

Respite Policy		DATE APPROVED	August 1994
BRANCH/DIVISION:	Children's disABILITY Services (CDS)/ Community Service Delivery	APPLICABLE TO	Children's disABILITY Services
RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY:		NEXT REVIEW DATE	
	ADM, Community Service Delivery Department of Families	DATE REVIEWED:	March 2019
POLICY OWNER:	Director, CDS	DATE REVISED	March 2019

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Respite can make a significant positive difference to families raising children with disabilities. Children's disABILITY Services provides respite to strengthen families, to reduce caregiver and family stress, and to support families to stay together longer, when this is in the best interest of the child and family.

2.0 BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

Families caring for children with disabilities may experience additional challenges that can be emotionally and physically demanding. Parents may need time away from the additional responsibilities of caring for a child with a disability.

3.0 PURPOSE OF RESPITE

The purpose of respite is:

- 1) To provide families with a temporary break in order to:
 - Relieve parents from some of the additional demands of caring for a child with a disability;
 - Provide parents with time to meet their own personal needs; and/or
 - Provide parents time to spend with other family members, including other children.
- 2) To provide children with disabilities opportunities to participate in age-appropriate social, recreational and developmental activities that promote independence and personal growth.
 - Respite care is distinct from, and is not a substitute for child care arrangements, nursery school, before and after school programs, or other long-term arrangements intended to meet the child care needs of the family.
 - Respite is not provided during school hours for school-age children.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

AN AGREEMENT FOR SELF-ADMINISTERED RESPITE SERVICES: is the title of the contract between Children's disABILITY Services and parents in a self-managed respite arrangement. It describes the terms and conditions of the arrangement.

COMMUNITY SERVICES WORKERS: are the Children's disABILITY Services staff persons responsible for assessing parents need for services and for planning respite services.

DIRECT SERVICE PROVIDERS: are casual staff hired and managed by Children’s disABILITY Services to deliver respite services.

PARENT: for the purposes of this policy, refers to the person(s) legally responsible for the care and custody of the child open to Children’s disABILITY Services. Parent may refer to birth, step or adoptive parents or the legal guardian.

SELF-MANAGED RESPITE: is an arrangement between Children’s disABILITY Services and parents. Parents are provided with direct funding to reimburse approved costs for purchasing respite services from a service provider managed by parents.

5.0 POLICY

5.1 ELIGIBILITY

Families may be eligible for respite if they meet the following criteria:

- Raising a child who is open to Children’s disABILITY Services; and
- There is an identified need for parents to have a break from the additional disability related demands of parenting a child with disabilities that cannot be met with available formal and informal supports.

5.2 SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Respite services may be provided by departmental, agency staff or family-managed service providers funded by Children’s disABILITY Services.

Respite care is provided in the family home or in the community on a time-limited basis according to the assessed needs of the family and the needs of the child with the disability.

The child who is open to Children’s disABILITY Services must be present during the provision of respite services. As respite is designed to relieve parents, respite may also include the siblings of the child with disabilities.

Families are not relinquishing their parental rights during respite, nor are respite providers acting in a co-parenting capacity.

5.3 ELIGIBLE EXPENSES/FUNDING

The amount of respite offered is based on the individual assessed disability-related needs of the child and family, and the availability of human resources and funding.

Funding is intended solely to compensate the respite worker for their services.

5.4 BASIC AND ADEQUATE

Respite supports will be provided in a basic and adequate way, i.e. the minimum required to meet the assessed needs of the child and family. Determining what is basic and adequate depends on the child’s disability-related needs, family capacity and other available supports.

While parents of typically developing children may also require breaks from the responsibilities of parenting, Children’s disABILITY Services respite services are intended to provide a break from the additional demands of parenting children with disabilities.

6.0 PROCEDURES

6.1 ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING

Assessment and planning with a Community Services Worker are required to determine families' respite needs.

ASSESSMENT

The assessment will consider the child's disability-related needs and the family's available formal and informal supports, including those not currently accessed by the family.

In assessing the needs of the child, consideration should be given to the skills and abilities of typically developing children.

PLANNING

Respite plans will be developed using a family-centered approach in partnership with families, department staff and respite providers to meet the needs of the family. Respite plans will be reviewed regularly.

6.2 RESPITE DELIVERY

Respite can be delivered in the following ways:

- 1) **Department-managed respite** through Direct Service Providers hired by the department;
- 2) Respite providers contracted by families who **self-manage** their respite service; and
- 3) **Agencies** that receive funding to deliver respite.

Community Services Workers will work in collaboration with families to determine the most appropriate respite delivery option.

DEPARTMENT-MANAGED RESPITE

Under department-managed respite, one or more Direct Service Providers are hired to provide respite services for a family. Hiring is done by departmental staff in consultation with each family. The Department is responsible for providing pay and benefits as outlined in the collective agreement. The Department also negotiates a service schedule with the Direct Service Providers and provides an orientation regarding the rights and responsibilities of the employee.

SELF-MANAGED RESPITE

Self-managed respite allows families to recruit a respite provider, establish their own service schedule and manage their respite funding. The Department provides the family with respite funding, based on their assessed needs and approved respite plans.

Families are responsible for the following the terms and conditions set out in the "*An Agreement for Self-Administered Respite Services*" developed in cooperation with their Community Service Worker.

Respite providers must be 18 years or older and not reside in the home of the family receiving respite services.

Families with self-managed respite must submit invoices, a respite care time sheet or suitable equivalent, and all supporting documentation to Children's disABILITY Services to demonstrate that respite service was received.

AGENCY DELIVERED RESPITE

The Department provides funding to agencies to deliver respite service. These agencies have specialized skills to support children with disabilities and they are responsible for the recruitment, hiring, and orientation of staff.

When an agency receives funding to deliver respite services, it enters a Service Purchase Agreement with the Department. Service expectations and reporting requirements are outlined within the Service Purchase Agreement.

6.3 SECURITY CHECKS

Respite providers are required to meet the security check requirements in the Criminal Record and Child Abuse Checks policy or in the terms and conditions as outlined in “*An Agreement for Self-Administered Respite Services*” prior to providing respite services.

6.4 OVERNIGHT RESPITE

Overnight respite can be approved in situations where care needs are exceptionally demanding. Overnight respite must not exceed five consecutive days, and not total more than seven days within 30 days. Overnight respite is approved based on assessed needs and available resources.