Navigating Community Resources for Children & Youth with Disabilities
What is The Advocacy Network on Disabilities?

MISSION

“The Advocacy Network on Disabilities champions the rights of individuals with intellectual, developmental, and other disabilities by promoting inclusion, providing services, and advancing systems change.”
Objective

At the end of this training participants will demonstrate an introductory knowledge about basic resources for children and youth with disabilities and their families.
INFANTS AND TODDLERS:
Birth to 36 months
EVALUATIONS: for infants and toddlers whose parents, teachers, or others, are concerned they may have a developmental delay or disability.

EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES: for infants and toddlers determined eligible based on a diagnosed condition or significant delay.
Two sites in Miami-Dade County:

**North Dade**
Located in Civic Center area
(305) 243-6660
Fax referrals to:
(305) 243-3501

**Southernmost Coast**
Located in Cutler Bay area
(786) 268-2611
Fax referrals to:
(786) 268-1748
PRE-SCHOOLERS:

36 months - 5 years old
FDLRS
Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System

**SCREENINGS:** With parent consent, free at your site for children who are not enrolled in public schools and considered to be potential candidates for Special Education services (speech/language, hearing, vision, developmental)

**EVALUATIONS:** This office handles the referrals for evaluations for children not enrolled in public schools

**PARENT SERVICES:** provides training, information about community resources, and guidance to families

Phone number: (305) 274-3501
HELP ME GROW
Operated by JCS 2-1-1

Supports questions and concerns of families regarding children Birth-8

• Health and developmental screenings
• Information, Resources, Materials
• Referrals with enhanced advocacy and follow up
• Assistance enrolling in community programs
Evaluation and Services
Kindergarten- 21 yrs. old
Division of Special Education
M-DCPS

Provides services for children 5 to 21 yrs. old with qualifying disabilities

Services include evaluations for children with suspected disabilities

Evaluations are requested at the child’s corresponding home school

All students that qualify for services have an (IEP)
The Process Simplified

Child is referred for an evaluation

Child is evaluated within 60 days of parent consent

Eligible students receive services as specified in IEP

Adapted from “The Basic Special Education Process under IDEA 2004” - NICHCY website
What the School Does Not Do...

MDCPS does not diagnose! Rather...

Students are identified to be in a category- or eligibility criteria- for placement purposes.

Medical professionals can provide a diagnoses.
Important Details Parents Should Know...

Concerned about your child? Begin by speaking to his/her teacher

Find out who in the school is in charge of Special Education- this varies!

Request for evaluation should be in writing
Important Details Parents Should Know...

Create a file for the child’s records

Ask for all professionals to explain evaluation results

Parents actively participate in writing the IEP, & are their child’s most important advocate!

It’s a good idea for parents to bring someone to the IEP meeting that may be of support to them
School Choices
McKay Scholarship
Provides scholarships for eligible students with disabilities to attend an eligible public or private school of their choice.

To be eligible, the student must have an IEP or 504 accommodation plan and have attended a Florida public school the prior year.

The scholarship amount is based on the student's IEP or 504 Plan and the services provided by the district.

Phone: 1-800-447-1636

http://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/k-12-scholarship-programs/mckay
School Choices

Step Up Scholarships

Income based:

Pays up to $5,677 (2015-16 school year) for school expenses:

- Tuition
- Books
- Uniforms
- Registration
- Transportation
- Testing

Special needs:

The average amount is $10,000, and can be used for:

- School
- Therapies
- Specialists
- Curriculum
- Technology
- College Savings

Phone: 1-877-735-7837

https://www.stepupforstudents.org/
Reading Scholarships

Who is eligible?

• Third- through fifth-grade public school students who scored a 1 or 2 on the third or fourth grade English Language Arts section of the Florida Standards Assessment in the prior year.
• Students who are classified as English Language Learners, and who are enrolled in a program or receiving services that are specifically designed to meet the instructional needs of English Language Learner students, will receive priority.
How Can Your Program Help Children with Disabilities (or Suspected)?

