

Evaluation of MCHB Combating Autism Act Initiative Activities

Client: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration

Overview

In 2011, Congress passed the Combating Autism Reauthorization Act (CARA) and appropriated funds to the Health Resources and Services Administration's Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) to support grants focusing on autism and related developmental disability education, early detection, and intervention. MCHB awarded 127 grants for training, research, and state demonstration programs aimed at improving systems of services for children with autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities. Under this contract and building on previous efforts, Insight conducted a comprehensive evaluation of MCHB's CARA-supported initiatives.

The evaluation had four primary goals:

1. Determine whether grantee activities were accomplishing MCHB's intended goals and objectives for the Combating Autism Act Initiative.
2. Identify problems or barriers that surfaced during implementation of the grants and how these were resolved.

1. Identify gaps between the grantees' activities and the goals of the initiative.
2. Measure the program's outputs, outcomes, and impacts.

This 3-year project followed Insight's initial Evaluation of *MCHB Combating Autism Act Initiative*. Building on that foundation, Insight used a mixed-methods approach with document reviews, in-depth semistructured interviews, and web-based questionnaires. Results of the evaluation were presented in a Report to Congress by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, as mandated under CARA.

Products

Report to Congress on Activities Related to Autism Spectrum Disorder and Other Developmental Disabilities Under the Combating Autism Act of 2006 and the Combating Reauthorization Act of 2011 (FY 2010–FY 2012)

Five additional reports: Summary report for each of the four funded grant programs and comprehensive evaluation report on CAAI (December 2015)

