



Complex Needs Adult Transitions

How to plan a successful exit from DFCS for our most
vulnerable youth

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MEET THE TEAM

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Children with Complex Needs

Includes children and youth who have a diagnosis that significantly impairs their functioning as compared to children of a similar age.

Intellectual and
Developmental
Disabilities

Physical
Impairments

Mental Health
Impairments

These children and youth often require specialized
planning for treatment and permanency

Considerations for Planning

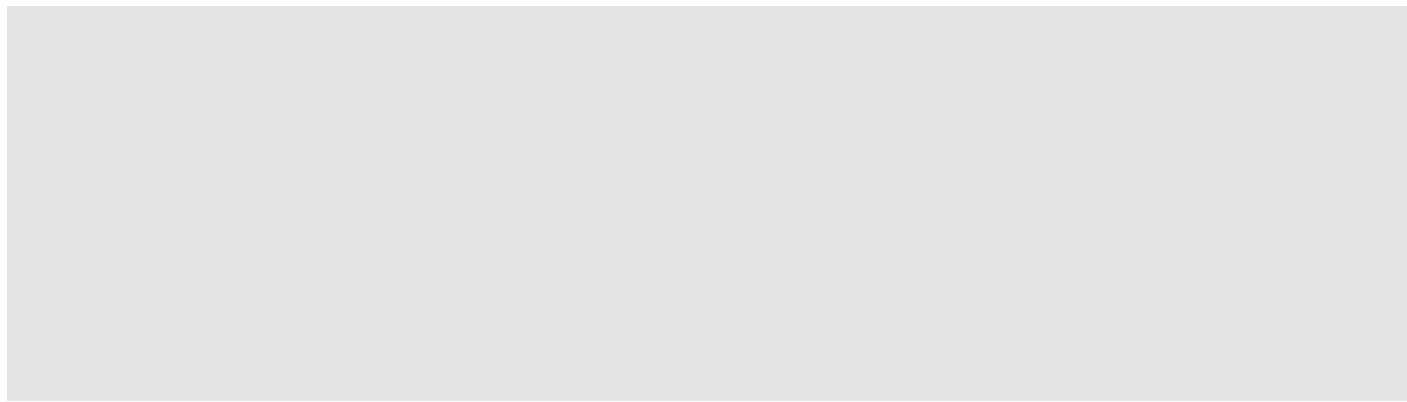


Social
Security
Disability

Adult
Guardianship

DBHDD &
NOW/COMP
Waiver

Social Security Disability



Social Security Benefits

RSDI

Retirement, Survivors, Disability Insurance

- Program for workers, their dependents, and survivors.
- Must pay into the system to qualify.
- Foster children may receive if they have a parent who is retired, deceased, or disabled.
- No limits on income or assets

SSI

Supplemental Security Income

- Welfare-based program designed for those who have not worked and paid into the system.
- Limits on income and assets (\$2000 in assets).
- Foster children may qualify if they have a disability and are not receiving IV-E funding.

SSI for Minor Children

- Standard:
 - Does the child have a mental or physical impairment that significantly impairs their functioning as compared to children of a similar age
- IV-E funding may eliminate eligibility
- IV-B Funding should not affect eligibility
- Comes with a monthly benefit and Medicaid

SSI for Youth Over Age 18

- Standard:
 - Does the youth have a mental or physical impairment that significantly affects their ability to perform substantial gainful activity?
 - **Can the youth work?**
 - Does the work need to be accommodated?
 - Additional supervision
 - Reminders to stay on task
 - Reduced hours/increased breaks
 - Reduced job duties
- After age 18, funding will be IV-B, so should not affect eligibility
- Monthly benefit and Medicaid

RSDI Benefits Over Age 18

- Standard:
 - Youth has a mental or physical impairment that significantly affects their ability to perform substantial gainful activity
 - AND**
 - Youth has a parent who is retired, deceased or disabled who paid into SS
 - May receive RSDI benefits under the parent's record
- Often results in a higher monthly benefit
- Monthly benefit and Medicare (after 2 year waiting period)

Important!!

You do not get to choose which program you qualify for!

