



CDC-AUCD-HRSA Leadership Opportunity

Act Early Ambassadors: State, Territorial, and Tribal Liaisons to CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early." Program

Request for Applications

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS RELEASED: December 16, 2015

**INFORMATIONAL CALL: Informational Call: January 7, 2016, 2pm ET. To join,
please dial: 866-951-1151, code 1857734**

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS DEADLINE: February 29, 2016

SELECTED APPLICANTS NOTIFIED BY: April 15, 2016

2016-18 ACT EARLY AMBASSADOR TERM: May 1, 2016 - April 30, 2018

**ORIENTATION CALL: May 3, 2016, 3pm ET. To join, please dial: 866-951-1151,
code 1857734**

REQUIRED ORIENTATION AND TRAINING (Atlanta, GA): June 8-9, 2016

This request for applications includes the following components:

- Act Early Ambassador Program Overview
- Act Early Initiative Background
- Role of the Act Early Ambassador
- Act Early Ambassador Responsibilities
- Ambassador Support
- 2016-18 Act Early Ambassador Timeline
- Application Procedure (including requirements and qualifications)
- Application Form

For questions about the Act Early Ambassador Program, contact Abigail Alberico at aalberico@aucd.org or 301-588-8252, ext. 205.



Act Early Ambassador Program Overview

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's \(CDC\) National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities](#) and the [Association of University Centers on Disabilities \(AUCD\)](#), with support from the [Health Resources and Services Administration \(HRSA\)](#), [Maternal and Child Health Bureau \(MCHB\)](#), announce a funding opportunity for Act Early Ambassadors to work with CDC's "[Learn the Signs. Act Early.](#)" (LTSAE) program to improve early identification of developmental delays and disabilities, including autism, by:

- serving as a state, territorial, or tribal point-of-contact for the national LTSAE program;
- supporting the work of Act Early Teams and other state/territorial/tribal or national initiatives to improve early identification of developmental delay and disability; AND
- promoting the adoption and integration of LTSAE resources, including materials to support developmental monitoring (milestone checklists, Milestone Moments booklet, Milestones in Action image library (coming soon), Milestone Tracker app (coming soon), etc.) and professional education tools ("[Watch Me! Celebrating Milestones and Sharing Concerns](#)" online training for early care and education providers, and the "[Autism Case Training \(ACT\)](#)" developmental behavioral pediatrics curriculum and web-based CE course for primary care health professionals) into systems that serve young children and their families or train those who serve young children and their families.

Up to 45 Act Early Ambassadors (representing states, territories, or tribes) will be funded; no more than 1 per state/territory/tribe EXCEPT for those with populations >10 million according to 2010 census, where up to 2 Ambassadors may be selected.

This opportunity is open to all whom meet the criteria and can fulfill the responsibilities. Those who have previously served as Act Early Ambassadors are also eligible to re-apply. Awards will be made based on an objective review of all applicants.

This announcement requests applications for the fifth cohort of Act Early Ambassadors.

Act Early Initiative Background

CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early." (LTSAE) program aims to improve early



identification of developmental delays and disabilities, including autism, by promoting developmental monitoring and screening so children and their families can get the services and support they need.

The LTSAE Act Early Initiative, a collaborative effort between CDC, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the Association for University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD), and the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs (AMCHP), seeks to improve collaboration among state programs that identify and serve young children with developmental disabilities and their families. CDC and HRSA work collaboratively on a variety of programs focused on early identification of developmental disability in young children. CDC, AUCD, and HRSA convened Act Early regional summits in all 10 HHS regions from 2007-2010. Act Early teams developed state plans and have begun implementation of state plan activities. Act Early teams are engaged in public awareness, education and training, collaboration, and advocacy at the state and local level.

Role of the Act Early Ambassador

- Act Early Ambassadors work within a cohort of state, territorial, and tribal leaders and with the national LTSAE program, AUCD, and Act Early state teams (where applicable) to support national, state/territorial/tribal, and local activities to improve early identification of developmental delay and disability by focusing efforts on increasing developmental monitoring (particularly through the promotion and integration of LTSAE messages and materials) and screening practices across their state.
- Ambassadors are strongly encouraged to collaborate with programs that serve young children and their parents, such as Head Start and Early Head Start, WIC, home visiting, IDEA Part C/Child Find and others, as well as health care and child care professionals and to introduce and sustainably integrate LTSAE developmental monitoring tools and trainings into the work of those programs with parents and professionals.
- Ambassadors collaborate with state agencies and campaign partners to improve policy and programs related to early identification.

