

## **Project Design - Narrative**

**Description** – Based on Florida Statute 1004.55, the seven regional autism centers are expected to provide nonresidential resource and training services for persons of all ages and of all levels of intellectual functioning who have autism, who have a pervasive developmental disorder that is not otherwise specified, who have an autistic-like disability, who have a dual sensory impairment, or who have a sensory impairment with other handicapping conditions. Each center will provide services within its geographical region of the state. Service delivery shall be consistent for all centers. Each center is expected to coordinate services within and between state and local agencies and school districts but may not duplicate services provided by those agencies or school districts.

Each center's constituency board will work collaboratively with the center. To promote statewide planning and coordination, a conference must be held annually for staff from each of the seven centers and representatives from each center's constituency board. The purpose of the conference will be to facilitate coordination, networking, cross-training, and feedback among the staffs and constituency boards of the centers.

## **State Performance Plan/Annual Report (SPP)**

The project will address the following two indicators:

- Indicator 10 - Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification, as submitted to the Office of Special Education Programs on February 1, 2008.
- Activities related to Indicator 14 - Percent of youth who had individual educational plans (IEPs), are no longer in secondary school and who have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school, although not specifically identified in the document submitted to the Office of Special Education Programs on February 1, 2008.

## **Project abstract**

Established in 1993, the University of Florida/Gainesville CARD provides services to families, educators and other professionals in 14 Counties in North Central Florida. Our region includes Alachua, Bradford, Citrus, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Hernando, Lafayette, Levy, Marion, Putnam, Suwannee, and Union Counties. The UF CARD/Gainesville is staffed by personnel with established expertise in autism and autistic-like behaviors and in sensory impairments. Working in collaboration with public and private schools, pre-service personnel development programs, the Northeast Florida Personnel Development Alliance, adult service agencies, community providers and families, the UF/Gainesville CARD assists over 1,500 individuals with autism and related disabilities. Additionally, UF/Gainesville CARD professionals work with researchers in Psychiatry, Psychology, Education, Nursing and Communication sciences and Disorders at the University of Florida through our connection to the William and Evelyn McKnight Brain Institute. We receive advice and guidance on policies and priorities by our Constituency Board which is comprised of a diverse group of family members of individuals with autism and related disabilities from throughout our region. Recent accomplishments in FY 2007 – 2008 include mentorship with individual teachers in our area, regional professional development days for educators, three intensive twelve-week courses in communication development for families of children with autism and related disabilities and support for including children ages 4 to 13 in summer camps in Marion and Hernando Counties.

CARD has been an invaluable part of Florida's education, family and community systems for the past 15 years. We have enriched the lives of thousands of individuals with autism and related disabilities and their families during that time period. As the demand for services increases with the growth in this population, CARD will continue to be an integral community partner. The seven Centers for Autism and Related Disabilities will continue to support the Florida Department of Education reading initiatives and efforts to achieve the SBE Strategic Imperatives. In addition to our functions for individuals across the age span, CARD UF/Gainesville will provide specific attention to Strategic Imperatives 1 (Increase the Supply of Highly Effective Teachers) and 3 (Improve Student Rates of Learning).

**Initiatives/Expected Outcomes:**

1. Staff that have expertise in autism and autistic-like behaviors and in sensory impairments.
2. Individual and direct family assistance in the home, community, and school.
3. Technical assistance and consultation services, including specific intervention and assistance for a client of the center, the client's family, and the school district, and any other services that are appropriate.
4. Professional training programs that include developing, providing, and evaluating pre-service and in-service training in state-of-the-art practices for personnel who work with the populations served by the centers and their families.
5. Public education programs to increase awareness of the public about autism, autistic-related disabilities of communication and behavior, dual sensory impairments, and sensory impairments with other handicapping conditions.

**Baseline data**

The University of Florida / Gainesville CARD has developed positive relationships with all school districts we serve, as well as teachers, agencies, and families, as evidenced by our high rates of training and professional development workshops (72), contacts with families (2,080), technical assistance contacts with school and agency personnel (328) and public education presentations (48) thus far for 2007-2008. In addition, several districts, including Gilchrist, Levy and Hamilton County Schools have utilized our services for at least one major project during the course of FY 2007-2008.

