



KidsVoice

**Advocating for Children
with Special Medical Needs:
The Resource Flipbook**

THE RESOURCE FLIPBOOK

Conceived by a multidisciplinary group of professionals in Allegheny County’s child welfare system, this flipbook is intended as a tool for those who touch the lives of medically needy dependent children. While some of this information is specific to “court-active” children, much is applicable to a wide group of children with special medical needs.

For updates, please visit www.kidsvoice.org and click on “The Resource Flipbook.”

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EARLY INTERVENTION

(Birth to 3)

Qualifying children, ages birth to three, are entitled to free therapies (occupational therapy, physical therapy, developmental therapy, etc.) provided in-home or community settings. These services are coordinated through Alliance for Infants and Toddlers, Inc. (Alliance).

How to obtain Early Intervention Therapies

Anyone can refer a child to Alliance if they have a concern that a child has a developmental delay and/or would like to request a developmental evaluation by calling 412-885-6000.

Parental consent is required to enroll a child in Alliance services

Alliance will attempt to reach the birth parent to have a consent signed. The birth parent may opt not to be involved with early intervention services, and agree to have another person sign in his or her place. If the parents' whereabouts are unknown, Alliance will appoint an educational surrogate. If the child is court-active, the child's KidsVoice attorney may ask the court to appoint an educational guardian. A birth parent has a right to refuse Alliance services for his or her child.

What characteristics may qualify a child for early intervention services?

A child exhibiting the following characteristics may be eligible for early intervention therapies:

- Diagnosis or condition with a high probability of leading to a developmental delay
- Identified 25% delay in one or more areas of development

A child with the following identifiers is eligible for tracking:

- Birth weight less than 3 lbs, 5 oz. (1,500 grams)
- Cared for in the hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
- Born to a chemically dependent mother
- Involved with CYF
- Has a dangerous level of lead poisoning

What to expect upon calling Alliance

An Alliance service coordinator will make an initial home visit to meet the child and caretakers, and determine what services the child may be eligible for. At this visit, the appropriate signatures will be obtained. Service coordinators can make referrals for family supports like respite care and community activities.

If requested by the caretaker, the child will receive a developmental evaluation. If the child qualifies, an Individualized Family Service Plan will be written to identify goals and the services that will be provided to meet those goals. If no therapies are needed, Alliance may track the child if he or she meets the tracking criteria. Services for the child and family will continue with periodic review and/or evaluations.

Transition Planning

Services can continue until age three if necessary. As the child nears age three, transition planning will occur to determine the appropriate next steps.

EARLY INTERVENTION

(Preschool Ages 3-5)

Qualifying children, ages three to approximately five, are entitled to attend a free therapeutic preschool program in their school district.

Which children qualify for early intervention preschool?

Those with a 25% delay in one or more of the developmental areas (cognitive, gross motor, fine motor, language/speech, personal/social or adaptive) AND who need specially designed instruction.

How to obtain early intervention preschool services.

If a child is involved with Alliance for Infants, his or her service coordinator will facilitate the transition to early intervention preschool services.

If a child lives in the City of Pittsburgh school district, contact:

Dr. Janice Matthew, Supervisor, 412-323-3960 at the Pittsburgh Public Schools Early Intervention Program.

If a child lives outside the City of Pittsburgh school district, contact:

Allegheny Intermediate Unit DART/ Early Intervention program's central office at 412-394-5736.

What to expect upon calling the Pittsburgh Public Schools Early Intervention Program or DART.

To determine whether the child may be eligible for early intervention preschool services, the child will be screened at one of four sites around the

county or the early intervention program can be provided with records from a physician that point to a developmental delay. Parental permission is not needed to conduct the screening.

If it is determined the child shows a delay, a parent must sign a permission form for the child to be evaluated. If the parents' whereabouts are unknown, the early intervention program may be able to appoint a surrogate. Or, if the child is court-active, the child's KidsVoice attorney may seek the appointment of an educational guardian. If the parent refuses to sign a permission to evaluation, no evaluation can take place.

Once the permission form is signed, the child should be evaluated within 60 calendar days. An Individual Educational Plan (IEP) meeting will be held to develop the child's plan within 30 calendar days after the Evaluation Report (ER) is issued. The child's IEP-based instruction must begin 14 days after the plan is approved by the child's parents, surrogate, or educational guardian. The Pittsburgh Public Schools Early Intervention Program and DART provide transportation to their school sites.

