



Texas Parent to Parent

Respite: Taking Time for Yourself

Sometimes, the best thing you can do for your child is take some time for yourself.

What is respite?

The word respite means “break” or “relief.” Respite services are designed to offer families a break from caring for their child with developmental delays or disabilities. Respite allows parents time to take part in activities that they find relaxing, entertaining, or restful while a respite provider cares for their child.

A respite break can mean an hour to take a walk while a respite provider stays in your home to care for your child. It may be a weekend away while your child is cared for outside of your home. It can also mean time to take a nap or see a friend while the respite provider takes care of your child.

How is respite different from day care?

Day care and traditional child care are provided on a daily or regular basis so parents can go to work or school. Respite, on the other hand, is typically provided on an irregular or short-term basis to provide the parent with a break from caring for their child with developmental delays or disabilities.

How can respite help my family?

Parenting is a difficult job and every parent can benefit from a break. Caring for a child with developmental delays or disabilities presents additional challenges that go beyond the everyday stresses of parenting. As a result, you may need longer rest periods or more down time. In addition, it may also be more difficult to find a qualified person to care for your child. Respite services can provide you with the needed support.

There are several resources you can access to support your families’ respite needs. The [Take Time Texas](#) website administered by the Department of Aging and Disability services provides many tools and a searchable provider database to access help and support for families.

If you are a family receiving Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) services, your ECI program may have funds to help you pay for respite services. Ask your ECI service coordinator about:

- the availability of ECI respite funds,
- levels of funding based on level of care needed,
- process for prioritizing requests,
- wait list policy,
- annual hourly limit, and
- annual total dollar limit.

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Also, ask your ECI service coordinator to help you find providers in your circle of friends and family or in your community. Respite can help strengthen your whole family. It can help decrease stress and help increase your family's health and well-being. In addition to giving you and other caregivers some rest, it may help free up time to spend with other members of your family.

Here are additional tips for finding a respite provider:

- Ask family members, friends, other parents, or your child's doctor, teacher, or therapist for recommendations.
- Find providers in your community on the following website: www.taketimetexas.org
- Call the 2-1-1 information and referral line.
- Search for child care providers through the state's Child Care Licensing website: www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_care.
- Contact local colleges for students studying in fields such as child development, education, nursing, physical, occupational, or speech therapy.
- Contact your local children's hospital.

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