Project Name:	Mind the Gap: Peer Navigation to Support Access to Care in Under-Resourced Families
Applicant Organization:	WarmLine Family Resource Center
Awarded Amount:	$291,504
Funding Announcement Name:	Promoting Service Access and Equity Grant

PROJECT SUMMARY

This project, which is a collaboration between Warmline and Family Soup Family Resource Centers, directly addresses the DDS focus area of building leadership capacity to increase representation and voice in the developmental services system for families in diverse communities through implementation of an evidence-based peer navigator curriculum. The program will meet the needs of historically underrepresented groups who have challenges accessing Regional Center services. The target population includes low income families (at 250% of the poverty level or below) and Spanish-speaking families in both rural (Yuba, Sutter, Colusa, Placer) and urban (Sacramento, Yolo) areas served by Alta California Regional Center. We will work with the MIND Institute Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities and the Autism Intervention Research Network in Behavioral Health (AIRB) to train peer navigators in a culturally responsive, flexible evidence-based program specifically designed to engage diverse families, provide education about disability and advocacy, and support them in facilitating access to care for their children with autism and other developmental disabilities. Mind the Gap is a peer navigator program for families of young children who are in the process of obtaining or recently received a diagnosis of ASD/DD who have limited engagement with the service system. The Mind the Gap intervention was developed through a collaborative process with community stakeholders specifically to engage diverse families. In Sacramento partners included Alta California Regional Center as well as early intervention providers, school districts, family resource centers and others. Topics covered in Mind the Gap address issues meaningful to caregivers (e.g., social support, system navigation, ASD knowledge, stress management) and children (e.g., challenging behavior, communication, service access) to support families in accessing community services, such as the Regional Center, more rapidly. The modules, materials. and videos are available in English, Spanish and Korean (materials can be reviewed in English at https://www.livebinders.com/b/2665813). Families have an initial intensive participation, meeting with their coach approximately weekly for 12 sessions, and then talking less often for an addition 1-2 months. Peer navigators will participate in an intensive, 12-hour training provided by the AIRB team. In a recent study, Mind the Gap demonstrated high rates of acceptability by parents and peer navigators for content and delivery method. Parents reported that they felt more empowered and effective in navigating their child's treatment after participation. Overwhelmingly, parents reported that the relationship with their peer navigators was the most helpful aspect of the intervention. Analyses show greater use of educational materials, faster access to initial services, and increases in parent empowerment after intervention for the coaching group compared with parents who received the materials only. We propose to test the feasibility and effectiveness of implementing Mind the Gap in two California Family Research/empowerment centers to increase engagement of families in the service system and to facilitate access to services more quickly and extensively by low resource families. Data collected from this project will be combined with other sites across the country to identify the best ways to scale up the peer navigator intervention. This project extends current services provided by Family Soup and Warmline but funding the use of a systematic curriculum designed to engage families who often choose not to pursue services. Funding will allow us to test the effects of more intensive family navigation services which extend beyond our current services. We will collect all of the data required by DDS in addition to other information about the usefulness of the program. We expect that the use of the curriculum will increase service access and engagement in diverse families and that MTG could be used in family resource and empowerment centers across the state.

