

K12. START SERVICES NJ

Program Overview

START (Systemic, Therapeutic, Assessment, Resources & Treatment) is a short-term (12–18 months), community-based program supporting adults (21+) with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) and co-occurring behavioral or mental health needs. Operated by **YAI**, START focuses on crisis prevention, crisis response, and strengthening the entire support system around the individual.

Key Service Components

- **Psychoeducation & Training** – For families, providers, and community partners.
- **Cross-System Collaboration** – Strengthening relationships across service networks.
- **Clinical Consultation** – Assessment, treatment planning, and therapeutic guidance.
- **In-Home Therapeutic Coaching** – Short-term skill building and stabilization.
- **Crisis Response & Mitigation** – Support to prevent or reduce emergency situations.

Eligibility

- Age **21+**
- Eligible for **NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)**
- Resident of one of the **11 START NJ counties**

Referral Process

1. Complete the START NJ referral form.
2. Email the completed form to **NJSTARTReferral@yai.org**.
3. YAI reviews eligibility, gathers additional information, and connects with the support team.

Program Goals

- Reduce behavioral health crises and psychiatric emergencies.
- Prevent unnecessary hospitalization or long-term inpatient stays.
- Identifying and filling gaps in a person's system of support.
- Decrease caregiver/provider burnout.
- Improve system-wide coordination and capacity.
- Support individuals to remain safely in their homes or community residences.

Contact & Additional Info

Email: NJSTARTReferral@yai.org

Website: <https://www.yai.org/services/start-services-nj>

START (Systemic, Therapeutic, Assessment, Resources & Treatment) Services NJ is a multidisciplinary, systems-focused program targeting crisis prevention and response for adults (21+) with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD) who also have complex behavioral and mental health needs. Delivered via clinical consultation, psychoeducation, crisis mitigation, training, and in-home therapeutic coaching, it's designed as a short-term (12–18 month) intervention. The service model emphasizes system-level support, meaning it works with a person's broader support network — community providers, family members, and other stakeholders — to build resilience and prevent psychiatric emergencies for the person.

To be referred, individuals must be 21 or older, eligible for New Jersey's Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), and reside in one of the 11 participating counties. The referral is processed by submitting a completed form by email to NJSTARTReferral@yai.org. The program's goals center on identifying and filling gaps within a person's system of support, reducing psychiatric emergencies, minimizing the need for unnecessary inpatient hospitalizations, lowering caregiver burnout, and minimizing law-enforcement involvement, while strengthening community capacity so participants can remain safely in their homes or community residences.