

Emergency Caretaker Resource Guide



*Howard County Domestic
Violence Fatality Review Team
Howard County, Maryland*

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Using this Guide....

The purpose of this guide is to provide support and information for those citizens who have unexpectedly had minor children placed in their custody due to an unforeseen emergency. This initial time period can be very overwhelming and dealing with issues involving children can provide additional stress during an already stressful and emotional time. This guide contains resources available to help you find service providers and agencies available to assist in and around Howard County.

This document is intended to serve as an emergency informational guide only and not intended to be a complete resource or to take the place of competent legal advice.

Do I need Custody or Guardianship?

There are many different types of custody. Generally, sole custody is when a person has both legal and physical custody of a child. Legal custody is when a person has the right to make long range plans and decisions for the education, religious training, discipline, non-emergency medical care and other matters of major significance concerning the child's welfare. A person with physical custody has the child living primarily with them and they have the right to make decisions as to the child's everyday needs.

Guardianship is a type of custody where a court grants to the guardian the legal authority to have physical custody of another person, or to make decisions for the person's benefit or welfare, or some combination of both. Often a third party needs to obtain guardianship over a minor child. An adult seeking guardianship over a minor child should file a petition with the court for guardianship in the name of the child. Unfortunately, there are no statewide court-approved forms to apply for a guardianship. While a petition for guardianship may be filed by any person seeking a guardianship, you may want to consult a lawyer.

Helpful link: <http://www.mdcourts.gov/legalhelp/family.html>

What is Kinship Care? What can it do for me?

Helpful link:

www.dhr.maryland.gov/foster-care/kinship-care/

In Maryland, a kinship caregiver is related by blood or marriage within five degrees of consanguinity or affinity to a child who is in your physical care.

Kinship Care is designed to preserve family ties by assisting when possible with the needs of children, biological parents, and relatives who provide care to the child 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There are two categories of Kinship Care: Formal and Informal. In the case of Formal Kinship Care, the child has come to the attention of the State and is now in the custody of the State but is placed with a relative. In Informal Kinship Care, the child's parent(s) voluntarily placed the child in the care of a relative by blood or marriage. Legal custody is not required.

WHAT BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE?

As a Maryland resident and relative caregiver you can apply on behalf of the child for cash assistance referred to as a "child only" grant. This grant is based on the child's resources only.

THE CHILD MAY ALSO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS:

- Child Support
- Medicaid
- Food Stamps
- Child Care
- Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)
- Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP)

APPLICATION OPTIONS INCLUDE:

- Call or write your local department of social services and request an application
- Go in person to your local department of social services for an application; you may complete the application while there, however there might be a wait before you are interviewed.
- As part of the interview process, the interviewer MUST complete a child support order.

OTHER BENEFITS:

- **Consent for Healthcare Affidavit** - Available to a relative caregiver who does not have legal custody or guardianship of the relative child in their care. The caregiver must be able to verify a family relationship with the child and that the child's parent(s) is not available. To receive this form, contact your local Health Department.
- **Education Affidavit** - Provides relative caregivers assistance in enrolling the child in school and allows the relative caregiver to be an advocate for the child in school matters when the parent(s) is not available. To receive this form, contact the child's school
- To Apply for Social Security Survivor's Benefits or Supplemental Security Income – www.socialsecurity.gov

LIST OF KINSHIP CARE SUPPORT GROUPS:

- Just For Us Support Group, Baltimore City
Donnie Green: 410-542-3377
- Grandparent Family Connections
Frederick H. Streider: 410-706-8716
- Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Central Maryland
Natalie Meade: 410-243-4000 x224
- Grandparents & Other Relative Caregivers
Annette Saunders: 410-225-2600 x111
- Grandparents as Parents of Howard County (GAP)
Duane St. Clair: 410-381-4800
- Grandparents Supporting Grandparents, Baltimore County
Ann Abramson: 410-853-3888
- Progressive Life Center Kinship Care Program, Prince George's County
Evette Clark: 301-773-1701
- Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP), Eastern Shore
Helen Johnson: 410-742-0505 x105
- Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP), Somerset County
Sister Diane Moore: 410-651-9608

