



TEACCH RESEARCH AUTISM IN ADULTHOOD PROJECT SUMMARY

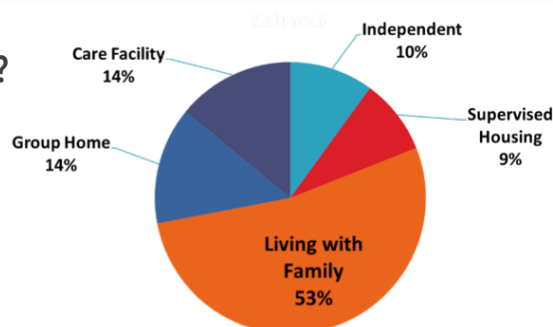
We are incredibly grateful to you and the other 315 families who completed our Autism in Adulthood study! This research helped us learn more about adults who were diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at TEACCH during childhood. We wanted to get a sense of what things are going well, what some of the challenges are for adults with ASD, and to get an idea of what services or resources are needed. We learned about adults with autism who ranged from their early 20's to late 50's. It was a privilege to have the opportunity to talk with you and your families and catch up on your successes and your challenges. We could not do this important work without any of you.

The results from this project have been presented at conference across the world including the International Meeting for Autism Research. So, we wanted to make sure to share some of our results with the families who made this project possible. Here are some highlights from our initial findings:



WHERE DO ADULTS WITH AUTISM LIVE?

- Adults with ASD have a range of living situations although the majority are living with their family.



WHAT DID WE LEARN ABOUT DAILY ACTIVITIES & LIVING SKILLS?

- Regardless of where adults lived, many required some help with daily activities and living skills.
- Adults with ASD need the most help with: financial management (84%), social and recreational activities (76%), medication/health related needs (73%), and cooking/meal planning (72%).
- Adults who are more independent in their daily skills were more likely to be employed and had a higher quality of life.



SERVICE USAGE AND NEEDS

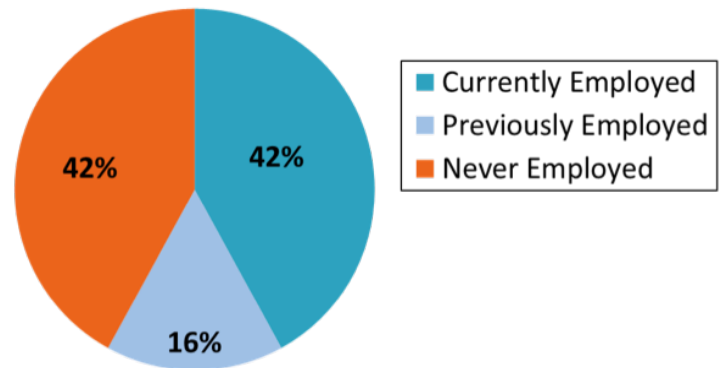
- Many adults continue to need a wide range of services. Most frequently reported service needs were psychological or mental health services, independent living instruction, employment supports, residential services, and transportation.
- Caregivers whose adult children continued to live at home reported a greater need for services and more barriers to receiving services than caregivers whose adult children lived in a residential facility.





WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT EMPLOYMENT?

- Adults worked in many job settings, ranging from store clerks and stockers to computer programmers.
- Having any kind of employment was associated with a higher reported quality of life, increased contact with friends, and fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression.



WHAT'S NEXT?

Thank you again for your help. With your support we are making significant gains in our understanding of the service needs for adults with ASD.

- This research has supported several undergraduate and graduate students at UNC who are focusing their efforts on learning more about autism in adulthood. In fact, the undergraduate student who earned the highest research award from the UNC Department of Psychology in 2016 (Elizabeth Schroeder) was a member of our ASD in adulthood team.
- Our clinicians are using this information to develop adult interventions. Based on our findings that independent daily living skills are the biggest predictor of employment, we are hard at work developing an intervention program targeting these skills.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE INVOLVED IN FUTURE RESEARCH?

- We hope that you will continue to participate in our research projects on autism in adulthood at TEACCH. Please consider joining the UNC Autism Research Registry, a resource that connects researchers with families. If you join the Registry, you'll receive information about studies you may want to participate in. There is no obligation to participate in any study you hear about.
- We are already working on a new study to understand how adults with autism are integrated into their community and hope that you will participate.

CONTACT US

If you are interested in continuing to be a part of our research...

Email: TEACCH_Research@med.unc.edu

Call Elena Lamarche at 919-962-3303

With much appreciation and best wishes for a happy new year,

Laura Grofer Klinger, Ph.D.

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