



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY

Adoption Subsidy
Support for families of children with
special needs



Introduction

This handbook is designed to assist adoptive parents explore resources available within the community to assist them in caring for their children. Resources may include family support, counseling, respite care and ways to connect with other caregivers. This handbook is meant to be a starting place for adoptive parents trying to figure out what their needs are and what options are available.

Adoptive parents are the primary caregivers for their children. Caregiving is a labor of love. It can be very rewarding, but also exhausting. You may need resources to help you.

Resources

Sources of assistance to help you cope in your role as parent and caregiver may include:

1. Support Groups

Support groups offer a chance to get together with other parents and caregivers. This is an opportunity to give and receive emotional support, learn caregiving tips from others who are in a similar situation, have a good laugh, a good cry or just sit and listen.

2. Educational Classes

Classes offer an opportunity to learn new things. You may want to take a class to understand how each child is different, about your child's diagnosis or medications, what it means to have been abused or neglected, and issues surrounding adoption. You may learn new techniques for parenting, guiding and supporting your child.

3. One-on-One Support

There are a variety of counseling options available in the community. Counseling allows you to talk one-on-one with a professional who will listen and offer support. Counseling can help reduce stress, anger, and frustration, learn coping strategies, work towards goals, identify your inner strengths, and support you through your life journey.

4. Employee Assistance Programs

If you or a family member is employed, your workplace may have an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to fund individual or family

counseling. The counseling would be confidential (no one at work would know). Usually EAPs offer a set number of counseling sessions per family member free of charge. To find out if EAP is an option for you, contact the human resources department at your workplace.

5. Adoption Subsidy Case Management

Adoption Subsidy Specialists are appointed for all approved children. The Specialist is available to assist the child and family if requested. The Specialist may provide:

- assistance locating community resources
- assistance obtaining services
- advocacy and support with families
- participation in educational or mental/behavioral health meetings with the family

6. Respite

Respite is defined as “short term care and supervision to relieve caregivers”. It is a supportive service of temporary relief to assist parents in successfully coping with the daily demands of parenting children with special needs. Respite may be available from a variety of resources. If your child is eligible for the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) or the Regional Behavioral



Health Authorities (RBHA) respite may be a service he or she is entitled to receive. Contact your child’s DDD Support Coordinator or RBHA Child and Family Team Facilitator for information about how to obtain respite through their programs.

Adoption Subsidy Special Services Subsidy

Respite may be available through Special Services Subsidy. Special Services Subsidy is provided for extraordinary, infrequent or uncommon needs related to the pre-existing special needs conditions of the child on the Adoption Subsidy agreement.

The adoptive family must exhaust all other resources, including private insurance, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS)/Medicaid, Regional Behavioral Health Authorities (RBHAs), Arizona Long Term

Care System (ALTCS), Division of Developmental Disabilities and the public school district services before applying to the Adoption Subsidy Program for special services payment.

All special services must be authorized by the Adoption Subsidy program prior to receipt of the service. The family is expected to participate to the extent possible in providing special services.

1. Need for Adoption Subsidy respite

The need for Adoption Subsidy respite must be related to the child's special needs conditions on the Adoption Subsidy agreement and all public resources must have been exhausted. Respite that is available from other resources must be used before respite from adoption subsidy can be considered. Other resources include: Private Insurance; DDD; RBHA; ALTCS and Private Foundations such as the Autism Society, Cerebral Palsy Association, Easter Seals, etc.

In some circumstances, documentation from a professional treating the child may be required to determine the amount of respite needed.

The use of and need for respite from Adoption Subsidy shall be reviewed annually. Unused prior approved hours may not be carried over to a subsequent year.

aApproval of respite is based on the following guidelines:

- Child is not eligible for RBHA or DDD or other resources that provide respite.
- The child has special needs conditions on the adoption subsidy agreement which require demanding care and because of which the parent requires relief from his/her care responsibilities.
- The child is experiencing a crisis related to conditions on the agreement and other resources are not available.
- Parent needs time to recover from a particularly stressful situation in order to resume his/her care responsibilities.
- The parent or family is experiencing an emergency or crisis which temporarily prevents the parent(s) from performing his/her normal responsibilities.



