

Application Report



Applicant Organization: Autism Society Inland Empire

Project Name: Adverse Effects of Growing up in a Pandemic: Accessing Early Start to Ameliorate Impact

Application ID: App-22-608

Funding Announcement: FY 22-23 Service Access and Equity Grant

Awarded Amount: \$320,000

Project Summary: This project is focused on improving awareness, access, and utilization of Early Start services, resources, and education for diverse and marginalized families, with a specific emphasis on families in the foster care system, Native American families, and Spanish-speaking families in the Inland Empire.

Authorized Certifying Official: Beth Burt bburt@ieautism.org 951-532-4462

Project Director/Manager: Beth Burt bburt@ieautism.org 951-532-4462

Project Manager/Coordinator: Beth Burt bburt@ieautism.org 951-532-4462

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Section Name: Applicant Eligibility

Sub Section Name: Applicant Information

1. Applicant Question: Project Title

What is the Project Title?

Applicant Response:

Adverse Effects of Growing up in a Pandemic: Accessing Early Start to Ameliorate Impact

2. Applicant Question: Awarded Amount

What is the total amount awarded for the project?

Applicant Response:

\$320,000

3. Applicant Question: Organization Type

Choose the response that best describes your organization.

Applicant Response:

Community Based Organization (CBO), 501(c)(3)

4. Applicant Question: Description of Organization/Group

Provide a brief description of the organization or group. Explain what experience your organization has managing a project similar to the proposal and state the outcomes of that project. You may upload your brochure or add a website link.

Applicant Response:

This project collaborates with three leading organizations: the Autism Society Inland Empire, the Kids First Foundation, and the Autism Assessment Center of Excellence.

The Autism Society Inland Empire (ASIE) brings 36 years of experience with project management, outreach into the community, and connections with a diverse group of CBOs who serve the Inland Empire. ieautism.org

Inland Empire Autism Assessment Center of Excellence (IEAACE) - will provide expertise in neurodevelopmental disabilities, gold-standard diagnostic skills, and connections with the medical community. They will contribute to the 'chats' with expert videos and webinars. They will also participate in the dissemination of information and materials.

Kids First Foundation (KFF) of San Bernardino will provide their expertise in mental health and working with developmental delays by creating videos, "chats with experts," and increased awareness of resources and connection to services.

5. Applicant Question: Applicant in Good Standing

Is the applicant in good standing with the California Secretary of State, California Franchise Tax Board, and California Department of Tax and Fee Administration? Please upload confirmation letter(s) or proof of good standing.

Applicant Response:

Yes

Attachment:

[CA Financial Documents.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

6. Applicant Question: Subcontractors in Good Standing

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?

Applicant Response:

Yes

Section Name: Grant Reapplication Information

Sub Section Name: Grant Reapplications Only

1. Applicant Question: Previous Award(s)

Did your organization receive DDS grant funding in fiscal year 2020-21 or 2021-22? If yes, go to question 2 to complete each column. If no, skip this category and go to category 3.

Applicant Response:

Yes

2. Applicant Question: Previous Grant Award(s)

Since fiscal year 2020, complete a row for each DDS Service Access and Equity grant your organization was awarded funding.

Applicant Response:

Year Awarded	Project Title	Grant Number	Award Amount
21	C.L.A.S.E. Latino Community of Practice	21-C02	200000.00
21	Autism Remote Work Force Readiness Pilot	21-C05	90000.00
20	CLASE Community of Practice: Empowering Latino Stakeholders With A Voice For Advocacy	20-C02	60000.00

3. Applicant Question: Previous Grant Outcomes

Provide a brief grant summary of your project outcomes for fiscal year 2020-21 and/or 2021-22.

