



Illinois Autism Training & Technical Assistance Project

FY2008 Project Highlights

- ▶ Record numbers participate in comprehensive on-line autism courses
- ▶ ISU undergraduate course added to on-line course options
- ▶ Illinois Experiential Practicum for Autism adds coaching
- ▶ Focus Family Support for Autism Spectrum Disorders continues to assist families with intensive support
- ▶ Article co-written by IATTAP Project Director published in the Autism Society of America Advocate and Principal magazines
- ▶ IATTAP featured in Autism Speaks "Talking to Parents about Autism" National Training DVD Package
- ▶ Increased focus on data-based decision-making and outcomes for families and students

IATTAP, a component of the Illinois Statewide Technical Assistance Center (IS-TAC), is an Illinois State Board of Education funded initiative focused on building the local capacity of schools to effectively educate students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and supporting families who have children with ASD.

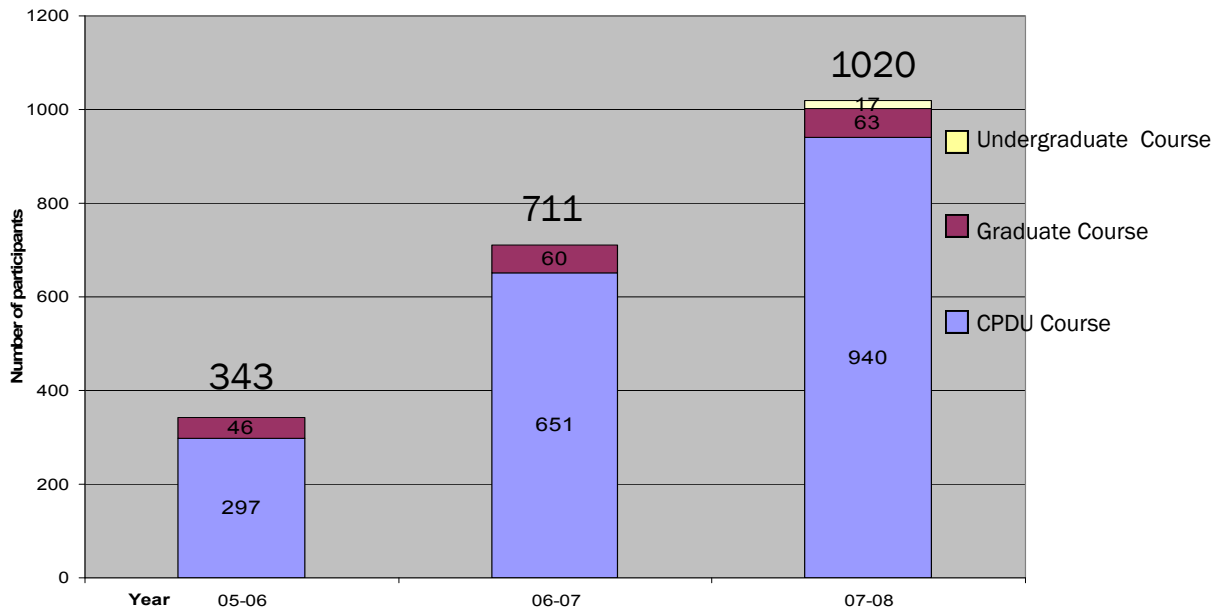
FY08 Highlights & Future Challenges

Illinois Experiential Practicum

Practicum weeks for school teams were offered in these four locations during summer 2007

- ▶ Charleston
- ▶ Arlington Heights
- ▶ Peoria
- ▶ Elmhurst

▶ On-Line Training Capacity Increases almost 300% ◀

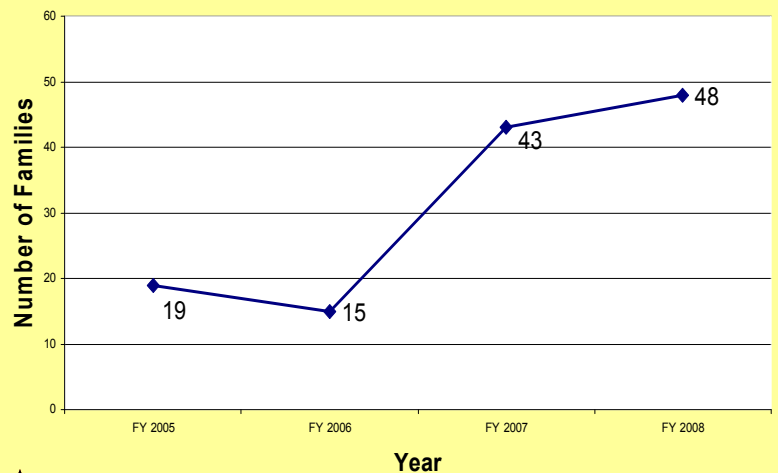


In Fiscal Year 2008, IATTAP began offering its on-line course through Illinois Early Intervention Training to enable more participants to take the free Continuing Professional Development Units (CPDU) version of this 54-hour comprehensive fundamentals course on Autism Spectrum Disorders. Illinois State University now offers a graduate level version and a newly completed undergraduate course. The graph above shows the number of people who have participated in the different on-line course options each year. Participant numbers have increased by 297% over the three years of on-line course availability.

