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An Act To Provide Training for Caregivers of Children with Autism and Related Disorders

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 34-B MRSA §5001, sub-§1-D is enacted to read:

1-D. Autism spectrum disorder. "Autism spectrum disorder" means any of the pervasive developmental disorders as defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th edition, published by the American Psychiatric Association, including autistic disorder, Asperger's disorder and pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified.

Sec. 2. 34-B MRSA §5440 is enacted to read:

§ 5440. Parent and family training

The department shall make available to a parent or other family member or guardian of a child with autism spectrum disorder and to community providers of services for children with autism spectrum disorder a 3-hour to 5-hour training course including instruction on understanding the assessment and diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and specific disorders under that diagnosis, various techniques and skills in dealing with a child with autism spectrum disorder and available community and state resources to help with parenting a child with autism spectrum disorder. The department may coordinate with a municipality or other governmental unit under section 5434 or a nongovernmental unit under section 5435 to provide the training required under this section. The department shall advertise and shall perform outreach to affected families regarding the course. The department shall conduct or contract for the course to be conducted regionally throughout the State on a semiannual basis.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Health and Human Services to provide a semiannual training course regionally throughout the State for parents, family members and guardians of children with autism spectrum disorder and community providers of services for children with autism spectrum disorder.