

Artisan

Opening Doors: A Discussion of Residential Options for Adults Living with Autism and Related Disorders



Matthew, age 4



Incidence of autism, 1 : 10,000 toddlers

Matthew, age 19



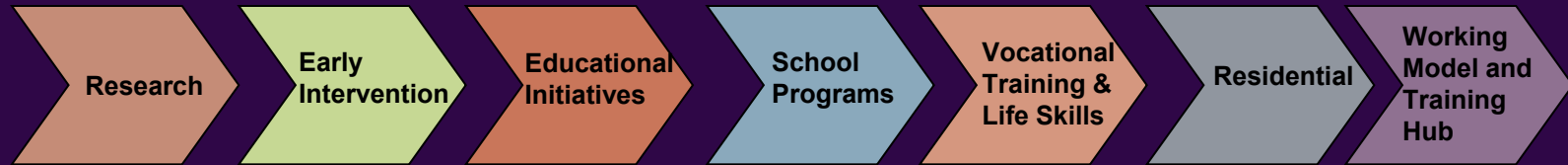
Incidence of autism today, 1 : 110

Mission

To advance research and provide a lifetime of support for individuals with autism and their families.

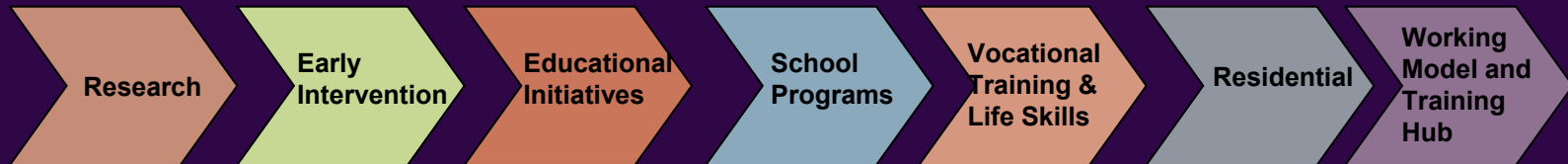


Core Values – Lifetime of Support



- Act with respect, compassion and a sense of urgency.
- Nurture families, respecting their diversity, rights and the individuality of their children.
- Work for excellence and continuous improvement.
- Maintain the highest level of integrity in everything we do.

Core Values – Lifetime of Support



- Promote cooperation, collaboration and teamwork
- Be accountable to donors, families, peers and fellow research partners.
- Commit to build, test and model best practices.
- Serve as a leader in quality research.

SARRC's Approach

- Family-centered
- Inclusive
- Research-based
- Personalized
- Collaborative
- Impact-oriented
- Pioneering



Overview

- Pioneering a fully integrated approach to autism research and comprehensive community resource.
- Conducting autism research since 1997.
- Raising \$40 million from private sources for the cause.
- Active collaborations with schools, clinical programs and government agencies.



2009 Achievements

- Provided services to more than 2,700 children, teens and young adults with ASDs, more than 4,000 parents, family members and typical peers, and more than 5,000 educational and medical professionals and paraprofessionals.
- Screened 2,058 individuals, 557 family members and 464 typical peers for research studies. Active collaborations with schools, clinical programs and government agencies.
- Provided 225 young adults with ASDs and 75 peer mentors with pre-vocational job training and work experience at art and culture venues and with non-profit organizations. Tracked more than 18,000 hours of volunteer community service.
- Implemented SARRC's employment services program for adults with ASDs, enrolling more than 135 individuals; 46 are gainfully employed.



Opening Doors Study

A report designed to advance the development of replicable residential models that offer quality, affordable housing options within the fabric of their communities.

- Urban Land Institute (ULI) Arizona
- Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center (SARRC)
- ASU Stardust Center for Affordable Homes & the Family
- ASU Herberger Institute, School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture

Within the next 15 years, more than 500,000 Americans with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) will enter adulthood.

How do we as a society respond to the pressing question looming today for millions of parents of children with autism:

Who will care for my child when I'm no longer able to do so?



Study Objectives

1. Evaluate existing residential programs and properties; identify best practices.
2. Develop a set of goals for sustainable residential community design.
3. Identify and analyze available financing options that support scalability.
4. Guide the design of residential options.
5. Increase public awareness of the growth trends in the population.



