Early Detection of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Childcare Centers

The West Philadelphia Early Childhood Education Initiative (WPECE) and the Delaware Valley Association for the Education of Young Children (DVAEYC) are collaborating with the A.J. Drexel Autism Institute at Drexel University on a research study to bring autism spectrum disorder (ASD) screening to Philadelphia childcare centers. We are inviting Philadelphia childcare centers that care for toddlers aged 15-47.99 months to participate.

The facts:
- Recent data estimates that about 1 in 68 children has been identified with an ASD
- Research suggests that early intervention improves outcomes
- Diagnosis of ASD at age 2 can be accurate, however the average age of diagnosis of ASD is after age 4
- AAP recommends screening for all children at 18 and 24 months

Your role as a childcare provider:
- Participate in a one-hour focus group to help us plan the best way to bring ASD screening to childcare centers
- Offer the study to every parent/caregiver of a child from 15-47.99 months old at your center
- Invite parents/caregivers to complete brief (5-10 minutes) screening on their child
- Teachers will fill out a brief screener on participating children in their class
- Teachers will participate in a one-hour training session and booster sessions as needed

Benefits:
- Trainings and workshops at no cost to childcare center teachers to promote early detection and intervention for ASD
- Diagnostic evaluations for children at risk for ASD at no-cost to families
- Families will receive feedback about their child’s strengths and weaknesses, including a written report
- Resources for families for navigating the early intervention system

Once you agree to participate, Dr. Robins or one of her research associates will ask to attend a staff meeting at your center. She will provide a brief overview of the study.

If you are interested in participating in one of these studies, please photocopy the enclosed enrollment letter on your letterhead and return by scan/email, mail, or fax to Attn: Dr. Diana Robins to her address below. We thank you for your time and look forward to working with you. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact either Dr. Robins or Katherine Weiner.

For more information, please contact:
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This research is conducted by a researcher who is a member of Drexel University