

HABILITATIVE SUPPORTS (HS) PARENT GUIDE FAQs

Question	Answer
<p>What is the habilitative supports service?</p>	<p>The habilitative supports service helps a child with a disability by facilitating the child’s independence and integration into the community. This service provides an opportunity for children to explore their interests, practice skills learned in other therapeutic environments, and learn through interactions in typical community activities. Integration into the community enables children to expand their skills related to activities of daily living and reinforces skills to achieve or maintain mobility, sensory-motor activity, communication, socialization, personal care (to prepare for the community activity), relationship building, and participation in leisure and community activities. Habilitative supports must ensure the child is involved in age-appropriate activities and is engaging with typical peers according to the child’s ability.</p>
<p>What does IDAPA rule say?</p>	<p>IDAPA rule, 16.03.10.663.02: Habilitative Supports, states that this service must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not supplant services provided in school or therapy, or supplant the role of the primary caregiver. Note: supplant means to replace or take the place of • Ensure the participant is involved in age-appropriate activities and is engaging with typical peers according to the ability of the participant. • Have a minimum of one qualified staff providing direct services to every three participants when provided as group habilitative supports. As the number and severity of the participants with functional impairments increases, the staff participant ratio shall be adjusted accordingly.

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	<p>IDAPA rule defines integration and community for these services as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16.03.10.661.08: Integration - The process of promoting a life for individuals with developmental disabilities that is as much as possible like that of other citizens of the community, including living in the community and having access to community resources. A further goal of this process is to enhance the social image and personal competence of individuals with developmental disabilities. • 16.03.10.661.04: Community - Natural, integrated environments outside of the home, school, or DDA center-based settings. <p>Note: DDA stands for “developmental disabilities agency”.</p>
<p>What are the qualifications for habilitative support staff?</p>	<p>IDAPA rule, 16.03.10.665.02: Habilitative Support Staff, states that: Habilitative supports must be provided by an agency certified as a DDA with staff who are capable of supervising the direct services provided. Providers of habilitative supports must meet the following minimum qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Must be at least eighteen (18) years of age; b. Must be a high school graduate or have a GED; c. Have received instructions in the needs of the participant who will be provided the service; d. Demonstrate the ability to provide services according to a plan of service; e. Must have six (6) months supervised experience working with children with developmental disabilities. This can be achieved in the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Have previous work experience gained through paid employment, university practicum experience, or internship; or

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. Have on-the-job supervised experience gained through employment at a DDA with increased supervision. Experience is gained by completing at least six (6) hours of job shadowing prior to the delivery of direct support services, and a minimum of weekly face-to-face supervision with the clinical supervisor for a period of six (6) months while delivering services. f. Must complete competency coursework approved by the Department to demonstrate competencies related to the requirements to provide habilitative supports. g. In addition to the habilitative support qualifications listed in Subsections 665.02.a. through f. of this rule, habilitative support staff serving infants and toddlers from birth to three (3) years of age must meet the following qualifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Have transcribed courses for a minimum of a Child Development Associate degree (CDA) or the equivalent through completion of twelve (12) semester credits from an accredited college or university in child development, special education, or closely-related coursework; or ii. Have three (3) years of documented experience providing care to infants, toddlers, or children less than five (5) years of age with developmental delays or disabilities under the supervision of a child development professional, certified educator, licensed therapist, or Developmental Specialist.
Who is considered a typical peer?	Children of similar age who are without disabilities.
What are considered integrated environments?	Integrated environments are environments where typical peers are present. Typical peers may be present in some type of capacity such as having natural access, as a spectator, or as a participant. The participant may access community environments with peers with disabilities as long as typical peers would access the same environment.

