

Abstract

The aim of this policy brief is to draw attention to the challenges that Latinx families in California face when attempting to access early intervention services for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Our research has shown that limited awareness, language barriers, stigma, and a lack of trust in the healthcare system are primary obstacles that prevent Latinx families from receiving the necessary support. To address these issues, we propose several solutions to the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and the California Regional Centers (RC), including expanding Spanish-language education, involving community health workers, providing culturally sensitive services, and improving training for healthcare providers and vendors. These initiatives are designed to reduce the stigma surrounding ASD, improve access to early intervention services, and meet the developmental needs of Latinx children with ASD.

Project Plain Language Summary

This project looks at the problems Latinx families face in starting early services for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in California. Challenges include: language difficulties, lack of awareness, stigma, and not trusting the early health services. We suggest giving information in Spanish, using community health workers, and training community health providers. It is important to meet unique needs of families. The goal is to lessen barriers among families and their children with ASD experience and improve cultural humility that supports access to early intervention for Latinx children.