

Evaluation of the Maternal and Child Health Bureau Autism CARES Act Initiative

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

Project Overview



This 3-year, mixed-methods study evaluates efforts by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to provide research, screening, and education around autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities (ASD/DD). In 2014, Congress passed the Autism CARES (Collaboration, Accountability, Research, Education, and Support) Act, continuing the federal government's investment in research, surveillance, and education activities related to ASD. The Act dedicated \$1.3 billion in federal funding over 5 years to support

these efforts, which are implemented through several federal agencies, including MCHB, which supports nearly 100 grantees.

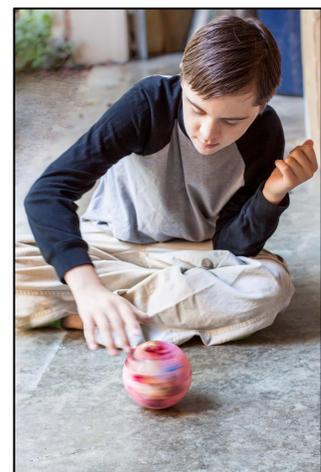
The goal of the evaluation is to measure the grantee's impact on MCHB's Autism CARES objectives, which follow:

1. Train professionals to use valid and reliable screening and diagnostic tools and to provide evidence-based interventions for ASD/DD.
2. Increase awareness of ASD/DD.
3. Support research on evidence-based interventions for ASD.
4. Promote the development of evidence-based guidelines for interventions.
5. Improve the infrastructure and system of services for individuals with ASD/DD.
6. Reduce barriers to screening and diagnosis.

This 3-year contract builds upon two previous evaluation iterations. Insight's approach includes document reviews; in-depth, semistructured interviews; web-based data collection techniques; and reviews of secondary data. Evaluation results will be compiled into a report to Congress by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, as mandated under the Act.

Core Activities

Program Evaluation; Literature Reviews; Survey Design and Implementation; Secondary Data Analysis; Performance Measurement and Monitoring; Policy Analysis and Assessment; In-Depth Interviews; Report Development and Presentation



Products

- The comprehensive, interagency report to Congress is scheduled to be released in fall 2018.
- A summary report of activities relating to young adults and transitioning youth is scheduled to be released in fall 2016.
- Four factsheets describing the activities of each MCHB program are scheduled to be released in fall 2018.