▶ Focus Family Support for Autism Spectrum Disorders Provides Intensive Supports

Focus Family Support for Autism Spectrum Disorders (FFSASD) is an important component of IATTAP’s response to families in need of intensive support. IATTAP is committed to data-driven decision-making and asks, “Does what we do make a difference in the lives of the families and the children with ASD?” The graph to the right shows the number of families in FFSASD enrolled in the outcomes tracking system (SIMEO – Systematic Information Management of Educational Outcomes) during the last 4 years. In FY08, 48 families were enrolled in SIMEO, increasing data tracking efforts by 152% since 2005.

Families of Children with ASD in Outcomes Evaluation Process



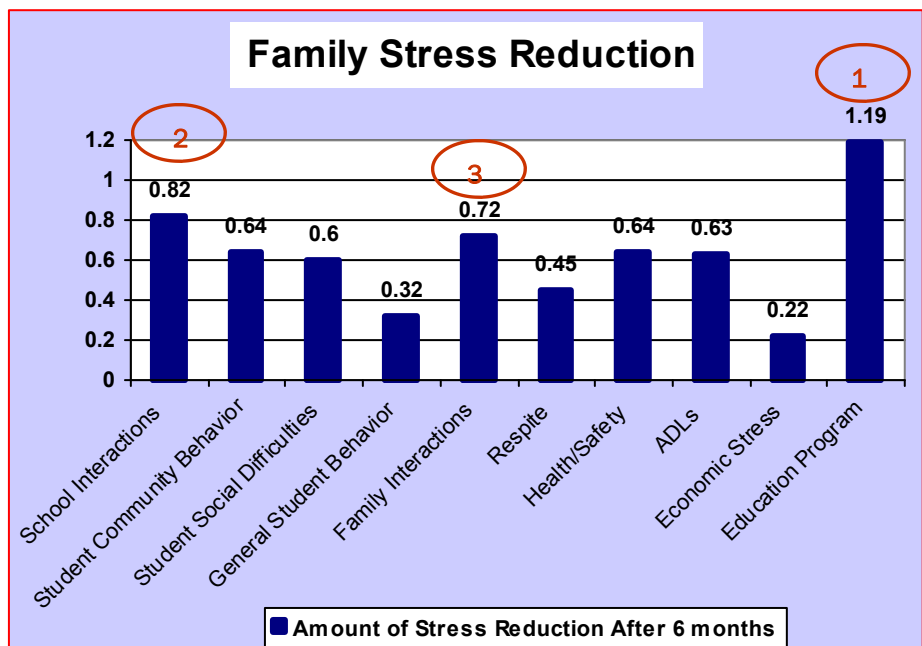
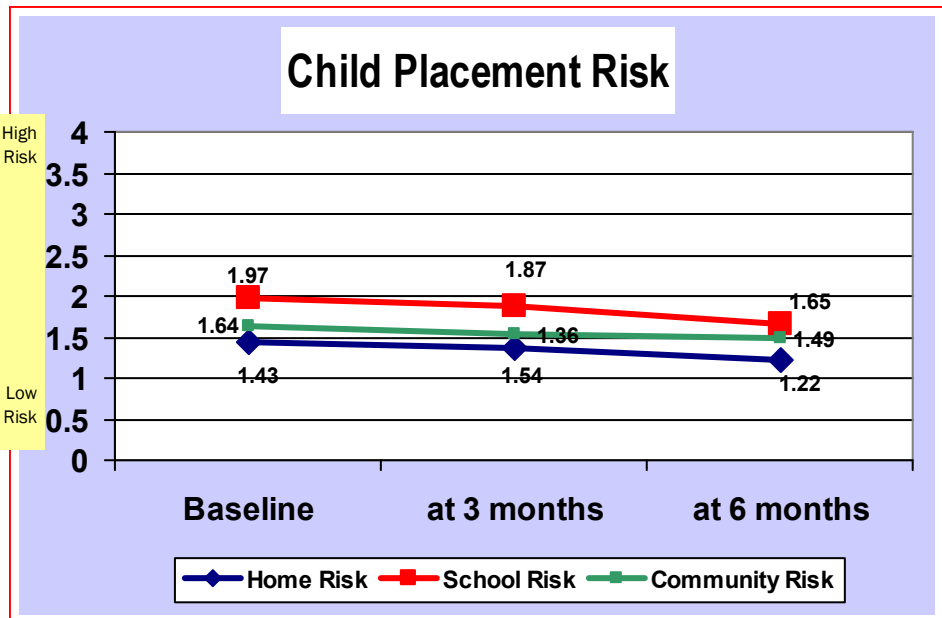
★ Unfortunately, despite high demand and need, the number of FFSASD families has remained constant for the last two years due to current funding levels. Additional funding is needed in order to reduce the now two-year waiting period for families to receive this support.

