



## Parents often ask?

### **I hate the label DD. Do I really need to be signed up with DDD?**

By getting a screening to be part of DD you may have the opportunity through the DD Assessment for your child to get services. Services from Birth through Life include residential, employment, therapies, financial help, etc. DDD services are voluntary and eligibility is not dependant on income. A person may apply to be eligible with DDD at any age. If a person who experiences a disability has an unmet need that DDD has a service to provide, then it may make sense to pursue eligibility. The number of people eligible also shows the legislature and policy makers how much of what type of support is needed for forecasting and budget development.

### **Even if I apply for DD services, I've heard there aren't any services available?**

Services do change year to year and "slots" do open up for different services. It is important to be enrolled and to put your child's name on the waiting list for the chance of a service opening up. Some services are available now depending on your child's need and urgency. It is important for individuals and/or their advocates to contact the CRM if a need arises. DDD has something like 42 different services and many of the popular ones have waiting lists, however, it is important for individuals and their families to maintain contact with the case manager and to share what is going on and what is needed for the person to maintain their health and safety. The case manager is a tool that is best used when contacted and kept in the loop. Another role of the case manager is to also provide non-mandatory case management services which includes providing information, advocating, etc.

### **Once I am on a waiting list what do I need to do? Is it worth it?**

Every year during your child's assessment, ask to be put on the waiting list. DO NOT assume you are automatically put on the list year to year. Even though some families have been on the waiting list for years slots for different services DO open up. I talked with a family the other day that has been on the waiting list for 12 years and has just got on Individual and Family Support Program. Staying on the list indefinitely may seem pointless but advocates are always pushing for slots to become open. GET ON THE LIST!

### **Who is my DD case manager and why do they change?**

You should know who your case manager is even if you do not receive any services. The Department of Developmental Disabilities in Olympia often changes caseloads for case managers which is why you get moved around. Sometimes case managers serve only certain age groups or certain kind of services (like state only or only waivers). Depending on what your services are you may have to change case managers. DDD also has a large case manager turn over which adds to the complication along with their LARGE caseload. Keep your case manager number/s handy so you can call them with questions and continue to ask about new services as they come available. Don't hesitate to ask.



## What is a DD Assessment and how often does my child get one?

DSHS developed a standardized assessment process that promotes consistency and accuracy in measuring the support needs of clients in all parts of WA State using proven computer-based technology. The state has a goal to provide similar services across the state. Through this assessment DD case managers are able to measure the support needs of clients. In the long run, this information also allows legislators to know the data in our state for services needed. The DD assessment typically occurs when a person is assessed for eligibility for a specific service. The assessment is reviewed at least one time annually.

## There are a lot of parts to the assessment—what are they?

There are three modules to the assessment:

### 1. Support Assessment

Children birth through 15 years of age  
 Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) 16 years and older  
 Acuity Scale for Protective Supervision, Caregiver Status, Daily Living, Behavior, Medical, Interpersonal Support, Mobility, Respite, and programs/services component.

2. Service Level Assessment—only administered when a client is approved or being considered by DDD for a paid service. Contains: Medicaid/Waiver Personal Care Assessment, Employment Support Assessment tool, DDD Sleep Assessment tool, and Mental Health Assessment tool.

3. Individual Support Plan—only administered when a client is approved by DDD for a paid service. This process creates a written plan.

## How often are assessments done?

They are administered annually but a parent or guardian may ask for an additional assessment at any time when there is a change in support needs. For instance, if an individual has a broken leg and needs more support to manage daily living. Call your case manager.

## What is an IFSP?

When your child is diagnosed before the age of 3 they can be involved with an Early Intervention Program commonly known as Birth to Three. Between the ages of Birth to Three services are provided through a Family Resource Coordinator (we have four in Jefferson County) of your choosing. They help a team of professionals (Physical, Occupational, Special Educator, Speech, Parent/s) develop an Individual Family Support Plan that helps to identify the child's needs and supports.