Services range widely from home-based instruction to enrollment in an early intervention public preschool classroom to enrollment in an approved private school. Children in early intervention preschool must be re-evaluated every two years, and their IEP must be reviewed every year.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Eligible children with physical, emotional, or mental disabilities are entitled to a “free and appropriate public education” designed to meet their unique learning needs. Special education and related services should be provided in the least restrictive environment, maximizing contact with regular education peers. Students may receive special education instruction until they reach age 21.

Children with developmental delays from birth to approximately age five are eligible for Early Intervention services (see Early Intervention sections).

Accessing special education – the first steps. Request an evaluation.

To determine whether a child is eligible for special education services, the child must be evaluated. To request an evaluation, send a dated letter to the principal of the child’s school. *Unless the child has been appointed a surrogate or an educational guardian, the biological parent must sign this request. To find out whether a court-active child may be appointed an educational guardian, call the child’s KidsVoice attorney at 412-391-3100.* The Evaluation Report (ER) must be completed within 60 calendar days from the date of this letter.

Following up on an Evaluation Report – The IEP team meeting

Once the Evaluation Report is completed, if the child is found to be eligible, an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) team meeting will be scheduled. The IEP team meeting should include the child’s parents or educational guardian,

the student (if appropriate), regular and special education teachers, and a school district representative. At this meeting, an IEP, which is a plan listing learning goals for the child and the related services that will be provided to meet these goals, will be written. The child's eligibility in an Extended School Year (ESY) program should be considered (see pg. 8). And, if the child is 14 or older, a transition plan should be included (see pg. 23).

If the child's caregiver agrees with the IEP, he or she will sign it. This IEP must be completed within 30 calendar days after the Evaluation Report is issued.

Implementing the IEP

The child must receive all of the programs and services listed in the IEP, beginning no later than 10 school days after the IEP is completed and signed. The IEP must be updated at least every year and the child must be re-evaluated every two years.

Disciplining Special Education Students

The school district must take into account a student's disability when evaluating misbehavior and subsequent punishment. School punishment is limited for children with disabilities. A student with a disability other than retardation cannot be suspended longer than 10 school days in a row, or 15 days in a school year. A suspension beyond these limits is a "change in placement" and the school must notify the parent or educational guardian and get approval for the "change in placement."

For students with mental retardation, any suspension is considered a “change in placement” and the school must notify the parent or educational guardian and get their approval prior to instituting the suspension.

Private Schools

If the IEP team determines that a child’s needs cannot be met in a public school, the IEP team should choose a private school where the child will receive an appropriate education. The child’s school district must pay for enrollment in, and transportation to, the private school.

Extended School Year (ESY) Programs

An ESY program is continuing instruction when school is otherwise closed i.e.; summer vacation or weekends). A student may qualify for ESY services if, by taking a vacation from school, he or she is in danger of losing gains made during the school year. A student’s need for ESY services should be discussed at the annual IEP conference. For students identified as autistic, severely mentally retarded, multiply disabled, severely emotionally disturbed, or with more than one disability, the school should hold an ESY meeting by the end of February. A decision should be made by March 31st and parents or caregivers must be given written notice.

The Right to Disagree with School Officials

Federal and state law gives children and their caretakers the right to disagree with school officials and provides specific ways to address these disagreements. These processes include mediation, pre-hearing conferences, and “due process”

hearings concerning a child's evaluation, program or special education placement.

For more information

The Education Law Center publishes comprehensive guides to the special education system. Download *The Right to Special Education in Pennsylvania: A Guide for Parents and Advocates* (2009 edition) and *Pennsylvania Parent Guide to Special Education for School Age Children*. The Disabilities Rights Network can provide legal assistance. Call 800-692-7443 for assistance.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education Bureau of Special Education runs the Special Education Consult Line, a toll-free help line, at 800-879-2301 (Voice/TTY/TDD).

If a court-active child is having a problem with special education services, contact the Educational Specialist on the Mental Health Children's Team at 412-350-4456 or, contact the child's KidsVoice attorney at 412-391-3100.

FREE HEALTH CARE

What free health care coverage may court-active children be entitled to?

Medical Assistance (MA) is free health insurance for low-income children and some adults. Court-active children who qualify for MA in Allegheny County are enrolled in *HealthChoices*, Pennsylvania's managed health care system.

Which court-active children receive MA?

