URLEND trainees visit ASSERT

Sue Reeves

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Five Utah Regional Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (URLEND) trainees spent a week at Utah State University’s Center for Persons with Disabilities recently to learn more about using Applied Behavior Analysis with children on the autism spectrum.

According to Lyndsay Nix, program coordinator for Autism Support Services: Education, Research and Training (ASSERT), the trainees from Utah and Idaho spent the first day observing ASSERT staff and students, then jumped in and began running their own discrete trials.

“They were super enthusiastic and excited,” Nix said. “It was great!”

The trainees included a post-doctoral resident in pediatric psychology, a speech language pathologist, a Ph.D. student in education with an emphasis in special education and neurodevelopmental disabilities, a master’s student in early childhood education and a student in special education.

According to a survey completed after the week was over, all of the trainees were satisfied with the knowledge and skills gained from the training, and all of the trainees said that as a result of the training, their knowledge of behavior analysis and working with young children with autism has increased.

“I was thrilled to have a hands-on approach in the morning and then discussion in the afternoon,” said one participant. “By the end of the week, I felt as though I could be hired! I really enjoyed making friends with the kiddos, and the staff was amazing!”

Another participant said, “Overall, the program is well run. I can tell that the staff is well trained and truly invested in the students. Thank you so much for allowing into your world for a week.”

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