



Summer 2020

Informing Families...Today and Tomorrow

A resource of the Washington State DD Council

SUMMERTIME in the AGE of SOCIAL DISTANCING

Life has changed dramatically in these past few months, but that doesn't mean social and physical activities come to a halt. There are things to do and ways to connect, both inside and outside the home. This special edition COVID-19 issue offers resources for connection, support and engagement for this summer and beyond.



Staying Healthy, Connected and Hopeful this Summer and Beyond

Normally, summer is a time for relaxation, family vacations, and outdoor activities. Instead, we are facing what may be the most challenging experience of our lifetimes.

During the COVID-19 crisis, I have often thought about the proverb, "The darkest hour is just before the dawn." Most of us know someone who has had COVID-19. Some have had it ourselves, and many have grieved the loss of someone we care about.

And while everyone has struggled in some way to adapt to a changing world, people with developmental disabilities and their families face some of the greatest challenges.

Disconnection from friends and family. Reduced access to supports, services, and personal protective equipment. Fear about contracting COVID-19 and whether or not the right care will be provided.

This experience has pushed us to our limits in so many ways. But we

are also witnessing something truly remarkable—countless examples of perseverance, creativity, and hope.

Many folks are using technology and social media in new ways to connect with others. Zoom and other video platforms have suddenly become second nature. Neighbors are looking out for each other and healthcare professionals continue to put their lives on the line to keep us safe.

Mr. Rogers once said, "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping." Truer words

could not be said about what we are seeing now.

We know life will look very different for a while, but I truly believe we will emerge from this crisis even stronger and more resilient than before.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me to learn more about the work of the Developmental Disabilities Council, or to share your perspectives. Feel free to call me at 360-586-3558 or send me an email at jeremy.norden-paul@ddc.wa.gov.

Please consider taking our brief survey about your needs and challenges during the COVID-19 crisis and beyond (find a link in the green box below-left). Your input will help us create our new State Plan for the next five years.

Thank you for reading. I hope you and your family stay healthy, connected, and hopeful.

Jeremy Norden-Paul
Executive Director
Washington State DD Council



We'd Love To
Hear From You.
ddc.wa.gov/survey



Resources to Help You GET CONNECTED

Telecommunication Equipment Distribution (TED)

The COVID-19 pandemic has reaffirmed the vital role that accessible telecommunications play in providing access to work, health care, and social connections.

Almost overnight, what once was viewed as an accommodation for some is now the norm for all.

Thanks to the Telecommunication Equipment Distribution (TED) program, people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or who have a speech impairment, can get the assistance they need to communicate during these difficult times (and beyond).

The cost of the equipment is determined by a sliding scale. Equipment may be at reduced cost or free of charge depending on income level.

Types of telecommunication provided by TED include:

- Picture phones
- TTY phones
- iPad Air/iPad Mini (WiFi only, 16GB, w/black Otter Box case)

- iPhones (data plans not incl.)

TED also provides anything an individual needs to access the equipment (e.g., switches, mounts, and speech generating apps.)

ELIGIBILITY

TED training is free to anyone who lives in Washington State (over age 4) and who is deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, or has difficulty with speech is eligible for help from the TED program.

TED helps many different types of people, including those with autism, strokes, Cerebral Palsy, and more. A diagnosis is not necessary to qualify.

HOW TO APPLY

TED is administered by the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH). Applications for those with speech impairments will be received by ODHH, and the information then given to PROVAIL for individuals with speech and physical access needs.

Visit informingfamilies.org/ted for application and information links.

Phone and Internet



CELL PHONES AND PLANS

Lifeline Assistance is the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) program that provides individuals with low-income access to free cell phones and wireless or internet service for up to \$9.25/month. Learn More: lifelinesupport.org.



INTERNET SERVICE

EveryoneOn is a nonprofit organization that connects low-income families to affordable internet service and computers, and providing digital skills training. Learn More: everyoneon.org.

Comcast Internet Essentials provides internet service for \$9.95 per month, plus tax to persons eligible for public assistance programs such as the National School Lunch Program, Housing Assistance, Medicaid, SNAP, SSI, and others. Learn more: internetessentials.com.



Are Remote Supports Right for Me?

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many people are turning to technology to participate in activities they would usually do in person.

Technology can play a key role in helping you go about your day to day business even if you need to stay at home.

The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) is now offering remote supports for some services when a client, case manager and their provider agree that receiving the support remotely will be safe and effective.

Do the following statements apply to you?

- ▶ My provider talks me through things a lot of the time.
- ▶ I don't need hands on assistance

while my provider is helping me.

- ▶ I prefer to stay away from others right now to stay healthy.
- ▶ My provider and I agree that we can work on the same things we used to face to face over phone or internet.

If so, you may be eligible to receive remote supports and should contact your DDA Case Manager to talk about whether you may be eligible.

Your case manager wants you to be safe and to make sure you receive quality supports. They may ask you a few questions when you call them, such as:

- ▶ What you and your provider plan to do together remotely?
- ▶ What technology you and your provider plan to use and if you

have the technology in your home already?

- ▶ What kind of supervision and support you need during the day?

If you need frequent physical assistance or interventions, your case manager will talk with you about who else in the household can assist you during your remote support services.

Remote support is not for everyone.

It is important to talk with your provider and case manager about how your supports are working for you.

You can change your mind any time and can ask for a change in how you receive your supports if you want to.

Need DDA services?

The NEXT STEP is UP to YOU

The first step in receiving services from the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) is applying for DDA eligibility.

If your family member is on the No Paid Services caseload, they have been determined DDA eligible.

The next step is up to you.

- ▶ Call the phone number provided in your notice of DDA eligibility; OR
- ▶ Complete an online Service & Information Request form at: dshs.wa.gov/dda/service-and-information-request.

You do not need name a specific service in your request (but if you do know, that's just fine too). Just fill out the online form, asking for more information about services to meet your family member's needs, and someone from your regional office will get back to you.

MANY NON-DDA SERVICES CAN BE PROVIDED REMOTELY, INCLUDING:

- Medical and Mental Health
- Early Childhood Intervention Evaluations
- Speech, Language and Occupational Therapies
- School Based Health Care Services

Check with your health care provider, Managed Care Organization (MCO), and/or school for more information.

State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Developmental Disabilities Administration
P.O. Box 45310
Olympia, WA 98504-5310

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WAS STATE DEPT
OF ENTERPRISE SRVCS
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Summer Resources for Fun & Support

Connect & Engage

Find virtual activities and learning opportunities through local and statewide parent and self advocacy organizations, such as Parent to Parent, local Arc chapters, Best Buddies Washington, People First and Special Olympics. Visit informingfamilies.org/connect to learn more.

Get Outdoors: Free & Reduced Park Fees

Washington State Parks offers passes that reduce or waive camping, moorage, watercraft launch fees and day use for limited income senior citizens, disabled veterans, foster parents and people with disabilities. To apply, visit: parks.state.wa.us/205/Passes.

Summer Meals for Kids

The Summer Meals program picks up where school meal programs leave off in June, providing free meals and snacks to kids age 18 and under all summer long. All kids are welcome, and some sites allow adults to purchase a meal as well. No proof of income, address or citizenship is ever required. Find sites near you: parenthelp123.org/resources/summer-meals-program.

If you have a question about Summer Meals, call the Family Food Hotline at 1-888-436-6392.

