



ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY CENTERS ON DISABILITIES  
*RESEARCH, EDUCATION, SERVICE*

## **Ask Your Senators to Support Behavioral Health for Military Families**

### **SUMMARY & BACKGROUND:**

Many families in the military services have difficulty obtaining behavioral health treatment for their children with developmental disabilities. Behavioral health treatment often helps children with developmental disabilities learn the skills to be successful in school, live independently, engage in employment, and enroll in postsecondary education and training after they graduate.

Senators Murray (D-WA) and Gillibrand (D-NY) have introduced an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act that will expand access to behavioral health treatment, including applied behavior analysis (ABA), to children and adults with developmental disabilities under the health care system for military families (called TRICARE). Please ask your Senators to support the amendment and expand access to ABA and other behavioral health for children and adults in military families with developmental disabilities.

### **TAKE ACTION:**

**Call your Senator** and ask him or her to support the Murray/Gillibrand amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act to provide essential behavioral health treatment to children in military families with autism or other developmental disabilities.

- Visit [AUCD's Action Center](#) to find out the name of your U.S. Representative (scroll down and enter your zip code)
- Dial the Capitol Switchboard at **202-224-3121** and ask for the office of your Representative
- Identify yourself as a constituent and the organization that you represent (if any)
- Give them your message, then pass this alert along to others!

**Message to Senator:** I am calling to ask Senator \_\_\_\_\_ to support the amendment offered by Senators Murray and Gillibrand to the National Defense Authorization Act that would expand behavioral health treatment under the TRICARE program for children and adults with developmental disabilities in military families.

**Or, email your members of Congress directly using [AUCD's Action Center](#).**

**Talking Points**

- The amendment will allow military service members whose children have been diagnosed with autism and other developmental disabilities to access essential behavioral health treatment, including applied behavior analysis, when prescribed by a physician.
- Many families in the military currently have difficulty obtaining behavioral health treatment for their children with autism and other developmental disabilities. This amendment would help solve this problem.
- Decades of research show the effectiveness of behavioral health care for children with significant developmental disabilities like autism. This amendment will go a long way to ensure that children with autism and other developmental disabilities get the health services they need to lead healthy and productive lives.