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
Applicant Eligibility		
Applicant Information		
1. Project Title What issthe Project Title?	**Applicant Response** Mind the Gap: Peer Navigation to Support Access to Care in Under-Resourced Families	
2. Awarded Amount	**Applicant Response** $291,504	
3. Organization Type Please check the box that describes your organization	**Applicant Response** Community Based Organization, non-501(c)(3) EIN	
4. Description of Organization/Group Provide a brief description of the organization/group (organization type, group mission, etc.). Explain what experience your organization has managing a program similar to the proposal and state the outcomes of that program.	**Applicant Response** WLFRC is an Early Start Family Resource Center (FRC), funded by DDS. We have over 25 years' experience providing peer support, training, information, referral and system navigation to families of children with disabilities in Sacramento, Yolo, Placer, Nevada, El Dorado and Alpine counties. Through our social programming, we offer a time for families to "take a minute", have fun with their kids and connect with each other – building their social circle. We offer music play dates, baby signs, family yoga and craft classes. All programming is virtual at this time, due to the pandemic. We provide a newsletter and web site (English and Spanish) full of information and resources relevant to families raising children with disabilities and delays. We also have staff who speak Russian and use American Sign Language.We have expertise in special education and help families navigate that and Regional Center systems. WLFRC is currently funded by a DDS disparity grant (19-C60). In the grant, we provide service navigation to ACRC clients 0-3, 3-5, 17-40 years old in Placer, Sacramento and Yolo Counties. The services are provided to clients who are African American, Spanish or Russian speakers. We are on track to meet all of our outcomes. With the new grant, we will serve clients 0-8 years old in Sacramento, Placer and Yolo counties who are low income and speak English or Spanish, have or are likely to be diagnosed with ASD or DD. Unlike our current grant (19-C60), the participants are not required to be ACRC clients in order to access the service. This will open up our outreach efforts and clients can self-referral. Family SOUP serves families of children with special needs through its programs and services that help families understand the nature of their child's disability, help them navigate the special needs system and provide them with support and information every step of the way. The Family SOUP mission is to empower families of children with special needs through support and education to reach their full potential as members of the community. Family SOUP serves the local community in Sutter, Yuba, and Colusa Counties through programs and services, with funding providing through various grants and the generosity of community benefactors, including serving as an Early Start Family Resource Center funded by DDS to serve young children 0-3 in Sutter County. We currently offer Spanish parent liaison services and assistance with referrals and service coordination with other agencies,	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
	including helping families understand the service systems available to their children such as Education and Regional Centers. Family SOUP works with families served by Alta California Regional Center. Family SOUP has a resource library with up-to-date information and the staff is adept at understanding the service system and finding appropriate resources for families. We have a large network of parent-to-parent support parents who will listen with their hearts because they, too, have been there. Family SOUP has a history of experience with supporting families in finding answers, providing IEP support, and linking families to services. We help families learn their rights and access services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act. Family SOUP has programs to help families communicate more effectively with school professionals and agency staff and advocate effectively for their child. Family Soup has the experience and resources needed to complete this project as we have been working with diverse families of children with special needs for nearly 30 years. This funding would allow us to better serve the underrepresented in our communities, focusing on those who are low income and more of our Spanish speaking population, ensuring that they are empowered and have increased access to services and supports.	
5. Applicant in Good Standing	**Applicant Response**	
Is the applicant in good standing with the California Secretary of State, California Franchise Tax Board, and California Department of Tax and Fee Administration?	Yes	
6. Subcontractors in Good Standing	**Applicant Response**	
Are the applicant's subcontractors in good standing with the California Secretary of State, California Franchise Tax Board, and California Department of Tax and Fee Administration?	Yes	
Grant Reapplication Information		
Grant Reapplications Only		
1. Grant Number	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplications Only) What is the Grant Number of previously awarded project? If not applicable select Not Applicable.	NA	
2. Project Title	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplications Only) What is the Project Title of previously awarded project? If not applicable select Not Applicable.	NA	
3. Project Start & End Dates	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplications Only) What are the Start & End Dates of the previously awarded project? If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Start Date: 04/30/2021, End Date: 04/29/2023	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
