

Community Services for Children with Special Needs



The easiest way to find services and support for your family and child (ages birth to 21) is to call SEAS for service navigation by a local, knowledgeable and caring person.



SEAS

Single Entry Access to Services
phone: 360.715.7485
fax: 360.676.6729

1. Find valuable support and information from other families and providers

- [Parent to Parent](#) offers support groups, newsletter, [Helping Parent](#) matches, and fun family events. Call 360-715-0170.
- The Parent Coalition at [The Arc of Whatcom County](#) provides one on one information and education to help you navigate support services. Call 360-715-0170.
- [National Association of Mental Illness](#) or [NAMI-Whatcom](#) has family trainings and support groups.
- [Guide by Your Side](#) (425-268-7087) and the [Washington Parents of Blind Children](#) gandarias1217@gmail.com offer support for parents of children with sensory disabilities.
- Online support groups and local websites such as www.whatcomtakingaction.org or [Bellingham Moms of Children with Special Needs](#) on Facebook can be very helpful.

For a comprehensive [Resource Directory](#), [Events Calendar](#) and helpful informational tools, visit www.whatcomtakingaction.org

2. Get additional therapy for your child

- If your child has therapy at school, he/she may benefit from additional therapy outside of school. *See back page.*
- Get on the wait lists. Right now! If you don't, it will take even longer for your child to be seen.

3. Enroll your child with the [Developmental Disabilities Administration \(DDA\)](#)

- DDA can provide lifelong support for children eligible for their services. DDA can help pay some costs of caring for your child, such as assistive technology and care providers. Call 714-5000 to get an application packet. See handouts on DDA at www.whatcomtakingaction.org.

4. Educate yourself -There's a lot to learn!

- Attend workshops at [The Arc of Whatcom County](#) and subscribe to their newsletter at www.arcwhatcom.org or call 360-715-0170 for more information.
- Use the free lending libraries from [The Arc](#) and the [Autism Outreach Project](#).

I need a break! Where can I get some help?

- [Parent to Parent](#) has a list of [Super Sitters](#) who have extra training. Call 360-715-0170.
- [DDA](#) may be able to provide Personal Care and Respite services for eligible clients. (*See above.*)
- [FACES Northwest](#) has a summer program for children with autism. Call 360-389-2151.
- [Max Higbee Center](#) offers recreational activities for youth with developmental disabilities ages 14 & up.
- [Buddy Break](#) is a free respite program designed to give caregivers of kids with special needs a break.
- For more ideas, check [Bellingham Parks & Recreation](#), [Special Olympics](#), and our [Respite Handout](#).

How can I get help paying for my child's care?

- Apple Health - covers health care costs. Visit ParentHelp123.org or call Whatcom Alliance for Health Advancement (WAHA) in Bellingham at 360-788-6594 to see if your child is eligible.
- DDA can help cover a variety of costs. (*See Above*)
- Supplemental Security Income ([SSI](#)) from Social Security offers funds for eligible children
- [Dominic's Closet](#) helps to get free medical supplies to those in need
- [Medicaid Transportation](#) - can help cover the [cost of travel](#) to medical appointments.
- Foundations and grants such as SISU Children's Fund and Ben's Fund.
- [Ershig Assistive Technology Resource Center](#) at WWU (360-650-2783) and [Bellingham Central Lion's Club](#) (360-733-4911) may help with specialized equipment your child may need.

Treatments and Therapies

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)

ABA is a method used to reduce challenging behaviors and to help people gain and improve skills including language, attention, social awareness, self-help, and play. ABA is very effective for children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder and similar developmental disabilities. For more information see: [ABA Handout](#)

Whatcom ABA providers:

Bayside Autism 206-825-0251	Endless Potential, LLC 360-930-6063	Pacific Northwest Autism 360-348-6414
Rehab Without Walls / Neurosolutions (425) 673-6911		Sendan Center 360-305-3275

**For information on getting ABA covered by Apple Health and a list of covered providers:
[Medicaid Applied Behavioral Analysis \(ABA\) Therapy Program](#): 360-725-1681**

Counseling, Family Therapy, or Psychotherapy

These types of therapies help to treat mental health issues like anxiety or ADHD and behavioral concerns. Family therapy can help both the child with autism and the whole family.

How do I find a counselor, family therapist, or psychotherapist?

- Ask your child’s primary care provider for a referral.
- Contact your insurance company for an approved list of mental health providers.
- For children on Apple Health call Access to Mental Health (1-888-693-7200) and ask for services.
- Check online directories of mental health providers at [NAMI Whatcom](#) (360-671-4950) and [Psychology Today](#).
- Contact [Washington’s Mental Health Referral Service for Children and Teens](#) 833-303-5437

Medication

Medication may help manage mental health symptoms, along with other therapies. Only certain types of providers can prescribe medication. Your doctor may be able to prescribe medication in consultation with a psychiatric provider, or may recommend a psychiatric provider.

You may need a prescription from your child’s doctor for the following therapies:

SLP **Speech/Language Pathologist**

An SLP works to improve your child’s ability to communicate. This could range from teaching a child to communicate with a pictures, gestures, words and sentences, to working with a group of teens on social skills. Some SLPs may also provide feeding therapy.

OT **Occupational Therapist**

An OT helps with the development of motor skills used in daily living. The OT may focus on sensory issues, coordination of movement, and balance, and include self-help skills such as dressing, eating, or grooming.

PT **Physical Therapist**

Physical therapists use a variety of treatments to help build strength, improve movement, and strengthen skills needed to complete daily activities.

Whatcom Speech/Language (SLP), Occupational (OT), and Physical Therapy (PT) providers:

Bellingham Pediatric Therapy - email OT	Connections SLP 360-756-1495	Catalyst Therapies SLP 360-389-3468	Sendan Center SLP 360-305-3275
Integrative Physical Therapy Services PT 360-715-8686	Whatcom Community Physical Therapy PT 844-898-0582	Washington Elks Therapy Program OT 800-825-3557	Pediatric NDT and SI Therapy Services OT 360-398-2772
Whatcom Physical Therapy PT 360-332-8167		Little Rascals OT 360-441-0596	Pacific Kids Therapy OT 360-393-6210
Harmony Physical Therapy PT 360-441-6053		WWU Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic SLP 360-650-3881	
PeaceHealth Medical Group Children’s Therapy SLP OT PT 360-752-5622		Kids in Motion PT OT SLP 412-444-5437	

For up-to-date [evaluation and SLP/OT/PT wait times](#) visit www.whatcomtakingaction.org