



Washington State Medical Home E-Update

News from the Washington State Medical Home Partnerships Project

Winter 2016

Updates on Community Asset Mapping for Children's Health and Development

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The Community Asset Mapping (CAM) project is a collaboration between local communities and Washington State Maternal and Child Health Title V partners. These partners include the Washington State Department of Health, the Washington State Medical Home Partnerships Project (MHPP), and the University of Washington Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND).

CAM staff and a network of state partners help communities strengthen local systems to screen, evaluate, diagnose and provide timely intervention services to children with autism and other developmental disabilities. CAM is a process and forum for communities to identify issues around serving all children, but especially children with special healthcare needs and their families. This is done through a community-driven process of identifying assets and challenges in how children are currently being identified and served, prioritizing opportunities to improve care, and moving forward as a community to pilot and implement improvements. CAM staff help communities identify and address training needs, as well as examine how to improve communication and referrals to state diagnostic centers for more complicated evaluations

Since the first facilitated CAM meeting in Walla Walla in February 2010, nine communities across Washington State have improved early identification and diagnosis of children with autism and other developmental concerns by bringing together pediatricians, families, educators, public health, early intervention, and other service providers in their communities. The first CAM communities focused on children at risk for or diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Supported by the federal Great MINDS (Medical Homes Include Developmental Screening) grant (2011-2014), Clark, Spokane, and Snohomish counties have expanded the focus to all young children. Below is an update on the activities of each of the Community Asset Mapping communities.

CAM Communities with an Autism Focus

The **Island County Autism Taskforce** continues to meet quarterly as a forum for learning and problem solving to improve identification and care for children with autism in their community. Last June they held a training to become a Health Care Authority (HCA) Center of Excellence (COE) for ASD in Island County, with participation of pediatricians, psychologists and psychiatrists, and other community service providers. (A COE is any medical practice, psychology practice, or multidisciplinary assessment team that has received training from the Health Care Authority and has been judged by the HCA to be qualified to write a prescription for Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) services.) Dr. Charles Cowan, former Medical Director at Seattle Children's Autism Center, and Lin Payton, from the Health Care Authority, provided the engaging and practical training. Using the SMART tool developed in Lewis County (see below), seven children have received a diagnosis of autism locally since the program began in October 2015. Several of these children have also started receiving ABA therapy in their communities.



Center of Excellence Training, Island County, WA, June 2015

The **Lewis County Autism Coalition (LCAC)** held its Fifth Annual Autism Awareness Conference titled: *"Transitions: Pathways from Infancy to Adulthood"* on Friday, October 16, 2015. Over 175 participants gathered, including parents, adults on the spectrum and professionals in health care, early intervention, early learning and public education. The LCAC will hold its Sixth Annual Autism Awareness Conference on October 21, 2016 in Chehalis.

The LCAC created the **School Medical Autism Review Team (SMART)** tool. The SMART tool involves a process where community providers come together to provide a comprehensive diagnosis of autism for a child in their local community. The SMART tool is available in English and Spanish. In Lewis County, this tool was used to help diagnose twenty children with autism in the past year.

The LCAC sponsors on-going social skills training classes and summer programs for children from toddler to high school age. For more information on the work of the LCAC, see the *Spotlight on Lewis County* below.

The **Skagit County Autism Partnership (SCAP)** includes members from the local county Division of Developmental Disabilities, public health department, early intervention program, school districts, medical providers and Skagit Valley College representatives. SCAP continues to meet monthly. Bill Cheney, Assistant Director for Special Services for the Mount Vernon School District and a member of SCAP, visited the Lewis County Autism Coalition

last spring and met with the SMART team. Using the SMART tool, members of SCAP are collaborating to pilot a preschool-age student through a local evaluation process to receive a diagnosis of autism.