4. Project Duration	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplications Only) What is the Total Project Duration (in months) of the previously awarded project? If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
5. 2016/2017 Award	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplications Only) Enter the amount of funding that was awarded in FY 2016/2017. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
6. 2016/2017 Expenses	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplicants only) Enter the amount of funding that was expended in FY 2016/2017. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
7. 2016/2017 Remaining	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplicants only) Subtract the Total Expenses from the Total Award to determine the amount remaining from FY 2016/2017. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
8. 2017/2018 Award	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplicants only) Enter the amount of funding that was awarded in FY 2017/2018. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
9. 2017/2018 Expenses	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplicants) Enter the amount of funding that was expended in FY 2017/2018. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
10. 2017/2018 Remaining	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplicants only) Subtract the Total Expenses from the Total Award to determine the amount remaining from FY 2017/2018. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
11. 2018/2019 Award	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplicants only) Enter the amount of funding that was awarded in FY 2018/2019. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
12. 2018/2019 Expenses	**Applicant Response**	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
(Reapplicants only) Enter the total amount of funding that was expended, or is anticipated to be expended, in FY 2018/2019. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
13. 2018/2019 Remaining	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplicants only) Subtract the Total Expenses from the Total Award to determine the amount remaining from FY 2018/2019. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
14. 2019/2020 Award	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplicants only) Enter the amount of funding that was awarded in FY 2019/2020. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
15. 2019/2020 Expenses	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplicants only) Enter the total amount of funding that was expended, or is anticipated to be expended, in FY 2019/2020. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
16. 2019/2020 Remaining	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplicants only) Subtract the Total Expenses from the Total Award to determine the amount remaining from FY 2019/2020. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
17. Total Awarded	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplicants only) Combine the amounts included in FY 2016/2017, FY 2017/2018, FY 2018/2019, and FY 2019/2020 for the total amount awarded for the project. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
18. Initial Proposed Number of People Served	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplications Only) Include the initial number of people projected to be served. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
19. Actual Number of People Served	**Applicant Response**	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
(Reapplications Only) Include the actual number of people served. Explain why this number is different from the projected impact number. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
20. Regional Centers in Catchment Area	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplications Only) List all Regional Centers in the project catchment areas that the project has served. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
21. Cities Served	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplications Only) List the cities your project has served. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
22. Counties Served	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplications Only) List the counties your project has served. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
23. City of Los Angeles	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplications Only) If your project has served the City of Los Angeles, list the zip code(s) and/or community(ies) your project has served. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
24. Activities to Date	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplications Only) Provide a detailed explanation of project activities to date. Include what the project has accomplished to date. From the start of the project to the date of reapplication, what are the key accomplishments? Have all activities been completed? If no, why not? If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
25. Project Impact & Outcome	**Applicant Response**	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
(Reapplications Only) Provide a detailed explanation of project impacts and outcomes to date. Attach data (summary of pre-tests and post-tests), participant success stories to demonstrate project outcomes and impacts. Provide outcomes of your project's impact in serving the target communities. Using your attached data, provide a brief statement of key findings. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
26. Project Objectives	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplications Only) What are the projects objectives in addressing disparities and what remains to be addressed/completed? Explain why these objectives have not been completed during the current grant period. Provide a brief description of the key lessons learned from your current project, if any. What were some of the challenges that prevented your project from meeting your objectives/measures? What are some strategies your organization plans to implement to address challenges, if any? If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
