

# 2016 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 2014-2015, 10,512 or 7.99% 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 2000-2001 and 2014-2015**  
(Child Count by Age Group)

	2000-2001	2014-2015
Age 3-5	94	459
Age 6-21	1,119	10,053
Age 3-21	1,213	10,512

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 2000-2001 and 2014-2015**  
(Child Count by Age Group)

	2000-2001	2014-2015
Age 3-5	9,144	15,113
Age 6-11	43,369	57,251
Age 12-17	39,936	53,485
Age 18-21	3,993	5,692
Age 6-21	87,298	116,428
Age 3-21	96,442	131,541

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

The Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Committee as established in 2015 The Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Advisory Committee was appointed in spring 2015 by Christina Corieri, Policy Advisor for Health and Human Services, Office of the Arizona Governor. The Committee was charged with making recommendations to the State for strengthening the health care system's ability to respond to the needs of Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) members with or at risk for ASD. Their report was issued February 9, 2016.

<https://azahcccs.gov/shared/Downloads/ASDAvisoryCommReport.pdf>

On April 28, 2010, S.B. 1181 created an Autism Spectrum Disorder Task Force. The task force's charge was to: review the coordination of services; identify problems and recommend solutions regarding the availability of services; identify current funding sources; recommend opportunities for the sharing of resources and services; identify evidence-based treatments and best practices; and identify state models and service systems for persons with autism spectrum disorder. This task force consisted of 17 members who including representatives from organizations, members of the Senate, educators and other providers.

<http://www.azleg.gov/legtext/49leg/2r/bills/sb1181s.htm>

## STATE INSURANCE COVERAGE

S.B. 1263/H.B. 2847, known as Steven's Law, became law in March 2008. Originally introduced by Sen. Amanda Aguirre (D-Yuma) Steven's Law requires group health insurance coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorder. 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

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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. 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. *Ariz. Rev. Stat. § 20-1402.03*

In 2015, SB 1322 was introduced to prevent hospitals and other medical service corporations from excluding patients or imposing monetary limits on medically necessary behavior therapy services. The bill was referred to the Rules Committee where it died.

### **OTHER STATE ACTIVITY**

The Arizona Board of Psychologist Examiners licenses individuals to practice psychology or behavior analysis in the State of Arizona.

<https://psychboard.az.gov/statutes-rules>

During the 2016 legislative session, S.B. 1121 was introduced to further define “behavior analysis.” The bill was introduced and referred to the Health and Human Services Committee. No further action was taken.

### **ESSENTIAL HEALTH BENEFITS**

Under the Affordable Care Act, Arizona will offer autism services including ABA on its federally-run exchange. Arizona has not specified ABA as a particular EHB. In the plan it is a stand-alone provision, but the legislature has put it under “Behavioral Therapy.”

(State of Arizona Self-Insured Plan administered by United Healthcare; State Employee EPO Plan)

### **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. In the 2014 Legislative Session, S.B. 1002 appropriated \$300,000 for training parents of individuals with autism in rural areas. Its purpose is to train parents in counties with less than 500,000 residents to provide intensive behavioral treatment to children with autism who are under the age of five.

<http://www.azleg.gov/ars/15/00891.htm>

# **2016 State Autism Profiles ARIZONA**

## **STATE LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR**

The Arizona State Legislature meets in Regular Session annually on the second Monday in January. The 2016 Regular Session convened on January 11, 2016 and adjourned on May 7, 2016. The 2017 Regular Session is expected to convene on January 9, 2017 and adjourn in April 2017.

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

### ***Sponsors of Autism Legislation***

Sen. Steve Pierce (R-Prescott) Dt. 1

Sen. Catherine Miranda (D-Phoenix) Dt. 27