

PHILADELPHIA AUTISM PROJECT

annual report
2017



Philadelphia
AUTISM PROJECT



index

● Introduction	2
● Defining the Need	3-5
● Background	3
● Community Connections	4
● Employment	4
● Justice System Interactions	5
● Addressing the Need	6-14
● Conference	6
● Resource Hub	7
● Resource Development	8-9
● Supporting Underserved Communities	9
● Service System Training	10
● Training Timeline	11-14
● Closing	15



Philadelphia
AUTISM PROJECT

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Welcome to the Philadelphia Autism Project Update Report!

The Philadelphia Autism Project began in 2014, consisting of meetings with over 130 diverse community stakeholders. Discussions ranged from the unmet needs of individuals living with autism and their supporters, to the current policies that affect people's daily living experiences navigating different systems, to the data trends that provided us a picture of how many people were affected in Philadelphia. In 2015, discussions culminated into the Philadelphia Autism Project Final Report on the background, purpose and 119 initiatives that will drive the Philadelphia Autism Project's effort in the coming years.

We are pleased to share with you an update on these efforts thus far. From providing trainings, to meeting with underserved groups, to listening to your feedback and ideas, the Philadelphia Autism Project has initiated work on 48 of the 119 initiatives (40%). While some initiatives require more time (such as braiding different funding systems), others could be implemented more quickly (such as the creation of a centralized resource hub).

An exciting component of this project is the opportunity to learn from the local community. This includes learning about the new and creative programs that individuals and groups want to develop in their communities and the opportunity to support those ideas. Through implementation, we also learn about the challenges that arise and continue to build on those challenges together.

What makes the Philadelphia Autism Project unique is its partnership between City Council, the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services, and the stakeholders comprised of individuals with autism, family members, School District staff, providers, policy specialists, data specialists, researchers and many more. We thank our stakeholders for their guidance as we work towards ensuring Philadelphia maintains its status as a top city for people living with autism and their families.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions on how we can continue to implement these initiatives and we are looking forward to meeting you, hearing from you, and continuing to exchange ideas at upcoming Philadelphia Autism Project events. You can learn more about us on our website at www.phillyautismproject.org, or follow us on Twitter @PhillyAutism and Facebook @PhillyAutism. We can also be contacted by email at phillyap@drexel.edu.

We are excited to continue our work together and we are looking forward to an eventful 2017!

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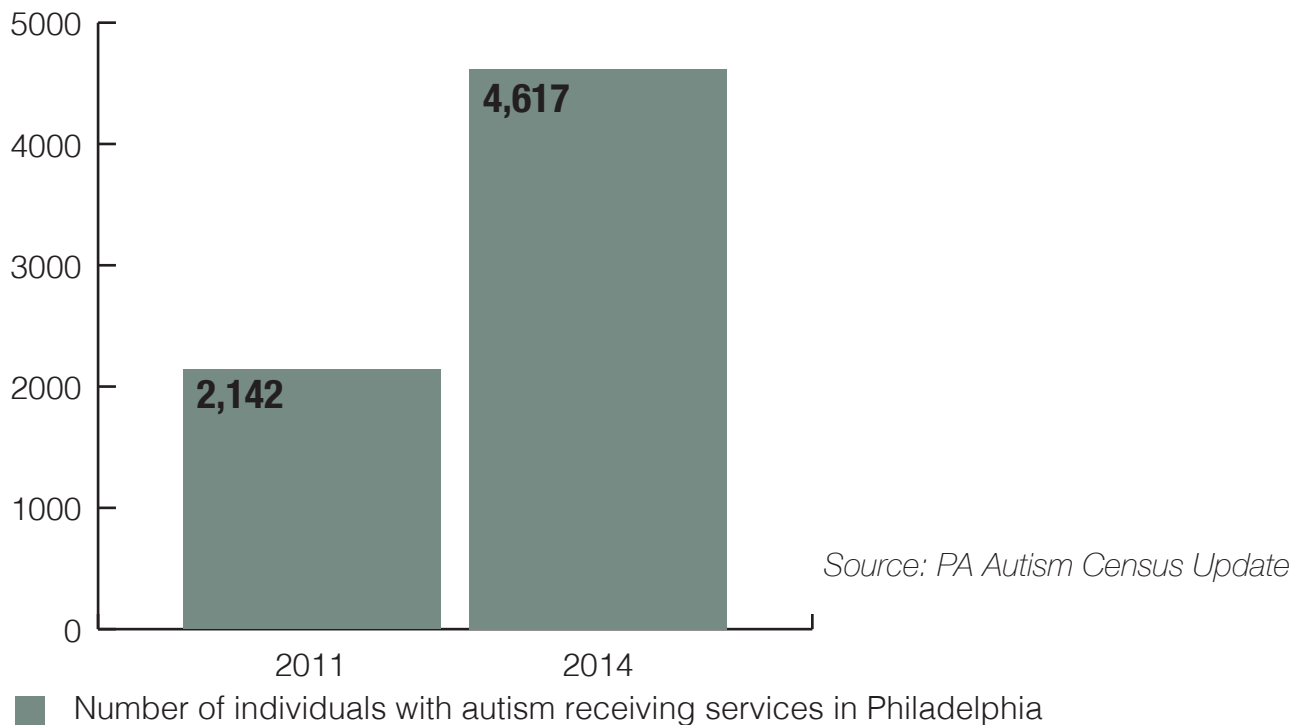