27. Project Transition	**Applicant Response**	
(Reapplications Only) If awarded, how will your current project transition into the 2020/21 proposed project? How does your proposed project complement your current project? Does your proposed project expand or continue your current project, if so how? What activities, measures, or target groups are being added? Provide a summary of the differences and reasons why you are proposing the change. If not applicable, select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
General Application		
Proposal Summary		
1. Individuals Impacted	**Applicant Response**	
Enter the projected number of individuals impacted.	80	
2. People Served	**Applicant Response**	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
What is proposed number of people projected to be served?	80	
3. Duration of project	**Applicant Response**	
What is the duration of the project? Enter Start & End Dates.	Start Date: 04/30/2021, End Date: 04/29/2023	
4. Duration of project (months)	**Applicant Response**	
What is the total duration of project in months?	24	
5. Regional Centers	**Applicant Response**	
List all Regional Centers in the project catchment areas.	Alta California Regional Center	
6. Cities Served	**Applicant Response**	
List the city or cities your project proposes to serve.	All cities with in Sutter, Yuba, Colusa, Sacramento, Placer and Yolo Counties.	
7. Counties Served	**Applicant Response**	
List the county or counties your project proposes to serve.	**Sutter, Yuba and Colusa (Family Soup); Sacramento, Placer, and Yolo (WarmLine FRC)**	
8. City of Los Angeles	**Applicant Response**	
If your project proposes to serve the City of Los Angeles, list the zip codes and/or communities your project will serve.	Not Applicable	
9. Community Based Organizations	**Applicant Response**	
Will you be working with one or more Community Based Organization?	Yes	
10. Regional Center Data	**Applicant Response**	
If you plan to use regional center data for your project, indicate what steps you will take (or already have taken) to acquire it. For example, completing a data agreement, completing a data request, meeting with RC to discuss data availability/timelines, etc.	NA	
11. First Project Type Selection	**Applicant Response**	
Select your first project type.	Community Connector (Example: Promotora or Navigator)	
12. Second Project Type Selection	**Applicant Response**	
Select your second project type (if applicable).	Parent Education (online or in person trainings, etc)	
13. Third Project Type Selection	**Applicant Response**	
Select your third project type (if applicable).	Not Applicable	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
14. Multiple Organizations Does your project include partnership with one or more organizations either as a co-applicant or subcontractor? If "yes", please upload a letter of support from each organization, that includes an explanation of their role in the partnership.	**Applicant Response** Yes	3
15. Leverage & Strategies Describe how your organization will leverage and build upon strategies, collaborations, and lessons learned to continue to address the identified disparities after completion of the project. How will your project continue its work after the grant funding has concluded?	**Applicant Response** This project leverages funding from the Autism Intervention Research Network in Behavioral Health (AIR-B) to disseminate and implement a peer navigator curriculum developed specifically to engage historically underserved families. The AIRB network will fund the training of the peer navigators, including training a "trainer" at each site who can continue to coach the peer navigators and train new staff as needed at each site in order to sustain the program after the grant funding is concluded. The AIRB team will also be able to support data collection and review. Warmline and Family Soup directors have participated in the AIRB community collaborative since it's beginning in 2016 and supported getting the community input and the development of the Mind the Gap program. This project is a natural extension of that collaboration and builds on the feedback and lessons learned in the testing of the curriculum. The program is now expanded to children with more developmental concerns (not just autism) and materials are updated based on family feedback (for example, shorter videos and having the peer navigator be the first contact for families). The materials will be freely available to community after the project is completed and our FRCs will work with the MIND CEDD to develop a sustainment plan as part of the project. This project extends the current Warmline navigator program by engaging families not yet served by ACRC and a greater range of families.	
Target Population		
1. Target Groups Served Select all groups the project will serve. If you select "Pacific Islander" or "Other" use comment section to list all groups.	**Applicant Response** African American , Hispanic , Other (list)	
Applicant Comment	All groups - Low Income	
2. Number of Target Group Served	**Applicant Response**	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
For each target group selected in previous question, list number served.	Low Income: 80 (overlap with all other groups) • Low income Spanish speakers: 30 • Low income African American: 20 • Low income English speakers:30	
3. Languages	**Applicant Response**	
Select all Languages the project will serve. If you select "Other" please list all languages.	Other (list) , Spanish	
Applicant Comment	English	
4. Age Groups Served	**Applicant Response**	
Select all Age Groups the project will serve. If you select "Other" please list groups.	Other (list)	
Applicant Comment	0-8 years	

