

What is Respite Care?



Respite care is a service that offers short term care for kids who need constant care. This gives the caregivers a planned break from their caregiving duties. It can last a few hours, a day, overnight, a weekend, or even longer. It can happen at home, at a care center, or at a program in your community. Respite care is very important because it helps caregivers rest.

Who needs respite care?

Caregivers who help children that need help all day and all night. This includes children who have complex medical conditions, developmental disabilities, behavioral health challenges, or multiple diagnoses that are providing around-the-clock care.^{1,2}

Did you know? About 1 out of every 6 children in the US have a developmental disability. Most of them are cared for at home by family members.^{3,4}

What is caregiver burnout, and how can respite care help?

Caregiver burnout is a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion that happens while you're taking care of someone else.⁵ Caregivers of children with disabilities may have increased risk of physical illness, depression, anxiety, and PTSD compared to the parents who do not. Even short rests can ease stress, improve wellbeing, and lower rates of depression in caregivers. Even short breaks make a big difference!^{6,7}

Who provides respite care?

Respite care is given by people who know how to help children with disabilities. They are often trained to do so. These people usually work with disability organizations and nonprofits, day camps and programs, or faith based community programs (like churches, synagogues, mosques). They can also be trusted friends or extended family members.²

What types of respite care are there?

There are many types of respite care! They vary by location and length of stay.²

By Hours:	By Location:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Hourly: A few hours at a time. This is often in the form of home health or day care services.● Overnight: Care for the night● Weekend: Over the weekend● Weekly: One more more weeks at a time. Often offered at a camp.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● In your Home● Out of home:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ community or faith-based agency program○ day care or afterschool program○ hospital or health center○ residential setting○ camps

Who pays for respite care?

Respite care can be covered by insurance or be offered at a low cost. It can be given by volunteer organizations. Many families can access respite through Medicaid waiver programs, state grants, or nonprofits. Some organizations offer sliding-scale payment.² A social worker or early intervention coordinator can help you find what you qualify for.

Who benefits from respite care?⁸

Your Child	You
Socialization: They can connect with peers in a supportive setting.	Reduce stress
New experiences: Camps, activities, and outings that they may not be able to do access otherwise	Lower rates of depression
Trained, Safe Care: Providers with experience and training	Time to attend to your own health
Independence: Experiences separate from their caregivers in a safe environment.	Connect with your partner or other children.
A refreshed caregiver!	A refreshed caregiver!

How do I find Respite Care?

- Care Team: Reach out to your child’s care team, including their pediatrician, occupational/physical/speech therapist, or social worker to ask about local programs.
 - ARCH National Respite Network: Visit archrespite.org to use their free search tool to find providers near you.
 - Your state’s Medicaid Office: Call your state Medicaid office to see if you qualify for the Medicaid waiver programs.
 - Family Resource Center: Ask your school and early intervention providers for recommendations to respite care resources.²
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Can I have more information?

- Yes! The ARCH National Respite Network has a great guide for caregivers. You can read it here:
 - [Arch Caregiver Guide](#)
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Sources: Please read if you would like more information!

Sources

1. [What Is Respite Care? | National Institute on Aging](#)
2. [9 Steps IDD Caregiver web.pdf](#)
3. [Developmental Disability Basics | Child Development | CDC](#)
4. [Prevalence and Trends of Developmental Disabilities among Children in the US: 2009-2017 - PMC](#)
5. [Caregiver Burnout: What It Is, Symptoms & Prevention](#)
6. [9.Susana-Pizano-Vega-Johanna-G.-Leichty-Malik-D.-Peterson-Samuel-P.-Abraham.pdf](#)
7. [Effects of respite care for children with developmental disabilities: evaluation of an intervention for at risk families - PubMed](#)
8. [Exploring the Benefits of Respite Services to Family Caregivers: Methodological Issues and Current Findings - PMC](#)