



**ARIZONA**  
— DEPARTMENT OF —  
**ECONOMIC SECURITY**

# Division of Developmental Disabilities

June 6, 2025

# Agenda

- Behavioral Health Stratified Treatment (B.E.S.T.) Study
- Parents as Paid Caregivers (PPCG)
  - Policies for Public Comment
  - Implementation Timeline



# Live Your **B.E.S.T.** Life: A Mental Health Study for Youth with IDD



# Agenda



**01** Learn about the BEST Study  
Why it matters and how it supports mental health for youth with IDD.



**02** Hear Personal Stories  
Hear from youth and parents in the study



**03** Live Panel/ Ask Questions  
Hear from our team members including youth with IDD/caregivers



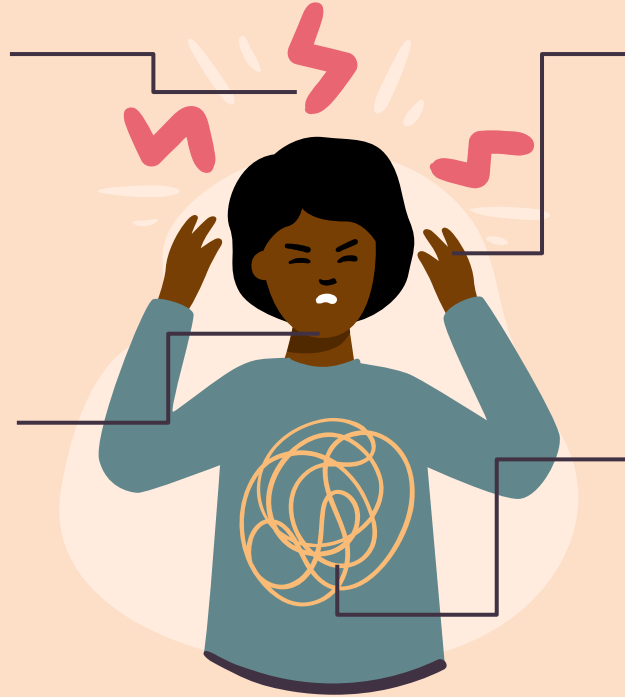
# Why this Study Matters: Teens with IDD often feel stressed and overwhelmed

## Body Changes

Sleeping a lot more or less, stomachaches, headaches, or other pain

## Behavior Changes

Not wanting to do favorite things; trouble paying attention; avoiding others



## Changes in Mood

Feeling more angry or upset; crying often or looking sad; feeling scared

## Changes in Thoughts

Saying things like “I’m not good” or I wish I wasn’t here”

# Why this Study Matters: High Needs, Low Access

## Help is Hard to Find for Youth with IDD

70% of AZ families say their child with IDD needs mental health care but isn't getting it

6-7x

## Youth with IDD are More Anxious

Youth with IDD are 6-7x more likely to have anxiety

2-3x

## Youth with IDD are More Depressed

Youth with IDD are 2-3x more likely to have depression

70%

# What is the B.E.S.T Study

- Researchers and doctors from Arizona State University, University of Illinois, Brown University, and other sites are working with youth with IDD and caregivers on the B.E.S.T. Study.
- The Behavioral Health Stratified Treatment (B.E.S.T.) study tests if adding mental health support to care coordination helps teens with IDD.



Benjamin Van Voorhes, MD, MPH  
**Principal Investigator**



Kristin Berg, PhD  
**Co-Principal Investigator**

# Goals of the B.E.S.T. Study



Improve  
health related  
quality of life



Reduce  
depression &  
anxiety



Improve health  
behaviors



Promote positive  
transition to  
adulthood  
outcomes

**By US For US:  
B.E.S.T. was  
created with  
Youth with IDD**



“I think a lot of people don’t connect anxiety or depression to having a disability. The B.E.S.T. study has helped me talk about these things. We all have bad days, but depression is worse. Understanding how disability and mental health are tied together and having strategies to use to help me cope has really helped me.”

-Teen Participant 17 yrs. old

I've seen a positive difference in [child] since she started with the B.E.S.T Study. She's using the skills she's learned, and you can really see the improvement in her attitude and overall mental health."

