

Supplemental Security Income Video Transcript

Hello. My name is Lisa Koob. I am a family navigator at the Waisman Center. Today we are talking about supplemental security income, also known as SSI. We are going to answer these questions.

What is SSI?

Why is SSI helpful?

What is important to know about SSI?

How do you apply for SSI?

And where can you learn more about SSI?

First, let's answer the question, **what is SSI?**

Supplemental Security Income or SSI provides Medicaid health insurance for children with disabilities. It is one of several ways for children in Wisconsin to get Medicaid health insurance. In Wisconsin, Medicaid is also known as Forward Health. SSI also provides a monthly income check.

Next, let's talk about **why SSI is helpful.**

If your child already has Medicaid through BadgerCare, you might wonder why they should also apply for SSI. SSI is a type of straight Medicaid. That means there is no HMO or network of providers assigned to your child's Medicaid. Many families find it helpful to have more flexibility with which medical providers their child is able to see. The monthly check is also helpful to families. You can use this to pay for your child's basic needs, such as housing costs, food, and clothing. You can also use the SSI check for toys and activities for your child.

What else is important to know about SSI?

SSI eligibility is determined through the Social Security Administration. For your child to be eligible, your household income and assets must be below a certain level. You will need to report your income regularly to the Social Security Administration. Your child must be a US citizen or a permanent resident. Your child must also have a diagnosed disability. This could be autism, down syndrome, cerebral palsy, or many other diagnoses. A diagnosed disability can also be something like developmental delay. This might be diagnosed by your child's primary care provider if your child has delays in how they learn, play, act, speak, or move. Your child must show delays in multiple areas of development to qualify for SSI. This means they are much further behind than their peers in several skills.

How do you apply for SSI?

To apply for SSI, you may contact the Social Security Administration. Their phone number is 800-772-1213. You can call them directly or start the application online. Then they will call you. We will provide a link to their website at the end of this video. Please know that application and eligibility determination process can take a while. The Social Security Administration staff will gather information from you about your child. They will ask you about your income and assets. They will need medical records that list your child's diagnosis. They will ask for records from Birth to 3 or school, depending on your child's age. If you don't have these records, they will ask you to sign releases so they can get them. When you apply for SSI for your child, keep in mind that SSI staff need to know about the extra help your child needs and will be less interested in your child's many strengths. Think about what you or others have to do to help your child each day. Think about what you would have to tell someone caring for your child who doesn't know your child as well as you do.

Finally, where can you learn more?

You may learn more about SSI on the Social Security website. Family Voices of Wisconsin also has some helpful fact sheets with information. Please see the resource links in the video details. All of these resources are available through the QR code on this screen. Thank you for joining us today, and we look forward to seeing you next time.