

Elevator Pitch Guide

for the Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) Program

What is the purpose?

- The purpose of this document is to provide context to the Local Health Departments on how to customize and apply the elevator pitch, i.e., how to share key information about the Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) Program with families.

CYSHCN Program

- The CYSHCN Program seeks to improve the system of care for children and youth with special health care needs from birth and up to 21 years of age and their families.
- Children and youth served by the CYSHCN Program have an illness or condition for which they need extra health care and support services. They might have a serious or long-lasting:
 - Physical condition,
 - Intellectual or developmental disability, and/or
 - Behavioral or emotional condition.
- CYSHCN is a program that provides information as well as referrals about insurance, health, social services, and community resources to CYSHCN and their families as well as medical providers, school personnel, and community-based organizations, to support children and youth with special health care needs in their community.
- Through the CYSHCN Program, families can connect with support networks that understand the challenges of caring for children and youth with special needs.
- Additional program information may be found here:
 - The NYS DOH CYSHCN website: <https://health.ny.gov/CYSHCN>
 - The Regional Support Center CYSHCN Project Portal: <https://cyshcn.wihd.org/>

Families with CYSHCN

- Families with children and youth with special health care needs don't only need one resource; they will keep needing resources and information services throughout their children's lifespan.
- Families constantly need information, referrals, services, and references, including those from word of mouth.
- Most times, you will be able to address the family's needs. Remember, you are there to support families and can always follow up if needed.

- Parents often need to learn what they need and want to know about their child's disabilities.
- How you talk to parents is essential. It generates a feeling that impacts the family's utilization of a program or service.
- The family's life must change because of the child's needs, mental health stresses (understanding context), and still having to care for other home or personal needs.
- Families can come with stigmas due to previous negative experiences.

Recommendations from parents with CYSHCN

- Be compassionate with the family and with yourself.
- Be aware of your tone, voice, and expectations of the interaction with the family/parent.
- Avoid judgment; consider that you are just getting a snapshot of what the other person is going through.
- It is OK to say you do not know, but you can get back to them. Following up can create a positive impression. Example: "I don't have that information right now, but I can look into it and get back to you."
- Listen and build rapport with the family.