

Autism Navigator[®] for Early Intervention Providers

Professional Development Tiers to Support Effective Implementation



Autism Navigator uses an implementation science framework to promote coordinated change at practice, program, organization, and system levels to support community uptake and sustained utilization in medical, social service, and early intervention systems. The focus in Autism Navigator on how to facilitate the process of adopting evidence-based practice and sustaining its high-fidelity use in everyday settings is designed to reduce the time between research and widespread implementation. The following stages of “Successful Implementation” require purposeful matching of “Stages” to statewide strategic planning and implementation (Smith, Hurth, Pletcher, Shaw, Whaley, Peters, & Dunlap, 2014):

1. *Exploration*: identify need and determine innovation
2. *Installation*: acquire resources/ prepare implementation
3. *Initial Implementation*: put new practices in place at selected sites with feedback loops and improvement cycles
4. *Full Implementation*: assure practices are used with high fidelity and achieving expected outcomes at all initial sites and begin scale up and sustainability activities
5. *Expansion and Scale-Up*: increase number of sites

Five tiers of professional development have been designed to support effective implementation of Autism Navigator for Early Intervention Providers:

- **Tier 1)** Completion of Knowledge and Skills level course
- **Tier 2)** Leadership Roles in Mastery level course
- **Tier 3)** Certification as an Autism Navigator Early Intervention Provider
- **Tier 4)** Certification as an Autism Navigator Regional Specialist
- **Tier 5)** Certification as an Autism Navigator Master Coach and Global Trainer

The Autism Navigator Professional Development Tiers parallel the above stages for promoting the uptake of the innovation, when the collection of Autism Navigator courses and tools are chosen. In addition, the Implementation Drivers, particularly the competency drivers or the activities to develop, improve, and sustain providers and administrators to put innovations into practice so children and families benefit, are systematically scaled for uptake in the 5 tiers of professional development. The development of implementation teams and a community of learners further exemplifies how Autism Navigator utilizes an implementation science framework.

The initial professional development tier begins for providers and immediate supervisors who want to learn more about effective implementation of Autism Navigator and progress to providers interested in advancing to the Mastery level and assuming leadership roles in their region or agency, to providers who are seeking recognition for specialized Autism Navigator training leading to certification to document implementation fidelity and coaching other providers.

Following are detailed descriptions of the steps delineated for each of the 5 tiers of professional development for Autism Navigator for Early Intervention Providers.

Tier 1: Completion of Autism Navigator for Early Intervention Providers Knowledge & Skills Course

Who would benefit from participation: Early Intervention Providers serving families of infants and toddlers with developmental delays and their immediate supervisors or program coordinators

Participant will

1. Enroll in Autism Navigator for Early Intervention Providers Knowledge & Skills Course
2. Register and participate in Autism Navigator Learner Community *Knowledge & Skills* level webinars
3. Pass learning assessments for each unit
4. Complete unit evaluations and receive certificate of completion for all units

[Complete Autism Navigator Early Intervention Providers K&S course in 1-6 months.](#)

Tier 2: Leadership Roles in Autism Navigator for Early Intervention Providers Mastery Course

Who would benefit from participation: Early Intervention Providers serving families of infants and toddlers with early signs of autism spectrum disorder and/or interested in developing leadership skills in autism service delivery

Participant will:

1. Have completed Tier 1 requirements within past 12 months
2. Enroll in Autism Navigator for Early Intervention Providers *Mastery Course*
3. Register and participate in at least 6 Autism Navigator Learner Community *Mastery* level webinars
4. Complete all of the Application Exercises for all of the Libraries available in the *Mastery Course* and submit for documentation
5. Form an online peer partnership with another provider in the Autism Navigator Learner Community *Mastery* level webinar (either identify a provider from the Local Team or reach out to a provider at a distance) and participate in 6 web discussions of videos from the *Mastery Libraries*

Participants who complete the above Tier 2 steps, can also apply for recognition as a **Local Autism Navigator Team Leader**, and will:

6. Identify and organize a Local Autism Navigator Team of early intervention providers who are working on or have completed Tier 1
7. Support providers to form peer partnerships within the Local Autism Navigator Team to share ideas and to participate in Local Autism Navigator Team face-to-face or web discussion groups on Autism Navigator implementation
8. Guide reflective discussions with team members around implementation using case presentations and video clips selected from the *Mastery Libraries*

Participants who complete the above Tier 2 steps, can also apply for recognition as a **Reliable Rater of Fidelity of Implementation**, and will:

