

# Parents Taking Action

Latino immigrant families who have children with Autism Spectrum Disorders face many challenges accessing information and services for their children. They also need information about things they can do at home to help their children develop. This educational program is aimed at helping parents learn about autism, autism interventions and services, and how to access them. We also teach parents strategies for improving social and communication skills and reducing problem behaviors among their children with ASD.

The program is carried out by a *promotora de salud* who is also a parent of a child with ASD. Promotoras receive special training on the educational information. The promotora will engage other parents in the educational program through 14 weekly home visits that last about 2 hours each. Parents participating in the program will receive a manual with all of the session content and a resource folder of programs and services in their area.

The topics and goals for each session are presented below.

| Session   | Goals  |
|---|--|
| <b>Session 1</b> Introduction to the program                                | Meet the promotora and receive an overview of the program                                |
| <b>Session 2</b> Understanding child development                            | discuss developmental milestones and recognizing signs                                   |
| <b>Session 3</b> Understanding the autism spectrum and your child's needs   | Learn about how autism is diagnosed and what autism symptoms relate to your child        |
| <b>Session 4</b> What works to address symptoms of autism                   | Learn about evidenced-based practices and how to tell if a practice works for your child |
| <b>Session 5</b> How to be an effective advocate                            | Learn about the importance of being an advocate for your child and advocacy strategies   |
| <b>Session 6</b> Advocacy in the school system                              | Learn about the IEP process and advocacy strategies to use in your child's school        |
| <b>Session 7</b> Play together, learn together                              | Learn about the importance of play and ways to engage your child in play                 |
| <b>Session 8</b> Creating everyday opportunities to encourage communication | Learn strategies for enhancing communication through daily routines                      |

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|---|--|
| <b>Session 9</b> Helping your child make friends and interact with others                       | Explore activities parents can do to help their child interact with peers                          |
| <b>Session 10</b> Challenging behavior is communication   | Learn why children engage in challenging behaviors   |
| <b>Session 11</b> How to reduce challenging behaviors and respond appropriately when they occur | Explore strategies for preventing and reducing problem behaviors                                   |
| <b>Session 12</b> Reducing stress and recognizing signs of depression                           | Learn about risks to parental health and well-being and how to reduce stress                       |
| <b>Session 13</b> Talking about autism to others and social support                             | Discuss how to share information with others about your child and the importance of social support |
| <b>Session 14</b> Looking ahead   | Set future goals and explore how to sustain growth. Celebrate completion!                          |

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