an empowerment model of consultation
a message from the Administrator

POPARD continues to develop innovative, research-based initiatives that increase local capacity and expertise. In 2011, we launched an expanded empowerment model of consultation by including the entire school and parent team in providing more input and participation at all stages of the consultation process, with POPARD providing more contact and support throughout the process.

partnerships with systems that include individuals with ASD
POPARD has been involved with the Pacific Autism Family Centre, BCCAN, BCASP, the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research and Collaboration, SET-BC, Douglas College and SFU. International partnerships include collaborative launching of an evidence-based anxiety program with University of Colorado’s Dr. Judy Reaven.

expanding our online capabilities
Our website is an increasingly important tool for delivering information about ASD. The number of visitors to our website continues to grow: our eLearning lessons were viewed over 40,000 times this year.

appreciating our partners
POPARD is only able to do the work with do with the dedication and support of our district partners, school teams, teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators and parents across the province. We appreciate your contribution and value our partnership as we work together to enhance the lives of students with ASD.

Georgina Robinson
Dr. Georgina Robinson
EMPOWERMENT

an expanded model of consultation

The goal of the empowerment model is to make consultation meaningful for all involved. Before consultation begins, the POPARD consultant contacts both school and parent to gather the information required by the consultant in order to better understand the needs of the student in his/her particular setting.

Pre-meetings and observations are followed by a brainstorming of ideas with the team, and rather than the consultant “telling” the team what to do (expert model), the goal is for the consultant to work with the team to agree on an implementation plan, translating an evidence-based approach, that will work with this child in their setting, giving consideration to the particular skill set and resources of the team and context.

Implementation Support is a new aspect of the consultation model. This can include “hands-on” work with the team to demonstrate or model, “make and take” sessions, mentoring of the staff, or additional training. The POPARD consultant makes a commitment to follow-up with the school team.

Follow-up includes contact by phone, email or live online meetings, and face-to-face meetings or coaching sessions when the POPARD consultant returns to the district to provide the agreed upon implementation support.

This expanded model of consultation results in rich program and skill development and much higher levels of treatment fidelity. The POPARD consultants return to find that implementation plans have been implemented as designed, or if not, the teams are on their way, and with additional mentoring, are better able to increase the capacity of staff.

“Not only has the student made progress in changing his behaviour, the parents and teachers have also changed the ways they interact with the child. A success story for all stakeholders.”

... a response from our online survey
dawson creek, peace river south

800 kilometers northeast of Vancouver, School District #59 (Peace River South) is home to 4,198 students in 23 schools based in rural communities spread widely across the district.

Peace River South School District, like a number of other districts in BC, now has a District Autism Team trained by POPARD. Their multi-disciplinary team is able to consult effectively and knowledgeably with school teams working with students with ASD. Because they are local and readily available they are able to provide service and implementation support when and where it is needed, rather than waiting for support from the coast. Their team has strong credibility in the district and they are still able to draw on POPARD for complex training and ongoing team or district training.

The Peace River South Team took part over two years in the updated District Autism Team Training provided by POPARD. This training, based on an empowerment model, is modular in nature, allowing it to be customized for specific district needs; tailored to individual team needs; presented in flexible order; offered in different depths and provided in different time frames to best suit each context. It involves supporting the team in increasing their knowledge and understanding of ASD; developing team processes; learning a team consultation process and planning for team sustainability.
expanding our educational outreach

We are expanding our educational outreach beyond our courses and consultations. Ten school districts, including 5 from outside the Lower Mainland, participated in our October Videoconference on Self Regulation. New titles were added to our increasingly popular Handout Series, and a partnership with Pyramid Educational Systems has resulted in an eLearning series on the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) for non-verbal individuals. Video modeling is being added to our Functional Curriculum.

The School-Age Screening Inventory for High Functioning Students (SAASI-HFS) was published and made available internationally. Authors Dr. Georgina Robinson and Dr. Ted Wormeli provided training sessions for psychologists and SLPs on its administration within a model of best practices in identifying school-aged children with high functioning ASD.

Dr. Robinson also provided training in assessment of high-functioning students with ASD and the administration of the SAASI at the Geneva Centre for Autism international conference, the National Association of School Psychologists conference (NASP), the BC Association of School Psychologists conference (BCASP), and the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA).