-Parent of Teen Participant

# Who Can Join the B.E.S.T. Study?

Age 13-20



Teens age 13-20 years old

Have IDD



Have a disability that affects learning or development (IDD)

Enrolled in DDD



Getting help from a support coordinator from DDD

Internet Access



Has access to a phone tablet or computer with internet

# What You Do in the Study

## Screening/Enrollment

if the study is a good fit for you, and if you and your caregiver agree, you can sign up and get started

## Join Group A or Group B

You will be randomly placed in Group A or B.

**Group A:** You get the same DDD care you already have.

**Group B:** You get the same DDD care **plus** mental health supports from the B.E.S.T. team.

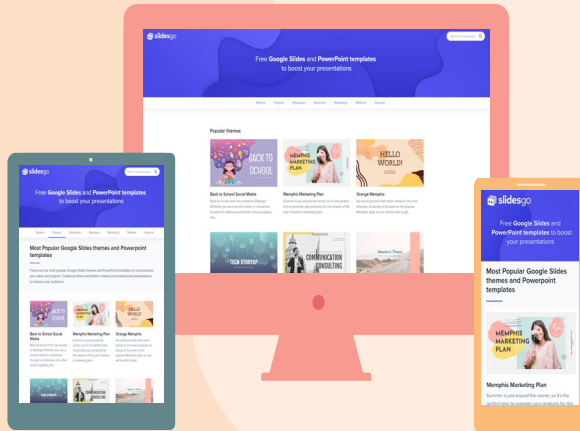
## Share Experiences

Everyone answers questions about how they are doing at 6, 12 and 24 months

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Get up to \$200 to for sharing your experiences!

# What Does Group B Get?



- Your level of support is based on how much stress, sadness, or worry you feel.
- You can get online lessons and videos about mental health.
- If you need more help, you can join online therapy with a trained counselor.
- Everything is done on Zoom and fits your schedule.

# Live Panel/Q & A

Anja Herrman

Caroline O'Hara

Anne O'Hara

# THANKS!

To learn more about the B.E.S.T. Study

[beststudy@uic.edu](mailto:beststudy@uic.edu)

1-833-732-5778

[www.beststudy.info](http://www.beststudy.info)



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# Parents As Paid Caregivers

Policies for Public Comment

# Parents as Paid Caregivers (PPCG)

- Policies are open for public comment
  - AHCCCS (May 9 - July 9)
  - DDD (June 9 - July 9)
- Each agency (AHCCCS & DDD) must follow traditional procedures for posting comments; an [instruction guide](#) has been developed to help streamline the process for stakeholders
- Helpful tips:
  - If both AHCCCS and DDD have the same policy open, focus on the AHCCCS policy
  - Review and provide feedback on the policies in the order they have been listed in the instruction guide
  - Use the [Google Form](#) to provide your feedback



# Implementation Timeline

Task	Start Date	End Date
AHCCCS Public Comment Period	May 9	July 9
DDD Early Notification Period	May 9	July 9
DDD Public Comment Period	June 9	July 9
40-hour weekly PPCG Service Model Limitation and Single Service Provider Agency Requirement in Effect	July 1	N/A
Review of Public Comments	July 10	July 25
Final Versions of Policies Posted	July 28	
Case Manager/Support Coordinator Training on Policies and Tools related to PPCG	July	September
Policy Revision Effective and Implementation Date	October 1	



# Implementation By July 1, 2025

All PPCGs providing care to a member are employed by a single service providing agency, and

All PPCGs providing care under the PPCG Service Model are not exceeding 40 hours in a week or 16 hours in a 24 hour period.

- Providers will receive outreach from DDD to help coordinate transitions.
  - Toolkit for Workforce Development
- PPCGs and members will receive outreach from their Support Coordinator/Case Manager to inform the of both requirements and support transition

# Implementation By October 1, 2025

All Support Coordinators/ Case Managers have been trained on the Policies and Tools to implement the PPCG Service Model

All Support Coordinators/ Case Managers will begin implementing policy changes and using the new tools at the member's first planning meeting occurring after October 1, 2025.





Thank You!