defining the need

Background

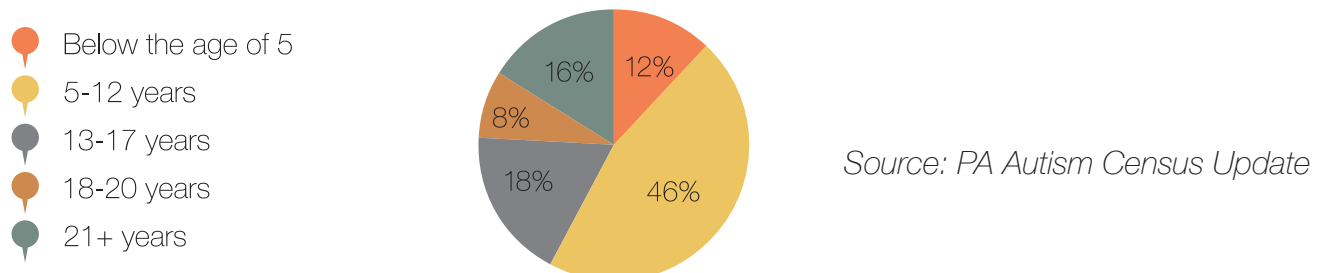
- In 2011, the Pennsylvania Autism Census found there were 2,142 individuals with autism in Philadelphia receiving services.
- By 2014, that number increased to 4,617 individuals - more than double the number of individuals from 2011 Pennsylvania Autism Census report.

Individuals with Autism Receiving Services in Philadelphia



- Among the individuals with autism in Philadelphia who are receiving services, more than 3/4 (76%) were children and about one in four (24%) were adults. Adults were the fastest growing group.

Percentage of Individuals with Autism Receiving Services in Philadelphia by Age Group.



