

A Comparison of Specialized Family Care and Specialized Foster Care in West Virginia

	Specialized Family Care	Specialized Foster Care
Program Intent	<p>This is a foster care program to meet the needs of both children and adults with an intellectual and/or developmental disability, e.g. IQ at or below 70. Additionally, biological families use Specialized Family Care for respite services when caretakers need a break from regular care or an emergency arises that results in the regular care being disrupted.</p> <p>For the most part, Specialized Family Care is a long-term placement option. Many people in placement have been in the same home for over 10 years. For most children placed in Specialized Family Care, these homes become their “forever homes.”</p>	<p>This is a foster care program to meet the needs of children who have been abused, neglected or who have resided in a home with excessive conflict (domestic abuse).</p> <p>Specialized Foster Care is intended as a short-term placement option for children and adolescents with severe behavioral or emotional problems resulting from their environment rather than a particular disability.</p>
Program Referral Criterion	<p>Individuals are typically referred to Specialized Family Care by child and adult social and behavioral health service agencies, health facilities, and by biological families who can no longer provide care for their family member.</p> <p>To receive placement an individual must have an intellectual and/or developmental disability and qualify for Title XIX I/DD Medicaid Waiver services, Medicaid Personal Care services or have private pay capabilities.</p> <p>Adults and children are eligible.</p>	<p>The state (DHHR) removes children from the home for their health and safety. The children are placed with a Specialized Foster Care family who receives a stipend or reimbursement for care.</p> <p>Children are generally placed in Specialized Foster Care due to behavioral issues and difficulties.</p> <p>Only children are eligible.</p>
Program History	<p>The Specialized Family Care Program was developed as a result of the Medley vs. Ginsberg case and the resulting decree also known as the Medley Decree. For this reason, Specialized Family Care is oftentimes referred to as the Medley Program. The program was first developed to provide a family-based living alternative for individuals being released from state institutions and now also serves children and adults who are at risk for being hospitalized or institutionalized.</p>	<p>The Specialized Foster Care services developed due to a lack of “regular” foster homes who would accept teenagers or children with severe behavior issues. Specialized Foster Care provides counseling services, case management services and also assists with biological family visitations. These foster parents are sometimes referred to as “treatment parents” or “therapeutic foster homes.”</p>
Program Providers	<p>Specialized Family Care is provided by both public and private placement resources. Placement resources include the Specialized Family Care Program administered by West Virginia University Center for Excellence in Disabilities, Braley and Thompson Specialized Family Care, and Potomac Center Specialized Family Care.</p>	<p>Specialized Foster Care is provided by both public and private placement resources. Placement resources are WV DHHR, Try Again Homes, Burlington UM Family Services Inc., Braley and Thompson, KVC, Children’s Home Society, National Youth Advocate Program, Potomac Center, Pressley Ridge Schools of WV, and NECCO Inc.</p>