



ACCESS TO SERVICES FOR ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES

Budget Priorities Fact Sheet #2 Second of a 3-part series

The Need

Imagine being the driver, cook and valet for your 29 or 39 year old son or daughter. You love your child but perhaps you are in your 50s or perhaps your 60s. He wants to be around peers more and that you hope to have more time for your day. Josh is a young man who is 29 years old and he still lives with his mother. His mother is the main person who lifts him up and helps him get out of bed in the morning and countless other activities throughout the day. They and hundreds of others are in need of a change.

Whether it's a young person turning 22, and leaving school or someone like Josh, access to services is a life changing experience not just a budget line item.

Funded Services Make a Difference

Building a seamless system for people with disabilities will take time given our present budget situation. But we cannot stand still and ignore individuals who need our support.

Massachusetts needs to respond to the over 610 students Turning 22, hundreds on the waiting list and 3000 others who are waiting for family support services. The legislature can open the door to the community for individuals and families with measured investments.

Line Item	Services	House 2	Unmet Needs	Total
5920-2000	Community Residential Budgeted at less than FY '08 despite many individuals waiting	\$568,961,352	\$5,543,000	\$574,504,352
		*request includes House 2 cut restoration		
5920-3000	Family Support The <i>most</i> cost-effective service or support	\$55,044,228	\$3,000,000	\$58,044,228
5920-5000	Turning 22 Services needed for 610, community work and living	\$6,100,000*	\$4,500,000	\$10,6000.000
		*House 2 includes \$1.6 Million cut, request allows \$3 Mil. for employment; \$21.6 M annualization		

Community Residential

The Community Residential account is reduced by \$543,000. Growth relative to Conference '08 reflects the re-allocation of FY'08 Turning 22 and Salary Reserve \$\$.

Approximately 11,000 people are served through this account. Waiting lists have been growing since the Boulet Settlement was completed. There is no emergency account and limited flexibility

at DMR when individuals appear in crisis or urgent need. These include circumstances such as parental illness or death. Please note that the chart above shows restoration of \$543,000 cut plus the unmet need.

Family Support

This DMR funded program serves an unduplicated count of 13,247 families (estimated April 2007). That count included 4,600 adults and 8,647 children under 18. Although the most cost-effective program, Family Support has received only one increase (outside of Turning 22 re-allocations) of 500,000 in the past seven years. A 3000 family wait list is estimated by state officials. An investment of \$3,000,000 will reach a minimum of 1500 families, half of the existing wait list.

Turning 22

The primary source of services for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities including autism spectrum disorder are local school systems. When children turn 22 they enter the adult service system where there are no entitlements. The transition to adult services is critical time. But the experience is a jarring one for students and families when they learn that there is limited or no funding for employment services. Ideally this is the time when the knowledge and skills acquired in school are applied to the world of work in the hope of creating a meaningful life. These services include job training, some sort of day services and transportation. (Please note that the \$10.6 M. and annualization of \$21.6 Million for Turning 22 includes the restoration of the cut in House 2 budget. An average \$22,000 package is needed for those who live with family members, employment, transportation and in-home service).

Turning 22 dollars, although increasing over the years have not kept pace with the number of eligible individuals turning 22 annually. The increasing numbers of children with autism spectrum disorder and those who have survived with complex medical needs are probably the main reasons for the increase. Almost 200 students out of an estimated 610 graduating, will require residential services which leaves little for the majority who continue to live with family members and need employment or family support.

Our request allows at least \$3 Million to be applied to employment services which means at least 175 students will have a chance at a job. If T-22 is not increased many of these young people will have no where to go and they run the risk of losing many of the skills acquired in all of their earlier learning. Parents may need to quit their jobs to stay home with these young people resulting in not only lost wages for the family but also a reduction in tax revenue.