



MASSACHUSETTS ADVOCATES *for* CHILDREN

We are requesting level funding of \$4 million for the

Children's Autism Medicaid Waiver

FY16 Budget Request for Children's Autism Medicaid Waiver -- # 5920-3010 (Division of Autism/DDS)

Funding history for Children's Autism Medicaid Waiver:

- FY09 budget provided \$ 4 million (before "9c" cuts)
 - FY10 budget provided \$2.5 million
 - FY11 budget provided \$2.5 million
 - FY12 budget provided \$3 million
 - FY 13 budget provided \$3 million
 - FY14 budget provided \$4 million
 - FY15 budget provided \$4 million
 - FY 16 House 1 provides level funding
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- With level funding of \$4 million the Waiver will be able to continue to serve 220 young children with autism at risk of institutionalization who require intensive in-home services.
 - The Commonwealth will receive federal reimbursement for approximately 50% of the cost of these critical Waiver services.
 - There is an urgent need for intensive services to support children with autism. The number of children enrolled in Early Intervention with an autism diagnosis has nearly tripled since 2001.ⁱ
 - The Commonwealth's Autism Commission, established by the legislature, recognized the critical importance of the Children's Autism Medicaid Waiver to meet the needs of young children with autism and recommended increasing capacity to serve 500 children.
 - With the recently enacted Autism Omnibus Act, MassHealth will soon provide medically necessary services for children with autism. Autism Waiver services remain crucial to support young children with intensive needs in their homes and communities.
 - Research demonstrates that children with autism who receive intensive in-home services can make *substantial progress and in some instances acquired skills within typically developing ranges* in areas of social skills, language acquisition, nonverbal communication, and reductions in challenging behaviors.
 - Cost-benefit analysis has shown that if children with autism receive intensive services at a young age, the savings are significant. Recent studies have found that the provision of intensive services (such as Applied Behavioral Analysis), at early ages can result in ***estimated cost savings ranging from \$187,000 to \$203,000 per child ages 3-22 years***, and a total lifetime savings range of 1 to 2 million dollars.

Mass Advocates for Children 2/19/15

ⁱ According to data provided by Department of Public Health, the number of children in EI with a diagnosis of autism rose from 628 in 2001 to 1703 in 2014.