The **Walla Walla Autism Workgroup** is part of the work of the Walla Walla Medical Home Leadership Network team. The Walla Walla public health department has suffered many reductions in funding and cuts in staff. They continue to dialogue about the supports for children who have autism and their families. They are also working on improving access to developmental screening and referral for children in the community birth through 5 years old. The Walla Walla community has a lot of activity going on in the area of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). For more information on ACEs activity in Walla Walla, go to <http://resiliencetrumpsaces.org/>

The **Yakima Autism Oversight Committee (AOC)** continues to meet regularly. Last year they held an Autism Summer Symposium that was a huge success. Plans are underway for another Autism Summer Symposium in August of 2016. Proposed subjects include topics for parents, community partners, and school personnel. The Yakima Behavior Assessment Team currently holds a LEGO Therapy group for children with ASD. They also have plans to start a social skills group this coming spring for girls with ASD ages 9-11 and another one for boys with ASD ages 7-9 .

The Yakima AOC supports the following partners in the community:

- [*Lynchpin*](#) - an organization developed to provide social opportunities for youth with ASD. They have a variety of weekly groups, including Legos, Minecraft, Pokémon, and others. They offer both social groups and opportunities for learning for parents and children.
- *Family Counseling and Autism Consulting* - is the private practice of Terri Allen, a counselor who specializes in working with people with autism in Yakima County. She provides therapy and support for all ages, individuals with autism and without, and those living with people with autism.

CAM Communities with a Universal Developmental Screening Focus for All Children

The **Benton-Franklin** community has restructured their group to combine Universal Developmental Screening (UDS) efforts and their medical home team outreach. Robin Henle is the lead for the UDS work in Benton Franklin. This work is done through the Benton-Franklin Early Learning Alliance. Recent activities include partnering with local libraries to include developmental screening information at parent engagement activities, and partnering with Help Me Grow and the Benton-Franklin Early Learning Alliance to provide parent education at the November 2015 Early Learning Conference.

Benton Franklin will host its twelfth annual autism conference this summer. The **Northwest Autism Conference** (formerly the Southeastern Washington Autism Conference) will be held on August 9-10, 2016, at Three Rivers Convention Center. For information on last year's conference, go to <http://www.kadlec.org/neurological-resource-center/autism-conference?/autism>.

Clark County aligns and coordinates their work with the Clark County Interagency Coordinating Council (CCICC) and Child Find. Since being involved in the CAM work, Clark County has enhanced coordination between the Clark County Children with Special Health Care Needs program, the CCICC and Child Find. They recently engaged with Child Find to distribute developmental resource information to local provider offices and agencies that are in contact with young families. Clark County developed a brochure to explain developmental screening and early intervention to families titled, "*Early Screening and Intervention for Developmental Delay is Key to Helping Your Child Reach Their Maximum Potential*" — click on this printable [*brochure pdf*](#) for more information.

Snohomish has created a structure for their coalition that includes three workgroups based on the community's identified priorities emerging from the initial CAM meeting. These workgroups meet on a regular basis and report to the Steering Committee that meets quarterly.

Snohomish County CAM work has embraced three priorities:

- Ensure training for healthcare providers regarding how to do screening and how to talk with families about results and concerns.
- Enhance connections with families and healthcare providers through outreach/communication, information, and resource identification.
- Improve underserved children's access to services.

Currently, they are finalizing a brochure on child development to be printed and distributed throughout the community through libraries, medical practices, families, and others.

The **Spokane CAM Workgroup** continues to promote Universal Developmental Screening (UDS) efforts through the work of local pediatrician Dr. Kristi Rice and the Spokane Regional Health District. Dr. Rice has done training on Universal Developmental Screening (UDS) to thirteen pediatric providers from two large pediatric practices, Rockwood Pediatrics and Community Health Association of Spokane. Plans are underway to train other providers in the community, including family medicine physicians, in implementing UDS in their practices. Spokane Regional Health District will be collecting data in January and May 2016 on the number of all children birth-5 years old who have a well-child exam, the number of children screened, and the number of children referred to services. They will compare this data with baseline data collected in May 2015.

