

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

WHEREAS, Autism is one of the fastest growing bio-neurological developmental disabilities in the world, which impacts a person's ability to communicate effectively and interact with other people^{1,2}; and

WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control has labeled autism an epidemic, affecting 1 in every 150 children in the United States, and over 1.5 million Americans have some form of autism. Utah has one of the highest autism rates in a 14-state study—1 in every 133 children. The rate is higher still for boys, at 1 in 79^{3,4}; and

WHEREAS, With early diagnosis and intervention and appropriate services and support, individuals with autism can lead distinguished, productive lives in their communities and strive to reach their full potential.^{5,6}; and

WHEREAS, Improving outcomes for children with autism by providing early diagnosis and intervention will decrease the lifetime costs of treating and providing services, resulting in an overall societal cost savings per child served, estimated to be millions of dollars^{7,8,9}; and

WHEREAS, Coverage of health care, behavioral, and psychotherapeutic services for autism and other diagnosed developmental delays is limited, inconsistent, or excluded altogether by private health plans and insurers, leading to denial of coverage and leaving families with lost time and no services^{10,11}; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Utah PTA collaborate with schools and community organizations to educate parents, school administrators, and teachers about autism spectrum disorders and their effects on families; and be it further

Resolved, That Utah PTA support efforts to ensure appropriate and equitable coverage by private health plans and insurers for the diagnosis and medically necessary treatment of individuals with autism and other disorders causing developmental delays; and be it further

Resolved, That Utah PTA advocate for adequate laws that will further research into the causes of autism spectrum disorders and assist families with a child with autism spectrum disorders.

Documentation:

¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorders-Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, 14 Sites, United States, 2002", Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, Surveillance Summaries, February 9, 2007, Vol. 56, No. SS-1, pages 12-28, <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/ss/ss5601.pdf>

²Emanuel DiCicco-Bloom, Catherine Lord, Lonnie Zwaigenbaum, Eric Courchesne, Stephen R. Dager, Christoph Schmitz, Robert T. Schultz, Jacqueline Crawley, and Larry J. Young, "The Developmental Neurobiology of Autism Spectrum Disorder", The Journal of Neuroscience, June

28, 2006, Vol. 26, pages 6897-6906; doi:10.1523/JNEUROSCI.1712-06.2006
<http://www.jneurosci.org/cgi/content/full/26/26/6897>

³Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2007, pages 12-28

⁴Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorders-Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, Six Sites, United States, 2000", Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, Surveillance Summaries, February 9, 2007, Vol. 56, No. SS-1, pages 1-11, <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/ss/ss5601.pdf>

⁵Autism Society of America, "Next Steps: A Guide for Families New to Autism", 2004, 2006, <http://www.autism-society.org/site/DocServer/nextsteps06.pdf?docID=4203>

⁶J. J. McEachin, T. Smith, O. Ivar Lovaas, "Long-term Outcome for Children with Autism Who Received Early Intensive Behavioral Treatment", American Journal on Mental Retardation, 1993, Vol. 97, pages 359-72.

⁷John W. Jacobson, James A. Mulick, Gina Green, "Cost-Benefit Estimates for Early Intensive Behavioral Intervention for Young Children with Autism – General Model and Single State Case", 1998, Behavioral Interventions, Vol. 13, pages 201-26.

⁸United States Government Accountability Office, Special Education: Children with Autism (GAO-05-220 (2005)), <http://www.gao.gov/htext/d05220.html>

⁹Michael L. Ganz, "The Lifetime Distribution of the Incremental Societal Costs of Autism", 2007, Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, Vol. 161, pages 343-49, <http://archpedi.ama-assn.org/cgi/reprint/161/4/343>

¹⁰Douglas L. Leslie, Andres Martin, "Health Care Expenditures Associated with Autism Spectrum Disorders", 2007, Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, Vol. 161, pages 350-55, <http://archpedi.ama-assn.org/cgi/reprint/161/4/350>

¹¹Pamela B. Peele, Judith R. Lave, Kelly J. Kelleher, "Exclusions and Limitations in Children's Behavioral Health Care Coverage", 2002, Psychiatric Services, Vol. 53, pages 591-94, <http://psychservices.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/reprint/53/5/591.pdf>