

Connecticut's Families Face an Autism Crisis

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control now estimates that 1 in 150 people have some form of an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This means that approximately 23,000 people in Connecticut are living with ASD. ¹

In 2002, the State of Connecticut Advisory Commission On Services and Supports for Persons with Developmental Disabilities Who Do Not Have Mental Retardation found that families face a complex, confusing, and fragmented system of support because there are seven state agencies/divisions that provide some services to children and adults with developmental disabilities. Most other states have established one state agency as the lead or responsible entity for coordinating and providing services to the population of citizens with a developmental disability. ²

Building a Better Future for People with Autism

The solution for Connecticut's autism crisis requires training a certified, skilled public workforce for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Investing in paraprofessionals and instructors in one-on-one relationships with children with ASD will improve their education and development.

SEIU is also working with Connecticut families and advocates to improve services for adults with ASD, who are too often cut off from services by age 21. A pilot program launched last year has begun to provide 25 adults and their families with support services such as job coaching, life skills and case management. Expanding this program will enable more adults with ASD to live productive and independent lives. ³

SEIU members are committed to providing the consistent, stable, and cost-effective care our families living with autism need. That is why we are supporting legislative solutions that would create a new autism-specific State agency.

760 Capitol Avenue ~ Hartford, CT 06106
(860) 951-6614 ~ www.csea-ct.com



¹ Autism Society of America press release, "Autism Prevalence in the U.S. Rises to 1 in 150." Feb. 8, 2007; SEIU estimate, based on CDC 1 in 150 number multiplied by July 1, 2005 CT estimated population of 3,510,297. The latter is from STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, Health Care Quality, Statistics, Analysis & Reporting. <http://www.ct.gov/ecd/cwp/view.asp?a=11066&q=250666>

² http://www.dmr.state.ct.us/IDDW/adv_exec.pdf, pg 4.

³ "Connecticut Autism Spectrum Disorder Pilot Project Update to the Legislature," January 2007. http://www.dmr.state.ct.us/AutismPilot/update_leg1-07.pdf, pg 2