



WASHINGTON
— AUTISM ALLIANCE —

Moving from Crisis to Confidence

A Complete Guide to Systems
Navigation and Self-Empowerment
for Families



I. Introduction: Navigating the Lifespan



The Challenge

Families often face fragmented and complex systems when seeking support for intellectual & developmental disabilities.

The Mission

Washington Autism Alliance (WAA) acts as a personal advocate and legislative champion, expanding access to healthcare and education.

Core Objective

Transforming the journey from early intervention through adult services into a manageable, empowered path.



*“Jameses Guys”
James Frye-Artist*

II. Diagnosis to Action: Mastery of Complex Systems

- Early Intervention
- Healthcare & Insurance
- Public Education
- Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)
- Transition to Adulthood
 - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
 - Social Security (SSI/SSDI)

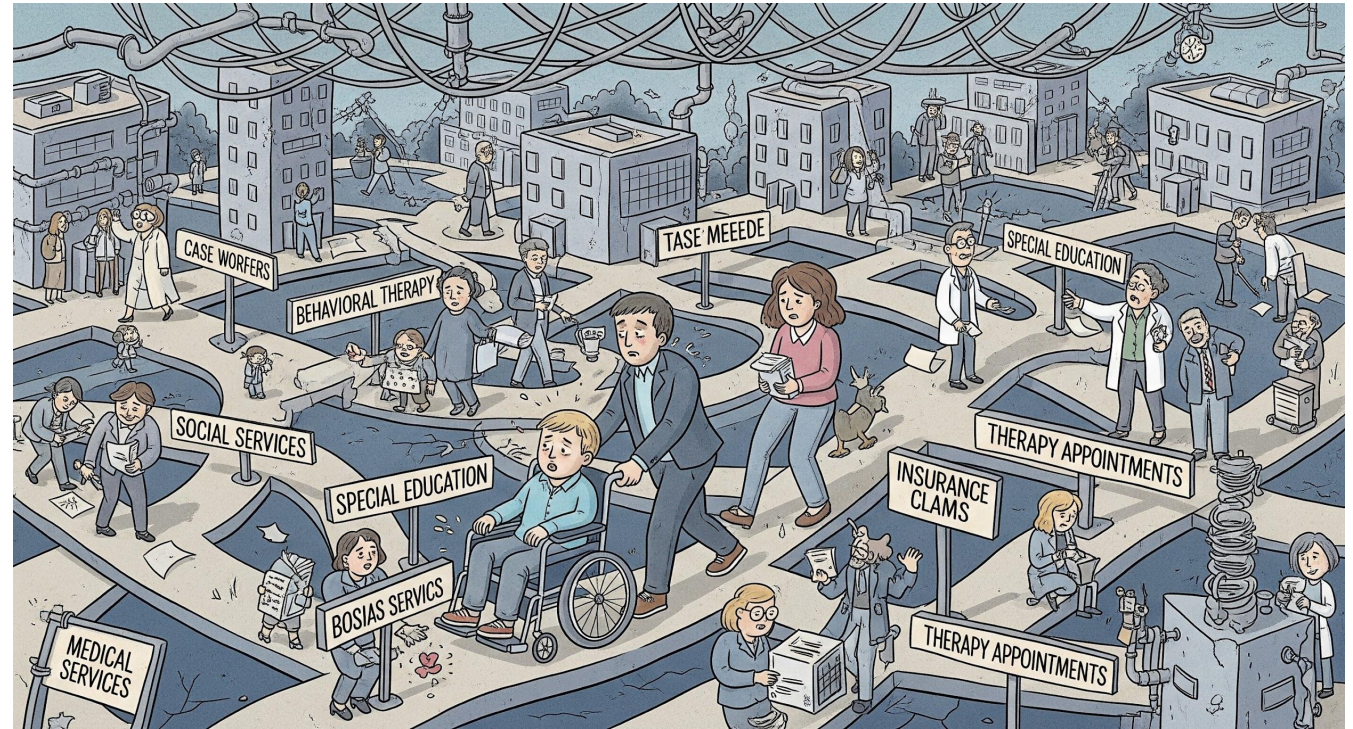


Extensive library of recorded workshops: <https://washingtonautismalliance.org/online-academy/>

III. Multi-System Navigation



- **Know the Money:**
 - **Public Education**
 - **Private Insurance**
 - **Medicaid.**
 - **DDA Waivers**
 - **Teach a Family to Fish**



IV. Expert Advocacy: IEP/504 Mastery (1)



Key Educational Protections

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) establishes core principles to ensure students receive the support they need.

