

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Department: Mental Health

HB Section(s): 10.410

Program Name: Autism

Program is found in the following core budget(s): Community Programs

1a. What strategic priority does this program address?

Services increase community capacity to diagnose autism spectrum disorder (ASD), support community inclusion, positive behaviors, independence, and employment for individuals with ASD and their families.

1b. What does this program do?

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DD) provides specialized services for individuals diagnosed with ASD and their families. These services are provided through DMH Medicaid waivers, Missouri's Autism Projects, and through specialized diagnostic clinics. There are approximately 15,158 individuals with an autism diagnosis who are enrolled with the Division of DD. In total, \$275 million is being spent on supports for individuals with an autism diagnosis.

Autism is a complex neurodevelopmental disorder that includes a broad range of conditions that affects social interaction, communication, and behavior. The range and severity of ASD can vary widely from mild to severe impairment. Common symptoms include difficulty with communication, difficulty with social interaction, obsessive interests, and repetitive behaviors. Early recognition along with behavioral, educational, and family-based interventions may reduce symptoms and support development and learning. Autism is the fastest growing developmental disability in the United States with a prevalence rate of 1 in 59, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2018). Boys are 4 times more likely to be diagnosed with autism than girls. This ratio is consistent with reports from Missouri's Autism Centers.

DMH provides residential, home, and community based services to individuals with ASD through four Medicaid waivers. In addition, DMH oversees five regional Autism Projects in Missouri: Southeast, Southwest, Central, Northwest, and East, each governed by a local Parent Advisory Council (PAC). Each of these local advisory groups make funding and provider recommendations of general revenue funds for its region. Based on PAC recommendations, DMH contracts with local providers for a variety of intervention services aimed at supporting families and helping them keep their loved ones integrated within the home and community.

DMH also contracts with six regional Autism Centers and two intervention centers to provide ASD diagnostic evaluations and intervention services. Missouri's Autism Centers are clinics which provide best practice diagnostic evaluations and referrals for children, as well as training for families and communities. In addition, Missouri's Autism Centers provide clinical training to and serve as a statewide resource for the medical and clinical community to advance evidence-based and emerging best practices for ASD diagnostics and intervention.

DMH also contracts with the Thompson Center through the University of Missouri-Columbia to implement a series of ECHO Autism programs to address a shortage of clinical and community providers throughout Missouri that can appropriately diagnose and care for individuals with Autism and their families. The average age of ASD diagnosis is over 4 years even though ASD can be diagnosed as early as age 2, (Whittling Down the Wait Time, 2016). Through this contract and the Autism Center's prioritization of diagnostic evaluations for those under age 4, DMH hopes to diagnose kids in Missouri earlier, allowing for earlier interventions and overall better outcomes for individuals with ASD.

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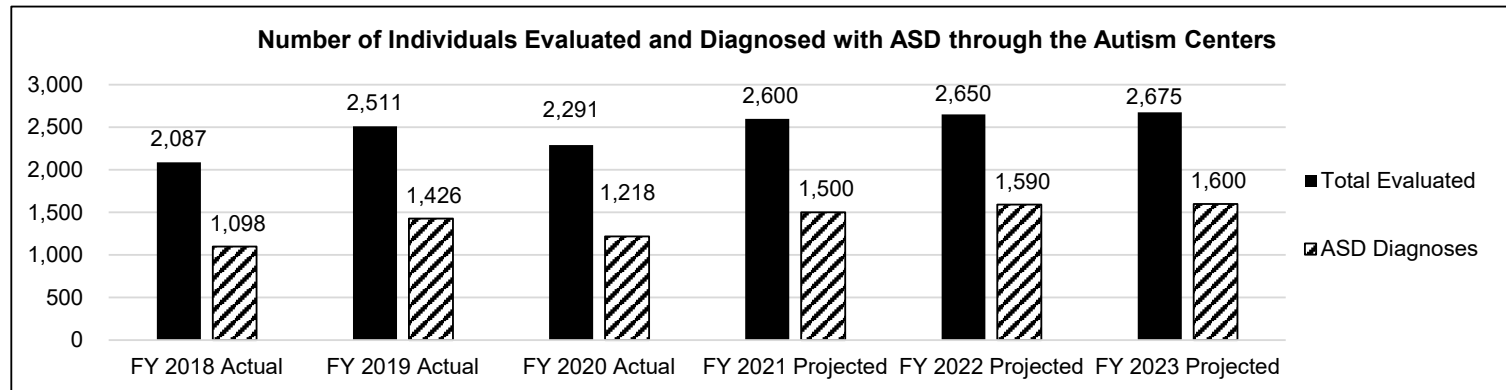
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2a. Provide an activity measure(s) for the program.