▶ Making a Difference for Families

Through FFSASD, IATTAP works with a family over 6-12 months using procedures and support strategies based on an individual family needs, characteristics and preferences to assist the family in reaching goals and making changes in their family life. Performance and outcomes are tracked to determine the results of work with these families. IATTAP Facilitators obtain information from team members about child and family activities and functioning in the home, school and community. This data is then used at team meetings to engage families and other team members to review concerns, celebrate success and determine action needed to create the desired change. The graphs below depict some of the positive outcomes being experienced by families who participate in FFSASD.

▶ Placement Risk and Family Stress reduced through FFSASD ◀

Families with children with ASD often describe major difficulties keeping their child at home, while school and community programs express concerns over adequately providing for children with ASD. This is known as placement risk. Families of children with ASD also express significant stress related to caring for their child with ASD. A significant outcome noted after just six months of the FFSASD process is a reduction in this risk of a child being placed outside the home, school or community setting. Another outcome that has been found is a decrease in family stress. After six months of FFSASD, all areas of family stress were decreased. The greatest reduction in family stress were in the areas of education programming, school interactions and family interactions.



▶ Experiential Practicum adds Coaching

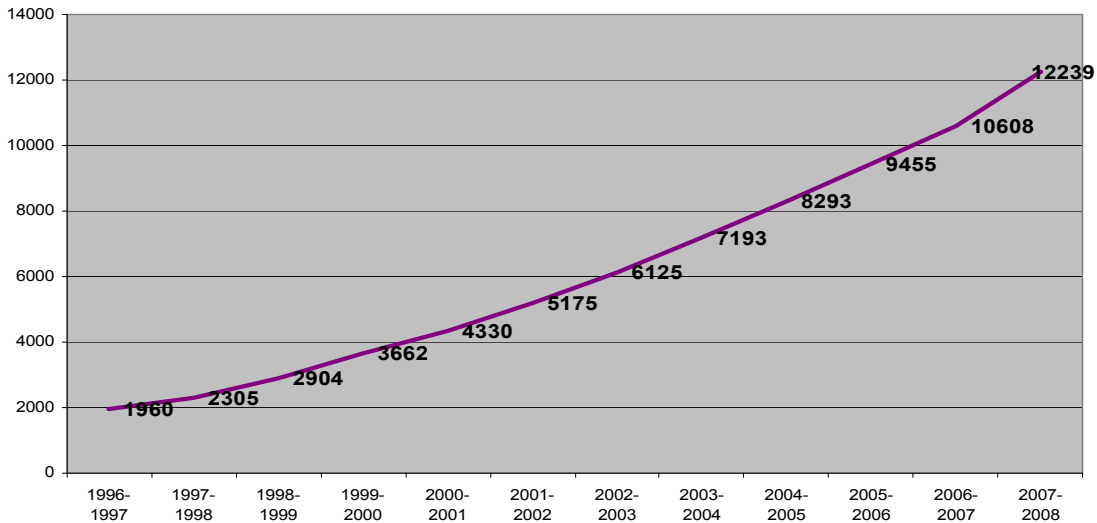
Practicum weeks	4
Teams	60
Networking meetings	40
Teams self-assessing	37

Dedicated to effective professional development and increasing the impact of coursework, IATTAP offers week-long summer practicum for school and district teams as follow-up to on-line courses. Research has shown that workshops, conferences and even intensive coursework often do not make a difference in what teachers do. Hands-on work and follow-up support are both essential to produce change in practices in classroom and schools. Last summer, sixty teams from schools all over Illinois participated in a practicum week, working through guided practice to implement strategies and supports for students with ASD. In FY08, IATTAP added coaching to provide follow-up support to increase implementation of strategies during the school year. The IATTAP coach assists the team with support for students with ASD at the team's school and meets with the team to guide them through a self-assessment, action planning and problem-solving throughout the year.

★ Practicum Teams began self-assessment, action planning and development of ASD coaches to improve education effectiveness for students with ASD. Additional state resources are needed to make this valuable process available to all schools and districts in Illinois and to improve the outcomes for the rapidly growing number of Illinois students with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Increase in Autism Category in Illinois Students since IATTAP Began ▶ 624 %

Number of Children in Illinois Receiving Special Education under the Category of Autism Ages 3-21



Source: Illinois State Board of Education

IDEA Child Count Data December 1, 2008