Spotlight on Lewis County Autism Coalition

Lewis County held their first community-wide meeting focusing on autism diagnosis and services in February 2010. Since then they have secured grant and community funding to sustain their coalition with support from a professional facilitator and to host an annual autism conference in the community. In 2015, the Lewis County Autism Coalition became a 501c3 non-profit agency.

Coalition programs focused on improving services for children with autism and their families include:

- **An annual conference**—“*Transitions: Pathways from Infancy to Adulthood*” was the theme of the Fifth Annual Lewis County Autism Conference. The October 16, 2015 event was held at Bethel Church in Chehalis, WA. Over 175 participants gathered, including parents, adults on the spectrum and professionals in health care, early intervention, early learning and public education. Participants gathered to learn best practices, discover community resources and understand what to expect as individuals with developmental disabilities transition through life. To view presentations and handouts, go to <http://www.lcautism.org/conferences/>



Keynote Speaker was Dr. Gary Stobbe, Director of Adolescent and Adult Services at the Seattle Children's Hospital Autism Center.

- **SMART**-*The School Medical Autism Review Team (SMART)* is a process where community providers come together to provide a comprehensive diagnosis of autism for a child in their local community. This process engages school and medical professionals in a collaborative team setting. The team utilizes the 'SMART tool' as a way to collect and review a child's needs and to share information across school, medical and community settings. This process ensures appropriate services and facilitates a timely diagnosis that can support the child's success in school and life. The tool was developed and piloted by members of the **Lewis County Autism Coalition**, and is available in both English and Spanish. To view and download the SMART tool, go to <http://medicalhome.org/stateinitiatives/community-asset-mapping/#exampleslocal>

In 2015, in collaboration with Mary Chmelik, ARNP from Mary Bridge Children's Hospital, twenty children in Lewis County received a diagnosis of autism through the SMART process. These children were seen during a cumulative 10-month period. Many of these children are currently receiving ABA therapy or have secured their place on the waiting list for ABA therapy because of their diagnosis. The SMART tool and team process is a great example of community collaboration. Not only are more families being served, but also providers are working together to ensure all aspects of a child's care is coordinated across settings.

In February 2016, 20+ SMART team and Lewis County Autism Coalition members attended a training to become a Center of Excellence recognized by the WA HCA, further enhancing Lewis County's capacity to diagnose and treat individuals on the autism spectrum.

- **The Link**-The Link is a resource center for families of children who have autism or behavioral health questions in Lewis County and Southwest Washington. To access The Link, contact autismlinkcoordinator@gmail.com or call (360) 736-9391 ext. 749. This service is a project of the Lewis County Autism Coalition and supported through grant funding.

Related Activities

Help Me Grow Washington (HMG WA)

Help Me Grow Washington (HMG WA) is the unified initiative of the Universal Developmental Screening Partnership. This initiative is convened by the Department of Health and supported by over 100 committed parents and professionals. Their goal is to make sure all families understand early childhood brain development, recognize the importance of developmental screening and know where to go if they have concerns about their child's development.

The HMG Washington Partnership is fostering change to ensure that:

- All families understand the importance of developmental screening for young children at important times in their child's early years when additional supports and services can make a difference
- There is no wrong door to standardized developmental screening. Access to developmental screening is readily available online and in communities across Washington through health care providers, early learning providers and others.
- Further evaluation is available to all children who may need early intervention and other services to reach their optimal development.

The HMG WA Focus and Momentum Team oversees the strategic efforts of the Partnership and champions broad change. Action Teams composed of parents, physicians, childcare providers, administrators and others meet monthly to implement proposed strategies and consider additional steps to advance the above goals. For more information, or to get involved in this dynamic work, see <http://helpmegrowwa.org/>

Centers of Excellence

A Center of Excellence (COE) is any medical practice, psychology practice, or multidisciplinary assessment team that has received the COE training from the Health Care Authority or has been judged by the HCA to be qualified to write a prescription for ABA services. There are many different ways for children and youth to get a diagnosis of autism. In order for a child or youth to be eligible for ABA therapy through Apple Health/Medicaid, a recognized Center of Excellence (COE) must conduct a comprehensive evaluation within the last two years and write an order for Applied Behavior Analysis therapy.