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	<p>Some examples of integrated environments are, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child’s home if typical peers are present • The child’s neighborhood • Community – where typical peers would be present (e.g., zoo, parks, library, stores, restaurants) • Private preschools with typical peers • Daycares with typical peers • Play dates/activities in and out of the home when typical peers are present • Extra-curricular after school activities such as clubs, sports, or dances • Sports activities – as participant or spectator • Community centers such as the YMCA, recreation centers, and church programs or activities • Clubs or classes of interest to the participant (e.g., art classes, Boy/Girl Scouts, 4H) • Seasonal activities such as fairs, festivals, fishing, etc. • Summer activities such as sports camps, swim lessons, and parks and recreation camps where typical peers are in attendance • Social events
<p>Is the habilitative supports service the same as developmental therapy?</p>	<p>No, habilitative support is a service provided by a paraprofessional, but is not a skill building therapeutic service like developmental therapy. If the intent is to have the child practice skills, the child should already have the foundational skills or basic skills related to the task/activity that will be targeted to be generalized and practiced in an integrated community environment. However, it is not required that the child have a certain skill level or set of skills before participating in habilitative supports.</p>
<p>How do I determine if the habilitative supports service is</p>	<p>Ask the following questions:</p>

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<p>the appropriate service for my child?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your short and long term dreams/goals for your child and will habilitative supports meet these goals? • Are there behavioral and/or safety concerns that will make it difficult for my child to be in the community right now and can habilitative intervention better meet my child's needs? • What skills has your child learned or is currently learning at school or at home that you would like him/her to practice in a community setting? • With whom do you want your child to socialize and where are these opportunities? • Are there any activities you like to do as a family or does your child have interests that create opportunities/ideas for integration?
<p>What is the role of the habilitative supports staff?</p>	<p>The habilitative supports staff will work with the child to facilitate integration, facilitate participation, and practice skills. During the habilitative supports session the habilitative supports staff should take advantage of teachable moments with the child. The habilitative supports staff can help the child practice, generalize, and maintain skills they already have. The habilitative supports staff can also support the child in any life skill area where the child does not yet have the skills necessary to participate. They should be familiar with the child's intake information, assessments, Plan of Service, skills to practice, information regarding safety, and areas to focus on when providing the service. A teachable moment is an unplanned opportunity that arises in which a habilitative supports staff has an ideal chance to offer insight to the participant. Insight is different than teaching a skill.</p>

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Can habilitative supports be provided in the public schools?	Public and charter schools have an array of services that are offered to children through the Medicaid School-Based Services program to address children’s developmental disabilities needs in the school setting. Please contact your local school district for more information regarding the Medicaid School-Based Services program.
Who is responsible for identifying community activities and community locations for service when habilitative supports are being delivered?	The family and other team members, including the case manager, DDA staff, and/or any other individuals that the family would like to invite to the family-centered planning meeting are responsible for making decisions as to which community-based activities will be accessed by a child using habilitative supports. A family-centered planning approach should consider the child’s age, opportunities to interact with similar age peers in community activities, the child’s interests, and the skills the child has learned or is learning in school or at home that will be practiced in the community. The families in partnership with the DDA can access these opportunities and should create a schedule together.
Can my child receive habilitative supports in the DDA center-based environment?	The DDA center may be used for habilitative supports when the planning team identifies specific individualized circumstances that would require a limited time period in a non-integrated environment. This time should be used in preparation or follow up to an integrated community activity that day. Examples may include preparing for the community activity, processing and reviewing the day’s events at the end of the community activity, hygiene/toileting needs that cannot be addressed in the community, etc. Each day your child participates in habilitative supports there should be an opportunity for them to be involved in community integration.
Can my child receive habilitative supports in the home?	Yes, as long as typical peers are present or the time in the home is in preparation or follow up to an integrated community activity that day. Home may also be included in the child’s natural routine such as coming home from school, having a snack, then going into the neighborhood to play with typical peers. Play dates with typical peers may take place in or out of the home.

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<p>Is there a daily minimum expectation of time my child needs to be in the community during habilitative supports?</p>	<p>The focus of the habilitative supports session should be community integration. Each day that habilitative supports are delivered, the bulk of the session should be in an integrated environment. Time spent in non-integrated environments must be directly tied to a specific need of the child that cannot be addressed in the community. The amount of time spent in non-integrated environments must be based on that need and be proportionate to the integrated community activity it is supporting. For example, if a child's after school integrated community activity is expected to be one hour in length, but the child has toileting or feeding needs that necessitates time at the DDA, the time spent in the DDA center should be based on the length of time it would take to address these needs. In the above example, the child should not get four hours of habilitative supports in the center to prepare for a one hour community integrated activity.</p>
<p>If my child receives group habilitative supports how many other children can be included?</p>	<p>Group ratios may be in a group of one habilitative supports staff to three children or less, depending on the child's needs.</p>