

Rhode Island

What is one interesting thing about your state?

The oldest operating carousel in the United States is in Rhode Island, at Watch Hill Beach in Westerly.



Engaging Communities

Context:

- Our HRSA project is focused on:
 1. Increasing access to information about ASD/DD , with emphasis on early signs (i.e. by providing training and webinars and engaging in community outreach).
 2. Providing family navigation and support to families, especially in medically underserved communities
- Our HRSA family navigation model engages RI communities by:
 1. Focusing on the state's core cities and the Narragansett Tribe (see **State Data**) in order to increase equitable access to resources.
 2. Partnering with community organizations to reach target communities
 3. Increasing our linguistic and cultural capability to provide accessible training, navigation, and support

Successful Strategies:

- Connections fostered by partnering with existing state efforts & committees focused on health equity and increasing access to information about screening/evaluation: e.g. Rhode Island's Health Equity Zones initiative, Rhode Island Department of Health Successful Start Screening Committee, EOHHS' Interagency Council.
- Investing in building relationships and partnerships with community leaders to increase linguistic and cultural capability, e.g. Center for Southeast Asians, Narragansett Tribe Pre-School and Health Center, Central Falls Parent Academy, Providence RTL, etc.
- Investing in a bilingual Community Engagement Specialist dedicated to the city of Providence.

Challenges:

- Relationships and partnerships with trusted community organizations require significant time investment to nurture and build, which often means it takes longer to assess the impact of activities.

QI Method

Method: PDSA Cycles (initiated March 2019)

Focus:

How might we engage more families in Rhode Island's core cities in The Autism Project's Creating the Connections training – a key strategy? Is tele-education a viable strategy for increasing access to information about early signs, screening, and evaluation?



Successful Strategies:

- Using PDSA cycles on a small team – the learn-by-doing nature of the methodology enables us to quickly implement plans, learn from them, and act accordingly.
- Partnering with community organizations enables our team to identify and mitigate barriers that prevent families from accessing information and significantly increase our reach.

State Data

- Rhode Island used/uses data from Kids Count to design its project model, focused on Rhode Island's Core Cities and the Narragansett Indian Reservation in Charlestown. 2/3 of the state's children living in poverty live in these cities; the concentration of Black and Hispanic children in these cities is the highest.
- The Autism Project keeps demographic data on each individual who receives training as well as records of family navigation and support engagements that enable us to assess our reach in the core cities.

Challenges:

- Quantifying the impact of access to the information about early signs/screening/evaluation beyond the training, especially when training parents in the core cities - connecting the dots between the training and improved outcomes.