Applicant Response:

We were fortunate enough to receive two grants from DDS in 2021:

- CLASE Community of Practice leadership empowerment program for leaders serving the Hispanic and Spanish-speaking communities. We currently have 45 leaders from 21 agencies participating, up from 43 leaders from 19 organizations last year. Last year's grant focused on increasing stakeholder advocacy skills for leaders serving the Hispanic community and participation in stakeholder advocacy participation (the baseline was two leaders in 1 event). By the end of the year, we provided over 1100 hours of training and increased involvement to six CLASE leaders who attended the POS meeting; three gave public comment. Additionally, at least 15 leaders participated in stakeholder feedback to IRC in a special meeting to discuss the reinstatement of social recreation services. Three other leaders attended a stakeholder session with the Chief of the Department of Developmental Services, Office of Community Operations in the Southern Region Office, to share their thoughts on the new proposal for \$10M Social Recreation grants. DDS was able to have a meeting (with the translation of all documents and interpretation in English and Spanish to allow additional stakeholder feedback. In another stakeholder session, three leaders gave feedback on Coordinated Family Support Services.
- This year we received a 2-year grant to continue to strengthen the CLASE Latino Community of Practice leaders by providing culturally relevant leadership, bias, systems training, and support for at least 30 parent advocates and leaders who serve the Inland Empire (Riverside and San Bernardino Counties) Hispanic I/DD community. Additionally, CLASE members will develop and disseminate twelve new resources (3 each year in English and Spanish) to educate the Latino community on Regional Center services in the next two years. We currently have 45 leaders enrolled in this year's cohort. This group has worked on resources around Housing, Social Recreation services, Camping, and is now training on the Culture of Poverty to understand better how to work with specific community members.
- Remote Employment Pilot Project provides virtual training to six self-advocates with Autism to explore 21st Century job skills, remote employment, resume writing, interviewing, self-advocacy skills, accommodations, job matching, and Job Club. We have provided and seen increased skills training, and participants have identified and working towards employment goals. This project will end on Dec 31, 2022.

4. Applicant Question: Project Transition

If awarded, how will your current project(s) transition into the 2022-23 proposed 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.

Applicant Response:

This additional grant would leverage new partners to address disparities in Early Start.

Section Name: General Application

Sub Section Name: Proposal Summary

1. Applicant Question: Project Type

Choose the project type that best describes your activities from the list below:

Applicant Response:

Engagement and Outreach

Applicant Comment:

A 'pandemic echo' refers to the crises now occurring directly related to the pandemic but not due to the COVID-19 virus itself. In the Inland Empire, we continue to hear from parents, pre-schools, mental health professionals, and medical providers about their concerns for our youngest generation of children. Many children did not receive medical care or socialization opportunities. The result is many children with varying behaviors or developmental lag that is challenging for pre-schools, childcare, and medical professionals who do not know what to do.

This project is focused on improving awareness of and access to Early Start services, resources, and education for diverse and marginalized communities in the Inland Empire. This project will utilize trusted CBOs, radio, webinars, social media, and printed material to reach and engage underserved areas such as our more remote communities, Spanish-speaking communities, the Native American community, and foster children, often the least reached populations and whose children have the highest needs.

2. Applicant Question: Duration of project

Choose the duration of your project.

Applicant Response:

24 months

3. Applicant Question: Regional Centers

Choose the Regional Center(s) that your project will serve. Check all that apply. If you are proposing a statewide project, select the All Regional Centers/Statewide option.

Applicant Response:

- Inland Regional Center

4. Applicant Question: Counties Served

List the county or counties your project proposes to serve. Check all that apply. If you are proposing a statewide project, the select All Counties / Statewide option.

Applicant Response:

- San Bernardino County
- Riverside County

5. Applicant Question: Community Based Organizations

Will you be working with one or more Community Based Organizations? If so, provide the name of the organization and how you will be working together.

Applicant Response:

Other agencies who are engaged stakeholders for children in the Inland Empire and who will be invited to participate as a part of information dissemination include; IEHP, Molina, First 5, Indian Family Services, Screening Assessment Referral and Treatment Centers (SART), Department of Behavioral Health, foster agencies, Child Family Services (CFS), Children's Network, and Faith-Based and medical community programs.

Attachment:

[Letter of support for autism.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

6. Applicant Question: 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

Attachment:

[KFF_LetterofSupport.docx.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

[IEAACE Letter of Support October 2022.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

7. Applicant Question: Strategies and Sustainability

How will your project continue its work after the grant funding has concluded?

