

A Guide for Parents or Guardians of Persons with Special Needs

| What if | Do These |
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| Your child is diagnosed with intellectual disability (ID) or pervasive developmental disabilities (PDD) | Join a support group. |
| | Put your child’s name on Medicaid Waiver Programs interest lists |
| | Start record keeping. |
| | Keep minimal financial resources under your disabled child’s name, if you think s/he needs SSI in the future. |
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| When special needs child is | Who to Contact |
| Birth – 3 | ECI, Early Childhood Intervention, provides services on a sliding fee scale. For information about ECI or to refer a child, call Health and Human Services(HHS) at 1-877-787-8999 or visit www.hhs.texas.gov>early childhood intervention |
| Age 3 - 22 | Your local public school system will be your child's primary provider |
| | Under “The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act” (IDEA), a qualifying child is entitled to “free and appropriate public education”. This public education entitlement program ends when the qualifying child turns 22. |
| Birth – 18 | You can also inquire your local authority (such as the Harris Center or Texana Center) about respite care. However, before your child turns 18, there may be co-pay for the service. |
| > Age 18 | Family income no longer plays a role for programs available at your local authority. If your child has not already been seen by the local authority, take him/her now. Keep in mind that, unless your child has a court appointed guardian, s/he is considered a legally competent adult at age 18 and must be present to sign all forms and give consent for testing and services. |

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| > Age 22 | Your child ages out of school. If DID determines that your child qualifies for service, your local center becomes your child’s primary provider. In addition, contact Texas Workforce Commission(TWC) at 1-800-628-5115 for help in getting employment, if your child can do some work, even if supervision is necessary. |
| > Age 22 | Once your child is on ICF-IDD or Medicaid waiver program, your service provider becomes your primary provider, rather than your local center. |
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| When special needs child is | Things To Remember |
| Age 14 - 22 | Transition plan begins at public school at age 14. Your child is eligible for transition service until graduation from public school. |
| Before age 18 | You should request a “Determination of Intellectual Disabilities” (DID) be done on your child at your local authority. |
| Age 18 | Your child is considered an adult. Legally, your parental rights end unless you acquire guardianship. The application process can begin at age 17 ½. Legally, your financial responsibilities toward your child end. You can apply Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid for your child. |
| Age 22 | Remember, your child ages out of school system when s/he turns 22. Most adult services are not entitlements. You need to start thinking about a day program to keep your child active during the day. The better programs all have a waiting list. You should visit day programs and place your child’s name on the waiting list early. |
| Age 26 | Contact your medical insurance or the human resource department of your employer if you want to keep your child with special needs on your medical insurance policy. |