Project Application
Project Application

1. Project Summary	**Applicant Response**	
Provide a clear and concise project summary that includes a defined target population, catchment area, and project design. Specifically describe what your project will accomplish and how it will benefit the community served.	This project directly addresses the DDS focus area of *building leadership capacity to increase representation and voice in the developmental services system for families in diverse communities* through implementation of an evidence-based peer navigator curriculum. The program will meet the needs of historically underrepresented groups who have challenges accessing Regional Center services. The target population includes low income families (at 250% of the poverty level or below) and Spanish-speaking families in both rural (Yuba, Sutter, Colusa, Placer) and urban (Sacramento, Yolo) areas served by Alta California Regional Center. We will work with the MIND Institute Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities and the Autism Intervention Research Network in Behavioral Health (AIRB) to train peer navigators in a culturally responsive, flexible evidence-based program specifically designed to engage diverse families, provide education about disability and advocacy, and support them in facilitating access to care for their children with autism and other developmental disabilities. Timely access to services for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other developmental delays and disabilities (DD) is key to ensure children receive maximum benefits from intervention services (National Research Council, 2001; Boyd, et al., 2010). Unfortunately, for minority and low-resource families	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
	documented disparities exist in timeliness of diagnosis and access to services. Children from racial or ethnic minority groups, and/or families from low-income households are more likely to start services at an older age and receive fewer services than white families (Mandel et al., 2002). For underrepresented groups, common barriers to accessing services include lack of resources and knowledge about the service system and limited knowledge of child development, mistrust of the service system and providers, and cultural and linguistic mismatch with early intervention approaches and providers (e.g. Stahmer et al., 2019, Liptak et al 2008; Mandell et al 2002). *Mind the Gap* is a peer navigator program for families of young children who are in the process of obtaining or recently received a diagnosis of ASD/DD who have limited engagement with the service system. The *Mind the Gap* intervention was developed through a collaborative process with community stakeholders specifically to engage diverse families. A community needs assessment led to the development of a peer navigator approach. In the intervention, a peer navigator (a trained caregiver of a child with a disability) works directly with the family. The focus of their work is based on the needs of each family explored through a strengths-based family interview. Topics covered in *Mind the Gap* address issues meaningful to caregivers (e.g., social support, system navigation, ASD knowledge, stress management) and children (e.g., challenging behavior, communication, service access) to support families in accessing community services, such as the Regional Center, more rapidly. Each topic includes short informational videos, infographics and other information sheets, engagement activities and goal-oriented tasks for the parent that the navigator and parent identify together. The modules, materials. and videos are available in English, Spanish and Korean (materials can be reviewed in English at https://www.livebinders.com/b/2665813). Families have an initial intensive participation, meeting with their coach approximately weekly for 12 sessions, and then talking less often for an addition 1-2 months. Each session includes review of the goals from the prior session, completion of a video or activity related to the families' needs and goals, discussion of service	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
	access successes, challenges and next steps and development of new goals (or continuation of prior goals) related to service access and self-care. We anticipate most families will complete the program and be independent in their use of the materials after 4-6 months. The program has been adapted and pilot tested for all virtual implementation to ensure support for families during the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Prior to initiating the intervention, peer navigators will participate in an intensive, 12-hour training provided by the AIRB team on the following: 1) components of the intervention; 2) data collection procedures; 3) caregiver engagement strategies (including culturally competent care); 4) local and state service system navigation and resources; and 5) ensuring safety and boundaries with families. In a recent study, *Mind the Gap* demonstrated high rates of acceptability by parents and peer navigators for content and delivery method. Parents reported that they felt more empowered and effective in navigating their child's treatment after participation. Overwhelmingly, parents reported that the relationship with their peer navigators was the most helpful aspect of the intervention. We propose to use *Mind the Gap* in two California Family Research/ empowerment centers to increase engagement of families in the service system and to facilitate access to services more quickly and extensively by low resource families. This project extends current services provided by Family Soup and Warmline by funding the use of a systematic curriculum designed to engage families who often choose not to pursue services. We expect that the use of the curriculum will increase service access and engagement in diverse families and that MTG could be used in family resource and empowerment centers across the state.	
2. Organization Experience	Applicant Response	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
What experience does the organization/group have working with the target population?	WarmLine and Family Soup both have dedicated staff that are part of and work with English and Spanish speaking communities in the targeted counties. In the targeted counties, the poverty rates range from 16%- 20%. The poverty rate for Latinos in California is almost 23%. (PPIC of California, 2018). The target counties include both rural and urban families living in poverty. Warmline and Family SOUP parent liaisons have experience working directly with families providing parent-to-parent support and helping them to navigate the complex service system. Both FRCs work with families of all kinds- kinship care, foster families, parents and grandparents. Multiple languages, ethnicities, homeless, etc. are all welcome and the FRC is often the first place families come for help.	
3. Underserved Target Populations	**Applicant Response**	
Explain how the target population(s) are underserved using RC POS data or other data as supporting evidence of the disparity.	The Alta California Regional Center POS shows relative equity overall across different race/ethnicities, indicating that their diversity work thus far may be helping. However, there are some differences that could still use improvement. Service utilization across all ages indicates 69-75% of services authorized are utilized. However, in early intervention families are utilizing only 45-52% of the services authorized by Regional Center. While the numbers are not vastly different, Hispanic families are the least likely to utilize authorized services. We expect they are also less likely to access services in the first place, especially if they are immigrant families. For children 0-2, Black/African American families are more likely to have no purchase of services than White families. Insurance-related expenditures are much higher for White families than families of color, especially Hispanic and Black/African American families, which may indicate greater challenges advocating for insurance services. Additionally, only English-speaking families are accessing insurance services. As recommended in Alta community meetings related to disparities as well as the DDS disparities workgroup, there is a need to go beyond POS to understand disparities in services use and access. The literature clearly indicates a need to support low income families, families of color and non-English speaking families in understanding ASD/DD and in learning how to navigate the complex service system that supports them in a way	

the complex service system that supports them, in a way that is culturally responsive and reduces mistrust and stigma.

Focus groups conducted in Sacramento by the AIRB had themes that supported ideas that families are delaying access to care due to a lack of trust in providers and limited understanding of how to access services. Additionally, providers in those groups reported extreme challenges in engaging families after a referral and the high number of families referred that do not initiate services at all – the provides indicated families often never call the services coordinator back even after multiple attempts to contact them.