Applicant Response:

This project will pilot multiple ways and use current networks to increase outreach efforts to connect target families (Spanish-speaking families, foster care families, and Native American families) with Early Start. This project can leave long-lasting and sustainable changes, including:

- Data on effective ways to reach these marginalized communities can be used after this grant is over to identify best practices and reduce costs in the future.
 - The building and strengthening of relationships in the community between CBOs and Early Start - especially for families in marginalized communities. These relationships will continue to grow over the next two years creating stronger partnerships and understanding of the need and resources available to parents of young children.
 - Videos and webinar recordings will be kept on stakeholder websites in perpetuity to be accessed later.
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Sub Section Name: Target Population

1. Applicant Question: Ethnicity Groups Served

Select the ethnicity group(s) the project will serve. For "Indian", "Pacific Islander", "Slavic" or "Other" use comment section to list specific groups.

Applicant Response:

- Hispanic
- Native American

2. Applicant Question: Ethnicity Group(s), Language(s) and Number of Individuals Served

For each ethnicity group, provide the number of individuals your project intends to serve and the related language(s).

Applicant Response:

Ethnicity Group(s)	Individuals Served	Language(s)
Foster Families	500	English and Spanish
Hispanic	1000	Spanish and English
Native American	100	English

3. Applicant Question: Age Group(s) Served

Select all Age Groups the project will serve.

Applicant Response:

- Birth up to Three (Early Start)
- Three to Five

Section Name: Project Application

Sub Section Name: Project Application

1. Applicant Question: Project Summary and Organizational Experience

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. In your answer, include what experience your organization has working with the target population and how your organization will work with the local RC(s).

Applicant Response:

A 'pandemic echo' refers to the crises now occurring directly related to the pandemic but not due to the COVID-19 virus itself. In the Inland Empire, we continue to hear from parents, pre-schools, mental health professionals, and medical providers about their concerns for our youngest generation of children. Many children did not receive medical care or socialization opportunities. The result is many children with varying behaviors or developmental lag that is challenging for pre-schools, childcare, and medical professionals who do not know what to do.

Our project is focused on improving awareness, access, and utilization of Early Start services, resources, and education for diverse and marginalized families, with a specific emphasis on families in the foster care system, Native American families, and Spanish-speaking families in the Inland Empire. The 24-month project will consist of 2 one-day conferences for professionals, including distributing of culturally and linguistically appropriate Spanish outreach material, 12 Webinars for parents of diagnosed and non-diagnosed children 0-5 with an opportunity to ask questions to an expert and a Resource Liaison position to connect families to resources, 12 Videos short videos, 150 Social media posts over 24 months (in non-diagnosed parent groups 1x a week) and 8 Outreach events in the community. The goal is to have an additional 100 Native American families, 500 foster families, and 1000 Spanish-speaking families receive services from Early Start.

By increasing the knowledge of medical professionals, preschool/childcare facilities, and families/caregivers, creating culturally and linguistically appropriate education and material, partnering with trusted messengers, and collecting and analyzing data, we feel this project will be effective in reaching and engaging these underserved families.

This project will bring three leading organizations in the Inland Empire and use their combined network to reach these most underserved communities to make them aware of Early Start and other resources that can help in the development of their child.

The Autism Society Inland Empire has over 30 years of experience providing system navigation, education, and social programs for children and adults with autism and their family members in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

The Inland Empire Autism Assessment Center of Excellence focuses on providing the gold evaluation standard for neurodevelopmental disorders, such as autism spectrum disorder. IEAACE has served over 6,000 children and their families through its growing team of clinical experts.

Kids First Foundation was founded in 2019 to fill the gaps for children, youth, and adults who may be experiencing trauma and/or mental health issues. KFF employs and/or contracts a diverse group of seasoned therapists with expertise in working with those who may have developmental disabilities.

2. Applicant Question: Data and Community Input

Explain why you have selected your priority population(s) using RC POS data and other data as supporting evidence of the disparity or inequity. Include how your organization used input from the community, target population, and RC to design the proposal.

