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Sent: Friday, February 15, 2013 7:04 AM
To: AppropriationTestimony
Cc: Catherine A. Hogan
Subject: Testimony on Inclusion Teaming for the Health and Hospital Committee Hearing
February 15th, 2013

Good morning,

I would like to offer my support to the proposal for funding from INCLUSION TEAMING. They are a CT based group working with teens and young adults with autism and other neurological differences.

This is what they do:

PART A OF PROGRAM -- BASIC INSTRUCTION

1. Inclusion Teaming brings youth with social communication challenges into an instructional program with peers who have typical communication challenges.
2. IT teaches them about the basic differences in social communication that exists between them.
3. As part of our teaching, we mix the youth together in small group discussion to identify the blocks in communication that occur from misinformed judgement of others. The youth practice teaching about the differences by expressing their ideas from a leadership position (such as a podium). The students love this as they get comfortable--they are building knowledge, confidence, and skills.
4. Once understanding has improved between the two groups, we begin to practice strategies that help the youth with and without the social communication challenges work together on problem solving a team task, learning to say what they need, and freely expressing alternative ideas for problem solving in ways that can be understood.
5. We incorporate tools for time limits, taking turns, and acknowledging another person's perspective.

PART B OF PROGRAM -- JOB CREATION AND JOB SUPPORTS

IT will explore a range of job possibilities that fit a youth's talent through graduate interns with typical communications and graduates with social communication challenges. We will develop new ways to support individuals with high functioning autism on a job--software, phone linkages etc. We will prepare them with success portfolios. We provide internships for individuals on the spectrum once they have been adequately trained in PART A of our program. Some internships may be paid.

The Inclusion Teaming program works on basis of equality in inclusion -- all members minds are equal--we find ways to address the gap in knowledge and employment for the individuals with high functioning levels of autism.

John Elder Robison