Virtually all children residing in CYF-approved foster homes or licensed facilities automatically receive MA. All children in Juvenile Probation Office (JPO) placements are eligible for MA.

Children in unapproved foster homes will get MA for 60 days, but then will be disenrolled. To enroll a child in MA, the caregiver should apply at the local county assistance office with a court order and proof of residency. To find the nearest county assistance office or for more information on enrolling children in MA, call the DPW Welfare Helpline at 800-692-7462.

Court-active children living with their parents do not qualify for MA enrollment through CYF. The parent will have the responsibility of obtaining health care for the child, and may qualify for MA. For help in determining MA eligibility, call the DPW Welfare Helpline at 800-692-7462.

What is the “medical necessity” standard?

Medical necessity governs what medical benefits and services a child covered by a *HealthChoices* HMO will receive. This standard provides for unlimited services, as long as the child's *HealthChoices* affiliated health care provider finds that

the service is medically necessary and the managed care organization approves the request.

Managed care plans under *HealthChoices*

There are three physical health managed care plans:

Unison/MedPlus

800-414-9025 special needs unit 877-844-8848

UPMC Health Plan, Inc./UPMC For You

800-286-4242 special needs unit +option 2, then option 2

Gateway

800-392-1147 special needs unit 800-642-3550 + option 1

There is one behavioral health plan:

Community Care Behavioral Health Organization (CCBHO) 800-553-7499 - Member Services Line 888-251-2224 - Providers and Claims

HealthChoices Special Needs Units

Each HealthChoices HMO has a special needs unit to coordinate care for children with special medical needs. Special needs units are generally staffed by social workers and RNs who:

- Manage specific cases e.g.; involving pediatric nurses, HIV-positive members, etc.).
- Assist members having trouble navigating the system.
- Make referrals to specialists.

Federal Health Care programs for individuals with special needs:

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

A financial benefit for children and adults with disabilities.

Who qualifies:

Children under 18 who demonstrate a long-term physical or mental impairment resulting in a severe functional limitation. Individuals over 18 who demonstrate a long-term physical or mental impairment that prevents the person from doing substantial work. For children in CYF-approved placements, CYF is the SSI payee.

To obtain:

Caregivers of children in unpaid placements may apply at the local social security office. To locate the nearest social security office call 800-772-1213 or search www.socialsecurity.gov.

Medicare

Health insurance for individuals over 65 and children with specific illnesses, regardless of income.

Who qualifies:

Eligible children must have continuing dialysis for permanent kidney failure or be in need of a kidney transplant or a Diagnosis of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease).

To obtain:

Apply at the local social security office. Call 800-772-1213 or search www.socialsecurity.gov.

Pediatric Child Care

Child's Way 412-365-6065 provides daytime nursing care, Monday through Friday, for medically fragile children ages birth to three. The medical services cost is covered by most health plans. The child care fee is the parents' or guardians' responsibility. TANF and Child Care Works payments for day care are accepted.

Having trouble obtaining medically necessary health care or services? Been denied medically necessary services?

If the child is in a CYF-approved placement, contact the CYF Managed Care Unit 412-350-6639. The Managed Care Unit acts as a liaison between CYF-active children, their caregivers, and the *HealthChoices* HMOs.

Contact the child's PCP to request an effective alternative medical treatment that may be covered by the HMO.

Personally contact the HMOs' special needs units (see above for phone numbers).

If the child is court-active, contact the child's KidsVoice attorney at 412-391-3100. The attorney can determine whether filing a grievance with the *HealthChoices* HMO or a Fair Hearing request with the Department of Public Welfare might help remedy the problem.

MENTAL HEALTH

There are several ways to access mental health services:

If a child is in a paid placement through Allegheny County Children, Youth and Families or Juvenile Probation, regardless of the county in which the children resides, call CCBHO at 800-553-7499.

All children residing in out-of-home paid placements have mental health coverage through Community Care Behavioral Health Organization (CCBHO). To find out the mental health services CCBHO providers offer, call and ask to speak with a Kids Team member.

Request MH case management through Allegheny County's MH/MR Service Coordination Units. Children with intensive mental health needs may benefit from the assistance of a case manager. A Service Coordination Unit can help coordinate a child's mental health services. A child does not need to be a member of CCBHO to access this service.

There are different levels of case management; all are free:

Administrative Case Manager (ACM):

Sees the child as needed.

Resource Coordinator (RC):

Sees the child at least once per month.

