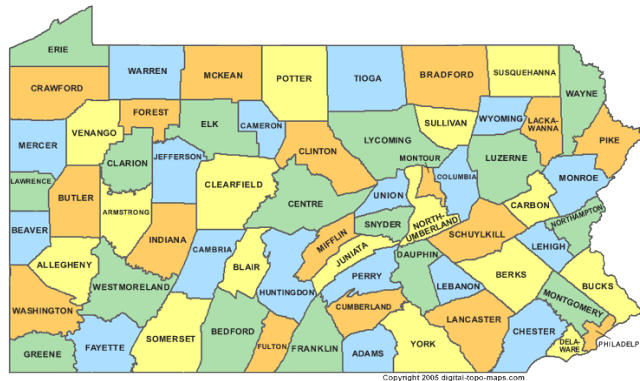


AUTISM IN PA: FAST FACTS

Individuals with autism are supported by multiple systems throughout Pennsylvania.



Autism Bureau: The Pennsylvania Bureau of Autism Services is one of the **first Bureaus in the nation** specifically designated to meet the needs of individuals, families, and professionals in the autism community.

Census Study: Pennsylvania conducted the **first census study of its kind in the nation** to estimate the number of Pennsylvanians living with autism. From this study, published in 2009, and the 2014 update, a comprehensive census report was developed to inform policy development and the design of effective services.

- PA's numbers reflect national trends
- An estimated **55,000** children and adults in Pennsylvania are living with autism
- **# of adults with autism in PA** will grow to more than **36,000** by 2020.
- These numbers are a drastic underestimate.
- **Updated PA autism census study:** The updated study includes 2011 data from additional sources, including the Pennsylvania Departments of Human Services (formerly the Department of Public Welfare), Education, and Corrections.

Adult Autism Programs: Pennsylvania has established the **first state programs in the nation** designed to meet the needs of **adults with autism** through services provided by trained professionals.

- Two Programs: *Adult Autism Waiver* and *Adult Community Autism Program (ACAP)*
- The *Adult Community Autism Program (ACAP)* was recognized as a **national model of excellence** in 2012 by CMS; it's an integrated model of care reflecting national trends
- Innovative, fiscally responsible, assessment & outcomes-based, ongoing training for providers
- There have been many challenges in launching new programs without a roadmap, but it's rewarding to see the positive and measurable outcomes for the participants being supported.
- Pennsylvania's adult programs are providing a **blueprint** for other states developing their own models for adults

Needs Assessment: Pennsylvania conducted a needs assessment of individuals and families living with autism, **the most comprehensive study of its kind to date in the nation.**

- The findings from the needs assessment highlight challenges that Pennsylvanians with autism, of all ages, face every day.

- Implementation of the recommendations are benefiting individuals and families across the Commonwealth and driving collaborations across systems, service providers, community organizations, and advocacy groups who have a vested interest in meeting the needs of the growing population of individuals with autism.

ASERT Collaborative (*Autism Services, Education, Resources & Training*): **Innovative approach to public-private partnerships** and the **first collaborative regional model of its kind in the nation**

- Developed and funded by the Pennsylvania Bureau of Autism Services, ODP, DHS
- Driven by the needs assessment findings
- Goal of these partnerships between universities, hospitals, and autism service providers is to improve regional access to quality services, resources, information, and training across the state
- Addressing important topics and developing models that may inform other states: *Employment, Post-Secondary Transition, Adult Diagnosis, Adolescent & Adult Social Skills, and many others*
- Pennsylvania has launched a **Statewide Autism Resource Center** with toll-free #, website and outreach specialists, to streamline access to accurate information across the state.
- Serves as a valuable resource to BAS staff and provider networks
- Supports BAS efforts to continually improve the quality of our programs, through the collection and analysis of data.

ACT 62: Autism Insurance Act

- Challenging but important opportunity to create standards in the service delivery system, by ensuring that the professionals working with children with autism have the expertise to meet their specific needs
- Requires government programs and certain private health insurance policies to cover some of the costs of diagnostic assessment and treatment of autism spectrum disorder for children under the age of 21
- Requires certain individuals working with children under the age of 21 to hold or obtain a professional license; the qualifications to obtain a license include certain educational credentials, professional experience, and the completion of autism-specific training
- Implementation of this legislation has required the collaboration of multiple state agencies within the Department of State, Department of Insurance and Department of Human Services.

Training Priority: The Pennsylvania Bureau of Autism Services has trained ***thousands of professionals*** in an effort to increase the number of professionals trained to support children and adults with autism and their families. Trainings are provided through a combination of virtual and face-to-face formats.

- **Professional Conference:** Held annually, with both Pennsylvania and national experts providing practical strategies and best practices for supporting individuals across the spectrum and across the lifespan.
- **Individual & Family Conference:** Debuts in September 2015, with training sessions developed for individuals with autism (age 17+) and families (parents, spouses, siblings, etc.).
- **Clinical training series:** Held annually; live presentations around the state for direct service providers.
- Administration of a free online training & resource center
- Free virtual trainings to meet Behavior Specialist Licensure requirements