



TRI-COUNTIES REGIONAL CENTER

Enhancing the Quality of Life for Persons with Developmental Disabilities

Policies & Guidelines

Policies and Guidelines - 11501

SERVICE POLICY GUIDELINES

Family Supports – School-Age Individuals

Tri-Counties Regional Center supports the hopes and preferred future(s) of persons with developmental disabilities towards maximum community inclusion and participation. Tri-Counties Regional Center will encourage and support children and/or their families in their decision regarding where the child will live. Tri-Counties Regional Center will work with children and their families to maintain school-age individuals in their family home.

All families experience the need for intermittent relief from the stress of raising a child. In many instances, families with a child with developmental disabilities will be able to provide for their own relief through the assistance of family members, friends, or paid sitters. The need for child care should not be confused with the need for family support services. All working parents of children must provide arrangements for child care that are routine and consistent with their work schedule. Tri-Counties Regional Center will assist families in locating appropriate child care arrangements.

Various community programs also serve a secondary function by providing family support services and relief to parents from the responsibility of providing 24 hour care. Such programs include public schools and local social and recreational programs. Parents are encouraged to use such programs to meet these needs whenever possible as they provide enriched experiences for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Family support services are supports and services provided to a person with developmental disabilities and his/her family that contributes to the ability of the family to reside together. Tri-Counties Regional Center encourages and supports children and their families to access existing personal and community resources whenever possible to meet their family support needs. Tri-Counties Regional Center will encourage families to use these resources before expending public resources to meet these needs. Consideration will be given to the ordinary care, support and supervision that a family must provide to a child of a similar age without a disability.

Tri-Counties Regional Center recognizes that some families with a developmentally disabled child are not able to meet all of their family support needs through traditional sources because some individuals with a developmental disability require a degree of care beyond that needed by the majority of individuals of a similar age.

The Planning Team will determine the desired family support outcomes, will identify and access all private and generic resources available to meet all or any portion of the need for family support services, and will decide which, if any, regional center funded family support services are to be used to meet any remaining need for family support services.

Individuals receiving SSI, SSA and AFDC are eligible for In-Home Support Services provided through the County Department of Social Services. When appropriate, Tri-Counties Regional Center will assist families to access these services as it could provide the family with additional resources to purchase personal care assistance for the person while providing relief to the primary care giver. Tri-Counties Regional Center will authorize funding for services required by and resulting from the child's developmental disability. Tri-Counties



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Regional Center will use creative and innovative approaches to meet objectives contained in the person's Individual Program Plan that are a cost-effective use of public funds. Family support services for school-age individuals may be purchased when:

- the child has behavior challenges or medical care needs or supervision needs that exceed those of children the same age without developmental disabilities;
- there are few or no natural supports or generic supports available to provide necessary supervision during times when the parent(s) are away;
- the behavior or medical needs of the child require supervision by a trained professional; or
- the family is experiencing a short term crisis or emergency situation.

Family support services may include but are not limited to in-home respite care; in-home nursing care; out-of-home respite care; day care; after school programs; extended school year programs; and/or crisis intervention services.

Tri-Counties Regional Center will assist and advocate for school-age individuals to acquire social skills and participation in age appropriate public and private recreational activities. Children and their families are expected to use their personal resources to pursue hobbies, leisure activities and access entertainment events. Tri-Counties Regional Center may authorize funding for the acquisition of specific social skills when the Planning Team has determined the skills cannot be taught by the family or by public and/or generic resources.

The expected result from the provision of any family support service for school-age individuals must lead to measurable outcomes as stated on the person's Individual Program Plan. The provision of family support services for school-age individuals must be both clinically and fiscally an effective use of public funds.

Exception Policy:

Tri-Counties Regional Center recognizes that some individual needs are so unique that they may not be addressed in this Service Policy and may require an exception. Such request for an exception to a Service Policy will be made through the Planning Team process. For children with severe behavioral challenges (CDER "Franklin Factor" or "ff" greater than 20), an exception will be required for more than 40 hours of respite per month. For all other children, an exception will be required for more than 25 hours of respite per month.

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