Intensive Case Manager (ICM):

Available to a child with three services in place.
Sees the child at least two times per month.

To request a case manager, call any Service Coordination Unit. Allegheny County Service Coordination Units are listed on pages 16-17. Ask to speak with an MH Children's Case Manager to schedule an intake interview.

Consent for Treatment/Release of Information.

At the intake interview, the mental health professional will require a parental consent if the child is under 14. If the child is under 14 and a parent is unavailable, the child's KidsVoice attorney can seek the appointment of a medical guardian. If the child is 14 or older either the child, or the parent or legal guardian, may sign the consent.

Make a referral to a MH service provider.

Anyone can refer a child to a mental health service provider as long as the provider is affiliated with the child's health insurance. The person referring the child should call the provider's intake department and be prepared to complete an intake form. The provider will then link the child to the appropriate service coordination unit.

Call the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services referral line at 877-356-5355. Run by the DPW, this hotline provides answers to questions related to mental health services.

Call the county MH Liaison

If you have problems accessing MH services for a CYF or JPO active child, call County MH Liaison Kristen Hughes at 412-350-2431 or consult the Web at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/obh.aspx.

The Resolve Crisis Network answers 24 hours per day for emergency mental health counseling and access to mobile mental health assistance 888-7YOU-CAN or 888-796-8226. Call 412-350-4457 if you are not sure which agency is closest to a certain area or for information / consultation about 302 involuntary commitments to the hospital.

Complete Listing of Allegheny County Service Coordination Units:

Milestone

412-243-3400

Administrative Office:

600 Ross Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15221

www.aemhmr.org

www.milestonecentersinc.org

Chartiers MH/MR Center, Inc.

412-221-3302

437 Railroad Street

Bridgeville, PA 15017

www.chartierscenter.org

Family Services of Western PA

888-222-4200

310 Central City Plaza

New Kensington, PA 15068

www.fswp.org

Mercy Behavioral Health

412-323-4500

North - 412 East Commons

Pittsburgh, PA 15212

www.mercybehavioral.org

Mercy Behavioral Health

412-488-4040 or 877-637-2924

South - 330 S. 9th Street

Pittsburgh, PA 15203

www.mercybehavioral.org

**Mon-Yough Community Services,
MH Outpatient**

412-675-8530

331 Shaw Avenue

McKeesport, PA 15132

www.myics.org

Staunton Clinic

412-749-7330

111 Hazel Lane, Suite 300

Sewickley, PA 15143

www.stauntonclinic.com

Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR

412-351-0222

723 Braddock Avenue

Braddock, PA 15104

www.tcv.net

Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic

412-624-1000 or 877-624-4100

3811 O'Hara Street

Pittsburgh, PA 15213

<http://wpic.upmc.com>

MENTAL RETARDATION

In Allegheny County, the gatekeeper to mental retardation services for children age three and older is the Allegheny County Office of Mental Retardation/ Developmental Disabilities. A child with mental retardation must be registered with the intake office to access services. Call 412-350-7285 to get started.

- 412-253-1250 (intake/registration) and MR/DD crisis line 412-350-3695, fax 412-350-3316
- All intake must go through the County Office of MR/DD

Call before a child's 22nd birthday!

It is critical that youth are classified as MR before age 22. If not, they will not be eligible for services through the MR system as adults.

Determining eligibility

Parental consent is required to access education and medical records needed to verify the child's MR status. If biological parents are unable or unwilling to sign the consents and the child is court-active, contact the child's KidsVoice attorney for assistance.

- Children three to six must have a diagnosis of a 25% delay in two or more areas of functioning.
- Individuals six to twelve enrolled in school need an IQ of 70 or below and a MR diagnosis mild, moderate, severe or profound.

Meeting the client

Once eligibility is verified, intake staff will meet with the child and caretaker. The intake worker will develop a Prioritization of Urgency of Needs for Services (PUNS) Plan. The intake worker will also describe the Independent Support Coordination Units and ask the caretaker to choose one.

Allegheny County Independent Support Coordination Unit for MR services:

ISC units

Family Links

416 Olive Street

McKeesport, PA 15132

412-672-8632

Mon Valley Supports Coordination Unit

Rankin Christian Center

230 Third Street

Rankin, PA 15104

412-464-1545

Staunton Clinic

300 Bilmar Drive, Suite 240

Pittsburgh, PA 15205

412-928-8687

Independent Supports Coordinator (ISC)

Once an Independent Supports Coordination Unit is selected, an Independent Supports Coordinator (ISC) is assigned. As a liaison to the human services system, the ISC develops an Individual Support Plan (ISP) for the child and helps coordinate, monitor, and locate services.