Despite a 4% decrease in funding received in FY 2007-2008, The University of Florida / Gainesville CARD was able to successfully provide the services requested by districts and families. It should be noted that requests for services and number of services delivered continues to increase each year. Our Center experienced an 8.3% increase thus far in the number of new families registered during FY2007-2008. Thus, the number of families and educational programs served by the UF / Gainesville CARD continues to increase, and the additional reduction in funding will make it extremely difficult to maintain current rates of service. Accordingly, goals for 2007-2008 will reflect maintenance of current service levels instead of increasing rates of services.

FY 2008-2009's baseline data on CARD's efforts to meet the expanding needs of the districts and families are highlighted in Table 1.

**Table 1: 2007-2008 Demand and Provision of CARD Services**

	Number of New Constituents	Total Constituents	Professional Education Trainings	TA meetings/ visits	Individual consultations	Public Education
2005-2006 actual	197	1142	81	372	3,685	22
2006-2007 actual	192	1302	101	662	2,902	38
2007-2008 anticipated	192	1494	80	500	3,200	12
2007-2008* actual	208	1495	72	327	2,070	43

\*(partial data through May 2008)

In FY 2007-2008, the University of Florida/Gainesville CARD staff met with ESE Directors, autism coordinators, and FDLRS representatives to develop technical assistance and training plans for the 2008 – 2009 school year. A report summarizing these plans will be provided to FL-DOE with our final report. Training plans developed and offered across the districts focused on teaching social and communication skills, supporting students in inclusive settings, transition from school to post-school life, and developing quality programs for students with autism. During FY 2007-2008, the Florida CARDs developed an Autism Observation Instrument for General Education Classrooms to supplement the Autism Classroom Checklist developed in FY 2006-2007. These instruments can be used by district and school administrators to systematically measure program quality as well as the impact of CARD teacher training. In FY 2007-2008, all but 3 trainings offered statewide by CARD were delivered in face-to-face format. In light of budget cuts for both CARD and stakeholders, in 2008-2009, CARD will develop, pilot and evaluate a variety of training formats and presentations for remote or technology based training.

In response to data from the FY2006-2007 year plan that indicated that students with ASD lagged behind other disability groups (26% compared to 56%) in accessing post-high school employment and education, CARD developed a series of case studies of individuals with ASD who successfully navigated the transition. Their stories were assembled for analysis of what strategies the individuals used to obtain their outcomes, and what resources were used, including CARD’s role in obtaining successful transition to adult life. In 2008-2009, CARD will supplement this baseline data with census data, attempting to contact all constituents that were students with ASD with IEPs who exited high school in 2007. All CARD centers will collaborate to develop the format and method for this endeavor.

Finally, the UF/Gainesville CARD will work in support of the Florida Department of Education efforts to address disproportionality (SPP 10) in FY 2008-2009. Baseline data provided indicates that one district (Alachua) in the UF/Gainesville CARD region has already been identified as having an unacceptable risk ratio (2.06) for white (not Hispanic) students in 2007-08. In 2008-2009, CARD will work with the districts in our region to develop and offer training on culturally sensitive identification and eligibility assessment, and offer this training to targeted district personnel, as well as all other interested stakeholders.

### **Established need**

In order to address SPP number 10 (Disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups), CARD has examined the Florida Department of Education data on Risk ratios for students identified as ASD. As presented in Baseline Data section above these data indicate a clear need for improving practices in the identification of these students. CARD anecdotal data supports these findings. Across Florida's school districts, white (not Hispanic) and Asian /Pacific Islander students are being over identified with ASD and Black (not Hispanic) students are being under identified with ASD. Thus further training of school psychologists and others involved in the evaluation, identification and eligibility processes is necessary. Additionally, training for parents and family members who participate in providing information to diagnosticians is also imperative.

To address SPP number 14 (Percent of youth in competitive employment and/or enrolled in post secondary school within one year of leaving high school), baseline data for CARD constituents needs to be collected in FY 2008-09. Although CARD surveyed adult constituents of all ages regarding these issues in FY 2007-08, further data on those exiting school in 2007 is needed. Our survey of adult constituents showed that only 12% were in college or technical school and only 19 % were currently working. In FY 2007-08, CARD also compiled case studies of post-school success stories. These data represent a best practices goal for transitioning students.