1

RSDI

- No Limits on resources
- If you qualify, you must take it
- Medicare

2

Other sources of income

Can reduce or eliminate SSI eligibility

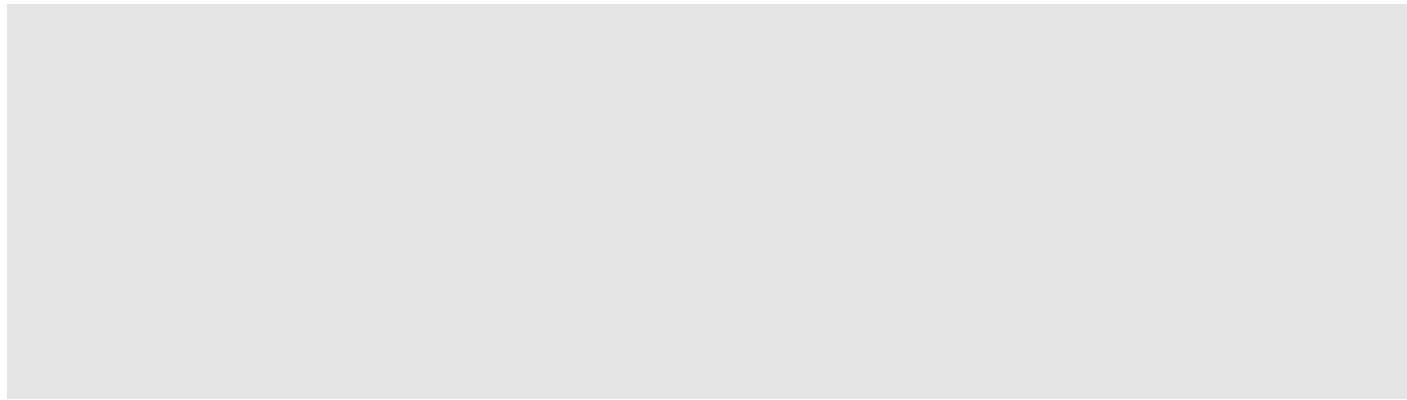
- Child Support Inheritance
- Adoption Assistance

3

SSI

- Program of last resort
- No other sources of income/support
- Cannot have more than \$2000 in resources
- May qualify for both RSDI and SSI if RSDI amount is lower than the SSI maximum (~\$841/month)

Adult Guardianship



Standard for Adult Guardianship

- Does the adult (over age 18) lack sufficient capacity to make or communicate significant responsible decisions concerning his or her health or safety?
- If the youth can communicate decisions and have an understanding of the decisions, then a guardianship is often not necessary

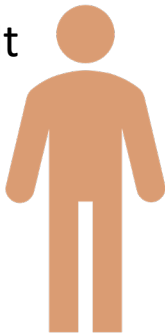
Guardians for Minors vs. Adults

Minor



Guardian takes place of parent
Takes placement
Provides financially
Provides direct care of needs

Adult



Administrative Role
Sign contracts, permissions, medical consents
Does not have to provide placement, or direct care
Not individually financially responsible
Must make decisions in the best interests of the ward

Guardianship v. Conservatorship

Guardianship



Over the person
Limits ability to: enter contracts, consent to medical treatment, decide where to live

Conservatorship



Over Money and Property
Takes away the right to: manage finances, buy and sell property
Often not necessary if only income is SS

Why Do We Need Adult Guardianships

DFCS Voluntary Placement Agreement

Medical Consents

DBHDD Intake Documents

Voluntary Placement Agreements

- When a youth turns 18, DFCS no longer holds “custody” of the youth.
- In order to remain in DFCS care, the **youth** (or a **legal guardian appointed through Probate Court**) must sign a Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA)
 - GALs and Child attorneys may not sign
- VPA sets out statutory requirements for youth to remain in DFCS care between ages 18-21
 - Must meet certain criteria to remain in care
- This is voluntary! Youth may sign out at any time.
- DFCS may terminate the agreement if youth is not in compliance.

