

# All in for Kids

## A Birth to 3 Program Family Newsletter

All in for Kids is a newsletter created to keep you and your family informed about the services available through the Birth to 3 Program. The newsletter is published by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.



## Katie Beckett Medicaid Is Health Insurance for Children With Special Needs

Katie Beckett Medicaid is a way for families to get Medicaid for their child. Katie Beckett Medicaid provides health care coverage for children who qualify. In Wisconsin, Katie Beckett Medicaid can help families get Medicaid for their child when the family may not normally be eligible because the family's income is too high.

Katie Beckett Medicaid helps children who:

- Have complex medical needs.
- Have long-term disabilities.

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- Have mental health needs.
- Live in the community instead of in a hospital or institution.

## Katie's Story

The name comes from a child, Katie Beckett, whose family advocated that the best treatments and services for her needs were available out of the hospital. Shortly after Katie was born, she got sick with a viral illness. The family worked with state representatives to create a way to get Medicaid to cover many of Katie's health care needs so she could be cared for at home.

Katie Beckett Medicaid was signed into law in 1981. Since 1981, over 500,000 children have been served in 24 states, where Katie Beckett Medicaid has been put into place.

## How do I know my child is eligible?

Children eligible for Katie Beckett Medicaid in Wisconsin must:

- Be under 19 years old.
- Have a disability.
- Be a Wisconsin resident.
- Be a U.S. citizen or qualifying immigrant.
- Live at home, in a foster care setting, or in another eligible community-based setting.
- Meet the requirement based on the functional screen.
- Not have more than \$2,000 in income a month that is in the child's name. Income that is in the child's name includes, but is not limited to:
  - Social Security benefits
  - Child support payments
  - Trust payments

## How do I apply for Katie Beckett Medicaid for my child?

If you are interested in learning about this or applying, here is what you do. You can call the Katie Beckett Line at 888-786-3246, and a Katie Beckett eligibility specialist will help you.

During the first step of the application process, you and a Katie Beckett eligibility specialist will work together to:

- Answer questions.
- Go over the application materials.

# FOR YOUR INFORMATION

## What is Medicaid?

In Wisconsin, Medicaid helps people get:

- Health care coverage.
- Long-term care.
- Services for physical and mental health and well-being.

There are many different Medicaid programs. Each program has different requirements to enroll.

## What is a functional screen?

A functional screen is a tool that collects information about the child's health, need for supports, and how they play and interact with others. It helps decide if a child is eligible for the Children's Long-Term Support Program, Katie Beckett Medicaid, or other similar programs.

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- Verify certain documents.
- Complete the functional screen.

Once the application and the functional screen have been completed, a team within the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) will review the child’s medical information to confirm that the child is eligible for Katie Beckett Medicaid.

After your application has been reviewed, your family will receive a decision in the mail. If your child is approved, a plastic ForwardHealth ID card will be mailed to you. You can use it to get Medicaid-covered services. ❖

## Fun Things to Do This Spring

Shake off the winter cold and try any of these fun spring activities that will have you and the kids enjoying the warmer weather:

- Blow bubbles! Go buy some bubbles at your favorite dollar store or make your own. Babies love to watch them, and toddlers love to chase them!
- Walk the family dog! Stretch your legs and take the family pet on a much-awaited walk without the snow and cold! No dog? Then take the kids to your local dog park and watch the pups play and enjoy warmer weather!
- Head to the park! What better way to use your toddler’s extra energy? Babies love to see the activities at the park and explore some tummy time on the grass!
- Read outside! Not all books have to be saved for bedtime. Pick a few classics, sit outside in the sunshine and get ready for story time!
- Play ball! Infants and toddlers love playing with balls, so encourage them to roll or drop the ball or toss it back and forth. ❖

## Family Engagement

The Birth to 3 Program supports your family in helping the child grow, learn, and develop to their fullest potential. Family engagement—the participation and involvement of family members and caregivers in the supports and services the child receives—directly improves the child’s growth and development.



