



# All in for Kids

*A CLTS Program Family Newsletter*

All in for Kids: CLTS Program is a newsletter that helps keep you and your family informed about the supports and services available through the CLTS Program. The newsletter is published by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS).



## Family spotlight: Henry's journey toward water safety

At just four years old, Henry is already making big waves, thanks to support from the Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) Program.

Henry lives near a stream with his family in Marathon County, so his family's goal has been to help him recognize water dangers and learn essential safety skills. With the help of the CLTS Program, Henry started swim lessons to build his confidence and learn critical water safety strategies. Henry is learning how to float, navigate the water safely, and practice new skills that could save his life in a water emergency.

His mom, Danielle, shared how much these new opportunities have meant:

“Thanks to the support we’ve received, Henry has been able to start swim lessons. It’s been so encouraging to see how far he’s come.”

The photos of Henry proudly showing off his new swimming abilities tell the story best. His growing skills are not just helping him stay safe—they’re building his confidence, his independence, and his joy.



*With a big smile, Henry practices floating during swim lessons.*



*Henry sits at the edge of the pool, ready to jump into learning important water safety skills.*

Henry’s family expressed deep appreciation for the CLTS Program and the difference it’s made in their lives: “We are truly thankful for everything CLTS has made possible for our family.” ❖

## **The CLTS Program wants your family stories and photos!**

The All in for Kids newsletter is for families. We want to feature your photos and experiences for other readers to enjoy! You can share things like:

- A positive interaction with the CLTS Program.
- An example of how the CLTS Program has helped your family or child.

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- A photo or story of an activity you did with your child.
- A photo of artwork or something else your child has made.

Email your family story or photo to [dhsclts@wisconsin.gov](mailto:dhsclts@wisconsin.gov) with “All in for Kids” in the subject line. You can also send ideas for stories you would like to read in the newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you! ❖

## It's Here! The New CLTS Program Participant and Family Handbook

We have exciting news—the new CLTS Program Participant and Family Handbook is here!

This handbook is designed for your child and family. It provides helpful information about the CLTS Program in one easy-to-use handbook. Whether you're new to the program or have been receiving services for a while, the handbook will help you navigate the supports and services available to help your child thrive.

### Highlights of what's inside

- Details about supports and services available to help your child meet their goals.
- Information on who can be part of your CLTS Program team and how they can support your family.
- Guidance on life transitions and how to help your child prepare for new experiences.

This family-friendly handbook will answer common questions and help you feel confident in using the CLTS Program to support your child's growth and development.

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## How can you get the handbook?

We're making it easy for families to get this important resource.

- All families enrolled in the CLTS Program received a handbook in the mail. If you are new to the CLTS Program, you will receive one within about a month of your child being enrolled.
- An online version is also available so you can access it anytime, anywhere. Get it at [dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/p-03689](https://dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/p-03689).

We're thrilled to bring you this new handbook, and we can't wait for you to explore it. This is just one of the ways we are working to make sure families like yours have the information and support they need to help children live their best lives with the CLTS Program. ❖

## Renew your Medicaid – don't lose your CLTS Program services

Every child who participates in the CLTS Program be enrolled in full-benefit Wisconsin Medicaid health care coverage. That's why one of the most important things you can do to support your child in the CLTS Program is to make sure their Medicaid coverage stays active.

Whether your family is new to the CLTS Program or you've been a participant for years, here's what you need to know to keep your child's Medicaid and CLTS services on track.

## What is Medicaid and why does it matter?

Medicaid provides health care coverage to children, people with disabilities, low-income adults, pregnant people, and older adults. In Wisconsin, Medicaid gives families access to:

- High-quality medical and mental health care
- Long-term care options
- Services that support physical, emotional, and developmental health

For children in the CLTS Program, having Medicaid is a requirement. It works hand in hand with the CLTS Program to provide the



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services and supports your child needs to grow, participate in their community, and live their best life.

## How do Medicaid and the CLTS Program work together?

Medicaid covers your child's health care. The CLTS Program adds extra supports and services that help meet your child's goals as indicated in their Individual Service Plan (ISP) that aren't typically covered by Medicaid or private insurance. Together, they make sure your child has what they need to thrive.

