



## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is Vista Adult Services?**

Based in Hershey, PA, Vista Adult Services was established in 2014 to offer a comprehensive array of employment, skills training, and residential services to adults living with autism in Central Pennsylvania.

### **Why is there a need for Vista Adult Services?**

Although adults over the age of 21 represented just 11.2% of all individuals receiving autism services in 2011, Pennsylvania Autism Census 2014 data suggest this age group will continue to experience the largest growth in the autism population. Through 2020, the proportion of adolescents transitioning into adulthood with Autism Spectrum Disorders in Pennsylvania will grow rapidly, from 7.1% in 2005 to 32.1% in 2020.

### **How did Vista Adult Services get started?**

Vista Adult Services is a natural next step for Vista, a world-class provider of autism services to children and families living with autism. The Vista School® was founded in 2002 by an audacious band of parents who refused to accept the limited services available at the time for children with autism. The Vista School is licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education as an Approved Private School. With this state license and the Medical Assistance Partial Hospitalization License granted to The Vista Foundation in 2005 by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, children with autism in Central Pennsylvania are able to receive the integrated special education and behavioral therapy services they need, regardless of their parents' economic circumstances.

### **How does Vista Adult Services find jobs for adults with autism?**

Vista recognizes that ALL adults are employable. The Vista employment team takes a customized approach to supporting individuals and helping them to succeed in paid positions. Customized employment entails “a flexible process designed to personalize the employment relationship between a job candidate and an employer in a way that meets the needs of both. It is based on an individualized match between the strengths, conditions, and interests of a job candidate and the identified business needs of an employer.”

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/EmploymentFirst.htm>

### **Have you had any placement success so far?**

Yes! Vista Adult Services already has placed several individuals with local companies, including Hershey Entertainment & Resorts, Pepsi Beverages Company and Keystone Villa. In addition, through our VistaWorks program, The Vista School places students of employment age in paid positions. With varied interest and abilities, positions have been secured in office settings, warehouses, nursing homes, and more. There are no limits to potential business matches for those we support.

**What happens when adults are not working?**

The Community Integration Center (CIC) will serve as a springboard for individuals with autism to maximize their employment potential. Whether they have not yet secured a position, recently lost a position, or are employed part time, adults can attend the CIC to further build skills while they explore community interests. Instruction will be individually considered and geared to skills most relevant to securing, enhancing, or maintaining a job placement. Staff will include a Community Integration Specialist who coordinates operations and a team of employment specialists and life skills instructors.

**Why is Vista offering residential services?**

Few opportunities now exist for adults with moderate to severe autism to live as independently as possible. During the 2015-16 fiscal year, Vista expects to offer its first residential services for adults and to provide the support these adults need to be successful.

**What is the process for obtaining residential services?**

An individual interested in residential services should work with their team to ensure they have been approved for a consolidated waiver and are on the list for residential services. A meeting will be held with staff from our residential services program to begin gathering information such as, where do you want to live? What characteristics do you want in potential housemates? What is your timeframe for moving forward with residential services? What are some of your expectations of staff and these services? This is also a time for the individual and their family to gather information from us in regards to the services we intend to provide and our timeframes.

**How are residential services meeting individual needs?**

Residential services are tailored to meet an individual's needs while living with housemates or others in a licensed environment. Each individual's unique need and preferences are considered when deciding on the location of the home, time frames, other potential housemates, schedule for the house staff, etc. Some individuals may require additional staffing supports while in the community or due to medical reasons an implementation of treatment plans. Each individual and their team works with the residential team to develop an environment which promotes continued learning, skill development, and growth while maximizing opportunities for community participation and integration.

**How will Vista Adult Services be funded?**

Currently, Vista is eligible to receive funding for services through Medicaid waivers (consolidated & P/FDS), county based funds, and school district contracts. Private pay can be discussed on an individual basis. At this time Vista Adult Services is not a vendor of The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR).

**How do I get started?**

Please visit our website, [www.vistaadultservices.org](http://www.vistaadultservices.org), click on the "getting started" tab, and click on "submit a referral". This will direct you to a form to fill out and submit. Once this form is received and reviewed by our staff, you will receive a call to discuss your needs, as well as our programs.