## **Scope of Work**

### **Project Activities**

#### **Support for Strategic/Reading Imperatives**

The Florida Department of Education Strategic Imperatives are central to CARD's long-standing tradition of: (1) Increasing the Supply of Highly Effective Teachers (Strategic Imperative One); and (2) Improving Student Rates of Learning (Strategic Imperative Three). CARD has also targeted Reading and SPP Indicators 10 and 14 for special attention during 2008-2009.

#### **Strategic Imperative One: Increase the Supply of Highly Effective Teachers**

As noted above, building capacity among professionals serving people with autism and related disabilities in our local communities is one of the fundamental CARD missions. Because educational interventions are the only scientifically validated treatments for children with autism spectrum disorders and related disabilities, the importance of having well-trained, highly effective teachers is paramount. NCLB further articulates the critical need to have highly skilled teachers in all instructional areas, including those related to exceptional student education. The seven Centers for Autism and Related Disabilities will continue their individual and collaborative efforts to increase the numbers of such professionals serving students with autism and related disabilities across the State of Florida. This target population includes teachers serving students with autism and related disabilities in General Education classrooms, Autism classrooms (defined as classrooms where more than 50% of the students have Autism); and other Exceptional Student Education classrooms. Related service providers, paraprofessionals, and parents will also be included in this process and related activities.

Each CARD center will continue to collaborate with districts regarding their needs for professional development, critical areas for training, and outcomes of in-service training. The University of Florida/Gainesville CARD will develop an annual service plan for each district and continue to identify teachers who participate in training as well as those who have obtained the autism endorsement.

**Activity 1:** Develop 2008-2009 service plan through ongoing collaboration with stakeholders.

Deliverable

- Report outlining plan

**Activity 2:** Each CARD center will continue to track the number and type of teachers who participate in training.

Deliverable

- List of number/type of teachers trained

**Activity 3:** Each CARD center will continue to track the number of teachers who have obtained the autism endorsement.

Deliverable

- Report on endorsement progress (i.e., numbers, trainings, technical assistance)

**Activity 4:** Provide training and technical assistance as well as support and consultation that lead to an increased number of teachers meeting requirements for endorsement prior to 2011.

Deliverables

- Quarterly reports

**Activity 5:** Develop survey instrument to assess number of students in meaningful, supported or competitive employment one year following graduation.

Deliverable

- Survey instrument

**Activity 6:** Survey will be distributed to CARD constituents who graduated in June 2007. Target group consists of those CARD constituents who had IEPs.

Deliverables

- Summary report of regional survey results
- Statewide summary report

**Activity 7:** Disseminate training materials for CARD Observation Instrument for Autism Classrooms to DOE and School Districts.

Deliverable

- Training materials

**Strategic Imperative Three: Improve Student Rates of Learning**

Students with autism and related disabilities consistently demonstrate less favorable outcomes when educational interventions lack consistency and continuity. CARD has served a very important role since its inception in helping to provide direct assistance, training, technical assistance/consultation, and support to all of the learning environments (i.e., home, school, community) in which people with autism participate. In serving as the bridge between settings, CARD helps to ensure continuity and consistency of care. The well-documented deficits in the maintenance and generalization of skills for learners with

autism and related disabilities have informed our service delivery system. It is this multi-disciplinary, multi-setting, multi-service approach that contributes to improved rates of learning among our constituents. As such, we will continue to provide Direct Assistance and Support, Consultation and Technical Assistance, and Professional and Parent Training across all settings and to all those involved in the education and support of our constituents. CARD sites will investigate ways to measure the efficacy of these services in partnership with school districts and other educational agencies.

The CARD program aims to maintain FY 07-08 client contact, consultation and training rates. However, reductions may be realized due to a 9 to 13% cut in state funding for FY 08-09. To continue to meet constituent needs, we will examine alternative modes for service delivery and training, including tele-conferencing, web-conferencing and other distance learning tools.

**Activity 8:** Conduct individualized client and programmatic consultative support to improve student outcomes that directly impact rates of learning, including improvement of behavior, skill acquisition, language and literacy skills, social skills, and inclusion. Consultation and support will also be provided to families of students with autism and related disabilities preparing for transition to post-secondary education and/or employment.

