

2009 State Autism Profiles

MAINE

DEMOGRAPHICS

In 2000, 594 or 1.67% of children ages 3-21 who received special education services in Maine have autism. In 2007-2008, 1,990 or 5.78% of children with disabilities ages 3-21 who received special education services have autism.

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

	1999-2000	2007-2008
Age 3-5	150	390
Age 6-11	279	947
Age 12-17	152	597
Age 18-21	13	56
Age 6-21	444	1,600
Age 3-21	594	1,990

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

	1999-2000	2007-2008
Age 3-5	3,978	3,889
Age 6-11	15,056	13,795
Age 12-17	15,086	15,250
Age 18-21	1,513	1,491
Age 6-21	31,655	30,536
Age 3-21	35,633	34,425

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

STATE TASK FORCE

Maine does not have an active task force on autism at this time. Pursuant to the Autism Act of 1984, the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) released their biannual autism spectrum disorders report in June 2007. The report outlines issues, initiatives, and proposed recommendations to improve support systems for individuals with autism. Maine DHHS has also collaborated with the Maine Department of Education and external organizations to develop an interagency strategic plan for developing an improved statewide system of care for individuals with autism.

http://mainegov-images.informe.org/dhhs/2007_autism_report.pdf

STATE INSURANCE COVERAGE

L.D. 21 was introduced on January 7, 2009 requiring all individual or group health insurance plans, policies or contracts and all individual or group health maintenance organizations to provide coverage for the diagnostic testing and screening of autism spectrum disorders. L.D. 21 was referred to the House Committee on Insurance and Financial Services and sent for concurrence. In the Senate, L.D. 21 was placed under suspension of the rules on motion and referred to the Committee on Insurance and Financial Services. L.D. 637 was introduced on February 19, 2009 to require health insurance coverage to adults with mental retardation or autism spectrum disorders who are incapacitated and financially eligible under the MaineCare program. The legislation was referred to the House Committee on Health and Human Services and sent for concurrence. L.D. 637 was placed under suspension of the rules on motion and referred to the Health and Human Services Committee.

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MEDICAID

Maine Home and Community Based Services Waiver: Support Waiver

The Maine DHHS Office of Adults with Cognitive and Physical Disability Services operates a support waiver for adults 21 years or older with mental retardation or autism spectrum disorder who require ICF/MR level of care. An amendment was approved in 2006, which made changes to the services offered. Services include home support (formerly residential training and personal support services); community support (formerly day habilitation) with a maximum limit of 1,300 hours per year; employment specialist services with a maximum of 10 hours per month; work support with a maximum limit of 600 hours in combination with employment specialist services; home accessibility adaptations (formerly environmental modifications) with a \$10,000 maximum limit in a 5-year period with an additional limit up to \$300 for repairs and replacement per year and supporting documentation from a physician for purchases over \$500; specialized medical equipment and supplies (formerly adaptive equipment) with supporting documentation from a physician for purchases over \$500; communication aids with supporting documentation from a speech pathologist for purchases over \$500; non-traditional communication consultation and assessments; consultation services; counseling; crisis intervention for up to two weeks; crisis assessment with a maximum amount of \$2,500; transportation services; occupational, physical and speech therapy.

EDUCATION

In April 2008, the Governor John Baldacci signed into law LD 1977. The law requires the Maine DHHS and the Department of Education to collaborate and develop statewide protocols for the diagnosis of autism for children ages 18-30 months old through the Child Development Services System, and provide an early intensive treatment program for each diagnosed child.

OTHER STATE RESOURCES

In June 2007, Governor John Baldacci signed into law LD 1801, changing the definition of autism and eligibility for services provided by the Maine DHHS. The law defines autism as a person with a diagnosis of autism per DSM-IV and assessed by the department with a score within at least 2 standard deviations below the mean on the adaptive behavior scale. Services may be provided to individuals with autism who exhibit substantial limitations in at least three of the following areas: communication, self-care, self-direction, capacity for independent living and learning.

STATE LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

The Maine legislature meets annually on the first Wednesday in December for the first regular session and on the first Tuesday in January for a second session. The 124th Maine State Legislature convened December 3, 2008 and is expected to adjourn June 17, 2009.

<http://janus.state.me.us/legis/>

Sponsors of Autism Legislation:

Sen. Joseph Brannigan (D-Portland) District 9
Sen. Peter Mills (R-Skowhegan) District 26

Rep. Emily Cain (D-Orono) District 19
Rep. Margaret Craven (D-Lewiston) District 74
Rep. Richard Sykes (R-Harrison) District 98
Rep. Mark E. Bryant (D-Windham) District 110