:: Information for Families

Who is eligible?
Any family who provides care for an individual with autism or on the autism spectrum can apply for a respite worker. You apply for a respite worker by contacting Susan Nolls at JACIL. Please contact Susan at susan@jacil.org for information about application deadlines and forms. We are currently accepting applications for respite workers beginning in late January of 2013.

What is respite care?
Respite care is a way to provide caregivers with some time to complete tasks other than caring for their family member. In our program, this will be a regularly scheduled 2 hour block of time each week while Illinois College is in session. The respite workers are Illinois College students who are training to work in education, health professions, and social service. They will spend engage in developmentally appropriate activities with your family member.

What are families expected to provide?
Families or primary caregivers are expected to designate an appropriate activity for the respite worker. They should also make sure that their child is ready for a guest. This includes making sure that bathroom and hygiene needs have been met in advance of the respite workers arrival. If meals or snacks are to be consumed while the respite worker is present, these foods should be prepared and designated in advance. Caregivers should also make sure that their child is properly told about the respite worker’s arrival in order to reduce transition problems. At the end of the semester, families will also be asked to complete an evaluation of both the respite worker and the respite program.

What is not included in respite care?
The respite workers are expected to focus exclusively on your autistic family member while they are in your home. This means that they are not expected to cook, clean, or perform other household tasks while they are in your home. In order to properly provide safety, respite workers will also not be allowed to answer your phone, answer your door, or provide care for other children or family members. Respite workers are also not allowed to provide more than two hours of week of care through this program. If you would like to hire your respite worker for additional childcare duties, you can elect to pay them for this extra care.

:: Program Administrators

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