Extended Youth Services (EYS) Criteria (O.C.G.A. §15-11-340)

1. Be secondary education or a program leading to an equivalent credential;
2. Be enrolled in an institution which provides postsecondary or vocational education;
3. Be a participant in a program or activity designed to promote or remove barriers to employment;
4. Be employed for at least 120 hours per month;
5. Be employed for 80 hours per month, provided that he or she is also engaged in one of the activities described above or can only work 80 hours per month due to a medical condition;
- 6. Be incapable of doing any of the activities described above due to a medical condition.**

DFCS Process to seek Guardianship

County determines if a guardianship may be necessary



County staffs with Complex Needs Adult Planning Team



Petition filed in Probate Court

Who serves as Guardian?

Willing and Appropriate Parent

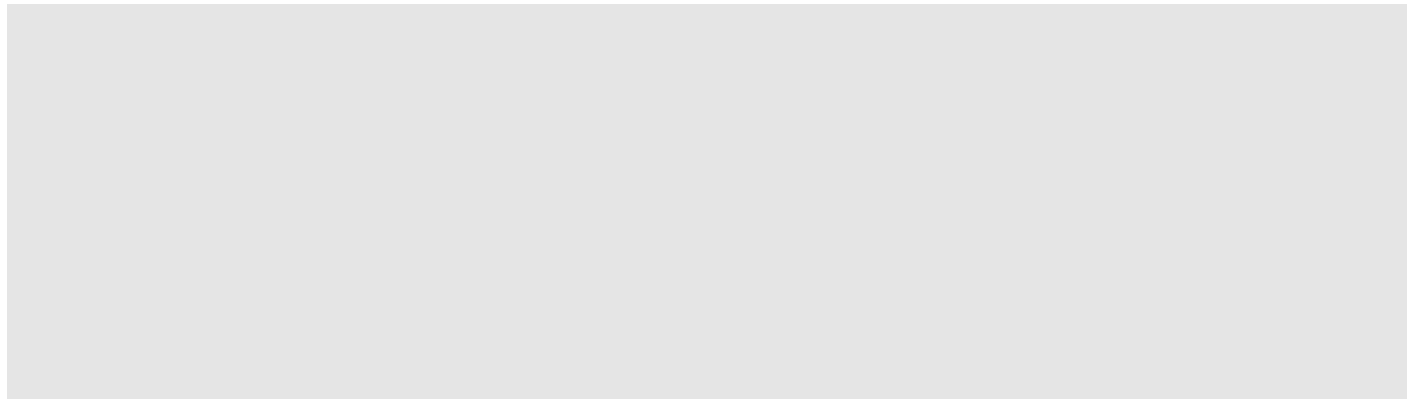


Willing and Appropriate Relative

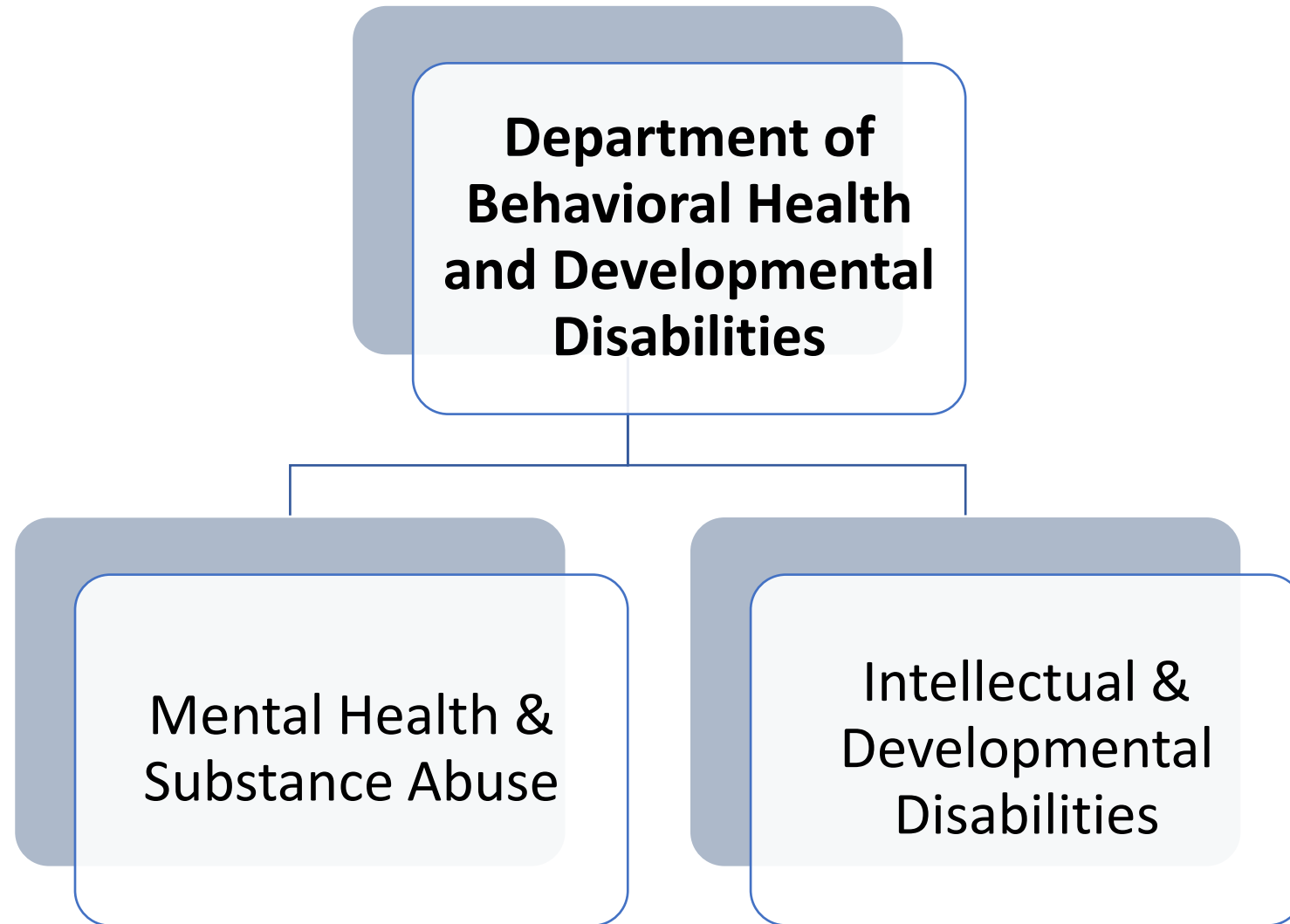


Public Guardianship Office

NOW/COMP Waivers



NOW/COMP Waivers: Administration



Why is DBHDD important?

- When a youth with intellectual and/or developmental disability ages out of DFCS, and they will need continuing care as adults, DFCS is no longer able to provide for that youth.
- Ongoing adult services may be available under a Medicaid waiver (NOW/COMP), which is administered by DBHDD
- Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities must be the primary impairment

NOW/COMP

A Medicaid waiver that can be used to pay for services for a person with intellectual, developmental, or physical disabilities.

NOW