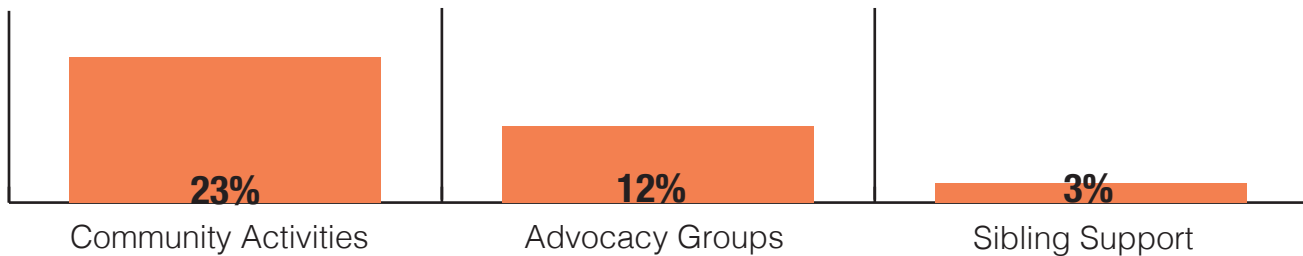
defining the need

The Philadelphia Autism Project uses data from the community to approach the stakeholder initiatives. This section outlines data gathered from the Pennsylvania Autism Needs Assessment and the Pennsylvania Autism Census Project about people with autism living in Philadelphia.

Community Connections

- The [Pennsylvania Autism Needs Assessment](#) found that fewer than one in four (23%) of individuals with autism in Philadelphia participate in community activities, 12% participate in an advocacy group, and 3% of siblings of individuals with autism receive support.

Percentage of Individuals with Autism in Philadelphia that Participate in Activities or Receive Sibling Support



Source: PA Autism Needs Assessment

Employment

- According to the Pennsylvania Autism Needs Assessment, more than **two-thirds of adults** with autism are unemployed. Of those who are employed, most work part-time.

- More than **1 in 4 adults** with autism report needing, but not receiving vocational training, career counseling or supported employment.



- **1 in 5** report needing, but not receiving help with transition planning.



defining the need



Justice System Interactions

The 2014 Pennsylvania Autism Census Update found that the number of pre-adjudicated charges associated with individuals with autism receiving services within the juvenile justice system in Philadelphia more than doubled between 2005 and 2011.

Preadjudicated charges are charges that have not yet gone to court.

The number of charges per 100 individuals with autism rose from 15.2 in 2005 to 17.6 in 2011.

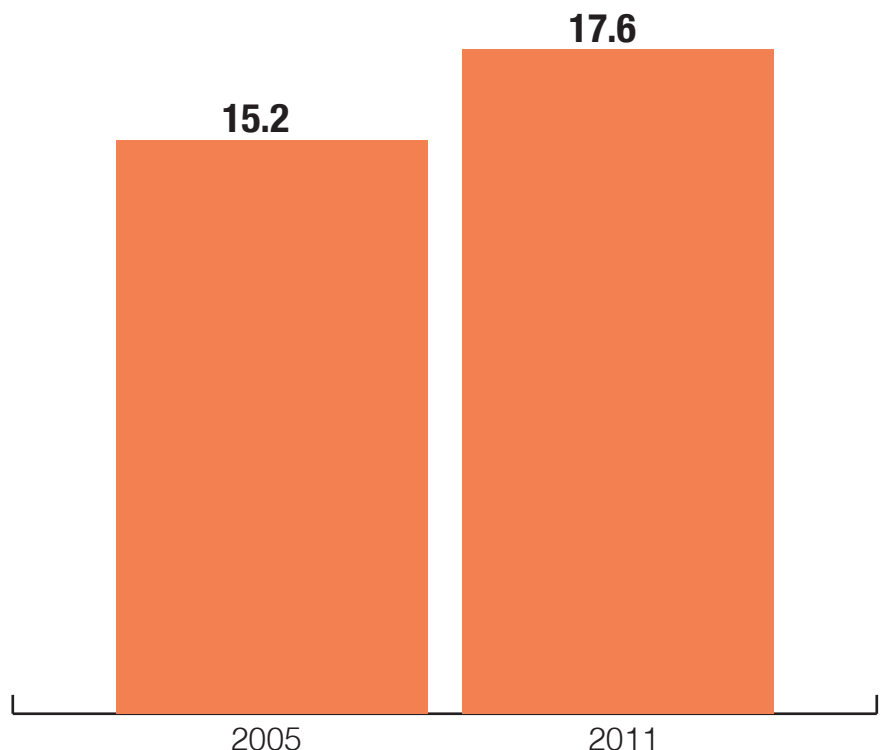
In Philadelphia, the majority of offenses occurred when individuals with autism reached the ages of 16 and 17, and tended to be misdemeanors, compared to less frequent felonies and summary charges.

