

2012 State Autism Profiles VIRGINIA

DEMOGRAPHICS

In 2000, 2,228 or 1.37% of children ages 3-21 who received special education services in Virginia have autism. In 2010-2011, 11,658 or 7.18% of children with disabilities ages 3-21 who received special education services have autism.

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

	1999-2000	2010-2011
Age 3-5	228	936
Age 6-11	1,308	6,015
Age 12-17	560	4,010
Age 18-21	132	697
Age 6-21	2,000	10,722
Age 3-21	2,228	11,658

Source: Reported by the Commonwealth of Virginia 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 Virginia for 1999-2000 and 2010-2011
(Child Count by Age Group)

	1999-2000	2010-2011
Age 3-5	14,444	17,081
Age 6-11	70,579	65,571
Age 12-17	70,248	69,765
Age 18-21	6,941	9,921
Age 6-21	147,768	145,257
Age 3-21	162,212	162,338

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

STATE TASK FORCE

Autism Advisory Council

On March 28, 2011, Governor Robert McDonnell signed S.B. 1269 into law, creating an Autism Advisory Council in the legislative branch to promote coordination of services and supports among the many groups that deliver services to people with autism spectrum disorder. The creation of this council is dependent on its receiving funding from the Appropriations Committee.

Autism Committee

The Commonwealth of Virginia does not have an active task force on autism at this time. In March 2006, H.J. 96 passed both the Senate and House of Delegates, convening an autism committee to evaluate and improve the education and treatment of individuals with autism spectrum disorders. The measure expanded upon a 2001 study on autism, "Services Available for Individuals with Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders," which identified the need to improve the training of educators of students with autism. The joint resolution encouraged the Virginia Department of Education to strengthen the qualifications for instructors of autism, provide training and other types of professional development opportunities for instructors, and evaluate the placement of students with autism (e.g., IEP, public v. private school). The joint resolution also requests that the Virginia Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services expand training opportunities that address the needs of individuals with autism. The committee was comprised of 20 members, including educators, representatives of state agencies, and parents of children with autism.

2012 State Autism Profiles VIRGINIA

STATE INSURANCE COVERAGE

On April 29, 2011 Governor Robert McDonnell signed H.B. 2467 into law, requiring that health plans in Virginia provide for the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorder in children ages two to six years old. The requirement applies to the state employees' health insurance plan and to the local choice health program, and does not apply to an insurer, corporation, or health maintenance organization, or to government employee programs, if the costs associated with coverage exceed one percent of premiums charged over the experience period. Treatment includes behavioral health treatment, pharmacy, psychiatric, psychological, and therapeutic care, as well as Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). Coverage is limited to an annual maximum benefit of \$35,000 for ABA unless the insurer elects to provide coverage in a greater amount. Coverage is not subject to any visit limits. Governor McDonnell signed H.B. 1106 – an amendment to H.B. 2467 – into law in February 2012, relating to the licensure of behavior analysts and assistant behavior analysts.

2011 Va. Act, Chap. 876 and 2011 Va. Act, Chap. 878 (H.B. 2467 of 2011, S.B. 1062 of 2011)

Virginia continues to have a mental health parity law, which states that individuals who suffer from biologically-based mental illnesses, including autism, are entitled to group health insurance coverage, as with coverage for other illnesses. Small employers with 25 employees or fewer, individual policies, and short-term policies are exempted. (*VA Code §38.2-3412.1:01*)

MEDICAID

Virginia Home Community Based Services Waiver: VA Individual & Family DD Support

Implemented on July 1, 2008, this HCBS waiver helps individuals with developmental disabilities including those with autism to continue to live at home and within their communities. Services provided include: day support, in-home residential, personal care, prevocational, respite care, supported employment that is group/individual/consumer directed, adult companion, assistive technology, crisis stabilization, crisis supervision, environmental modifications, family and caregiver training, PERS, skilled and private duty nursing, therapeutic consultation, and transition. The waiver expires on June 30, 2013 and applies only to individuals ages 6 and older.

<http://www.medicaid.gov/Medicaid-CHIP-Program-Information/By-Topics/Waivers/Waivers.html>

EDUCATION

Teacher Endorsements

In the 2011 session, H.B. 1720 was introduced to change the requirements for teachers seeking an endorsement for special education to include demonstration of proficiency in student behavior management. Also, local school districts would be required to provide 80 hours of training in behavior management to any aid assigned to work with a teacher who primarily has responsibility for children with autism spectrum disorder, within the first 60 days of being assigned. H.B. 1720 was referred to the Appropriations Committee; no further action was taken.

Autism Tuition Assistance Grant Program

H.B. 1985 and S.B. 956 were introduced on January 13, 2009 to create an autism tuition assistance program of up to \$20,000 for an eligible student with autism with an individualized education plan to attend a participating Virginia private school instead of the public school in his/her district. The eligible student must have received special education services within the Virginia public school system for at least one year, and the parents of the eligible student must have obtained admission to a participating Virginia private school. H.B. 1985 was incorporated by voice vote in the Appropriations Committee on February 4, 2009. No further action was taken. S.B. 1544, similar to S.B. 956, was introduced on January 6, 2009. It was defeated in the Finance Committee on February 5.

2012 State Autism Profiles VIRGINIA

EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Autism Priority Project – Training & Technical Assistance Centers

The Virginia Department of Education's Autism Priority Project provides training and technical support to educators of students with autism. Eight regional centers have been established throughout Virginia.

<http://www.ttaonline.org/>

OTHER STATE RESOURCES

Autism Study

In March 2008, H.J. 105 passed, which authorizes the Joint Audit and Review Commission to study the current level of support and services available to individuals with autism spectrum disorders and how to best provide services. The commission evaluated services and training programs across different areas, such as education, law enforcement, and mental health, and compared the results to different states. Based upon its findings, the commission proposed recommendations and best practices for improving service delivery to individuals with autism. The Joint Audit and Review Commission presented its "Assessment of Services for Virginians with Autism Spectrum Disorders" report in June 2009.

<http://jlarc.state.va.us/reports/Rpt388.pdf>

Additionally, the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services will be including in its yearly report to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission a summary outlining a plan and specific goals for autism spectrum disorders employment programs to obtain and sustain employment.

STATE LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

The Virginia General Assembly meets annually beginning the second Wednesday in January. The assembly meets for 60 days in even-numbered years and 30-days in odd number years. The 2012 Session convened on January 11, 2012 and adjourned on March 10, 2012. The 2013 Session will convene on January 9, 2013 and will adjourn on February 8, 2013.

<http://legis.state.va.us/>

Sponsors of Autism Legislation:

Sen. Janet D. Howell (D-Fairfax County) District 32
Sen. Walter A. Stosch (R-Glen Allen) District 12
Sen. Jill Holtzman Vogel (R-Winchester) District 27

Del. David L. Englin (D-Alexandria) District 45
Del. Thomas Greason (R-Potomac Falls) District 32
Del. Patrick Hope (D-Arlington) District 47
Del. Robert G. Marshall (R-Loudon) District 13
Del. John M. O'Bannon, III (R- Henrico, Richmond) District 73