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CIDNY Makes The Difference For Children With Disabilities And Their Families

Gloria and her husband came to CIDNY with their son, Matthew, who has Down Syndrome. They requested help obtaining Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for Matthew. A benefits counselor assisted the family by working with the Social Security Administration to ensure that Matthew received the financial support necessary to meet his needs. Although the family came to CIDNY only for help obtaining SSI for Mathew, their counselor identified additional needs.

The counselor helped get Matthew into a Medicaid waiver program. This enabled the family to benefit from additional supports and services like respite care, homemaking, and counseling. They were also helped to find affordable housing more suited to their needs. "All four of us were living in a small one bedroom apartment in the Bronx. Matthew and his sister shared the bedroom, which was very hard for both of them. Matthew was not sleeping well, which affected his behavior. Now, each of my children has their own bedroom and they are doing so much better."

Matthew has made great strides over the past few years. CIDNY's education specialist worked with the family so that Matthew could receive the educational and supportive services that help him thrive in a school environment.

Gloria says, "CIDNY is a great help to the community and to children with disabilities. Because of CIDNY's excellent advocates, Matthew is no longer going to school only with other children with disabilities. He is in a class that has children with and without disabilities. He is starting to participate in inclusive after-school activities. He is taking an art class, which he loves.

"Matthew is thriving. CIDNY is one of the best when it comes to service coordination and advocacy. The staff work together and are very professional. They don't make you wait forever for help. Because many of them have disabilities, they know how to assist people with disabilities. They are very aware and sensitive. Without CIDNY, there is so much I would not be able to get done. Matthew would not be in the school he is in now or have his SSI benefits and my family might still be living in a small, unsafe apartment."