To learn more about the needs of justice system professionals in understanding people with autism, the ASERT Collaborative conducted a statewide survey of over 300 justice system professionals, including probation officers, judges, attorneys, and Child and Youth Services staff. The survey found that only 27% of these professionals had received autism training. Survey respondents indicated that learning to communicate with individuals with autism, navigating challenging behaviors related to autism, and systems and services available to individuals with autism were all top training priorities.

Visit phillyautismproject.org/justice to learn more.

Justice Charges for Individuals with Autism in Philadelphia

■ Number of charges per 100 individuals with autism



addressing the need

Conference

- The first annual Philadelphia Autism Project Conference, “Awareness to Action” was held on October 16th, 2015 at the Free Library of Philadelphia, Parkway Central Branch. There was an overwhelmingly positive response to this conference:
 - Over 150 self-advocates, family members, and professionals from throughout the Philadelphia region attended the conference.
 - Attendees had the opportunity to connect with leaders in the education, clinical, policy, and research fields, while also learning about the Philadelphia Autism Project community engagement efforts, including the seed award projects.
 - Highlights from the conference included presentations from lead researchers about effectively finding resources to inform treatment planning and decision making.
 - Attendees also learned skills for communicating with decision makers.



Conference: What's Next?

- We are excited for our second Philadelphia Autism Project Conference, "Fostering Connections: Living, Working, and Building Relationships" held on May 12th, 2017 at Community Behavioral Health!
 - The focus of the conference will be on community inclusion of individuals with autism and will cover topics related to social roles and relationships, innovations in employment, and creating connections to the community.
 - Registration and additional conference information is available at: www.phillyautismproject.org/conf2017.

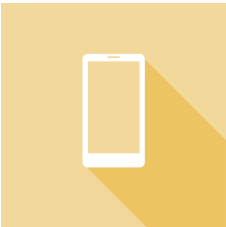
addressing the need

Resource Hub

The ASERT Resource Center has supported more than 4,000 Philadelphia individuals, professionals and families.



- Learn about some of our initiatives online at **www.phillyautismproject.org**
- Connect with statewide resources through ASERT's website: **www.paaautism.org**



- We may have connected with you by phone at **1-877-231-4244** (*English and Spanish*)
- We may have connected with you by email at **phillyap@drexel.edu**



- Follow us on Twitter **@PhillyAutism**
- Get updates on our Facebook page **@PhillyAutism**

addressing the need

Resource Development

• One of the long-term initiatives of the Philadelphia Autism Project was the creation of a “gold standard” centralized resource, website, or physical location. You can find some of the following resources on the Philadelphia Autism Project’s website.

The Transition Toolkit Collection page features:

- Toolkits that are designed for a variety of audiences and needs
- Toolkits that cover the lifespan, from early diagnosis into older adulthood
- Tabs that separate the toolkits by age group for easy access
- A link and a description of each toolkit for quick reference

Do you want to add a transition toolkit? Do you have questions? Please contact us at phillyap@drexel.edu or info@paautism.org!

This resource was designed to address the initiative of the Philadelphia Autism Project to develop "Transition Toolkits" across the lifespan for teachers/professionals to use to support individuals and families living with autism.

What's Next?

Resource pages targeting specific areas of need and interest for individuals with autism have been created and additional pages are underway. Current resource pages include:

- LGBTQI resources
- Voting

Another initiative identified by stakeholders was Postsecondary Transition Planning. A resource page is currently underway! It will focus on navigating postsecondary opportunities, materials, and forms that youth and their family members may come across in school as they navigate the education system.

A physical resource hub: Catered resources developed to support library staff and individuals with autism and/or their family members who visit the library.

To address this, we provided free trainings at library clusters across the city. We received their feedback in the creation of a social story for visiting the library. We also developed “Key Signs of Autism for Library Staff”.

