

Planning for the Future

Special Needs Trusts, ABLE Accounts, and More

There are many aspects of future planning that parents of children and youth with special healthcare needs (CYSHCN) should consider. One great resource to help parents start to plan and envision what the future may look like for their child is through Charting the LifeCourse. This tool "is intended to help persons of all abilities and ages create a vision for a good life, consider the resources they need and action steps they will take, identify how to find or develop supports, and discover how to live the lives they want." More information about Charting the LifeCourse can be found on our fact sheet: "Life Course: Looking at the Big Picture".

Once a family has created a vision for the life they hope their child will have, they can start to take action steps towards additional future planning. In many cases, it will be necessary for parents to consider Guardianship and Guardianship Alternatives for their child after age 18. Additional information about both Guardianship and Guardianship Alternatives can be found in the Indiana Family to Family Fact Sheets.

Future financial planning is a significant concern for many families. Many adults with disabilities are able to earn their own living; however, parents should take time to consider how they can plan for their child's future financial needs. A few common ways that parents can plan for their child's financial needs include: Special Needs Trusts, Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Accounts, and Individual Development Accounts (IDA).

Special Needs Trusts

One way that parents can plan for their child's future is by opening a Special Needs Trust, which is also known as a Supplemental Care Trust. This type of trust is a place to transfer savings, life insurance payouts, and other funds for a person with disabilities that will not jeopardize their eligibility for programs such as SSI and Medicaid, due to their income eligibility and asset limit requirements. To set up a Special Needs Trust in Indiana, you'll need to consult with either an elder law attorney or The Arc Master Trust. An elder law attorney can help with the process of understanding and opening a special needs trust, as they are familiar with disability laws and financial planning options. To locate an elder law attorney, visit www.naela.org which is the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys. Another option is to contact The Arc Master Trust, which offers families an affordable for the administration of their Special Needs Trust. To learn more about the Arc Master Trust, visit www.thearctrust.org or contact them at 317-977-2375 or 800-382-9100.

Achieving A Better Life Experience (ABLE) Accounts

An ABLE Account is a savings option for individuals with disabilities. The ABLE Act allows certain individuals with disabilities and their families the opportunity to contribute to a tax-advantaged savings account that can be used for maintaining health, independence, and quality of life. Indiana's ABLE Account program, INvestABLE Indiana helps families save for the future while preserving their SSI and Medicaid Benefits. More information on INvestABLE Indiana can be found on the state's website: <https://savewithable.com/in/home.html> or in our fact sheet: "ABLE Accounts".

Individual Development Accounts (IDA)

Individual Development Accounts (IDA) is a program to help low-income individuals build wealth as a path out of poverty. Eligibility for IDA includes having an income of less than 200% of the federal poverty guideline and having a job to earn income. An IDA is a savings account option that allows individuals to set aside funds for a specific financial goal over approximately a 3-year period. For example, this might look like: buying a home, paying for training or education, or starting a small business. Savings in this type of account are matched by state dollars (around \$3 matched for every \$1 contributed, up to \$4,500). Individuals participating in this program also receive benefits such as financial counseling and financial education. More information on Individual Development Accounts can be found on the state's website: <https://www.in.gov/ihcda/homeowners-and-renters/matched-savings-opportunities-individual-development-accounts-ida/>

Planning for the future can often be difficult and overwhelming; however, there are options available to meet your family's individual needs and circumstances. For additional information and assistance in understanding these options, contact Indiana Family to Family at 1-844-323-4636 or by email at info@inf2f.org.

Indiana Family to Family does not provide estate planning services and does not endorse any provider.

Programs and systems change often. It is important to ensure that you are using the most current information. This fact sheet was updated July 2022. Please check <https://www.inf2f.org/fact-sheets.html> for the most recent edition.
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