

Evaluation of MCHB Combating Autism Act Initiative Activities

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

Project Overview

In 2011, Congress passed the Combating Autism Reauthorization Act (CARA) and appropriated funds to the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) 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 disorders (ASD) and other developmental disabilities (DD). Under this contract and building on previous efforts, Insight is conducting a comprehensive evaluation of MCHB's CARA-supported initiatives.



Insight has 4 primary goals for this evaluation:

1. Determine whether grantee activities are accomplishing MCHB's intended goals and objectives for the Combating Autism Act Initiative (CAAI).
2. Identify problems or barriers that surfaced during implementation of the grants and how these were resolved.
3. Identify gaps between the grantees' activities and the goals of the initiative.
4. Measure the program's outputs, outcomes, and resultant impacts.



This 3-year project follows up on Insight's initial evaluation, entitled "Evaluation of MCHB Combating Autism Act Initiative." Building on that foundation, Insight is employing a mixed-methods approach that includes document reviews, in-depth, semi-structured interviews, and Web-based questionnaires. Results of this evaluation will be presented in a Report to Congress by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), as mandated under CARA.

Core Activities

Program Evaluation; Literature Reviews and Environmental Scans; Survey Design and Implementation; Qualitative Research; Secondary Data Analysis; Performance Measurement and Monitoring; Policy Analysis and Assessment; Report Development and Presentation

Products

- The interagency "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 (FY2010–FY2012)" is available at <http://iacc.hhs.gov/reports/reports-to-congress/FY2010-2012/CAA-CARA-ReportCongressFY2010-2012.pdf>.
- This project also includes 5 additional reports. A summary report for each of the 4 funded grant programs and a comprehensive evaluation report on the CAAI are scheduled for release in December 2015.