

**Subject:** College Autism Network - December 2022 Updates

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## COLLEGE AUTISM NETWORK

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### College Autism Network News and Notes December 2022

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#### Thanks for a Great 2022

We’re in that seasonal spirit, so it seems appropriate to share our good cheer. We’ve had a pretty darn good year here at the College Autism Network, and we have many of you to thank. First, to all of you who have joined CAN, committing your professional or personal funds to support our work, we are grateful. Your confidence in the value of this organization means the world to us. To those of you who attended the sixth

College Autism Summit in Nashville, we are so happy you joined us in person for a great event. We're especially grateful to our sponsors who help keep the Summit affordable for autism support professionals. A special thanks to the members of the Summit Planning Team for your hard work, fun meetings and brilliant ideas. Thanks to those of you who regularly, or occasionally, joined



our CANVAS and Program Directors' calls this year, especially if you facilitated a discussion. These learning and networking opportunities are helping to weave the many threads of this work into a coherent and compassionate fabric, making a difference on so many campuses. Thanks to our new **Practitioners' Advisory Board** members who are helping CAN become the best organization it can be. We have a lot to be thankful for, especially for the opportunity to do all of this and more in 2023. See you there!

-Your CAN Leadership Team (Lee, Brad, Brett, Brittany and Kelsey)

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## Adding the "A" to DEI

If your campus is in conversations about the place of Accessibility in the landscape of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, this US Department of Labor **blogpost** (who knew?) provides a good overview of D, E, I and A that will help clarify terms and provide some common language.



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## Volunteers Needed to Help Plan the 2023 College Autism Summit

Have you attended a Summit? Would you be interested in helping plan the next one? We're looking for potential program reviewers, marketing experts, logistics planners, and more. Good time guaranteed. If you'd like to help, please take a moment to fill out this short **Google form**. We'll be in touch after the first of the year.

## Program Directors' Call on Social Skills Curriculum Models, Part 2

Our program directors had an interesting and informative discussion in November about several social skills curriculum models (BASICS, PEERS and the Neurodiversity Navigators model). On **January 17 at 4 pm ET**, we'll have another call, this time to learn



about two new tools for your toolbox: the HEARTS model, developed at Boston University which focuses on dating and relationships, and iSocial, a 16-week, cohort-based “social competence intervention” developed at the University of Missouri, delivered on Zoom with classroom support. We'll have the developers of these programs on the call. If you're not on our PD listserv, please contact [Lee](#) to be added so you will receive the invitation and Zoom link.

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## Time to Confirm/Update your Autism Program Database Entry!

If your Autism Support Program (ASP) is listed on our CAN [database](#), please take a few moments to review the information we have for you. Double-check your links! If you want to make any changes, please email [Katie McDermott](#), our database coordinator.

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## New Study on Eye Contact Shows Brain Activity Differs in Autistic Adults

A recent article in the journal PLOS ONE that reported on a study done at Yale on eye contact and autism has received quite a bit of coverage in the popular media. [This article](#), published by Neuroscience News, is a good summary of the study, which looked at brain activity in autistic and non-autistic adults. One particularly interesting finding that hasn't gotten much attention, but seems particularly relevant these days, is that the brain responds differently to live versus video faces.

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## Podcast to Recommend for Those New to Neurodiversity

**This excellent podcast** is from the series “Life Examined,” produced by the public radio station KCRW in Los Angeles. The host interviewed Francesca Happe, Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience at King’s College (London) who discusses autism as “a different way of being” as opposed to a disorder or disease. While most readers of this newsletter are familiar with this perspective, this podcast is an excellent recommendation to make to colleagues, family and even newly-diagnosed autistic students you work with. The holiday break is a perfect time to suggest they put on some headphones and take a 30-minute walk while learning. Dr. Happe makes particularly cogent points about gender and autism

### ...And a Podcast for the Rest of You



For those of you who like podcasts, here’s another worth listening to. **The Loudest Girl in the World** is an autobiographical series hosted by Lauren Ober, an accomplished podcaster (if you listen to This American Life, you’re probably familiar with her work). Here’s a description from the website: “This show tells the story of Lauren’s journey to understand what the hell it means to be on the autism spectrum and how to live life as a newly diagnosed autistic person. It’s about finding yourself broken in a place you never expected to be and emerging from that place a mostly glued back together person.” Happy listening!

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*This newsletter is published monthly by the **College Autism Network**, an independent 501(c)3 organization supporting the success of autistic college students and the professionals who work with them. Want to share an article? Feature an upcoming event? Post a job opportunity in autism support services? Our monthly newsletter reaches over 1500 self-advocates and professionals. Send it **to Lee** and we’ll share it.*

*Was someone nice enough to forward this newsletter to you? We’re happy to add you to our mailing list to receive it directly. **Send us a note.***

*If you appreciate our work, please consider **joining CAN** to receive additional information and discounts on some of our resources and to support our work.*

*Individual and organizational memberships are available.*