- Increasing the number of individuals accessing autism-specific services within the home and community supports inclusion and fosters independence.

	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Projected	FY 2022 Projected	FY 2023 Projected
Missouri Autism Projects						
East	1,374	1,284	1,125	1,130	1,130	1,130
Northwest	979	1,032	905	925	925	925
Central	1,190	1,239	1,389	1,395	1,395	1,395
Southeast	407	436	447	450	450	450
Southwest	914	954	997	1,000	1,000	1,000
Diagnostic Clinics	2,087	2,511	2,291	2,550	2,600	2,650
Total Served:	6,951	7,456	7,154	7,450	7,500	7,550

- Access to evidenced-based ASD evaluations and appropriate diagnosis allows families to access appropriate intervention and support services.



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2b. Provide a measure(s) of the program's quality.

- Missouri's Autism Centers' median age (in months) at diagnosis compares favorably to national average (see note below).

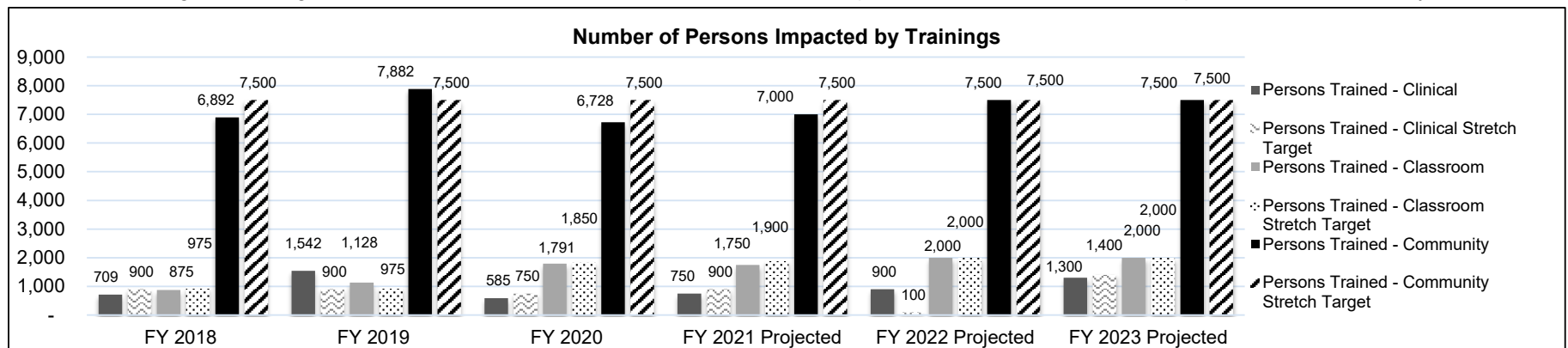
Median Age at Diagnosis of ASD (months):			
Center	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
Thompson Center^	58	68	60
Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital/Knights of Columbus(KOC) Development Center	49	35	50
Children's Mercy Hospital	41	46	46
SEMO Autism Center	47	50	67
Washington University - St. Louis^	106	71	46
Mercy Kids Autism Center - St. Louis	46	48	42
National Average >48 months			

Note: Children with ASD can be diagnosed as early as 2 years of age, but on average, the age of diagnosis is after 4 years (Gordon-Lipkin, E., Foster, J., & Peacock, G. (2016). Most recent CDC data is based on FY 2018 and lists 46 months for ASD diagnosis; 56 months for ASD/PPD; and 67 months for Asperger's. Yearly mean age at diagnosis was not a required reporting function of MO's Autism Centers until FY 2018. Some, however, provided that data voluntarily.

^Thompson Center and Washington University evaluated a higher percentage of children over the age of 60 months in FY 19 while continuing to prioritize timely appointments for those under age 60 months.

2c. Provide a measure(s) of the program's impact.

- Targeted trainings increase awareness and advance evidence-based, best practices for clinicians, educators, providers, and community members.