What's Next? This will expand to developing resources for professionals in other fields including educational, medical, and child welfare professionals.

addressing the need

Resource Development

Feedback from stakeholders indicated the need for additional resources

To address this, we developed an accessible Early Intervention One Pager for family members and providers looking for information about Early Intervention services in Philadelphia.

We have an active Philadelphia specific Events Calendar where we continue to share events happening around the city.

We have a listing of over 30 in-person support groups and Free Library of Philadelphia locations that we continue to build upon.

Supporting Underserved Communities

The 2015 seed award initiative provided funding to 12 organizations and individuals throughout the Philadelphia area. Activities included raising awareness, providing education and support, piloting modifications to a diagnostic screening tool, and new programs within existing community organizations.

1. One example of a seed project was the development of videos to increase autism awareness for under-served and under-represented populations. Collaboration continued with the video creator and the Free Library of Philadelphia to host video screening and awareness events in the community. Over 100 individuals attended the screening events.
2. Collaboration and outreach has continued with organizations such as the Walnut Street Theater, Philadelphia Museum of Art, and Voting on the Spectrum, to promote community inclusion activities throughout Philadelphia. This includes providing voting specific resources and a voting booth for individuals and their families to practice voting, or providing outreach about the Art Museum's and the Walnut Street Theater's programs for children with autism.
3. On January 18th, 2017, the Philadelphia Autism Project and The Self Advocacy Power Network for All (SAPNA) collaborated to provide a one-day workshop on starting or strengthening a self-advocacy group in the Philadelphia community. SAPNA is funded by the PA Office of Developmental Programs and managed by Self Advocates United as 1 (SAU1). The training was a huge success and attended by over 30 self-advocates, family members, and support staff.

What's Next? Our 2017 GRants for Autism Advocacy and Support (GRAAS) funded the creation of self-advocacy and/or support groups in Philadelphia, as well as existing groups, in making them stronger or able to reach out to more people.

addressing the need

Autism and Service System Training

Justice System

As a result of the needs indicated in the statewide survey conducted by ASERT, and the increasing number of individuals coming into contact with the justice system, we have provided numerous trainings for justice system personnel. Over 350 Philadelphia police officers have been trained in autism through Crisis Intervention Training.

The Philadelphia Autism Project is also working with the Philadelphia Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide trainings to child welfare professionals throughout the Philadelphia area. This will include six 3-hour Autism 101 trainings for DHS Philadelphia Juvenile Justice Services Detention Center and Court and Family Services staff. The Philadelphia Autism Project and DHS are working to provide additional trainings to supervisors and staff.

What's Next? The Philadelphia Autism Project continues to collaborate with the ASERT Collaborative Eastern Region to provide trainings to Philadelphia police officers through Crisis Intervention Training and together they are working to expand this training to all 6,000 police officers in Philadelphia.

Community Organizations

There were several initiatives that touched on the need to provide training to different communities, such as in the university setting, employment setting, and community based programs. We have been busy! Below is a list of places we have provided specialized trainings for as well as community outreach events we have participated in throughout Philadelphia.

What's Next? Please keep your eye out for the Philadelphia Autism Project table at multiple events in the Philadelphia area during Autism Awareness month in April 2017. Tailored trainings are available upon request. If you would like to request a free training, please contact phillyap@drexel.edu or ASERT@drexel.edu.



