

Top Ten Things Parents Need to Know

When You Suspect Your Child has a Delay Under age 5:

Contact the following programs for information and possible assessment for services which are free of charge:

Birth to Age 3: Infants/Toddler Program: 240-777-3997 / **Ages 3-5:** Preschool Education Program (PEP): 301-279-2016

For more resources ages birth through 21, please see Montgomery County Public Schools Department of Special Education <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/special-education/>

Deaf/Hard of Hearing: 301-670-2250 Speech/Language: 301-649-8085 Autism: 301-593-3720

Vision: 301-670-2250 Physical Disabilities: 301-657-4959 Emotional Disabilities: 301-279-4967

If your child has been determined to have a significant developmental disability:

1. **By age 5:** To be eligible for MetroAccess, you must be at least 5 years old and have a disability as defined by the ADA, and be unable as a result of your disability to utilize fixed route transportation such as Metrobus or Metrorail or need to use a ramp or wheelchair lift to board or exit a public transit vehicle. For eligibility and other ridership rules, contact WMATA at 202-962-2700, Option #8, <http://www.wmata.com/accessibility/>
2. **By age 13, make certain that there are no financial assets** in your child's name in excess of \$2,000.
3. **By age 14**, apply for **Developmental Disability Administration (DDA)** services at <http://dda.dhmf.maryland.gov>
4. **At age 18** apply to both **Medical Assistance and SSI** (Supplemental Social Security Income). Apply for Supplemental Security through www.ssa.gov and Medicaid through the Maryland Health Partners. DDA application: <http://dda.dhmf.maryland.gov/SitePages/howtoapply.aspx>
5. Most **private health insurance** companies will allow you to continue insurance indefinitely with proper documentation by a physician, but you must **different companies have different requirements as to when they should be notified. Sometimes it is years before they turn 21. Find Out.**
6. There are special procedures for students with developmental disabilities who **transition from school at age 21**. Parents should work with their transition teachers to understand the process. **Visit multiple provider agencies with the graduate at least the summer before graduation (or your 21st birthday)** so that you can pick a provider of choosing.
7. Individuals who are DDA eligible may be entitled depending upon DDA eligibility status to a **Coordinator for Community Services** whose job is to help the individual, and their families, navigate the system. You may choose the organization that will provide this service. DDA has this information
8. There are many different services individuals with developmental disabilities may require, and may be entitled to. They may change over time. **Individuals, and their families, who are receiving DDA funded services may request changes in levels of service at any time.**
9. Remember that there is a difference between services for children and adults. **Federal law states children are entitled to certain rights/services up until age 21. Adults are eligible for services.** There are long waiting lists for many services. So when you apply for any services, **do not minimize the intensity of needs your child and family have.** Remember the worst day you have lived through and communicate this honestly.
10. **Become involved** - you can advocate best for your child when you know the resources that are entitled to and how to get them. Every disability has a parent support group. Learn from those that have gone before you, then help others who will come along after you.

If over age 21: Contact Developmental Disabilities Administration;
Southern Regional Office (301)362-5100 <http://dda.dhmf.maryland.gov>