

By Senator Ring

32-00024A-09

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to autism; requiring that a physician
3 refer a minor to an appropriate specialist for
4 screening for autism spectrum disorder under certain
5 circumstances; defining the term "appropriate
6 specialist"; defining the term "neuropsychologist";
7 providing an effective date.
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9 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
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11 Section 1. If the parent or legal guardian of a minor who
12 is an eligible individual, as defined in s. 627.6686, Florida
13 Statutes, believes that the minor exhibits symptoms of autism
14 spectrum disorder, the parent or legal guardian may report his
15 or her observation to a physician licensed in this state. The
16 physician shall immediately refer the minor to an appropriate
17 specialist for screening for autism spectrum disorder. As used
18 in this section, the term "appropriate specialist" includes, but
19 is not limited to, a person who is licensed in this state as:

20 (1) A neuropsychologist and who is competent in the area of
21 neurological testing. As used in this subsection, the term
22 "neuropsychologist" means a psychologist who has additional
23 training and experience in understanding brain-behavior
24 relationships. A neuropsychologist has an advanced degree in
25 psychology, known as a Ph.D. or Psy.D., and usually works with
26 psychiatrists, neurologists, neurosurgeons, physiatrists, and
27 other medical specialists as a team to coordinate a patient's
28 care;

29 (2) A board-certified behavior analyst;

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- 30 (3) A psychologist;
- 31 (4) A psychiatrist;
- 32 (5) A neurologist; or
- 33 (6) A developmental or behavioral pediatrician and who
- 34 specializes in child neurology.

35 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2009.