Communicate and partner with parents and service providers

Schedule conferences with parents to support the student

Provide resources and referral information to families
How Else Can You Help?

Provide staff with professional development in the area of the student’s disability

Reach out to other professionals that can support program in including the student
Useful Documents

✓ “Getting to Know Me”

✓ Authorization for Exchange of Information

✓ Individual Educational Plan (IEP)

✓ Evaluation recommendations & strategies

✓ Parent-Teacher Conference documentation
Resources to Support Parents

Learning Disabilities and other
www.nclld.org

Developmental Disabilities, including Autism
www.disabilityscoop.com

Mental Health- Emotional/Behavioral
www.nimh.nih.gov
What a difference knowledge makes...
Great Starting Points...

Dial 211

The Children’s Trust is funding 211 in Miami-Dade County to make this resource and referral line available to everyone in our community. Includes referrals to after school care, summer program and child care centers.

https://www.thechildrenstrust.org/parents/helpline

APD Resource Directory

Search engine by zip-code or city listing general resources and also disability specific

http://resourcedirectory.apd.myflorida.com/resourcedirectory/

FDLRS Resource Guide

A compilation of resources, general and disability specific

http://prekese.dadeschools.net/-docs/ForTeachers/email-weeklybriefings/emails13-14/4.2.14%20FDLRS.pdf
Great Starting Points...

The Advocacy Network on Disabilities
Family Support Coordinators assists families and professionals identify and access the services they need and want
Phone: 305-596-1160
http://advocacynetwork.org

Parent to Parent of Miami
Offers parents of children with special needs education, information and advocacy
Phone: 305-271-9797
www.ptopmiami.org
Disability Specific

Autism

Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Vision Impairment

Mental Health
Autism

UM-NSU C.A.R.D.

Center for Autism and Related Disorders

A good starting point for families suspecting or learning of their child’s diagnoses.

• Provides family and professional training
• Individualized client and family support
• Programmatic Consultation and technical assistance
• Facilitates social groups

Intake appointment phone: (305) 284-5440

http://www.umcard.org/index.php
FIU Embrace

FIU Embrace is a university-wide initiative that promotes health, wellness, and overall functioning for adults with developmental disabilities, such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD), intellectual disabilities (ID), and other neurodevelopmental disorders (OND). It seeks to help these persons lead healthy lives and maximize their individual potential across their lifespan.

Florida International University
Modesto A. Maidique Campus
MARC 140
11200 S.W. 8th Street
Miami, FL 33199

Phone
(305) 348-5377
Deaf and Hard of Hearing

711

Florida Relay Service is the communication link for people who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability. Dial 711 from any phone to connect.

Sign Language Interpreters

American Sign Language Interpreters, Inc
5800 S.W. 5th Terrace
Miami, FL 33144
Phone: 786-393-4864

American Sign Language Services, Inc
Phone: 407-518-7900 extension 334
Toll Free: 1-888-SIGN-ASL
FAX: 407-518-7903
Relay 711 Service
Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology (FAAST)

Non-profit organization funded by the U.S. Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) through the Assistive Technology Act of 2004 and the State of Florida Department of Education Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The mission is to improve the quality of life for all Floridians with disabilities through advocacy and awareness activities that increase access to and acquisition of assistive services and technology.

http://pediatrics.med.miami.edu/community-outreach/assistive-technology/faast

http://www.faast.org/
Visual Impairments

**Miami Lighthouse for the Blind** provides a variety of services for people with visual impairments, such as:

- Programs for babies through adults at no cost to families
- Braille lessons and translation of written language
- Professional training and technical assistance support to program’s serving children with visual impairments

Phone Number: 305-856-2288

Florida Division of Blind Services

Helps blind and visually impaired Floridians achieve their goals and live productive and independent lives. Services cover all ages from babies to senior citizens and offer Employer Services, the Braille and Talking Books Library, and the Business Enterprise Program.

http://dbs.myflorida.com/
Mental Health

**Institute for Child and Family Health (ICFH)** provides child and family counseling services in the family's home, the child's school, or in one of three outpatient centers.

