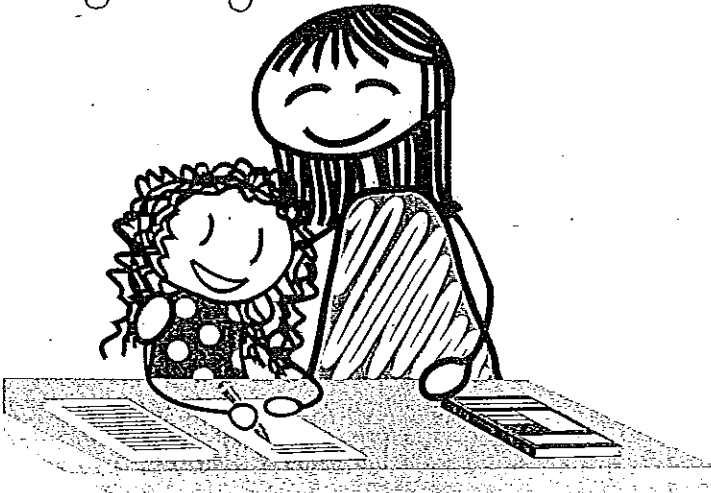


WHEN YOUR CHILD HAS SPECIAL NEEDS

by Diane Wiscarson

Navigating Public Agency Services



Contact Information

Developmental Disabilities Services

Clackamas County:

(503) 655-8640

clackamas.us/socialservices/developmental.html

Multnomah County:

(503) 823-4000

multco.us/dd

Washington County:

(503) 846-8611

www.co.washington.or.us/HHS/DevelopmentalDisabilities

County Mental Health Services

Clackamas County:

(503) 742-5335

www.clackamas.us/behavioralhealth/services.html

Multnomah County:

(503) 988-5464

multco.us/mhas/mental-health-services

Washington County:

(503) 846-4528

www.co.washington.or.us/HHS/MentalHealth

THINK CREATIVELY WHEN PLANNING services for children with disabilities. With a large range of services in Oregon, people can access respite care, budgeting assistance, nutrition services, and safe social and recreational settings, to name a few. Finding and navigating services can be frustrating and time consuming. A short overview to get started is provided.

Developmental Disabilities (DD) Services are for people with developmental or intellectual disabilities. Once eligible, DD case workers are an integral part of obtaining and managing services. Individual Support Plans are established with each individual, identifying needs based on health and safety, interests, choices and goals.

Once eligible for DD services, brokerages offer case management services, formal and informal support strategies and help access private and public resources. In Oregon, there are regional brokerages throughout the state. Often, the wide range of services available are provided in-home or via personal supports to help a person fully participate in community life, including work.

Oregon Technical Assistance Corporation (OTAC) believes communities are enhanced by the participation of ALL members, and thus promotes full participation in community life through training, technical assistance and related services. OTAC provides current information about services, supports and evidenced-based practices, while supporting development of systems and infrastructures to be implemented for individuals in communities.

People Planning Together (PPT) is a program offered through OTAC. PPT teaches people receiving services to take proactive and leadership roles to plan their life. PPT classes are taught by certified trainers — each of whom experience disability themselves. PPT helps people have a larger role in developing their Individual Service Plans.

County Mental Health Services provide assistance to adults and children with mental illness as well as support for their families. Services include assessments, evaluations, counseling, groups, life skills and symptom management, medications, hospital care and job services.

SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN WITH DEVELOPMENTAL, INTENSIVE BEHAVIORAL AND MEDICAL NEEDS

Children's Intensive In-Home Services (CIIS) serves children living at home, from birth through age 18. There are three CIIS types: medically fragile, intensive behavior and medically involved. Family income is not considered when determining eligibility for any CIIS program. CIIS for medically fragile children is for children with intensive medical needs, who are technology dependent and require nursing care. DD eligibility is not required.

CIIS for intensive behavioral needs provides support services for children who have behaviors that are dangerous to themselves or others. To be eligible, the child must also be DD eligible.

The CIIS medically involved program is for people with a medical condition causing the need for total assistance with all daily living activities. CIIS medically involved program services do not require DD eligibility.

