



autism speaks®

**Supporting the Missouri Autism Community
During COVID-19 Through Advocacy**

May 19, 2020

our mission

Autism Speaks is dedicated to promoting solutions, across the spectrum and throughout the life span, for the needs of individuals with autism and their families. We do this through advocacy and support; increasing understanding and acceptance of people with autism; and advancing research into causes and better interventions for autism spectrum disorder and related conditions.



Mission Objectives

Through partnerships and collaboration, we are committed to:

- Increasing global understanding & acceptance of people with autism
- Being a catalyst for life-enhancing research breakthroughs
- Increasing early childhood screening & timely interventions
- Improving the transition to adulthood
- Ensuring access to reliable information & services throughout the life span

Autism Speaks does not provide medical or legal advice or services. Rather, Autism Speaks provides general information about autism as a service to the community. The information provided in this email is not a recommendation, referral or endorsement of any resource, therapeutic method, or service provider and does not replace the advice of medical, legal or educational professionals. Autism Speaks has not validated and is not responsible for any information or services provided by third parties. You are urged to use independent judgment and request references when considering any resource associated with the provision of services related to autism.

Challenges the Autism Community is Facing

- Abrupt discontinuation of educational services
- Closure of day programming
- Closure of clinics
- Shift to telehealth
- Mental health supports for parents
- Lack of connection to community opportunities and supports
- Severe disruption of community employment
- Discontinuation of respite relief for families
- Disruption of much-needed routines
- Loss of income for families
- Challenging behaviors
- Access to healthcare with appropriate supports



Contact our Autism Response Team

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1-888-AUTISM2 (1-888-288-4762)

En Español: 1-888-772-9050

help@autismspeaks.org



Agenda

Welcome
Lisa Radtke
Executive Director
Missouri

Federal Advocacy
Update
David Sitcovsky
Senior Director
Policy and Federal
Government
Affairs

State Advocacy
Update
Judith Ursitti
Director State
Government
Affairs

Community
Outreach
Colleen Shinn
Director
Community
Outreach



Federal Advocacy Response

Federal COVID Legislation – What's Passed

MARCH 6: COVID 1

Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations

Provides \$8.3 billion in emergency funding for federal agencies to respond to the coronavirus outbreak

MARCH 18: COVID 2

Families First Coronavirus Response Act

- Provides emergency paid sick and family leave
 - DOL has provided Q&A regarding these provisions of the law
- Tax credits
- Free COVID-19 testing (where available)
- Expands food assistance and unemployment benefits
- Increases Medicaid funding

MARCH 27: COVID 3

Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act

Provides \$2 trillion in funding for provisions, including:

- Economic impact payments to most Americans
- Increased unemployment benefits
- Hundreds of billions of dollars to address the public health response
- Assistance for small businesses and other employers to retain employees and keep their businesses operating
- Billions of dollars for schools
- Extends the Money Follows the Person program through November

Federal COVID Legislation – What's Passed

APRIL 24: COVID 3.5

Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act

Interim bill to replenish small business assistance program and address other issues:

- Limited scope to address Paycheck Protection Program and funding for hospitals and testing.

Our advocacy priorities during the COVID crisis

- Additional funding for home and community-based services (HCBS)
- Additional funding to meet the educational needs of students with autism
- Protecting the [rights of students under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) (IDEA) and other laws
- Expanded access to telehealth services for health care needs
- Eligibility for \$500 economic impact payments for dependents over age 17
- According caregivers of adults with disabilities the [same emergency paid sick and family medical leave](#) policies accorded caregivers of children
- [Preventing discrimination](#) in treatment decisions and care allocation based on disability

Congressmen Chris Smith (R-NJ) and Mike Doyle (D-PA), co-chairs of the Congressional Autism Caucus, have sent letters to congressional leadership advocating for many of these priorities.

What's next?

- COVID 4 – negotiations ongoing
- On May 15th, the House of Representatives passed The Heroes Act – a \$3 trillion relief package.
- Priorities that are included in The Heroes Act:
 - Substantial increase in funding for HCBS
 - \$100 billion for education (in addition to \$1 trillion in general assistance for state and local governments)
 - Dependents over 17 retroactively eligible for economic impact payments. Eligible for additional \$1,200 payments in Heroes Act.
 - Clarifies eligibility for emergency paid sick and family leave for caregivers of adults with disabilities
 - \$10 million for DD Act activities
- The Senate has not indicated that it will take up this bill. Path from here is unclear...



State Advocacy Response



HEALTHCARE

Missouri was approved for an 1135 emergency waiver on March 23, 2020 by CMS, the federal Medicaid agency. This allows for greater flexibility which will:

- Temporarily suspend Medicaid fee-for-service prior authorization requirements.
- Extend pre-existing authorizations for which a beneficiary has previously received prior authorization through the end of the public health emergency
- Suspend Pre-Admission Screening and Annual Resident Review (PASRR) Level I and Level II Assessments for 30 days
- Modify State Fair Hearing Requests and Appeal Timelines
- Modify Provider Enrollment
- Allow Provision of Services in Alternative Settings

Additional information can be found [here](#).