LINKS TO OTHER COMMUNITY WEBSITES PROVIDING SERVICES FOR RELATIVE CAREGIVERS:

- KINSHIP CARE RESOURCE CENTER
Location To Be Determined
- GRANDPARENTS AND OTHER RELATIVE CAREGIVERS
Baltimore
asaunders@lighthousehealth.org
- RELATIVES AS PARENTS PROGRAM
Eastern Shore
www.macinc.org
- MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
www.msde.state.md.us
- MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGING
www.mdoa.state.md.us
- MARYLAND GOVERNOR'S OFFICE FOR CHILDREN
www.goc.state.md.us

LINKS TO NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ADVOCATING FOR RELATIVE CAREGIVERS:

- AARP.ORG
www.aarp.org/quicklink
- The BROOKDALE FOUNDATION GROUP
www.brookdalefoundation.org
- CHILDRENS DEFENSE FUND
www.childrensdefense.org
- CHILD FOCUS
www.child-focus.org
- GENERATIONS UNITED
www.gu.org
- GRANDFAMILIESOFAMERICA
www.grandfamiliesofamerica.org
- GRANDFAMILIES STATE LAW & POLICY RESOURCE CENTER
www.grandfamilies.org

How Do I obtain Important Documents?

Birth Certificate Application Guidelines

An official certificate of every birth, death, marriage, and divorce should be on file in the locality where the event occurred. The Federal Government does not maintain files or indexes of these records. These records are filed permanently in a State vital statistics office or in a city, county, or other local office.

Rules, ordering instructions, and fees for all 50 states, the District of Columbia and all US possessions can be found on the "Where to Write for Vital Records" web page, maintained by the US Centers for Disease Control.

To obtain a certified copy of any of the certificates, write or go to the vital statistics office in the State or area where the event occurred.

The following link will take you to the Maryland Vital Statistics Administration web page. This page contains the link for downloading the application form for obtaining a birth certificate.

Helpful link: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/maryland.htm>

For all requests make check or money order payable to the identified office, in the correct amount for the number of copies requested. Do not send cash.

Give the following facts when writing for birth or death records:

1. Full name of person whose record is requested
2. Sex.
3. Parent's names, including maiden name of mother.
4. Month, day, and year of birth or death.
5. Place of birth or death (city or town, county, and State; and name of hospital if known).
6. Purpose for which copy is needed.
7. Relationship to person whose record is requested.
8. Day time telephone number with area code.

Social Security Card

You will need the child's Social Security Number (SSN) in order for him or her to get a job, collect Social Security benefits and receive other government services. It is not necessary to carry the child's card with you, keep it in a safe place with your other important papers.

Helpful link:

www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/

Are there programs to help with basic needs? Emergency/Financial Assistance

Helpful link: <https://mydhrbenefits.dhr.state.md.us>

MyDHR is a web-based screening and application tool that will allow Maryland applicants to complete an on-line application any time day or night for the following programs: Food Supplement Program (FS), Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA), Temporary Disability Assistance Program (TDAP), Medical Assistance (MA), Medical Assistance Long Term Care (LTC), Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP), and Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP). There are also links to other programs and services such as the Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Program and Maryland's Child Support Enforcement Administration.

Emergency Assistance to Families with Children (EAFC)

Helpful link: www.dhr.maryland.gov/weathering-tough-times/emergency-assistance/

This program provides emergency cash assistance to families who need emergency help paying rent or utilities. These funds are available through the local department once per year when funds are available.

- DSS staff reviews each family situation to determine who is eligible.
- Families must have one or more children under 21 living with them.
- Families must present proof that they are behind on rent and have been/will be evicted.
- Families must present notice from utility companies that services have been/will be cut off.

You will need the following Information and Documents:

1. Identification and Proof of Address (from Apartment or house lease; electric, gas, water, or phone bill; rent book; rent receipt; or mortgage statement)
2. Proof of Income for past 2 months (from past 2 months pay stubs that show your income, or most recent benefit letter for government checks (SSI, SSDI, VA, Social Security, or any others)
3. Proof of emergency – eviction or utility cut-off notice
4. Proof of other cash or non cash resources. (Bring most recent savings and checking account statements)
5. Social Security numbers: Everyone who gets services must have a social security number.
6. Proof of Household Expenses. Bring as many of the following as you can: most recent BG&E gas or electric bill; most recent fuel oil or propane bill that shows the company's name, address, and telephone number; receipt or written statement of child care costs; real estate tax bill; recent doctor or hospital bills.

