



December 29, 2008

Dear Colleague,

I am pleased to invite you to the **Region 8 Act Early Summit in Salt Lake City, Utah at the Sheraton Salt Lake City Hotel on March 5-6, 2009**. The need for coordinated early diagnostic methods and intervention systems is apparent to all of us who are dedicated to improving the lives of people with neurodevelopmental disorders. 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 neurodevelopmental disorders.

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 enhance 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 as HRSA launches its "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. The Center for Persons with Disabilities at Utah State University will be hosting this meeting. Please review the attached information and reply to your state team coordinator if you have any questions.

We look forward to seeing you at the Region 8 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 disorders.

Yours truly,

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