

## DDS Children's Services Coordination

*Department of Developmental Services (DDS) is a Commonwealth of Massachusetts agency that serves individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.*

*The nature and frequency of DDS Children's Coordinator contact varies based on need and availability.*

A **DDS Children's Coordinator** works at the local DDS Area Office. A DDS Children's Coordinator caseload consists of individuals under 22 years of age who have been found eligible for children's supports through the DDS Intake and Eligibility process. The **DDS Children's Coordinator** is a link to information, assistance, and resources available through entitlement supports (e.g. IEP or insurance), other State Agencies, within the community, or available within DDS.

### **DDS Children's Coordinators can:**

- assist families with problem-solving and planning through discussion and information-sharing.
- help provide or improve linkages between families and support providers.
- assist with referrals to services for which a child/family might be eligible (e.g. CBHI, ABA, SSI, etc.)
- assist families with improving communication with involved providers to address complicated issues.
- identify resources to help families improve their understanding of the IEP process and evaluate proposed plans to help improve services through the IEP.
- help connect families to each other and to the larger community of advocacy organizations to foster mutual support, share information and contribute to the improvement of service delivery system over time.
- assist with advice and guidance on topics at age 18 "Age of Majority" including: Social Security / MassHealth "Head of Household, Guardianship or alternative supportive decision-making supports, DDS Adult Eligibility and related "Chapter 688" processes.
- maintain an on-going record for the DDS Eligible Child to assist with referrals and the DDS Adult Eligibility / "Chapter 688" process.
- refer to DDS Family Support Centers or other DDS-funded specialty support services based on availability and assessment of need.

### **DDS Greater Boston Area Office**

65 Sprague Street (B-West) Hyde Park, MA 02136

Phone: (617) 363-2900 Fax: (617) 363-2998



## Scope and Limitations of DDS Children's Services

- DDS Children's Services are not "entitlement services".
- DDS is funded through Massachusetts legislative process, which begins each Spring and includes the Governor's Budget, a House Ways and Means budget, legislative committee adjustments and results in a final budget approved by the Governor and Legislature.
- DDS, like all Commonwealth Agencies, operates on a Fiscal Year: July 1 through June 30 of the following year.
- DDS Eligible Children (age 5-22) have access only to:
  - Case Management Services (Children's Service Coordination)
  - Family Support
- DDS-funded services are provided or arranged based on need and availability.
- DDS cannot provide services to replace other services for which a child is eligible through legal entitlements (IEP, insurance-funded, etc.).
- DDS cannot provide Residential services to DDS Eligible Children.
- DDS does not have an "out of home" respite option for DDS Eligible Children.
- DDS may arrange, facilitate, or, in some cases, provide afternoon or other recreational activities, but capacity is limited. These are not formal "After School" programs, and certainly are not "Therapeutic After School Programs" (TASPs) as may be offered through DCF or DMH.
- DDS Children's Coordinators may assist families with educational advocacy but ARE NOT Educational Advocates