



# Combating Autism Advisory Council

January 2009



## Purpose:

The Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN) Program in conjunction with the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) Program is forming the **Combating Autism Advisory Council** to guide the work of the two federal grants received by each program.

As an advisory body, the Council will include previous Autism Task Force (ATF) members, autism experts, leaders, and individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and their families. This begins the process of carrying out part of the state's strategic plan to explore and improve needed changes and connect autism-related information, services and research to the public.

The advisory council will:

- Provide oversight to the grant projects
- Maintain the momentum of the work of the Task Force
- Ensure sustainability for the project work
- Improve methods of information sharing
- Build partnerships
- Raise and spread autism awareness statewide

## Background:

CSHCN and LEND were awarded three year competitive implementation grants for state work. These grants were awarded through the federal Department of Health and Human Services and under the Combating Autism Act, 2006.

CSHCN's "Autism Awareness: Partnership for Change" and LEND's "Combating Autism Expansion" grant will be funded from September 1, 2008 through August 31, 2011.

## Proposed Strategies:

CSHCN and LEND grant activities build upon ATF recommendations, the Combating Autism Act of 2006, and all six of the CSHCN national performance measures.

The grants focus on:

- Engaging and empowering new stakeholders and partnerships, building on the ATF
- Training to providers and families
- Impact existing benefit systems for children with special health care needs, particularly those with ASD and other developmental disabilities.

## CSHCN State Autism Implementation Grant Goals

The overarching intent is to improve access to quality, comprehensive, coordinated, community-based systems of health care and related services for children and youth with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and other developmental disabilities.

The CSHCN Program will:

- Engage and empower key stakeholders to participate at all levels of project, including needs assessment, program development and sustainability planning, and implementation.
- Coordinate consistent, evidence-based training across sectors of health care and service providers, family support organizations, legislators, and parents of children and youth with ASD and developmental disabilities statewide.
- Research and recommend changes to existing state legislation to improve service systems for children and youth with ASD and developmental disabilities.

## LEND Autism Expansion Grant Goals

The overarching goal of the grant is to expand the number of professionals in all disciplines involved in the diagnosis and treatment of ASDs and related disorders.

The UW LEND Program will:

- Provide high-quality interdisciplinary education to health professionals and family trainees, emphasizing integrated services.
- Expand the training materials and content to emphasize ASD and related disorders.
- Increase the number of trainees in the LEND program.
- Increase the awareness and knowledge of community members and professionals statewide about screening, service eligibility, diagnosis, treatment, community resources and family support for individuals with ASD and their families.
- Expand the skills of health professionals to create or participate in community-based partnerships for children with ASD and related disorders.
- Collaborate with MCHB grantees and Autism Speaks on screening tool assessment and other efforts to strengthen the evidence base.

## Proposed Council Members:

- Former Autism Task Force Members
- Autism Organizations
- Medical Home Leadership Network
- Family Support Organizations
- Providers – Medical, Psychologists, Care Coordinators, School Nurses
- Health-Related Organizations – American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Developmental Disability Council (DDC), Seattle Children's, Mary Bridge-Multi-Care, Family to Family Health Information Center, health plans, Arc, regional autism centers
- State Agencies – Department of Health (DOH), Department Social & Health Services (DSHS)- Developmental Disability Division, Health and Recovery Services Administration (HRSA), Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), Autism Outreach Project
- Legislators

## Proposed Plan:

The Combating Autism Advisory Council (CAAC) will be asked specifically to:

- 1) Inform and update the Needs Assessment data search
- 2) Participate in evaluation efforts
- 3) Identify and recruit members for the National Learning Collaborative (NLC) and instate NLC workgroup
- 4) Identify and recruit youth for the CAAC and panel discussions at two state training Summits
- 5) Work to change systems through modification or amendment
- 6) Distribute materials and information for autism awareness related to the Autism Guidebook, the autism awareness initiatives currently legislated around the IDEA Part C "Child Find posters" and "Parent Informational" posters on how to find ASD resources, and the national Center for Disease Control (CDC) campaign materials "Learn the Signs. Act Early."

The Council will form subcommittees which will take up various tracks of work as they relate to the grants.

## Membership Job Description/Responsibilities

- Bring forward community concerns to Council and represent Council to the community
- Share responsibility to ensure effective meetings by coming prepared and follow up on action items
- Be open to diverse opinions and points of view
- Adhere to the mission of the Council
- Be present at the meetings or appoint representative to participate

## Time Commitment

- Approximately 5-6 in person meetings the first year
- Subcommittee and other meetings by conference call, I-Linc, or video-conference, as needed
- 3-year grant timeframe

## Meeting Location

- The first meeting is in Olympia, with future meeting dates and locations to be determined.
- Subcommittee meetings as needed by conference call, I-Linc, and video-conference or as set up by leaders.

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