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SUPPORTS FOR FAMILIES

Oregon was the first state to establish the Lifespan Respite Program. State Lifespan Respite Programs help families find respite providers and access respite payment resources. Lifespan Respite Care is a community-based system of accessible respite care services, meant to help families of children or adults with special needs get a "respite" or break from caregiving to restore and strengthen their ability to continue providing care. Eligibility for respite care is not based on finances, but on the needs of the person requiring care.

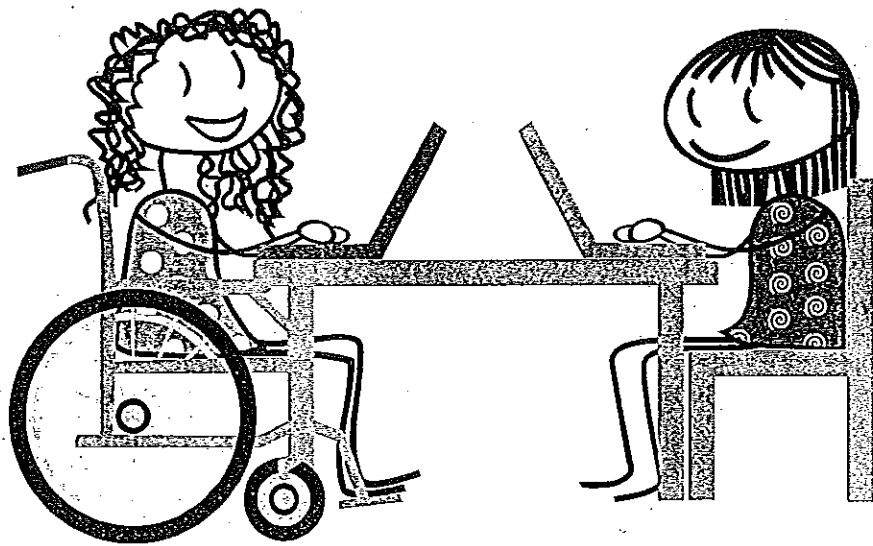
Adaptive & Inclusive Recreation (AIR) services are offered through the City of Portland. These are community-based recreation activities and leisure services for all ages, including dances, bowling, beach trips and summer camps. The AIR Program is one of the top specialized community recreation programs in the country.

Portland State University offers inclusive recreational programs including adaptive climbing, wheelchair basketball, and goalball. PSU's inclusive recreation programs are for any person who wants to try a modified activity.

Special Olympics Oregon (SOOR) provides free sports training and athletic competition for people with cognitive disabilities. SOOR is available to anyone with intellectual disabilities and provides fitness development opportunities and community participation with friends and families. In Oregon, there are monthly events in every region of the state to allow athletes to compete as often as desired. There is no upper age limit, but athletes must be at least 8 years old to participate.

SNAP is the federal food stamp program, officially entitled, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, whose goal is to provide healthy food to low-income households. Children, seniors and people with disabilities comprise about two-thirds of all SNAP participants. To obtain SNAP benefits in Oregon, apply via internet at apps.state.or.us/online-application or at your local county office.

Many services and programs can be specifically tailored to individual needs and those of the individual's family/caregivers. Oregon Helps is a guide to health and social services that help estimate eligibility for 33 programs and assistance organizations, and can be accessed at 21info.org/oregonhelps. Services can help pave a path to success, but navigating the systems and learning to think creatively takes time and practice.



Employment Related Services

EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES is often hard to obtain, especially competitive employment. But training and accommodations may be the only barriers to a fulfilling and successful job. Several agencies work to help break down those barriers, and some of those agencies are summarized here to provide a starting place.

EMPLOYMENT FIRST

All people, including those with disabilities, should have every opportunity to make an informed choice about employment. The Employment First initiative is intended to improve opportunities for individualized community-based employment for Oregonians with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. Employment First is premised on the beliefs that everyone can work, and there is a job somewhere for everyone. Thus, Employment First is creative in providing support and finding jobs for individuals with disabilities. Additionally, Employment First believes communities embrace people who contribute, so their mission to help individuals obtain jobs is also helping those people become part of their community.

OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

Oregon's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRs) helps people with disabilities find and keep employment and independence. To create employment opportunities for people with disabilities, OVRs works directly with the community and businesses. Services offered and used by individuals depend on the unique needs and goals of each person. OVRs services range from assessments to training and job placement services.

