

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Autism Community Network

OUR MISSION IS TO MAXIMIZE THE POTENTIAL OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM BY PROVIDING EARLY DIAGNOSIS FOR THOSE WITH LIMITED ACCESS AND EDUCATING AND EMPOWERING THE COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT THEM

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Autism Community Network (ACN) 2017 Program Evaluation Report

Overall Program Goal: ACN will provide interdisciplinary diagnosis and treatment for young children with autism; training and education for autism service providers; and comprehensive information and networking for families and professionals.

Program Objective #1: Clinic – Provide high quality and timely autism diagnoses to underserved children and families.

Activity #1.1: Provide interdisciplinary autism diagnostic services.

Expected Outcome #1.1: Provide at minimum a total of 960 clinical autism diagnostic services, specifically: 720 Level 2 Focused Assessments (L2FAs); 240 Diagnostic Evaluations.

In 2017, ACN scheduled a total of 1011 autism diagnostic services; specifically 792 L2FAs and 219 Diagnostic Evaluations. Attendance rates across these services varied, resulting in a total of 791 autism diagnostic services provided during 2017. Actual numbers of services provided and their attendance rates are: 593 L2FAs (75%), 198 Diagnostic Evaluations (90%).

The total number of children seen for diagnostic services in 2017 was 593; this number is unduplicated. Of these children, 75% were boys and 25% were girls. A majority of the families of these children identified themselves as Hispanic (68%), White (24%), African American (6%), and Asian American (2%). They lived in 99 different zip codes across 23 counties in the San Antonio and South Texas area. Of the families seen in 2017, 67.1% were Medicaid-qualified, 32.5% had commercial/private insurance, and the remaining 0.4% were uninsured and used the sliding fee scale. The average age of the children seen for L2FA was 3 years 1 month and the average age of the children seen for autism diagnostic services was 3 years 10 months which is significantly younger than the average age (4 years, 8 months) of children seen in 2010, demonstrating continuing improved access to early diagnosis and intervention for young children with autism from underserved populations.

Since ACN opened its clinic in March 2009, it has provided a total of 6,983 autism diagnostic services. Referrals for diagnostic services have more than doubled from 440 in ACN's opening year of 2010 to 951 in 2017.

Of the 593 autism risk assessments (L2FAs) completed in 2017, 315 children (53%) were recommended to return for a full autism diagnostic evaluation. In 2017, 198 initial autism diagnostic evaluations were completed. The initial diagnostic evaluations resulted in a positive diagnosis of autism for 125 children (63%) and a negative diagnosis of autism for 73 children (37%).

Throughout 2017, families referred for a Level 2 Focused Assessment were seen on average approximately 2 weeks after the referral was received. If a Diagnostic Evaluation was recommended following the Level 2 Focused Assessment, families were typically scheduled within 6 to 13 months of returning the Patient Intake Packet, approximately 11 months on average. The length of time needed to complete the entire diagnostic process, from Level 2 Focused Assessments to Diagnostic Evaluation, ranged from 7 to 15 months and averaged approximately 13 months across the entire year.

Activity #1.2: Parents/families will be surveyed for satisfaction with diagnostic services provided by ACN.
Expected Outcome #1.2: Autism diagnostic services will be rated a 4.5 or higher on a 5-point scale.

A Family Satisfaction Survey continued to be used in 2017 to obtain both quantitative and qualitative feedback on the autism diagnostic services provided by the ACN clinic team. Based on the 142 surveys completed for both L2FAs and Diagnostic Evaluations, families indicated a high level of satisfaction with the services that they received at ACN. A total of 79 surveys (13% response rate) were received for the L2FA service with an overall satisfaction rate of 4.96 on a 5-point scale, with 5 being the highest level of satisfaction. For the Diagnostic Evaluation service, 63 surveys (32% response rate) were returned, indicating an overall satisfaction rate of 4.93 on a 5-point scale, with 5 being the highest level of satisfaction.

Several family members provided qualitative data on their returned surveys in the form of comments. The following quotes are indicative of some of the comments received:

- Everyone was very kind and gentle with my son. Very open with me which I appreciate.
- Everyone is friendly, helpful, and cheerful attitude.
- Treated my child very well and kept him entertained during explanations.
- Was shocked to see how well they were able to educate me. ACN was prepared "fully" with paperwork and referrals.
- Very thorough. Staff very professional and patient. Explained everything so I understood.
- I thank you all!
- Everyone was super helpful!
- Very knowledgeable staff, courteous and very pleasant to deal with. Thank you!
- I feel as though the assessment gave us a sense of direction. Thank you all so much!
- Awesome service, very thorough.
- This was a great experience and a huge stepping stone for my son's development. Thanks.
- Thank you for taking the time with us and making sure we understood our options.

Activity #1.3: Families who receive an autism diagnosis through ACN will register to Autism Lifeline Links.

Expected Outcome #1.3: Enrollment into ALL will be accessed in 100% of families served through the diagnostic program. 100% of families will be asked to enroll ALL. Of those families, 80% will complete the registration form and signature to enroll in ALL on the day of the diagnostic evaluation.

In 2017, 125 families were offered the opportunity to be seamlessly referred to ALL; 98 of them (78%) accepted this opportunity.

