

Covering children with autism would be good...

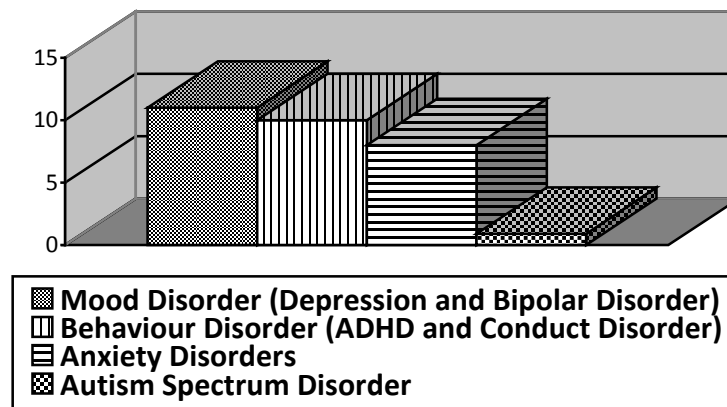
covering **all** children with brain disorders would be **better**.

*All of Michigan's children deserve the **best** care that we can provide*

Ending insurance discrimination against one particular brain disorder<sup>1</sup> that afflicts just some of our children discriminates against large numbers of children with equally severe and debilitating brain disorders.

Singling out one particular treatment<sup>2</sup> for a statutory insurance mandate puts legislators in the position of making medical decisions and ignores the inevitable advancements in treatment.

#### Selected Children's Mental Health Disorders – U.S. Prevalence - %



According to a National Institute of Mental Health 2010 study<sup>3</sup>, **20% of youth during their lifetime are affected by some type of mental disorder** to an extent that they have difficulty functioning. Studies show that 11-13% experience severe disorders that significantly impair their daily lives.

***Please – don't tell these children and their families that their needs don't count!***

It should also be noted that children frequently have overlapping and multiple disorders. Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders have a two-to-six-times greater risk of experiencing comorbid psychiatric conditions than their normal peers.<sup>4</sup> In 2006, a study showed that in a cohort of ten- to 14 year old children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, 70% had at least one comorbid psychiatric disorder and 41% had two or more.<sup>5</sup>

**End insurance discrimination in Michigan today by enacting mental health parity for all**

<sup>1</sup> Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a pervasive developmental disorder that is diagnosed by criteria from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders published by the American Psychiatric Association. ASD is defined as a Developmental Disorder by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

<sup>2</sup> Applied Behavior Analysis is one of several Early Intensive Behavioral Interventions that have been shown to be effective with some, but not all children with autism.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/science-news/2010/national-survey-confirms-that-youth-are-disproportionately-affected-by-mental-disorders.shtml>

<sup>4</sup> Raja M, Azzoni A, Clinical Practice and Epidemiology in Mental Health 2008, 4:26

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.bu.edu/autism/files/2010/03/2006-Leyfer-et-al-comorbid-disorders1.pdf>