

The following are the ten universal best-practice features that have been shown to provide a common foundation to all successful intervention programs:

- 1) Emphasis on earliest possible screening and diagnosis for eligibility for Autism services
- 2) Programs are tailored to the needs of each individual with specific adaptations that match the person's spectrum profile
- 3) Highly structured and skill-oriented teaching and treatment programs
- 4) Frequent informal reassessment and systematic data-based tracking of skill growth and related plan review and revisions
- 5) Use individual motivational strategies and systems (extrinsic vs. intrinsic)
- 6) Teaching areas are structured, organized and distraction-free environments with intensive one-to-one and small group sessions.
- 7) Provide multiple settings and consistency of methodology for promoting skills generalization
- 8) Personnel are well-trained and evaluated for competency
- 9) Intervention strategies are maintained full-day and year-round from preschool through adulthood
- 10) Research over the last two decades consistently shows 25 hours a week in year-round programs is the service level needed to produce positive levels of growth
- 12) 40+ hours may be needed for optimum outcomes in behavioral programs that are seeking fully normative outcomes.

However the entire family, respite, public or private provider team, and strong shared data tracking systems are all important parts of reaching any best practice program goals. No one member of our family or society can do this alone.

RECENT PUBLICATION: A meta-analysis of educational interventions text: "Educating Children with Autism" Published by the National Research Council. National Academy Press. Washington D.C. at: www.nap.edu

PAST RESEARCH: COSAC/Center for Outreach and Services for the Autism Community, 1450 Parkside Avenue, Suite 22, Ewing, NJ 08638. Autism Helpline **1-800-4-AUTISM**. Basic Information/Research in English and Spanish.