

2009 State Autism Profiles

ARIZONA

DEMOGRAPHICS

In 2000, 1,213 or 1.26% of children ages 3-21 who received special education services in Arizona have autism. In 2007-2008, 5,252 or 4.01% of children with disabilities ages 3-21 who received special education services have autism.

Table 1-1: IDEA Part B - Children with Autism in Arizona for 1999-2000 and 2007-2008
(Child Count by Age Group)

	1999-2000	2007-2008
Age 3-5	94	368
Age 6-11	731	2,915
Age 12-17	316	1,696
Age 18-21	72	273
Age 6-21	1,119	4,884
Age 3-21	1,213	5,252

Source: Reported by the State of Arizona 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 Arizona for 1999-2000 and 2007-2008
(Child Count by Age Group)

	1999-2000	2007-2008
Age 3-5	9,144	14,097
Age 6-11	43,369	57,025
Age 12-17	39,936	54,172
Age 18-21	3,993	5,842
Age 6-21	87,298	117,039
Age 3-21	96,442	131,136

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

STATE TASK FORCE

At this time, the State of Arizona does not have an active task force on autism. The original language of H.B. 2847, as introduced by Rep. Konopnicki (R-Safford), included the establishment of a task force to study health insurance coverage for individuals. However, the House Finance Committee passed a “strike everything” amendment to mirror H.B. 2847 with S.B. 1263. The section on the autism task force was not included in the engrossed bill. (Refer to section on State Insurance Coverage)

STATE INSURANCE COVERAGE

Sen. Amanda Aguirre (D-Yuma) introduced S.B. 1263, Steven’s Law, which requires group health insurance coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorder. S.B. 1263 was amended onto H.B. 2847, legislation sponsored by Rep. Bill Konopnicki (R-Safford), as a compromise between the health insurance industry and lawmakers. Additionally, an agreement was reached for a moratorium until 2011 on any further insurance coverage requirements pertaining to autism. S.B. 1263/H.B. 2847 passed and was signed into law by Gov. Janet Napolitano in March 2008. The law prohibits health service or medical service corporations from excluding or denying coverage for the diagnosis, assessment, treatment, and services, for autism spectrum disorder. In addition, the law explicitly prohibits the exclusion or denial of coverage for medically necessary behavioral therapy, including applied behavior analysis, from or under the supervision of a licensed or certified provider. The law exempts small business or individual health insurance policies and services rendered outside of the state. Behavioral therapy is covered for an eligible individual at a maximum of \$50,000 per year up to the age of 9 years old and at a maximum of \$25,000 per year for an eligible individual between the ages of 9-16.

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EDUCATION

In January 2008, H.B. 2278 was introduced to align the age requirements for special education services. H.B. 2278 added an exception that allows students receiving special education services who turn 22 years of age to continue receiving special education services through the end of that school year. The legislation passed the House Education Committee and was referred to the Rules Committee.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Arizona Scholarship for Pupils with Disabilities

Since 2006, the Arizona Scholarship for Pupils with Disabilities provides scholarships to qualifying students with disabilities to attend a qualified public school in another school district or to attend a private school. Parents interested in applying for a scholarship for their child exercise their parental option to place their child in a qualified school. Scholarships are awarded on a “first come, first served” basis. The maximum scholarship awarded is equivalent to the amount allotted for the student in the resident school district. Approximately, \$2.5 million has been appropriated for the scholarship program. The program is slated to terminate in 2016.

STATE LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

The Arizona State Legislature meets in Regular Session annually on the second Monday in January. The 2009 legislature convened on January 12, 2009 and is expected to adjourn on May 9.

<http://www.azleg.gov/>

Sponsors of Autism Legislation:

Sen. Carolyn S. Allen (R-Scottsdale) District 8
Sen. Amanda Aguirre (D-Yuma) District 16
Sen. Timothy S. Bee (R-Tucson) District 30

Rep. Tom Boone (R-Peoria) District 4
Rep. Bill Konopnicki (R-Safford) District 5
Rep. David M. Lujan (D-Phoenix) District 15