

All in for Kids

A Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) Program Family Newsletter

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



Family spotlight: Iver's big steps forward

Meet Iver, a bright and determined toddler from Brown County who joined the CLTS Program earlier this year. Since enrolling in early 2025, Iver has been growing in strength, confidence, and independence, all with the help of his dedicated care team and supportive therapies.

At 18 months old, Iver was just beginning to stand and hadn't yet taken his first steps. Less than a year later, he's not just walking, he's running!

"His confidence in his abilities is growing, and as a parent it is so wonderful to see," shares his mom, Jessie Paque.

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Using both Medicaid and private insurance, Iver is making great progress through physical therapy, where he's been working hard on strength and balance. The CLTS Program complements that care with hippotherapy, a specialized service that uses horseback riding to build motor skills, posture, and coordination. This fall, Iver's family will also add aquatic therapy to his routine for even more growth opportunities.

Together, these therapies help Iver build not only physical skills, but also self-confidence. His therapies help him explore new environments and let him enjoy being a kid.

“We are so grateful for Iver's care team and the CLTS Program for making his hippotherapy possible,” says Jessie. ❖



Iver takes big strides during a physical therapy session, working hard to build strength and stability.



At hippotherapy, Iver practices crossing midline movements, building coordination while riding his therapy horse.

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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.
- 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 dhsccls@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! ❖


DHS begins planning the renewal of its Children’s Long-Term Support Program waiver

DHS is starting the process to renew the CLTS Program waiver for 2027-2031. The waiver is what makes the CLTS Program possible. The CLTS Program waiver explains how the program works, including who is eligible, what services are available, and how families can direct their own services. This process includes DHS filling out an application for our partners at the federal level that lays out the eligibility and services covered under the CLTS Program. The federal government must review and approve the CLTS Program waiver application every 5 years. Renewing the CLTS Program waiver gives DHS the opportunity to review and improve the program.

How the CLTS Program waiver renewal process works

First, DHS asks for feedback about the CLTS Program from families, program participants, counties, community organizations and advocates and service providers. DHS will use this feedback to help

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plan for the next five years and write a new CLTS Program waiver application. Next, the draft application will be shared for public comment in spring 2026. After considering public input, DHS will submit the final application for federal approval in late 2026. When that's granted, the updated CLTS Program waiver will begin January 1, 2027.

Goals for the CLTS Program waiver renewal



DHS wants to make the CLTS Program even better by focusing on:

- **Consistency:** Creating a high-quality and consistent CLTS Program experience across all Wisconsin counties.
- **Timely access and coordination of benefits:** Helping families get the supports and services they need, when they need them.
- **Efficiency:** Making the program easier to understand and use for participants, county agencies and providers.

How you can give feedback:

DHS wants to hear from you! There are multiple ways you can get involved:

- **Send ideas and thoughts to DHSCLTSWaiverRenewal@dhs.wisconsin.gov.** We welcome your input at any time about any CLTS Program topic. Below are some questions to consider:
 - What works well in the CLTS Program?
 - What isn't working well in the CLTS Program?
 - Are there any CLTS Program supports or services that are unclear or could be improved?
 - Are there other changes to the CLTS Program that we should think about?
- **Be ready to take a survey.** We will share an opportunity to fill out our survey and give us your input. We'll use your suggestions to draft changes to the waiver so we can make the program the best it can be from 2027 to 2031.
- **Look forward to reading the draft waiver changes in 2026.** You'll be able to see what's changing and share feedback during a 30-day public comment period and Tribal consultation.



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To learn more, get updates, or read our concept paper with more details, please visit the CLTS Waiver Renewal webpage at dhs.wi.gov/clts/waiver/renewal.htm. ❖

How CLTS Program services are funded: what families need to know

When your child needs support, the CLTS Program is here to help. But understanding how different supports and services are funded can sometimes feel overwhelming. Here's what you need to know, and how your support and service coordinator (SSC) works with you every step of the way.

Your child's needs come first

Whether it's a therapy tool, a piece of equipment, or a new support service, your SSC will always start with one important question:

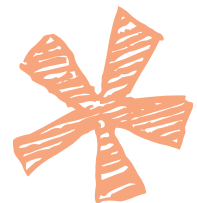
What is your child trying to do or achieve?

Understanding your child's goal helps your team find the best possible solution.

We start with the goal

It's totally okay if you've already found a product or service you think could help your child. Your SSC will still begin with your child's need or goal because there may be more than one way to meet that need. It's important to explore all your options with your team because:

- A specific item you found may be great, but another option might work even better.
- Another program might already cover it.
- The item might be more affordable through a different supplier or source.
- You and your team will make decisions together to find the best support for your child.