Act Early Ambassador Responsibilities

The responsibilities allow Ambassadors to apply individual creativity and expertise toward meeting the needs and addressing the challenges of each Ambassador's own state, territory, or tribe related to early identification.



Act Early Ambassadors are expected to:

- make a 24-month commitment to this program (May 1, 2016-April 30, 2018);
- attend a 2-day Ambassador training at CDC in Atlanta June 8-9, 2016) and a 2-day refresher training at CDC in Atlanta (early June, 2017) (travel costs included);
- develop, maintain and implement a work plan that includes at least 2 Ambassador goals (see “Sample Ambassador Goals” below);
- participate in 90-minute Ambassador calls with AUCD, CDC, and HRSA every other month;
- prepare 1 mid-term and 1 final report of Ambassador activity; and
- participate in a pre-Ambassadorship assessment activity as well as a post-Ambassadorship assessment activity (likely short surveys)

Additionally, Ambassadors are encouraged (but not required) to:

- attend an Act Early Ambassador Meeting and Act Early Networking session at your own expense in Washington, DC in conjunction with the AUCD annual conference (November, 2016, 2017); and/or the AMCHP annual conference (January, 2017, 2018)
- post and share resources within the network of Ambassadors (through the Ambassador email listserv and other mechanisms);
- participate in 1-hour “learning circle” webinars every other month;
- participate in 1-hour, topic-specific “Act Early” webinars on a quarterly basis; and,
- present Ambassador achievements and lessons learned at state and national conferences and other appropriate forums.

Act Early Ambassador responsibilities typically require about 4-8 hours per month.

Sample Ambassador Goals:

- Work with state Head Start and Early Head Start to improve developmental monitoring in child care by systematically integrating LTSAE materials into classrooms and parent-teacher conferences statewide
- Work with regional agencies (such as WIC) to improve developmental monitoring by parents using LTSAE milestone checklists
- Work with pediatric and family practice residency programs to incorporate the Autism Case Training at children’s hospitals and medical schools



- Work with early childhood state agencies to incorporate the “Watch Me! Celebrating Milestones and Sharing Concerns” online developmental monitoring training into early care and education training programs
- Work with state-wide home visitation programs to increase developmental monitoring by integrating LTSAE materials into home visits

AUCD and CDC will provide both scheduled and as-needed technical assistance to help Ambassadors accomplish their goals.

Ambassador Support

To support Ambassadors, AUCD will provide:

- \$4000 annual stipend (\$8000 total, across 2-year term) plus travel expenses to Atlanta, GA for CDC Ambassador trainings in June 2016 and June 2017.
 - Stipend can be used to support a variety of activities related to the implementation of the Ambassador workplan (e.g. local travel, meeting costs, printing, etc.) Please note, if you cannot accept a stipend for Ambassador efforts related to work you’re already carrying out, you can use the stipend for convening meetings, printing materials, etc.
- Scheduled and as-needed technical assistance provided by email, phone and webinar;
- Structured peer support, a forum to network, share ideas and problem-solve with colleagues nationwide working on similar issues.
 - Participation in in-person meetings, webinars, and making use of the Ambassador group email list help keep Ambassadors connected with one another; this connection to other experts in the field is among the most valued aspects of the Ambassador experience
- Technical expertise and consultation, information from leading national experts in the fields of child development, developmental disability, and health promotion.

2016-2018 Act Early Ambassador Timeline

The timeline below has been provided to help applicants assess their ability to complete the requirements of the Ambassadorship. A final timeline and work plan will be developed by the selected applicants in partnership with AUCD and CDC.

Timeline

- RFA Released: December 16, 2015
- Informational Call: January 7, 2016, 2pmET. To join, please dial: 866-951-1151, code 1857734



- Applications Due: February 29, 2016
- Awards Announced: no later than April 15, 2016
- Orientation Call: May 3, 2016, 3pmET. To join, please dial: 866-951-1151, code 1857734
- Ambassador Training (Atlanta, GA): June 8-9, 2016
- Ambassador work plan due: June 30, 2016
- Reporting Activities (includes work plan updates and budget reports)
 - End-of-Year 1 progress report: April 29, 2017
 - FINAL Report: April 20, 2018
- Ambassador Progress & Updates Meeting (optional; Washington, DC in conjunction with AUCD annual conference): December 4-6, 2016
- Ambassador Refresher Training (Atlanta, GA): early June, 2017 (TBD)

