



HOW FUNDING WORKS IN MASSACHUSETTS

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General Information about where money comes from to pay for services:

Private families, state agencies, or school districts provide funding for services. Private families pay for services themselves with money out of their pocket. School districts and state agencies receive funding from the state. The state receives funding from our tax dollars, programs that they make money on (i.e., tolls, parking tickets, etc.), and the federal government. The federal government receives money from our federal taxes, investments, and programs that they make money on.

For the state of Massachusetts monies are allocated each July for the state’s fiscal year (July – June). Money comes from the federal government as well as the state to fund a variety of program. The State of Massachusetts then compiles these funds and distributes funding to various agencies (DPH, DDS, DOE...). The agencies have budgets for different programs.

Who does MILESTONES, Inc. receive funding from?

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| ▪ Intensive early Intervention | Department of Public Health |
| ▪ DOE/DDS Program | Department of Developmental Services |
| ▪ Home-Based Services (age 3+) | Various Towns and Private Families |
| ▪ Clinic | Various Towns and Private Families |
| ▪ Educational Consultation | Various Towns and Private Families |
| ▪ Summer Camp | Various Towns, Private Families and State Agencies |
| ▪ School for Accelerated Learning | Various Towns |
| ▪ Pragmatic Groups | Various Towns and Private Families |

Department of Public Health (DPH) / Early Intervention:

DPH has many programs relating to the health and well being of families in Massachusetts. One program is called Early Intervention. Each town in Massachusetts is assigned to an Early Intervention Agency. The job of Early Intervention Agencies is to know a little information about many disorders. At Early Intervention a child may be assigned to the following staff:

- Service Coordinator (who orchestrates the child’s care and determines what services they are eligible for)
- Developmental Educator (whose job is to know about child development)
- Occupational Therapist (who work with the child’s fine motor skills and/or sensory integration)
- Speech-Language Pathologist (who work on the child’s language)
- Physical therapist (who work with the child’s gross motor skills)

When a child has a more severe disorder, such as autism spectrum disorders or blindness, they are referred to a Specialty Service Provider who has expertise in the child’s disorder and provides intensive services (from 5-30 hours per week). MILESTONES, Inc. is a Specialty Service Provider.

Children who are under three fall under the auspices of the Department of Public Health and are entitled to the services listed above for free.





Excellence in Child Development Since 1994.

Department of Developmental Services (Formally the Dept. of Mental Retardation)

DDS provides a variety of services for students over three years old. A student must be eligible for services by having a significant disability. Some students with Asperger's Syndrome who do not have cognitive limitations also qualify for DDS's services because the scope of their disability is so pervasive that they qualify.

DDS can provide services such as case coordination, respite (babysitting) funding, funding for equipment, job coaching, and others. DDS's funding is limited and services are based upon what funding is available.

Department of Education/Department of Developmental Services Initiative (DOE/DDS Program)

This was a program created to keep children out of a residential facility by providing wrap around care. The child is educated at school all day and then comes home and can receive therapeutic and respite services. This program often pays for additional items such as equipment (communication devices, sensory equipment, etc.) or memberships (YMCA, or others). This program is cost shared by the child's town and the Department of Mental Retardation. The amount of services a child receives is based upon the amount of funding they have. Space is very limited and there is a waiting list, which can take years to receive services. This program is only for children who have severe cognitive limitations or extreme behavioral issues.

When a student enters the DOE/DDS program a "vendor agency" holds the child's funding and distributes it according to a plan, which is created by the family, state, and vendor agency. Only approved vendor agencies can hold funding for families. MILESTONES, Inc. is an approved vendor agency.

Local Towns:

Local towns receive money for education from taxes, town fees, department of education, state and federal grants, and sometimes, federal monies (if they qualify for specific program such as low income initiatives).

Each year towns set up their budget, which is approved by the school committee (which is comprised of various community members). Everything except grant money must pass through the school committee and must come out of budgets.

Local towns contract with MILESTONES, Inc. to provide a variety of services including Educational Consultation and Home-Based Services for students. The town/school is only responsible for students who are over three years of age. If a child is under three, it is the responsibility of the Department of Public Health.

In towns there are several budget categories for education. It is more advantageous for a town to work with an agency approved by the Department of Education because the services are considered "reimbursable". This means the town receives a percentage of compensation for the services (so the money doesn't need to solely come directly from the towns revenue – from taxes, etc.). MILESTONES, Inc. is approved by the Department of Education for reimbursable services.

