



# Washington State Medical Home Newsletter

SUMMER  
2010

## Issue Focus: Community Asset Mapping for Early Identification and Diagnosis of Autism

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Community Asset Mapping (CAM) is a pilot project of the Washington State Combating Autism Advisory Council ([CAAC](#)). The goal of this project is to establish coordinated and accessible systems for families to receive developmental screening and help through a diagnostic process for autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) or other developmental concerns. This includes working with the multidisciplinary diagnostic centers across the state to provide a faster diagnosis for children as well as identifying the training and technical assistance needs of communities to improve the identification and diagnosis of ASDs.

CAM was envisioned at the June 2009 Multidisciplinary Diagnostic Teams Summit held in Yakima. Summit participants developed a model for how communities and diagnostic centers could support the early diagnosis of children with autism. This template was called the [Tiers to Autism Spectrum Diagnosis and Referral for Others Disorders Pyramid](#), (see page 2 for image). The pyramid is a tool to help communities identify what resources they have within their communities to identify and support the efficient diagnosis of children with autism.

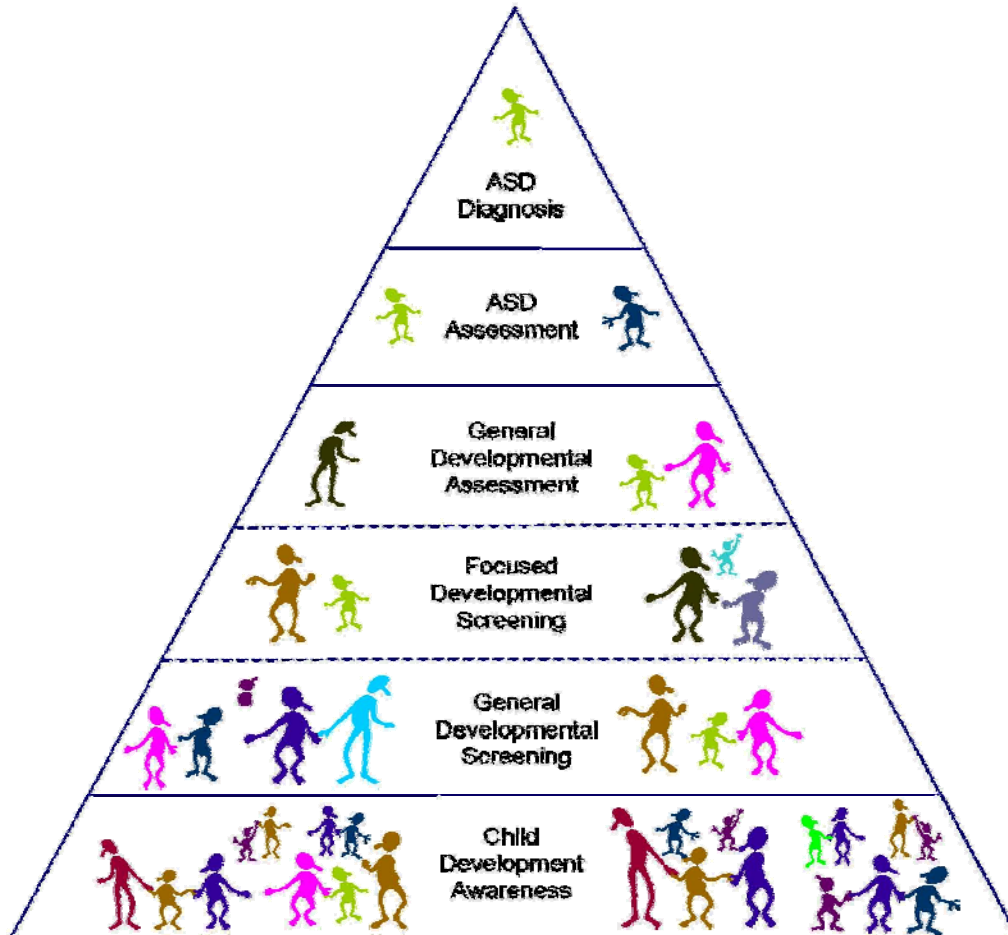
A team of four professionals from the Department of Health Children with Special Health Care Needs Program and the University of Washington's LEND and Medical Home Projects came together to help plan and facilitate the use of the pyramid in communities throughout Washington. Pilot communities were selected based on identified criteria including diversity, both geographically and culturally, and their commitment to the process. A community liaison invited key community stakeholders from programs such as public schools, medical home teams, Birth to 3, Parent to Parent, pediatric medicine, Head Start/ECEAP, and others to participate in a half day meeting. The first 2 sites were Lewis County on Feb 16 and Walla Walla on Feb 24.

