

Help families who have children with disabilities navigate complex systems of supports and services. Families of children with disabilities, including physical, developmental or behavioral disabilities are the most important resource to ensure their child is healthy, included and connected with their community. When families have access to the right information, training, and navigation assistance, their success increases. Supporting families prevents crisis and the need for more costly services and maximizes the use of existing “generic” community, health and school-based supports. This can reduce or even eliminate reliance on formal disability services.

WHY CDRs?

RECOMMENDATION

Provide funding and direct DHS to develop and implement statewide Child Disability Resources (CDRs) for Wisconsin children with disabilities and their families. In addition to virtual information, this resource includes a person that a family can talk with to get help navigating complex systems like education, health and community resources.

KEY FEATURES OF CDRs

- **Comprehensive Information and Assistance** providing accurate, timely and family-centered help will reduce conflicting information and the need to contact multiple agencies to get the “right” answer.
- **Family Navigators** to assist with a family’s specific concerns in a culturally-competent manner.
- **Advocacy and Benefits Counseling** to assist with appeals and denials of eligibility or services.
- **Family Education** to provide system navigation information and skills in family-friendly language.
- **Seamless Access to Eligibility Determination** for long-term supports, services and Medicaid.
- **Marketing and Outreach** campaign to launch the CDRs and promote access for families.

PROPOSAL

1. Families find the information they need.

The CDRs will: ^(a) aggressively market one statewide name, phone number, and website; ^(b) include all key features listed above including, face-to-face, phone and web-based assistance; and ^(c) engage staff with expertise in multiple children’s systems.

2. Families “get through the doors” to services.

The CDRs will: ^(a) connect families with eligibility determination for multiple programs and; ^(b) connect families to begin planning for supports and services; ^(c) provide access to advocacy services.

3. Families get the supports or services they are eligible to receive. The CDRs will: ^(a) connect families to a county service coordinator when appropriate; ^(b) will provide accurate and accessible information about multiple systems families need to work with; ^(c) assist with benefits counseling and advocacy services and; ^(d) provide accessible family education and skill-building opportunities.

56,000 children in Wisconsin have a disability that likely makes them eligible for LTSS (WI DHS 2019)

41,400	13,900	845
Not served in the Disability Services System	Receiving service/s	Waiting for services

Contact: Liz Hecht, 608.263.7148 or liz@fvofwi.org