New Option Waiver

Offers services and support to enable individuals to remain living in their own home or family home.

COMP

Comprehensive Support Waiver

Serves individuals with more intensive needs who require residential care.

Waiver Support Services

- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Behavioral Support Services
- Community Access
- Community Living Supports
- Community Residential Alternatives
- In Home and Out of Home Respite
- Prevocational Services
- Specialized Medical Equipment and Supplies
- Intensive Support Coordination and Support Coordination
- Supported Employment
- Transportation
- Vehicle Adaptation
- Skilled Nursing Services
- Nutrition Services
- Interpreter Services

Eligibility Requirements

- Diagnosis of intellectual disability **prior to age 18** and/or a closely related developmental disability prior to age 21 (severe cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism).
- Have significant **deficits in adaptive functioning** in specific areas
- Require a level of care provided in an intermediate-care facility for people with intellectual disabilities
- Have a **Qualified Medicaid**

What is a Qualified Medicaid

- SSI is a qualified Medicaid
 - If youth qualifies for SSI, they get Medicaid
 - The Medicaid portion goes to services
 - The monthly benefit portion goes toward Room and Board
- Former Foster Care/Chafee Medicaid
 - May cover services, but does not cover Room and Board

If youth has RSDI and qualifies for Medicare – DON'T PANIC!
DBHDD completes an MAO Communicator, files with OFI Medicaid Office and child is approved for “Medical Assistance Only” Medicaid.

