

# 2012 State Autism Profiles RHODE ISLAND

## DEMOGRAPHICS

In 2000, 357 or 1.16% of children ages 3-21 who received special education services in Rhode Island have autism. In 2010-2011, 1,787 or 7.05% of children with disabilities ages 3-21 who received special education services have autism.

**Table 1-1: IDEA Part B - Children with Autism in Rhode Island for 1999-2000 and 2010-2011**  
(Child Count by Age Group)

	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>
<b>Age 3-5</b>	48	181
<b>Age 6-11</b>	211	756
<b>Age 12-17</b>	90	732
<b>Age 18-21</b>	8	118
<b>Age 6-21</b>	309	1,606
<b>Age 3-21</b>	357	1,787

*Source: Reported by the State of Rhode Island 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 Rhode Island for 1999-2000 and 2010-2011**  
(Child Count by Age Group)

	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>
<b>Age 3-5</b>	2,614	2,945
<b>Age 6-11</b>	13,913	9,434
<b>Age 12-17</b>	12,830	11,434
<b>Age 18-21</b>	1,370	1,519
<b>Age 6-21</b>	28,113	22,387
<b>Age 3-21</b>	30,727	25,332

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

## STATE TASK FORCE

### ***Joint Commission to Study the Education of Children with Autism in the State of Rhode Island***

In early 2009, legislation (H 5691, H.5270, S.170, and S.716) was introduced to establish a Joint Commission to Study the Educational Needs of Children with Autism in Rhode Island. The study would focus on diagnosis and assessment, prevalence, impact on family, the role of the family, educational goals, interventions, educational programs, public policy approaches to personnel training and education. The commission would be comprised of 24 members, including legislative officials, representatives from state agencies, and professionals with an interest in autism. The final report was to be submitted to the General Assembly by January 28, 2010 and was to dissolve by June 15, 2010. H.5691/S.716 was transmitted to the governor on July 7, 2009 and became law on July 16 without his signature. H.B. 5286 was passed in the 2011 session without the governor's signature, extending the reporting date of the Commission until January 24, 2012, with the commission set to expire on June 28, 2012.

## STATE INSURANCE COVERAGE

In 2011, the Rhode Island legislature passed and Governor Lincoln Chafee signed S.B. 107/H.B. 5275, mandating private and state health care plans cover for diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorder. Health plans are required to provide benefits for Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA), speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. There is a \$32,000 a year limit on ABA. Benefits for occupational therapy and physical therapy are to be the same for all other diseases or disorders covered by the health plan.

In the 2012 session, H.B. 7165 amended the scope of coverage for autism spectrum disorders to include psychology, psychiatry, and pharmaceutical services as covered treatment options, though the services

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would be to the extent that such services are a covered benefit for other diseases and conditions. It also enables licensed psychologists to provide ABA therapy if they have “equivalent experience.” S.B. 2559 , also passed in the 2012 session, creates a five-member Applied Behavior Analyst Licensing Board within the Department of Health.

### EDUCATION

#### *Autism Support Center*

The Rhode Island Department of Education, Office of Special Populations in contract with the Rhode Island Technical Assistance Project has made available the Autism Support Center to serve as a clearinghouse for information and support for educators and parents of students with autism spectrum disorders. Services available include workshops, training, information, resources, best practices, and other pertinent information that support the educational needs of children with autism.

<http://www.ritap.org/asd/>

### OTHER STATE RESOURCES

#### *Rhode Island Evaluation and Treatment Act*

The Rhode Island Evaluation and Treatment Act directs the Rhode Island Department of Health to evaluate what methodologies would provide an accurate diagnosis of autism spectrum disorders and to develop a system for maintaining records of diagnoses. (*RI Gen Law §23-79.1*)

### STATE LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

The Rhode Island General Assembly meets annually in Regular Session on the first Tuesday in January. The 2011 General Assembly convened January 4, 2011 and adjourned July 1, 2011. The 2012 convened on January 3, 2012 and adjourned on June 13, 2012. The 2013 session will convene on January 8, 2013 and is expected to adjourn in June 2013.

<http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/>

#### *Sponsors of Autism Legislation:*

Sen. James E. Doyle III (D-Pawtucket) District 8

Sen. Edward O’Neill (I- Lincoln, North Providence,  
Pawtucket) District 17

Sen. John J. Tassoni, Jr. (D-Smithfield) District 22

Rep. Russell Jackson (D-Middletown) District 73

Rep. Eileen S. Naughton ( D-Warwick) District 21