

FAMILY SUPPORT SUBSIDY (FSS): WHAT FAMILIES NEED TO KNOW

Michigan has a program to help families who care for their children with severe disabilities at home. The Family Support Subsidy Program can pay for special expenses the family has while caring for their child with severe disabilities.

This financial support may help prevent or delay placements outside the home. In other cases, the program may provide the funds necessary to allow children to return from placements outside the home.

Supporting families of children with severe disabilities in this way allows families to stay together. It gives them flexibility in purchasing special services and saves money by avoiding or reducing the need for more costly placements outside the home.

Families may be eligible for this program if they have a child under age 18 who has been identified by Michigan's public-school system as having an educational eligibility category of:

- cognitive impairment (CI)
- severe multiple impairment (**SXI**) or
- autism spectrum disorder (ASD)

Children with an eligibility category of CI may be eligible if their development is in the severe range of functioning as determined by the public-school system.

Children with ASD must be receiving special education services in a program designed for students with autism or in a program designed for students with severe cognitive impairment or severe multiple impairments.

In cases in which the child is not receiving special education services or if it is not known if the child is receiving special education services, parents may contact the director of special education at the local or intermediate school district. They can also call Early On® at 1-800-EarlyOn or by email to eoreferral@edzone.net.

PROGRAM BENEFITS

Many children with severe impairments may not be able to eat, walk, dress or talk on their own. They often have both mental and physical impairments and need round-the-clock care. Families that include children with severe disabilities have many expenses other families do not.

Uses for the subsidy might be the purchase of additional therapies, special equipment, special food, diapers, transportation costs, in-home specialized care, respite care, family counseling, support groups, general household expenses, family recreation and home remodeling to provide for the special needs of the child.

This list is not all-inclusive. A unique feature of the subsidy is that the family decides its use to suit their needs.

FAMILY SUPPORT SUBSIDY (FSS): WHAT FAMILIES NEED TO KNOW TO APPLY

Request your application by calling Centra Wellness Center at 877-398-2013 and ask for the Family Support Subsidy coordinator. You may get and turn in applications at any time. Renewals are required every year just before or during your child's birth month. The following papers must be turned in with your application:

- A copy of the child's legal birth certificate
- Your family's most recently filed Michigan Income Tax Return (MI-1040)
- A signed release of information for your child's school/school district.
- Providing a copy of the child's social security card is encouraged but not mandated.
- A copy of the parent(s) social security card is mandatory.

For more information on the Family Support Subsidy Program please visit the Michigan.gov website: https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-71550_2941_4868_7145_81705---,00.html