

Navigating Disability Services & Planning for Lifelong Support

Did You Know...



that disability services are available to individuals as young as age 3?

Through Maryland's Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), individuals can apply for service eligibility starting at age 3.

If your application is approved, you'll be assigned an **advocate**—a trained professional who will guide you through navigating service providers and help you apply for a waiver.

A **waiver** is a form of Medicaid funding that allows the state to cover a portion of the costs for services provided to you or your loved one.



One example of a waiver is...



the Family Supports Waiver

This waiver provides access to Personal Support Services with disability service providers like Bello Machre.

There are various other waivers available, each designed to offer funding based on factors such as age, diagnosis, and specific service needs.

Your advocate will guide you in selecting the waiver that best fits the needs of you and your loved one.



Did You Know...



Division of Rehabilitation Services are available at age 14?

Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) are available to students as young as age fourteen.

DORS works with service providers to support students in preparing for, finding, and keeping meaningful employment.

Waivers will not restrict you from receiving DORS services and will not affect your DORS eligibility.



DORS services include...



- Job Exploration Counseling
- Instruction in Self-Advocacy
- Counseling on Post-Secondary Education Opportunities
- Workplace Readiness Training
- Work-Based Learning Experiences (WBLE)
- Disability-related skills training
- Job search and job placement services
- Job coaching and supported employment services
- Assistive technology solutions for disability-related needs





Did You Know...

that you can (and **should**) start exploring service providers before the final year of high school?

You can apply to the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) at any age, even if you're not ready to start services immediately.

Once deemed eligible, you'll be assigned an advocate to help you navigate available services and plan for the transition after high school.

Early planning allows you to explore service providers, build a support system, and ensure a smoother post-education transition.



Getting Ready For Post-Education

How to Prepare

Start with the Maryland DDA



- Families should begin by completing the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) eligibility application.
- Once approved, a Coordinator of Community Services (CCS) will be assigned to advocate and connect individuals to available waivers, providers, and programs.



MARYLAND
Department of Health

Developmental Disabilities Administration



Get to Know Service Providers



- **Start Early:** We encourage individuals and families to think about life goals beyond education early to ease the shift from school-based to adult services.
- **Visit Providers in Person:** Meet with program directors, observe services in action, and ask questions to ensure a good fit.
- **Leverage CCS Support:** The CCS can guide families through the application process for preferred programs and services.



Work with Your School



- **Begin Planning Early:** Begin transition planning well before the IDEA-mandated age of 16 to explore post-high school options like independent living, education, and employment.
- **Use Available Resources:** Attend transition fairs and provider info sessions to learn about services and start planning early.
- **Build Self-Advocacy Skills:** Schools and providers can help individuals prepare for adult services by teaching them to express their needs and preferences.
- **Collaborate for Success:** Strong partnerships between families, schools, and providers ensure a smooth transition to adulthood.





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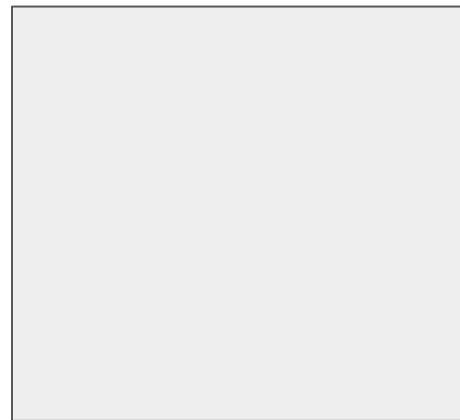
**Getting Started
With Services!**



How Bello Machre Can Help



- Our experts are happy to meet and speak with you or your school about preparing for the post-education transition.
- Bello Machre's ***Ray of Hope Program***
- *Want to learn more?* Scan the QR code below to sign up for informational sessions, fill out an inquiry form, revisit today's slides, or explore additional helpful resources.



Any Questions?