The NOW/COMP Waiver Process

Eligibility

- Application can be made at any time (ideally by age 14-16)
- Child is found “pre-eligible” and put on Planning List

Funding

- Youth can be transitioned to a host home
- Services through DBHDD can begin

Individuals are moved from the Planning List to Funding the Waiver based on **priority**. DBHDD determines priority based on a Needs Assessment.

For Youth in Foster Care, priority comes when DFCS can no longer provide care (generally, age 21).

Accessing Services for Youth in Foster Care

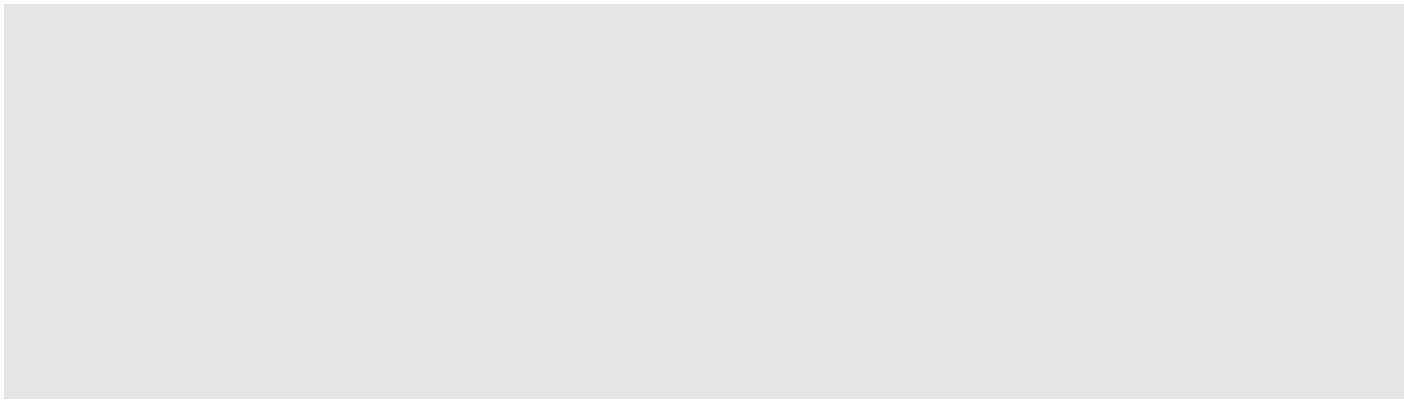
Make sure Youth has a **current, complete** psychological evaluation

- ✓ COMPLETED **PRIOR TO AGE 18**
- ✓ Psychological **less than 2 years old**
- ✓ Contains a **FULL SCALE IQ** – not an abbreviated IQ
- ✓ Contains an **ADAPTIVE FUNCTIONING ASSESSMENT**
 - ✓ Discuss domains and sub-domains of each area of testing



“We need a full IQ score (not an abbreviated IQ) and adaptive functioning assessment with a discussion of the domains and sub-domains of each area of testing”

Timelines



Timeline

Age 14-16

- File Application for NOW/COMP Waiver
- File for SSI (if not already receiving)
- If child is IV-E, do we need to look at changing the funding source to open SSI eligibility?

Timelines

Age 17

- Everything under Age 14-16
 - File NOW/COMP Waiver
 - File for SSI
 - If child is IV-E, do we need to look at changing the funding source to open SSI eligibility?
- Transition Staffing with State Office
- Consider if youth may need an adult guardianship
 - Can file at 17 ½

