



# The California Autism Professional Training and Information Network (CAPTAIN): Driving Change in Ensuring Treatment Fidelity in Evidence Based Practices



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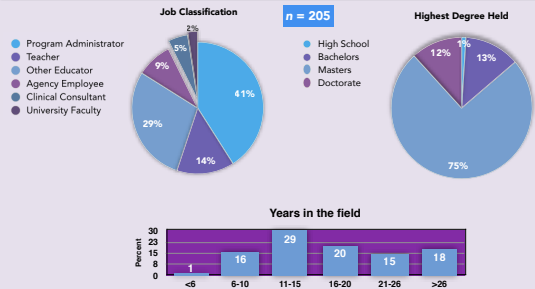
## Introduction

One child out of 68 is diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), an increase of approximately 30% from 2012. As the nation's most populous state, this trend poses a major service delivery challenge. The California Autism Professional Training and Information Network (CAPTAIN) is meeting this challenge through a multi-agency collaboration that supports the understanding, use and dissemination of evidence based practices (EBPs) for individuals affected by ASD across the state. Based on earlier efforts with California's participation in the CDC Regional Act Early Summit (2009) and the OSEP funded National Professional Development Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders (NPDC-ASD) Training and Technical Assistance Grant (2010-2012), CAPTAIN is a statewide initiative with three primary goals:

- 1) To increase knowledge about ASD and EBPs through systematic dissemination of information.
- 2) To increase implementation and fidelity of EBPs in schools and the community.
- 3) To increase inter-agency collaborations to leverage resources and standardize processes.

The above goals are being met through annual educational summits and a train-the-trainer model. A CAPTAIN website has also been created to vet and disseminate relevant information on ASD.

### Demographics



## Methods

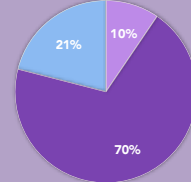
CAPTAIN participants completed a 38 item online survey prior to the annual summits in 2013 and 2014. A Likert scale was used, and results were analyzed to collect participant demographics and self report for Year One (pre) and Year Two (post) survey items related to the three CAPTAIN goals. This poster focuses on the analyses of CAPTAIN cohort responses from both years measuring current diagnostic descriptions and knowledge of ASD, content knowledge of EBPs, use of standardized protocols for treatment, and summative evaluation of treatment efficacy (content that was taught in Year One annual educational Summit).

## Results

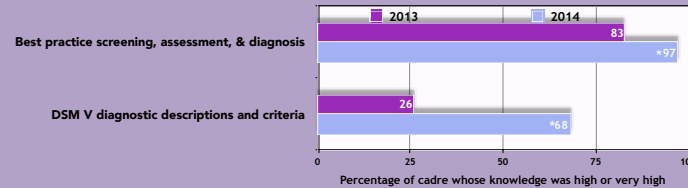
\* = p is significant at the <.05 level

Goals (since the 2013 CAPTAIN Summit) for Increasing Knowledge about ASD and EBPs in the Community

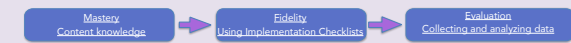
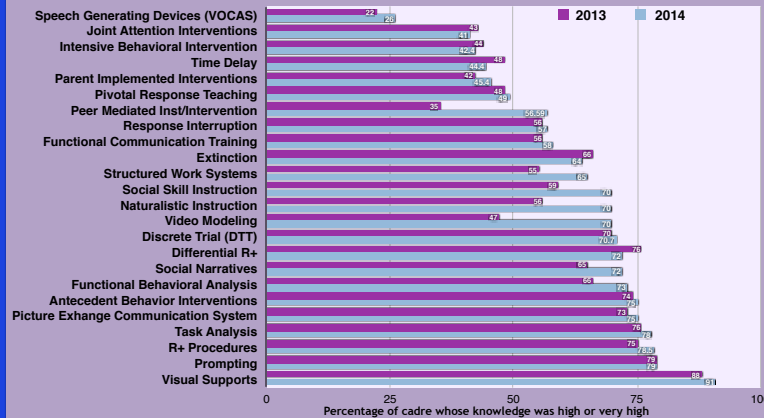
- Less than expected
- Expected level of outcome
- More than expected



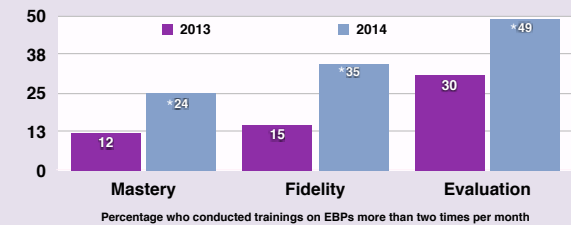
### Knowledge of ASD diagnostic best practice



### Knowledge of EBPs



### Use of EBPs



## Discussion

CAPTAIN is focused on enacting systems-level change across California by disseminating and implementing information on evidence-based practices (EBPs) in autism through educational summits and regional training activities throughout the year. Existing infrastructures were leveraged within key stakeholder groups to be maximally efficient. Survey data on participant knowledge about ASD and EBP competency and treatment fidelity show promising results and a growing momentum for unified approaches to addressing the needs of individuals with ASD and their families. CAPTAIN has successfully achieved the following to date:

- Recruited highly qualified and experienced cadre members to become leaders, trainers and facilitators in the effort to increase knowledge and use of EBPs.
- Facilitated a higher competency level in use of EBPs through its educational summits, resulting in an increase that was statistically significant for all three areas of mastery, fidelity, and evaluation.
- Embraced a higher standard of service delivery that will ultimately improve the lives of individuals with ASD.

These findings reflect the immediate impact that CAPTAIN training efforts have made in increasing competency levels and implementation of EBPs for professionals working across the state of California. The next phase is to have this process become a routine step in the administration of EBPs in autism.

The above results should be interpreted as preliminary due to the self-report format of the data, the comparison between the two years being dependent on survey completers only and some survey items were slightly modified for increased clarity. The next steps of this study will address these considerations.

## References

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Systems level change: the power of knowledge, implementation and evaluation