Study Process

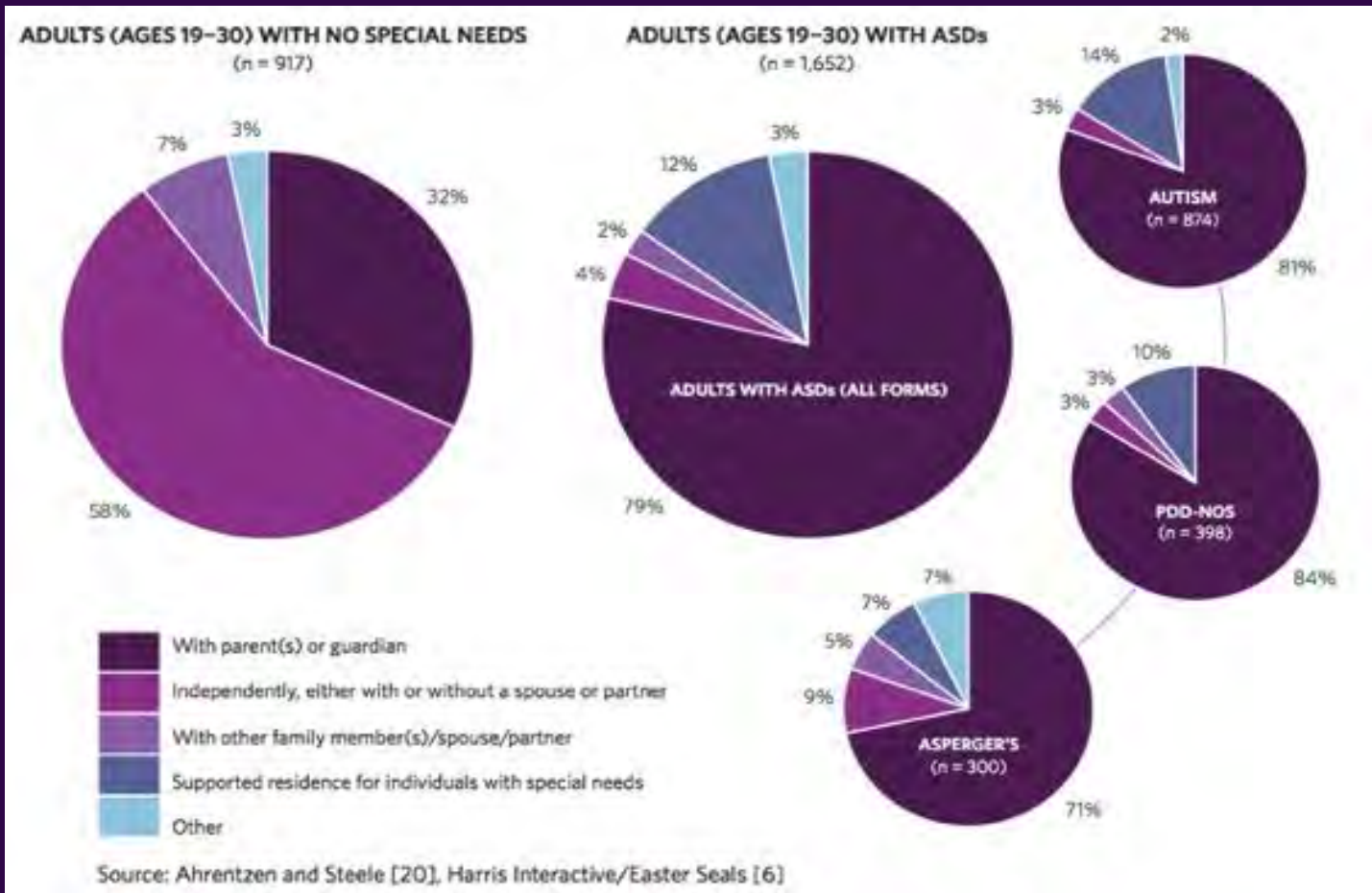
- Assessed current options based on the identification of more than 100 properties serving developmentally disabled, physically disabled and other special needs populations
- 17 projects selected for more thorough research and/or on-site visits
- Investigated trends and innovations in housing for other special needs populations



“Hundreds of thousands of parents of children with autism across the country can no longer afford to wait for new doors to open.”



What's Next for Adults Living With Autism: Market Demand & Pressing Concerns



Pressing Concerns

- Economic cost of system's failure have far-reaching implications
- Costs society billions of dollars annually
- As much as 90% of the costs of caring for an individual with autism are in adult services
- The population represents a community of workers, many of whom can meet the needs of employers provided adequate supports are in place



“Societal costs can be dramatically reduced if the right lifelong living and learning opportunities are available.”

