

## **Understanding the service group called “Children with high to very high support needs”**

### **What is this guide intended to do?**

All children need some level of support from their family to stay healthy, safe, and happy. Children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) may need assistance above and beyond what is typical for all children. This guide helps you understand what a service group is, how it is determined, and what to do if you disagree with your child’s service group. No matter what service group your child is assigned to, don’t forget that you will take the lead in deciding what services your child receives.

### **What is the Oregon Needs Assessment?**

The Oregon Needs Assessment (ONA) helps us achieve our vision of a system of supports that is easy to use and responsive to the strengths, needs and direction of people with disabilities and their families.

The Oregon Needs Assessment is a tool used by the Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS) to get information about what kinds of challenges your child may have if they had no support. It is completed by a person called an Assessor, with help from you, your child, and other people you choose.

The information is used to help you, your child and those you choose to help you with planning, talk about what kinds of supports are best for your child. The Oregon Needs Assessment does not identify how your child will be supported, or what will help your child achieve their goals — that is done during the Individual Support Planning process. You, your child, and others you choose, will decide what supports will best meet your child’s needs and help them reach their goals. Your child’s Oregon Needs Assessment and resulting service group are just one part of the planning process.

## Why are service groups important?

If your child receives developmental disabilities services as one of the supports in your child's life, their service group determines the most hours a care provider ("provider") may be paid to support your child each month. If your child needs agency residential services, their service group determines how much residential providers will be paid to care for them.

## How was my child's service group determined?

Certain questions in the Oregon Needs Assessment are used to determine your child's service group. This guide will go on to explain exactly how this works.

## How are service groups organized?

Service groups are first organized by a person's age, such as infant/toddler (birth to 3), young child (4 to 11), adolescent (12 to 17), and adult (18+). Within each age range, there are different service groups based on support needs.

## What causes someone to be assigned to the Child: High to Very High service group?

A child may be assigned this service group due to any of the following:

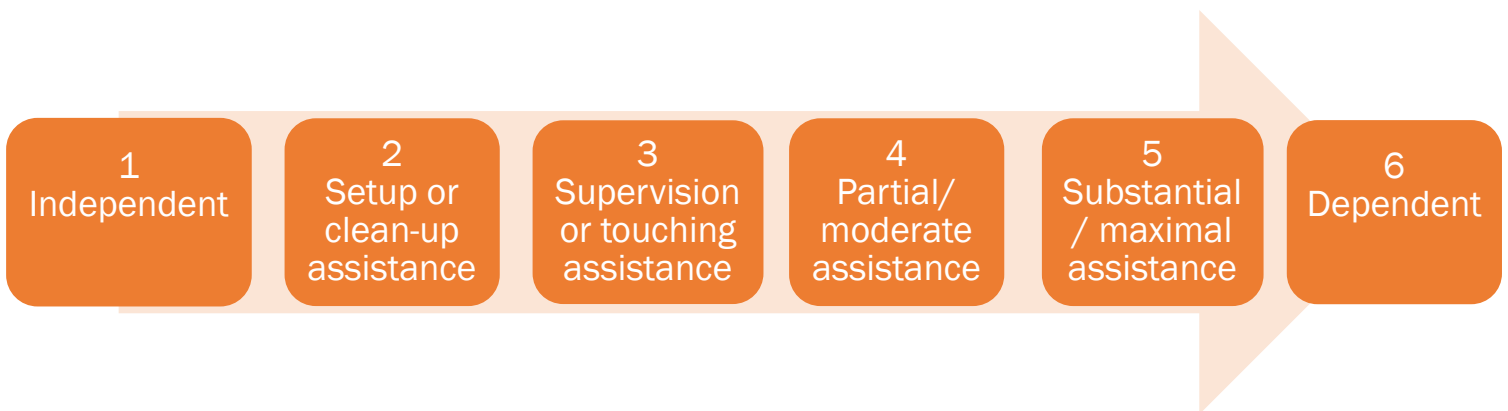
- very high general support needs related to your child's disability
- one or more medical condition(s) that requires a very high degree of support
- behavioral challenges that require a very high degree of support

Those in the Child: High to Very High service group are all unique individuals. They are in the same service group because the type or level of assistance they need is similar.

