



**The Need to Fully Restore \$45 Million for Community Programs (5911-2000)**  
*Keep Thousands of Children at Home; Families Together*

**House 1 Status:** Governor Patrick and EOHHS Secretary JudyAnn Bigby provided good news on March 25 by recommending to the Legislature that half of a \$45 million cut to DMR/DDS’s Community Programs Account (5911-2000) in the House 1 budget be restored. This memo, drafted for legislators, explains why it is critical to protect disability and human service programs in the midst of this recession and specifically why Family Support services (historically respite line-item 5920-3000) must be fully restored.

The Arc and MFOFC support the use of new revenue as recommended by the Governor and Legislature to protect critical services. **An additional \$22.5 Million beyond the Governor’s recommendation is needed to fully restore 5911-2000 (for a total of \$192,074,452).**

The Governor’s \$22.5 million restoration will provide funds for essential infrastructure, including emergency services and community-based direct support staff, which helps families with everything from information/referral and education/training to helping families access public or private resources. A full \$10 million of the restored funds is needed just to protect emergency and related services for families in crisis.

**Meanwhile, there is no restoration for nearly 80 percent of the families currently served by this account.** On April 13, DMR/DDS is planning to mail termination notices to approximately 9,000 families informing them that they will lose planned respite, stipends or flexible funding as of July 1. (Even with restoration, 3,000 families are on a waiting list.) These critical services include:

- Medical supplies and services
- Respite care, including emergency and overnight respite
- After-school programs for school-age children and teens
- Specialized recreation programs including sports, camps, etc.
- Skills instruction such as teaching parents to manage challenging behaviors
- Teaching independent living skills to individuals with disabilities
- Adaptive equipment (specialized shower stalls, wheelchair ramps, etc.)
- Educational planning and support
- Information and referral services
- **And much, much more...**

**Please – we need your help.** As a cost-effective alternative to expensive residential and emergency services, there is no replacement for Family Support Services. One of Massachusetts’ soundest investments, Family Supports must be maintained not only for the sake of the 11,500 individuals and families who use it, but also for our Commonwealth, which reaps the benefits of this extraordinary program every day. **Revenue is available to address these critical services – please use more of the stimulus funds to maintain these essential services.**

<u>Priority Line Item/Services</u>	<u>H1Budget Cut</u>	<u>Total Needed</u>
5911-2000 Community Programs	\$45,204,684	\$192,074,452
4120-3000 MRC Extended Employment	\$8,600,000	\$28,643,000 (language needed)
5920-3010 Autism Division	\$2,626,077	\$6,264,213
5948-0012 DESE-DDS (also 7010-0041)	\$3,500,000	\$10,000,000 (language needed)
4000-0117 Salary Reserve	\$23,000,000	\$23,000,000