Timelines

Age 18

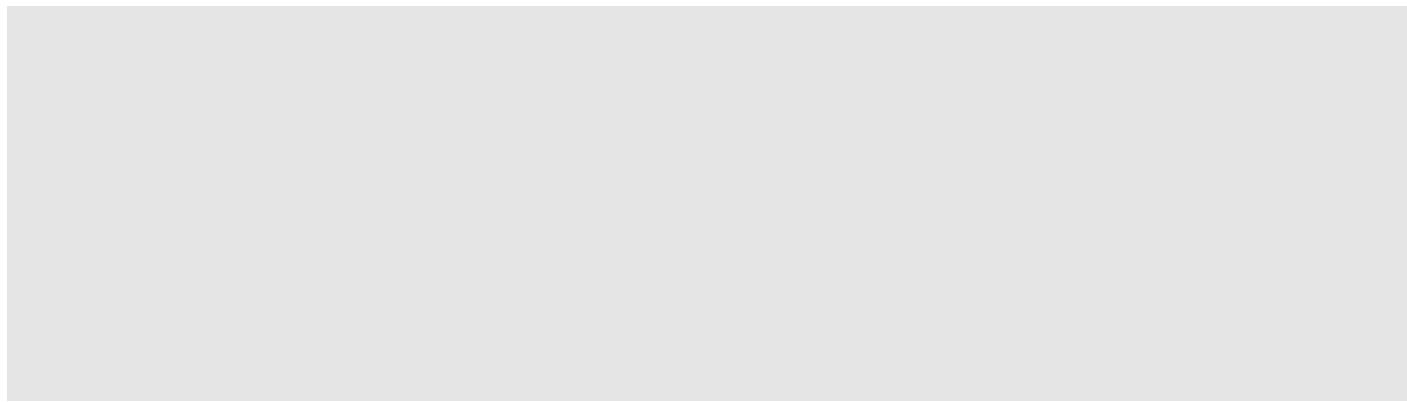
- Everything under Age 14-16 and Age 17
 - File NOW/COMP Waiver
 - File for SSI
 - Transition Staffing with State Office
 - Consider if youth may need an adult guardianship
- Youth or Guardian to sign Voluntary Placement Agreement
- Is the current placement a potential long-term option past age 21?
 - If yes, need to advise placement to begin host home conversion
- If there is a legal guardian, invite them to planning meetings

Timelines

By Age 20

- Everything under Age 14-16 and Age 17 and Age 18
 - File NOW/COMP Waiver
 - File for SSI
 - Transition Staffing with State Office
 - Consider if youth may need an adult guardianship
 - Voluntary Placement Agreement in Place
 - Placement conversion to host home underway, if applicable
- Contact the Planning List Administrator (PLA) at DBHDD
 - Youth will be aging out of DFCS, need to start assessments
 - Will a new host home be needed?
 - Invite the PLA to planning meetings

Mental Health Impairments



Youth with Mental Health Impairments

- Handled through the Behavioral Health side of DBHDD
- There is no Medicaid Waiver program for comprehensive services for behavioral health
- Prior to age 18, begin working with DBHDD (Behavioral Health side) to identify services for the Youth.

Accessing Behavioral Health Services

- Contact Regional DBHDD Behavioral Health Administrator
 - Tier 1
 - Comprehensive Community Providers are DBHDD's community service boards, which serve as the public safety net and offer a core benefit package, as well as additional specialty services
 - Tier 2
 - Community Medicaid Providers ensure choice for individuals receiving Medicaid and offer a core benefit package
 - Tier 3
 - Specialty Providers offer an array of specialty treatment and support needed in continuum of care.

Source: Ga DBHDD website:

<https://dbhdd.Georgia.gov/be-dbhdd/be-supported>

Adult Mental Health Community Services

- Core Services
- Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)
- Community Support Teams (CST)
- Disaster Mental Health Services
- Peer Services
- SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR)
- Supported Employment (SE)
- Peer Support, Wellness, and Respite Centers
- Intensive Case Management (ICM)/Case Management (CM)
- Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH)

Applying for Behavioral Health Services

- Contact DBHDD Behavioral Health Administrator
 - <https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/regional-field-offices>
- Undergo Assessments to determine level of care
- Make connections with Community Providers

Supporting Our Youth

- Begin planning early!
 - Identify whether child will require continuing care past age 18 due to a medical condition
 - Is that condition primarily development/intellectual or mental health
- Apply early!
 - Begin applying for SSI when it is apparent the child has a serious impairment
 - NOW/COMP applications beginning at age 14
 - DBHDD Behavioral Health supports prior to age 18
- Encourage staffing with the State Office so comprehensive transitional planning can take place



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Questions??