Deliverables

- Quarterly reports
- Provide 3000 direct assistance contacts during the current fiscal year
- Serve 6000 individuals in the context of these assistance contacts

**Activity 9:** Conduct consultation and technical assistance that improves student outcomes in the areas of behavior, skill acquisition, language and literacy skills, social skills, inclusion and overall skill acquisition, including critical skills for employment and post-secondary education and training.

Deliverables

- Quarterly reports
- Provide 500 consultation and technical assistance contacts to teachers and schools within our region during this year
- Serve 1000 individuals in the context of these assistance contacts

**Activity 10:** Conduct family and professional trainings or group discussions that improve student outcomes in the areas of behavior, skill acquisition, language and literacy skills, social skills, inclusion, and overall skill acquisition, including critical skills for employment and post-secondary education and training, and prepare family members to be active participants in their child's education.

Deliverables

- Quarterly reports
- CARD Annual Conference materials
- Provide 80 trainings to families, teachers and schools within our region during this year
- Serve 1000 individuals in the context of these trainings or group discussions

**Activity 11:** Provide public education and awareness programs and/or activities that address the increasing prevalence of autism and related disabilities, the learning styles of our constituents, community-based instruction and inclusion practices, and the range of support services offered by CARD.

Deliverables

- Quarterly reports
- Offer 20 public education and awareness programs and/or activities
- Serve 500 individuals in the context of these public education programs and/or activities

**Activity 12:** Link families to support groups that enable families to learn from each other.

Deliverable

- Provide links to all support groups within our region on our website.

**Activity 13:** Conduct at least one regional family education program that addresses reading or literacy instructional support strategies.

Deliverables

- Quarterly reports
- Training materials
- Workshop evaluation data

**Activity 14:** Maintain a database of resource and referral information that can be disseminated to families, educators and other professionals.

Deliverables

- Website
- Professional database
- Resource lists

**Evaluation Plan:**

Related to Strategic Imperative One, information gathered from the initial needs assessment in 05-06 and our subsequent collaborative meetings with stakeholders in 06-07 and 07-08 yielded annual regional service plans. A continuation of this process will be pursued in 08-09, and existing training measurement and demographic information (e.g., survey responses, attendance records) will be provided to FLDOE.

Consistent with its mission as described above, CARD will also continue to address Strategic Imperative Three. Activities for this imperative will be tracked in existing database systems, and quantitative reports will be generated quarterly outlining the number of each type of activity conducted (individual family/school assistance, technical assistance/consultation, professional training), number of recipients of each service, and additional information on instructional personnel participating in professional development activities (e.g, type of position held, professional credentials, district, etc.).

Products produced through these objectives will include deliverables noted above.

***Support for Reading Imperative***

The University of Florida/Gainesville CARD will provide support for Reading Initiatives through Activities 2, 8, 9, 10, and 13 above. CARD will support the reading initiatives by providing training opportunities to teachers and parents on instruction of both pre-literacy skills and reading skills in the five critical areas, and by consulting with educational professionals and parents on increasing student motivation to learn and decreasing problematic behaviors that may interfere with students learning to read.

## **Dissemination/Marketing**

Marketing information to current and potential consumers about the CARD program will be shared in a variety of ways. The major formats for sharing information include:

- **Brochures**

The University of Florida/Gainesville CARD will disseminate brochures featuring our project's mission, activities, a brief statement on the nature of autism and related disabilities, along with project staff contact information. Brochures include: (1) Statewide CARD brochure; (2) "A Map for Your Journey" family brochure.

- **Fact Sheets**

CARD has produced a variety of fact sheets over the years, including those on Autistic Disorder, Asperger Syndrome, PDD-NOS, Choosing Professionals, Diagnosing and Evaluating Autism, Positive Behavior Supports, Accessing CARD Services, etc. Additional fact sheets on specific topics will continue to be developed and distributed as needs are identified. All fact sheets are offered in English and Spanish.

- **Website**

The University of Florida/Gainesville CARD will continue to maintain an internet web site ([www.card.ufl.edu](http://www.card.ufl.edu)). This website will continue to be updated to provide accurate information on professional development workshops, and family education offerings.