Temporary Cash Assistance

Helpful link: www.dhr.maryland.gov/weathering-tough-times/temporary-cash-assistance/

Temporary Cash Assistance provides cash assistance to needy families with dependent children when available resources do not fully address the family's needs and while preparing program participants for independence through work.

Families applying for TCA who need only short-term assistance may be eligible for a welfare avoidance grant. Families receive a one-time lump sum payment instead of monthly TCA.

To be eligible, a family must cooperate with the requirements of child support, participate in work activities and comply with substance abuse provisions. Adults with dependent children applying for TCA must meet financial and technical eligibility requirements. Families may file an application for assistance with child care costs.

File an application with your local Department of Social Services. You may also file an application by mail, fax or to apply online, go to: <https://mydhrbenefits.dhr.state.md.us>

Energy Assistance

Helpful link: www.dhr.maryland.gov/office-of-home-energy-programs

The Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP) provides assistance with home heating bills. Limited assistance is available to replace broken or inefficient furnaces.

The **Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP)** assists eligible low-income electric customers with their electric bills. Assistance is available whether you are an active customer or you are currently without service.

Eligible electric customers may receive help in three ways:

1. Help to pay current electric bills;
2. Help to pay past due electric bills; and,
3. Help with energy efficiency measures to reduce future electric bills.

The **Utility Service Protection Program (USPP)** protects low-income families from utility cut-offs and allows MEAP eligible households to enter into a year-round even monthly payment program with their utility company.

To apply for any of these programs, contact the local Home Energy Programs Office in your area or call 1-800-352-1446. *(For the hearing impaired 1-800-925-4434).*

Burial Assistance

Helpful link: <http://dhr.maryland.gov/weathering-tough-times/burial-assistance/>

The **Burial Assistance Program** provides limited assistance to help with funeral expenses of deceased recipients of assistance programs when their families cannot afford funeral costs.

An application for Burial Assistance must be filed on behalf of the deceased individual. To do this, contact the local Departments of Social Service in the county where the individual resided.

What about Medical Care? Emergency/Financial Assistance

Helpful link: <http://dhr.maryland.gov/weathering-tough-times/medical-assistance/>

- **Maryland Children's Health Insurance Program**
- **Medicaid**
- **Maryland Pharmacy Assistance Program**
- **Medicare Buy-In Program**

Maryland Children's Health Insurance Program MCHIP

This program uses Federal and State funds to ensure that all children in Maryland have medical insurance. The program provides full health benefits for children up to age 19, and pregnant women of any age who meet the income guidelines. MCHIP provides care through a variety of Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) for:

- Children under age 19, who are not eligible for Medicaid
- Pregnant women of any age
- Whose countable income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty level
- Children of employed parents whose employer does not offer family health insurance (NOTE: Even if you have health insurance, it's best to apply and let the case manager assigned to your application determine your eligibility)

To apply, complete an application and provide the requested information. Applications can be mailed in or taken to any location listed below.

- Applications are available at the local Department of Social Services
- Applications are also available at your local health department, WIC Centers, and local hospitals and schools
- Applications can be mailed upon request by calling 1-800-456-8900

You will need:

1. General information about family members (names, birth dates and social security numbers)
2. Proof of income
3. If pregnant, written proof of pregnancy and expected date of delivery signed by your doctor or nurse.

Medicaid

Medicaid, also called Medical Assistance (MA) pays the medical bills of needy and low-income individuals.

Medicaid coverage is granted to individuals receiving other public assistance, including Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA), and Foster Care. Low-income families, children, pregnant women, and aged, blind, or disabled adults may also qualify.

You must file an application to find out if you are eligible for Medicaid. To do this, you can go to the local Department of Social Services (LDSS) in the city or county where you live or if you are applying for a child or a pregnant woman, you may apply at your local Health Department. You can also file an application on line at <https://mydhrbenefits.dhr.state.md.us>

The Maryland Medicaid Pharmacy Program Recipient Access Hotline

Recipients with pharmacy related issues may call the toll-free Medicaid Pharmacy Program Recipient Access Hotline at 1-800-492-5231. Local Baltimore Metropolitan area callers may dial 410-767-5800 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Do not use these numbers for eligibility or enrollment issues.

