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ABLE SAVINGS PLAN CHANGES LIVES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

State launches campaign to raise awareness among 130,000-180,000 Washington citizens who may be eligible for the first-time savings program

OLYMPIA, WA —Emma Patterson has her sights on a promising future: “When I am an adult, I want to teach art in the Child Life program at Seattle Children’s Hospital,” said the 16-year-old from Lake Stevens, Washington. “I will need to go to college and have an apartment in Seattle to do this job.”

Patterson has big goals. She also has Down syndrome. And up until recently, asset limits for federal benefits, such as Social Security and Medicaid, kept Patterson and other individuals with disabilities from being able to save money for things like a college education or housing.

Last year, for the first time, Patterson and her family were finally able to begin saving for her future without fear of losing federal benefits, thanks to the Washington State ABLE Savings Plan, a new way for people with disabilities to save for today and tomorrow.

“My family and I can save money so I can live the life I want, and a Washington ABLE account will help us do that,” Patterson said.

Patterson and other ABLE account holders are sharing their stories as part of the new statewide campaign that aims to raise awareness among the estimated 130,000 to 180,000 children and adults with disabilities in Washington who may be eligible for the tax-advantaged savings program. [Discover Emma’s story here.](#)

Beginning this month, people in Washington will see advertisements on television and online designed to let people living with disabilities know about this new program. [Watch the 30-second TV spot here.](#)

“Financial education and empowerment for all Washingtonians is extremely important,” said Washington State Treasurer Duane Davidson. “Washington’s ABLE program offers citizens with disabilities greater access to opportunities for saving and investing their money, learning financial management and increasing their independence.”

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Washington's ABLÉ program, which is housed within the Washington State Department of Commerce, was launched in 2018. Federal legislators passed the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act in 2014, which allowed states to create these savings accounts for people living with disabilities and their families. U.S. citizens or legal residents who have a disability or blindness that developed by age 26 are eligible for ABLÉ.

ABLE account holders can set aside money and make investments in stocks and bonds. Withdrawals from an ABLÉ account are tax-free and can be used for many types of monthly living expenses, like groceries, housing, technology or transportation. ABLÉ account holders can also save toward big goals, like a trip, college, or vehicle or house purchase.

To learn more or to enroll in the Washington State ABLÉ Savings Plan, go to <http://www.washingtonstateable.com/>.

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