

2013 State Autism Profiles TEXAS

DEMOGRAPHICS

In 2000, 7,131 or 1.45% of children ages 3-21 who received special education services in Texas have autism. In 2011-2012, 36,550 or 8.31% of children with disabilities ages 3-21 who received special education services have autism.

Table 1-1: IDEA Part B - Children with Autism in Texas for 1999-2000 and 2011-2012
(Child Count by Age Group)

	1999-2000	2011-2012
Age 3-5	1,108	3,447
Age 6-11	3,876	18,304
Age 12-17	1,778	12,495
Age 18-21	369	2,304
Age 6-21	6,023	33,103
Age 3-21	7,131	36,550

Source: Reported by the State of Texas in accordance with Section 618 of IDEA to U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs

Table 1-2: IDEA Part B - Children with Disabilities in Texas for 1999-2000 and 2011-2012
(Child Count by Age Group)

	1999-2000	2011-2012
Age 3-5	36,442	40,756
Age 6-11	210,873	170,635
Age 12-17	223,824	197,144
Age 18-21	20,503	31,140
Age 6-21	455,200	398,919
Age 3-21	491,642	439,675

Source: Reported by the State of Texas in accordance with Section 618 of IDEA to U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs

STATE TASK FORCE

Texas Council on Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders

The Texas Council on Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders is composed of seven public members appointed by the governor and representatives from key state agencies involved with the regulation and administration of services for individuals with autism. The Council issues an annual report every two years to identify and address the needs of individuals with autism. Past recommendations have included a recommendation that the Department of Aging and Disability Services establish a Medicaid waiver to provide in-home support, independent living with support, or group options for adults with autism. The most recent report is the 2011 Annual Report.

<http://www.dads.state.tx.us/autism/>

<http://www.dads.state.tx.us/autism/publications/2011annualreport.pdf>

STATE INSURANCE COVERAGE

Texas provides health insurance coverage for all generally recognized autism services prescribed in the treatment plan by the primary care physician. Originally covering only enrollees older than 2 and less than 6 years of age, the legislation was amended in H.B. 451, and signed by the governor on June 19, 2009, to expand coverage to enrollees diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders who are older than 2 years and less than 18 years of age. (*Texas Insurance Code Chapter 1355.015*) Generally recognized services may include the following:

- Evaluation and assessment services;
- Applied behavior analysis;
- Behavior training and behavior management;
- Speech therapy;

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- Occupational therapy;
- Physical therapy; and
- Medications or nutritional supplements used to address symptoms of autism spectrum disorder.

In 2013, H.B. 3276 was passed by the legislature and signed by the Governor to amend the provision of the law requiring health plans to cover the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorder. At a minimum, a health benefit plan must provide coverage for screening a child for autism spectrum disorder at 18 and 24 months. However, the legislature specifically noted that this coverage does not apply if a determination is made under the Affordable Care Act that this benefit would be in addition to the Essential Health Benefits package and that therefore, the state will not pay for the additional service.

<http://legiscan.com/TX/text/HB3276/2013>

EDUCATION

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) works with its 20 Regional Education Service Centers (ESC) on statewide leadership functions and projects. TEA established a Statewide Leadership Function for Autism with the Region 13 ESC in 2008

<http://www.txautism.net/>

Regional Education Service Centers Autism Contacts

http://autism.esc2.net/contact_us.asp

Legislation

Section 89.1055(e) was amended to include an “Autism Supplement” that clarified existing considerations in the individualized education program (IEP) for students with autism spectrum disorders and added new considerations in the IEP. The eleven strategies are optional unless required in the IEP by the admission, review, and dismissal committee (*19 T.A.C. Section 89.1055(e)*).

<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/special.ed/guidance/iepfaq.pdf>

In 2009, S.B. 1302 was introduced to establish the Autism Services Accessibility Program, which would allow students ages 3 to 10 with autism spectrum disorders to attend the public school of their choosing. State aid would be transferred accordingly. The bill was last referred to the Senate Education Committee. No further action was taken.

S.B. 2204 was also introduced in 2009 to create the Autism Interdisciplinary Enhancement Program, which would allow students with autism spectrum disorder to use state funds for services offered through a qualifying community provider. The funds would not surpass the amount that would be entitled to the student’s public school for the student. The bill was left pending in the Senate Education Committee. No further action was taken.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Texas State Conference on Autism

The Texas Education Agency, in conjunction with the Region 2 ESC, sponsors an annual statewide conference to provide resources and information to parents, educators, and other professionals working with individuals with autism. The 22st Annual Texas Autism Conference took place in Austin, Texas on October 17-18, 2013.

<http://autism.esc2.net>

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OTHER STATE RESOURCES

Autism Spectrum Disorders Resource Center and Pilot Program Study

On May 27, 2009, the governor signed H.B. 1547, requiring the Health and Human Services Commission to establish and administer an autism spectrum disorders resource center. The center will collect and distribute information and research, conduct training and development for those working with individuals with autism, coordinate with autism service providers, and provide support for families affected by autism and other developmental disorders. The legislation also states that the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission shall conduct a study to evaluate the costs and benefits of a pilot program that will provide services to adults with autism. The report on the findings of this study was submitted to lawmakers on August 23, 2010. The act went into effect on September 1, 2009.

<http://www.dads.state.tx.us/autism/publications/HB1574Report.pdf>

Texas Legislature Approves Pilot Program for Autism

The Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) selected four providers, including Easter Seals of North Texas, to provide autism related services to children 3-8 years of age.

<http://www.dars.state.tx.us/announcements/20080307.shtml>

STATE LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

The Texas Legislature meets in Regular Session for approximately five months every other year. The 83rd Regular Session convened on January 8, 2013 and adjourned on May 27, 2013.

<http://www.capitol.state.tx.us>

Sponsors of Autism Legislation

Sen. Rodney Ellis (D-Houston) District 13
Sen. Kirk Watson (D-Austin) District 14
Sen. Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) District 21
Sen. Leticia Van de Putte (D-San Antonio) District 26
Sen. Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D-Brownsville) District 27

Rep. Lois W. Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) District 13
Rep. Diane Patrick (R-Arlington) District 94
Rep. John Davis (R-Houston) District 129
Rep. Alma Allen (D-Harris) District 131
Rep. Senfronia Thompson (D-Houston) District 141
Rep. Harold Dutton, Jr. (D-Harris) District 142