

# 2016 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 2014-2015, 3,076 or 9.64% 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 2000-2001 and 2014-2015**  
(Child Count by Age Group)

	2000-2001	2014-2015
Age 3-5	150	447
Age 6-21	444	2,629
Age 3-21	594	3,076

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

	2000-2001	2014-2015
Age 3-5	3,978	3,445
Age 6-11	15,056	13,638
Age 12-17	15,086	13,830
Age 18-21	1,513	1,007
Age 6-21	31,655	28,475
Age 3-21	35,633	31,920

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) reports every two years on the work completed over the past two years, the status of services for people with autism, and initiatives underway to improve and expand services. The most recent report was issued in 2015.

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/reports/2015/Autism-Act-Report.pdf>

In 2007, DHHS submitted the “Autistic Spectrum Disorders Report” to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. 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](http://mainegov-images.informe.org/dhhs/2007_autism_report.pdf)

In 2008, Maine created the Autism Spectrum Disorder Systems Change Initiative and charged the Initiative to analyze the multiple systems of care that individuals with ASD and their families utilize. The Maine Developmental Disabilities Council (MDDC) staffs the Initiative.

## STATE INSURANCE COVERAGE

On April 12, 2010, Governor John Baldacci signed into law L.D. 1198 to mandate coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders. The law requires all individual insurance policies and contracts group health insurance policies, and all individual and group health maintenance organization contracts to provide coverage for children five years of age and younger. Treatment is defined as habilitative or rehabilitative care, applied behavior analysis, counseling services and therapy services, including speech, occupational and physical therapy. The policy may limit coverage for applied behavior analysis to \$36,000 per year, but may not include any limits on the number of visits. The law also requires the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, Bureau of Insurance to review and

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evaluate the financial and social impact and medical efficacies of this mandated health insurance benefit, and submit a report to the Legislature by February 1, 2015.

[Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. Tit. 24-A § 2768 \(2010 Me. Laws, Chap. 635; L.D. 1198; S.B. 446 of 2010\)](#)

In 2014, through passage of L.D. 347, the Maine legislature, over the Governor's veto, expanded health insurance coverage for autism spectrum disorders to individuals 21 years of age and under. The new law applied to individual, group and group HMO policies issued or renewed on or after January 1, 2014. [http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills\\_126th/billtexts/SP012701.asp](http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_126th/billtexts/SP012701.asp)

Maine also has a mental health parity statute that requires specified group contracts to provide, at a minimum, benefits for a person receiving medical treatment for specified mental illnesses, including pervasive developmental disorders. Other specified individual and group insurance contracts or policies must make available benefits for the treatment and diagnosis of specified mental illnesses, including pervasive developmental disorder or autism, under terms and conditions that are no less extensive than the benefits provided for medical treatment for physical illnesses.

[Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 24 § 2325-A; tit. 24-A § 2749-C, § 2843 and § 4234-A](#)

### ESSENTIAL HEALTH BENEFITS

Under the Affordable Care Act, autism services including applied behavior analysis (ABA) will be part of the Essential Health Benefits package offered by the state. Maine has categorized ABA under "rehabilitative and habilitative services." The exchange is being run by the federal government. (Anthem Health Plans of ME – Anthem BCBS; PPO)

### MEDICAID

Maine Medicaid covers services for children with autism under traditional Medicaid through its Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) program.

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oms/provider/children/index.html>

#### ***Maine Home and Community-Based Services Waiver: ME Home & Community Services for Adults w/ID or Autistic Disorder***

This waiver, implemented on July 1, 2010, provides services including community support, home support, work support, communication aids, consultation, counseling, crisis assessment, crisis intervention, employment specialist services, home accessibility adaptations, non-traditional communication consultation, non-medical transportation, non-traditional communication assessment, specialized medical equipment and supplies, and speech therapy for individuals 18 and older with autism and intellectual disability. This waiver expires on June 30, 2020.

#### ***Maine Home and Community-Based Services Waiver: ME Support Services for Adults w/ID or Autistic Disorder***

This waiver, implemented on January 1, 2011, provides community support, respite, work support-group, assistive technology, employment specialist services, home accessibility adaptations, and transportation for individuals ages 18 and older with autism and intellectual disability. This waiver was supposed to expire on December 31, 2015, however, it continues to be offered in Maine.

[http://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid-chip-program-information/by-topics/waivers/waivers\\_faceted.html](http://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid-chip-program-information/by-topics/waivers/waivers_faceted.html)

<http://maine.gov/dhhs/oads/home-support/disability-with-autism/index.html>

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### EDUCATION

On May 23, 2011, Governor Paul LePage signed H.P. 546 into law, creating a work group within the Department of Education to provide recommendations on how to ensure teachers and paraprofessionals that work with children with autism are highly qualified. The work group is required to file a report of its findings and recommendations to the legislature on December 7, 2011 and the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs is authorized to introduce legislation to the Second Regular Session of the 125th Legislature.

<http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/getPDF.asp?paper=HP0546&item=1&snum=125>

On June 15, 2011, the governor signed H.P. 986 into law, providing for the coordination of Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education on the annual report on efforts to plan for and develop social and habilitative services for persons who have autism or other pervasive developmental disorders. This bill repealed provisions providing the transition of students with disabilities to adults services and transitional services by the Interdepartmental Committee on Transition. This bill included language regarding the duties of school administrative units regarding students with disabilities who are in transition from school into the community. Provisions of this rule were adopted by the Department of Education.

[http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills\\_125th/chapters/PUBLIC348.asp](http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_125th/chapters/PUBLIC348.asp)

### 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 2016 session convened on January 6, 2015 and adjourned on April 16, 2016. The 2017 session is expected to convene on December 7, 2016.

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

#### *Sponsors of Autism Legislation*

Rep. Peter C. Stuckey (D-Portland) District 114