addressing the need

Training Timelines



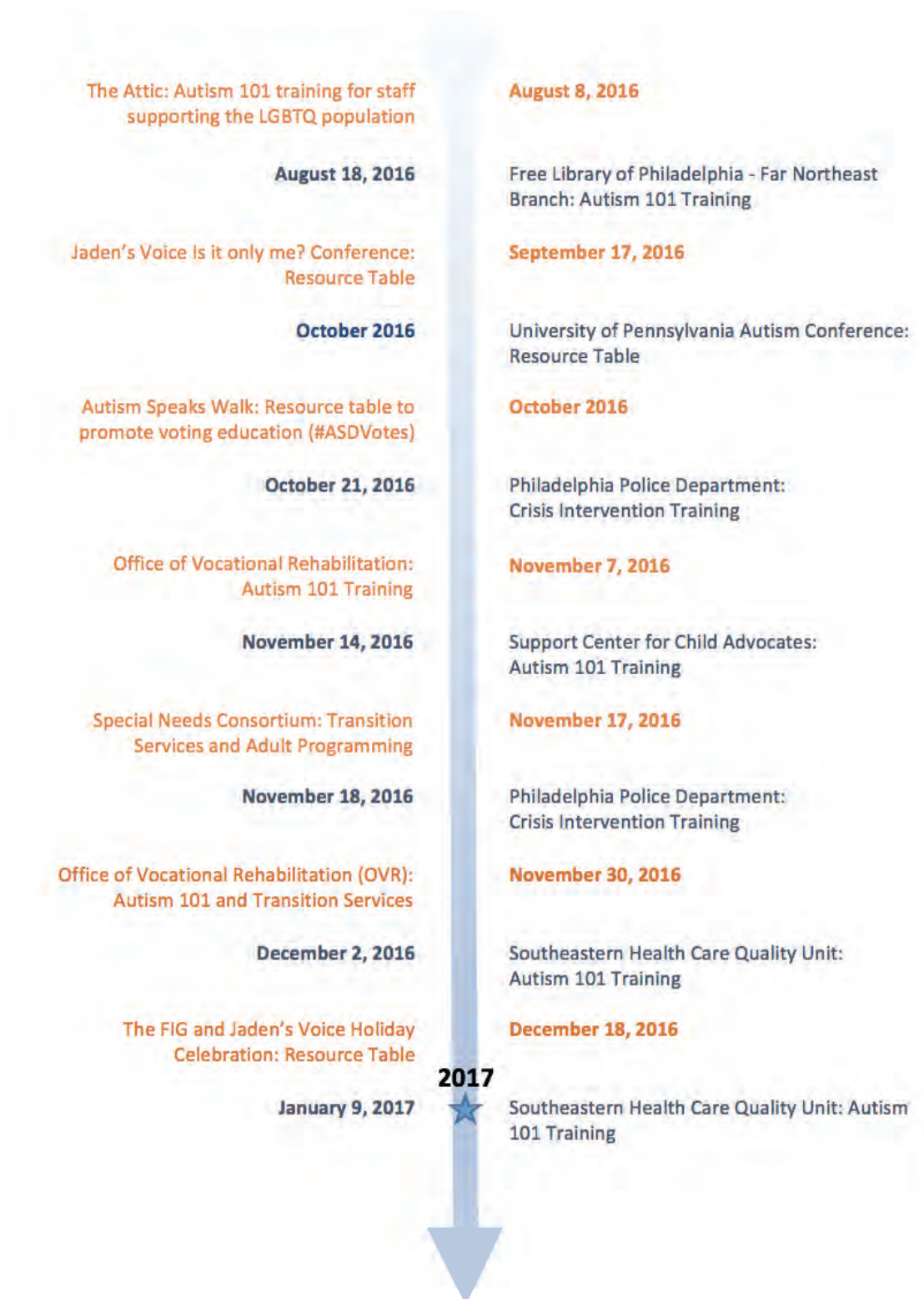
addressing the need

Training Timelines



addressing the need

Training Timelines



addressing the need

Training Timelines



THANK YOU



The Philadelphia Autism Project team is excited to continue to work with community and stakeholder input to realize the initiatives outlined by the Philadelphia Autism Project Final Report. These efforts will not only focus on creating environments where individuals living with autism and their family members can thrive, but also expanding potential for communities to benefit from being more inclusive.

Thank you to all of the community members, stakeholders, policymakers, families and individuals with autism who have helped to contribute to such a strong start for the Philadelphia Autism Project. We still have a lot of work to do and we are looking forward to future collaborations with you!



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