Medicare Buy-In Program

Medicare Buy-In Program also known as QMB (Qualified Medicare Beneficiary) and SLIMB (Specified Low-Income Medicare Beneficiary) is designed to protect low-income Medicare beneficiaries from the significant and growing costs required to receive Medicare coverage, including out-of-pocket cost sharing expenses (deductibles and co-payments).

Maryland Health Connection

Helpful Link: <https://www.marylandhealthconnection.gov/>

Maryland Health Connection is open to all legal residents of Maryland. In general, to obtain health coverage through Maryland Health Connection, you must live in Maryland and be a U.S. citizen or be

lawfully present. To enroll in a QHP, you cannot currently be incarcerated, except if you are incarcerated pending disposition.

Maryland Health Connection is for you if:

- You need health coverage
- You need health coverage and you're interested in finding out whether you are eligible for help with paying for your coverage through Medicaid, Maryland Children's Health Program or through a QHP
- Your employer doesn't insure you or doesn't offer affordable coverage. Employer coverage is considered affordable if the employee's share of the annual premium for self-only coverage is no greater than 9.66% of annual household income.
- The coverage offered by your employer doesn't meet some basic standards, known as providing "minimum value." Employer coverage provides "minimum value" if it covers 60 percent of health care costs on average. Your employer should be able to tell you if your plan meets this standard.
- You're self-employed
- You've been denied insurance due to a pre-existing condition
- You're insured but looking for cost savings

How can I get help with Food Costs? Emergency/Financial Assistance

Women, Infant and Children Program (WIC)

Helpful link: <http://www.howardcountymd.gov/displayprimary.aspx?id=4294969221>

WIC is a federally funded nutrition education program with healthy supplemental foods. The supplemental foods are purchased with WIC checks at local grocery stores. It is also a referral program for other health agencies.

It provides services to pregnant women, new mothers, infants and children under the age of five.

SNAP Program

Helpful link: www.dhr.maryland.gov/food-supplement-program/

The **Food Supplement Program (FSP)** formerly known as *Food Stamps* helps low-income households buy the food they need for good health. Everyone has the right to apply for FSP. For many applicants, we do not look at assets or resources when determining eligibility for FSP

You may be able to get FSP benefits if you:

1. work for low wages,
2. are unemployed or work part time,
3. receive Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) or other public assistance payments,
4. are elderly or disabled and live on a small income, or
5. are homeless.

Applicants must file an application and be interviewed. Some people who have little or no money qualify for food benefits right away. They must only have an interview and verify identity.

File an application with your local Department of Social Services. You may also file an application by mail, fax or to apply online, go to <https://mydhrbenefits.dhr.state.md.us>

- [Other organizations providing supplemental food services in Howard County](#)

Pantry	Address	Phone
Bridgeway Community Cupboard	9189 Red Branch Road Columbia, MD 21045	443.283.7260
Celebration Church	6080 Foreland Garth Columbia, MD 21045	410.772.0820
Eva Johnson Foundation	Tiber Hudson Apartments 3120 Burgess Mill Way, 2nd Floor Ellicott City, MD 21043	410.455.9290
FIRN (Foreign-born Information and Referral Network, Inc.)	5999 Harpers Farm Road, Suite E- 200 Columbia, MD 21044	410.992.1923
Howard County Food Bank	8920 Route 108, Suite A Columbia, MD 21045	410.313.6185
Mt. Pisgah AME Church	5901 Cedar Fern Court Columbia, MD 21045	410.730.6688
Mt. Zion United Methodist Church	12430 Scaggsville Road Highland, MD 20777	301-854-2324
St. John Baptist Church	5495 Cedar Lane Columbia, MD 21044	410.992.6977
Glenelg United Methodist Church	13900 Burntwoods Road Glenelg, MD 21737	410.489.7260
Dasher Green Head Start Center	6680 Cradlerock Way Columbia, MD 21045	410.313.6210
Ellicott City Head Start Center	8510 High Ridge RD	410.313.2750

