

Talking points for families who want their legislators to include family-based developmental therapies, such as RDI, in the Autism Treatment Acceleration Act and the Autism Insurance Reform Amendment to America's Affordable Health Choices Act Of 2009:

Ask to speak to the Senator or Congressman personally. If he or she is not available, ask to speak to his or her closest assistant. Be sure to write down this person's name and number for future reference and so you can address him or her by name in conversation. Then say:

“My name is XXXXX and I am calling from (town and state). I am the parent of a child on the autism spectrum. I am calling to get your support for including family-based developmental therapies, such as RDI, in the Autism Treatment Acceleration Act and the Autism Insurance Reform Amendment to America's Affordable Health Choices Act Of 2009. Family-based developmental therapies can be as effective for many children and often less expensive than intensive behavioral therapy.”

Give specific examples about your family's experience with family-based developmental intervention. [If you have done RDI, there are some sample points listed later in this document.]

“If family-based developmental therapies are not included as covered interventions in the autism insurance reform legislation, many families may be forced to opt instead for the a more expensive behavioral therapy that meets their needs less well. Providing parents with a choice in covered autism interventions could potentially save the system millions of dollars and result in better outcomes for many children.”

Good luck! You really can make a big difference by making these calls!

Talking points for families who discontinued ABA in favor of RDI:

Ask to speak to the Senator or Congressman personally. If he or she is not available, ask to speak to his or her closest assistant. Be sure to write down this person's name and number for future reference and so you can address him or her by name in conversation and let us know whom you spoke to. Then say:

“My name is XXXXX and I am calling from (town and state). I am the parent of a child on the autism spectrum. I am calling to make you aware of an autism therapy that you may not have heard of, Relationship Development Intervention or RDI. I am calling to get your support for including family-based developmental therapies, such as RDI, in the Autism Treatment Acceleration Act and the Autism Insurance Reform Amendment to America's Affordable Health Choices Act Of 2009.

RDI is effective for many children and much less expensive than intensive behavioral therapy or applied behavior analysis. RDI has peer reviewed research backing its effectiveness. The website [HYPERLINK "http://www.rdiconnect.com" www.rdiconnect.com](http://www.rdiconnect.com) will give you more information on RDI. Our family has done both intensive behavioral therapy and RDI for our child. RDI gave us better results and was about one fifth the cost of our previous ABA program (or substitute actual cost difference). The cost difference is because, in RDI, parents are quickly and efficiently trained to be their child's own therapists.

Here are the benefits we have seen with RDI (these are suggestions; tailor these to your family's actual experience):

- There is less stress on the family compared to the stress level when we had the intensive behavioral therapy. We don't have professionals in our house for 40 hours/week (or actual hours). We now know how to work the therapy into our everyday lifestyle with our child.
- We, as parents, have become the kind of guides that parents are meant to be. We are not delegating our parent role to therapists. We now know how to parent our child with confidence, knowing that the way we parent them is helping to reduce their autism.
- We have developed an emotional connection with our child we didn't have before RDI.
- Our child is able to connect with other people in ways we didn't think he could before RDI.
- Our child is able to go out in the world and encounter new experiences with confidence and curiosity in ways he couldn't before RDI.
- We are no longer consumed with the autism and we see our child becoming less and less autistic in the way he thinks and behaves. With the ABA program, our child gained skills, but still thought and behaved in an autistic way.
- We are much more optimistic about my child's future now than when my child was in the behavioral program. We now see him on the path to having meaningful, close relationships, gainful employment, and living independently as an adult.

“If family-based developmental therapies such as RDI are not included as covered interventions in the autism insurance reform legislation, many families who may have chosen RDI will be forced to opt instead for the much more expensive behavioral therapy. Providing parents with a choice in covered autism interventions could potentially save the system millions of dollars and result in better outcomes for many children.”

Talking points for families who use both RDI and ABA:

Ask to speak to the Senator or Congressman personally. If he or she is not available, ask to speak to his or her closest assistant. Be sure to write down this person's name and number for future reference and so you can address him or her by name in conversation and let us know whom you spoke to. Then say:

"My name is XXXXX and I am calling from (town and state). I am the parent of a child on the autism spectrum. I am calling to make you aware of an autism therapy that you may not have heard of, Relationship Development Intervention or RDI. I am calling to get your support for including family-based developmental therapies such as RDI in the Autism Treatment Acceleration Act and the Autism Insurance Reform Amendment to America's Affordable Health Choices Act Of 2009.

