

## 1.0 Background/Context

While most children become sufficiently independent and responsible at adolescence to not require supervision at all times, some adolescents with disabilities may still require care and supervision to ensure their safety. As a result, parents whose adolescents require care and supervision may not be able to work or pursue their studies. Children's disABILITY Services (CDS) may assist families with disability-related adolescent care to prevent parents from disengaging from employment-related activities.

### 1.1 Definitions

**Disability-Related Need:** Disability-related need is what distinguishes the need of a CDS-eligible child from the need of a typically developing child.

**Employment-Related Activities:** Part-time and full-time employment, including self-employment, as well as education and training programs, including placements, practicums and employment readiness programs.

**Standard Hours of Work:** In line with provincial employment standards, the standard hours of work are 40 hours per week and 8 hours per day.

## 2.0 Policy

CDS provides funding for service providers to deliver disability-related care and supervision of children ages 12 to 17 while their parents engage in employment-related activities.

Supports may be delivered by service providers managed by families, the department or agencies in family homes or community settings, including in group settings, where such programs exist. Supports may be provided during daytime (excluding periods that CDS-eligible children and their peers are expected to be in attendance at school), evenings, nights or weekends, while their parents are engaged in employment-related activities.

Supports are provided to meet families' assessed disability-related need in a basic and adequate manner. While CDS provides funding for this service, it does not include the provision of replacement or back-up staff when the assigned service provider is unavailable.

While not its primary purpose, this service provides an opportunity for service providers to work with children on skill building and reinforcement, as well as to implement behaviour support plans.

Prior to accessing funding for employment-related adolescent care, parents are expected to explore and access any options that meet or reduce their need for this support where possible, such as working offsetting schedules from their partner's, accessing flexible work options (hours and locations) or attending classes during their child's school hours.

## **2.1 Assessment Criteria**

CDS may approve funding for adolescent care when all of the following criteria are met:

- The child is at least 12 years old and eligible for Children's disABILITY Services
- The child can no longer access child care\*
- The child requires care and supervision due to their disability-related needs
- The parent(s) is engaged in employment-related activities that they would not be able to maintain (i.e., they may face dismissal or voluntary resignation) without adequate supervision for their child with disabilities
- The parent(s)' employment or training schedule cannot be adjusted sufficiently to allow the parent to meet their child's care needs
- The family has explored its informal support options (e.g., extended family, friends, neighbours)

\*Typically, children may access licensed child care until the end of the school year during which they turn 12 years old.

## **2.2 Exclusions**

Support is not available for the following:

- Supervision during the child's school hours
- Parents working voluntary overtime hours
- Time spent for job seeking
- Time dedicated for studying
- While parents are on leave from work

## **2.3 Employment-Related Activities**

### ***Employment***

Parents may be supported to engage in paid employment activities up to their full-time equivalent hours for their position's regular assigned work schedule.

For parents working part-time positions, they may be supported to work up to an amount equivalent to a standard work day and week, which may include working at more than one employer.

### ***Self-Employment***

Parents may be supported to engage in self-employment activities up to a standard work day and week.

Self-employed parents are expected to make use of the flexibility that self-employment allows, including pursuing self-employment activities while their child is attending school.

### ***Education and Training***

Parents may be supported to attend in-person or online classes, as well as placements, practicums and co-ops required for their academic program.

## **2.4 Parental Rest Periods**

Supports may be approved on an exceptional basis to provide parents who work overnight with a rest period while their CDS-eligible child remains at home.

Consultation with the Leading Program and Practice Specialist is required for all rest-related requests.

## **2.5 Transportation**

CDS does not provide assistance with transportation of children during the provision of adolescent care. The transportation of children is the responsibility of parents and, where applicable, schools.

## **2.6 Siblings**

Support is intended to meet disability-related care needs of children eligible for CDS. Given this, parents are responsible for arranging the care and supervision of their other children under the age of 12.

Despite this, the inclusion of siblings during adolescent care may be considered on a case-by-case basis if:

- The CDS-eligible child does not require close one-to-one supervision,
- The level of supervision needed by the sibling is limited, and
- The sibling is sufficiently independent, mature and responsible as to not interfere with the service provider's ability to adequately supervise the child with disabilities.

## 3.0 Standards

### 3.1 Assessment & Service Planning

Service plans should meet the family's assessed disability-related needs in a basic and adequate manner, which is the minimum amount of support required to meet their needs.

Services plans must consider the schedules of the child and their parents. Plans should include coverage for commuting time, professional development days, school breaks (winter, spring and summer) and school-wide early dismissal days, where applicable.

The following questions should be considered when assessing families' eligibility for adolescent care and to determine the funding required to meet their need:

- Does the child have disability-related needs that necessitate full time supervision to ensure their care and safety?
- Would a child of a similar age be left alone without supervision in those same circumstances (e.g., before or after school, evening, overnight, weekend)?
- Are the parents at risk of losing or leaving their employment-related activity in order to care for their child?
- Can the family mitigate its need for supports through offsetting parents' schedules, alternate work arrangements, use of vacation days and paid family-related leave (if available)?
- Has the family explored their informal supports? Does the child's care needs exceed what may be expected of informal supports?

### 3.2 Service Plan Review

In accordance with program standards, service plans must be reviewed at minimum annually to assess the adequacy and appropriateness of the service plan.

Plans will be reviewed when families' needs and circumstances change such as a change of employment status, hours and locations. Parents are required to advise their caseworker in a timely manner of any changes to their circumstances and needs (e.g. change of work hours, location, status, etc.).

## 4.0 Tools and Resources

- [Adolescent Care \(Employment Support\) Scenarios](#)
- [Inclusion of Siblings during Family Supports – Considerations](#)