In addition to these local data multiple studies report that delays in service access are especially common among families from traditionally under-resourced groups. Children from racial or ethnic minority groups and/or families from low-income households are more likely to start services at an older age and receive fewer services than white families (Liptak et al., 2008). Parents who are struggling financially often report that they have limited guidance on the available services or next steps to accessing services for their child with ASD, and have identified a number of structural barriers (e.g., work schedule or transportation) to meeting their child's needs (Pickard & Ingersoll, 2016; Stahmer et al., 2019). Many parents feel overwhelmed with managing their child's support needs in the context of financial instability, stigma surrounding DD, and isolation due to their child's frequent behavioral issues (Howell et al., 2015).

In our focus groups in Sacrament and Yolo, parents reported a lack of understanding of the service options available to their child (Stahmer et al., 2019). This is an important consideration, as parents' service knowledge mediates the relationship between parent socioeconomic status and ASD service us.

Finally, families may distrust the medical system (Grinker et al., 2012), based on negative experiences or mismatched cultural beliefs, which may perpetuate reluctance to engage with service systems. Distrust of the service system can stem from a lack of clarity during the diagnostic process or on available treatment approaches, inadequate access to appropriate treatment, and limited involvement of parents in decision-making about services (Burkett et al., 2015).

When looking at POS the two language most utilized by families served by Alta California Regional Center are English and Spanish, therefore we will focus on these two languages.

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
4. Input from Community	**Applicant Response**	
How did your organization use input from the community and/or target population to design the project? What methods did your organization use to allow the community to advise you in designing the project? Were there any changes to your project design as a result of community input?	The intervention proposed here was developed through a community-partnered approach that incorporated stakeholder feedback and an in-depth exploration of the barriers to treatment engagement for under-resourced and minority caregivers of young children with ASD/DD. Both Family Soup and Warmline, as well as Alta Regional Center, participated in the *Mind the Gap* development, assisting with obtaining community feedback through facilitation of focus groups, interviews with families and providing input regarding the needs of their populations. In addition, our community collaborative included many community early intervention organizations (e.g., Help Me Grow; UCEDD; First 5; Sacramento County Office of Education; Autism Spectrum Therapies) and parents of children with ASD/DD. All had input into the development of the intervention using a community-partnered approach. Caregivers in Sacramento and Yolo counties reported system-level concerns (e.g., confusion around navigating service systems and a desire for greater support) and barriers related to cultural identity (e.g., community stigma, experiences with provider discrimination, limited language accessibility). Families and providers also expressed a strong desire for connection and guidance from others with similar life experiences. In addition, MTG was pilot tested in the Sacramento region and parent, coach, and stakeholder feedback from the pilot informed modifications to the intervention to increase fit with the community.	
5. Improve Access	**Applicant Response**	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
How will your project improve equity, access and reduce barriers to services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families and is sustainable?	The project aims to support low income and Spanish speaking families to better understand their child's developmental needs, service systems, learn specific strategies for accessing and maintaining services, and strategies for reducing stigma and stress which are often barriers to service access for low resource families. Evaluations of peer navigator models have shown them to be effective in increasing parent knowledge and access to community resources (Magna et al., 2017). Further, the use of peer coaches to deliver interventions to parents has been identified as a critical element in increasing parent engagement in their child's treatment (Pellecchia et al., 2018). These findings support the importance and promise of parent-centered interventions that are focused on service access and delivered by trusted peers with similar life experiences as a way to increase engagement in the system for diverse families. Sustainment of family involvement in the system will be obtained by using a follow up model in which peer navigators set up a system of checking in with families monthly following the initial intervention to answer questions and support continued access to services. Sustainment of the MTG program will be promoted by use of a train-the-trainer model in which a staff person at the site is trained in the MTG training protocol and can train new peer navigators as needed even after the proposed funding has ended. The intensity of the curriculum is flexible such that it can be implemented in more or less intensive way based on the funding climate of the program. Data from the program will be used to support ongoing funding for additional peer navigators as needed from public and private sources, including working with Regional Center to consider a parent training vendor model.	
6. Support RC's Recommendations	**Applicant Response**	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
How does this project support the RC recommendations and plan to promote equity and reduce disparities in their catchment area? If you are a RC, how does this project support your recommendations and plan to promote equity and reduce your identified disparities? How will your project collaborate with other organizations that serve individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families?	This proposal is an excellent match to one of Alta California Regional Centers key goals which is to explore innovative activities and partnerships geared towards enhancement of the diverse populations' participation in the greater developmental disabilities community. Mind the Gap is an evidence-based program developed in partnership with multiple agencies in our community with a goal of increasing participation in services and advocacy activities for diverse families. Because Alta representatives are part of the collaborative, they have direct access to feedback and information about the success of the program and can consider opportunities to expand and partner with additional agencies to scale up this innovative program. Alta California Regional Center's plan to promote equity and reduce disparities includes a focus on low income and Hispanic populations for all ages. Additionally, the project will provide community outreach targeting diverse populations and communities in Alta's catchment area. This project will naturally continue collaboration with other agencies in the Sacramento Regional who participate in the Sacramento AIRB network.	
7. Project different or unique	**Applicant Response**	
How is the proposed project unique or different from a currently funded grant (e.g., strategies, activities, and goals) in the proposed regional center catchment area? If the project is similar to a currently funded grant listed on the Department's website, how is the proposed project different?	This project is unique and innovative for several reasons. First, the program uses a community-based approach that combines community input and needs assessments with research evidence to develop an effective, flexible program designed specifically to support diverse families with limited resources who struggle to access services in our current system. Second, the program has a curriculum developed for families, with input from families, that is engaging and includes activities peer navigators can use to build family independence in engaging with multiple service systems. These activities are designed to build both support an independence in the use of advocacy skill and persistence in service access. Third, the program provides a structure training and ongoing supervision for peer navigators to provide the support they need to assist families with complex needs. Site experts will be trained by the research team to support the project in the long term. Finally, the program is part of a larger network that is using a continues improvement process to adapt to new research and community needs to ensure the program continues to be relevant. One of the challenges that we have seen as an organization is that we have not always been able to	