RDI is effective for many children and much less expensive than intensive behavioral therapy or applied behavior analysis. RDI has peer reviewed research backing its effectiveness. The website [HYPERLINK "http://www.rdiconnect.com" www.rdiconnect.com](http://www.rdiconnect.com) will give you more information on RDI. Our family is using both interventions with our son with great success. Because we include the RDI, which is done by us, the parents, we are able to have a much less intensive ABA program than we would without RDI. So the combination is more cost effective than if we just did ABA.

Here are the benefits we have seen that we attribute to RDI [these are suggestions; tailor these to your family's actual experience]:

- There is less stress on the family compared to the stress level when we had prior to RDI. We now know how to work the therapy into our everyday lifestyle with our child.
- We as parents have become the kind of guides that parents are meant to be. We are not delegating our parent role to therapists. We now know how to parent our child with confidence, knowing that the way we parent them is helping to reduce their autism.
- We have developed an emotional connection with our child we didn't have before RDI.
- Our child is able to connect with other people in ways we didn't think he could before RDI.
- Our child is able to go out in the world and encounter new experiences with confidence and curiosity in ways he couldn't before RDI.
- We are no longer consumed with the autism and we see our child becoming less and less autistic in the way he thinks and behaves. With the ABA program, our child gained skills, but still thought and behaved in an autistic way.
- We are much more optimistic about my child's future now than when my child was in the behavioral program. We now see him on the path to having meaningful, close relationships, gainful employment, and living independently as an adult.

If family-based developmental therapies such as RDI are not included as covered interventions in the autism insurance reform legislation, many families who may have chosen RDI will be forced to opt instead for the much more expensive behavioral therapy. Providing parents with a choice in covered autism interventions could potentially save the system millions of dollars and result in better outcomes for many children."

Talking points for families who never did ABA:

Ask to speak to the Senator or Congressman personally. If he or she is not available, ask to speak to his or her closest assistant. Be sure to write down this person's name and number for future reference and so you can address him or her by name in conversation. Then say:

"My name is XXXXX and I am calling from (town and state). I am the parent of a child on the autism spectrum. I am calling to make you aware of an autism therapy that you may not have heard of, Relationship Development Intervention or RDI. I am calling to get your support for including family-based developmental therapies, such as RDI, in the Autism Treatment Acceleration Act and the Autism Insurance Reform Amendment to America's Affordable Health Choices Act Of 2009.

RDI is effective for many children and much less expensive than intensive behavioral therapy or applied behavior analysis. RDI has peer reviewed research backing its effectiveness. The website [HYPERLINK "http://www.rdiconnect.com" www.rdiconnect.com](http://www.rdiconnect.com) will give you more information on RDI. Our child never received behavioral therapy, only RDI. We are thrilled with the results and we have saved about \$40,000 per year compared to what we would have spent on intensive behavioral therapy.

Here are the benefits we have seen that we attribute to RDI [these are suggestions; tailor these to your family's actual experience]:

- There is less stress on the family compared to the stress level when we had prior to RDI. We now know how parent our child with confidence, in ways that help improve the autism.
- We as parents have become the kind of guides that parents are meant to be. We are not delegating our parent role to therapists.
- We have developed an emotional connection with our child we didn't have before RDI.
- Our child is able to connect with other people in ways we didn't think he could before RDI.
- Our child is able to go out in the world and encounter new experiences with confidence and curiosity in ways he couldn't before RDI.
- We are no longer consumed with the autism and we see our child becoming less and less autistic in the way he thinks and behaves.
- We are much more optimistic about our child's future now than when our child was in the behavioral program. We now see him on the path to having meaningful, close relationships, gainful employment, and living independently as an adult.

If family-based developmental therapies such as RDI are not included as covered interventions in the autism insurance reform legislation, many families who may have chosen RDI will be forced to opt instead for the much more expensive behavioral therapy. Providing parents with a choice in covered autism interventions could potentially save the system millions of dollars and result in better outcomes for many children."