



PARENTS' GUIDE TO THE AUTISM MANAGEMENT BILL, 2025

What it means for your child — and what to tell the Senate

Public participation deadline: Monday, 22 December 2025

Committee receiving views: Senate Standing Committee on Health

1. Why should parents care about this Bill?

This Bill will decide **how Kenya supports autistic children and adults** for many years to come.

If passed as it is:

- It will affect **diagnosis, hospital services, schools, caregiver support, and funding**
- It will guide how **counties and the national government** respond to autism
- It will shape **how your child is treated — with dignity or stigma**

Parents' voices are critical at this stage. The Senate is **legally required** to listen to public views.

2. What does the Bill do well? (The good news)

The Bill has **positive intentions**, including:

Early diagnosis

- Autism diagnostic centres in referral hospitals and county hospitals
- This can reduce late diagnosis

Training

- Training for doctors, teachers, and caregivers
- Autism awareness included in teacher training

Public awareness

- Government-led campaigns to reduce stigma

Government responsibility

- Both **national and county governments must act**
- Autism units will be created inside health departments

Funding (important!)

- The law says money **must be set aside** in health budgets for autism programs

These are **important gains** worth protecting.

3. What are the problems parents should be worried about?

Despite good intentions, the Bill has **serious gaps that affect real families**.



Problem 1: The Bill talks about “prevention of autism”

The Bill repeatedly uses the words “**prevention of autism.**”

This is wrong and harmful

- Autism is **not a disease**
- Autism cannot be “prevented”
- This language can:
 - Increase stigma
 - Blame parents (especially mothers)
 - Justify harmful or unscientific practices

Parents should ask the Senate to REMOVE this wording.

Problem 2: Autism is treated only as a medical issue

The Bill focuses mainly on:

- Hospitals
- Diagnosis
- Doctors

But autism also affects:

- School life
- Learning support
- Employment
- Community life
- Independent living

The Bill does **not clearly guarantee:**

- Inclusive education in ordinary schools
- Classroom support or aides
- Reasonable accommodation
- Life-long support beyond hospitals

Parents should demand a rights-based approach, not only medical care.

Problem 3: Caregiver support is very weak

The Bill only mentions:



- **Caregiver support groups**

But parents actually need:

- Respite care (time to rest)
- Mental health support
- Financial support
- Protection at work (flexible hours, leave)

Support groups alone are **not enough**.

Parents should ask for real caregiver support services to be added.

Problem 4: No clear protection against discrimination

The Bill says autistic people have rights under disability law — but:

- It does not explain **how those rights will be enforced**
- It does not stop discrimination in:
 - Schools
 - Hospitals
 - Employment
 - Public services

Parents should ask for strong anti-discrimination protections.

Problem 5: No accountability

The Bill does not require:

- Annual reports to Parliament
- Independent monitoring
- Clear timelines

Without accountability, counties may ignore the law.

Parents should ask for monitoring and reporting requirements.

4. What should parents ask the Senate to change or improve?

Parents do **not** need legal language. Simple, clear requests are enough.

Here are **key messages parents can submit**:

1. Remove harmful language



“Please remove all references to ‘prevention of autism’. Autism is not a disease and this wording increases stigma.”

2. Make schools truly inclusive

“The Bill should clearly require inclusive education, reasonable accommodation, classroom aides, and Individual Education Plans for autistic learners.”

3. Support caregivers properly

“Caregivers need respite care, mental health support, and financial assistance — not just support groups.”

4. Guarantee funding

“The Bill should specify minimum funding levels or create a dedicated autism support fund.”

5. Protect dignity and privacy

“Autism data collection must respect privacy and require consent, in line with the Data Protection Act.”

6. Ensure accountability

“The law should require annual reporting to Parliament and independent monitoring.”

5. How can parents submit their views?

Parents can submit views **individually or as groups**.

Where to send views

- **Senate Standing Committee on Health**
- Through:
 - Email submissions
 - Physical submissions (where available)
 - Public hearings (if announced)

What to include

- Your name (or group name)
- County
- Short explanation of your experience as a parent/caregiver
- What you support in the Bill
- What you want changed

Submissions do **not** need to be long or technical.

6. Deadline (very important!)



Public participation closes on Monday, 22 December 2025

After this date:

- Parents lose the chance to influence the law
- The Bill may pass without fixing these gaps

7. Final message to parents

This Bill can either:

- Help autistic children live with dignity and support
OR
- Lock Kenya into a medical-only, weak support system

Your voice matters.

Nothing about autistic children should be decided without parents and caregivers.