9. Review video observations of home visits from families posted in the *Mastery library*, rate fidelity of implementation using the *Autism Navigator Intervention Provider Fidelity Review Form*, and meet 90% overall agreement per session with the rating by an Autism Navigator Master Coach for 4 different families
10. Upload video observations of 4 sessions from at least 2 different families you serve, rate fidelity of implementation based on self-evaluation using the *Autism Navigator Intervention Provider Fidelity Review Form*, and meet 90% overall agreement per session with the rating by an Autism Navigator Master Coach for 4 sessions from at least 2 different families

Participants who complete the above Tier 2 steps, can also apply for recognition as a **Local Autism Navigator Team Peer Mentor**, and will:

11. Identify members of the Local Autism Navigator Team who want to learn to document fidelity of implementation based on self-evaluation using the *Autism Navigator Intervention Provider Fidelity Review Form*
12. Lead individual web or phone meetings as a peer mentor with providers on the Local Autism Navigator Team to: 1) review videos of their home visits with families and children to hone their observation skills and

- encourage them to identify what went well and where they faced challenges with implementation; 2) support the provider's reflection on their self-evaluation of implementation fidelity, 3) encourage the provider to problem solve and find resources and information to support their application of Autism Navigator, and 4) guide the provider to select video clips to share in Local Team discussion groups
13. Guide reflective "intentional" discussions of selected video clips from home visits by the local team members reviewed during Local Team discussion groups

[Demonstrate leadership in Autism Navigator Early Intervention Providers Mastery course in 6-12 months.](#)

Tier 3: Certification as an Autism Navigator Early Intervention Provider

Who would benefit from participation: Early Intervention Providers serving families of infants and toddlers with early signs of autism spectrum disorder and coaching families or caregivers in natural environments

Participant will:

1. Have completed Tier 1 and 2 requirements within the past 24 months or concurrently working on Tier 2
2. Complete an application for certification as an Autism Navigator Early Intervention Provider, which can be found in Tools in the Mastery course, submit it to info@autismnavigator.com, and receive approval
3. Complete all of the *Application Exercises* for the Libraries of Coaching Practices and submit for review and feedback
4. Register and participate in at least 6 Autism Navigator Learner Community Mastery level webinars in 12 months
5. Identify 4 families of toddlers between 12 and 24 months of age who show red flags of autism, are eligible for early intervention services, and whose families consent to video recording and upload
6. *Note: It is recommended to identify the 4 families sequentially over 6-9 months, rather than simultaneously, to promote learning and application, allowing for some overlap between families*
7. Upload videos and fidelity forms for review for each of the 4 families
8. Participate in web coaching sessions with an Autism Navigator Master Coach once a week for the first month and then at least 2 times a month until meeting fidelity with each of the 4 families
9. Demonstrate fidelity of implementation based on self-evaluation with 4 families using the *Autism Navigator Intervention Provider Fidelity Review Form* and meet 90% overall agreement per session with the evaluation by an Autism Navigator Master Coach for at least 3 out of 4 weekly sessions per family
10. Demonstrate fidelity of implementation based on evaluation by an Autism Navigator Master Coach with 4 families using the *Autism Navigator Intervention Provider Fidelity Review Form* and meet 80% on all 3 domains (Building Consensus, Layers of Support, Coaching Strategies) and 85% overall per session for at least 3 out of 4 weekly sessions per family
11. Sustain fidelity of implementation with 2 families using the *Autism Navigator Intervention Provider Fidelity Review Form* over at least 3 months (80% on all 3 domains and 85% overall based on Master Coach evaluation; 90% agreement between self-evaluation and Master Coach)

[Complete the steps for Certification as an Autism Navigator Early Intervention Provider in 8-12 months.](#)

Tier 4: Certification as an Autism Navigator Regional Specialist

Who would benefit from participation: Early Intervention Providers with at least 3 years of experience serving families of infants and toddlers with early signs of autism spectrum disorder and interested in demonstrating implementation fidelity and coaching and mentoring other providers on Autism Navigator in their region or agency

Participant will:

1. Have completed Tier 3 requirements within the past 24 months
2. Complete an application for certification as an Autism Navigator Regional Specialist, which can be found in Tools in the Mastery course, submit it to info@autismnavigator.com, and receive approval
3. Register and participate in at least 6 Autism Navigator Learner Community Mastery level webinars in 12 months

Demonstrate fidelity of implementation coaching 2 new families

4. Identify 2 new families (6 families combined in Tiers 3 and 4) who show red flags of autism, are eligible for early intervention services, and whose families consent to video recording and upload
5. Participate in web coaching sessions with an Autism Navigator Master Coach once a week for the first month and then at least 2 times a month until meeting fidelity with the 2 new families
6. Sustain fidelity of implementation with at least 1 new family (meet fidelity with 6 families and sustain fidelity with at least 3 combined in Tiers 3 and 4) using the Autism Navigator Intervention Provider Fidelity Review Form over at least 3 months (80% on all 3 domains and 85% overall based on Master Coach evaluation; 90% agreement between self-evaluation and Master Coach)

