

HB 525 -- Autism

Sponsor: Grisamore

This bill requires the Division of Developmental Disabilities within the Department of Mental Health to establish programs and services for individuals diagnosed with autism in conjunction with the families of persons with autism, the regional parent advisory councils, and the newly established Missouri Parent Advisory Committee on Autism to enhance a family's ability to meet the developmental and training needs of a family member with autism. The five-member committee will be appointed by the division director and is required to meet quarterly and submit an annual report to the Missouri Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders, the Governor, and the department director.

The autism programs will include locations in central, east, northwest, southeast, and southwest Missouri. Each regional program must have a regional parent advisory council with seven to nine members having certain membership criteria as specified in the bill. Each regional council must meet at least twice a month and is required to submit an annual report to the department director and the committee. If a regional council disagrees with a decision made by the division deputy director, the issue can be referred to the committee.