Telehealth Services

- States have broad flexibility to cover telehealth through Medicaid including the methods of communication (such as telephonic, video technology commonly available on smart phones and other devices) to use.
- Telehealth is important not just for people who are unable to go to the doctor, but also for when it is not advisable to go in person. No federal approval is needed for state Medicaid programs to reimburse providers for telehealth services in the same manner or at the same rate that states pay for face-to-face services.

Telehealth Services

Chlora Lindley-Myers, Director
Department of Commerce and Insurance
March 26, 2020 Bulletin



The provision of healthcare services via telehealth is becoming increasingly important as an alternate way for consumers to access healthcare services in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Telehealth allows consumers to access healthcare services – including services like mental health services, physical therapy, and speech therapy– while maintaining appropriate social distancing. Under section 376.1900 RSMo, health carriers in Missouri are required to provide coverage for health care services provided by a health care provider via telehealth in the same manner as they would provide such coverage if the service was provided in person. The Department strongly encourages accessing healthcare services via telehealth in order to maintain social distancing.

Telehealth Services

Services the autism community could potentially access via telehealth include but are not limited to:

- Behavioral health treatments, including applied behavior analysis
- Therapeutic services, including speech therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy
- Psychological and psychiatric care

HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

The Department of Social Services filed an Appendix K Application on April 10, 2020

- Self-Directed Personal Assistant Service will allow for a family member and DSP to exceed the maximum 40 hours per week authorized in the support plan.
- Out of Home respite and Temporary Residential Services may be provided in any setting necessary to ensure the individual's health and safety needs can be met.
- If a Day habilitation location closes due to COVID-19, Day habilitation can be provided in the following alternate locations:
 - An individual's private home;
 - A waiver residential setting; or
 - Other setting such as a hotel, shelter, school or church.
- Temporarily permit payment for services rendered by family caregivers or legally responsible individuals.
- Temporarily modify provider qualifications.
- Temporarily modify person-centered service plan development process and individual responsible for person-centered service plan development, including qualifications.

Additional details can be found [here](#). Note this application is still pending CMS approval.

Special Education/Early Intervention

According to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education:

State and local education agencies are testing these uncharted waters together. Our challenge is to think about the intent and purpose behind the procedural requirements for each step of the special education process, and then lead teams as they reflect on how they can fulfill that same purpose and intent in an alternate way, in light of our current circumstances. We must do the best we can to stay true to the intent of IDEA.

View the [DESE Special Education Compliance COVID-19 Question and Answer Guide.](#)

Special Education/Early Intervention

The state of Missouri is receiving funds from the COVID-3 stimulus package through the Education Stabilization Fund.

K-12	\$ 203.7 million
Post-secondary	\$ 175.9 million
Governor's Discretionary	\$ 54.3 million

It is critical that advocacy occur so that Missouri students with autism receive appropriate supports and services, including but not limited to:

- Hardware, software, communication devices, and other assistive technology
- Appropriate transition from early intervention to special education
- Services not received during the time of school closures and remote learning
- Appropriate transition out of special education to adulthood

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Follow our advocacy profiles



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Community Outreach

COVID-19 Information and Resources

These are particularly challenging times for the autism community:

- Disrupted routines, changes in access to services and the uncertainty is taxing for people with autism and their families.
- Parents and caregivers are taking on roles of teacher, service provider and therapists.
- Adults with autism are cut off from services face loss of jobs.
- Autism Speaks is making resources and support available to help our community weather this storm. We are in this together.



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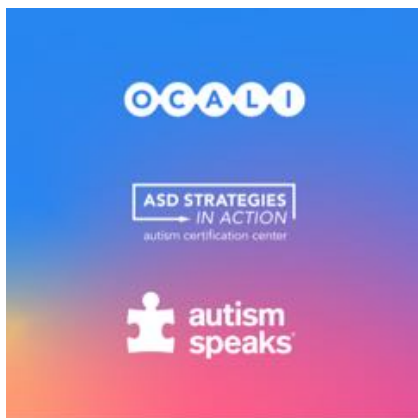
En Español: 1-888-772-9050

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Information and Resources

- [Dealing with School Closures](#)
- [How to handle clinical care during social distancing and school/program closures](#)
- [What should the autism community know about the coronavirus outbreak?](#)
- Visit our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) channels, where we will regularly share the ideas we're hearing from throughout the community. For local information, join an [Autism Speaks Facebook Group](#) in your area.
- NEW April 9 - Autism Certification Center (ACC) and Autism Speaks are teaming up to make 30+ hours of [online video learning resources](#) available at no cost for the autism community.



Information and Resources

[What Is Autism?](#)[Help & Information](#)[Our Work](#)[Get Involved](#)[Que es el autismo?](#)[Donate >](#)

Information by Topic

Autism Speaks is committed to providing the autism community with resources to meet each person and family's unique needs throughout every stage of life. To help with your search for support, we have organized our resources, information, expert advice and personal stories by category.

[Financial Planning](#) | [Safety](#) | [School](#) | [Technology](#)

[Health and Wellness](#) | [Behavioral Challenges](#) | [Medical Resources](#) | [Transition to Adulthood](#)

[Adults](#) | [Family Support](#) | [Community Life](#) | [Miscellaneous](#)



Thank You