Demonstrate fidelity of implementation coaching and mentoring 4 early intervention providers

7. Identify 4 early intervention providers in the training region who are working with families of toddlers ideally between 12 and 24 months of age who show red flags of autism, are eligible for early intervention services, and whose families and providers consent to video recording and upload
8. Upload audios or videos of sessions and fidelity forms for review for each of the 4 providers
9. Participate in web coaching sessions focused on coaching and mentoring with an Autism Navigator Master Coach once a week for the first month and then at least 2 times a month until meeting fidelity with 4 providers
10. Demonstrate fidelity of implementation based on self-evaluation coaching and mentoring 4 early intervention providers using the Autism Navigator Provider Coach and Mentor Fidelity Review Form and meet 90% agreement per session with the evaluation by an Autism Navigator Master Coach for at least 3 out of 4 weekly sessions per provider
11. Demonstrate fidelity of implementation based on evaluation by an Autism Navigator Master Coach with 4 providers using the Autism Navigator Provider Coach and Mentor Fidelity Review Form and meet 80% on all 3 domains (Building Consensus, Layers of Support, Coaching Strategies) and 85% overall per session for at least 3 out of 4 weekly sessions per provider
12. Sustain fidelity of implementation with 2 providers using the Autism Navigator Provider Coach and Mentor Fidelity Review Form over at least 3 months (80% on all 3 domains and 85% overall based on Master Coach evaluation; 90% agreement between self-evaluation and Master Coach)

Demonstrate fidelity of implementation leading team meetings and trainings for providers

13. Prepare content and lead at least 2 team meetings (5 to 20 participants) and at least 1 training session (larger than 20) in 12 months
14. Upload meeting and training materials for review and feedback
15. Demonstrate at least 80% participant satisfaction on the evaluation survey

Complete the steps for Certification as an Autism Navigator Regional Specialist in 6-12 months.

Tier 5: Certification as an Autism Navigator Master Coach and Global Trainer

Who would benefit from participation: Early Intervention Providers who have completed Tiers 1-4 and are interested in a focus on professional development as a career path

Participant will:

1. Have completed Tier 4 requirements within the past 24 months
2. Be invited to complete an application for certification as an Autism Navigator Master Coach, submit the application to info@autismnavigator.com, and receive approval
3. Register and participate in at least 6 Autism Navigator Learner Community Mastery level webinars in 12 months

APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Demonstrate fidelity of implementation coaching 2 new families

4. Identify 2 new families (8 families combined in Tiers 3 to 5) who show red flags of autism, are eligible for early intervention services, and whose families consent to video recording and upload

5. Participate in web coaching sessions with an Autism Navigator Master Coach once a week for the first month and then at least 2 times a month until meeting fidelity with the 2 families
6. Sustain fidelity of implementation with at least 1 new family (meet fidelity with 8 families and sustain fidelity with at least 4 combined in Tiers 3 to 5) using the Autism Navigator Intervention Provider Fidelity Review Form over at least 3 months (80% on all 3 domains and 85% overall based on Master Coach evaluation; 90% agreement between self-evaluation and Master Coach)

Demonstrate fidelity of implementation coaching and mentoring 4 new early intervention providers

7. Identify 4 new early intervention providers (8 providers combined in Tiers 4 and 5) and participate in web coaching sessions focused on coaching and mentoring with an Autism Navigator Master Coach at least 2 times a month until meeting fidelity with 4 providers
8. Demonstrate fidelity of implementation with these 4 new providers (8 providers combined in Tiers 4 and 5) using the Autism Navigator Provider Coach and Mentor Fidelity Review Form and meet 80% on all 3 domains and 85% overall based on Master Coach evaluation; 90% agreement between self-evaluation and Master Coach
9. Sustain fidelity of implementation with 2 providers using the Autism Navigator Provider Coach and Mentor Fidelity Review Form over at least 3 months (80% on all 3 domains and 85% overall based on Master Coach evaluation; 90% agreement between self-evaluation and Master Coach)

Demonstrate sustained fidelity of implementation leading team meetings and trainings

10. Prepare content and lead at least 2 team meetings (5 to 20 participants) and at least 1 training session (larger than 20) in 12 months
11. Upload meeting and training materials for review and feedback
12. Demonstrate at least 80% participant satisfaction on the evaluation survey

Participate in implementation planning to deploy Autism Navigator in a new region led by a Master Coach