## The BIG takeaway: To stay in the CLTS Program, your child must stay in Medicaid

CLTS Program eligibility requires active enrollment in a full-benefit Wisconsin Medicaid health care program. **If your child loses Medicaid coverage, they will lose access to the CLTS Program**—even if their needs haven't changed. That's why keeping Medicaid is so important.

## Which Medicaid programs meet the CLTS Program eligibility requirements?

To continue receiving CLTS Program services, your child must enroll in one of the following kinds of Medicaid coverage:

- ✓ BadgerCare Plus
- ✓ Katie Beckett Medicaid
- ✓ Home and Community-Based Waiver (HCBW) Medicaid
- ✓ Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Medicaid
- ✓ Adoption Assistance Medicaid
- ✓ Foster Care Medicaid

These programs give your child the coverage they need to stay in the CLTS Program.



## WHAT'S AN ISP?

Your child's Individual Service Plan (ISP) is a personalized plan that outlines their goals and the services they'll receive through the CLTS Program. Your support and service coordinator (SSC) works with you to build and update this plan.



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## What programs don't meet CLTS Program eligibility?

Some programs may offer limited benefits or cover only specific health needs. While these programs will give your family important support, they do not meet the eligibility requirements for the CLTS Program.

- ✗ FoodShare
- ✗ Family Planning Only Services
- ✗ Tuberculosis-Related Only Medicaid
- ✗ Emergency Services Plan

Children only enrolled in one of these programs are not eligible for CLTS Program services. Be sure your child is covered by a full-benefit Medicaid program to maintain their enrollment.

## What happens during Medicaid renewal?

Every year, you'll need to renew your child's Medicaid health care coverage. This is a critical step in keeping their CLTS Program services.

Here's what to expect:

- About two weeks before your child's renewal month, you'll receive a letter and renewal packet in the mail.
- You'll need to complete and return the packet or go online to update your information—before the deadline.
- Visit [dhs.wi.gov/renew](https://dhs.wi.gov/renew) for helpful tips and instructions.

Act quickly! Missing the renewal deadline can cause a gap in Medicaid and in your child's CLTS Program services.

## Need help with Medicaid renewal?

You're not alone. Your support and service coordinator (SSC) is here to help you understand your child's Medicaid status and keep your CLTS Program supports and services going. If you're unsure about your child's coverage or think you might have missed a renewal step, reach out to your SSC right away.

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## Bottom line: You must have Medicaid to be enrolled in the CLTS Program

Stay informed, stay enrolled, and stay connected to the supports that help your child grow, thrive, and shine.

For more information, visit: [dhs.wi.gov/children/index.htm](https://dhs.wi.gov/children/index.htm) or call 877-WiscWay (877-947-2929) to get connected to local help. ❖

## Peace of mind at the push of a button: How PERS supports safety in the CLTS Program

In the CLTS Program, every child's safety matters—and so does your peace of mind. That's why the Personal Emergency Response System (PERS) is one of the many supports available to help your child live safely at home and in the community.

Whether it's a medical emergency or a moment when your child is unexpectedly out of sight, PERS can help make sure your child has access to help when it's needed most.

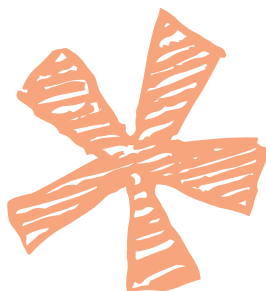
### What is PERS?

PERS is not a person or a caregiver, it's a device or technology that helps you connect quickly with emergency help in urgent situations.

### Here's how it works:

PERS devices often use GPS technology and offer a direct communication link between your child, your family, and emergency responders. Some devices are worn like bracelets or pendants, while others are specially designed trackers or communication tools.

In rare cases a cellphone and cellphone service may be covered for emergency response, but only if no other PERS options are available to meet the child's needs.



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## When is PERS helpful?

If your child:

- Has a medical condition that may lead to sudden emergencies, or
- Tends to leave unsupervised and could get lost

...a PERS device can provide critical support. These devices help ensure that help is always just a button—or a call—away.

