



# ASCEND Project

Autism Support through Collaboration, Education and Nurturing Development

## About ASCEND

Thanks to the generous support of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services and the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR), we are thrilled to launch the ASCEND program. This initiative focuses on improving autism knowledge among Oklahoma's child care consultants through expert-led sessions and interactive educational experiences. Through a series of informative sessions, participants will engage in specialized curriculum that emphasizes autism awareness, individualized planning, and fostering inclusive settings.

## Schedule of Events

### Prerequisite: Navigating Autism (online module)

This training is a pre-recorded course that introduces participants to the characteristics of autism, general supports, and resources. This training is approximately 2 hours long and needs to be completed before January 12, 2024. To register, visit: [Navigating Autism](#)

### Day 1: Orientation, January 12, 2024 Quartz Mountain State Lodge 8:30am-2:30pm

This full-day training dives into specific supports for autistic children in the classroom setting. Participants will be introduced to the ASCEND program and expectations.

### Day 2: Consultant Training, April 8, 2024 OKC (location TBA) 9:30am-3:30pm

This training will primarily focus on simulation and resources specific to autism spectrum disorder. Consultants will be led through common scenarios, strategies, and resources.

### Monthly Virtual Meetings: First Tuesday of Each Month, (Start date TBA)

Participants will join virtual meetings to learn about autism-specific strategies and discuss specific cases presented by child care consultants.

### Coaching Sessions: Scheduled by Childcare Consultants

Participants will collaborate with mentors from the Autism Foundation of OK in conducting coaching sessions for child care providers requiring additional assistance in supporting children with autism at their facilities. These sessions will be conducted both in person and virtually, with the quantity determined by the number of referrals in each specific region.

## Kelli Marshall, MS, CCC-SLP

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Kelli is a highly experienced speech-language pathologist based in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. With nearly two decades of experience, her expertise lies in developing functional communication systems, augmentative-alternative communication devices, social skill development, and home programming.

## Tara Warwick, OTD, MS, OTR/L

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Tara is a distinguished occupational therapist based in Oklahoma City, OK. She brings over twenty years of expertise in pediatric therapy. Her areas of speciality include behavioral management, sensory processing, self-care training, assistive technology, and home programming.