

# California Health Improvement Project (CHIP) Autism Assessment Center of Excellence (AACE Center)

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## Problem Statement and Underlying Causes

Significant disparity in access to Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) assessment exists in the Inland Empire (IE) for Latino children in particular as the average age of diagnosis of ASD is age 7 compared to the national average for all children is age 4. The delay in diagnosis results in delayed treatment, diminished life-long functioning and higher cost of care. There are multiple factors contributing to poor access to assessment and delayed treatment:

- First there is a lack of national clinical criteria for the diagnosis and treatment of ASD.
- Second, the lack of assessment resources in the Inland Empire leads to treatment authorizations that are based on cost rather than clinical criteria. This is exacerbated by recent legislation that mandates insurance companies to pay for behavioral treatments, which is driving the demand for costly treatments that are not well understood.

## Project Description

- The Inland Empire ASD Collaborative will develop a new, child-centric Assessment Center of Excellence designed to provide a comprehensive assessment for all children in need.
- The inter-agency collaboration will infuse resources from multiple disciplines into an integrated trans-disciplinary model of assessment that will improve referrals and align providers and educators to meet the individual child's need.
- The "one stop" assessment center will reduce the time from referral to diagnosis and early intervention by eliminating the inefficiency of passing children between agencies and providers over the period of months and years to piece together uncoordinated treatment and education plans.

**Goal:** Maximize the quality of life for ASD children in the Inland Empire and their families by providing every child with access to a collaborative, organized, integrated and Trans-Disciplinary Assessment/Treatment resource for Autism.

### Output-oriented Objectives:

- Establish and Convene the IE ASD Collaborative monthly; consisting of the key organizers and payers responsible for ASD healthcare and education in the IE.
- Develop the Vision, Mission and Business Plan to guide the creation of a new ASD Assessment Center of Excellence to serve all children in the IE.
- Establish a Non-Profit entity and fiscal agent to enable the AACE Center to raise the funds needed from First 5 and other funding sources to open by 12/2014.
- Identify and procure the AACE Center site, the trans-disciplinary clinical team, staff and equipment needed to begin serving children by first Quarter 2015.
- Develop the evidenced-based Assessment Model to be implemented in the AACE.

### Outcome-oriented Objectives:

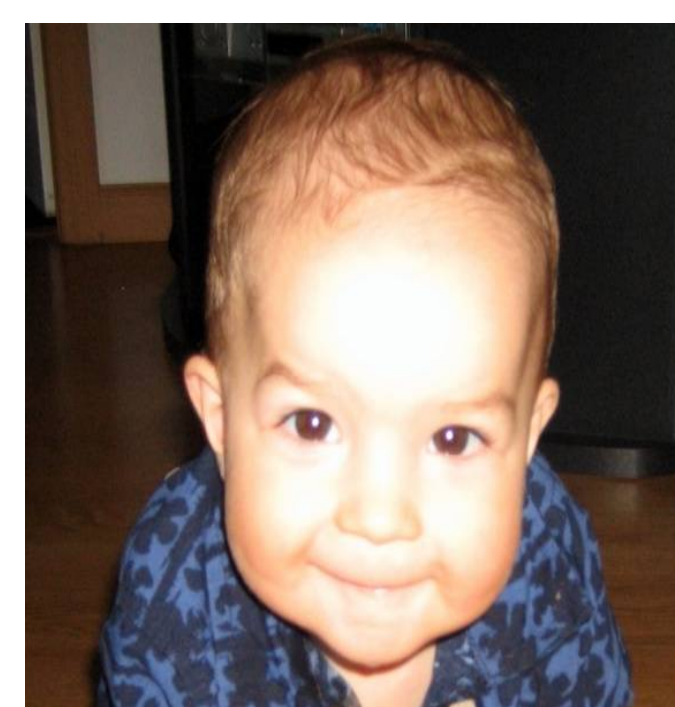
- Reduce the Average Age of ASD Diagnosis in the IE by one year by 2016.
- Improve the quality of life for ASD Children and families evidenced by satisfaction survey results comparing pre and post AACE Center implementation.
- Recognition as a trusted and credible ASD assessment provider by 12/2015.
- Financially self-sustaining 2 years after start-up.
- Create a model that can be replicated in other areas.

