



## NEWSLETTERS

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Opioid dependence treatment in the privacy of a doctor's office



# DECEMBER 2013: COMPANIES OFFER ABA BENEFITS, AFTER EMPLOYEES ASK

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## QUALCOMM ADDS ABA TO BENEFITS AFTER EMPLOYEES ASK



Lisa Lammens and her husband Dave Ross work at the high-tech company Qualcomm.

For many years the couple paid out of pocket for ABA therapy for their son Jaxen, who is on the autism spectrum. Initially the benefit was not covered by Qualcomm. Then, Dave and Lisa decided to ask! Ultimately the company agreed!

Now, Jaxen-- and all the children of Qualcomm's employees who need the support-- may receive ABA therapy. [Read How They Did It](#)

## FAMILIES AHIP HELPED TO OBTAIN INSURANCE COVERAGE

AHIP helps family on an individual basis on a sliding scale. Below is a partial list of our recent successes.

Nine-year-old boy with autism, CA, Los Angeles County: This family was unhappy with the ABA provider assigned by Kaiser. Kaiser denied their request to change to an out-of-network provider. AHIP appealed, and won!

Seven-year-old girl with autism, CA, Contra Costa County: We recovered reimbursement for over \$30,000 of claims for this family, some from the regional center, and some from the employer through Aetna. Aetna failed to inform the parents that ABA services would be discontinued when the plan transitioned from state-regulated (with ABA) to a self-insured plan.

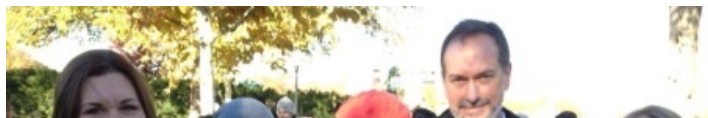
Ten-year-old boy with autism, IN, Evansville: Despite a recommendation for 35 hours of ABA therapy, Anthem approved only 20 hours, advising the family to seek additional services from their school district.

AHIP appealed, arguing that Indiana law states medical coverage is limited to treatment that is prescribed by the insured's treating physician. The law does not state that IEP services should be factored into the equation, nor does it state that children can only get half of what was prescribed in the treatment plan because the school should be paying for the other half. AHIP won the appeal securing the 35 hours/week of therapy for this child.

If you or someone you knows needs help convincing your insurance company to abide by the law, please [contact us at AHIP](#).

## **\$6,000 FUNDRAISING GOAL - WOULD YOU PLEASE CONTRIBUTE?**

Insurance companies feel anonymous, and hold the power to decide our children's fate. Help us continue to hold them accountable! **DONATE NOW**. We regularly help families write insurance appeals and offer services on a sliding scale for those with middle and low incomes. We help those on Medi-Cal through generous donations from families like you!! We respond to every email question that we receive, no charge! We post all new laws and legislation relevant to autism to help families stay informed. We meet with elected officials and encourage them to legislate on behalf of autism families. Please help us stay afloat and continue to hold insurance companies accountable! **DONATE NOW**.



## **AHIP FOUNDER KAREN FESSEL TRAVELS TO**



## AUTISM SPEAKS WASHINGTON D.C. POLICY CONFERENCE

Last month, I had the good fortune to attend the Autism Speaks to Washington, Policy and Action Summit. Many well-known senators addressed our group. Senator Bob Menendez (D-NJ) spoke about "The Aging In" Act, which will address much needed services and programs for adults with autism. Eric Cantor, House Majority Leader (R-VA) spoke about The Kids First Research Act, to guarantee money for research into autism. Both spoke about getting the Combating Autism Reauthorization Act (CARA), passed, as well as adopting an international treaty on autism. Other important issues included housing and employment for adults as the current wave of people with autism transition to adulthood. I left with the upbeat feeling that legislative change on behalf of autism families has and is taking place across the United States, and that lawmakers care and are listening! [More](#)



## ANTHEM BLUE CROSS & CIGNA LAWSUIT SETTLEMENTS

If you are a subscriber of Anthem Blue Cross (Blue Cross of California) or Cigna (includes Self-insured, ERISA plans), you could receive benefits from class action settlements regarding improper denial of coverage for applied behavioral analysis (ABA) for members with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). If you are a Blue Cross member and paid out-of-pocket for ABA services between June 27, 2004 - September 15, 2013, you may be eligible. More information. If you have been insured by Cigna and



denied ABA therapy, you too may be eligible for reimbursement. [More info.](#)

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## HEALTH NET, ANTHEM BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD ILLEGALLY DENIED THERAPY TO PATIENTS. HEALTH NET IS FINED \$300,000

The California Department of Managed Health Care ordered Health Net, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield of California in November 2013 to stop denying medically necessary therapy to patients with developmental disabilities, autism and other medical conditions. The three insurers will be required to reimburse patients who paid out of pocket for these improperly denied treatments. [Read full article.](#)

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## AUTISM BENEFITS FOR MEDI-CAL PATIENTS

Medi-Cal patients seeking therapy for children with autism, please visit our website for updated [comprehensive information](#), including strategies to obtain therapies, your rights and a sample letter of medical necessity. On the legislative front, thank you, Senator Lou Correa, for publicly stating your intent to remedy the Medi-Cal/autism disparity, and fight to include ABA as a covered Medi-Cal benefit. "One of the sad chapters in [last year's] budget wars was when Healthy Families was merged into Medi-Cal and the funding that used to be contained in Healthy Families for the treatment of autistic children disappeared. That was a bitter budget pill to swallow. That was something a lot of us are not happy about, and actually are really angry over. I hope this



year in the Legislature we can remedy this situation." -Senator Correa, 11/18/2013, [California Healthline](#)

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