

Children's Services Respite Programs

Parent Handbook

Glenville and Albany locations

55 Helping Hand Lane
Glenville, NY 12302

314 S. Manning Blvd.
Albany, NY 12208

Telephone: (518) 437-5540

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Our Philosophy..... | 3 |
| Eligibility..... | 3 |
| Service coordination..... | 3 |
| Waiting List..... | 4 |
| Registration and Enrollment..... | 4 |
| Annual updates..... | 5 |
| Fees..... | 5 |
| Temporary Discontinuation of program..... | 5 |
| Changes in Enrollment..... | 6 |
| Personal Belongings..... | 6 |
| Health Policies..... | 6 |
| When Should I Keep My Child Home?..... | 7 |
| Nutrition..... | 8 |
| Parent Involvement..... | 8 |
| Classroom Communication..... | 9 |
| Enrichment Opportunities..... | 10 |
| Conclusion..... | 11 |

Welcome to Children's Services Respite Program!

The Children's Services Respite Programs (Including Langan After School, Clover Patch After School, Langan School Vacation and Glenville Respite) are OMRDD funded programs and meet all OMRDD regulations.

Our Philosophy

The mission of all Children's Services Respite Programs is to provide individuals who have a diagnosis of a developmental disability(s) with after school and school vacation activities and care. These programs offer recreational activities for individuals in a safe and fun environment with the intent to promote exploration of the individual's interests. These programs strive to provide a staff to child ratio of up to 1:2 to ensure optimum supervision and support for individuals. Depending on the level of supervision required this ratio may increase to 1:3.

Eligibility

The Children's Services Respite Programs admit children regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, or economic status. To be eligible for the Respite program an individual must have a diagnosis of a developmental disability and must have OMRDD eligibility determined or be enrolled in the HCBS Waiver program. If you are unfamiliar with OMRDD or the Waiver program please speak with you Service Coordinator or contact the program supervisor to assist you with the enrollment process. The Children's Services Respite Programs offer the unique ability to enroll individuals who have 'provisional' eligibility for Waiver services. Once again, contact the program supervisor to discuss this further. These programs have been created with a maximum staff to child ratio of 1:2 (often this will be 1:3), and based on this model; it is the program supervisor's discretion to determine if an individual can be safely accommodated.

Priority admission is given to children who are currently enrolled in the Langan School and Clover Patch Pre-school.

Service Coordination/Waiver Enrollment

The Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver program is essential for enrollment in Children's Services Respite Programs. Enrollment in the waiver provides families with funding and access to programs and services throughout the area and in many agencies with the intent to enrich and provide support for families of those with a disability. In essence the

idea is to provide an individual with the opportunity to “Get better at life” which is the very mission of the Center For Disability Services.

A key resource in accessing the Waiver and the programs it offers is the Service Coordinator. The service coordinator is charged with assisting families and individuals in finding appropriate programs and support as well as enrollment in those programs. The service coordinator serves as the family’s advocate in pursuing these services. The Center For Disability Services offers service coordination and the Service Coordination Department can be contacted at (518) 738-0020. We encourage families to explore this option as it will provide opportunities and programming beyond Respite Services.

Waiting List

Unless there is a current enrollment vacancy available for your family member they will be placed on the program waitlist for the program you have chosen to apply for. The waitlist is created in chronological order, based on when the individual’s application and chart were submitted and completed. Those individuals who are currently enrolled in Clover Patch programs or the Langan School will be given priority on the waitlist.

Registration and Enrollment

The enrollment process for Children’s Services Respite Programs is as follows:

- Program tour: The family must contact the program supervisor and set up a time to tour the program(s) they are interested in. At this time the program supervisor will discuss eligibility requirements, details and will answer any questions the family has concerning the program. It is encouraged that the family’s service coordinator attend this tour. At this time the program supervisor will provide the family with the application for enrollment. If it is apparent that the individual may not be suitable for program (requiring a 1:1, does not have waiver etc.) the program supervisor will discuss this with the family at this point.
- The family, with assistance from their service coordinator, will complete the application and send this along with other required documentation to the enrollment specialist listed in the application who will ensure all proper documentation is included. The enrollment specialist will work with applicants and their Service Coordinator throughout the enrollment process.
- When the application is complete the Program supervisor and Supervising RN of the program will review the application to ensure the individual can be safely accommodated in program. The individual is then placed on the program waitlist unless an opening is currently available that meets the family’s request. If the program cannot safely or adequately meet the needs of the individual, the family will be contacted by the program supervisor.