- The parent requires relief from his/her care responsibilities due to the parent's own medical or mental health situation.

2. Respite Provider

Acquiring someone to provide respite care is the responsibility of the adoptive parent. The respite provider:

- Must be 18 years of age.
- May not be a member of the child's household.
- May be an agency provider who is trained, licensed or certified and matched by the agency to provide care for special needs children.
- May be a nursing center, group home or shelter.
- May be another adoptive parent, family friend, or relative who is trained to provide care for the child.

Payment for Adoption Subsidy Respite

Adoption Subsidy will only pay for respite services at the Adoption Subsidy established rates. If the provider selected by the adoptive parent will not accept the Adoption Subsidy rate it is the adoptive parent's responsibility to pay the difference.

Following are the procedures that apply in order to obtain payment for respite services:

- Respite services and number of hours must be prior authorized by Adoption Subsidy.
- The original State of Arizona substitute W-9 from the respite provider (available from Adoption Subsidy) must be received by Adoption Subsidy prior to payment.
- Requests based on crisis situations rather than the child's needs must be approved by the Adoption Subsidy Supervisor.



- Respite must be re-authorized every year and the respite year is from July 1st through June 30th
- Unused hours will not carry over to the next year.
- Respite will be authorized by the hour for a specific number of hours.

- Over ten (10) hours will be considered a full day and the maximum rate for a day is the hourly rate times 10. (No more than 10 hours will be reimbursed per day.)
- The maximum rates that Adoption Subsidy will pay for respite are based on the maintenance rate for the child. (These rates may or may not cover the full cost and may need to be supplemented by parents. Maintenance may be used for this purpose.) Adoption subsidy will not pay more than the rate charged by the provider.

The hourly respite rate allowed is:

AM1-\$5.00/hour

AM2-\$7.00/hour

AM3-\$9.00/hour

AM4-\$10.00/hour

Anything over 10 hours will be considered a full day and the maximum rate is the hourly rate multiplied by 10. (i.e. \$5.00 X 10 hours = \$50.00 for the day)

The expectation is that respite will be provided to siblings together by

the same provider. If more than one provider is needed it must be approved by Adoption Subsidy. When more than one child is cared for at the same time by the same provider the rates will be adjusted as follows:

1st child-- full rate

2nd and subsequent children --half rate of 1st child (not to exceed the child's normal rate)

Exclusions for Adoption Subsidy Respite

- Respite care shall not substitute for babysitting, day care, after school care, transportation, in-home health aide, personal care, therapeutic services (i.e. one on one) or another specific service such as tutoring or nursing care.
- Respite care shall not substitute for an Out of Home placement.
- Respite care is not available for children living in Out of Home placements.
- Adoption Subsidy respite care may not be used in order to have a preferred provider who is not available through public resources.
- Respite care should not be used in lieu of including a child on a family vacation.



Suggestions for the Respite

Provider

1. Child information

Provide the following information to the provider about your child:

- The child's medical needs and medications, with complete instructions on when and how to give them
- Allergies and how to address them;
- Information about the child's behavior, consequences and specific behavior plan or Individual Service Plan (ISP);
- Child's likes/dislikes including favorite activities; and
- Personal care routines including food preferences and sleep habits.

2. Contact information

Provide the following information to the provider:

- Where you will be and how you can be reached;
- Doctor's name and number;
- Where to take the child in an emergency;
- Name and number of contact person if parent cannot be reached; and
- Medical consent and insurance information.

Adoption Subsidy Units

You can contact your Adoption Subsidy Specialist for information about resources or to obtain prior authorization for services including respite at:

Phoenix Unit

1818 E. Sky Harbor Circle North
Ste. 100

Phoenix, Az. 85034

602.771.6470

Tucson Unit

4201 S. Santa Rita Ave.
Ste. 105

Tucson, Az. 85714

520.885.8002

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