Photo by: Steve Dreiseszun



Summary of Major Findings

- Lack Of Consistency In The Definition Of Residential Options
- Void Of Market Data
- Lack Of Documented Design Guidelines
- Shortage Of Turn-Key Support Service Models
- Limited and Cumbersome Access To Capital
- Critical Short-Term Needs



Today, the number of housing choices for adults living with autism spectrum and related disorders is extremely limited.

“Current financing options, both public and private, have been insufficient in size and scope to support the creation of appropriate housing at scale for the current population, much less the anticipated growth.”



Residential Options

- Transitional Models
- Supported Living
- Supervised Living
- Group Homes
- Agricultural Programs
- Intermediate Care Facility



“We must restructure the way existing government funding is allocated to housing resources for the developmentally disabled in order to grow a sustainable real estate supply over time.”



Financing Options

- Large Donor/Charitable Contribution Model
- Low Income Housing
- Private Pay
- Government Funded and Operated
- Medicaid/Title XIX and SSI



Although there are a variety of sources for capital funding, organizations most often use two to three sources to cobble together a workable financial model for the projects.

“Real estate developers, homebuilders and architects need to know how best to create autism-friendly environments and how residents can be supported in their homes and communities.”



Home Design Goals



Ensure Safety & Security

A safe living environment is the top priority. Issues range from providing appropriate security systems to selecting non-toxic products and materials.



Maximize Familiarity, Stability & Clarity

Changes and transitions can be problematic for adults with ASDs so creating continuity and connection with the past is important. Design strategies include logical spatial layout and use of familiar materials.



Minimize Sensory Overload & Simplify

The sensory environment by designing spaces to be quiet, visually calm, well ventilated and to have appropriate lighting.



Allow Opportunities for Controlling Social Interaction & Privacy

To accommodate personal preferences, the design of any home should provide residents with a variety of social opportunities included within a singular space.



Provide Adequate Choice & Independence

The physical environment should be designed so options are available but few and flexible so that it can be adapted to changes in residents' needs over time.



Foster Health & Wellness

To address any ongoing health vulnerabilities, the physical design should promote healthy living through the use non-toxic materials, the availability of natural light, good ventilation and incorporation of universal design strategies.



Enhance One's Dignity

Everything from selecting a neighborhood that accepts diversity and supports its residents to designing a home that allows residents to personalize their spaces and define their living arrangements serves to enhance one's dignity.



Ensure Durability

Investing in high-quality materials, fixtures and appliances at the outset will result in lower maintenance/replacement costs and will optimize resident safety.



Achieve Affordability

Designing for longevity and incorporating green building practices can lower costs over the lifetime of the home.



Ensure Accessibility & Support in the Surrounding Community

Critical to the overall success of any residential development. Access to transportation, community services, entertainment and shopping coupled with a supportive neighborhood community will create the best possible situation for the residents.

Home Design Guidelines

- **Neighborhood**
- **Floor Plan Strategies**
- **Outdoor Spaces**
- **Living/Community Rooms**
- **Kitchens**
- **Hallways, Stairs & Ramps**



Home Design Guidelines

- **Bedrooms**
- **Sensory Rooms**
- **Bathrooms**
- **Laundry Room**
- **Technology**
- **Appliances & Fixtures**



Home Design Guidelines

- **Visual Cues**
- **Ventilation**
- **Lighting**
- **Materials**
- **Acoustics**



“The solutions for addressing an issue as complex and sweeping in scope and impact as housing for a special needs population of more than 500,000 individuals and growing must be addressed on multiple fronts...and we must identify which market forces can serve as catalysts for advancing the design/development of residential options.”



Recommendations & Next Steps

- Conduct National and Market Specific Surveys
- Create an Interactive Database of Housing Options
- Develop and Test Soft Infrastructure Support Models



Recommendations & Next Steps

- Develop Prototypes to Test Best Practices and New Ideas
- Respond to Current and Short-Term Demand
- Increase and Systematize Capital Resources From Public Agencies
- Pursue Testing of Innovative Options



Photo by: Steve Dreiseszun

*“The recommendations included in **Opening Doors** will not only advance public-private-nonprofit collaborations in the development of community housing initiatives, they will also provide short-term benefits to adults living with autism and their families.”*

Supporting Individuals with Autism & Their Families



Autism

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<http://www.autismcenter.org/openingdoors.aspx>