FAPE

Free Appropriate Public Education

Schools must provide special education and related services at public expense that meet state standards.

- Tailored to unique needs.
- IEP must be "reasonably calculated".
- Progress must be more than "de minimis".

LRE

Least Restrictive Environment

Educate with non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate.

Rachel H. Four-Part Test:

- Educational/non-academic benefits.
- Effect on the classroom.
- Cost of services.

PWN

Prior Written Notice

Crucial paper trail for school decisions on ID, evaluation, or placement.

Must Detail:

- What was decided and why.
- Data used for decision.
- Other options considered.

Often the most overlooked advocacy tool.

IV. Expert Advocacy: IEP/504 Mastery (2)



Least Restrictive Environment- LRE





- To the maximum extent **appropriate**, children with disabilities are educated with children who are non disabled

Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular education environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes, with the use of supplementary aids and services, cannot be achieved satisfactorily

IV. Expert Advocacy: IEP/504 Mastery (3)







Strategic Advocacy Skills

-  **Data-Driven Focus**
-  **Student-Centric Framing**
-  **Proactive Proposals**
-  **Understanding the System**



Effective Communication

-  **Target the Problem, Not the People**
-  **Active Listening & Perception Checking**
-  **Parent Input Statements**
-  **The Follow-Up**



Use the "3 C's": Collaborate, Connect, and Communicate.



Ask Clarifying Questions

Document Everything:



IV. Expert Advocacy: IEP/504 Mastery (4)



Prior written notice must:

- Describe the **action** the school **proposes or refuses** to take;
- Explain **why** the school is proposing or refusing the action;
- **Describe each** evaluation procedure, assessment, record, or report the school used in making its decision;
- Include a statement that you have protections under IDEA;
- Tell you how to get a copy of the Procedural Safeguards notice;
- **Include contact information** for individuals or organizations that can help you understand IDEA;
- **Describe other choices** that the ARD Committee considered and the reasons why those choices were rejected; and
- Provide a **description of other reasons why** the school proposes or refuses the action.

Prior Written Notice (PWN)

Student Information
[Student Name]

Date of Meeting:
Purpose of Meeting: [Purpose - e.gg.]
Purpose of Meeting: Evaluation Planning

Explanation of Proposed Action

- The school proposes to conduct a identification, evaluation, psychoeducation psychoeducation (FAPE) evaluation...
- The school proposes to change the student's a placement to resource room for mathematics instruction...

Data Used in Decision-Making

- Results of recent standardized academic assessments
- Teacher observation data
- Teacher observations and progress monitoring data
- Input from the IEP team meeting on [Date]

LaChuan E. ...