## SPRING FAMILY FUN

### Make Your Own Bubbles

You can make your own bubbles with items you already have at home! All you need is 1½ cups water, ½ cup of dish soap, and two teaspoons of sugar and these easy steps:

- Put the dish soap in a large cup.
- Add water.
- Then add the sugar.
- Gently mix together.
- Have fun!

From the Spruce Crafts website:

<https://www.thesprucecrafts.com/make-your-own-bubble-blowing-mixture-1244214>

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## What is family engagement?

Family engagement means building relationships between the child, you and other family members, caregivers, and providers. It brings people together to work toward family well-being, strong parent-child relationships, and the ongoing learning and development of parents and children. Family engagement in the Birth to 3 Program helps to think about what your family's beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors look like in your home and how what is important to your family can also be done in other early childhood settings, schools, and the community.

## Why is family engagement important?

Strong family engagement has major benefits for the child, including:

- Improving their social-emotional and behavioral development. This means helping the child learn who they are, manage their feelings, build relationships with others, and show attachment to important people in their life.
- Preparing them for school by learning to get along with others, follow rules, and trust adults.
- Improving learning outcomes by helping the child be a confident and involved learner.

## Ways families can best engage with the Birth to 3 Program

The Birth to 3 Program wants to connect and engage with you. Programs and services are most effective when parents or caregivers are active participants. Family engagement helps build confidence in parents and caregivers in supporting the child. Activities that take place during visits are based on your family's unique needs and on the child's age and development, so they will be different for every family. Your team will guide and support you in these activities. Below are some suggestions for ways to be engaged in the child's supports and services.

- During the visits:
  - Join the child in a common activity. For example, read a book with the child and ask your team to watch and give ideas on how to support reading readiness.
  - Watch as your team does an activity with the child. You can then try it yourself with guidance from your team until you feel comfortable and confident.

## JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST

For faster delivery, sign up to receive the electronic version of this newsletter and other emails about the Birth to 3 Program. Go to [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/aboutdhs/alerts.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/aboutdhs/alerts.htm) and then scroll down and click the "Birth to 3 Program Information for Families" link on the left side.

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## REMINDER

The Birth to 3 Program team (which includes your family) works together to create an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). An IFSP is a written plan that guides and supports the efforts to boost the child's development up to age 3. This plan is based on identified needs to help meet the unique goals of your family and the child.

- Ask questions such as “Can you show me how to do that again?” or “How can I support my child’s learning?”
- Answer questions such as “What changes have you seen in the child since the last visit?”
- Communicate with the rest of the team by:
  - Giving feedback. Let providers know which activities worked well and which ones did not. As the expert in your family’s and child’s life, it’s important for you to express your thoughts and feelings.
  - Making sure you understand the IFSP and its goals. If something is unclear, ask team members to explain.

Family engagement is an important way to boost the child's growth and development. Let us know if you would like more tips on engaging with the Birth to 3 Program. ❖

## The 2023 Circles of Life Conference

The Circles of Life Conference is a yearly meeting for families with children who have disabilities. Providers and other professionals who support families and children also go to the conference.

At the conference, you can connect with other families, join educational sessions, and learn about new resources and providers.

There are activities for the whole family, including:

- Workshop sessions for youth with disabilities
- Programs for brothers and sisters
- Respite care for young kids
- Family Fun Night and an ice cream social

### Conference Details

This year’s conference will be held on May 11–12, 2023. You can attend either in person or remotely (online). In order to provide a safe space for families who choose to attend the conference in person, face masks will be required for all planned sessions and events.

### Attend in Person

The conference will be held at the Wilderness Resort in Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin. The Wilderness Resort is holding some rooms for conference attendees who want to stay at the hotel. We recommend making hotel reservations early.

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## Attend Remotely

You can attend remotely (or online) using a smartphone, tablet, or computer. The conference will be live-streamed on May 11–12, 2023. It will also be recorded so that you can watch it later. Check the Circles of Life website at [www.circlesoflifeconference.com](http://www.circlesoflifeconference.com) for more information.

