

Special Needs Planning

Preparing for the financial security
of your child with a disability

ADVICE AND PLANNING



Merrill Lynch
Wealth Management

Bank of America Corporation



Preparing for the **financial security** of your child with a disability



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As the parent or guardian of a child with a disability, one of your greatest challenges is providing for your loved one's ongoing financial security. Thankfully, people with serious disabilities are now living longer, fuller lives than ever thought possible.

Yet this welcome trend has left many families unprepared for a significant financial challenge: the desire to help provide a lifetime of support to a child with special needs while achieving other important financial goals.

Financial advice and peace of mind

Merrill Lynch understands that your goal is to provide for your loved one, now and even after you are gone. We can help you create and integrate special needs strategies while keeping in mind your other financial objectives.

A coordinated approach for caregivers

Your Merrill Lynch Financial Advisor will work with you, taking the time to understand you and your family. By serving as your single point of contact, your Financial Advisor can draw upon all the resources of Merrill Lynch and Bank of America—as well as outside advisors—to help you find appropriate solutions so you can spend more time and effort on providing for your loved one.

Taking your entire family into account

Addressing your complex financial needs successfully will require a strategy that goes beyond investment advice to integrate estate planning, insurance and trust considerations. This comprehensive view links special needs issues to your broader financial picture, benefiting both your child with a disability and your entire household.



How can you be sure your child will always be secure?

The challenge:
Balancing all your
financial goals
when you need to
provide for a **loved one**
with a disability



While planning for the future can benefit most investors, it's particularly critical for those with special needs. Your Merrill Lynch Financial Advisor can help you create a strategy to address all aspects of your financial situation, including issues that may be unique to families of children with disabilities.



Saving for “two lifetimes”

Providing lifetime financial support to your child with special needs could easily erode resources earmarked for other goals. To avoid this, you'll need to identify funding alternatives that won't conflict with your efforts to build and manage wealth.

Obtaining government benefits

Even if you can easily support your child, you may want to consider the role of government benefits such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI). This means-tested program can provide a monthly stipend to your child once he or she achieves the age of majority and serve as the gateway to Medicaid and other benefits often critical to those with special needs.

Considering lifestyle issues

As you plan for your family and your child with special needs, certain lifestyle issues may impact your decisions. For example, your child's future living arrangements, ability to earn income and degree of self-sufficiency can all affect the amount of support required.

Establishing a Special Needs Trust

Families of children with special needs often find it important to establish a Special Needs Trust. A Special Needs Trust is a unique type of financial arrangement that can provide supplemental funds to enhance a child's quality of life without jeopardizing eligibility for SSI.

Ensuring the equitable transfer of your estate

If you have more than one child, you may intend to leave most of your assets to the one with special needs. Since this strategy could unintentionally cause friction between siblings—leaving the child with a disability at odds with those best able to provide love and support once you are gone—it may be wise to consider other options.

Involving extended family members

Well-intentioned relatives could jeopardize your child's eligibility for government benefits by providing direct gifts or bequests. Including extended family members in planning discussions could help them work in concert with your financial view of the future.



The solution:
**The Merrill Lynch
Families of Children
With Disabilities Program**



Merrill Lynch’s Families of Children With Disabilities Program, the most comprehensive service of its kind, can help you address the unique issues you face as the parent of a child with special needs. Through this program, your Merrill Lynch Financial Advisor can provide you with a unique perspective and approach that integrates solutions for your child with your other household financial objectives.



Financial Foundation® report

At the center of the program is a Financial Foundation® report, a written financial plan that addresses the many aspects of your situation in a coordinated manner. A special needs supplement to the Financial Foundation report can help you consider the

steps necessary to ensure your child’s future well-being, including mapping out a letter of intent, evaluating the role of government benefits and Special Needs Trusts, and considering such issues as future living arrangements, health insurance options and the need for guardianship.