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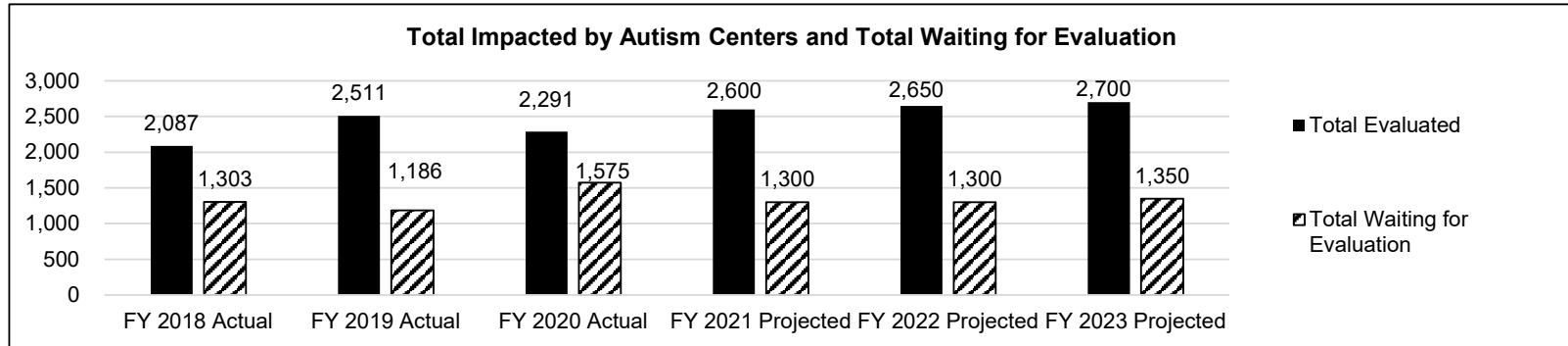
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2c. Provide a measure(s) of the program's impact, cont.

- Number of children to be evaluated has remained steady despite slight increases in those evaluated due to the increase in prevalence of ASD.



*Changed methodology in FY 19 to report average individuals waiting rather than 4th quarter waitlist.

FY 2020 Average Number of Individuals Waiting for ASD Evaluation			
Center	4 Years Old and Younger	5 Years Old and Older	Total
Thompson Center	236	580	816
Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital	201	183	384
Children's Mercy Hospital	77	55	132
SEMO Autism Center	24	54	78
Washington University - St. Louis	16	60	76
Mercy Kids Autism Center - St. Louis	55	34	89
Totals	609	966	1,575

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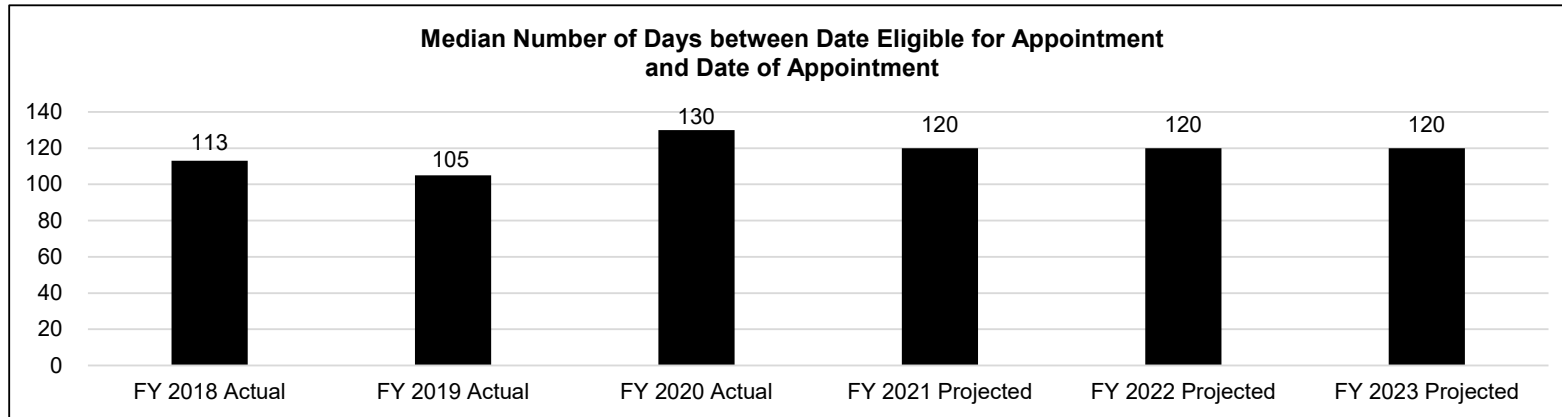
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2c. Provide a measure(s) of the program's impact.

