Respite for Adults with Developmental Disabilities

What is Respite?

- **Respite** is a service that provides temporary relief to those who are caring for a family member with a disability. Respite provides a short, planned break for families and caregivers, in order to support and maintain the primary caregiving relationship.
- There are various **models of care** for respite including short-term accommodation outside the home, day programs or accessing in home services. The type of service required will depend on the needs of the individual receiving care and the caregiver.

Funding for Respite

- For children with developmental disabilities (under age 18) there are programs run by the Ministry of Children and Youth including **Special Services at Home (SSAH)**, **Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD)** and **Enhanced Respite Funding**. These programs end at age 18.
- For adults with developmental disabilities (over age 18), there are two sources of government funding that may be used for respite funding:
  1. Passport Funding from **Developmental Services Ontario (DSO)**
  2. **Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) – Income Support**
- Respite can also be paid for privately by families.

How can I plan ahead for the transition to adult respite services?

- Some families will find themselves needing respite for the first time when their adult children leave high school. Individuals with disabilities can stay in school until the age of 21 in Ontario. Planning ahead is important to improve access to services, funding and support in the adult system.
- Apply as early as possible for DSO. Even if your child is deemed eligible and has an intake assessment there are long waitlists for Passport Funding (Report: **Nowhere to Turn, Ombudsman Ontario**)

How do I learn what respite services are available in my area?

- Learn about and access **Respite Services** in Ontario: [www.respitesservices.com](http://www.respitesservices.com)
- By providing your location and postal code, you will be directed to a contact person who is knowledgeable about what services are available in the area, how to apply and how to apply for funding. (In some regions this person is called a **Connecting Point Service Coordinator**)
- You can also contact agencies listed on the site directly to learn about the services, funding and supports available in your region.
- For those looking to hire their own respite workers, the **Family Registry** can help connect with individual workers from the **Community Helpers for Active Participation (CHAP)** program. The CHAP program allows individual respite workers to post their resumes online for families to view and coordinate with as suitable.

Having several respite workers, in addition to family and friends, who know your child’s care needs and you and your child can trust, is helpful in case of emergencies, such as caregiver illness or injury. It can take time to find the right people and for everyone to feel comfortable, but the rewards can be great.
What are my options while on the waitlist for Passport Funding?

- Paying out of pocket—**Fee for Service**—for respite is one option. You can use [www.respiteservices.ca](http://www.respiteservices.ca) to learn about what is available in your community and the costs, and if any subsidies or special programs exist or [www.connectability.ca](http://www.connectability.ca).
- Some caregivers choose to connect with other families to help get ideas, support and share resources. These two organizations help families connect:
  1. **Partners for Planning (P4P)** is a family formed and directed not-for-profit organization that focuses on assisting families in planning for the future of individuals with disabilities. Check out the [www.planningnetwork.ca](http://www.planningnetwork.ca) to learn about ways to connect.
  2. **Extend A Family** is a not-for-profit, charitable organization that assists in building relationships between individuals who have disabilities and other members of the community. Check out [www.extendafamily.ca](http://www.extendafamily.ca) to learn more.

What if I need help urgently?

- If your child is under 18, contact professionals involved with your family or call 211 to learn what services and supports are available for your situation.
- If you child is over 18 and has a developmental disability, contact your local DSO office and explain your situation. Each office has a system in place to assist with urgent needs in certain situations. You can also contact 211 to see what is available.
- If you are concerned about immediate health and/or safety, call 911.

**DISCLAIMER:** This resource was developed in January 2017 and content was based on the following references. Changes can occur to programs at any time. This resource may not reflect changes made after this date nor will it include information from other sources not listed below. Please refer to original resources for comprehensive definitions and terms related to the program, eligibility criteria, determination of rates, additional benefits, and other important information.

**REFERENCES CONSULTED:**

**Government Websites**
Home Care and Community Services Act, 1994
Website: [www.ontario.ca/laws/](http://www.ontario.ca/laws/)
Relevant Section: Ontario Regulation 386/99, Provision of Community Services
Accessed: Jul 2016

**Developmental Services Ontario**
Website: [www.dsontario.ca](http://www.dsontario.ca)
Accessed: Dec 2016

Ministry of Community and Social Services, Policy Directives for Application Entities
Relevant Pages: Individuals in Urgent Need of Support
Accessed: Jan 2017