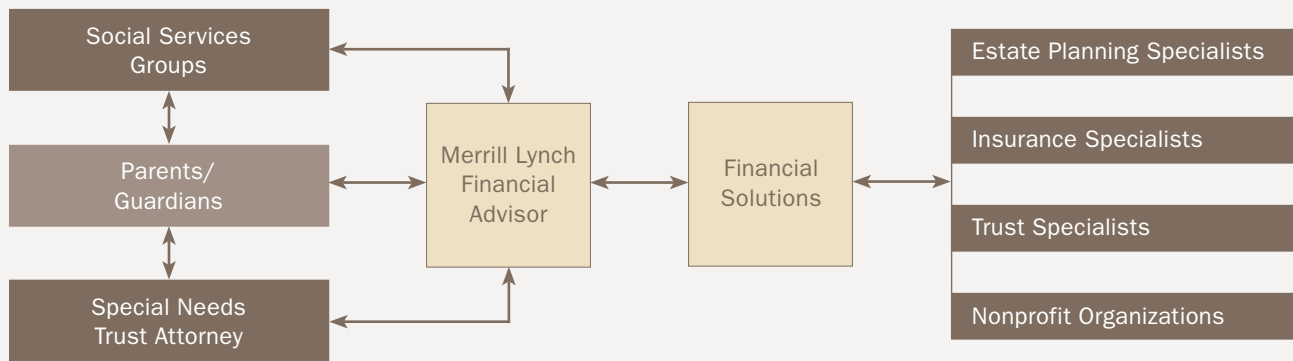
Teamwork approach

Addressing the physical, psychological and familial challenges of a child with a disability takes more than just financial advice. It requires the understanding and expertise of a team of specialists, professionals and organizations, all working together and dedicated to finding the most appropriate solutions to the complex financial needs of your entire family. This teamwork approach is what makes our Families of Children With Disabilities Program truly unique.

Coordinated strategy

Keeping up with the host of individuals involved in your child's care can take a great deal of time and effort. Your Financial Advisor can help streamline this task. By working with outside advisors (attorneys and social service representatives) and internal Merrill Lynch resources (trust, insurance and estate planning specialists), your Financial Advisor serves as your single point of contact who can help you achieve a coordinated strategy that meets your needs.

Our teamwork approach:



More ways
your **Merrill Lynch**
relationship helps
you address your **entire**
family's financial needs



Evaluating a Special Needs Trust

The Special Needs Calculator (described on page 9) will help determine the cost of providing your child with lifelong support and assist you in identifying Special Needs Trust funding alternatives, such as life insurance, personal savings or structured settlement funds. If you establish a Special Needs Trust, your Financial Advisor will work with you and the trustee to develop and implement an investment strategy appropriate for your goals. Additionally, your Financial Advisor can help coordinate your special needs considerations with other aspects of your situation, such as asset allocation, insurance strategies and estate plans for the entire family. Periodically, or as your goals and circumstances change, your Financial Advisor can meet with you to review progress, evaluate your financial options and help you modify your investment strategy as necessary.

Special Needs Trust resources

Your Financial Advisor can help you access a range of services for your Special Needs Trust, from referrals to special needs trustees, to comprehensive trust administrative and investment services once you have designated a trustee. In addition, Merrill Lynch Trust Company,¹ one of the largest trust organizations in the U.S., offers trust administrative services that can assist special needs trustees with their fiduciary responsibilities and investment services specially designed for trusts. Your Financial Advisor can also refer you to Crawford Care Management,² a special needs management service that can assist you in making decisions regarding trust distributions, securing the products and services you need, and preserving government-provided benefits.

Special Needs Calculator

The first step in planning for any financial goal is obtaining a realistic estimate of its cost. This can be particularly challenging when it comes to special needs. Merrill Lynch's Special Needs Calculator can simplify the process, calculating your lump-sum savings goal and allowing you to consider "what if" scenarios, factoring in such variables as different rates of return on your investments or changes in your child's living expenses.

Trustee referral program

Finding the right trustee for a Special Needs Trust is critical, since mismanagement of trust assets can place your child's financial security or government benefits in jeopardy. Your Financial Advisor can give you access to a nationwide network of professionals—attorneys and disability organization representatives—who serve as Special Needs Trust trustees and/or counsel to trustees. These

independent professionals provide the expertise necessary to carry out many complex and time-consuming responsibilities, including acting as fiduciary of trust assets and distributing funds in accordance with government guidelines.

The right Financial Advisor

Because Merrill Lynch knows how important it is for you to work with professionals who are sensitive to your situation and knowledgeable about special needs, we have developed a network of Certified Special Needs Financial Advisors who are trained in special needs planning. Each Financial Advisor in our Special Needs Financial Advisor Network has the skill and knowledge necessary to help address your family's needs, coordinate efforts with a special needs "team," and draw on the global resources and collective expertise of Merrill Lynch.

Merrill Lynch offers:

- Advice and guidance from a specially trained Financial Advisor
- A team approach that offers customized solutions
- A Special Needs Calculator
- A portion of the Financial Foundation report dedicated to special needs
- Information about life plans, government benefits and Special Needs Trusts
- A referral network for professional Special Needs Trust trustees
- Trust administrative services and asset management
- Referral to Crawford Care Management, a special needs management service

We can help you find
appropriate solutions
for the financial
challenges you face



Now you can move forward.

To learn more about the Families of Children With Disabilities Program or to locate a Financial Advisor in the Special Needs Financial Advisor Network, contact one of our representatives at (877) 456-7526. For additional information about our services, please visit www.totalmerrill.com/specialneeds.

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¹ Merrill Lynch Trust Company is a division of Bank of America, N.A.

² This service is offered by Crawford & Company, Atlanta, GA.



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