Applicant Response:

It is challenging to compare ethnicity data with Inland Regional Center data confidently. Out of the 8,830 clients, 7,930 (90%) have their ethnicity listed under "Other ethnicity or race/multicultural." This would leave 900 children in Early Start with the following identified ethnicity: Hispanic, 61%; White, 21%; Black, 11%; Asian, 7%; American Indian, .44%; and Native Hawaiian, .11%. If this smaller sample is accurate, it is relatively representative of census data. Early Start has advised they are aware of this issue and are working on getting better data.

Using this same data set, we identified the following disparities which informed this grant:

1. Out of the 8,830 clients, 837 were Spanish speakers (9.5%), which is very low compared to the Census Bureau data showing 25%, identifying the Spanish-speaking community as one of the targets for this population.
2. Children in foster care, birth to 2 years, have a \$600 difference in per capita authorized services than children in the same age group living at home; \$4969 for children at home compared to \$4311 for foster children.
3. Native American children had the lowest authorized services at \$4011, compared to Asian children at \$7150, White children at \$6888, Black children at \$6771, and Hispanics at \$6737 for Hispanics.

This data we called out is representative of feedback our organizations hear from the community and confirmed by Early Start. In discussions with Early Start, they are excited to collaborate on this project.

3. Applicant Question: Uniqueness

How is the proposed project unique from a currently funded grant (e.g., strategies, activities, and goals) in the proposed RC catchment area? If the project is similar to a currently funded grant listed on the Department's website, how is the proposed project different?

Applicant Response:

The uniqueness of this project is related to its multi-prong approach in terms of the agencies involved, the target audience for Early Intervention, the methodologies utilized, and the use of data to determine best practices. Further, this project was specifically developed to meet the needs of this peri-pandemic era.

Children, particularly those in more remote or underserved areas, were even more disenfranchised from services or identification of need for services given the pandemic restrictions. During COVID, the number of children whose psychological, behavioral, and developmental needs have been missed or identified late is staggering. This project involves experts from the advocacy arena, neurodevelopmental disabilities area, early childhood intervention, and infant-toddler mental health who will collaboratively offer parental and provider education, information, and resources on how to best transform and facilitate our children's current state of affairs. Furthermore, this project will provide data on which outreach efforts worked most efficiently to reach Spanish-speaking, foster, and Native American families in the Inland Empire, which has not been done before.

4. Applicant Question: Improve Equity and Service Access

How will your project measurably improve equity, access, and reduce barriers to services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families?

Applicant Response:

Now, more than ever, we see that parents/caregivers may not know their child needs services or where to attain them. Other families are confused about what behaviors are due to being home with COVID, lack of socialization, possible trauma, or a neurodevelopmental disability. Cultural and socio-economic concerns are additional barriers. We hear from parents working full-time and don't know how they will fit in visits to the doctors' offices, don't have transportation, or don't know where to get help. Often families say it is difficult to understand Early Intervention and Regional Center services. Some families tell us that information and resources are not available culturally appropriate, so families don't comprehend even when they have been told to seek out Early intervention services for their child and what it means.

This project will address the lack of knowledge on child development, accessing and navigating resources, and exploring new outreach opportunities with culturally and linguistically competent, fact-based information by trusted messengers into these marginalized communities.

Our ultimate goal is to use utilization data from the POS reports and intake data to assist us in showing the success of this program. Data will also be used from re/post tests, attendance on webinars/conferences, participation at monthly chat sessions, and comments from participants to assist us in showing the improvement in equity and access.

5. Applicant Question: Support of RC Plan

Does the project support the RC plan to promote equity and reduce disparities in their catchment? 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 to promote community inclusion?

Applicant Response:

Because receiving a diagnosis for your child can be emotionally overwhelming, it is essential to link parents with trusted messengers and repeat fact-based information about where to go and how to advocate for services. We look forward to working with Early Start to collect data and work together to remove barriers and help families feel they understand the available resources.