- North Dade number: (305) 722-7159
- South Dade number: (305) 722-5636

**PsychSolutions** provides individual and family therapy, psychiatric evaluation and mental health targeted case management. Services may be in the client’s homes and in some M-DCPS sites.

- Main office number: (305) 668-9000
Resources for Children Without Insurance

Act4me

Provides therapy scholarships for up to $3500 for children with neurological disabilities who do not have Medicaid

Contact: Martha Poulat Phone: (786) 473-6020
More information at: www.act4me.org

FL Elks

Provides free physical therapy for uninsured children up to 18 yrs. old in Miami Dade County

Contact: Chantal Salnave
(305) 278-2044
Resources for Children Without Insurance

Shriner’s Hospital (Tampa)
Offers care at no cost to uninsured children with orthopedic conditions
Contact for referrals:
1-813-972-2250 ext.: 7740

Epilepsy Foundation
Offers medical care, services and medication for seizures at no cost
Phone: (305) 670-4949
Financial Assistance

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Financial assistance to adult and children with disabilities who have limited income and resources

Maximum Assets $2000 not counting home
Maximum Payment $735

Applications on-line or visit your local SSA office

FL residents who are eligible for SSI automatically receive Medicaid from the State

For more information: 1-800-772-1213
http://www.ssa.gov/pgm/ssi.htm
Planning for the Future

• The Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act allows individuals with disabilities and their family and friends to save for future expenses, like popular Roth IRA and 529 college savings plans, while maintaining government benefits.
Medical Assistance
Medicaid Today

Primarily a system of Managed care
10+ choice plans available

Medicaid recipients enrolled/receiving waiver services or waiting for waiver services are NOT required to participate. Those recipients may continue receiving Medicaid “Open Access”
Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD)

The state agency responsible for serving the needs of people with developmental disabilities.

In the state of FL, a developmental disability is defined as:

Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Spina Bifida, Down Syndrome, Prader-Willi Syndrome, Intellectual Disability, Phelan-McDermid Syndrome and children age 3-5 at a high risk of a developmental disability

There are priority categories for accessing services.
Agency for Persons with Disabilities

- Waiting list for services, the lower the priority area, the longer the wait
- As of December 2017 there are 21,017 people on waiting list in Florida and 3,742 in Miami-Dade County
- Everyone who may be eligible for services should apply and be added to the waiting list.
- Florida ranks 50th in spending for Developmental Disabilities $1.88 per $1000 of personal income. The first ranked state spends $10.11

http://ddwaitlist.cbcns.usf.edu/index.cfm
Phone: 305-349-1478       www.apdmyflorida.com
## Individuals on Wait List by Priority Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category 1</td>
<td>Crisis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category 2</td>
<td>Children in Welfare System</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category 3</td>
<td>Intensive Needs</td>
<td>856</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category 4</td>
<td>Caregiver Over Age 70</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category 5</td>
<td>Transition from School</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category 6</td>
<td>Age 21 and Over</td>
<td>9,894</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category 7</td>
<td>Age Under 21</td>
<td>9,624</td>
<td>45.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Priority Not Yet Assessed</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>21,017</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Helps people who have physical or mental disabilities get or keep a job

What type of services are offered?

Medical and Psychological Assessment
Vocational Evaluation and Planning
Training and Education after High School
Job Placement & Coaching
Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Candidates can self refer and children are linked as part of transition services in last year of High School

Visit http://www.rehabworks.org to access a VR office directory
Contact your local office to request services
Questions?
(800) 451-4327 or (866) 515-3692
EMPLOYMENT ENHANCEMENT PROJECT - APD

• Supported Employment Coaching for individuals not working with VR to obtain and maintain competitive employment and participate in paid or unpaid internships as a path to employment. Any individual in Florida who meets APD eligibility, on the APD Waiting List, and over the age 18 may be considered for participation in the EEP.