

**Project Title:** A Parent to Parent Model of Service Coordination for Families of Preschool Age Children with ASD

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research project is to assess the effects of a culturally compatible parent to parent model of support and service coordination for 108 families who live in Hartford CT with a preschool child with ASD. The parents will be recruited from Hartford early childhood programs including Head Start programs and other preschool programs such as child care, and pre-K programs and randomly assigned to either a service coordinator group or control group. The parent to parent service will be provided by veteran parents who live in Hartford, have a child with ASD and who are culturally compatible to the target family. The veteran parents will be recruited, trained, supervised and evaluated for fidelity to the model by the Ct PATH /FVCT (Parents Available To Help/Family Voices of Connecticut) in collaboration with the CT Autism Action Coalition and the Hartford chapter of AFCAMP. The model that will be used is based on service/care coordination as defined by Title V of the MCH Block Grant and Part C of the Part C of IDEA. A series of validated checklists will be used by the veteran parents as they meet with the target parents to assist them to navigate the system for their child. Outcome measures will include a validated measure of family quality of life (Beach Center Family Quality of Life (FQOL) Scale (Hoffman, Marquis, Poston, Summers, & Turnbull, 2006), a medical home checklist, and a series of service self reports and observations, the child's IEP, and the child's developmental and health status. Structural equation modeling will be used to determine a path analysis between mediating variables and the main outcome of family quality of life.

**Key Words:** Access to Health Care, Case Management, Cultural Sensitivity, Early Childhood Development, Families, Family Professional Collaboration, Service Coordination