Besides working collaboratively with Inland Regional Center and our two partners - the Kids First Foundation and the Autism Assessment Center of Excellence, we have identified over 40 CBOs and government agencies we will be working with: including our local health insurance plans (IEHP, Molina), First 5 agencies (Riverside and San Bernardino Counties), Indian Family Services, Screening Assessment Referral and Treatment Centers (SART), Department of Behavioral Health, several foster agencies, Child Family Services (CFS), Children's Network, and Faith-Based and medical community programs. Many of these agencies are long-time partners and have attended the CLASE Community of Practice for leaders serving the local Latino IDD community or members of the Autism/Neurodevelopmental Disorders Collaborative, which has been established for ten years. These partners are eager to distribute educational and resource material to families and link them to other trusted resources to ensure the children receive the treatments they need.

6. Applicant Question: Project Activities and Measures

Note: Before answering this question, applicants must complete the Activities Template located in the middle tab directly above.

The schedule of activities clearly and specifically demonstrates the steps that the project will take to achieve its stated objective and measures. Do the proposed measures appropriately track the project objective and activities, provide insight into the effectiveness of project, and demonstrate impact on the target population?

Applicant Response:

We feel our proposed measures will appropriately track the project objective and activities, provide insight into the effectiveness of the project, and demonstrate impact on the target population. Our strategy is to utilize and measure different strategies for reaching Native American families, foster families, and Spanish-speaking communities. Three agencies will be working on this project to ensure its success. Capacity has been built into the grant to ensure professionals are working in their areas of expertise. For example, the Autism Society Inland Empire will lead in creating social media posts. Still, the content will be checked by subject matter experts in Kids First and the Autism Assessment Clinic and then strategically disseminated and tracked by a Social Media marketing company. A data analyst with the Autism Society will collate the data each month, which will be reviewed in monthly meetings with all partners, including Early Start to track trends and adjust as necessary.

This project is focused on improving awareness, access, and utilization of Early Start services, resources, and education for diverse and marginalized families, with a specific emphasis on families in the foster care system, Native American families, and Spanish-speaking families in the Inland Empire.

This model will be used for the printed material, videos, webinars, and the conference to ensure. All partners put careful thought into this model to effectively reach these marginalized communities with the most accurate and up-to-date information and resources about how to help their children.

7. Applicant Question: Budget Template and Narrative

Note: Before answering this question, applicants must complete the Budget Template located in the tab directly above.

The project budget is consistent with the stated project objective and activities, and clearly and concisely explains how the proposed expenditures support the overall project design and outcomes. The project budget costs are clearly associated with the activities and does not include non-allowable costs or costs funded by other sources.

- Budget Template example is located at [Attachment C](#).
- Budget Details and Restrictions are available [here](#).

Applicant Response:

See attached report.

Section Name: Proposal Certification

Sub Section Name: Certification

1. Applicant Question: Confirm Proposal Discussion with RC(s)

CBOs are required to discuss their proposal with each RC(s) the CBO is intending to serve. If you are a CBO, have you discussed your proposal with each RC you are intending to serve?

Applicant Response:

Yes

2. Applicant Question: RC Contact

CBOs are required to submit their application concurrently to the Department and to each RC(s) catchment the CBO is intending to serve. If you are a CBO, state the name(s) of the contact person(s) at each RC you have emailed your proposal application. The RC contact list is available here at [Attachment F](#).

Applicant Response:

This project was discussed with CJ Cook, MBA, Manager- Community Engagement, and Edyth Gallardo, MPA, MSW, Federal Compliance Specialist, Early Start Program at Inland Regional Center (IRC).

3. Applicant Question: Code of Conduct

Grantee Code of Conduct

The Department is committed to supporting services and programs with integrity that foster collaboration and professionalism. Grantees are expected to conduct project activities in a professional and respectful manner that include:

- **Valuing Diversity and Inclusion.** Grantees should embrace diversity that includes but is not limited to: ability, race, language, national origin, citizenship, age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, and religion.
- **Conducting Activities with Personal and Professional Integrity.** All activities with individuals, families, community organizations, regional centers, and state, local and federal agencies should be conducted with professionalism, dignity, respect, and fairness. Grantees should be open to listening to different points of view and fostering productive communication.
- **Providing a Positive Work Environment:** All projects should foster a positive and respectful work environment with their colleagues and other grantees.

Applicant Response:

- I acknowledge that I have reviewed the Code of Conduct.
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4. Applicant Question: Applicant Certification

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.

Applicant Response:

Yes
