



www.utahparentcenter.org 1-800-468-1160

Childcare Ideas for Families with Children with Significant Disabilities

- Visit careaboutchildcare.utah.gov to search for childcare providers in your area. Click on “parents” and then click “search”. From there just enter your zip code. On the next screen click on the blue letters that say “Click here for other search options”. You will then see a dropdown list where you can find your child’s disability. It will pull up providers who have special needs endorsements or who are willing to work with that specific disability.
- Talk with the regular sitters in your neighborhood. Explain your child’s needs and offer to have them be with your child while you are present so they reach a comfort level with their needs and the things they will need to do.
- Advertise for and hire a person who is interested in a child with special needs and train the person in providing care.
- Contact nursing students at local hospitals or schools of nursing or child development majors at nearby colleges.
- Go to your local college departments, such as special education, psychology, social work, Occupational Therapy, etc. and put up a flyer about needing respite or summer childcare.
- Join a parents group for children with special needs and exchange babysitting services. One idea is to join your local Family to Family Network where you can meet other parents in similar situations and also exchange ideas on local resources and supports. Find your local network by visiting: www.utahparentcenter.org/projects/family-to-family/
- Form a babysitting “co-op” with friends and neighbors and teach them about your child’s special needs.
- Investigate respite or temporary care facilities in your community. Ideas include places

such as Turn or Rise (see detailed UPC summer list for specifics)

- Contact your local Parks and Recreation Department and ask about adaptive Recreation Programs. Many of them offer after school programs to individuals with more significant disabilities.
- Talk to your child's school to see if there are Special Ed school staff or Para Professionals interested in after school work. Some teachers want and are looking for a summer job.
- Be sure to get on the Waiting List for Division on Services for People with Disabilities. These services provide families with financial support to help provide more intensive services for children and young adults who qualify. There is a waiting list, but even being on the waiting list can pay off! Sometimes DSPD receives one time funding to provide some limited services to families on the waiting list. Learn more at <http://www.hsdspd.utah.gov/>
- If you have a child who is technology dependent such as a child with a mechanical ventilator or tracheostomy, consider applying for the Travis D Waiver. This waiver may provide up to 45 hours of monthly respite care from a nurse for those who qualify. Find out more at <http://health.utah.gov/cshcn/Travis/>
- If you are on the waiting list for DSPD or currently have services and you have some critical needs such as not being able to find childcare, it's always a good idea to check in with your DSPD case worker. In some cases they can provide you with a Navigator who can assist you in finding and accessing services for your child.
- Network with contacts in the community such as family, friends, church members, etc. to get ideas on potential caregivers.
- Always do your research when hiring a provider. Investigate if they are licensed and able to do the job. Interview them and do a visit where the care will be provided. Always ask for and check references. Communicate with the provider often and always be on the lookout for any warning signs your child might exhibit that might indicate things are not working out.