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Funding sources work together to support your child's health and long-term care needs

Many of the supports and services your child needs may be available through a few insurance options. Your SSC will help you understand which funding source must be used first. These funding sources include:

- **Private Insurance:** This is your family's health insurance. This is coverage that you may receive through your job. Private insurance typically covers medical services like doctor visits, therapies, and prescriptions.
- **Medicaid (sometimes called ForwardHealth Card services):** Medicaid is a public health insurance program for children and adults with certain needs or disabilities. In Wisconsin, your ForwardHealth Card gives your child access to Medicaid covered services, like doctor visits, therapies, and prescriptions.
- **CLTS Program Medicaid Waiver Funds:** The CLTS Program is a special Medicaid long-term care program that provides extra supports and helps your child live in their community.

The CLTS Program is the payer of "last resort," meaning it can only be used after other sources have been considered.

Responsible use of public funds

The CLTS Program must follow certain rules when funding supports and services:

- If Medicaid covers a similar support or service that meets your child's needs, CLTS Program funds cannot be used to pay more for a different brand or an upgraded version.
- CLTS Program funds can't duplicate services covered by another program.
- Your SSC must document which benefits you explored before using CLTS Program funding.

This helps make sure funds are used responsibly, while still getting your child what they need.

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You're part of every decision

Your family's voice matters. Your SSC is there to:

- Keep you informed
- Explain decisions and funding options
- Answer questions
- Collaborate with you on solutions that support your child's goals

If a request is denied, you have rights

If a request for an item or service is denied, you'll receive a letter, called a "Notice of Adverse Action," that explains:

- Why the request was denied
- What your rights are
- How you can ask questions or file an appeal

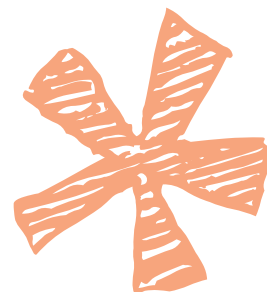
Appeals are a way to make sure all options are explored, and your child's needs are fully considered. Read more about these options in the section called **If you disagree with a decision in the CLTS Program** at the end of this newsletter.

The CLTS Program is here to help your child thrive

Navigating support systems might sometimes be confusing, but you don't have to do it alone. Your SSC and team is here to walk with you, explain options, and make sure every decision is made with your child's best interests in mind. ❖

If you disagree with a decision in the CLTS Program

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.



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If you believe something was denied but you did not receive a Notice of Adverse Action (NOA), you still have the right to receive one. The NOA explains the decision and gives you the right to appeal. If you think you should have received one but didn't, ask your SSC or the agency providing CLTS Program services to send it to you.

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. Make sure to sign and date the request.

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

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. ❖

Partner highlight: Wisconsin FACETS

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.

Wisconsin FACETS (WI FACETS) is a nonprofit organization that offers free support and training to families of children with disabilities or suspected disabilities, from birth all the way through age 26. As Wisconsin's Parent Training and Information Center, WI FACETS

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helps families understand their rights and feel more confident as they support their child's learning and development.

Through one-on-one support, online and printed resources, and live and recorded webinars, WI FACETS is here to answer your questions and connect you with the tools you need.

How WI FACETS supports families in the CLTS Program

Families enrolled in the CLTS Program often work with both school systems and community-based services. WI FACETS can help bridge those experiences by offering:

- Free training and guidance on how special education works.
- Support to prepare for individualized education plan (IEP) meetings or other school discussions.
- Information about resolving concerns with schools and service providers.
- Resources to understand educational rights, behavioral supports, and the transition to adulthood.
- Statewide access to trainings where you can join live over Zoom or watch recordings anytime.
- Information tables at resource fairs.

All services are available in English and Spanish, with interpretation in other languages upon request. WI FACETS works to make every family feel welcomed, informed, and empowered.

Partnering for better outcomes

Figuring out how school, community programs, and health services work together can sometimes feel overwhelming. WI FACETS helps make it easier by providing trusted, family-centered information and tools.

Their mission is simple: to help families partner with schools and service providers to ensure the best outcomes for their children.

Need help or have questions?

Call WI FACETS at 877-374-0511 to speak with a help desk specialist.

Visit wifacets.org to view upcoming trainings, family-friendly resources, and webinars.

If you or your child is in the CLTS Program and looking for support with school services, advocacy, or planning for the future, WI FACETS is here for you. ❖

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



Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers Declares 2025 the Year of the Kid

Gov Evers signs bipartisan pro-kid budget: "This is a win for Wisconsin's kids, families, and communities." Gov. Evers enacts 2025-27 budget to do what's best for kids and working families by lowering out-of-pocket costs for child care and more.

View the press release here: content.govdelivery.com/accounts/WIGOV/bulletins/3e7d45c



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



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 for more information.

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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.
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. ❖

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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.

Para leer este boletín en español, visite dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/AKids25.

Xav nyeem tsab ntawv xov xwm no ua Lus Hmoob, mus xyuas dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/AKids25.

For other languages (繁體中文, 简体中文, Deutsch, العربية, русский, 한국어, Tiếng Việt, Deutsch, ພາສາລາວ, Français, Polski, हिंदी, Shqip, Tagalog, Soomaali): 608-266-5508.