If you are attending remotely, you can choose between two sessions for each workshop.

## Register for the Conference

Registration for the conference is available. Instructions are on the Circles of Life website at [www.circlesoflifeconference.com](http://www.circlesoflifeconference.com).

If you need help paying for the conference, scholarships are available. For more information, visit the Circles of Life website at [www.circlesoflifeconference.com](http://www.circlesoflifeconference.com). ❖

## Birth to 3 Program Family Spotlight: Bella's Story

We heard from a family who shared how the Birth to 3 Program has helped their 2-year-old daughter, Bella, come out her shell.

Since starting the Birth to 3 Program last summer, Bella's mother, Catrina, says that her daughter's transformation has been incredible to witness.

Catrina says that Bella's therapist has done amazing work with her, and that Bella looks forward to her therapy sessions each week.

"She started out very quiet, timid, and afraid to form new words," says Catrina. "Now she confidently tells me about the world around her, and she is highly motivated to learn new words." ❖



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## The Birth to 3 Program Wants Your Family Stories and Photos!

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

- A positive interaction with the Birth to 3 Program or an example of how it 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 [dhsbirthto3@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:dhsbirthto3@dhs.wisconsin.gov) with "All in for Kids" in the subject line. You can also send ideas for stories you would like to see in the newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you!❖

## Helpful Resources for Families

Everyone 5 years and older needs an updated (bivalent) booster dose to stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccinations. Being up to date provides the best protection against severe illness associated with COVID-19. Information about booster doses:

[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-booster.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-booster.htm)

Latest information about COVID-19, including information about vaccinations for children, vaccine booster doses, and testing:

[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm)

Everyone aged **6 months and older** can get a free COVID-19 vaccination from their health care provider, community-based vaccination clinic, local or tribal health department, or pharmacy.

Find out how at: [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-get.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-get.htm)

Children 2 years and older can protect against COVID-19 by wearing a mask. Learn more at:

[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/parents.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/parents.htm)

Tips for talking about COVID-19 vaccinations with family and friends: [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-talk.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-talk.htm)

How to prevent the flu:

[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/influenza/prevention.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/influenza/prevention.htm)

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent COVID-19. You can also help stop its spread by:

- Wearing a mask on public transportation or at crowded gatherings. You can wear a mask even if it is not required.
- Staying home when feeling sick.
- Getting tested if you have symptoms or after close contact with someone who has COVID-19.

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Information about children's eye health, vision, and screening:  
[www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/tips-children-eyes-vision](http://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/tips-children-eyes-vision)  
[www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/children-eye-screening](http://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/children-eye-screening)

Warning signs of vision problems in babies and children:  
[www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/eyes/Pages/Warning-Signs-of-Vision-Problems-in-Children.aspx](http://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/eyes/Pages/Warning-Signs-of-Vision-Problems-in-Children.aspx)

New to the Birth to 3 Program? Take a look at these resources:

- The Early Intervention booklet helps you understand how early intervention helps your family and child learn and grow together:  
[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/p-03022.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/p-03022.htm)
- The Birth to 3 Program Services at a Glance guide explains the supports and services available:  
[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/p-03011.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/p-03011.htm)

Previous issues of All in for Kids: Birth to 3 Program newsletters:  
[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/birthto3/family/index.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/birthto3/family/index.htm) (Scroll down to the Publications & Videos tab at bottom of page.)

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All in for Kids is a newsletter published by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services for children and families in the Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program.

The Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program is an early intervention program committed to serving children under the age of 3 with developmental delays and disabilities and their families. The program partners with families to assist the child's development and support the family's knowledge, skills, and abilities as they interact with and raise their child. For more information, visit [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/children/index.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/children/index.htm).

Para leer este boletín en español, visite [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/akidsb-3-2022.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/akidsb-3-2022.htm).

Xav nyeem tsab ntawv xov xwm no ua Lus Hmoob, mus xyuas [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/akidsb-3-2022.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/akidsb-3-2022.htm).

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