

Early Intervention

If your child has recently been diagnosed with a disability, or if you have concerns about your child’s development, you may be wondering what to do next. You’re taking a great first step by reaching out for information and you’ll find lots of supports with The Arc of Northern Virginia, as well as other nonprofit organizations and public programs.

Local Services and Assessments

Localities are required by federal law to screen infants and toddlers who have or may have a developmental delay. In Virginia, this program is called Infant and Toddler Connection of Virginia. Local government entities, called Community Services Boards (CSBs) manage early intervention intakes and assessments.

Early intervention can have a huge impact on the lifelong ability of your child to speak, develop motor and social skills, and become more independent. Reach out to your local Infant and Toddler Connection office as soon as possible to plan for an assessment and begin services like occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech therapy. These supports will be offered on a sliding scale and may be covered by insurance. Some services, including service coordination, assessments, and transition planning for preschool are free.

| Northern Virginia Infant & Toddler Connection Offices | | |
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| Locality | Phone | Website |
| Alexandria City | (703) 746-3387 or (703) 746-3350 | https://www.alexandriava.gov/child-and-family-services/program/parent-infant-education-program-pie |
| Arlington County | (703) 228-1640 | https://health.arlingtonva.us/public-health/health-clinics-services/parent-infant-education-program-pie/ |
| Fairfax County and Falls Church | (703) 246-7121 | https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/familyservices/office-for-children/infant-and-toddler-connection |

Exploring Other Publicly Funded Supports

Your child may be eligible for assistance beyond what Early Intervention can offer. This is a brief list of some resources that may be available and where to go to learn more.

1. **Medicaid Waivers.** Waivers offer community-based support services, including care attendants, respite, Assistive Technologies, and more. Waivers do not take into account whole family assets and income when determining eligibility. Visit <https://thearcofnova.org/resource-library/#waivers> to learn about Waivers.
2. **Medicaid Healthcare.** Medicaid health insurance is available to children whose families are living below the poverty level. You can visit and <https://commonhelp.virginia.gov> to learn about Medicaid. It is often easiest to call the hotline on the site to apply.

3. **Social Security.** Social Security cash benefits are available to the child with a disability if the entire family's income meets the income limits for the program. If your family is living below the poverty level, visit <https://www.ssa.gov/ssi> to apply for Social Security benefits.
4. **Early Periodic Diagnosis Screening and Testing (EPSDT).** EPSDT is an additional funding stream for children under the age of 21 who have Medicaid. EPSDT may cover the cost of additional therapies, equipment, medical supplies, and care attendants. To learn more, visit <https://www.dmas.virginia.gov/for-providers/maternal-and-child-health/early-and-periodic-screening-diagnostic-and-treatment-epsdt/> or call 804-786-6134.

Exploring Privately Funded Supports

You may be able to access additional supports through private resources and funding. This is a brief list of some options and information on how to learn more.

1. **Coverage through private health insurance.** Talk to your HR representative and/or directly with your insurance plan to determine if supplemental therapies or other services are covered.
2. **Private Providers.** Look through The Arc of Northern Virginia's Transition POINTS: Early Intervention Guide to explore private services you can pay for, including life and estate planning options, respite programs, and recreational opportunities. <https://thearcofnova.org/programs/transition/>

Seek Out Resources and a Supportive Network

Supports from other families who have been there will be invaluable.

1. **The Arc of Northern Virginia's resources.** The Arc of Northern Virginia has a free online resource library, a lifespan information and support program called Transition POINTS, and a free YouTube channel filled with resources.
 - Online "Ask the Arc" Portal to ask your questions- <https://thearcofnova.org/answers/>
 - Resource Library- <https://thearcofnova.org/resource-library/>
 - Transition POINTS- <https://thearcofnova.org/programs/transition/>
 - YouTube Channel- <https://youtube.com/user/VideosatTheArcofNoVA>
 - Upcoming Events and Workshops- <https://thearcofnova.org/workshops/>
 - Newsletters- <https://thearcofnova.org/about-us/newsroom/newsletters/>
 - Membership- <https://thearcofnova.org/support-us/membership/>
2. **The New Path from The Arc of Virginia.** Visit The New Path online to learn about family support options from The Arc of Virginia. <https://www.thearcofva-newpath.com/>
3. **Local Parent and Advocacy Groups.** The Autism Society of Northern Virginia, Parents of Autistic Children of Northern Virginia, and the Down Syndrome Association of Northern Virginia all have excellent resources and supports for families.
 - The Autism Society of Northern Virginia- <https://www.asnv.org/>
 - Parents of Autistic Children of Northern Virginia- <https://poac-nova.org/>
 - Down Syndrome Association of Northern Virginia- <https://www.dsanv.org/>