- **Autism Awareness Posters**

Autism awareness posters have been created for use across Florida. These posters have been distributed across our catchment area to local pediatricians, childcare centers, schools, and other relevant agencies. Each year the University of Florida/Gainesville CARD adds to the distribution of these posters.

- **Newsletters/Training Calendars**

The University of Florida/Gainesville CARD will publish a general project newsletter, at least twice this year. These publications will contain general information about the project as well as information on professional development opportunities and other items of interest to constituents and autism professionals.

- **Conferences**

The University of Florida/Gainesville CARD, in cooperation with the other six CARD Centers and the Florida Outreach Project for Children and Young Adults who are Deaf-Blind, will sponsor an annual conference on autism and related disabilities. This conference will feature multiple training and awareness activities aimed at both parents and professionals. The conference will feature a teacher-training day co-sponsored by the Florida Department of Education, along with an adult service provider training day.

- **Other conferences**

The University of Florida/Gainesville CARD staff will present information at the Autism Society of America National Convention in July 2008 in Orlando, Florida, the Florida Family Café and other relevant events. All seven CARD sites will staff an exhibitor booth during events featuring information about our activities as well as autism and related disabilities.

- **State Personnel Development Alliances and ESE training forums**

Project staff will disseminate information about project objectives at regional Professional Development Alliance meetings and other Exceptional Student Education Forums.

- Information about professional development opportunities will be shared at meetings and through related Alliance networks.
- Information about specific training events will also be disseminated to pre-service educators in our region and to each FDLRS affiliate for inclusion in their training calendars and web sites.

### **Reporting Outcomes**

As required by FLDOE, the University of Florida/Gainesville CARD will provide a quarterly report of progress as well as fiscal information outlining the cumulative listing of expenditures to our project manager, Sheryl Sandvoss. Reports will be submitted electronically using the format provided by BEESS. The fourth quarter report will be a cumulative report of the project's accomplishments. Regular status updates will also be provided. Regular status updates are provided through monthly conference calls. Regional training data for this project are reported to PEPSA for inclusion in the BEESS project training database

**DELIVERABLES FORM**

**Deliverables: Manuals, reports, videos, CD ROMs, training materials, brochures, and any other tangible product to be developed by the project**

(1) Name of Deliverable and Brief Description	(2) Standard(s) for Acceptance	(3) Due Date(s)
1. REPORT to FLDOE outlining CARD/district service plan.	1. Review by DOE Staff; User Friendly; Review by Other Entity (Statewide CARD Director's Committee)	September 1, 2008
2. Quarterly REPORTS of CARD activities.	2. Appropriately Organized; Content Accurate; Content Complete; User Friendly; Review by DOE Staff	September 30, 2008; December 31, 2008; March 31, 2009; June 30, 2009
3. REPORT to FLDOE of number and type of teachers who participate in training	3. Review by DOE Staff; User Friendly; Review by Other Entity (Statewide CARD Director's Committee); Content Accurate	June 30, 2009
4. REPORT to FLDOE of number of teachers who have obtained the autism endorsement.	4. Review by DOE Staff; User Friendly; Review By Other Entity (Statewide CARD Director's Committee); Content Accurate	June 30, 2009
5. SURVEY instrument for post-secondary constituents.	5. Review by DOE Staff; User Friendly; Review by Other Entity (Statewide CARD Director's Committee); Content Accurate	October 1, 2008
6. Regional and Statewide summary REPORTS to FLDOE, school districts, and adult service providers of post-secondary constituent survey.	6. Review by DOE Staff; User Friendly; Review by Other Entity (Statewide CARD Director's Committee & Adult /Transition Committee); Content Accurate	June 30, 2009

**DELIVERABLES FORM**

<p>7. TRAINING MATERIALS for CARD Observation Instrument for dissemination to FLDOE and school districts.</p> <p>8. Information on support groups, local resources, and providers via website (<a href="http://card.ufl.edu">http://card.ufl.edu</a>)</p>	<p>7. Review by DOE Staff; User Friendly; Review by Other Entity (Statewide CARD Director's Committee); Content Accurate</p> <p>8. Review by DOE Staff; User Friendly; Content Accurate</p>	<p>October 1, 2008</p> <p>July 1, 2008 and ongoing</p>
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**TRAINING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND DISSEMINATION FORM**

