

NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
1971 SESSION

CHAPTER 1007
SENATE BILL 383

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR THE TRAINING AND
EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH SEVERE LEARNING, COMMUNICATION AND
BEHAVIOR DISORDERS.

Whereas, the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina should be ever mindful of its mandate to provide, where necessary, special programs of training and education for children with specialized learning and communication problems; and

Whereas, there is not presently existing in North Carolina an appropriate training and educational program for children with certain types of severe communication and behavior disorders, such as autism, aphasia and other severe learning problems; and

Whereas, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction is a State agency which already exists for the purpose of meeting the needs of children through the public school system; and

Whereas, the fact that the special educational needs of some children are not being met does not require the establishment of new kinds of services. Rather, these needs would seem to be more adequately and effectively served by providing appropriate training, consultative and evaluative services, as well as financial support to existing services, so they might better perform their functions; and

Whereas, the Child Research Project, a federally funded pilot project conducted under the auspices of the Department of Psychiatry and the Child Development Institute of the University of North Carolina School of Medicine at Chapel Hill, is recognized as having available to it expert knowledge in the field of diagnosing, training, educating and establishing special classes for the training and education of children with severe learning, communication and behavior disorders; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. The Dean of the School of Medicine of the University of North Carolina is hereby directed to establish in the Department of Psychiatry and the Biological Sciences Division of the Child Development Institute, a program to be known as "The Institute for the Treatment and Education of Children Afflicted with Autism and Related Communications Handicaps," hereinafter referred to as "the Institute."

Sec. 2. The Institute will consist of three regional centers to be designated and located as follows:

- (1) The Eastern Regional Center to be located as near as is feasible to the campus of East Carolina University;
- (2) The Western Regional Center to be located as near as is feasible to Asheville;
- (3) The Piedmont Regional Center to be located as near as is feasible to the campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The Piedmont Regional Center shall also serve as the administrative and research center for the Institute.

Sec. 3. The function of the Institute shall be the identification, evaluation and education of children with autism and related disorders of communication. The Institute shall offer educational and training programs for such children and support and training for their parents. The Institute will conduct research, including program evaluation, development of new treatment and educational techniques and related programs concerning problems of communications development. The Institute will provide demonstration classes, train teachers, and provide consultation and support to classes for autistic and communication-handicapped children in cooperation with the Department of Public Instruction, and the Department of Public Instruction is hereby directed to support and assist the Institute in the accomplishment of the functions of the Institute.

Sec. 4. Funds are to be made available by the Institute from annual program support monies appropriated to it for the establishment of classes for autistic and communication-handicapped children in appropriate local areas as determined by the Dean of the School of Medicine. To the extent possible and feasible, these funds are to be apportioned equitably to the three regions. Classrooms established pursuant to this section shall serve children in areas outside of regular school districts and shall not be considered part of a superintendent's general special education program. For the purpose of this program, schools wherein such classes are established shall be permitted to admit children below the currently established school age, and are encouraged to admit children to such classes as soon as their educational handicap can be identified. The Institute shall assure that classes established under this section function in such a manner as to actively involve and train the parents of the children served in the methods of educating such children.

Sec. 5. The Dean of the School of Medicine of the University of North Carolina is directed and empowered to formulate rules and regulations necessary for the expedient accomplishment of the purposes of this act, and to set standards governing the admission of pupils to programs and classes established pursuant to this act.

Sec. 6. There is appropriated out of the general fund the sum of \$550,000 to be used by the Dean of the School of Medicine of the University of North Carolina for annual program support of the Institute for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1972.

Sec. 7. This act shall become effective July 1, 1971.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified, this the 20th day of July, 1971.