



Massachusetts Act Early Campaign Brief

Massachusetts Act Early is the state campaign for the national "Learn the Signs. Act Early." program run by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD), in collaboration with the Association of University Centers on Disability (AUCD).

The campaign aims to educate parents and professionals about childhood development, including early warning signs of autism and other developmental disorders, and encourages developmental screening and intervention. The MA state team has set the following as its goals:

1. Develop affordable and feasible outreach plan to increase public awareness (e.g., disseminating free CDC Act Early materials in settings such as childcare, education, early intervention, medical offices, community centers, etc.)
2. Increase training for health care, early childhood and educational professionals;
3. Shorten the wait times between screening, diagnosis and intervention by
 - a. promoting early intervention (EI) adoption and implementation of a second level screening process;
 - b. coordinating interaction between EI and diagnosticians to streamline referrals to diagnostic centers
4. Develop and disseminate a culturally competent autism screening kit for pediatric offices and community health centers.

MA Act Early has 40-60 state team members, with an executive steering committee and three task forces. Since November 2010, MA Act Early has held three statewide summit meetings and five webinar/conference calls. State team members represent parents, university centers of excellence, health care organizations, public health, early education, day care, elementary and secondary education, disability agencies, family support agencies, advocacy groups, and research centers.

For more information about the MA Act Early State Autism Team, please contact:

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