“You could use these handouts to help with all students, not just students with ASD. This is a very valuable resource.”
... from a Superintendent

“This is a unique instrument, normed in schools in BC. It has been incredibly helpful to my practice. The higher functioning students with ASD are often not identified until they reach school, and this is a tool that is great for school professionals, easy to use, with great descriptors and examples.”
... from a Psychologist

SAASI-HFS Manual and Protocol

new releases to the POPARD Handout Series
VIRTUAL OUTREACH

a world wide resource

www.popard.ca is an engaging, dynamic and functional aspect of our service. Our regular updates and newsletters motivate visitors to come back monthly. Our eLearning modules provide a brief and engaging presentation on a wide range of topics related to supporting students with ASD. Students value our online quiz reviews and the secure area for required readings. District Partners and Consultants can download forms and resources from their own secure areas of the web. Both educators and family members find value in our website, and our statistics show that our visitor loyalty is significant.

overview of webstats:

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"While on a cruise to Alaska, I met a delightful couple from Prince Edward Island. Came to find out Marie is an SEA who supports students with autism in her local public school district.
And...Marie just raved about the resources and information we provide for staff and parents through our POPARD web presence. She said they access and use our web resources frequently in her PEI School District!"

...from a POPARD Psychologist

"I think it is a brilliant addition to your outreach service. I like the opportunity to inservice myself when our POPARD consultant is not in our district."

"I had our student support teachers develop a scavenger hunt using website clues to get them aware of what is on it. They loved the idea."

...from our online survey
building relationships
Partnerships between systems that include students with ASD has been an area of particular focus for POPARD this year. These partnerships range from memberships on advisory committees and participating in research projects to co-hosting conferences and workshops.

overview of partnerships:
• Pacific Autism Family Centre
• Douglas College Advisory Committee
• Centre for Interdisciplinary Research and Collaboration in Autism (CIRCA), UBC
• BCAAN, NHAAN, BCASP, BCCASE Working Group on assessment of students with ASD
• SET-BC research project on the impact of technology on executive functions
• SFU Centre for Disabilities joint conference on Transitions to Higher Education
• Transitions Fair with representation from agencies across Ministries
• Video eLearning Partnership with Pyramid Educational Consultants (Delaware)
• The Autism Conference with Spectrum Solutions, Nelson, BC

expanding research opportunities
Applied research opportunities have expanded in 2011. Staff are encouraged to collect research data so their approach can be evaluated and the results published or presented at international conferences. All projects result in teaching new skills to the participants, improved outcomes for students with ASD, and more students receiving service from the POPARD team. Some projects have resulted in system-wide changes implemented at the school and district level.

overview of invited conference presentations:
• National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) National Conference, San Francisco
• Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) National Conference, Toronto
• The Geneva International Autism Conference, Toronto
• The Autism Conference, Nelson, BC
• Cross Currents, Vancouver

POPARD’s partnership with UBC resulted in training POPARD psychologists in the administration of ADOS and ADIR, placement of a School Psychology Intern, and collaboration between the POPARD principal and several POPARD psychologists with the Department of Educational Psychology and Special Education and with the School Psychology Program
In 2010 - 2011, POPARD applied research projects included partnerships with the Kootenay, Richmond, Abbotsford and Fraser Cascade School Districts, and with Dr. Judy Reaven, University of Colorado. Below are examples of some of this year’s Applied Research Projects.

**Kootenay school district**

*Prevent - Teach - Reinforce School-Based Model of Behaviour Support* took place in two Kootenay schools and was supported by Rose Iovannone, Florida-based co-author of this approach. This project led to district-wide adoption of positive behaviour support practices.

The results of another study, *Effectiveness of Video Modelling to Increase Independence*, suggested increased life skills and learning for the student with ASD. Results of both studies were presented at the NASP Conference in San Francisco.

**University of Colorado**

*Fighting Worry and Facing Fears: a Coping Group for Children with HF-ASD and their Families*, was a 14-week series supported by Dr. Judy Reaven from the University of Colorado. Parent and child groups met in sessions facilitated by six POPARD staff. Data were collected on treatment integrity, parent perceptions and student anxiety levels.

> “Thank you for running this program. I really enjoyed the parent group. It helped to hear what other parents were doing, and to share ideas that might work. I think I better understand anxiety now, and how to help him face his fears a little at a time, and not try to push too hard and have it backfire.”  ... from a parent participant

**Fraser Cascade school district**

This applied research project examined the impact of following workshop presentations with individual mentorship of classroom teachers, as well as the relevance of best-practice autism strategies for all students and teachers.

