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NEW YORK ACTS WEB SITE IS LAUNCHED

Site is 'one-stop shop' for information on Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders

ALBANY, N.Y. - Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) and their families now have a single comprehensive resource to go to for important information on ASDs and the State services available to address the needs of these individuals and their families. New York State's Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) and the State Education Department (SED) announced today the launch of the New York ACTS (www.nyacts.org) Web site.

New York ACTS (An Initiative for Addults and Children on the Spectrum) was developed by the New York State Interagency Task Force on Autism, a partnership of 11 State agencies, as a way to bring reliable, current information to the public about autism and to assist New York's families to easily find State services for their loved ones with ASD. Because individuals with ASD may need services from different State systems – education, health, mental health and developmental disabilities services – NYACTS offers a dedicated site from which people can get the information they need without any prior knowledge of New York's service agencies.

"New York ACTS demonstrates New York State's commitment to letting the people we serve drive what we do," said **OMRDD Commissioner Diana Jones Ritter**. "It effectively connects people to the services they seek regardless of which system provides it. It has resulted from and will continue to demonstrate how our government is working together in an effective and integrated way."

"We are very pleased to have had the opportunity to partner with the other State agencies in the development of this website", said **SED's Commissioner Dr. David**

Steiner. “NYACTS represents a truly coordinated effort among State agencies. This Web site provides a wealth of information on ASD and organized access to services in New York State. It represents the State’s genuine commitment to individuals with ASD and their families and is especially important given the increasing incidence of ASD.”

In addition to information on autism and New York State services and supports for individuals and families, New York ACTS provides news stories related to ASD, the answers to frequently asked questions, and information on important laws, events and trainings, the network of Centers for Autism and Related Disabilities across New York State, New York State’s autism initiatives, and profiles of New York citizens of all ages living with ASD. A cross-agency committee will regularly update and maintain the Web site. As scientists and others improve their understanding of ASD and identify effective practices in diagnosis, assessment, treatment and education for individuals with ASD, the committee will continue to promote and expand New York ACTS as a means to bring the latest information to a wide range of parties.

New York ACTS is sponsored by the following New York State agencies:

- OMRDD
- SED
- Office of Mental Health
- Department of Health
- Office of Children and Family Services
- Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
- Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities
- Council on Children and Families
- Office for Temporary and Disability Assistance
- Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services
- New York State Insurance Department

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