## What is the general support need criteria for Child: High to Very High?

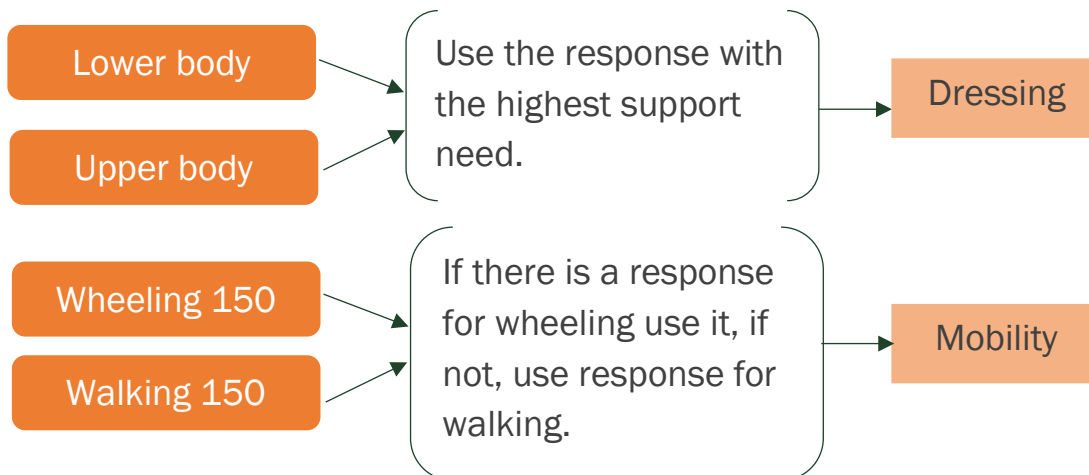
To measure general support need, the focus is on responses to Oregon Needs Assessment questions about activities of daily living and instrumental activities of daily living (ADLs/IADLs). The ONA asks about many different activities of daily living and how much support a person needs with these activities.

For each question, the responses are on a scale from 1 to 6. The scale for each question looks like:



Responses to certain questions in the ONA are used to create one overall score called the General Support Need (GSN) score.

First, responses about dressing and mobility in the ONA are combined into two items:



Then, dressing and mobility are added to responses to other questions in the ONA. There are eight questions that are added up for children that are 5 to 11 years old. They are:

Putting on/taking off footwear	Eating	Toilet hygiene	Shower/ bathe self
Oral hygiene	Other general hygiene	Dressing	Mobility

If you choose not to answer a question from the ONA or the question is not applicable, that response is scored as a 1. If an activity is not attempted due to a medical condition or safety concern, that response is scored as a 6.

### Age Add-on Score

For children ages 5 to 11, six other questions are added to the list above to create an age add-on score. These questions ask about housework, making a light meal, laundry, using public transportation, money management, and light shopping. The Oregon Needs Assessment does not require answers to these questions. For children in this age range, these questions are automatically scored with a 6 for “dependent” so the age add-on score for 5 to 11-year-old children is 36.

The total GSN score includes adding the responses to the first eight questions plus the age add-on score of 36. Children with a GSN score between 74 and 84 are assigned to the Child: High to Very High service group.

### What is the medical support need criteria for Child: High to Very High?

The focus of this criteria is the Oregon Needs Assessment questions about medical support needs. The ONA asks about many different medical treatments and therapies, specifically how often you need each treatment or therapy.

For each question, responses are counted on a scale from 0 to 3. The scale for each question looks like:



The responses to the following twenty-eight questions about medical treatments and therapies are then added up using the scale above.

Respiratory therapy	Chest percussion	Postural drainage	Nebulizer	Tracheal aerosol therapy
Oral suctioning: oral cavity only	Airway suctioning	Tracheal suctioning	Nasopharyngeal suctioning	Other suctioning
Tracheostomy care	Care for central line	Intravenous injections	Subcutaneous injection	Jejunostomy tube
Nasogastric or abdominal feeding tube	Indwelling or suprapubic catheter monitoring	Insertion of catheter (intermittent)	CPAP/BiPAP	Mechanical ventilator
Oxygen therapy	Colostomy, urostomy	Peritoneal dialysis	Hemodialysis	Active cerebral shunt monitoring
	Baclofen pump	Wound care	Treatment for stage III or IV ulcers	

The total of the responses to these twenty-eight questions is called the Medical Support Need (MSN) score. The ONA also asks if a person performs the treatments or therapies.

You are assigned to this group if you have an MSN score between 5 and 84 and have at least one daily medical treatment or therapy that is performed by a person.

## What is the behavioral support need criteria for Child: High to Very High?

The ONA asks about different behavioral challenges and supports needed for those challenges. A person is assigned to the Child: High to Very High group based on the following responses:

**Two of these** behavioral challenges were present in the past year (or would be present if you did not have support):

Injurious to self

Aggressive or combative

Sexual aggression/assault

Property destruction

**And at least one of these kinds** support is used:

Proactive strategies/  
physical prompts at  
least daily

Safeguarding  
interventions at least  
monthly

Emergency/crisis  
services two times in  
the past year

**And both of these** questions were answered “yes”:

Positive Behavioral  
Support Plan created

Positive Behavioral  
Support Plan  
implemented

If you would like to see your child’s Oregon Needs Assessment to see how it was scored, you can get it from your child’s Services Coordinator.

## **If you disagree with your child's assigned service group**

You, and those in your child's life, best understand what your child needs to achieve their goals. You have rights and options when you don't agree with decisions made about the services and supports your child receives.

The links below describe steps you can take if you disagree. These pages define when your child is eligible for exceptions and how to file them, as well as the standard hearings and appeal rights and process.

Request a hearing: <https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/idd/Pages/hearings.aspx>

Request an exception:

<https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/idd/Pages/exceptions.aspx>

## **Resources**

### **Where to learn more**

More information about how the service group framework was developed and what steps are next online:

<https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/compass/Pages/service-groups.aspx>