	Ellicott City, MD 21043	
Old Cedar Land Head Start Center	5451 Beaverkill Road Columbia, MD 21045	410.313.7246 or 7257
Byrant Woods Elementary School	5450 Blue Heron Lane Columbia, MD 21044	410.313.6859
My Brother's Keeper Food Ministry at West Liberty UMC	2000 Sand Hill Road Marriottsville, MD 21104	410.751.2562
Solomons Porch Worship Center	10545 Guilford Road, Suite 104 Jessup, MD 20794	301.776.0000
Bread of Life Food Pantry	8901 Washington Street Savage, MD 20763	301-725-3944

I need help with Housing Emergency/Financial Assistance

HOUSING

The Howard County Department of Housing and Community Development works to provide affordable housing opportunities for low and moderate income residents of Howard County.

The Housing Choice Voucher Program (formerly known as "Section 8"), provides assistance for very low-income households (single or family), the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Participants who receive vouchers search for their own housing, which may include single-family homes, townhouses, and apartments, or even the family's present residence. The housing subsidy (by way of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development) is paid to the participating landlord directly by the Howard County Housing authority on behalf of the resident. This payment is paid with the caveat that the housing unit meets the requirements of the program.

The Public Housing Program is a program funded and regulated by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), created to assist lower income families to live in affordable, decent and safe housing. The housing agency owns the units rented to approved families. The participating families are required to pay 30% of their adjusted gross income toward rent and utilities.

Rental Assistance Program is a program funded and regulated by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, providing grants to local governments to assist low income families who either are homeless or have an emergency housing need with flat rent subsidies. The ultimate goal is to help families transition from homelessness or temporary emergency housing to permanent housing. Participating families find their own housing for rent, boarding house rooms, other single room

occupancy arrangements, apartments, group homes, transitional housing (provided it is not temporary emergency housing), single family houses, and mobile homes.

Affordable Housing - The Rental Housing Program leases affordable, decent and safe units of varying size and type to low- to- moderate income County residents. The family's monthly rent payment varies and is based on factors such as gross income, unit size and the affordable rent structure associated with the unit.

Address: Department of Housing and Community Development
6751 Columbia Gateway Drive, 3rd Floor
Columbia, MD 21046

Email: hcvhousing@howardcountymd.gov

Web: <http://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments.aspx?ID=2232>

Phone: (410) 313 – 6320

What about help with Legal Services or Transportation? Emergency/Financial Assistance

Transportation

RTA

410-313-1921

Provides transportation services to residents of Howard County that have low income, are elderly, and/or have a disability. Must have prior certification through this program.

For certification contact:

Riders with Disabilities 410-313-6402

Riders 60 + 410-313-7212

Riders with Low Income 410-313-6440

Please see <http://marylandtransit.org/>

HOWARD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT (MA HealthChoice Transportation Program)

410-313-6300

Provides assistance with transportation to and from medical appointments for individuals with Medical Assistance (MA).

HOWARD COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

410-313-7350

HCMHA has grant funds available to assist individuals served by the public mental health system in getting to counseling/outpatient treatment appointments.

Legal Services

- Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland: probonomd.org
- Maryland Legal Aid: mdlaborg. Local office 410-480-1057
- Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service: mvlslaw.org
- Maryland People's Law Library: peoples-law.info
- Maryland State Bar Association: msba.org
- American Bar Association: findlegalaid.org
- To search for attorneys admitted to practice in MD:
www.courts.state.md.us/cpf/attylist.html
- Attorney disciplinary actions: www.courts.state.md.us/attygrievance/sanctions.html
- Criminal Injuries Compensation Board: <http://www.dpscs.state.md.us/cicb>

Where can we obtain Bereavement/Counseling Services?

Steven Daniel Jeffrey's Foundation

5430-F Lynx Lane, Suite 246
Columbia, MD 21044
410-730-3310

Grief counseling referral service and professionally led specialized grief (Tears and Smiles) counseling groups for children and parents.

Gilchrist Grief Services

5537 Twin Knolls Rd., Suite 433
Columbia, MD 21045
443-849-8251

One-on-one counseling for children, adolescents, and adults dealing with the often overwhelming feelings and physical responses associated with a loss. Bereavement counselors possess a Master's degree in counseling and are licensed in the State of Maryland.

