**Autism Training Opportunities of Southwest Virginia**

**Welcomes You to Our**

***Second Annual Early Intervention Conference***

**in Blacksburg, Virginia:**

**“Getting Babies Ready for the Future: 0 to 5 years”**

**October 3, 2012**

**The Keynote Speaker is:**

**Laura Hartmann**

 **Older sibling of an adult with autism**

Laura has spoken nationally and internationally about her experiences from the other side of the spectrum, as a person growing up with a sibling with autism. Laura has earned an English M.A. from VA Tech and a Spanish M.A. from St. Louis University. She is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in English literature at Northeastern University in Boston. This last spring, Laura presented a paper entitled “Writing on the Spectrum: Neurodiversity and the First-Year Writing Classroom” at the 63rd Conference on College Composition and Communication, a national conference in the field of college writing. Laura actively pursues ways to blend her academic interests and her role as a sibling advocate.

**Target audience: Educators, service providers, parents and family members, anyone interested in the topic of the future of autism**

**Autism Early Intervention**

**Conference**

**“Getting Babies Ready for the Future: 0 to 5 years”**

**Save the Date: October 3, 2012**

**Register Early**

***No on-site Registrations***

**Meet the presenters: click here**

**To register on line: click here**

**To get more information send an e-mail to**

**r.hartmann@alivecontroversy.com****.**

**Meet our speakers:**

**Dawn Hendricks, Ph.D.,** serves as an Assistant Professor at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) where she holds a dual role. She is the Director of Training for the VCU Autism Center for Excellence. In this role, she directs state-wide training initiatives for families, schools, and service providers of individuals with autism spectrum disorders. This requires collaboration with state agencies, colleges and universities, families and organizations. Additionally at VCU, Dr. Hendricks coordinates the Post-baccalaureate Certificate in Autism Spectrum Disorders program. In this capacity, she develops curricula and provides instruction to educators throughout the Commonwealth.

Dr. Hendricks serves on the Virginia Autism Council, a state supported council of autism professionals, to improve educational and training measures for personnel who serve individuals on the spectrum. She provides consultative services to family members and service providers in the areas of evidence based strategies, positive behavior supports, and parent implemented intervention. She has over 18 years experience supervising programming and providing information on best practices through technical assistance and training.

**Dana Childress** has worked in the field of early intervention for over 17 years as an early childhood special educator, service coordinator, supervisor, trainer, and writer. She currently works as part of Virginia's early intervention training team developing professional development resources and conducting web-based and in-person training. Dana is also a doctoral student in special education at Old Dominion University with interests in family centered practices, autism spectrum disorders, supporting family implementation of intervention strategies, and professional development for in-service early intervention practitioners.

**Becky Crigger,** M.Ed., RYT-500, has been teaching yoga since 2003. She is a certified yoga therapist and has worked with individuals with autism spectrum disorders since 2010, focusing on the effects of restorative yoga on individuals who suffer from anxiety. Becky is the owner of In Balance Yoga Studio in downtown Blacksburg, where she teaches classes, offers private yoga therapy sessions, and trains yoga teachers for certification.

**Dr Gillian A. Rai, D.O.T., M.Ed., OTR/L**

Dr Rai received her bachelor degree in Occupational Therapy from the University of Durban-Westville, South Africa, where she was born and raised. She decided to visit the USA in 1997, as a result of her curious nature and a passion for learning. Through her travels, she decided to make VA her home, although still a South African at heart. While working as an Occupational Therapist in the school systems, Dr Rai had a strong desire to understand the academic demands placed on children in the elementary school setting as well as the integration of effective practices in special education, including the provision of technology solutions into the curriculum & instruction to meet the needs of students with mild to severe disabilities, and decided to pursue a masters degree in education. She earned her Masters degree in Special Education (with a Learning Disabilities concentration) from Virginia Polytechnic University in 2004, where she also worked as full time faculty in a special education research program, teaching and providing consultations to schools in SW Virginia. As an avid scholar and thirst for knowledge, Dr Rai earned her doctoral degree in OT (Pediatrics) at Temple University, Philadelphia. In addition, she is also SIPT (Sensory Integration and Praxis Testing)certified with 18 years of combined practice and teaching experience here and abroad in the field of pediatric Occupational Therapy, serving children and families in private practice, school systems, early intervention, and many other settings. Outside of the classroom, she continues to enjoy working clinically with children as well as creating, planning and facilitating workshops and training at state and national conferences. In keeping with her passion for learning, she joined the Jefferson College of Health Sciences in 2009, teaching in both the OTA and OT programs.

**Roxana Hartmann** is a private consultant and an International speaker from Blacksburg, Virginia. Roxana has over 23 years of experience on disability issues and state of the art educational best educational practices, her commitment to all aspects of the advocacy from Inclusive Education, Person Center Planning, Positive Behavior Supports, self-determination, friendships and natural supports, are some of the areas that she considers pivotal to ensure best outcomes for people in the autism spectrum. She is the mother of a young man with autism who is nonverbal and has been fully included from preschool and today continues to take higher education courses. She has been featured on the Today Show, People Magazine, CBS this morning, The News Hour with Jim Leher, She has been quoted and featured in the Washington Post, New York Times, USA TODAY, and the AP Worldwide.

**Presentations**

**PROACTIVE STRATEGIES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER**

Proactive Strategies for Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder is a workshop designed to introduce participants to autism spectrum disorders (ASD) as well as effective strategies for supporting infants and toddlers who have (or who are suspected of having) ASD in home and community environments. A focus is placed on strategies designed to support the child’s understanding of the environment and to enhance receptive and expressive communication. The training is geared toward early intervention and early childhood service providers and parents of young children with autism spectrum disorders.

**- An overview of autism spectrum disorders**

-Primary characteristics associated with autism spectrum disorders

-Secondary characteristics associated with autism spectrum disorders

-Strengths associated with autism spectrum disorders

-Support needs of young children with autism spectrum disorders

**- Implementing Visual Supports and Environmental Structure in the Home and Community** –

-Description and importance of environmental structure

-Description and importance of visual supports

-How to use environmental structure and visual supports to enhance understanding and increase independence

**Enhancing Communication in Young Children with ASD**

-Importance of social-communicative interactions on development

-In depth review of characteristics of expressive and receptive communication in infants & toddlers with ASD

-Practical strategies to support communication development within the context of natural activities and daily routines

**Sensory Processing, Anxiety, and Restorative Yoga**

Restorative yoga is quickly becoming a new alternative therapy to help children in the spectrum deal with anxiety and sensory issues. Restorative yoga is a type of yoga that requires a minimal physical effort and that encourages relaxation, a calm focus, and deep breathing techniques. This presentation will provide you with information on how your child can learn new ways to deal with stress and anxiety through restorative yoga.