Several common needs were identified in the Lewis and Walla Walla communities. Needs included:

- \* A community "road map" for parents and providers to increase awareness of resources within the community and navigation along the Pyramid.
- \* Coordinated systems for communication between all providers & families within the community to support navigating the Pyramid.
- \* Increased child care provider awareness and knowledge of development red-flags and training in how to talk with parents when a developmental concern is observed.
- \* Coordinated communication among community providers and the out-of-community diagnostic team.
- \* Expand community provider knowledge, skill, and utilization of ASD screening tools such as MCHAT and others.

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## Tiers to Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)\* Diagnosis and Referral of Other Disorders



[www.medicalhome.org/leadership/documents/TiersofAutismDX-Feb10.pdf](http://www.medicalhome.org/leadership/documents/TiersofAutismDX-Feb10.pdf)—for more details

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## CAM Activities

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Currently Walla Walla County is having monthly meetings through their Medical Home Leadership Network team. They are working on composing a local algorithm for use in the community. In May, Carla Nibler and Terry Huff visited Mary Bridge Children's Hospital and spent some time with the diagnostic team there. They came back very encouraged and ready to continue to network with the diagnostic centers across the state. In July, they will hold 2 trainings on MCHAT and how to talk to families for community providers. They are expecting over one hundred people to attend! Dr. Glenn Tripp, Medical Director of Developmental Services at Mary Bridge Children's Hospital and Health Center in Tacoma and a member of both the WA Combating Autism Advisory Council and Pierce County MHLN team is planning a trip to Walla Walla in late summer or early fall to have informal talks with medical providers about identifying and taking care of children with autism.

Lewis County has secured funding to support a professional facilitator to help conduct their monthly meetings. Their goals include developing a clearly articulated algorithm that could be adapted and written up for all Lewis County providers and used in health care settings, child care settings, early intervention, and with families. They are exploring ways to connect with other sites throughout Washington to share resources and information.

Some of the lessons learned through piloting this project include:

- \* Communities liked the Pyramid and found it a helpful organizing tool.
- \* Communities are hungry for the opportunity to have facilitated dialogues about coordinating ASD services and resources. They appreciate the assistance of a TA team, and it motivates forward action within the community.
- \* Communities want ongoing communication with the TA team and collaboration with the CAAC (Combating Autism Advisory Council).
- \* For communities to be successful carrying out next steps they desire to build a community-based infrastructure with dedicated financial resources .
- \* It is vital to include family members as ongoing participants of the community discussions and next steps.
- \* Communities also want to discuss building skill and capacity in providing evidence-based intervention services.

Island County is the third community currently receiving technical assistance as a CAM pilot site. Rene Denman, Lead Family Resources Coordinator and Melinda Kurtz, public health nurse Children with Special Health Care Needs Coordinator have been working with health care providers in their community to identify local resources. They will have a larger community meeting with the UW/DOH team August 31.

Other communities have taken the concept and materials from the CAM are piloting this approach on their own. These communities include Whatcom, Yakima, Madigan Military Medical Center in Pierce County, Spokane and the Tri-Cities.

The hope is that communities throughout Washington will eventually be able to take this material, and the groundwork that has been established, and use it in their communities. Every child and family has the right to a timely assessment, a professional diagnosis, and evidence-based services in their community. This exciting work brings us one step closer to that goal.

For more information about the CAM project please contact: Amy Carlsen, RN, Medical Home Project and LEND at: [carlsa@uw.edu](mailto:carlsa@uw.edu)

## The Washington State Medical Home Project



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[www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/mch/cshcnhome2.htm](http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/mch/cshcnhome2.htm)

### Autism Guidebook for Washington State: A Resource for Individuals, Families and Professionals

The Autism Guidebook for Washington State was developed through the efforts of the Caring for Washington Individuals with Autism Task Force, a Governor appointed group comprised of parents and professionals, established in 2005 by the Washington State Legislature.

The Legislature instructed the Autism Task Force in 2007-2008 to compile information for and draft a Washington State guide for individuals with autism—birth through lifespan—as described in the Task Force's 2006 recommendations.

Patterned after the *Ohio Service Guidelines for Individuals with ASD/PDD, Birth through Twenty-One*, this book contains a wealth of relevant information for families, educators, medical professionals, care providers, and others who make informed decisions about individual care of children and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder and related disorders.

To access the Guidebook as a full document, or to look at individual sections, please go to the Dept of Health webpage: [www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/mch/Autism/Guidebook.htm](http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/mch/Autism/Guidebook.htm)

For printed copies of the Guidebook, please contact Carol Miller, MPH, Autism Grant Coordinator at [Carol.Miller@DOH.WA.GOV](mailto:Carol.Miller@DOH.WA.GOV)