What is a Waiver?

A Waiver is a program that allows the use of Medicaid dollars to fund services for MR individuals in the home and community. The office of Mental Retardation operates two waivers that apply to individuals under the age of 21: Person/Family Directed Support Waiver and Infant/Toddlers and Families Waiver. Call DPW at 888-565-9435 (ask specifically about waivers and you will be transferred) or consult an ISC for eligibility requirements.

Dissatisfied with a child's Independent Supports Coordinator?

Call the child's Independent Supports Coordination Unit and ask to speak with the unit supervisor. The unit supervisor will assign the child a new Independent Supports Coordinator within the unit. Or, the child's service provision can be transferred to another Independent Supports Coordination Unit.

Other resources for MR individuals:

Achieva

412-995-5000 or 888-272-7229

Advocacy, education, residential services, early intervention, respite care, summer camp, financial planning, and recreational activities

Chartiers Community Mental Health and Retardation Center

412-221-3302 ext. 187

Recreation for MR teens

Easter Seals of Western Pennsylvania

412-281-7244 or 800-587-3257

School-to-work programs for MR adolescents ages 14-21

McGuire Memorial

724-843-3400 ext. 106

Day school for MR children ages 3-21

Sharpe Visions, Inc.

Contact Kim Love at 412-456-2144 ext. 112

Community supports services, respite care, summer camp, and recreational activities

Verland Foundation

212 Iris Road, Sewickley, PA 15143

412-741-0607

Pre-vocational training and day programs for youth 18 and over

www.verland.org

Wraparound and MH services for MR children

For children residing in out-of-home paid placements, call Community Care Behavioral Health Organization at 800-553-7499 to speak to a Kids Team member. Or, see the Mental Health section of this flipbook.

Residential placements

If a child's needs are so great that living in a foster or group home is not feasible, Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF/MR) are residential living programs that provide medically related care for MR individuals.

ICF/ MR within four hours of Pittsburgh:

Allegheny Valley School

412-299-7777

McGuire Memorial Home

724-843-3400

Skills Essential

814-238-3245

Valley Community Services

724-547-0980 ext. 11

The Verland Foundation

412-741-2375

For more information visit:

www.county.allegheny.pa.us/dhs

www.dpw.state.pa.us

www.helpinpa.state.pa.us

or call the Special Kids Network at 800-986-4550

INDEPENDENT LIVING

Independent Living (IL) services, geared toward helping secure employment, post-secondary education, and successful management of adult responsibilities, must be provided to all youth in care who are ages 16 and above. 42 U.S.C. § 675 (1) (D). Youth with disabilities cannot be denied IL services because they have a disability or impairment.

IL Plans are an important part of Family Service Plans (FSP)

Federal law requires that each youth in care, aged 16 and over, must have an IL component to their Family Service Plan. The IL section should address how the teen will be provided with information to supplement their skills in these areas:

Education

- Vocational and career services
- Physical and mental health care
- Housing
- Relationships with caring adults
- Knowledge of community resources and public benefits/services
- Expertise in Daily Living Skills

Transition Plans: An important part of a special education student's IEP.

Every child in a special education program must be provided with transition services beginning at age 14. These transition services should be coordinated with the child's IL services so that they are mutually reinforcing. By age 14, the student's IEP by state law must include a statement of transition service needs, focusing on the child's course of study. By age 14, the IEP must include a transition plan (a statement of needed transition services) including the agency responsible for providing the service.

More information about transition can be found at www.elc-pa.org (under fact sheet entitled *Transition to Adult Life for Children with Disabilities*) and www.pattan.k12.pa.us (click on "secondary transition" under "evidence based practices.")

Besides the educational system, independent living service provision and discharge planning may involve coordination with the following agencies:

- Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 412-392-4950
- Office of Mental Health. Call a Service Coordination Unit (see pages 16-17)
- Office of Mental Retardation 412-350-4387
- Social Security Administration 800-772-1213

How are IL services provided?

Allegheny County provides several different independent living resources to teens in care:

Non residential Services: IL services are taught to teens in the home and community.

Residential Placements: Participants live in an IL facility and receive IL services.

Community Resources:

GED preparation, training for a vocational career, computer skills classes, parenting, etc.