Program Objective #2: Training – Provide high quality, best practices training and education for autism service providers and parents/primary caregivers of children with autism.

Activity #2.1: Provide high quality, best practices training and education for autism service providers and parents/primary caregivers of children with autism.

Expected Outcome #2.1: Provide training and educational services to 750 professionals and 750 parents/caregivers.

During 2017, ACN provided training and educational services to a total of 1564 professionals and 794 parents/primary caregivers. Specifically, ACN provided a total of 50 trainings, totaling 146.5 hours, to 1564 (professional and paraprofessional) autism service providers. ACN was invited to present 5 times, totaling 6.5 hours. A total of 54 Family Empowerment Classes, totaling 156 hours, were provided to 229 parents/caregivers. Additionally, 565 parents/caregivers participated in the hands-on parent training program at ACN. In addition, ACN collaborated with Aspergers101 to offer a 4-part library series that took part at the main public library, was livestreamed to 9 library locations in town, and livestreamed on the web via Apsergers101, KABB, and WOA. The series has been viewed over 100,000 times and continues to be accessible to the community.

Activity #2.2: Provide high quality, best practices education and training for autism service providers.

Expected Outcome #2.2(a): Professionals who participate in professional training will rate presenters at 4.5 or higher on a 5-point scale.

All participants in ACN professional trainings are asked to complete a Professional Training Evaluation Form, consisting of five questions regarding the quality of the training provided and their level of satisfaction with the training that they received. Participants respond to each question using a 5-point scale in which 5 indicates the highest level of satisfaction with the training. In 2017, the average rating for professional trainings was 4.64 out of 5.

Expected Outcome #2.2(b): Professionals who participate in professional training will obtain a score of 70% or higher on a post-test about the training topic.

All participants in ACN professional trainings are asked to complete pre and post training quizzes on the training topic, specifically the content or information that was delivered in the training, to determine whether participants demonstrate an increase in their knowledge through their participation in the training. In 2017, 97% of the participants in professional trainings obtained a score of 70% or higher on post training quizzes.

Expected Outcome #2.2(c): Participants in professional trainings will self-report an increase in knowledge related to the training topic after the training of at least 1 point on a 5 point scale.

All participants in ACN professional trainings are asked to rate their level of knowledge related to the training topic on a 5-point scale before and after participating in the training. In 2017, 92% of the participants self-reported an increase in knowledge of at least 1 point.

Activity #2.3: Provide high quality, best practices training and education for families of children with autism. Expected Outcome #2.3(a): Family members who participate in Family Empowerment Classes will rate presenters at 4.5 or higher on a 5 point scale.

Family members in ACN Family Empowerment Classes are asked to complete a Family Empowerment Class Evaluation Form, consisting of five questions regarding the quality of the class topic provided and their level of satisfaction with the class that they received. Family members respond to each question using a 5-point scale in which 5 indicates the highest level of satisfaction with the training. In 2017, the average rating for parent/caregiver trainings was 4.8 out of 5.

Expected Outcome #2.3(b): Family members who participate in Family Empowerment Classes will obtain a score of 60% or higher on a post-test about the training topic.

Family members in ACN Family Empowerment Classes are asked to complete pre and post training quizzes on the class topic, specifically the content or information that was delivered in the class, to determine whether participants demonstrate an increase in their knowledge through their participation in the class. In 2017, 92% of family members in Family Empowerment Classes obtained a score of 60% or higher on post class quizzes.

Expected Outcome #2.3(c): Family members will self-report an increase in knowledge related to the class topic after the class of at least 1 point on a 5 point scale.

Family members in ACN Family Empowerment Classes are asked to rate their level of knowledge related to the class topic on a 5-point scale before and after participating in the workshop. In 2017, 96% of the participants self-reported an increase in knowledge of at least 1 point.

Expected Outcome #2.3(d): Family members in the Hands-On Family Empowerment Training Courses will demonstrate improvement in their interactions with their children by meeting performance outcomes specific to each hands-on training course.

In 2017, ACN's Hands-On Family Empowerment Training Courses continued to include the ABA Hands-On course, the DIR/Floortime course, the Sensory Processing course, and More Than Words course. A total of 216 families (family member and child) participated in ACN's Hands-On Family Empowerment Training Courses in 2016. Outcomes specific to each course were tracked with the following results:

Participants in the ABA Hands-On Family Empowerment Training Course will increase their appropriate responding to their child by an average of 15 points.

- 81% of the participants increased their appropriate responding to their child by an average of 15 points or more. The average percentage increase of caregivers' appropriate responding to their child was 48.18 points.

Participants in the DIR/Floortime Hands-On Family Empowerment Training Course will increase their functional social-emotional capacities demonstrated by the parent and child dyads by an average of 10%.

- 77% of the participants increased their functional social-emotional capacities demonstrated by the parent and child dyads by an average of 10% or more. The average increase of functional social-emotional capacities demonstrated by the parent and child dyads was 15%.

Participants of the Sensory Processing Hands-On Family Empowerment Training Course will meet performance expectations for two of the three goals related to sensory processing.

- 100% of the participants met or exceeded performance expectations for two of the three goals related to sensory processing.