



# Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services Special Education-Related Services

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Senate Education Committee

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# DARS Vision and Mission

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## Vision

- A Texas where people with disabilities and families with children who have developmental delays enjoy the same opportunities as other Texans to pursue independent and productive lives.

## Mission

- To work in **partnership with Texans with disabilities** and families with children who have developmental delays to improve the quality of their lives and to enable their full participation in society.

## **Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECI)**

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- ECI is a coordinated system of services for children, birth to 36 months, with disabilities or delays in development.
- ECI services are available in every Texas county and are provided by a network of 56 local ECI program contractors.
- ECI is funded in part through IDEA Part C
- Total served: 57,110 (FY09)

# Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECI)

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- Reasons for eligibility:
  - Developmental delay – 73%
  - Atypical development – 16%
  - Medical diagnosis – 11%
- Home and community based services
  - Physical, occupational, speech, and developmental therapy
  - Integrated into family routines
- Coordinate with other community programs

# Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECI)

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- Transitioning from ECI services
- Return on investment
- Importance of ECI as related to Special Education

## **DARS Autism Program**

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- Provides services for children ages 3 through 8 with an autism spectrum disorder diagnoses
- Services provided by six contractors
  - Fort Worth, Dallas, Houston, Rosenberg, Austin, San Antonio
- Total served: 277 (FY09)
- Funding: FY 08-09 \$5M    FY 10-11 \$6.6M

## **DARS Autism Program**

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- Program designed to:
  - Provide positive behavior support strategies, including Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)
    - ABA: a methodology used to treat a variety of disorders with a focus on decreasing problematic behaviors and teaching new skills
  - Other services provided include: assessments, testing, physical & occupational therapy
  - Compliment services included in a child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), if such a plan exists

## **DARS Autism Program**

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- Bill private insurance and any other available third party source before using DARS funding
- Best practices/program improvements
  - Uniform insurance billing procedures
  - Maximum duration of services
  - Family Cost Share
  - Standardized progress assessments