

Fast Facts for Families and Community Partners about ... Respite

What is Respite?

- Respite provides families with a temporary break from care-giving responsibilities
- Respite offers supervision and care-giving services by individuals comfortable with meeting the needs of a child with complex health concerns. The child's special needs may be behavioral or emotional, or medical.
- Respite is typically of short duration, ranging from a few hours to a couple of days

When and why might a family seek Respite?

- When they need an occasional break from the 24-hour a day, seven day a week responsibilities of care giving.
- When the idea of finding a "baby sitter" is simply out of the question, because the demands of caring for a child or youth with special health care needs are too great or too complex.
- Respite offers the opportunity for families to: go out alone or visit with a friend; be alone with your spouse; spend special time with your other children; and attend events away from home. It allows families to come back refreshed and better able to cope with complex responsibilities.

What should families keep in mind when looking for respite programs?

- The need to match your child's requirements for skilled medical care with the respite program's facility and providers.
- You need to ask about availability of specialized equipment, wheelchair accessibility, and other facility features
- Be sure that the program has skilled respite providers who are trained to deal with your child's health or behavioral condition. The providers should also be trained in medication administration and use of adaptive equipment. Providers should know lifting techniques, specialized feeding methods, sleeping arrangements, and emergency care if needed.
- Cost and eligibility requirements differ from program to program.
- Medicaid doesn't cover respite except for those on the Hopeful (Hospice) Waiver.
- What days and hours are available? Does the program take siblings?
- There are many different types of respite programs. Some programs provide services only in the child's home, while others are located at a community setting where children and families interact with others. Parents need to find the right fit for their child's needs.

How can I learn more about respite options in my area?

- There isn't one place or agency that keeps track of respite options available in Colorado. Across the state new respite programs are being started and some may be closing, making it difficult to find what is available where you live. Sadly, there are some parts of the state that have few if any respite options for families. Below are organizations that can provide information on respite that may be available in your community. Also on the list are several respite programs that have worked with Public Health and the Health Care Program for Children with Special Needs (HCP).
 - Contact “**HCP**”, which is a public health program. HCP can answer your questions about respite options and connect you with a variety of services and supports provided by other state agencies, non-profit organizations, and support & advocacy groups. **To find the HCP office for the county you live in, call 303-692-2370 or 1 800-886-7689, or go the HCP Web site at www.hpcolorado.org**
 - Contact **Family Voices Colorado** for help finding health care providers, help to pay for health or related service provider, programs a child or youth with special needs might be eligible for, and connections to other families or advocates. **1-800-881-8272 www.familyvoicesco.org**
 - **Colorado Respite Coalition (CRC)** is a group of parents and professionals, who together facilitate an ongoing dialogue that explores, connects, and supports community organizations and individuals interested in creating a variety of respite programs and providing information to communities in Colorado. For more information contact Val Saiz, Co-chair: 303-619-1437 Saiz@comcast.net or Janis De Baca, Co-chair: 720-231-5268 jdebacahcp@aol.com
 - **Community Centered Boards (CCB)** provide assistance for children and youth with developmental disabilities, including respite support for those eligible. To find the CCB in your area go to: http://www.cdhs.state.co.us/ddd/CCB_Main.htm
 - **ARCH National Respite Locator:** <http://chtop.org/ARCH/National-Respite-Locator.html>
 - **Easter Seals Discovery Clubs**-Respite program sponsored by Easter Seals providing a day for children and youth to explore and learn in a friendly social setting. Discovery Clubs at four locations in Colorado: Denver, Boulder, Highlands Ranch, and Lakewood. For more information including schedules, costs, and application go to: http://co.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=CODR_Discovery_2008 or call 303-569-233 x312
 - **Night Owls** –One Friday night a month respite program for children with special needs and their siblings, ages 1 month to 12 years at the Fisher Early Learning Center on the University of Denver Campus. For more information and Registration forms, go to: www.du.edu/fisher/nightowls.html, or email: NightOwls@du.edu or phone: 303-871-2095

Children with Special Health Care Needs Unit
Prevention Services Division ~ Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment



Colorado Department
of Public Health
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