A dependent teen may remain in foster care beyond age 18, under certain conditions. Dependent youth are entitled to remain in care beyond age 18, and until age 21, if the youth:

1. was adjudicated dependent before reaching the age of 18 years; and
2. is in a course of instruction or treatment; and
3. asks the court to retain jurisdiction before 18th birthday. 42 Pa.C.S. § 6302. A hearing is required to close a dependency case.

A youth cannot be discharged from care without a hearing. 42 Pa. C.S. § 6351.

Discharge planning should begin well ahead of time. If a youth has needs related to mental health or mental retardation, transition planning should involve accessing services in the mental health and mental retardation system. Services should be arranged prior to the youth's discharge from foster care. With systems, like these, that often have waiting lists for services, a referral is not sufficient discharge planning.

CYF should present a discharge plan to the court before the older youth's case is closed. The plan should include:

- Education and employment
- Stable source of income
- Stable housing

- Health and mental health care
- Health insurance coverage
- Connection with family and/or caring adults
- Connection with community resources

Discharge plans that do not indicate a stable and maintainable source of housing or simply refer a youth to a shelter should be rejected as not meeting a youth's permanency goal.

IL services do not automatically end when a teen's court case closes. If a teen's juvenile court case closes, the teen may self-refer to IL services. If a teen is enrolled in a nonresidential IL program at case closure, the teen may remain in the IL program until age 21.

Allegheny County Department of Human Services Independent Living Initiative

The ILI provides an array of transitional services for youth with both open and closed cases up until their 24th birthday.

JoAnn Hannah
412-350-7153

Allegheny County IL Resources:

In-home Services CYF caseworker must initially make a referral:

Auberle SUCCESS
412-326-0023

Circle Care R U Ready
412-937-1605 ext. 225

Hill House Family Workforce and Development

412-392-4410

www.hillhouse.org/familyworkforce.php

Family Links

Journey Towards Independence

412-924-0170

Ward WISE

412-343-6300 ext. 234

Community Resources Anyone can refer, (or self-refer):

Three Rivers Center for Independent Living

900 Rebecca Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15221

Contact: Rick McWilliams 412-371-7700 ext. 118

Skills training for people with disabilities:

The Hub

26th and Smallman Streets

Pittsburgh, PA 15222

412-338-0882

Pittsburgh Job Corps Center

7175 Highland Drive

Pittsburgh, PA 15206

412-441-8700

The Hill House

1835 Centre Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15219

412-392-4400

The Bridge of Pittsburgh

425 Sixth Avenue, 20th Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
412-325-0951

***Residential Placements Anyone can refer,
(or self-refer):***

Rosalia

624 Clyde Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
Intake: 412-682-4410

MOCS (Family Links)

McKeesport, PA 15135
Intake: 412-672-8632

Three Rivers Youth – The Loft

508 Franklin Avenue
Wilkinsburg, PA 15221
Intake: 412-243-4466

Note:

There are many other residential IL placements, but they can only be accessed through a CYF caseworker or resource coordinator. IL services are also available through foster care agencies/providers.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Physically challenged children may require an array of assistive technology devices, adaptive transportation, and home and vehicle modifications to increase their independence and to help them actively participate in their communities. The Allegheny County organizations listed below can help to secure these resources:

Equipment and Assistive Technology Devices covered by insurance

When equipment is covered by health insurance, one of these Pittsburgh-area companies will likely provide and service it:

Apria 724-873-7720

Blackburn's Pharmacy 724-224-9100

Klingensmith Healthcare, Inc. 800-272-3233

Pediatric Services of America 412-322-4140

Equipment and Assistive Technology Devices not covered by insurance

When health insurance will not cover an assistive technology device, call:

Three Rivers Center for Independent Living (TRCIL) 412-371-7700

TRCIL is an umbrella organization providing used equipment, assistance in identifying equipment needs, and help in locating vendors and alternative funding sources.

Variety: The Children's Charity

412-747-2680

Grants of up to \$5,000 for mobility devices (wheelchair lifts, ramps, etc.).

