

This is the third in a series of fact sheets to help families and providers understand how to access and use the benefits of the Children's Long-Term Support Program.

What is the Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) Waiver Program?

The CLTS Waiver Program provides funding and support for families who have children with disabilities, who are Medicaid eligible, so they can care for their children at home and participate in their communities. This fact sheet will give you tips as you participate in your child's eligibility process.

Completing a Functional Screen for CLTS Programs

Many programs in Wisconsin that provide supports and services for children with special needs require that a functional screen be completed to determine eligibility. Examples include: the CLTS Waiver Program, the Children's Community Options Program (CCOP), Comprehensive Community Services (CCS), and the Katie Beckett Program. The **Functional Screen** is a screening tool that collects information on your child's health, need for supports and how they play and interact with others.

Keep in mind that the screen only determines your child's **functional eligibility** but not their overall program eligibility. Children who are functionally eligible for the waiver program also need to be financially eligible for Medicaid in order to participate in the CLTS program.

A service coordinator or social worker will meet with a family and ask questions about the child. That staff person will then complete an online functional screen and it will be reviewed and a determination will be made by the Department of Health Services.

What Should Families Consider When Completing a Functional Screen?

Remember "Rosy vs. Realistic"

Often parents want to be positive and optimistic about what their child could do or might do and paint an overly rosy picture. This is not a good time to be overly optimistic. It is best to be as realistic as possible, and talk about all of the things that your child has trouble doing.

Before you meet with agency staff think about the following:

- If you were leaving your child with a friend or family member for a whole month and you had to tell them everything you do for your child and all the things that your child needs to get through the day, what would you tell them? Include things that might only happen occasionally.
- On an average day how much help or support do you provide to your child and how much time does that take? Now consider a difficult day— What does that look like?

These questions can help you have a more realistic view of the care that you provide and will help to give a realistic view of your child to the screener.

- Are you up with your child during the night?
- How about at meal times?
- What is it like when your child does not feel well or has a bad day at school?
- What support or help is provided by other family members and what if that help is not available?

Below Are a Few Examples of a Rosy vs. Realistic Perspective:

Rosy = Ben can dress himself independently.

Realistic = Ben can dress himself independently about one day a week, if I have the right clothes set out for him.

Rosy = Sophie can communicate her needs to me.

Realistic = Most of the time, people who are unfamiliar with Sophie do not know what she wants or cannot understand her words or signs.

Rosy = Aiden plays with his siblings after school.

Realistic = If supervised by an adult and not having a bad day, Aiden can play with his brother and sister for about a half hour before there is a meltdown.

Can Families Review the Functional Screening Tool?

Yes, the screen is available on the Department of Health Services website at

dhs.wisconsin.gov/functionalscreen/index.htm

This will give you a sense of the questions that will be asked. You can also review your completed form with your screener or request a copy.

What if My Child is Found Not Eligible Through the Screening and I Think the Screener Missed Something?

Contact the social worker or staff person who completed the screen and talk with them about what was missed or not considered during the screening process. Families can also ask that another staff person complete a new functional screen. If you still feel that your child should be eligible, but was not, consider the county grievance or state appeals process. (See *Family Voices of Wisconsin CLTS Fact Sheet #8.*)

If your child was not deemed eligible you may also want to wait 9 to 12 months and request a new screening. Sometimes in younger children the differences between a typically developing child and a child with a disability are not as profound. As your child gets older their challenges become clearer and he or she may qualify for long-term supports and other services. You can request a new screen if there are any changes in your family's living situation, or your child's condition or behavior.

If you have questions, contact your **Regional Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs**. To find your Center, go to dhs.wisconsin.gov/cyshcn/regionalcenters.htm or call **800.642.7837**.



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