



Autism Project – East Bay Support Center

The incidence of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) has been growing exponentially throughout the Country, with Rhode Island having over 10,000 reported cases in 2013.

The toll it takes on the parents with an ASD child is substantial both emotionally and financially. Ultimately it is up to the parents to understand how to deal with their child's disorder and to find the treatment or training that may be available - not an easy task. Since there is no cure and no identified cause, this is a lifetime commitment.

ASD has risen to the level of a crisis in our communities. As in any crisis, local community support can often provide the first level of relief to the affected parents and children. Distance and cost of professional help can be key factors impeding needed support to over 200 families in Bristol County.

The proposal is that a support center be established in Bristol for the East Bay, staffed by professionals, parent advocates and supported by the community to aid ASD families get local and affordable support.

An Advisory Council has been formed to identify programs, structures and resources needed to launch, fund and publicize a local ASD Support Center. Members of this Council come from several community, business and professional organizations:

Bristol Warren Regional School District (Mario Andrade)
Bristol County Town Councils (Mary Parella, David Frerish)
Bradley Hospital (Christine Brown)
Autism Project, Inc. (Joanne Quinn)
Bristol Rotary Charities Foundation (Bruce Cox, Chris Woodard, Scott Pickering, Jacques de Labry)

We conducted a Survey to identify services most desired by the ASD families and are in the process of firming up a location for this center. The Survey will be accessible until the end of May at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/D33KBT8>

Bristol Rotary Charities Foundation is seeking funding for this Center from the communities it will serve and will launch a fundraising effort this Summer & Fall - targeting for an opening of the Center in September.