



  
**KidsVoice**

Protecting Children's Rights

**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](http://www.kidsvoice.org) and click on "Resources."

## Table of Contents

Early Intervention (Birth to 3)	2
Early Intervention Preschool (3 to 5)	3
Special Education	5
Free Health Care	9
Mental Health	13
Mental Retardation	16
Independent Living	21
Physical Environment	26
Recreation and Leisure	28
Transportation	30
Legal Resources	31

## 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 (412) 885-6000 if they have a concern that a child has a developmental delay and/or would like to request a developmental evaluation.

### 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 parent's 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 school 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. 22).



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 *Special Education In A Nutshell* and *The Right to Special Education in Pennsylvania: A Guide for Parents* at [www.elc-pa.org](http://www.elc-pa.org) or order these guides by calling (412) 391-5225. The Education Law Center staff answers questions concerning school-related problems at (412) 391-5225.



The Pennsylvania Department of Education Bureau of Special Education runs the Special Education ConsultLine, 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 Dan Davison, the Educational Specialist on the Mental Health Children's Team, at (412) 350-7118. 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:*

**UMPC Health Plan**

(800) 286-4242/same # for special needs unit

**Gateway Health Plan**

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

**Three Rivers Health Plan/Med PLUS+**

(800) 414-9025/special needs unit (877) 844-8844

*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](http://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](http://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) 473-2066. 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 pg. 15.) 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 Ingrid Gomez-O'Toole at (412) 350-6679 or consult the Web at [www.county.allegheny.pa.us/dhs/BH/mh.html](http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/dhs/BH/mh.html).

Allegheny County Service Coordination Units:

Allegheny East MH/MR

10 Duff Road, Suite 301

Pittsburgh, PA 15235

(412) 731-9747

(412) 243-3400 ext. 346

Chartiers MH/MR

437 Railroad Street

Bridgeville, PA 15017

(412) 221-3302

Family Links

2644 Banksville Road

Pittsburgh, PA 15206

(412) 343-7166

Family Services of Western PA

Central City Plaza

New Kensington, PA 15068

(724) 335-9883

(888) 222-4200

Mercy Behavioral Health

1200 Reedsdale Street

Pittsburgh, PA 15233

(412) 323-8026

Mon Yough Community Services  
331 Shaw Avenue  
McKeesport, PA 15132  
(412) 675-8480  
(412) 675-8585 (outpatient)

Staunton Clinic  
Sewickley Valley Hospital  
720 Blackburn Road  
Sewickley, PA 15143  
(412) 749-7341

Turtle Creek Valley MH  
723 Braddock Avenue  
Braddock, PA 15104  
(412) 351-0222

Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic  
4601 Baum Boulevard  
Ross Building, 2nd Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15123  
(412) 605-1264

## 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.



## Call before a child's 18th birthday!

It is critical that youth are classified as MR before age 18. 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 PUNS Plan (Prioritization of Urgency of Needs for Services). 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:*

#### Family Links

2644 Banksville Road  
Pittsburgh, PA 15216  
(412) 343-7166

#### Family Links Satellite Office

622 Market Street  
McKeesport, PA 15132  
(412) 664-7144

Mon Valley Supports Coordination Unit  
Rankin Christian Center  
1800 West Street, 4th Floor  
Homestead, PA 15120  
(412) 464-1545

Independent Supports Coordination at UPMC  
Drake-Liberty Building, Suite 100  
4117 Liberty Ave.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15224  
(412) 622-4500

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 (717) 346-1372 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 – (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

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

(412) 741-2375

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

**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 ext. 318



For more information:

Visit [www.county.allegheny.pa.us/dhs](http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/dhs)

Visit [www.dpw.state.pa.us](http://www.dpw.state.pa.us), [www.helpinpa.state.pa.us](http://www.helpinpa.state.pa.us)  
or call the Special Kids Network at (800) 986-4550

Purchase *Understanding the Mental Retardation System in Pennsylvania, A Guide for Consumers and Families* for \$10.00 by contacting Sheila Stasko at (877) 372-WAIT.

## 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 must include a statement of transition service needs, focusing on the child's course of study. By age 16, the IEP must include a transition plan (a statement of needed transition services) including the agency responsible for providing the service.

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 MH section for phone numbers)

Office of Mental Retardation (412) 350-7285

Social Security Administration (800) 772-1213

**How are IL services provided?**

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

*In-home Services:* IL services are taught to teens in the home.

*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's Independent Living Resources:

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

#### Hill House

1835 Centre Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
Intake: (412) 392-6472

#### Holy Family Institute

8235 Ohio River Boulevard  
Emsworth, PA 15202  
Intake: (412) 766-9020

#### Homewood Brushton YMCA

7140 Bennett Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15208  
(412) 243-2900



Ward – In-home services  
WISE Program  
50 Moffett Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15243  
(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

*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) 924-0430

Three Rivers Youth – The Loft  
508 Franklin Avenue  
Wilkinsburg, PA 15221  
Intake: (412) 243-5638

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. 111

Equipment recycling

Pennsylvania's Initiative Assistive Technology (PIAT)

Contact Kevin Huwe at (412) 371-7700 ext. 111

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. 27  
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 ext. 136

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

## Recreation and Leisure

### Play Facilities, Organized Activities, and Adaptive Toys

Center for Creative Play

(412) 371-1668

A fully inclusive and universally accessible play facility that offers unstructured play, respite care, Saturday night child care, and seasonal programming including camps. Free for CYF-involved youth, their caretakers, and biological children of foster parents.



Special Olympics of Allegheny County  
at (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) 276-5164 or [lekotek@lekotek.org](mailto:lekotek@lekotek.org)

Adaptive toys [www.lekotek.org](http://www.lekotek.org)

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](http://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

P.P. Tug, Inc.

(724) 228-1781

Windwalker Farm

(724) 643-8324

## Camp

For a comprehensive list of special needs and health-related summer camps, go to [www.unitedwaypittsburgh.org](http://www.unitedwaypittsburgh.org).

## Camp Arc Spencer

(724) 775-7375/(866) 462-2267

[www.achieva.info](http://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.

**Disabilities Law Project**

Legal assistance to individuals with mental and physical disabilities.

**(412) 391-5225****[www.dlp-pa.org](http://www.dlp-pa.org)**

## Education Law Center

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

(412) 391-5225

[www.elc-pa.org](http://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](http://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) 648-1082



This resource flipbook was produced as part of a Skadden Foundation Fellowship awarded by the law firm of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom.

This edition of the flipbook was printed thanks to a grant from the Allegheny County Bar Association.

A number of representatives from local agencies participated in creating this publication. Among them are the Alliance for Infants and Toddlers, Every Child, and the Managed Care Unit at the Office of Children, Youth and Families. A special thanks to the Project Star staff—without their diligence and creativity this project would have been impossible.



Protecting Children's Rights

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[www.kidsvoice.org](http://www.kidsvoice.org)