Congruent Counseling Services

10630 Little Patuxent Parkway, Suite 209
Columbia, MD. 21044
410-740-8066 / 410-740-8068 Fax

Congruent Counseling offers individual, family, marital, and group counseling. A psychiatrist is on staff to provide psychiatric evaluations and medication management. Therapists are on staff who specialize in working with children, teens, and adults. A broad range of issues are addressed including depression, anxiety, attention deficit, acting out behaviors, substance use and addictions, marital difficulties, and more.

Mental Health Authority

410-313-7350 - English Referrals
410-313-7376 - Spanish Referrals

Mental health treatment referral that covers children, adolescents, and adults who receive medical assistance and, in some cases, low-income uninsured.

Howard County Office of Children's Services

3300 North Ridge Road, Suite 380
Ellicott City, MD 21043
410-313-1940 / 410 313-1430 Fax

www.howardcountymd.gov/children

Provides free information and referral services to parents and community members who are looking for resources for children ages 0-18 years old. Locate: Child Care, is a specialized service that provides contact information for preschool and child care programs in Howard County. The CARE Center (Child and Adolescent Resources) also provides behavior intervention services for children in a child care or preschool program. This is a free service for children ages 0-5 years old. It is funded by the Maryland State Department of Education. The Office also offers educational programs for parents and caregivers. A quarterly workshop calendar is distributed throughout the community. The office will also conduct workshops off site at a parenting, community group or child care center.

Kidsline

410-461-1833

United Way sponsored telephone counseling for youngsters during after-school hours.

MSA-The Child and Adolescent Center

10005 Old Columbia Road, Suite L260
Columbia, MD 21046
866-853-4397 (toll free) or 443-259-0400

The program specializes in treating children and adolescents that are experiencing crisis. Serves children ages 6 to 18. The program also provides partial hospital and intensive outpatient services. The services include psychiatric evaluations, medication management, crisis intervention, individual, group and family therapy and expressive art therapy. The program serves patients with behavioral health as well as chemical dependency problems. Transportation is available.

Sheppard Pratt @ Howard County

Way Station, Inc. (WSI)

9030 Route 108, Suite A

Columbia, MD 21045

410-740-1901 / 410-740-2503 Fax

www.waystationinc.org

Outpatient mental health services include: Psychiatric evaluations, medication evaluation and management, individual, group and family therapy, psychological testing.

Sheppard Pratt @ Howard County provides In-Home Therapy for families with children in Howard County. A licensed clinician meets with families for approximately two hours a week in the privacy of the family's home. Clinicians work with children and families to address a variety of areas of concern including (but not limited to) oppositional behaviors, trauma, family conflict, clinically diagnosed issues, behavioral problems, anger, depression, anxiety, ADHD, truancy and loss. This service is billable through Medical Assistance if the individual is eligible, or through direct pay by clients. Contact: Liza Armstrong, Director, Child & Adolescent Services 410-740-1901 x.7726

Advanced Behavioral Health

301-345-1022 / Fax Referrals: 301-560-5558

Off-Site Counseling Services (OCS) – In-home therapy provided by licensed therapists to children, adolescents and their families who have Medicaid/MA as their health insurance. Minimum 2 visits per week in the home, school or other client-determined location.

The Care Center – Early Childhood Mental Health Project

410-313-CARE

children@howardcountymd.gov

The Early Childhood Mental Health program can help child care providers and early childhood educators with children ages 0-5 years of age that have difficult and disruptive behavior. CARE Center behavior specialists work on site and provide observations and consultations with families and educators to provide intervention and support to decrease challenging behaviors.

Lighthouse Center for Therapy and Play

7126 Water Oak Road

Elkridge, MD 21075

240-389-2685

www.lighthouseplaytherapy.com

Specializing in working with children, adolescents and families, Lighthouse uses play and talk therapy to treat trauma, anxiety, depression, and ADHD.