When an opening becomes available, you will be contacted by the Program Supervisor, who will confirm your requested schedule and will select a start date. As it is critical to fill openings as

soon as they occur, you will be asked to make a decision within 24 hours following the program supervisor offering the family enrollment. If the family does not want services at this time the next individual on the waitlist will be offered the spot in program.

In order to ease your child's transition into program, you are encouraged to bring your child for short visits prior to your child's start date.

Annual Updates

To remain in compliance with OMRDD regulations, the Respite Programs require that the following information is updated on an annual basis (within 1 year):

- IEP
- Physical
- TB test (PPD, Mantoux or X-Ray when required)
- Behavior support plan if required
- Immunization Record
- Program specific releases
- Emergency information card
- Parent/guardian permission for medication/treatment administration

The Respite Program will also require the following information to up dated every six(6) months:

- Medical prescriptions/treatment orders
- ISP

The program will periodically send out notifications to families listing which items will need to up dated and by what deadline. If the information required is not up dated by the deadline the individual may be suspended from program until that item is updated.

Fees

As the Respite Programs are funded through the HCBS Waiver, there is no fee for families.

Late Pick-up- If a child remains after their scheduled time or program closing time; the family will be contacted by the program supervisor to discuss the matter. It is important that individuals be picked up at the appropriate times agreed upon to ensure proper ratios are maintained and that program staff can leave work in a timely fashion. Persistent lateness may result in the dismissal from the program, at the discretion of the Program Supervisor.

Temporary Discontinuation of Enrollment

At times, parents may wish to discontinue services for their child for a short period of time (e.g. the summer months, maternity leave). The Respite program cannot hold spaces for children of

families in such situations. If a family elects to withdraw their child for a specific time period, the Program Supervisor will contact the parents prior to filling the last space in the child's classroom. At that time the family may re-enroll the child or forfeit the space.

Changes in Enrollment

Parents must provide two weeks written notice for any changes in the child's enrollment, for example, an increase or decrease in the number of days or withdrawal from Program. Increasing the individual's schedule will be contingent on the availability of space in program.

Personal Belongings

We ask that valuable personal belongings not be brought to program. This includes but is not limited to jewelry, money, expensive clothing or items of sentimental value (i.e. an old family quilt for naptime). The respite program is not able to accept responsibility for any lost or missing items.

Health Policies

To ensure that the children in our care are safe and healthy, we ask that you adhere to the following health policies:

-Upon enrollment your child must have a complete physical examination.
Each child's medical record must be updated annually and when your child receives Immunizations.

-When your child is in program, staff will follow general health guidelines and will consult directly with the Program Nurse or Supervisor to determine when a child is too ill to remain in program. The Program Nurse or Supervisor will make the decision when a child must go home due to illness.

Allergies- Any known allergies or changes in health conditions should be reported to the program nurse, or supervisor in her absence.

Accidents and Injuries- A written report will be completed in the event of an accident or injury. If injury requires immediate medical care, the parent/ legal guardian or emergency backup will be notified. If necessary, 911 will be called.

Child Abuse and Neglect- Our staff are required by New York State Law to report known or suspected cases of abuse or neglect to the State Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment.

Administration of Medication- If possible medications should be provided at home but we understand that there will be times when your child will require medication while at Respite. Parents are required to provide the Program Nurse with a signed and dated prescription from the child's

physician. At the Respite Program ONLY the Program Nurse can administer medication. Each medication must be in its original container and the properly labeled measuring device must be provided by the parent. The Center cannot be responsible for mixing or preparing any medication.

All medications require a physician's signed instructions on the provided form, with the following exceptions: sun screen, diaper cream, etc.

