

August 7, 2017

Barbara Sears, Director
Ohio Department of Medicaid
50 West Town St., Suite 400
Columbus, OH 43215

Subject: Rule 5160-34-01 Intensive Behavioral services for Children with Autism

Dear Director Sears:

I am writing on behalf of the Autism Society of Ohio in support of Rule 5160-34-01 - Intensive Behavioral services for Children with Autism.

The core characteristics of autism are communication, social and behavioral differences. These differences necessitate intervention to provide successful long term outcomes for individuals with autism. Early intervention for children with autism spectrum disorder helps improve their intellectual ability and reduces autism symptoms years after originally getting treatment – it has also improved long term success for individuals to autism, leading them to become working, taxpaying contributors to Ohio's economy. This rule will help more children with autism get much needed services without having to access waiver services and give greater flexibility to County Boards of Developmental Disabilities and others providing services to children with autism.

The Autism Society of Ohio, which includes the seven affiliates throughout Ohio, strongly supports this rule and we believe it will provide greater access to vital behavioral interventions for children with autism.

We urge you to approve this rule and do all you can to facilitate its implementation.

If you have any questions, or if we can assist in this effort, please do not hesitate to contact Barbara Yavorcik, Autism Society of Ohio Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, at 419-787-8124 or Barb@autismohio.org.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



Kathi Machle
President of the Board
Autism Society of Ohio

The Autism Society of Ohio (ASO) is a statewide affiliate of the Autism Society of America. It is a coalition of the local Ohio affiliates (Greater Akron, Central Ohio, Greater Cincinnati, Greater Cleveland, Mahoning Valley, and Northwest Ohio). ASO's mission is to "improve the lives of all affected by autism," and focuses its efforts on advocating for individuals with autism, their families and those who work with them. ASO also serves as a resource for information and support in areas where our local affiliates do not cover, mainly rural communities. ASO's mission is to "improve the lives of all affected by autism", with a focus on advocacy and autism awareness across the state. ASO also serves as a resource for information, programming and support in areas not served by a local affiliate.