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## **DDA Announces Funding to Expand Recreational Programs for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**

\$500,000 in grants will be distributed to nonprofit organizations across Tennessee

NASHVILLE – The Department of Disability and Aging (DDA) announced new funding aimed at supporting existing recreational programs to provide more opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Tennessee.

The department is providing up to \$25,000 in one-time funding to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations to support existing non-academic recreational programs, such as youth developmental camps, to increase capacity, providing more people with intellectual and developmental disabilities the opportunity to participate in the same activities as their peers. In addition to expanding capacity, the grant will allow programs to meet the needs of higher-acuity participants by funding support for individuals with complex medical needs.

“Individuals with disabilities and children in foster care often get overlooked when it comes to activities like recreational programs, or there’s just not enough capacity in existing programs to accommodate everyone,” said DDA Commissioner Brad Turner. “This grant is a direct response to that need.”

Organizations interested in applying must adhere to the following criteria:

- Applicants must have an existing, established non-academic recreational program serving school-aged children (ages 5-22) with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.
- Applicants must develop a plan to expand capacity to serve new school-aged children (aged 5-22) with IDD and/or disabilities.
  - Applicants must show how the funding will allow the program to enroll more school-aged children (ages 5-22) than are currently being served.
- Applicants must provide a detailed proposal plan for expansion.
  - Applicants need a plan including timelines, staffing needs, budget, and specific outreach strategies for the expansion.
- Preference will be given to programs that serve youth with IDD in foster care.

DDA has a total of \$500,000 in funding for this program. It is accepting applications for funding until June 8, 2026.

More information and the application process can be found on the DDA Grant Opportunities page: <https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/disability-and-aging/resource-directory/grants.html>



Video about how this program will impact Tennesseans with disabilities:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jl-RXn0pOB8>

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### **About the Department of Disability and Aging**

The Department of Disability and Aging is the state agency responsible for oversight of services and support to 1.5 million older adults and Tennesseans with disabilities. The department is the result of a merger between the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and the Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disabilities, effective July 1, 2024. Every day, the department strives to support people to live rewarding and fulfilling lives through Medicaid waiver Home and Community Based Services (HCBS), and a wide range of services and supports for older adults and adults with disabilities. DDA also provides services to infants and toddlers with disabilities or developmental delays through the Tennessee Early Intervention System (TEIS), and children under the age of 18 with disabilities or complex medical needs through the Katie Beckett Program. The department supports people to live the lives they envision for themselves by ensuring people are free to exercise rights, engage with their broader communities and experience optimal health. DDA is the first state service delivery system in the nation to receive Person-Centered Excellence Accreditation from the Council on Quality and Leadership. It has also been recognized as a national leader in its efforts to increase competitive, community-based employment outcomes for people with disabilities and its commitment to enhancing independence through Enabling Technology.