Mobile Crisis Team:

410-531-6677

The Howard County Mobile Crisis Team (MCT) is available free of charge to any Howard County resident or individual present in Howard County at the time of a mental health crisis. MCT is a partnership with the

Howard County Police Department and Grassroots. During hours of operation, MCT staff are able to respond to psychiatric crisis identified by the Police. Hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. seven days a week.

**Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center:
410-531-6006**

Provides telephone counseling, free walk-in counseling, emergency shelter for homeless, 24-hour suicide hotline, Mobile Crisis Team 7 days/week, and a Runaway Teen Program that provides crisis intervention for runaway youth and their families.

**Network of Care
Howard.md.networkofcare.org**

Network of Care for Behavioral Health is an online information site for individuals, families, and agencies concerned with mental and emotional wellness. This online community provides critical information, communication and advocacy tools.

MPB Group, Inc

The Banneker Building
5840 Banneker Road, Suite 270
Columbia, MD 21044

1-866-371-5933 (toll free) or 443-542-0811

Provides individual, family and group therapy, individual tutoring, therapeutic mentoring, psychological and psychiatric evaluations, medication management to children, adolescents and adults. Services for children and adolescents focus on sexual abuse/physical abuse/neglect, attachment/bonding issues, trauma (PTSD), grief/loss & bereavement, substance abuse, anxiety/panic disorders, regulatory difficulties (ADHD, OCD), mood disorders (depression), behavioral issues (oppositional defiant), developmental disabilities (PDD, autism), infant/preschool child therapy, play/therapy and parenting.

***INFORMATION REGARDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES LISTED IN THIS DIRECTORY DOES NOT REFLECT ANY RECOMMENDATION OR ENDORSEMENT FOR THE PROVIDERS/PROFESSIONALS LISTED.**

Frequently Asked Questions about School Enrollment

1. Where do you start with enrolling a child in a school for the first time?

If this is the first time the child will be enrolled in any school, **call the school** and ask what you must bring with you to enroll the child. At a minimum, most schools require the following documents:

- ✓ Birth certificate
- ✓ Proof of custody/guardianship (documentation which determines where the child resides and who has the decision-making authority)
- ✓ Parent/Guardian picture I.D., accepted documents are: Driver's License, Military I.D. or Passport
- ✓ Proof of residency
- ✓ Record of immunization (DHMH Form 896)

If you do not have these documents, you will be referred to the Pupil Personnel Worker assigned to the school of enrollment for further assistance.

2. What do I do if a child is transferring from one school to another?

Call the school the child last attended and ask the school what information is needed to transfer the child. Tell them the last day the child will attend school.

Call the child's new school and schedule an appointment. Be sure you bring all the required documents. The appointment will ensure that time is set aside to speak with you and to answer any questions you may have. Also, ask what items you need to bring with you to enroll the child in a new school.

3. Why is proof of custody/guardianship required?

Proof of custody/guardianship is required to identify who is legally responsible for the child and who can be contacted in case of an emergency. This tells the school who can make educational decisions for the child. Acceptable documentation includes:

- ✓ Birth certificate (which identifies the parents)
- ✓ Court order
- ✓ Separation or divorce decree
- ✓ A military power of attorney

*Parent names(s) on proof of identity documents(s) must be consistent with the name(s) on document(s) providing proof of custody.

4. Why do I need to bring the current Individual Education Program (IEP) for my child who receives Special Education services?

This will ensure that your child receives, at the new school, the appropriate special education instruction and related services, which were specifically developed for your child. It will also provide

the school with the dates for the annual IEP review of your child's program as well as any re-evaluation that may be required.

5. Do I need to bring the most recent report card and/or withdrawal grades?

It is not required, but this information is very helpful in matching up a continuing program for your child. It tells the school what courses your child was taking and may indicate the instructional level. For elementary children, it may indicate the reading or math, benchmark with which your child was being taught. For high school students, it may indicated credit earned and/or graduation requirements which have been met.

If you have any questions or need additional information you can contact the Counseling Specialist or Pupil Personnel Specialist at 410-767-0295.

What about Maryland State Department of Education School Programs?

Early Childhood:

Maryland's Early Childhood Intervention and Education System of Services for Children with Disabilities (Birth through 5)

The Early Childhood Intervention Education (ECIE) Branch includes the Maryland Infant and Toddlers Program and Preschool Special Education Services for Children with disabilities age birth through five and their families.