**Training, Technical Assistance, and Dissemination: All training and technical assistance (TA) activities whether provided onsite, through distance learning media, conferences, workshops, or other delivery strategies**

<b>(1) Name of Activity and Brief Description</b>	<b>(2) Quantity and Quality Standards for Acceptance</b>	<b>(3) Method of Documentation</b>	<b>(4) Critical Timelines</b>
<p>1. WORKSHOPS - Regional teacher training workshops on best practices, including reading/literacy instruction.</p> <p>2. Provide 500 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE/CONSULTATION contacts serving 1,000 professionals.</p> <p>3. TRAINING/GROUP DISCUSSIONS - Provide 80 trainings or group discussions to 1,000 educators and/or family members.</p> <p>4. CONFERENCE – Coordinate the annual</p>	<p>1. Appropriately Organized; Participant Feedback Indicative of Usefulness; Delivery Appropriate to Content and Audience</p> <p>2. Delivery Appropriate to Content and Audience; Design and Content Appropriate to Intended Audience; Participant Feedback Indicative of Usefulness</p> <p>3. Content Accurate; Design and Content Appropriate to Intended Audience; Participant Feedback Indicative of Usefulness; Format Consistent with Content and Intended Audience</p>	<p>1. Evaluation Summaries; List of Participants; Participant Feedback Summaries; Sign-in Sheets</p> <p>2. Self-Reporting; Participant Feedback Summaries; Anecdotal Data; Agreements</p> <p>3. Evaluation Summaries; List of Participants; Participant Feedback Summaries; Sign-in Sheets</p>	<p>October 1, 2008 (Identify topics and suggested dates for each district)</p> <p>Ongoing (throughout year)</p> <p>October 1, 2008 (identify regional training topics with districts)</p> <p>Ongoing (identify other topics and schedule trainings throughout year)</p>

**TRAINING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND DISSEMINATION FORM**

<p>CARD conference in collaboration with FAU CARD</p> <p>5. CONFERENCE – Presentation and Exhibitor table at Autism Society of America National Conference</p> <p>6. OTHER: PUBLIC EDUCATION – provide 20 public education workshops or events</p>	<p>4. Appropriately Organized; Design and Content Appropriate to Intended Audience; Use of Consultants (Guest Speakers); Participant Feedback Indicative of Usefulness</p> <p>5. Appropriately Organized; Design and Content Appropriate to Intended Audience; Use of Consultants (Guest Speakers); Participant Feedback Indicative of Usefulness</p> <p>6. Appropriately Organized; Design and Content Appropriate to Intended Audience; Use of Consultants (Guest Speakers); Participant Feedback Indicative of Usefulness</p>	<p>4. Evaluation Summaries; Participant Feedback Summaries; Sign-in Sheets</p> <p>5. Evaluation Summaries; Participant Feedback Summaries; Sign-in Sheets</p> <p>6. Evaluation Summaries; Participant Feedback Summaries; Sign-in Sheets</p>	<p>January, 2009</p> <p>July, 2008</p> <p>Ongoing throughout year</p>
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**SERVICE DELIVERY FORM**

**Service Delivery: Delivery of intended services to target population; e.g., adult literacy services, child find services, student evaluation services, etc.**

<b>(1) Name of Service and Brief Description</b>	<b>(2) Standard(s) for Acceptance</b>	<b>(3) Method of DOE Verification</b>	<b>(4) Timeline for Service Delivery</b>
INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION with statewide CARD Centers, Florida DOE, and local school districts	Specified agencies collaborate.	Anecdotal data; Attendance records; List of participants; Meeting agendas and minutes	Ongoing
REFERRALS FOR OTHER SERVICES – Provide resources and referrals to constituents, partners, and collaborating agencies including links on the CARD website to local support groups.	Referrals are appropriate to identified needs.	Anecdotal data; Referral database; Referral lists	Ongoing
OTHER: PROVIDE INDIVIDUALIZED CLIENT/FAMILY SUPPORT including 3,000 direct assistance contacts serving 6000 individuals	Individualized client/family support is appropriate to identified needs.	Quarterly reports	Ongoing

**APPLICANT INSTRUCTIONS: SERVICE DELIVERY FORM**