OVRs eligibility is for those with a physical or mental disability that makes it difficult to get or keep a job matching their skills, potential and interests. Additionally, to access OVRs services, the person must want to work.

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME AND RED BOOK

Red Book is a general reference tool about Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Red Book has resources to assist youth in transition to adult life. Eligibility for SSI is determined by the definition of disabled under the Social Security Act (SSA). Under the SSA, a person is disabled if they may not be able to engage in any substantial gainful activity because of a medically determinable physical or mental impairment(s) that is expected to result in death or has lasted or is expected to last for a continuous period of at least 12 months. The SSI program makes cash assistance payments to disabled persons who have limited income and resources. SSI employment supports provide a way for people with disabilities to work and receive an SSI check.

There is a separate definition of a disability for children under 18 who are applying for SSI. Children with certain disabilities also qualify for SSI. The list of disabilities that qualify children changes periodically. However, once a child is medically qualified for SSI, they will be able to continue to collect SSI even if their condition is taken off of the list of accepted disabilities.

ACHIEVING A BETTER LIFE EXPERIENCE ACT (ABLE)

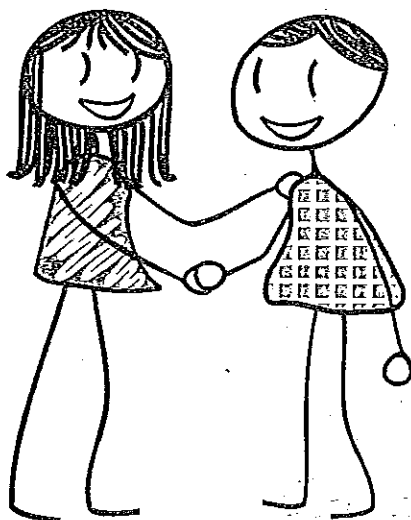
The ABLE Act is a federal law that helps create new savings plans for people with disabilities. The Act provides the opportunity to establish a deferred savings account to help maintain independence and contribute to the community. Each state must establish and operate an ABLE program. Oregon became the 31st state to enact the ABLE Act in August 2015. The ABLE Act's intent is to allow individuals with disabilities and their families the opportunity to contribute to a tax-exempt savings account. The account is designated for specific purposes such as maintaining health, independence and quality of life. Since each state must independently establish and implement the ABLE Act, the implementation varies from state to state.

What exactly does the ABLE Act do? The ABLE Act amends Section 529 of the Internal Revenue Service Code of 1986 to regulate tax-advantaged savings accounts for individuals with disabilities. The bill is intended to supplement, but not replace, benefits provided through private insurances, the Medicaid program, the Supplemental Security Income program, the beneficiary's employment earnings and other sources.

To be eligible for an ABLE plan a person must be disabled before the age of 26. Receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), qualifying for SSI or obtaining a disability certification following IRS rules are all acceptable ways to prove a disability. Approximately 5.8 million Americans are eligible for an ABLE plan. Friends and family may individually contribute up to \$14,000 a year to an ABLE plan without tax penalties. People can use money saved via the ABLE plan for a large number of purposes, including employment training and support, education, housing, transportation, assistive technology, health and wellness, financial management and funeral and burial expenses.

GET STARTED ACCESSING SERVICES

As with all agency services, much patience is needed. When starting this process, be sure to allow extra time, and be prepared to have patience and perseverance. Don't hesitate to make that extra phone call or send an additional email to follow up and make sure your loved one is getting the needed services for which he or she is eligible. ♦



Diane Wiscarson of Wiscarson Law has helped thousands of Oregon and Washington families obtain appropriate services and placements for their special needs children. Read more at www.wiscarsonlaw.com

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Contact Information

Vocational Rehabilitation Offices

[www.oregon.gov/DHS/
Offices/Pages/Vocational-
Rehabilitation.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/Offices/Pages/Vocational-Rehabilitation.aspx)

Oregon
(503) 945-5880

Clackamas County
(971) 673-6130

Multnomah County
Central Portland
(971) 673-2355

East Portland
(971) 673-5858

North Portland
(971) 673-3055

Washington County
(503) 227-2500

OREGON SYMPHONY PRESENTS



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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2016, 7:30 PM

Amy Andersson, conductor
Pacific Youth Choir

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