

FAMILY RESOURCE SPECIALIST NETWORK

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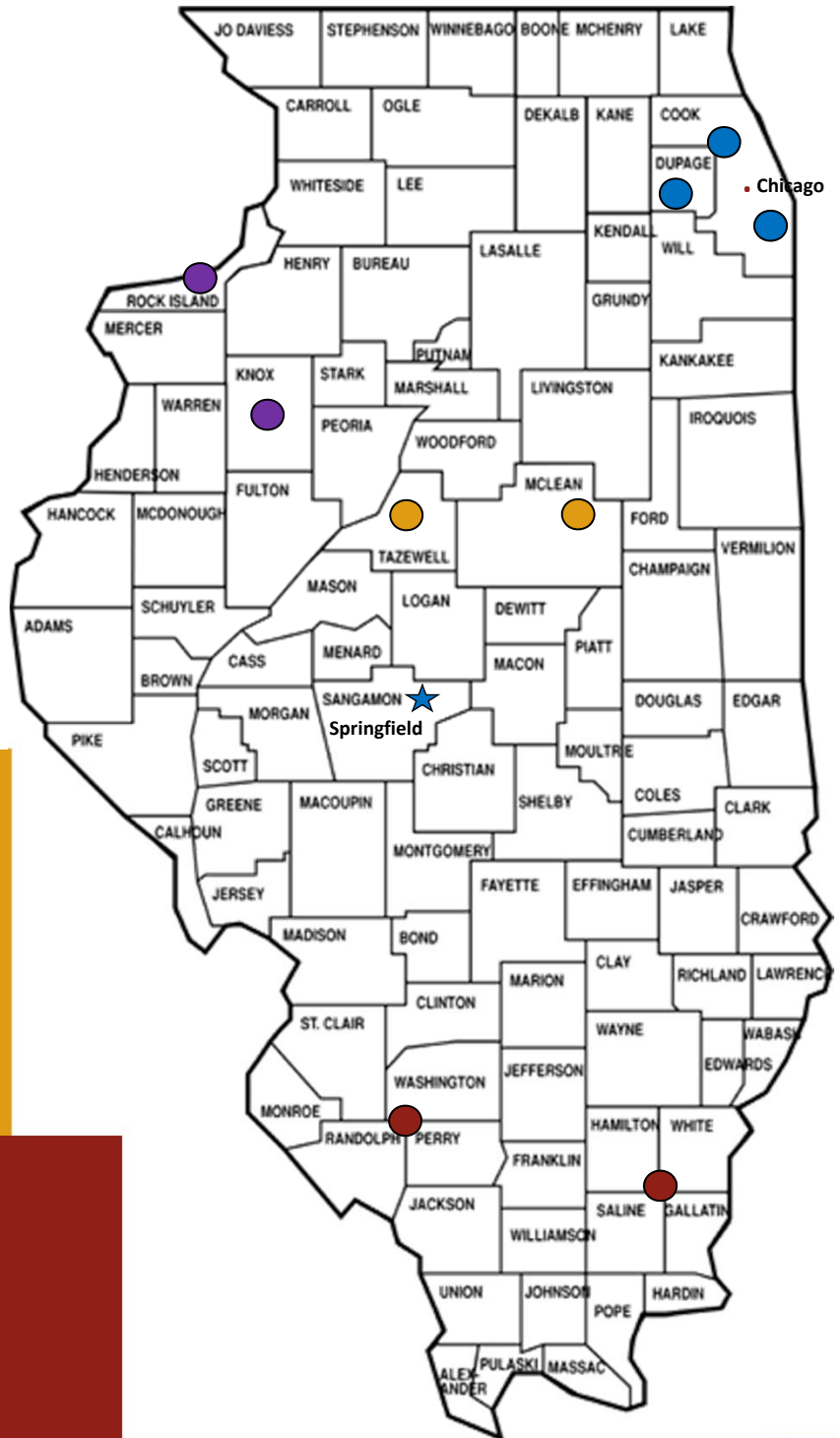
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Illinois Statewide Technical Assistance Center