Other Options Considered and Rejected

- Consideration was given to retain in the general classroom with accommodations

Other Options Considered and Rejected

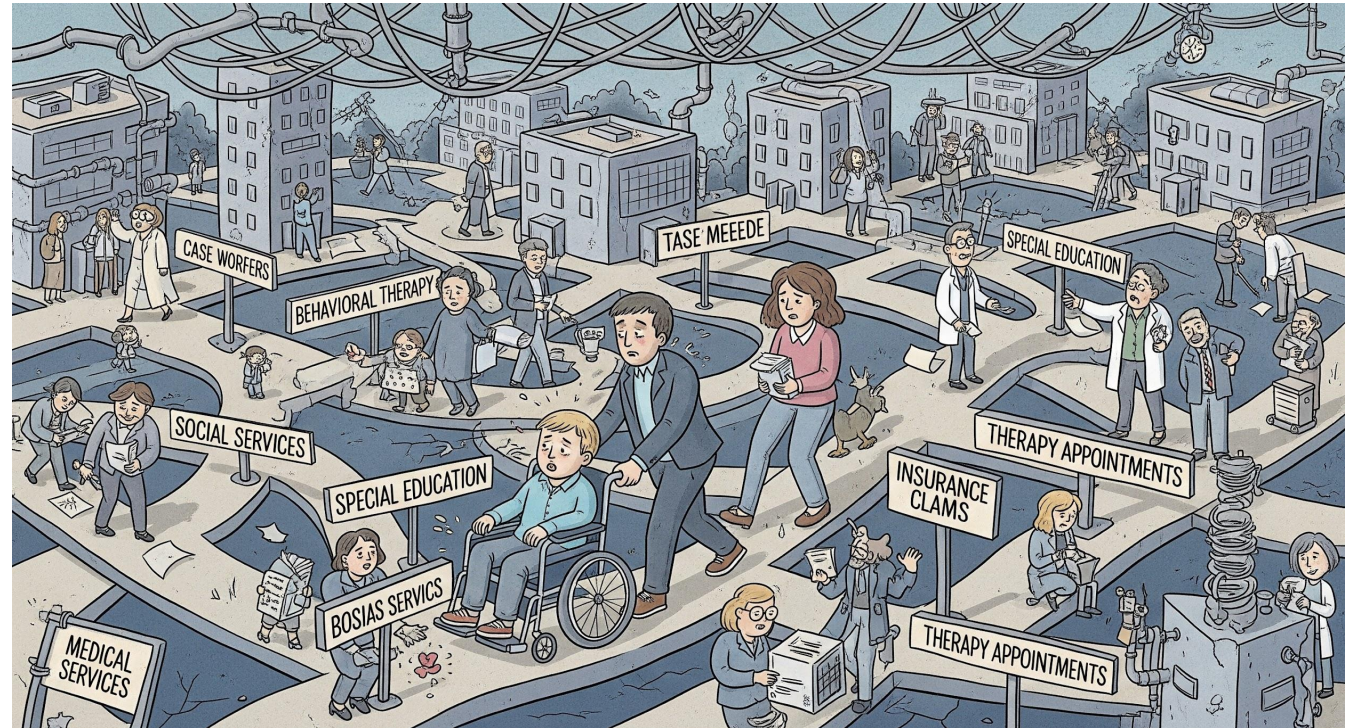
- accommodations, but this was rejected due to lack of emergent progress

Procedural Safeguards Notice
[Signature]

IV Employer Sponsored Health Insurance, Medicaid, Premium Payment Reimbursement



No matter what type of insurance your PWD has, there are laws that give them rights and protection. Mental Health Parity: Neurodevelopmental and Mental/Behavioral health services are covered by insurance in a manner comparable to other medical and surgical benefits.



IV Developmental Disabilities Administration



Covered services include:
personal care, case
management, respite,
community inclusion and
employment support,
residential habilitation, medical
equipment

