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First 5 Contra Costa



Listening to Families: Voices of Autism Parents

Community Insights Report 2025-2026

Care Parent Network gathered feedback from families raising children with autism through playgroups, support groups, workshops, and surveys funded by the First 5 Contra Costa Building Blocks Mini-Grant. This report shares what families told us about their experiences, needs, and hopes for a more inclusive community.





What Families Told Us

What Families Value

Parent support groups
Autism playgroups
Regional Center services
Speech therapy
Occupational therapy
ABA therapy
Parent-to-parent connections
Care Parent Network workshops
Family navigation

Challenges Families Face

Long waitlists for services
Difficulty accessing therapies
Navigating complex systems
Limited inclusive spaces
Limited sensory-friendly spaces
Financial barriers
Need for greater autism awareness

Families Want More

Inclusive community programs
Sensory-friendly events
Affordable recreation
Parent education
Continued support groups
Easier access to information
More resources and referrals

Voices from Families

"Thank you, Care Parent Network,
for all the help."

"Please keep doing the excellent
job."

"Connecting with other parents
made us feel supported and less
alone."



Moving Forward Together

Families thrive when they feel connected, informed, and supported. The insights shared in this report reflect the strength, resilience, and hope of autism families across Contra Costa County.

How Community Partners Can Help

- Expand inclusive recreation programs for children with autism and their families.
- Increase sensory-friendly opportunities at community events and public spaces.
- Partner with Family Resource Centers to reach more families early.
- Improve autism awareness through training, outreach, and education.
- Continue listening to family voices and centering their experiences in planning.



Thank You

We are grateful to the families who shared their voices and to our community partners for helping build a more inclusive Contra Costa County. Together, we can ensure every family feels welcome, supported, and connected.

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