Organizations affiliated with TRCIL:

Into New Hands

412-371-7700 ext.166
Equipment recycling

Pennsylvania's Initiative Assistive Technology (PIAT)

Contact Kevin Huwe at 412-371-7700 ext. 66

A statewide program to increase access to assistive technology for all Pennsylvanians. PIAT's three main programs are:

- Low interest loans for home modification
- Recycled Equipment Exchange Program (REEP) A listing of previously owned assistive technology devices for sale or donation
- Assistive Technology Lending Library (ATLL) Free short- term loans of assistive technology devices. Call 877-722-8536 voice/ TTY for an application

Grants and Loans for Assistive Technology and Home Accessibility Modifications:

Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation

888-744-1938

Low interest loans up to \$25,000 to Pennsylvania residents for assistive technology devices and home or vehicle modification

Action Housing, Inc.

Contact Frank Demus at 412-281-2102 ext. 2027
Home modification grants for Allegheny County residents based on household income

Home Accessibility Program for Independence (HAPI)

Contact Marsha Lambria at 412-255-6573

Grants and loans for home modification within the City of Pittsburgh based on income

Pennsylvania's Initiative on Assistive Technology

Contact Cindy Williams at 412-371-7700

TTY 412-371-6230

Low interest loans up to \$25,000 for home modification

RECREATION AND LEISURE

Play Facilities, Organized Activities, and Adaptive Toys:

Special Olympics of Allegheny County

412-279-5450

Free year-round training and athletic competition in Olympic sports for children, ages eight and up, with a primary MR diagnosis.

Lekotek

773-528-5766 or lekotek@lekotek.org

Adaptive toys www.lekotek.org

Toy Helpline: 800-366-PLAY

Fax: 773-537-2992

Assistive Technology Lending Library (ATLL)

Contact Nancy Lederman for an application.

412-371-7700 ext. 159 or 800-633-4588 ext. 159

Free short-term loans of assistive technology devices and adaptive toys. View the catalog at disabilities.temple.edu. Click on "Programs," go to "Assistive Technology," then to "PATLL."

Therapeutic Horse Riding

Low-cost recreational and therapeutic horseback riding for physically and mentally challenged children. Usually requires a doctor's release, input from a physical therapist, and a liability release.

Riding for the Handicapped of Western PA

724-443-4485

Therapeutic Horsemanship Center

724-282-4751

Elliott Acres

724-283-0947

Windwalker Farm

724-643-8324

Camp

For a comprehensive list of special needs and health-related summer camps, go to www.unit-edwaypittsburgh.org or humanservices.net.

Camp Arc Spencer

412-995-5000

Fax: 412-995-5001

www.achieva.info

Day and overnight summer camps and year round “weekend camps” for individuals with a primary diagnosis of MR.

TRANSPORTATION

Allegheny County provides some subsidized transportation for children with special medical needs. Local public and private programs offer assistance with the cost of vehicle modification.

Transportation Programs and Rental Vans:

Access

412-562-5353

Low cost transportation for individuals with physical, cognitive, or visual disabilities. Must be evaluated by an Access therapist to qualify.

Medical Assistance Transportation Program

412-350-4484

Reimbursement for transportation and provision of free door-to-door transportation to medical, dental, and psychiatric appointments within Allegheny County for Medical Assistance recipients. Children under age 17 must have an escort.

Wheelchair Getaways of Pennsylvania

800-221-6501

Wheelchair accessible rental vans

Vehicle Modification:

Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation
888-744-1938

Low interest loans to Pennsylvania residents for vehicle modification

Variety: The Children's Charity

412-747-2680

Grants of up to \$5,000 for mobility devices (wheelchair lifts, ramps, etc.)

LEGAL RESOURCES

All dependent children in Allegheny County are entitled to free representation and advocacy. A dependent child's legal resource of first resort is KidsVoice 412-391-3100. For children without a KidsVoice case team or a conflict child advocate, these organizations provide legal assistance on health and education-related matters.

Allegheny County Bar Foundation

Promotes public awareness of the legal and judicial system, and renders legal services to low-income clients.

412-402-6641

www.acbf.org

Disability Rights Network

Protecting and advocating the rights of people with disabilities.

412-391-5225

Fax: 412-391-4496

TDD: 412-467-8940

www.drnpa.org

Education Law Center

Legal advocacy to ensure Pennsylvania's children have access to quality public education.

412-258-2120

www.elc-pa.org

Pennsylvania Health Law Project

Direct advocacy and policy work to promote health care for low-income consumers and people with disabilities.

Pittsburgh office: 412-434-5779

Helpline: 800-274-3258

www.phlp.org

University of Pittsburgh Law School's Health

Law Clinic

Law students, supervised by law school faculty, advocating for people with mental and physical disabilities.

412-648-1300