



PROJECT ACCESS FACT SHEET #20



projectaccess.missouristate.edu
 projectaccess@missouristate.edu
 866-481-3841

AUTISM CONSULTANTS: WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE

AUTISM CONSULTANT: Missouri does not have such an educational designation. However, there is a three-tiered system of Project ACCESS autism educational consultants described below.

IN-DISTRICT AUTISM CONSULTANT (IDAC): A certified teacher with a minimum of two years classroom experience is selected by his or her school district's administration to attend the *Introduction to Autism* training either in a face-to-face format or the online format through Project ACCESS' Community of Practice site. In addition to the Introduction to Autism training, attending the *Working with Autistic Students in the Schools (WASS)* OR *Early Intervention for Young Children With Autism (EIYCA)* training is also required. These trainings enable the teacher to attend the Autism Consultant Training (ACT). An administrator must send an endorsement letter indicating the school district's intention to use that person as their In-District Autism Consultant (IDAC). School districts may have as many IDACs as is deemed appropriate for the district's needs for a staff member to consult with colleagues serving students with ASD in their own districts. Project ACCESS will provide each IDAC with a nametag and maintain a participant database. If the IDAC moves to another Missouri school district, the new district can make a written request to Project ACCESS and the IDAC status can be transferred to the requesting district.

MISSOURI AUTISM CONSULTANT (MAC): MACs are talented and expert individuals in the area of autism. There is an application process for MAC status. Project ACCESS selects MACs, trains them, monitors their effectiveness and ongoing education in autism, and sends them out across the state to consult in requesting school districts. MACs have typically attended most Project ACCESS workshops and they are invited to attend a refresher once each year. They receive frequent information through email, and receive a MAC nametag. MAC status has a highly regarded reputation across the midwest.

BEAT Coaches: BEAT is an acronym for Building Effecting Autism Teams, and a BEAT Coach is an ACCESS selected expert in development of support for students along the autism spectrum. Missouri public school districts are invited to participate in the BEAT Initiative by Project ACCESS staff. Typically, the Coach assists in developing a team around a specific child or group of children. The role of the Coach is not to provide services to the student(s), but to support the team in the provision of needed services. One or more members of the team must be an ACCESS trained In-District Autism Consultant (IDAC). As part of the agreement with school districts, the IDAC will be released after the year of coaching to assist neighboring school

districts as needed. The goal of the BEAT Initiative is to build capacity within local school districts.

For more information visit projectaccess.missouristate.edu.

© Project ACCESS - 2019 *Project ACCESS is a collaboration among the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Missouri State University, and Missouri's public schools.