



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

December 4, 2009

Dear Participant,

We are pleased to invite you to the Region X Act Early Summit in Seattle, WA on February 4th & 5th 2010. Autism spectrum disorders (ASD) represent a significant proportion of the total burden of developmental disabilities, and all of us must do our part to best coordinate early diagnostic methods and intervention systems. At this summit, a team of key stakeholders from various intervention and early childhood programs in your state will begin to identify ways to enhance statewide screening, identification, service provision and coordination for families and children with ASD and related disabilities. We hope you will agree to become part of this crucial endeavor.

As part of your state team, you will help to identify the unique strengths and challenges in your state, share information with other states in your region, and begin to lay the groundwork for more effective statewide early intervention and early childhood services for children with autism and related disabilities. **This event will greatly inform the future of the CDC's national "Learn the Signs. Act Early." health communication campaign as we begin to delve more deeply into the "Act Early" portion of the campaign. The Summit will also provide invaluable information for HRSA's "Combating Autism" Research, Training, and Demonstration initiative.**

This meeting is being sponsored by the CDC's National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (CDC/NCBDDD) and the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB). We have asked the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) and their network of University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities to help us identify key state stakeholders and to facilitate planning and communications for the summit. Please review the attached information from your state team coordinator and reply to Jennifer Bogin, Project Manager at AUCD if you have any questions.

We look forward to seeing you at the Region X Act Early Summit, which we hope will generate the energy, ideas and collaborative spirit that will carry us a step closer to improved identification, assessment, and services for young children with autism spectrum disorders and related disabilities and their families.

Sincerely,

Edwin Trevathan, M.D., M.P.H.
Director
National Center on Birth Defects and
Developmental Disabilities

Peter van Dyck, M.D., M.P.H.
Associate Administrator for Maternal and Child Health
Health Resources and Services Administration