

## Council History

*The New Hampshire Council on Autism Spectrum Disorders was created by the NH Legislature in 2008 to provide coordinated leadership in addressing the healthcare, education, and service needs of individuals who experience autism or a related disability. The Council is composed of stakeholders from state agencies, non-profit organizations, and advocacy groups. It meets quarterly and all meetings are open to the public. See [www.nhcouncilonasd.org](http://www.nhcouncilonasd.org) for details.*

## Council Accomplishments

*In collaboration with many partner organizations, the Council has helped to:*

- *Build a virtual resource center for families at [www.nhcouncilonasd.org/Portals.html](http://www.nhcouncilonasd.org/Portals.html).*
- *Secure the passage of Connor's Law which mandates health insurance coverage for the treatment of ASD.*
- *Train primary care providers to meet American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines for universal screening at 18 and 24 months.*
- *Establish an ASD training at the NH Police Academy.*
- *Introduce NH to emerging best-practices in supporting adults with ASD.*
- *Develop a group of highly trained parent-to-parent volunteers to assist families facing a new diagnosis on the autism spectrum or transition.*

## THE NH COUNCIL ON AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

The NH Council on Autism Spectrum Disorders  
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 22  
Concord, NH 03301

**EMAIL:** [Information@nhcouncilonasd.org](mailto:Information@nhcouncilonasd.org)

[www.nhcouncilonasd.org](http://www.nhcouncilonasd.org)

# The New Hampshire Council on Autism Spectrum Disorders



*Putting the Pieces Together  
in the Granite State*

## New Hampshire Faces the Challenge of Autism

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex neurologically-based developmental disability, marked by difficulty in communication and social interaction, as well as unusual behaviors or thought patterns. ASD varies widely both in its presenting symptoms and in its severity. It may be accompanied by sensory differences, speech delay or absence, cognitive impairment, chronic medical conditions, and motor involvement



For reasons that are not yet well understood, the incidence of ASD appears to be rising rapidly, and states throughout the country are struggling to realign resources to meet the unique needs of this population. The Centers for Disease Control recently found that one in 88 children has some form of autism. Because the symptoms of ASD are highly treatable, early identification and treatment are critical to achieving improved outcomes for individuals who experience ASD. Equally important, is developing a widespread appreciation for the unique strengths of individuals with ASD and transforming our schools, job settings, and communities into places of welcome and accommodation.

## Council Goals: *Putting the Pieces Together in the Granite State*

### ***I. A Strong Public Health Infrastructure***

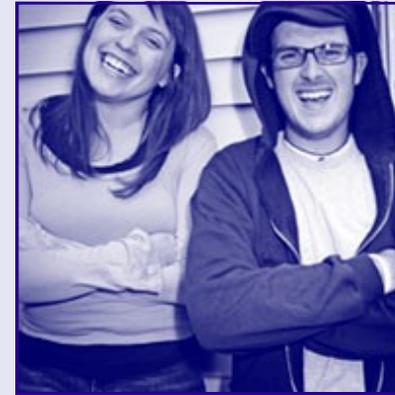
The State of New Hampshire will provide leadership to ensure that at all levels—local, regional, and state—services for individuals with ASD are provided in the most timely, collaborative, and effective manner possible. This includes developing and supporting a service infrastructure that is multi-disciplinary, person-centered, and easily accessed by children and adults with ASD and their families.

### ***II. Universal Screening, Timely Diagnosis, and Prompt Referral***

All New Hampshire children will be screened for ASD before age two. All children suspected of having ASD will be referred immediately for early supports and services and undergo a diagnostic evaluation within 45 days. All children with a diagnosis of ASD will have begun a robust program of evidence-based intervention and treatment within 45 days of diagnosis.

### ***III. Successful Transition to Adulthood***

All New Hampshire students and young adults with ASD will be given the opportunities and supports needed to make a successful transition to adulthood and to be engaged and contributing members of their community.



### ***IV. Safety***

All providers of emergency services will be aware of the sensory, behavioral, and social differences of individuals with ASD and how to appropriately accommodate their needs.

### ***V. Highly Trained Personnel***

Expand evidence-based, high quality pre-service and in-service professional development, technical assistance, and mentoring opportunities to ensure that New Hampshire has a workforce that is capable and confident in its ability to support individuals with ASD to be fully included in all aspects of their community.

### ***VI. Braided Funding and Equitable Health Insurance Coverage***

Funds from multiple sources—public and private, federal and state—will be brought together to ensure that New Hampshire can develop and sustain the infrastructure, workforce, and knowledge-base necessary to meet the public health challenges of ASD, and that the individuals served by this system receive medically necessary treatment(s) and the ongoing support needed to live a productive life of their own choosing.

— Report of the NH Commission on ASD, April 2008