13. Participate in focus groups and team meetings lead by a Master Coach to identify barriers and challenges to implementation, understand the values and collaborative structure of early intervention providers, healthcare providers, and families in the region, determine needs for cultural adaptation, and identify 3-4 initial sites for early adopters
14. Participate in implementation planning activities for the region to address challenges and cultural adaptation, identify service providers and potential champions within service systems, and prepare for training and deployment in the region
15. Participate in the face-to-face training session lead by a Master Coach to launch Autism Navigator in the selected sites for initial implementation with feedback loops and improvement cycles and incorporate the measurement tools consistent with the region's implementation framework
16. Participate in web coaching sessions focused on coaching and mentoring providers in the initial implementation region led by an Autism Navigator Master Coach and assist in assuring practices are used with fidelity and achieving expected outcomes
17. Participate in the steps for full implementation with strategic plan for improvement cycles, scale up, and sustainability activities as the number of sites increases

Participate in implementation activities to support and engage Autism Navigator users for sustainability in the region led by a Master Coach

18. Participate in planning activities in the region led by a Master Coach to establish peer partners, encourage intentional discussion groups, identify and engage champions to support providers feeling successful, and identify certified Autism Navigator Early Intervention Providers to become local team leaders and regional specialists.
19. Participate in Knowledge & Skills and Application level webinars led by a Master Coach to engage users actively, cover topics identified by users, and foster application of content for users through video review and problem solving via chat discussion

Complete the steps for Autism Navigator Master Coach Apprenticeship within 12-24 months.

JOURNEYMAN LEVEL OF COMPETENCE

Demonstrate sustained fidelity of implementation coaching and mentoring 4 new early intervention providers

20. Identify 4 new early intervention providers (12 providers combined in Tiers 4 and 5) and participate in web coaching sessions focused on coaching and mentoring with an Autism Navigator Master Coach at least 2 times a month until meeting fidelity with 4 providers
21. Demonstrate sustained fidelity of implementation with 2 of these new providers (10 providers combined in Tiers 4 and 5) using the Autism Navigator Provider Coach and Mentor Fidelity Review Form over at least 3 months (80% on all 3 domains and 85% overall based on Master Coach evaluation; 90% agreement between self-evaluation and Master Coach)

Demonstrate sustained fidelity of implementation leading team meetings and trainings

22. Prepare content and lead at least 2 new team meetings (5- 20 participants) and at least 1 new training session (larger than 20) in 12 months
23. Upload meeting and training materials for review and feedback
24. Demonstrate at least 80% participant satisfaction on the evaluation survey

Lead implementation planning to deploy Autism Navigator in a new region with coaching and mentoring by a Master Coach

25. Lead focus groups and team meetings with oversight by a Master Coach to identify barriers and challenges to implementation, understand the values and power structure of early intervention providers, healthcare providers, and families in the region, determine needs for cultural adaptation, and identify 3-4 initial sites for early adopters
26. Lead implementation planning activities for the region with oversight by a Master Coach to address challenges and cultural adaptation, identify service providers and potential champions within service systems, and prepare for training and deployment in the region
27. Lead the face-to-face training session with oversight by a Master Coach to launch Autism Navigator in the selected sites for initial implementation with feedback loops and improvement cycles
28. Lead web coaching sessions focused on coaching and mentoring providers in the initial implementation region with oversight by a Master Coach and be responsible for assuring practices are used with fidelity and achieving expected outcomes
29. Lead the steps for full implementation with oversight by a Master Coach with strategic plan for scale up and sustainability activities as the number of sites increases

Lead implementation activities to support and engage Autism Navigator users for sustainability in the region with coaching and mentoring by a Master Coach

30. Lead planning activities in the region with coaching and mentoring by a Master Coach to establish peer partners, encourage intentional discussion groups, identify and engage champions to support providers feeling successful, and identify certified Autism Navigator Early Intervention Providers to become local team leaders and regional specialists.
31. Lead Knowledge & Skills level webinars for the region with coaching and mentoring by a Master Coach to form a learner community and engage users actively, cover topics identified by users, and foster application of content for users through video review and problem solving via chat discussion
32. Lead Mastery level webinars for the region with coaching and mentoring by a Master Coach to form a learner community and engage users actively, cover topics identified by users, and foster application of content for users through video review and problem solving via chat discussion

Complete the steps for Autism Navigator Master Coach Journeyman within 12-36 month.

It is anticipated that Tiers 1 through 5 will be completed in a period of 3 to 5 years. The Autism Navigator Regional Specialist and Master Coach will need to be updated bi-annually through online training and renewed every 5 years.