provide the intensive family navigation services that we find our necessary in guiding underserved families through the early intervention process. This funding would allow us to be thoroughly trained as peer navigators and to access and implement evidence-based curriculum which would enable us to more actively spend time with the families, thus increasing their access to services and early intervention. This funding would help us to make a difference, developing culturally and linguistically responsive strategies, and increasing representation and voice in the developmental services system for self-advocates and families in our diverse communities.

This project supplements Warmline's navigator program currently funded by an existing DDS disparities grant (19-C60). In the grant, WLFRCs provide regional center and generic service navigation to ACRC clients 0-3, 3-5 or17-40 years old in Placer, Sacramento and Yolo Counties and are provided to clients who are African American, Spanish or Russian speakers. WLFRC is on track to meet all of the 19-C60 outcomes.

With the new grant, WLFRC will serve clients 0-8 years old in Sacramento, Placer and Yolo counties who are low income and speak English or Spanish, have or are likely to be diagnosed with ASD or DD. Unlike our current grant (19-C60), the participants are not required to be ACRC clients in order to access the service. This will open up outreach efforts and clients can self-referral.

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
8. Activities & Measures to Achieve Goal	**Applicant Response**	
Clearly and specifically state how the schedule of activities and measures demonstrate the operational details and steps that the project will take to achieve its stated goals, activities, and measures. **Note: Before answering this question, applicant may want to complete the Activities Template located in the tab directly above.**	Our overall project objective is to increase access to regional center and educational services for parents of low income families from diverse backgrounds whose children show signs of autism or other developmental delay or disability. To achieve this goal we have partnered with UC Davis MIND Institute Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) and the Autism Intervention Research Network in Behavioral Health (AIRB) to support us in achieving our goals and collecting outcome measures. Our first activity (to be completed by the end of the first month) will be to ensure adequate staffing for the program. We anticipate increasing time for an English speaking and Spanish speaking peer parent to provide coaching. However, we will recruit and hire additional staff if needed. We will also use this time to prepare all the peer coaching materials and purchase any needed equipment.	

coaching materials and purchase any needed equipment to begin the program.

During the second month of the project the AIRB team will provide 12 hours of training for our peer navigators that includes the following: 1) components of the intervention; 2) data collection procedures; 3) caregiver engagement strategies (including culturally competent care); 4) local and state service system navigation and resources (with a focus on Regional Center access); and 5) ensuring safety and boundaries with families. The training will be interactive and include didactics, role play, video of previous sessions and activities. All peer navigators will be required to participate in order to continue with the program.