The following link provides a list of the Centers of Excellence in Washington

State: http://www.hca.wa.gov/medicaid/abatherapy/Documents/hca_centers_of_excellence_for_asd.pdf

Several of the Washington CAM coalitions have supported local COE trainings. This training has been a vehicle to bring community stakeholders together and ultimately form a SMART team.

Some of the outcomes of the COE trainings include:

- physicians feel supported in their desire to increase resources in our community
- networking among physicians, schools, and other service providers
- increased access to autism services for local children.

LAUNCH II

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) was awarded a Project LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health) Expansion grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in 2016. This award will enable the WA DOH to build on the success of the first Project LAUNCH grant by expanding the key elements of the initial LAUNCH grant in supporting and enhancing behavioral and other supports in early childhood settings that serve infants and toddlers of high-risk populations.

Training and technical assistance will focus on developmental screening, mental health consultation, and workforce development. An oversight council provides alignment of child-wellness efforts across agencies and organizations. DOH is collaborating with Yakima partners from the original LAUNCH grant to spread this work into the three new sites in our state-Benton-Franklin, Chelan-Douglas, and North Thurston County. Communities of focus in the new expansion grant include our state's military population. This work aligns well with the [Help Me Grow Washington](#) common agenda.

[Project LAUNCH II Expansion Fact Sheet](#)

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

ACEs are significant incidents during childhood, which can result in harm to social, cognitive and emotional functioning. Resulting changes in brain development can affect a child's learning ability and social skills, as well as impact long-term adult health outcomes and quality of life. The Centers for Disease Control views ACEs as one of the major health issues of the 21st century. While not guaranteeing bad outcomes, ACEs increase the odds. In addition, they are largely preventable!

Several CAM communities are linking ACEs into their work. Spokane Regional Health department has several ACEs projects going. Walla Walla County has a strong focus on ACEs as well. For more information on ACEs, see the child health note http://medicalhome.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/chn-generic_ACEs.pdf

Autism Conference for Primary Care Providers

“Caring for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders in Your Practice: Practical Strategies” was a Continuing Medical Education (CME) program designed for primary care practitioners (PCPs) and their staff to discuss practical strategies for the management of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in the clinical setting. National and state experts discussed common medical, behavioral, and mental health issues; practice-based tools; resources and accessing services. This conference was held in Wright Auditorium at Seattle Children’s Hospital, Seattle WA, in October 2015. [Brochure](#). Several resource handouts from the conference are posted at: <http://medicalhome.org/stateinitiatives/autism-systems-work/#News.Resources>

[Washington State Medical Home Partnerships Project](#) is funded by the Washington State Department of Health (DOH), [Office of Healthy Communities](#) through a contract with the Healthy Starts and Transitions Unit to help with work on the six [national performance measures for children and youth with special health care needs](#). Our interdisciplinary staff are faculty and professionals at the University of Washington’s [Center on Human Development and Disability](#) (CHDD). CHDD also provides support and we work closely with the UW [Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities](#) (LEND) program as well as many additional [partners](#).

Washington State Medical Home Partnerships Project Staff:

Kate Orville, MPH, Co-Director, orville@uw.edu

Katherine TeKolste, MD, Co-Director, kat423@uw.edu

Amy Carlsen, RN, Family-Professional Partnerships, carlsa@uw.edu

Washington State Medical Home Leadership Network (MHLN) Community Teams:

<http://medicalhome.org/stateinitiatives/the-medical-home-leadership-network/#whatismhln>