- Length of time between eligibility and appointment indicates how long individuals must wait for an evaluation and indicates the need for additional resources to support ASD assessment and diagnosis.



2d. Provide a measure(s) of the program's efficiency.

- Autism Centers continue to prioritize timely appointments for children under 5, while working to reduce the overall wait time for appointments.

FY 2020 Median Number of Days between Date Eligible for Appointment and Date of Appointment	
Age	Median Days Waiting
Children 4 Years Old and Younger	113
Children 5 Years Old and Older	162
All Individuals	130

Note: Wait times for a comprehensive ASD assessment vary greatly across the country, ranging from 45 days to more than 365 days. Individuals receiving an ASD diagnosis can access a variety of intervention services. Individuals accessing intervention services at earlier stages are likely to achieve better long-term outcomes.

Source: *Whittling Down the Wait Time, 2016*

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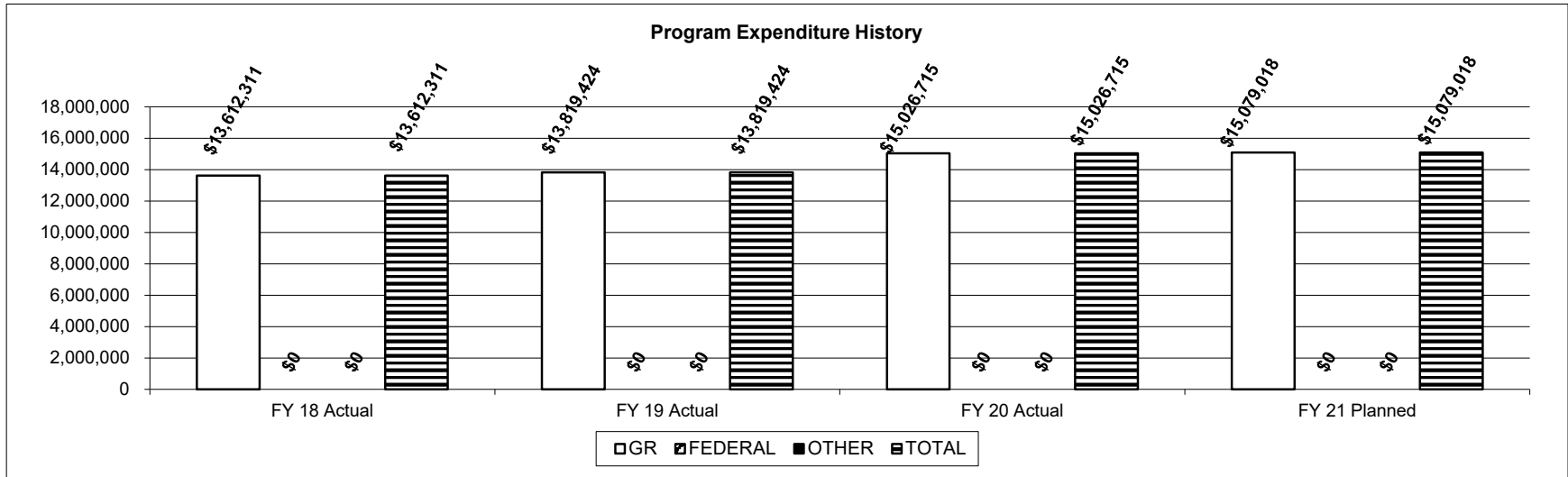
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3. Provide actual expenditures for the prior three fiscal years and planned expenditures for the current fiscal year. (Note: Amounts do not include fringe benefit costs.)



Note: FY 2020 Actual includes \$1M for Autism ECHO new decision item received in the FY 2020 budget, along with provider COLA.

4. What are the sources of the "Other " funds?

N/A

5. What is the authorization for this program, i.e., federal or state statute, etc.? (Include the federal program number, if applicable.)

Chapter 633, RSMo (Support services defined in Sections 630.405 through 630.460.)

6. Are there federal matching requirements? If yes, please explain.

No.

7. Is this a federally mandated program? If yes, please explain.

No.