Additionally, AIRB will provide monthly peer navigator supervision sessions to support ongoing practice and additional training. We will measure peer navigator adherence to the Mind the Gap model through review of procedure checklists and calls. AIRB will partner with a site-trainer at each site to share training methods and co-lead supervision sessions to ensure sustainment.

Outreach to share the program with community organizations and families will begin in the second month of the program while the navigators are receiving training. We will use social media platforms to share information and conduct a Facebook Live session through UC Davis with a peer navigator. Other outreach to underserved communities will include sharing information in low income areas such as Richland Public Housing, Salvation Army; partnering with Birth and Beyond, First 5 and Help Me Grow, and the CRLA. We will be advertising on social media as well as on our websites, and through printed flyers. Methods for reaching Spanish speaking communities will include sharing information with the Spanish speaking parent groups at the UCEDD, pediatrician's offices, Spanish language radio stations and connecting with the Migrant Farm Workers Association whom support and provide services to families in the farm workers camps throughout our counties.

Enrollment of families will begin in July, 2021 after the peer navigator training is completed. Our selection criteria will include living in a low income zip code or reporting an income less than 250% of the poverty level for California (considering the number of people in the household). Each family will complete an intake interview and survey to collect the measures required for peer navigator models and to guide the peer navigator in individualizing the intervention for the family.

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
	We will work with the AIRB research team to develop a checklist for peer navigators and the administrative assistant at each site to collect all required measures from families. AIRB collected similar data in the recent study of Mind the Gap and have a successful method that will be adapted for this project. All of the required elements (e.g., number of families completing each topic; number of families who received information about regional center services and generic services; number of participants enrolled, number completed (by race/ethnicity, income and language); those referred to Regional Center, those assessed, those receiving services, barriers, self-efficacy etc.	
	We will also ask families to complete the consent to share information for Regional Center to review POS before and after the intervention. Families be considered as having completed the program if they complete at least 6 sessions with the peer navigator in a 6 month period. We will also conduct an interview after program completion to better understand how families felt about the program, barriers to accessing regional center before and after the program, and any recommended improvements.	
	We will stop enrolling families 6 months prior to the end of the funding period so they each have time to complete the program. We will compile the data as it comes in and provide quarterly reports to Regional Center.	
	We are confident that our team will be able to accurately collect these data as we will have consultation and support from the AIRB research team and we have funded adequate time for peer navigators to collect data and administrative support to input and examine the data.	
9. Measures	Applicant Response	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
Are your proposed measures appropriate to track project goals and activities, provide insight into the effectiveness of the overall design of the project and demonstrate how the impact on the community will be evaluated?	Our proposed measures include all of the required measures for a Promatora/ Peer navigator model recommend by DDS. In addition, we will track milestones related to our activities and conduct qualitative interviews designed to help us understand satisfaction with the program, how the program supported access to regional center services, and how we can improve the program for scale up. Finally, we will measure peer navigator use of the Mind the Gap tools and activities in how they support families and will use these data at our monthly meetings to make sure that the program is being implemented well. The measures include milestones and qualitative and quantitative data to provide information about how well the project worked and how the project can be improved as well as the impact on the target group of low income, diverse families in need of services for their children.	
10. Budget Narrative	**Applicant Response**	
Note: Before uploading your Budget Narrative, applicants should complete the Budget Template located in the tab directly above. After you complete the Budget Template, please return to this question to upload your Budget Narrative. The project budget is consistent with stated projected goals and activities, and clearly and concisely explains how the proposed expenditures support the overall project design. The project budget costs are clearly associated with the project activities and goals. The project budget does not include non-allowable costs. The overall project budget is appropriate to the outcomes proposed. Please attach your Budget Narrative document. An example of a Budget Narrative can be found in Attachment C.		2
Proposal Certification		
Certification		
1. Applicant & Regional Center Discussion	**Applicant Response**	
If you are a CBO, have you discussed your proposal with the RC(s)?	Not Applicable	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
2. Applicant Certification	**Applicant Response**	
By submitting this application, the Applicant is certifying the truth and accuracy of the proposal. The applicant also certifies that if you have subcontracting organizations, each participating organization has reviewed your project and agrees to their assigned activities, measures, and the budget. (Select Yes or No and enter you name in the comment box.)	Yes	
Applicant Comment	Cid Van Koersel	