Helpful Hint! Some parents ask the pharmacist to prepare their child's medication in two separate labeled containers. That way, one can be sent to Program for administration during the day and one can be kept at home. Then, there is no worry about leaving the medicine at home or at Program!

Seizure Disorders- Individuals may be excluded when their level of consciousness or neurological condition interferes with their ability to participate. Increased somnolence or seizure activity may be a sign of illness, medication toxicity or deterioration in medical condition. The nurse should assess any changes in neurological status and upon his/her determination exclude the individual until seen by appropriate medical provider.

When Should I Keep My Child at Home? In an effort to provide children and staff with the healthiest possible environment, it is important that you observe the following health policies. Please note that it is the Program Nurse's discretion to exclude an individual from program. A child should be kept at home or will be sent home if she/he has:

Diarrhea- A child should not be brought to program if she/he is still experiencing loose or watery stools and/or shows other signs of illness.

Vomiting- If a child vomits (not to be confused with occasional spit-ups) he/she will be sent home **immediately**. A child who has vomited in the preceding 24 hours and has a poor appetite, or shows frequent signs of illness, should not be brought to day care.

Fever- Temperatures of 101 degrees or over or 2.5 degrees over/**or under** their baseline temperature or according to medical providers recommendations.

Upper Respiratory Congestion- Since green or yellowish drainage (discharge) is most always an indication of an infection, it is recommended that the child be seen by a physician. If an infection is present, your child may return program 24 hours after being on an antibiotic or with written permission from your doctor.

Communicable Illness- Please notify the program Nurse or Supervisor if your child has been exposed to a communicable illness. These illnesses include but are not limited to:

Chicken Pox
Impetigo
Coxsackie Virus
Ring Worm
Skin Infections

Roseola
Conjunctivitis
Strep Throat
Pneumonia
Head Lice

Your child should remain at home while the illness is contagious. The program nurse or designee will provide you with written guidelines on the symptoms and treatment of these illnesses whenever there is an exposure in your child's classroom. To ensure the health and safety of all children, the Program Nurse or Supervisor may require written documentation from a physician for a child to return to program following an illness.

When There Is No Nurse- In the event that there is no nurse present at program, some children may not be able to attend program that day. This decision is made on an individual basis and is determined by the medical needs of the individual. We at the Respite programs will give as much notice as possible to families affected by the Nurse's absence, especially if it is a scheduled absence.

Nutrition

Depending on your child's schedule and which program they are enrolled there is the potential that they will be having lunch at program.

- Glenville Respite Program: Parents will need to provide lunch
- Langan School Vacation: Lunch is provided from the cafeteria unless parents opt to send in a lunch.
- Clover Patch After School Program: no lunch is provided due to program hours.
- Langan After School Program: no lunch is provided due to program hours.

Please note, we ask all families who send in food items to respect the agencies Peanut-Free policy as many individuals who attend program may have allergies.

At all Respite programs an afternoon snack is provided via the cafeterias at either location. The snack menu is approved by a dietician and we look for snacks that are low in sugar, fat and sodium.

Parent Involvement

Visits: We believe that parent visits can enhance the program by promoting continuity and communication between program and home. We have an open door policy; we encourage and welcome visits from parents at any time.

Family Surveys: Besides daily communication and visits from parents and family members, the Respite Programs provide an annual survey to encourage families to give their input on programming and how well we're delivering services. This is a very valuable tool, which allows us to continuously develop our programs according to the needs of those who we serve.

Classroom Communication

Arrivals and Departures:

Most days, your child will be transitioning from their school program to the Respite Program. Almost always though, children will be picked up from program by a parent or an approved caregiver at the end of the day. When picking up, we ask that families use the visitor parking provided at each site and that they enter the facility through Door Number One. Most locations will require you to have a code to get in the building after a certain time. This code will be provided to you upon enrollment in program. This measure has been put in place to ensure the safety of the children attending our programs. If your child will be leaving earlier than normal on a particular day, it is helpful to let the program staff know what time your child will be picked up. We ask that you leave us with a list of all people authorized to pick up your child. If someone other than yourself comes to pick up your child, we will check the list and ask them for identification. For each classroom there will be a sign in/out sheet for caregivers to complete upon arrival or departure from program.

