



Earlier Autism Diagnosis and Intervention

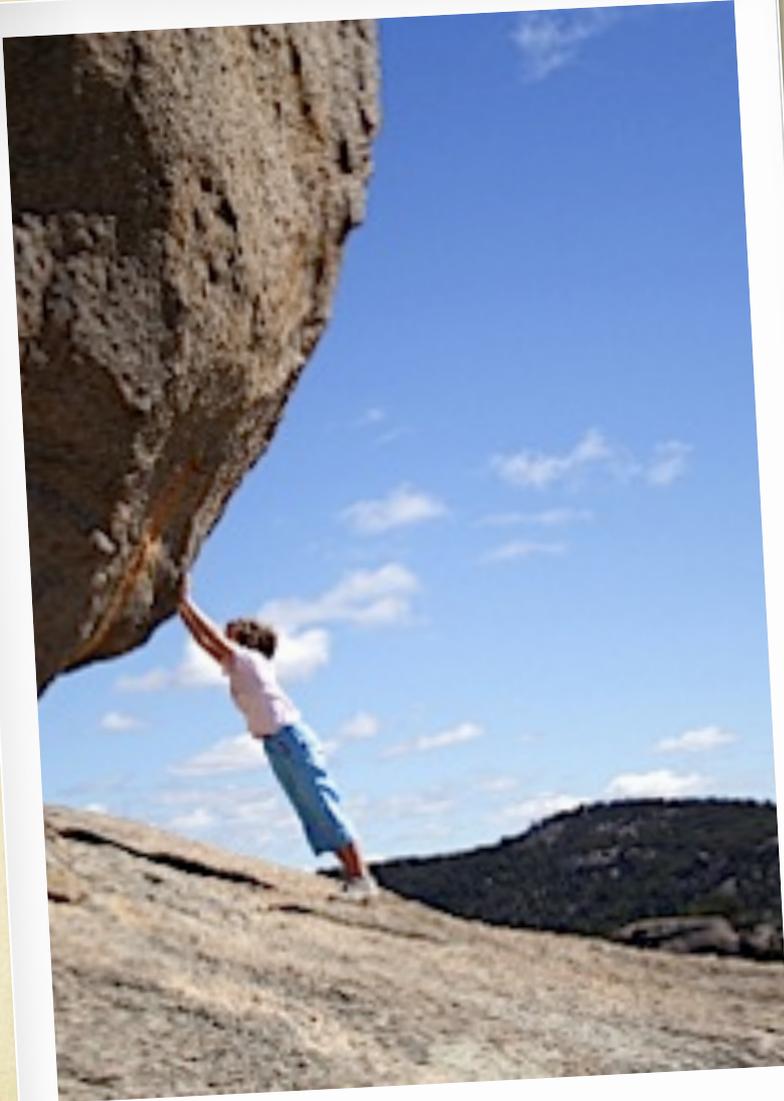
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Background

- 1 in 45 children are affected by autism
- Difficulty accessing services
- Disparity greater for children from minority backgrounds
- Early autism intervention and diagnosis are associated with better long-term outcomes

Goal: identify pathways to help children receive intervention sooner and improve their ability to reach their maximum potential.



Methods

- Anderson Model of Health Care Utilization
- NC Needs of Young Children with Autism Survey (n=469)
- Descriptives & logit modeling



Table 1. Sample Demographic Characteristics

Variable	Mean(SD)	Percentile
<i>Predisposing Characteristics</i>		
Minority race or ethnicity		29%
Child Race		
White		77%
Black		13%
Asian or Pacific Islander		2%
American Indian or Alaskan Native		2%
Other Race		6%
Hispanic Ethnicity		13%
Primary Language Spoken at Home		
English		92%
Spanish		7%
Other		1%
Confidence in knowing who to ask		63%
Number of Providers Visited	3.66(1.48)	
<i>Enabling Characteristics</i>		
HS Education or lower		19%
Screened for ASD		40%
Siblings w/ASD	0.15 (0.45)	13%
<i>Need</i>		
HFA		21%
<i>Context</i>		
Rural Residence		2%
<i>Outcomes</i>		
Parent First Concerned		88%
Age When Concerns First Recognized	21.16(12.99)	
Age at First Intervention	29.79(14.91)	
Age at Initial Diagnosis	39.27(17.17)	

Results

Recognition:
*Concerns first recognized by Parent versus
Pediatrician?*



Time to Recognition:
Concerns recognized Early versus Late?



Age of First Intervention:
Early versus Late?



Time to ASD Diagnosis:
Quick versus Long?

Journey to Law



Implications

- Important modifiable factors to improve systems of service & pathways that lead to early intervention & diagnosis
- Policy makers should support & increase:
 - autism awareness
 - routine autism screening
 - screening follow-up & addressing parents' developmental concerns
 - strategies to improve provider recognition for minority and higher functioning children
 - availability of specialists trained to conduct early diagnostic assessments.

Discussion

- How can we support these recommendations and changes?
- Are there other important recommendations not listed here that will be vital to support early autism recognition & intervention?





thank
you!

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