DDCS eligibility & Disability
Accommodations

DDA eligibility & Disability Accommodations
Washington Autism Alliance

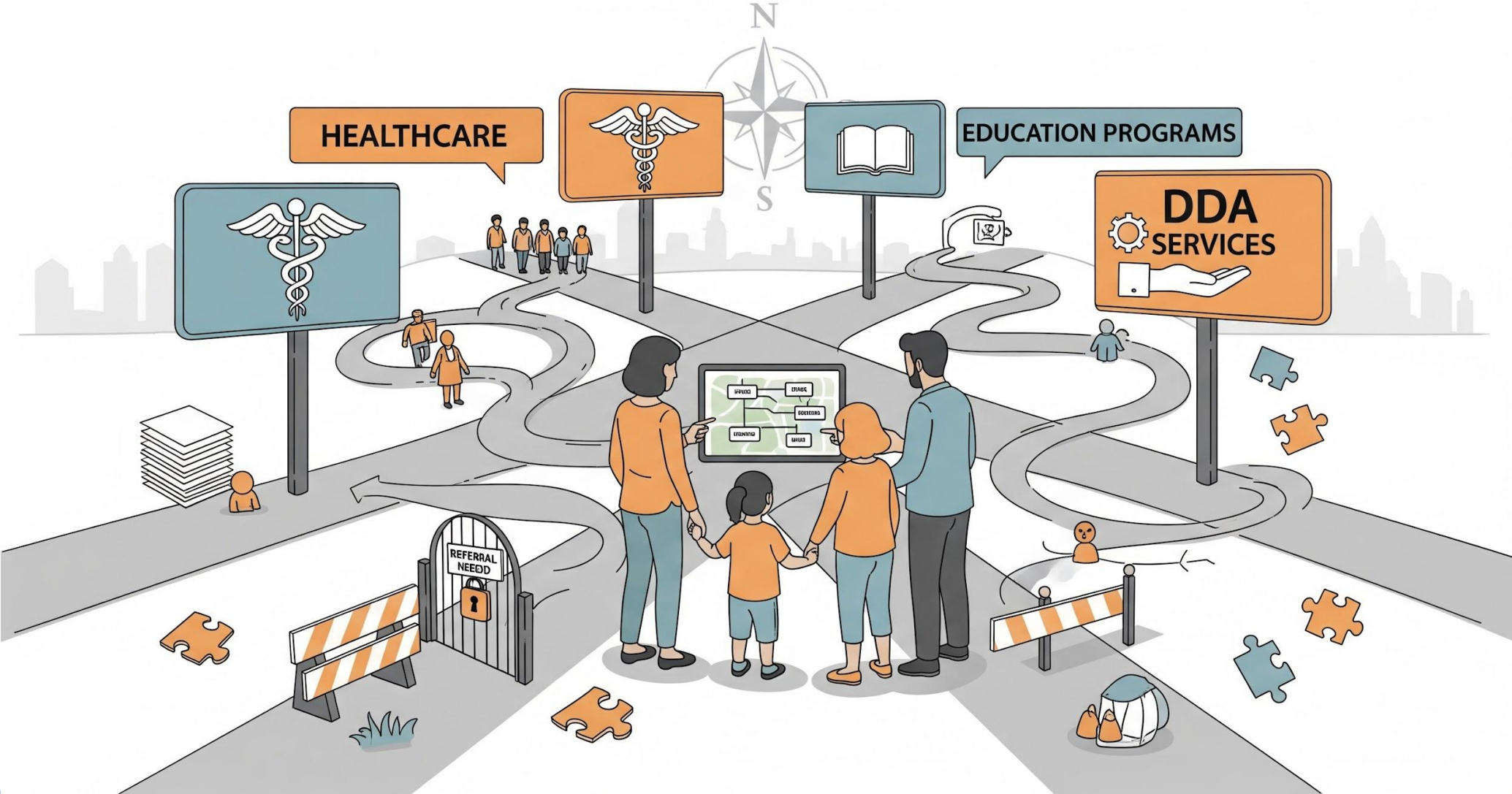
- Applicants that have previously been denied may always reapply with new information. It is very common for an applicant to apply again after being denied (the denial process is helpful for providers and knowing what documentation gaps exist for DDCS eligibility).
- Reapplications are also accepted after rules change significantly.

Watch on YouTube

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

<https://washingtonautismalliance.org/online-academy/>

WAA Family Navigation Services



WAA Family Navigation Services



Family Navigation is a personalized, hands-on service that helps families of individuals with developmental disabilities coordinate care, access services, and reduce the emotional toll of managing these complex needs. From obtaining evaluations and securing early intervention services, to selecting schools and programs that provide the right supports

WAA Family Navigation Services



Key Services Include:

- **Care Coordination**
- **System Navigation**
- **Funding & Benefit Access**
- **Appointment Coaching & Preparation**
- **Emotional Support & Advocacy**
- **Culturally Responsive Care**



Self Help Tools - Online Academy, Insurance Portal, Resource Directory



Online Academy Library

Upcoming Workshops

08 JAN 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm
SUPPORTING PARENTS OF HIGH MASKING AUTISTIC STUDENTS (SPA) - AUTISTIC + ASD
 Monday, Zoom <https://zoom.us> (please download the app and check your internet connectivity)

WAA - Lunch & Learn - Neurodiversity & Employment | Understanding FBAs & BIPs: Empowering Parents to Support Positive Behavior in Public Schools | DDCS eligibility & Disability Accommodations

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Under The Double Rainbow - The Intersection of autism and LGBTQIA+ | Artistic Burnout vs. Depression | Psychiatry for Autism and Co-occurring Mental Disorders

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Adults Navigating An Autism Diagnosis | How to include students with high support needs in grade level regular education curriculum | Parents Navigating A New Autism Diagnosis

