

We are the parents of a 13-year-old son with autism. When our son was first diagnosed, our family felt overwhelmed and isolated. We desperately wanted to support him in the best way possible, but we had limited guidance, scarce resources, and no meaningful respite from the constant demands of caregiving. Like so many families, it often felt as though we were navigating this journey completely alone.

That changed when we were accepted into the Respite Care Program. This program has given us far more than temporary relief has provided stability, hope, and access to resources we did not previously know existed.

As caregivers, the ability to rest, recharge, and attend to our mental and physical health has made a profound difference. We are better parents because of it, and our family has become stronger and more resilient. The positive impact has been undeniable. We are better equipped to meet his needs, advocate on his behalf, and thoughtfully plan for his future.

Respite care has significantly improved our quality of life and enabled us to remain engaged, healthy members of our community. Cutting or reducing funding for this program would be detrimental—not only to our family, but to countless families throughout Montgomery County who rely on respite care to survive and thrive. Without this support, caregivers risk burning out, families lose critical lifelines, and vulnerable individuals may ultimately face far more costly and disruptive outcomes.

Cutting total annual hours will result in long periods with no respite at all, families running out of hours months before the fiscal year ends. Consistent support across all 12 months is critical—short-term or reduced coverage defeats the purpose of respite.

Thank you for your time, your consideration, and your continued commitment to supporting families and caregivers in our community.