

How to apply to the DSO?

There are **nine DSO agencies** across the province. Youth can find their area DSO by visiting **DSOntario.ca** or calling **2-1-1**.



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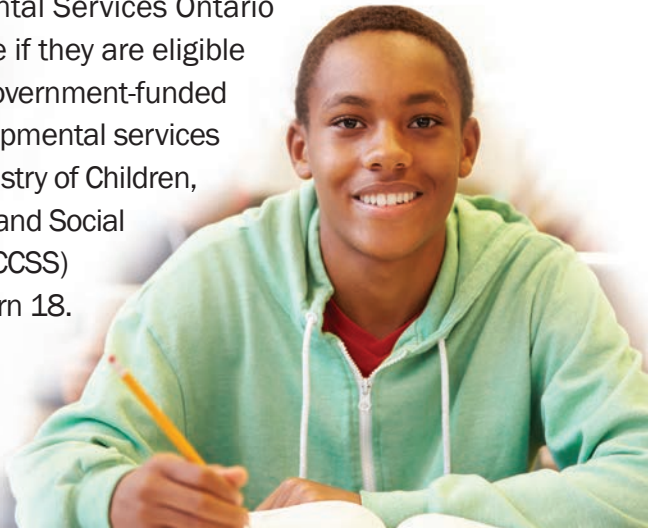


Preparing Students with Developmental Disabilities for **LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL**



Aiden, 15, is an aspiring web developer with a developmental disability. He loves spending time in his high school community. Aiden, his family and his support network are very excited about his upcoming 16th birthday. But they are also nervous about his future.

When youth turn 18, services such as Special Services at Home, Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities or services through the Ontario Autism Program, end. At the age of 16, youth and families can apply through Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) to see if they are eligible to receive government-funded adult developmental services through Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) once they turn 18.



What is DSO?

DSO is the access point for adult developmental services. DSO connects people to available services and supports in their community so that they can become more independent and actively involved in their communities, and ultimately live more meaningful lives.

Some of the services that may be available in their community include housing supports, caregiver respite, supports to help people take part in the community, specialized and clinical supports, the Adult Protective Service Worker Program, and the Passport Program.

When to apply to the DSO?

To reduce the service gap between children's and adult services, youth should start the process and apply early at the age of 16. With all the correct documents, they can be confirmed eligible for adult developmental services at age 16; however, the services will not start until age 18.

Here is an important age-milestone checklist to share with students and their families:

- At age 16, call DSO to see if you are eligible
- At age 16 to 17, schedule a transition meeting with your school
- At age 17 and 6 months, apply for income/employment support through the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), separate from DSO
- Before age 18, complete your application package with DSO

What can youth and families do while they wait for the services?

While youth and families are waiting for ministry-funded services to become available, they may want to research other local community resources, programs, and activities. Connect with local recreation centres, private recreation providers, and non-profit organizations that offer a variety of programs and activities for adults with special needs. Many of these programs are geared to meet the interests and abilities of all participants.