

FSSA Prioritizes Getting Services To Young Adults Leaving High School
Young people with developmental disabilities, 18-24, targeted

In a landmark action, the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration has announced a plan to bring support services to over 1,600 young adults with developmental disabilities between the ages of 18-24 over the next 10 months. The agency has announced that the Support Services Medicaid Waiver (SSW) will have a priority category for young adults who have left high school.

The first target is young people who left school in the 2006-2007 school year. 500 SSW slots are reserved for these individuals. An additional 1,100 SSW slots for young adults, 18-24, who have left school are planned to be released September, 2007-June, 2008. FSSA plans to offer the Support Services Waiver to future eligible students leaving high school. Key to implementing that plan is the future support of the Indiana General Assembly.

In November, 2007 an additional 100 Support Services Waiver slots will be released to people on the waiting list, based on date of application. In addition, FSSA has announced that **711 Developmental Disability Waiver slots and 55 Autism Waiver slots will be released to those on waiting lists. Priority slots will also be provided to caregivers age 80 and older and for emergency cases.**

The Support Services Waiver can provide developmental supports, job preparation, respite and family support up to a cap of \$13,500 per year. To be eligible for a Medicaid Waiver, individuals must meet Medicaid disability, income, and resource requirements, and "level of care" requirements under the Waiver.

The Arc of Indiana Waiting List Committee began working on this issue in 2006 by identifying how the state could begin prioritizing services to the more than 15,000 people on Medicaid Waiver waiting lists, as well as those who never knew to apply for services. Families and self-advocates recommended that waiting lists and the need for services be addressed in three ways: services to those ages 18-24 who have left or are leaving school; caregivers age 80 and older who continue to care for loved ones at home; and continuing to bring people off the waiting list based on date of application.

Families should immediately contact their local BDDS office to apply for this new priority category for the Support Services Waiver. Applications for Medicaid should be made at the local office of Division of Family Resources. Contact information for BDDS offices is printed on the back of this announcement. For additional information, go to: www.arcind.org