## What happens to services at age 3?

The Birth to Three services lasts only until age three. Then the child *ages out* or *transitions* to Pre-school. When a child ages out they now will get services through your local school system. Sometimes Birth to Three service is delivered through the school system so transition can be easier—but this will vary depending on how/where you get services.



### **What is an IEP and what age does that start?**

IEP is an *Individual Education Plan* that starts at the age of three in the school system. It is plan that is developed with a team of professionals that include the child and the parent/s. Parents may invite anyone they choose to attend an IEP meeting. You will have many IEP meetings until your child leaves school at age 18 or 21.

### **When should we start putting transition “employment” activities in my child’s IEP?**

It is important to start thinking about the transition program for your child at age 14. Jefferson County provides a transition guide, a transition network/council, and information. Attend training or meet with the county DD Coordinator for more information and maintain contact with your CRM as well through this process.

### **My child is almost 18, when should I start the guardianship process?**

You should start the guardianship process 3 months prior to your child turning 18. After age 18 the child is considered a legal adult and parents do not have rights for making any decision concerning their child. Scenarios to consider:

- If you child ends up in the hospital you will not be able to make medical decisions.
- If your child agrees to credit cards by mail or phone you cannot revoke the agreement (you could if you were a guardian)

### **Can I still get guardianship after 18?**

Yes.

### **Full or partial guardianship?**

Each individual with a disability is unique with unique abilities and needs. Special consideration should be paid to the potential effect this decision may have on the individual with a disability. Every individual with a disability who is able to make decisions for him self should retain all his rights to make decisions over his personal and financial decisions. However, often individuals need assistance making decisions to some degree. There are options for full or partial guardianships.

### **Can my child graduate from high school at 18 and still get the same services as if they stayed until there are 21?**

No, students may elect to stay in highs school from age 18-21 and be part of the “transition” program focused on life skills, job training, and employment. The goal is at 21 for students to graduate with a job if possible or be ready for employment services. If a student leaves school at 18 there are no employment supports until they turn 21 and can work with Dept. of Vocational Rehabilitation. DVR may chose not to provide employment services if they determine a person will need long term support to keep their job and funding for this kind of support is not available which it won’t be for folks DD eligible under the age of 21.



### **At age 21 what adult services will my child get?**

At age 21 the “yellow school bus” doesn’t show up anymore. Many young adults who do not have job coaches or employment sit at home isolated and bored. Unfortunately unless a person has a job and an active life there is not a lot of things to do. Some individuals participate in Gathering Place a few times a week, Special Olympics, or attend the weekly dance at The Arc. It’s important to start building a life beyond school through your community.

### **What does life after 21 look like?**

Life should look as typical for someone with a developmental disability as someone without a disability: Job, place to live, school, friends, community (church, volunteering), activities and hobbies, love, and family. It is important to build on all these things while a child is growing up whenever possible.

### **Am I on a waiver?**

Many families do not know if they are on a waiver or not or what services their child is on. Call your case manager to find out if you are on a waiver, on a waiting list, or the name of the service you are getting (or not).

### **What is a waiver and can I get one?**

There are 4 kinds of waivers: Basic, Basic +, Core, and Community Protection. Waivers are services that are financially matched by the Federal Government. “State only” services have no Federal match—services are only paid with state funds. People get put on waivers based on need and/or availability (slots that become open). Overall it is very difficult to get put on a waiver.

### **Who and what does a DD County Coordinator do?**

Each county has a Developmental Disabilities Coordinator. Each DD County Coordinator receives a budget from the Division of Developmental Disabilities to use for services in the county including: education materials, speakers/workshops, funding for programs like People First, P2P, Parent Coalition, training for providers, employment supports, etc. The DD Coordinator continually works to educate and enhance services in their county. They typically work directly with the DD Advisory Board. Parents are welcome to attend those meetings.

### **If you would like any more detailed information regarding these questions—**

please contact The Arc of Kitsap & Jefferson Counties at (360) 377-3473.