Howard County Public School System (HCPSS): Early Childhood Programs, the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten website pages offer many resources for families of young children, including helpful tips for promoting school readiness for children. There are resources available to assist you and your child with the transition to kindergarten, including a videotaped session of a parent workshop. You can also preview the curriculum and learn about registration procedures.

www.hcpss.org/schools/kindergarten/k_readiness.shtml

www.hcpss.org/students

Early Intervention Services

Early intervention services are designed to provide a program of developmental intervention directly to children with disabilities from birth to five years of age, to the parent, or both. Additional information regarding early intervention programs is available from the Office of Early Intervention Services at 410-313-7017.

What about transportation to school?

Student Eligibility for Transportation

1. Transportation services will be provided to students when the distance between their home and the home school is greater than the following:
 1. Half-day Pre-Kindergarten morning, noontime and afternoon: 0.5 mile
 2. Half-day Kindergarten, morning and afternoon: 1.0 mile
 3. Half-day Kindergarten noontime: 0.5 mile
 4. Full-day Kindergarten through Grade 8: 1.0 mile
 5. Grades 9 through 12: 1.5 miles
2. The bona fide residence of the parent/guardian will be used to determine eligibility for transportation services. Distance will be calculated as follows:

Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, Elementary and combined K-8 School students:

- Detached homes and townhouses – Measurement will be from the residence property line to the door(s) identified as the entrance to the school.
- Apartment complexes and condominium – Measurement will be from the entrance to the building to the door(s) identified as the entrance to the school.

Middle and High School Students:

- Detached homes and townhouses – Measurement will be from the residence property line to the property line of the school.
- Apartment complexes and condominiums – Measurement will be from the entrance to the building to the property line of the school.

Other transportation services:

- The parent of a child in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 8 who is eligible for transportation services may request alternate bus services.
- The parent of a child in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 8 who is not eligible for transportation service may request bus services to or from a daycare provider, if space is available.
- Temporary transportation services may be provided when the presence of unsafe walkways or pathways exists, or when a student's medical condition warrants.

Accessing Transportation Services

All transportation services must be accessed through the school that the student is scheduled to attend. Parents/guardians may contact the school if they believe that the student(s) is/are eligible for transportation services.

Transportation services provided to a student with an IEP/504 plan will be provided in accordance with that plan, as well as federal, state, and local laws/regulations.

Changes to Students' Personal Data:

If there are changes to a student's personal data such as:

- Address
- Emergency contact information
- Phone number

This may impact transportation services; the parents/guardians must provide the updated information to the student's school.

School Nutrition

School and Community Nutrition Programs Branch:

Financial Assistance is available depending on family income.

Applying for Free and Reduced Price School Meals

To apply for free or reduced-priced meals families should complete an online application, OR complete, sign and return a paper application, which is available at your students school.

- ✓ To apply online, please go to the website www.applyforlunch.com. Once the application has been submitted and reviewed, eligibility notifications will be sent to the home address provided in the application.
- ✓ To apply using a paper application, please request an application from any HCPSS school office or call the HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service Office at 410-313-6738

If you are earning at or below current Income Eligibility Guidelines, we encourage you to contact your school to fill out a school meal application. The school or local education agency will process your application and issue an eligibility determination.

If you are receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) benefits, your child automatically qualifies for free school meals. Please contact your child's school to determine if you need to fill out an application.

You should know...

If you are eligible for unemployment compensation, you might also be eligible for a free or reduced price school meal.

With the cooperation of the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration, we are reaching out to vulnerable households affected by current economic conditions. State Workforce Agency Administrators have been asked to inform those seeking unemployment benefits about the availability of free and reduced school meals. Please contact your school for additional information and assistance.

School Breakfast

This program is open to all children up to the age of 21 who are enrolled in public and nonprofit schools and residential child care institutions. School breakfasts are available in most public schools in Maryland.

Parents may call their child's school for details. If school breakfast is not available, parent are encouraged to call or write the principal to express interest in the program.

How much does breakfast cost?

Students who are eligible based on family income may eat school breakfast free of cost or at reduce-price of no more than 30 cents. Other students pay the price set by the local school system.

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