## Outputs & Outcomes

### Outputs Achieved

	3rd Qtr '12	4th Qtr '12	1st Qtr '13	2nd Qtr '13	3rd Qtr '13	4th Qtr '13	1st Qtr '14	2nd Qtr '14	3rd Qtr '14
<b>Collaborative Meetings</b>	*Monthly Meetings Occuring the first Friday of every month. (26 Meetings thus far)								
<b>Collaborative Partner Agencies Engaged</b>	*High Desert Selpa, IEHP, IRC, LLU. *Riv. Dept. of Education, Riv. County Dept. of MH, San Bernardino Dept. of BH *First 5 San Bernardino *First 5 Riverside, Childrens Network San Bernardino *Kaiser Permanente (Kaiser Terminates Collaboration (June 2013)) *The Autism Society *San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools Joins								
<b>Business Plan Development</b>	*Mission & Vision Statement Draft - Finalized (May 2013) *Logic Model Draft (all agency based on Org. alignment) *A combined Logic Model is presented for the Exec. Summ. *Spreadsheet of Fin. Plan (projected Clinic Costs) *501c3 Non Profit Filing & Bylaws completed								
<b>AACE Clinic Non Profit &amp; Fiscal Agent</b>	*IEHP Commits funding for Non Profit Filing *LLU approved as Fiscal Agent *LLU commits to be Fiscal Agent and provide interim non-profit entity								
<b>Funding</b>	*Identify potential funding sources *Meet w/L. Vismara/Senator Steinberg's office. *Meet with Dir. of The Autism Society of America *Funding presentation to First 5 SB *IEHP Contributes 100K *Kaiser Foundation Grant Submission *First 5 SB commits 300K (Sept) *First 5 Riv commits 300K (Sept) *Oak Foundation Grant Submission *Lucile Packard Foundation Grant Submission								
<b>Clinic Site</b>	*Potential Center Site identified *Lease negotiations commence								
<b>Clinical Assessment Model &amp; Scope</b>	*Gathering Best Practice models *Narrow scope 0-5 yrs of age *Visit to Center of Excellence "Mind Institute" *Constructed Clinical Team Job Descriptions *Pediatric Neurologist (Clinical Lead) Identified								

### Outcomes Achieved & Anticipated



- IE ASD Collaborative established & produced the AACE Vision, Mission and Business Plan.
- AACE 501c3 corporation established with Loma Linda University as Fiscal Agent.
- Start-up funding committed by IEHP and First 5 Riverside and San Bernardino.
- AACE Center site identified and physical plant scheduled for opening 12/2014.
- Evidenced Based Assessment Model developed with Trans-disciplinary team and AACE Center staff to be contracted and employed by 12/2014.
- AACE scheduled to open & begin providing assessments first quarter 2015.

## Lessons Learned

Start the selection process for the Non-Profit and Fiscal Agent early.

Multi-agency collaboration takes time, persistence and lots of communication.

Resistance to change and inertia can be overcome by a clear and passionate vision centered on improving quality of life for children.

Respecting established service providers and agencies with care not supplant them by focusing on the lack of Assessment resources rather than changing existing treatment services enabled broad-based community support.



## About My Organization

### IE. ASD Collaborative Agency Representation

Inland Empire Health Plan - sponsored the establishment of the IE ASD Collaborative and continues to provide the driving force to open the AACE Center

Autism Society Inland Empire  
Children's Network  
First Five of Riverside County  
First Five of San Bernardino County  
Inland Regional Center  
Department of Pediatrics, Loma Linda University School of Medicine  
Riverside County Office of Education  
Riverside County Mental Health Department  
San Bernardino County Department of Behavioral Health  
San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools  
Desert/Mountain Special Education Local Plan Area

## Contact Me

For more information, contact me:  
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**CHCF HEALTH CARE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM**

To learn more about CHCF go to:  
<http://futurehealth.ucsf.edu/>