## What does the CLTS Program cover?

The CLTS Program may pay for:

- The initial purchase of the PERS device.
- Installation or setup.
- Ongoing subscription or service fees if needed.

Your child's PERS device and related services must be part of their ISP and tied to specific goals or needs.

## Is PERS right for your child?

Talk with your support and service coordinator (SSC) if you:

- Worry about how quickly you can get help during a medical emergency.
- Have safety concerns about your child wandering or getting lost.
- Want an extra layer of protection when your child is at home or out in the community.

Together, you and your SSC can look at available PERS options and find the best fit for your child.

PERS is just one of more than 30 supports and services the CLTS Program offers. Each one is designed to help your child live more safely, independently, and confidently in your home and community.

For more information about CLTS Program services, please visit [dhs.wi.gov/clts/services.htm](https://dhs.wi.gov/clts/services.htm). ❖

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## Partner highlight: Family Voices of Wisconsin

*Partner Highlight is a recurring feature in our newsletter, putting a spotlight on some of the organizations that families might want to know more about.*

Raising a child with a disability or special health care needs comes with both joy and challenge—and having support along the way can make a world of difference. That's where Family Voices of Wisconsin (FVW) can help.

FVW is a statewide, family-run nonprofit organization that's been walking alongside Wisconsin families for 30 years. Their goal? To help parents and caregivers feel confident, informed, and empowered—especially when navigating complex systems like Medicaid, school supports, and the CLTS Program.

### A trusted resource for CLTS families

FVW knows that joining the CLTS Program—or even just learning how it works—can feel overwhelming at first. That's why they created a whole series of free, easy-to-understand fact sheets to help guide you along the way.

The CLTS fact sheet series covers topics like:

- Eligibility and enrollment
- What to expect during the functional screen
- How to develop your child's Individual Service Plan (ISP)
- Services and supports your child may qualify for

You can find all of these resources on their website: [familyvoiceswi.org/resource-library](https://familyvoiceswi.org/resource-library).

### Learning sessions designed for families

FVW also hosts free virtual learning sessions that break down big topics into helpful, plain-language conversations. Most sessions are held during lunch or in the evening—and if you can't attend live, many are available on-demand.

## WHO IS Family Voices of Wisconsin?

FVW is part of Wisconsin's network of agencies supporting children with special health care needs. They are also the state's Family-to-Family Health Information Center and the Wisconsin affiliate of the national Family Voices organization.

Learn more at [familyvoiceswi.org](https://familyvoiceswi.org).

For CLTS families, some especially useful sessions include:

- **Get Ready: An Introduction to the CLTS Program.** A deep dive into what the CLTS Program is and how it works. Created with input from over 100 parents!
- **Did You Know? Now You Know!** A great place to start if you're learning about Medicaid, private insurance, and long-term supports for the first time.

Other sessions focus on important topics like the transition to adulthood, supported decision-making, and parent advocacy. No matter where you are in your journey, there's something for you.

### **Rooted in lived experience**

Every staff member at FVW knows how important it is to have someone you can turn to for help, reassurance, or just a listening ear.

As one team member shared, "Especially when starting out or during times of transition, having clear, understandable resources and knowing what to ask for from professionals can make a real difference."

Family Voices of Wisconsin is here to partner with you—whether you're just getting started in the CLTS Program or ready to take your advocacy to the next level.

### **Stay connected!**

Sign up for Family Voices' email updates about upcoming sessions and new resources: [familyvoiceswi.org/connect](https://familyvoiceswi.org/connect). ❖

## **You can appeal CLTS Program decisions**

It's normal to have differences of opinion from time to time. If you disagree with a decision about your child's support or service in the CLTS Program, their eligibility, or a chosen provider, you have the right to appeal. This means you can formally request that the decision be reviewed by a judge.

## **Looking for ways to connect with other families?**

Family Voices also offers opportunities like:

- **Wisconsin Family Leadership Institute (WiFLI):** Advocacy training for parents and caregivers.
- **Advocacy for Change:** An annual event where families meet with state lawmakers.
- **Circles of Life Conference:** A family-friendly statewide gathering with workshops, a teen program, and fun activities!

