



Bridges, Inc. | 8920 Holly Ave NE Suite 102B, Albuquerque, NM 87122 | 505-856-6880

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## When people need people to help them with Autism, they turn to Bridges

Ask one of Bridges' parents and they will tell you Bridges changed their lives. Bridges, locally owned and operated since 1997, is New Mexico's largest and oldest company devoted to meeting the needs of individuals with Autism and their families. Bridges gives children with Autism the tools necessary to reach their greatest potential and become as independent as possible so that they may be fully contributing and valued members of their families and communities.

Through Bridges' one-of-a-kind approach, both the child and parent are able to reach significant results quickly. At the same time, Bridges' specialists are able to develop rapport with the child, and overcome the child's challenges. Bridges' clients learn social, communication, cognitive and behavioral skills by working with tutors directly in their homes, schools, and communities.

## Comprehensive Services for Individuals and their Families

Bridges offers a variety of services including:

- Adaptive Skill building based on Applied behavior Analysis (ABA)
- Behavior Therapy
- Individual and Family Counseling
- Social Skills Classes
- Sibling Support Groups
- Parent Support Group

## Funding for Autism Treatment is at Your Fingertips

Insurance coverage for Autism treatment is more accessible than ever in New Mexico. Many private health insurance policies now provide coverage for Autism services; meaning new options are available for your child. Contact Bridges and we'll help you determine what services are covered for your child through his/her private insurance.

Families can find affordable funding options for Bridges' Autism treatment through:

- Most Private Insurances (BCBS, Presbyterian, etc.)
- Military Insurance (through United military and Veterans Services ECHO Demonstration Model)
- Medicaid
- DD Waiver
- Mi Via
- Public school systems

## **BARRIERS TO ACCESS TO AUTISM CARE:**

1. Autism Diagnosis- UNM's Center for Development and Disability (CDD) needs increase funding in order to provide Autism diagnoses in a timely manner. Currently, children are placed a waitlist before being seen for a diagnostic evaluation.

I respectfully ask that you support increased funding to CDD for Autism Diagnosis.

2. Copays for Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)- ABA is the most recognized, evidence-based treatment for children with Autism. Many commercial plans provide ABA as a benefit but charge a copay for each date of service. ABA is an intensive service, with multiple sessions per weeks, resulting in multiple copays per week, which is cost prohibitive for many families.

When the Senate passed SB 39 in 2009, there were initial discussions that MCOs would not charge copays or would limit the copays to a monthly 'cost share'.

I respectfully ask that you contact the Superintendent of Insurance's office and urge the office to eliminate date of service copays for ABA or at least reduce them to a monthly cost share.

3. NM's limited capacity of Behavioral Health Providers-Autism is the fastest growing developmental disability, with 1 in every 88 children receiving the diagnosis. NM's providers cannot meet the growing number of families affected by Autism.

The State recently cut the Medicaid reimbursement rate for ***"Family Therapy with the Client Present", CPT Code 90847, by almost 21%***. This drastic cut has forced some agencies and companies to greatly reduce or eliminate Behavioral Health services to Medicaid recipients.

I respectfully ask that you urge the State to avoid Medicaid reimbursement rate cuts in excess of 10%.

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