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Transition Into Adulthood IEP | Access Gaps and Opportunities to Better Support Black Autistic Individuals and Families | Best Practices Education Guidelines for Twice Exceptional Students

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Initial Assessments, evaluations, reevaluations, IEEs | Entendiendo el Analisis Aplicado del Comportamiento (ABA) en español, Adriana Lama, PhD, BCBA-D, LBA | Understanding Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), Meny Minjarez, PhD, Ashley Penney, PhD, BCBA-D

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Insurance Portal

Hello Arzul

- + Table of Contents - Private Insurance
- Table of Contents - Medicaid

Autism and treatment

- ABA therapy treatment
- Autism screening and diagnosis
- Apple Health Covered Services
- Neuropsychological Evaluation for Autism
- ASD Treatment
- What is Autism

Coverage Options

- Medicaid Premium Payment Program
- Washington Assistance Programs
- Washington Health Plan Finder

Insurance Navigation Tools

- Sample ABA Therapy Call Log
- Sample Provider Call Log
- Sample Insurance Call Log
- Insurance Case Manager

Medicaid - Start Here

- Insurance FAQ
- Navigating Insurance Tips

Provider tools

- Confirm Network Status
- Out of Network/Single Case
- How to find and choose a provider

Short Term Options

- Bridging the Gap
- Grant Opportunities

Starting Medical Services

- Medical Coverage Criteria
- Medically Necessary Services
- Private Insurance: Prior-authorization

Private Insurance
 You can find information on diagnoses and treatment, choosing providers, encouraging your employer to add Autism benefits, information on navigating your benefits and more.

Medicaid
 You can find information on navigating Medicaid diagnosis and treatment, medical necessity, working with insurance case managers, the Premium Payment Program and more.

Explore the articles on the sidebar for more information

Apply for Insurance Navigation Assistance

If you need help with navigating your insurance or an insurance appeal please visit our online application at: <https://washingтонаutismalliance.org/navigation-services/>

Search Providers by Category



Adult Programs

Adult Programs - Age 22 - lifespan (308)



Advocacy, Financial, & Legal

Advocacy, Financial & Legal (72)



Autism Diagnosis

Autism Diagnosis (118)



Behavior Health & Mental Health

Behavior Health / Mental Health (889)



Educational Programs

Educational Programs (182)



Health Services

Health Services (203)



Local Autism Organizations

Local Autism Organizations (11)



Military Family Resources

Military Family Resources (10)



Neurodevelopmental Therapies

Neurodevelopmental Therapies



Other Local Organizations

Other Local Organizations (67)



Recreation

Recreation (197)



Religious Resources

Religious Resources (5)



Services

Services - Other (112)



Support Groups

Support Groups in your Community (100)

V Connections and Community Support



School District PTA Special Needs Group

Parent to Parent (P2P)

Washington State Fathers Network

Facebook support groups for specific diagnoses

[Friendship Circle](#)

[Best Buddies](#)



VI. How to apply for service



- Visit <https://washingtonautismalliance.org/navigation-services/>
- Read more about each service

<p>Resource Coordination</p> <p>Our Resource Coordinator collaborates with individuals and their families to identify barriers to resources and to create a specialized list of services tailored to their specific needs.</p> <p>Learn More</p>	<p>Multi-System Navigation</p> <p>Multi-system navigation services are designed to provide expert guidance and support to families caring for individuals with developmental disabilities, particularly Autism, across their entire lifespan.</p> <p>Learn More</p>	<p>Special Education Coaching</p> <p>Our Special Education coach provides one-on-one coaching to help families advocate for their student and secure the services they need.</p> <p>Learn More</p>
<p>Private Insurance Appeals</p> <p>Our Private Insurance Appeal navigator provides comprehensive support for families appealing unreasonable denial of medically necessary mental health benefits by private insurance companies.</p>	<p>Crisis Stabilization</p> <p>Our Crisis Stabilization Navigator assists people affected by Autism or developmental disability who are in or at immediate risk of losing school or residential placement due to complex support needs.</p>	<p>Strategic Parent Coaching</p> <p>We use collaborative, tailored approaches to enhance your young adult's independence, communication, and relationship-building capacities.</p>

- Complete a brief application



Join Us!



Volunteer



**Share the
Story**



**Advocate
for Change**

www.WashingtonAutismAlliance.org