



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
**OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD**



Connecticut Office of  
Early Childhood

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**Testimony Presented to the Appropriations Committee**  
**November 12, 2015**  
**Linda Goodman, Deputy Director**  
**Office of Early Childhood**

Good morning, Senator Bye, Representative Walker, and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee. I am Linda Goodman, Deputy Director of the Office of Early Childhood. I am here today to testify concerning the projected \$6.2 million Birth to Three deficit for the current fiscal year. I am accompanied today by senior members of our staff who are prepared to address detailed questions relevant to their areas of expertise.

The Birth to Three System is a federal and state entitlement program under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and under 17a-248 of the Connecticut General Statutes that supports families in meeting the needs of their infants and toddlers who are eligible due to significant developmental disabilities or delays. These services foster collaborative partnerships; are family centered; occur in natural environments; recognize current best practices in early intervention; and are built upon mutual respect and choice.

Families are coached on methods for fostering learning during daily routines in the home, child care settings or other places that are natural for that child and family. All children referred to the Birth to Three System are evaluated in five developmental areas. All children 16 months old or older are also screened for autism. A family service plan is developed for each eligible child that is tailored to each child's developmental needs and the family's priorities, resources and concerns.

Funding for Birth to Three Program is comprised of federal funds under IDEA Parts B and C, state appropriated funds, commercial insurance and parent fees in which 96% of all funding is used for direct services. In total, the funding for the Birth to Three Program consists of:

- Federal funds under IDEA Parts B and C = \$4.9 million
- State appropriated funds = \$39.2 million (Combined with funds from DSS of \$14.5M)
- Estimated Commercial insurance = \$4.2 million
- Estimated Parent fees = \$1.2 million
- **Total FY16 funding = \$49.5 million**

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A summary of the Birth to Three direct service shortfall is as follows:

Direct Service funding is \$46.9 million:

- State Appropriated to OEC = \$24.7 million
- State Transferred from DSS = \$14.5 million
- IDEA Part B = \$0.6 million
- IDEA Part C = \$1.7 million
- Parent Cost Participation = \$1.2 million
- Commercial Insurance Receipts = \$4.2 million
- **Total Direct Service Funding = \$46.9 million**

Direct Service Expenditures is estimated to be \$53.1 million:

- Direct Service Expenditures = \$43.3 million
- Additional Direct Services Expenditures = \$9.8 million
- **Total Direct Service Expenditures = \$53.1 million**

**Total Direct Services shortfall for FY16 = (\$6.2) million**

In understanding the components of this \$6.2 million shortfall:

1. **\$3.4 million** shortfall was assumed by the OEC when the program was transferred from DDS. Last year DDS transferred, with the approval of the Finance Advisory Committee, \$2.9 million from other DDS accounts to address a program shortfall; the enacted budget did not annualize this adjustment. Additionally, \$500,000 in unpaid FY15 invoices carried over into FY16.
2. **\$1.9 million** is largely due to a projected FY16 increase in caseload of 3.65% representing an average increase of 190 children per month.
3. **\$400,000** is due to a projected 3.8% increase in the number of children needing more intensive services, primarily children diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. This represents an average increase of 21 children per month.
4. **\$500,000** is due to an increase in federally funded infrastructure supports including salaries and related fringe benefits including an additional 1.5 FTEs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am joined today by Pietro Rosato, Fiscal Administrative Manager, Lynn Johnson, Director of the Birth to Three Program, and Mary Coyle, Birth to Three Fiscal Support Team Leader. We are happy to answer any questions that you may have.