The Illinois Autism/PDD Training and Technical Assistance Project (IATTAP) is one of four **Illinois State Board of Education** initiatives under the Illinois Statewide Technical Assistance Center (ISTAC) that provide training and technical assistance to schools in Illinois. Other ISTAC partners are PBIS Network, Project CHOICES and ISTAC-Parent. IATTAP focuses on educating and supporting children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and their families. The Project is operated under a grant to the School Association for Special Education in DuPage County and its **major goals** are to: Build local capacity to establish and implement effective educational supports and services in the least restrictive environment for children with ASD; Promote a proactive approach to working with individuals with ASD and their families; Help children with ASD remain with their families in their home communities and become productive; Increase the percentage of students with ASD who are educated in the general education classroom in their home schools; and Increase the effective and meaningful involvement of parents in their children's education.

FAMILY RESOURCE SPECIALIST NETWORK

The Family Resource Specialist Network creates a parent-to-parent connection of parents and family members who have children on the autism spectrum in different areas of Illinois. The network gives families the opportunity to contact another parent of a child with autism in their own or nearby community. The Family Resource Specialists organize Saturday parent conferences in their area and help to develop and disseminate a regional resource guide. They are also available to talk with parents by phone or e-mail, offering valuable information and a listening ear from another parent's perspective.

Information in resource guides include local education and other professional referrals, autism organizations and support groups (local, state, and national), community resources, autism support web sites, Illinois parent and professional training organizations, educational rights and advocate groups, newsletters and magazines, books, information regarding financial assistance, teaching aides, and safety aides.

The Family Resource Specialist Network helps to connect parents who share the experience of having a child with autism and to distribute valuable resource information from family to family.

MEET THE FAMILY RESOURCE SPECIALIST NETWORK . . .

Aurora

Carla Oldham –Carla and her husband, Walt are parents of 12 year-old twins, one of whom has autism. Carla founded PROUDD, (Parents Resource Organization for the Understanding of Disabilities and Developmental Delays) .

Antioch

Andrea Damenti – Andrea is a parent of a child with autism an co-president of a special ed CO-OP Advisory Board.

Bloomington

Jacquie Mace –Jacquie is the mom of 4 children. One of her 15 year-old twin boys has ASD. She is the founder of the Autism Society of McLean County and the author of the T.R.A.I.N. Resource book .

Chicago

Grace Dyson – Grace is the president of the Chicago Metropolitan Chapter #714 Autism Society of America. Grace has a 20 year old grandson who has autism. Grace loves football and basketball.

Mattoon

Lyndsey Reedy – Lyndsey is the mother of 2 kids, one which has ASD. Her motivation lies in seeing results of a family coming together and succeeding.

Mt. Vernon

Nicole Gaunt – Nicole and her husband J.C. are the parents of a 7 year old daughter and a 5 year old son , with autism. The Gaunts enjoy family time in the great outdoors.

Moline

Rick Ramirez –Rick and his wife, Cheryl have been married for 26 years. They are the parents of 18year-old son, Marcus, who has autism, and 27year-old daughter, Ericka. Rick's main interests are tennis and politics.

STL Metro East

Penny Salvato - Penny and her husband Andrew are the parents of 6 year old Daniel & live in Godfrey, IL. Daniel has High Functioning Autism & ADHD. Penny & her husband started a local support group (A.O.K. - Autism & Our Kids) that tries to meet the diverse needs of ASD children their families.

Woodridge

Rachel Westberg – Rachel is an insightful, caring individual and very passionate about her work in the autism field. Rachel is a sibling of a family member with autism. Rachel is a recreational therapist by trade.

East Peoria

Sandy Valentine –Sandy and husband Stan are parents of 3 children. Their youngest, Jack, is 19 and has autism. She has been providing support and encouragement to other families who have children with disabilities and medical issues for over 16 years.

New Baden

Kristen Wright – Kristen and her husband, Nathan are the parents of a 6 year old with high functioning autism. Kristen is very dedicated and passionate about working with individuals with ASD and their families. Kristen is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst.

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