Teachers who received mentoring in addition to instruction were more likely to successfully implement strategies taught in the workshop, and they were also more likely to use effective teaching strategies to support ALL students in their inclusive classroom.

> “Sometimes I did not know how to start or how to fit the strategy into my teaching day. Having the consultant model the lesson for me showed me how it could work. I have done three more Social Behaviour Maps since then!” ... from a teacher, SD 78

*The POPARD principal, in a partnership between UBC and School District #37 (Delta), mentored 14 school psychology students-in-training to conduct consultations and functional-behaviour assessments on students within the Delta School District*
training that make a difference

Over 6,000 BC Teachers and Para-Professionals participated in POPARD training courses, workshops, conferences or mentoring in 2010 - 2011.

Students attend training at the POPARD Training Facility in Delta, at a BC University or College, or in their home school district. We continue to have increased demand for our courses.

**POPARD’s regular training courses include:**

- Introduction to ASD (5 days training, with or without exam)
- Introduction to ABA (4 days training)
- University Level Overview of ASD (9 days training)

“**This course has significantly increased my understanding of Autism, and more specifically, what children with ASD face on a daily basis. I feel more confident and able to work with, develop strategies for, and be a positive ‘teacher’ for the children I work with. Thank you!”**

“The information, activities, materials and discussions have been excellent. This course will help my practices improve greatly.”

“I feel I am confident enough to go out into the field and demonstrate many of the techniques I learned during the ABA course. I found this course to be very informative. The instructor was very knowledgeable in his field. He was always open to suggestions”

“It gives me confidence that I’m doing the right things for our students”

**face to face training**

POPARD’s impact on BC’s educators is significant: **5,463** hours of face-to-face training were provided by POPARD consultants this year.

- Special Projects: 1541 Hours
- ASD Course: 1500 Hours
- Mentoring: 867 Hours
- Workshops: 597 Hours
- ABA Course: 400 Hours
- Research Projects: 258 Hours
- Conferences: 56 Hours
- UNIV Course: 45 Hours
services that make a difference

1,293 BC students with ASD were provided with direct services in the 2010 - 2011 school year.
Direct services include consultation, psychological or functional assessment, or a focused intervention.

comments from teachers about our new Implementation Plan:
“I found the collaborative model of involving all people involved in student’s life made it very efficient”
“This model, the POPARD consultant became a contributor, attempting to help, rather than the expert - allowed for more dialogue”
“I am getting lots of positive feedback regarding the Implementation time. School teams and parents are loving it.”
“The follow-up personal time and actual practical implementation was really the BEST part of the resource’s support process.”
“We really like the idea of walking away from a consult with a concrete plan with goals, roles and responsibilities.”

comments from parents:
“We love working with the consultant! She responds both to family and school needs.”
“Wonderful, this service we need greatly to support staff, students and families.”
Justin, age 12

A student in middle school, Justin rarely spoke at school. His mother noticed his increasing avoidance of school which culminated in bolting from school and running in front of traffic.

Together, the POPARD psychologist and consultant worked with Justin. A functional behavior assessment determined that Justin’s school avoidance was triggered by peer bullying at school.

Justin’s ASD means he has difficulty expressing his needs to others, and he hadn’t communicated his concerns to teachers; he just reacted with behavior.

The POPARD consultant and psychologist created a behavior support plan with the school team. The plan focused on teaching Justin to become more assertive and to communicate better with peers and adults. The support plan also provided increased supervision in zones where bullying could occur – not just to Justin, but also to others.

As an extension to this consult, the school team, and then the entire district, got on board to learn a process of “prevent – teach – reinforce”. Regular classroom teachers were trained in preventive practices to create more supportive classrooms, increase student social skills, and increase acceptance of individuals with differences. The POPARD team provided training, modeling, and coaching to teachers. Data collected demonstrated growth in teacher skills and changes in student behaviour, including decreased incidences of bullying and improved prosocial behaviours.

What began as a student-specific consult extended into a district wide research and training process that built capacity of all middle school teachers in the district.
ABOUT US

POPARD is a Ministry of Education service.

We provide educational and behavioural support services to schools in BC for students with autism and related disorders. We are teachers, psychologists and speech language pathologists.

The POPARD Office and Training Facility is located in Delta, BC.