

AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH 2018

The Alabama Department of Mental Health and Providers Celebrate and Share Resources

Progress has been made in the expansion and assistance of Autism services in Alabama. House Bill 284 was passed during the 2017 legislative session, allowing access to ABA therapy for children with autism who are covered by private health benefit plans (specifically medium sized, fully-funded plans), the State Employee Health Insurance Plan, the Public Education Employee Insurance Plan, ALL Kids, and Alabama Medicaid.

The [Alabama Interagency Autism Coordinating Council](#) (AIACC) was created by Act 2009-295, along with the [Alabama Regional Autism Network \(RAN\)](#), which was funded in 2016. To date, the Alabama Regional Autism Network's over 3,000 people have been served through individual and family assistance, consultation and technical assistance, professional training, and public education.

The [AIACC](#) strives to meet the urgent and substantial need to implement a statewide, comprehensive, coordinated, multidisciplinary, interagency System of Care for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families. Their mission is to foster strong connections and collaborations between individuals and families directly affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder, professionals and providers, and the community to promote quality of life and enrich the fabric of society for all.

The Regional Autism Networks (RAN) are housed at Auburn University, University of Alabama, University of Alabama at Birmingham, University of Alabama in Huntsville, and University of South Alabama. Each Regional Autism Network provides: 1) staff with expertise in Autism Spectrum Disorder; 2) individual and direct family assistance in the home, community, and school; 3) technical assistance and consultation services; 4) professional training programs; and 5) public education programs.

The AIACC will develop a long-term plan to address identification barriers such as duplicative or fragmented policies which may require modification; the development of a coordinated program of services; a comprehensive fiscal review, analysis and recommendations for state spending on programs and services for ASD; and the identification of annual action steps toward implementation.

To learn more about the AIACC, please visit <http://www.autism.alabama.gov/Regional-Autism-Network.html> or contact Anna McConnell, State Autism Coordinator at 205-478-3402.

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