



# The First Seven Days: What to Expect

*A guide for families starting with Aspire*

Reaching out is usually the hardest part; many families tell us they did it while bracing for another disappointment. Here is what the first week looks like, including the parts we can't control.

## Day 1

**We listen.** You tell us what's happening in your own words — no test to pass, no form to fill in first. We'll ask what a hard day looks like, what has already been tried, and what worries you most. We'll also explain how we work; we aren't the right fit for every family, and we'll say so early. You'll hear back within two business days.

## Days 1–2

**We sort out funding before anything else.** Services are paid through your Regional Center or your health plan, and that has to be in place before we can begin. We check it for you rather than sending you off to figure it out. Once you're accepted, we request authorization for the assessment right away; how fast it comes back is up to the funder.

## Days 2–5

**We come and see for ourselves.** These days start when the authorization arrives, not when you first call. We meet your family member where life happens — home, school, the community, or our center. And we'll ask the question we ask every family: what are your three miracles? The three things that, if they changed, would make life better. Your goals become the goals. We walk you through the assessment before it goes to the funder, so the recommendations are ones you actually want.

## Days 5–7

**We sit down and talk through the plan.** The assessment lists what needs to happen; the plan is how we'll go after it, starting with your three miracles. We aim to finish it within 30 days so treatment can begin as soon as it's approved, and we'll walk you through it in plain language.

**One note about timing.** Your funder's approval is the one step that isn't in our hands. With Kaiser it can come back the same day; with a Regional Center, about two weeks; with some funders it's 30 days. What we promise is contact: while your case is active, you'll hear from us at least weekly. Families tell us the hardest part is being forgotten between calls. We won't go quiet while we wait.

## Three things worth knowing before you start

### We work with you, not around you.

Our focus is the caregivers as much as your loved one. You're not handing your family member over to us; you're coached along the way, so progress holds when we're not there.

### You don't have to be in crisis to call.

Some families need intensive support. Others need answers to a few specific problems. Both are worth a phone call — we'd rather hear from you early than after a hard year.

### Your needs can change without you starting over.

As needs shift, you can move between our services without switching agencies or joining another queue. Always a warm handoff, never a cold restart.

### Questions, or ready to talk?

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Every family is different. This document describes our usual process, not a guarantee of timing or outcome.

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