Schedules: The children engage in a variety of activities throughout the day in the areas of language development, socialization, and small and large muscle development. Being that the Respite programs are recreational in nature, play is the major avenue through which young children learn and develop basic skills and concepts. These programs take full advantage of the facilities available to them including the gym, swimming facilities and playgrounds. Unless the weather is too cold/hot or too wet, each day the children will have an opportunity to be outdoors—either playing on the playground or taking a discovery walk in the neighborhood.

Daily Communication: Open communication is an important ingredient to your child's day. If you are unable to speak to your child's staff at drop-off or pick-up times, feel free to call during the day. It is important for our staff to receive any pertinent information that could affect your child's day. As well, the Respite programs will provide a small notebook for communication. This is a very helpful tool for both staff and families to communicate (especially on those very busy days).

Behavior: In any classroom, there is a wide range of behaviors. Our primary concerns regarding behavior are: to ensure the safety and well-being of children at all times, to recognize individual differences, and to facilitate growth and development. Children must also know what is expected of them and our expectations must be appropriate for the age of the children. Therefore, staff will talk with the children about simple, common sense rules for the classroom. When rules are simple and logical, they are easy to follow. These simple classroom rules will be shared with you also.

If your child has a current Behavior Support Plan the Respite Program must have a copy of the most up to date version of that plan (this plan should be updated annually). This will ensure that staff at Respite handle target behaviors appropriately and consistently with other programs as well as at home. All Respite Staff are SCIP-R (Strategies in Crisis Intervention and Prevention) certified according to OMRDD regulations and are recertified annually.

When a child engages in a behavior that is not acceptable (because it is unsafe or unkind to another), staff help the child identify the behavior that was inappropriate and help the child find an appropriate behavior. Staff emphasize the use of language/communication rather than physical actions; and use other techniques such as redirecting the child to an activity that eliminates that cause of the behavior, active listening to help the child use language/communication to deal with frustrations, offering choices to the child to promote self direction and self esteem. If the child needs an opportunity to calm down, the staff will direct the child to a quiet area away from the group and activity. This is a positive approach to help children use calming techniques and to establish the contingency that appropriate behavior is required for participation in activities.

When an unsafe behavior continues even after the techniques above have been used, the staff will employ the techniques outlined in his or her Behavior Support Plan. If there is no current plan or there is an unsafe behavior that is not addressed in the plan, staff will physically hold the child to prevent him/her from engaging in the unsafe behavior (hitting others, biting, throwing things) or remove the child from the classroom until he/she is calm. Whenever these techniques have been necessary, you will be informed. The staff will communicate with you and discuss with you ideas for preventing the behavior in the future.

It is part of the child's development to learn what is and what is not acceptable behavior. Our job (staff and parents) is to help the child in this developmental process, to help them build strong self-esteem, to facilitate learning, and to help the child acquire self-control. Open, direct, and continuous communication between staff and parents is important in this process. We welcome your questions and suggestions.

Newsletters: Parents will periodically receive newsletters from the Program Supervisor about program events or developments, upcoming events at the Center, and community events that may interest you.

Enrichment Opportunities:

Field Trips/In-House activities: An important part of our curriculum is offering the children experiences within the community. We plan field trips within the community, and we invite individuals from the community to come to us to share a special gift or talent. Parents will be notified of field trips and asked to complete a permission slip in order for your child to participate.

Integration: Both the Glenville and Albany locations of these programs provide numerous services to various populations. Due to this these programs have the unique ability to foster integration with the community at large. Many times the Respite programs will have opportunities to engage in activities with other programs and/or classrooms.

Conclusion

We hope that you and your child enjoy being a part of Children's Services Respite Programs. The Respite Program is a partnership between parents and caregivers. Through communication, caring, and nurturing, we hope the partnership is successful. Children need attention, love, and guidance. We must continue to strive to ensure that these essential elements are included in our daily routine. We want you and your family to have a healthy child, happy childcare experience, and we are happy you have selected the Respite program.

Children's Services Respite Programs:

This is to verify that I have received and read The Parent Handbook for the Children's Services Respite Programs.

Signature: _____ Date: _____