Learn more at [familyvoiceswi.org](https://familyvoiceswi.org).

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## To start the appeal process:

**Submit a request form or write a letter.** Fill out a form to request a hearing or write a letter explaining why you disagree with the decision.

**Send that form or letter to the Division of Hearings and Appeals.**

The address is:

Division of Hearings and Appeals

P.O. Box 7875

Madison, WI 53707-7875

The Division of Hearings and Appeals will notify you when a date for your fair hearing has been set.

For more information about appeals or to find the form, visit: [doa.wi.gov/RequestAHearing](https://doa.wi.gov/RequestAHearing)

It's important to know that filing an appeal is not a bad thing. It's simply a way to work through differences and make sure your child's needs are fully considered. The appeal process is here to support you if you feel a decision about your child's supports and services is not right for your situation. ❖

## Helpful resources for families

### Office of Children's Mental Health: Supporting Kids with Disabilities Fact Sheet

The Office of Children's Mental Health issued a fact sheet talking about what our state is doing to support children with disabilities. It includes a list of things that policymakers, providers, communities, schools, and parents/caregivers can do to help kids and their families. Download it here: [children.wi.gov/Documents/ResearchData/OCMH%20Fact%20Sheet\\_July%202024\\_Supporting%20Kids%20with%20Disabilities.pdf](https://children.wi.gov/Documents/ResearchData/OCMH%20Fact%20Sheet_July%202024_Supporting%20Kids%20with%20Disabilities.pdf)

### Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers Declares 2025 the Year of the Kid

The Governor's 2025-27 Executive Budget declaration builds on the administration's commitment to doing what's best for kids, bolstering youth mental health, ensuring safe drinking water in schools and



**Wisconsin Wayfinder**

Children's Resource Network

**Wisconsin Wayfinder helps connect you to resources**

Families often have many questions after learning their child has one or more delays, disabilities, special health care needs, or mental health conditions. Wisconsin has five regional Children's Resource Centers that are devoted to supporting these families. The centers help both families and providers:

- Connect to community resources.
- Learn about and find supports and services.
- Get answers to questions.

You can call the toll-free phone number 877-WiscWay (877-947-2929) to talk to a real person who will connect you with your children's resource guide.

You can go online at [dhs.wi.gov/wiscway](https://dhs.wi.gov/wiscway) for more information.

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communities, and more. View the press release here: [content.govdelivery.com/accounts/WIGOV/bulletins/3ce3a56](https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/WIGOV/bulletins/3ce3a56)

### Preparing for Life as an Adult: Transition Planning for Youth

Youth in transition (also called transition planning) is a process for teens with health care needs or disabilities. It helps you plan for your future and shift from getting youth services to adult services. Transition planning starts as early as age 14.

Get the 53-page guide that provides a wealth of information at [dhs.wi.gov/publications/p00413a.pdf](https://dhs.wi.gov/publications/p00413a.pdf). ❖

## Join our email list

Sign up to receive the electronic version of this newsletter and other emails about the CLTS Program.

1. Go to [dhs.wi.gov/dms/ltc-email-signup.htm](https://dhs.wi.gov/dms/ltc-email-signup.htm).
2. Scroll down to the **Children's Long-Term Care Subscription List Topics** section.
3. Select **CLTS Information for Families and Participants**.

Tell your family and friends in the program to sign up as well!

Previous 2025 issues of the All in for Kids: CLTS Program are available at: [dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/AKids25](https://dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/AKids25). ❖

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All in for Kids: CLTS Program is a newsletter published by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services for children and families in the CLTS Program.

The CLTS Program makes Medicaid funding available to support children with substantial limitations due to developmental, physical, or severe emotional disabilities who are living at home or in the community. Funding may be used to support a range of services based on an assessment of the child's and family's specific needs and identified goals or outcomes. For more information, visit [dhs.wi.gov/children/index.htm](https://dhs.wi.gov/children/index.htm).

Para leer este boletín en español, visite [dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/AKids25](https://dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/AKids25).

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