Ongoing:

- Bimonthly Ambassador calls with AUCD, CDC, and HRSA: 90-min, every other month, dates TBD – Ambassadors will be asked to present brief progress updates as part of these calls at least 3 times during their 2-year term.
- “Ambassador Learning Circles” webinar: optional, 1-hour, every other month, dates TBD
- “Act Early” webinars: optional, 1-hour, quarterly, dates TBD

Application Procedure

Submit the application form by email by COB on February 29, 2016 to Abigail Alberico at aalberico@aucd.org.

Applications need to address the components in the form (described below).

To be considered eligible, applicants are required to complete and submit all sections of the form.

Applications received after the deadline, February 29, 2016 will not be considered.

Please Note: You will receive notification of receipt of application no later than 72 hours following submission. If you have not received a notification of receipt within this timeframe, please contact Abigail Alberico at aalberico@aucd.org.



Qualifications

To be considered, applicants must:

- have knowledge and expertise in child development and/or systems that support early identification and referral for developmental delay/disability;
- have good presentation and communication skills;
- be familiar with the Act Early Initiative (for example, attended an Act Early Regional Summit and/or be a past or current member of an Act Early team or related cross-systems effort to improve developmental monitoring and early identification of developmental delay and disability in their state/territory/tribe);
- be connected to or familiar with state/territory/tribal programs that serve young children and their families; and
- have a strong interest in working collaboratively to further the goals of the “Learn the Signs. Act Early.” program in their state/territory/tribe.

Most importantly, this leadership opportunity aims to identify individuals who share the “Learn the Signs. Act Early.” commitment to improving systems and outcomes related to identifying young children with developmental delay and disability early so they and their families can get the help they need.

Fiscal Agent

Ambassadors will receive a \$4000 stipend annually (\$8000 total, across 2-year term) to support expenses related to the implementation of their Ambassador workplan. The Ambassador stipend must be awarded to a fiscal agent that will receive the funds and be responsible for progress reports. **Applications must include the signature of the fiscal agent representative.** Please direct questions concerning the Act Early Ambassador stipend or fiscal agent requirement to Abigail Alberico at aalberico@aucd.org.

How to Apply

Complete the application found [here](#). Submit the application and letters of support via email to Abigail Alberico at aalberico@aucd.org by **COB on February 29, 2016**.

For More Information

AUCD contact: Abigail Alberico, MPH; aalberico@aucd.org

CDC/NCBDDD contact: Katie Green, MPH, CHES; KKGGreen@cdc.gov



ACT EARLY AMBASSADOR APPLICATION

State/Territory/Tribe: _____

Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Current Affiliation: _____

Current Professional Role: _____

Are you a member of your state's Act Early team? Y N former member; team no longer active

If yes, please describe your role: _____

Additional Requirements:

- (1) Please attach a short bio (250 words or less) highlighting relevant training and recent professional experience and any qualifications not covered below.
- (2) Personal Statement and Plan: (500 words or less) Please tell us about (1) your interest in becoming an Act Early Ambassador and how this role fits with your personal and professional goals, (2) at least 2 specific goals that you hope to accomplish during a 2-year term as an Act Early Ambassador, and (3) why you believe you will be successful in achieving those goals (including the extent of relevant personal and professional contacts and past success).

Required Letters of Support:

- (1) Attach a letter of support from your supervisor/Program Director that supports your application (one page maximum).
- (2) Attach a letter of support from an individual (from outside your organization of employment) who can attest to any past success you have had in terms of fostering cross-system collaboration to create positive change for young children and their families.



Please read and check the boxes below before signing:

- I understand that participation in this program will require
 - Participation in bi-monthly Ambassador calls (typically scheduled in the afternoon to accommodate time zone variation)
 - Completion of mid-term and final report and maintenance of an Ambassador work plan
 - Local (in-state) travel to foster statewide communication and collaboration, and
 - Participation in my state or territory's Act Early team meetings (if applicable).

- I am available to attend the Act Early Ambassador training on June 8-9, 2016 in Atlanta, GA.

Applicant Signature: _____

Name of Fiscal Agent (Print) _____

Fiscal Agent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Submit the completed form to Abigail Alberico at aalberico@aucd.org by COB February 29, 2016.