

(JLARC) In Brief

Assessment of Services For Virginians With Autism Spectrum Disorders

House Joint Resolution 105 from the 2008 General Assembly directed JLARC staff to examine the services available to Virginians with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) in the Commonwealth.

JLARC staff found that while several public programs exist to diagnose, treat, and manage ASDs, those tend to be inadequately coordinated and cannot fully meet the needs of Virginians.

Although the research literature indicates that ASDs can be diagnosed between ages two and three, many children in the State are diagnosed later. Early intervention programs frequently do not provide the intensity of services needed to maximize outcomes and minimize costs, and many Virginia schools lack the tools and training to fully address the needs of students with ASDs. Limited supports exist to help adults with ASDs achieve independence.

If Virginia chooses to improve its system of care, priority could be given to ensuring that resources are used efficiently and services delivered effectively. Service gaps could then be alleviated, starting with early intervention.

**For details on the JLARC report, go to: <http://jlarc.virginia.gov/reports/Rpt388.pdf>
Of particular interest will be Chapters 3 and 6**