

FIVE News



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December 2016

The Five Project for International Autism and Disability Support, Inc.

美国五项目：国际孤独症和其他障碍支持机构

FIVE Turns 10 this month

Dear friends,

As FIVE turns 10 (on December 26, 2016) we want to highlight and celebrate essential components of the past 10 years, including volunteerism, collaboration, and consistent commitment to cultural competence and relevance in our work. The past two years have been extremely busy, with ongoing collaboration with the Hussman Institute for Autism and TobiiDynavox, as well as important support from experts from multiple autism organizations volunteering their time and expertise. Volunteers from China, and of Chinese heritage, have also been essential advisors in FIVE's work. We are grateful to these volunteers and their employers for providing their time and expertise.

Highlights that will be shared in this newsletter include:

**2nd annual training for Huiling Community Services program for adults (Guangzhou and Shanghai), in collaboration with the Hussman Institute for Autism.



Above: FIVE Training team (Linnea McAfoose, Helen McCabe, Jen Wilkens, and Esther Lam,) with teachers at Donggang Tongying Autism Center in Donggang, Liaoning province.

**Onsite teacher training at autism NGOs for children in Dalian, Donggang, Zhengzhou, Anshan, Shenyang, and Xi'an.

**Increasing focus on augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) as well as independent skills

**Technology utilization, including FIVE's WeChat group, and plan for new series of brief educational videos.

We hope that you will consider supporting FIVE, so more teachers and families can receive training and professional resources that they are urgently requesting. Donate online through paypal (link available at <http://thefiveproject.org/how-to-help.html>) or send a donation to 33 Fitch Terrace, Randolph, MA 02368 USA.

FIVE is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible.

"I am very upset now, and I really really need to know how I could help my son. I just saw the video you put on the internet. I don't know how to express my thanks to you.." —father of a young child with autism

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The teachers are looking forward to you coming here. The Five Project training is so important for our teachers. We are excited to see you all! —autism program director

Adults with Autism: A Focus on Independent and Life Skills

Last year we made a commitment to returning to organizations to provide more in-depth and follow-up training as our new focus. This included returning to Huiling Community Services for People with Disabilities, which has sites in over 15 cities across China. In Fall 2015, FIVE trainers provided initial training in Guangzhou and Xi'an and in November 2016, FIVE returned to Guangzhou and also worked with staff and students at Shanghai Huiling. This training was provided collaboratively by Patricia Wright, Linnea McAfoose, Esther Lam, and Helen McCabe. While the picture at right was taken after a day of lecture, as the sign held by the participants indicates, this was only a small part of our hands-on "practical guidance" training in classrooms for teenagers and younger adults. The teachers from the Guangzhou and Shanghai programs graciously opened their classrooms not just to FIVE but also to their colleagues from other cities, who spent several days with the trainers as they observed and provided feedback and suggestions for improvement. The focus of suggestions here, and in many of the training sites this year, focused on a few areas: promoting more independence in students, providing communication supports, and using more visuals to support independence and positive behavior. As these teachers are working with older children and young adults, they valued the ideas about communication and independence as urgent needs and areas to focus on. FIVE's work at Huiling is a collaboration between FIVE, Huiling, and the Hussman Institute for Autism, and is also supported by the volunteer training team. We thank them and their employers for sharing their time and expertise, including TobiiDynavox, which has allowed us to focus increasingly on the important skill of communication for individuals with autism of all ages.



Top: FIVE Training team with Huiling participants from around China.



Above: FIVE team discusses the vocational curriculum plan with the Case Manager at Guangzhou Huiling Teen Center.

Onsite Teacher Training

Volunteers with expertise in autism also provided training this year at NGOs serving children with autism and their parents in Dalian and Donggang (March), Zhengzhou (April), Anshan, Shenyang and Xi'an (June). Preparation for these trainings was facilitated by the invaluable help of Jessie Tian Jiang, who volunteered to translate many of the training materials. While FIVE has a goal to provide as much support as broadly as possible, we have also made a commitment to focus more on following up with those who we have trained. It is thus especially exciting that of these 6 cities, 4 of them were return visits, either for the 2nd or 3rd time. In March, Jen Wilkens, Linnea McAfoose, Esther Lam and Helen McCabe worked with teachers in Dalian and Donggang, focusing on reinforcement, visual supports, and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). In April, Melissa Mello and Helen McCabe provided training to 100 teachers and college students from in and around

Zhengzhou, as well as hands on training at Ruiman Autism Center. FIVE is grateful to these volunteers, as well as to volunteers Laurie Sperry and Diana Baker, who, with Helen McCabe, provided teacher and parent training in Anshan, and teacher training in Shenyang (along with Esther Lam in Shenyang). In addition to collaboration with Hussman Institute for Autism, TobiiDynavox partnered on several of these trainings, represented by Linnea McAfoose who also volunteered with Helen McCabe to provide training to 80 teachers from Sha'anxi province as well as hands on training at Zhihuidao in Xi'an, where FIVE had first provided training in December 2015. Observing ongoing progress in these partner organizations is motivating as we evaluate our work and plan next steps.



Top: Helen McCabe & Melissa Mello and participants of lecture training in Zhengzhou

Above: Helen McCabe, Laurie Sperry, & Diana Baker provided training in Anshan (pictured) and Shenyang. (also Esther Lam, not pictured).

Technology and Support

The Five Project was established in December 2006 and, in January 2008, two support groups were started. Combined together in 2010, the support group is a monthly meeting attended regularly by 20-25 families of young adults with autism, cerebral palsy, and various developmental and mental health challenges. As the families in this group have become dear friends to each other, in 2015, volunteer Shao Xiaojie set up an online WeChat group (similar to a Facebook or texting group), and now these friends communicate multiple times per day, sharing successes, challenges,

or inspiring thoughts and pictures. Though the families were close before, technology has brought them even closer. Knowing the power of technology and brief and immediate support, FIVE's next videos will be a series of short, 5-7 minute clips providing specific educational and behavioral methods and training.

Right: FIVE Volunteer Shao Xiaojie (seated, 2nd from right) organized the WeChat group which allowed us to easily connect for this informal gathering in November.



Promoting Communication for All

In addition to collaboration with the Hussman Institute for Autism, recent collaboration with Tobii-Dynavox has helped FIVE to bring greater awareness and knowledge regarding AAC (augmentative and alternative communication) to China. Often during training we learn from parents that

the children have no way to communicate. Trainers have stressed the importance of AAC in the form of pictures, communication boards, or devices. Now that TobiiDynavox has translated some of its products for China, we are better able to provide demonstration and examples of these methods. In this way, when

we share that behavior challenges will decrease if a person can communicate, we are also providing solutions that are available and culturally relevant!

Left: Linnea McAfoose & Helen McCabe teach about AAC.



Thanks to those who donated in the past year!

FIVE gratefully acknowledges donations received since our last newsletter.

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Please consider partnering with us, and with our collaborators in China, to strive for better services for children and adults with autism and other disabilities.

Please make a tax-deductible donation. You may donate online through paypal (link available at <http://thefiveproject.org/how-to-help.html>) or send a donation to

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