



## POLICY FORUM ON AUTISM

November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007

Best Western Ville-Marie, Montreal, Quebec

Room Mont-Royal I, 20<sup>th</sup> floor

### Final Program

Chair: Dr. Kim Kienapple

Facilitator: Sylvie Bigras

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07:30 – 08:30	Registration & Breakfast
08:30 – 08:50	Welcome and Overview of the program Introduction of participants and objectives of the day
08:50 – 09:00	Welcome from Dr. Kim Kienapple
09:00 – 09:45	<b><i>Early Identification of Autism in Infants</i></b> Susan Bryson, Ph.D., Dalhousie University  This talk will highlight the current knowledge about early signs of autism, finding from ongoing research examining early signs in high-risk infants, and challenges of early screening and diagnosis.
09:45 – 10:00	Question period
10:00 – 10:30	Coffee break
10:30 – 11:15	<b><i>Early Intervention in Autism: New Directions</i></b> Isabel M. Smith, Ph.D., Dalhousie University  An overview of the evidence for effective early intervention (EI) for young children with autistic spectrum disorders will be presented. The talk will highlight evidence gaps and both the strengths and limitations of current approaches. A need for feasible, sustainable community-based EI programs will be identified. As an example, Nova Scotia's novel model will be described, with preliminary data on one-year child and family outcomes.
11:15 – 11:45	Question period
11:45 – 12:45	LUNCH BREAK



- 12:45 – 01:50      Round table discussions\* – Theme 1: Research
- *How does research assist you in policy development?*
  - *Is the research being done addresses what policy advisors need?*
  - *What are the gaps in current research to help policy development?*
  - *Are there questions regarding research/policy development not being asked that should be?*
  - *Are there other issues beyond those considered to date?*
- 01:50 – 02:50      Round table discussions\* – Theme 2: Challenges
- *What are the obstacles to research-based recommendations becoming policy?*
  - *Are there ways of dealing with these obstacles?*
  - *Are there best practices recommended to deal with these obstacles?*
- 02:50 – 03:45      Round table discussions\* – Theme 3: Implementation
- *How can researchers and policy makers work together for implementation?*
- \*Self managed coffee break during the round table discussions
- 03:45 – 03:55      Wrap up
- 03:55 – 04:00      Closing remarks



## Biographies

### Dr. Susan E. Bryson

Professor and Craig Chair in Autism Research

Susan E. BRYSON received a PhD in Clinical Psychology from McGill University. She is the first holder of the Craig Chair in Autism Research at Dalhousie University, and Founding Director of the Autism Research Centre at the IWK Health Centre. She also helped to establish the Provincial Autism Resource Centre in Halifax for families and professionals. Dr. Bryson is a leading authority on the early detection and treatment of autism, on mechanisms of attention, emotion and learning in autism, and on co-morbid psychiatric disturbance in adolescents and adults with autism. Recently, Dr. Bryson has assumed the position of Provincial Clinical Leader for the newly developed Nova Scotia Early Intensive Intervention program for young children with autism. Dr. Bryson has served as consultant to Health Canada, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, and the Nova Scotia Departments of Health, Education and Community Services; she is one of the Founding Directors of the Canadian Autism Intervention Research Network; and she is on the editorial boards of *Autism*, the *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, *Autism* and the *Journal on Developmental Disabilities*. Dr. Bryson recently received the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal for outstanding contributions to the autism community.

### Dr. Isabel M. Smith

Dr. Isabel M. SMITH is an Associate Professor in the Departments of Pediatrics and Psychology at Dalhousie University in Halifax NS. She is a clinical-developmental psychologist based at the IWK Health Centre, the tertiary children's hospital for the Maritime Provinces. For the past 10 years she has consulted to government, and worked with early childhood educators, school boards, and health service agencies, promoting evidence-based diagnostic, treatment, and educational practices. In 2003, she received the Queen's Jubilee Medal for service to the autism community. Dr. Smith has been involved in autism research for more than 20 years. Her research interests include early perceptual, motor and cognitive mechanisms in ASD, particularly the development of imitation, and their implications for diagnosis and intervention. Current projects include a CIHR-funded study of the effectiveness of a novel model of early intensive behavioural intervention for young children with autistic spectrum disorders in Nova Scotia.

### Dr. Kim Kienapple

Dr. Kim KIENAPPLE received his Ph.D. from Purdue University and has been a member of the Department of Child and Youth Study, Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, Nova Scotia since 1984. Dr. Kienapple's research interests are in the area of conceptual and emotional development in young children. He has also published in the area of early childhood education and early childhood special education. His current work, in addition to acting as the Co-director of the Site on Early Intervention for the Centre of Excellence for Children and Adolescents with Special Needs, includes describing early intervention services in Canada, professional development and developing distance education models for early childhood educators.