



Financial Independence Through MO ABLE

*A practical guide to autonomy, asset protection,
and breaking the poverty trap for families.*

This deck explains the MO ABLE account—a tax-advantaged savings vehicle that allows individuals with disabilities to save money without losing government benefits. It is a structural shift in how we plan for the future.



The Binder on the Kitchen Counter

Most parents manage a “binder.” It holds medical records, school reports, therapy notes, and questions written at midnight. It documents history and current struggles. What the binder often lacks is a clear financial plan for when the child turns eighteen.

We usually think of “heavy tools” like guardianship or complex trusts. But there is a tool that sits closer to the ground.

The binder manages the medical reality. We need a tool to manage the financial reality.



The \$2,000 Resource Trap

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a needs-based program with strict resource limits. If a beneficiary has more than \$2,000 in countable assets, they risk losing benefits.

This number has not kept up with reality. Parents know it; advocates know it. The math does not work in modern life. It forces families to keep their children in artificial poverty to maintain healthcare and basic support.

“The math does not work in modern life.”



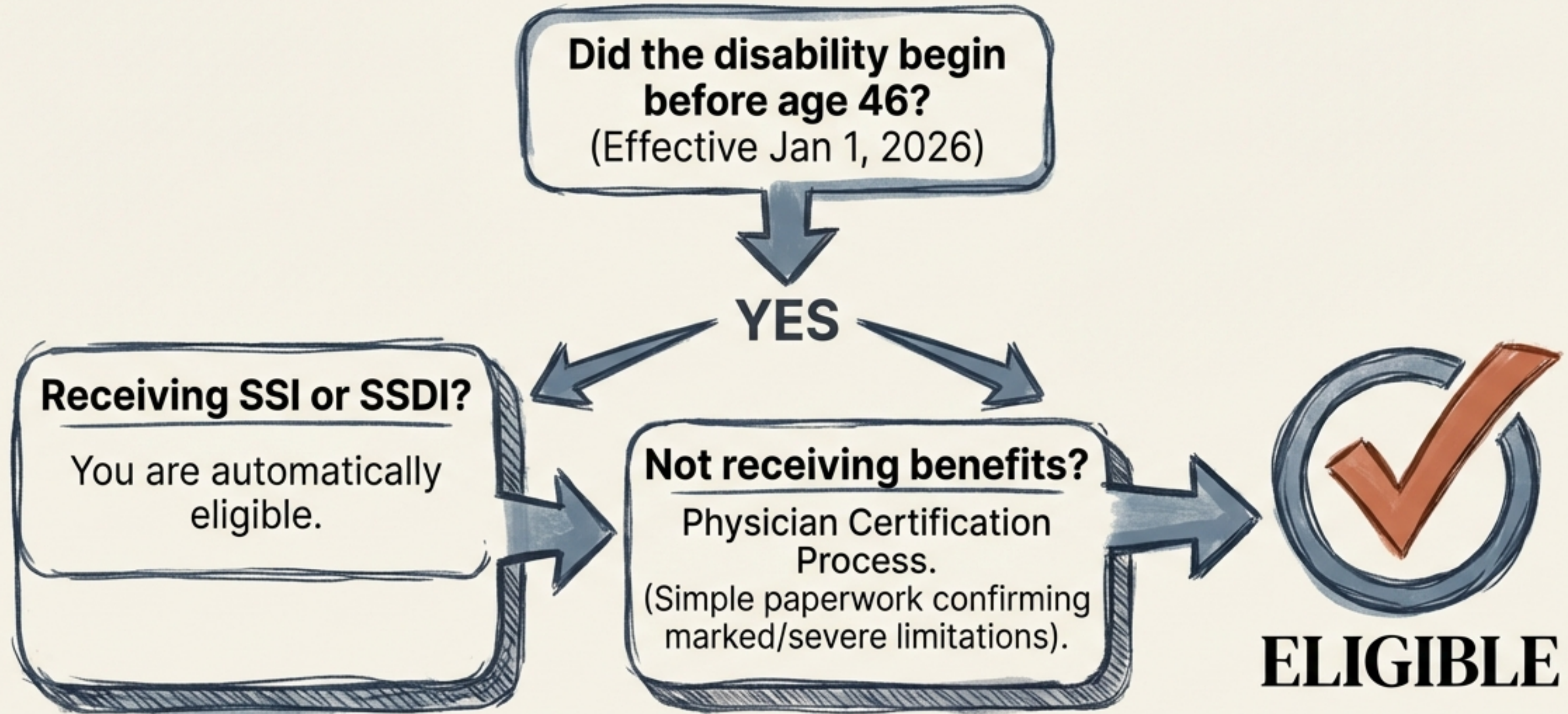
A Structural Shift in Asset Limits

An ABL account changes the equation. The first \$100,000 inside an ABL account is ignored for SSI resource purposes.

The Fine Print:

- It does not count toward the \$2,000 cap.
- If the balance exceeds \$100,000, SSI cash benefits are merely suspended (not terminated) until the balance drops.
- Crucial: Medicaid eligibility continues regardless of the ABL balance.

Who is Eligible?



If your child has a disability that started young, they are likely in.

The Point is Autonomy

Unlike a traditional Special Needs Trust where a trustee controls distributions, an ABLE account is owned by the beneficiary. When appropriate, the individual can use funds directly. It allows practice with financial guardrails. It moves the dynamic from “asking for money” to “managing one’s own resources.”

Traditional Trust



Trustee Control (Permission Required)

MO ABLE Account



Beneficiary Ownership (Direct Access)

Covering the Friction of Daily Life

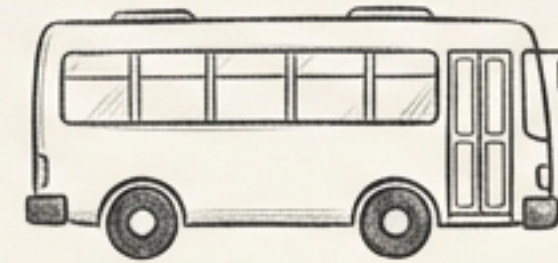
Qualified Disability Expenses are defined broadly to improve health, independence, or quality of life.



Housing & Utilities



Food & Basic Living



Transportation



Therapy & Support



Assistive Tech

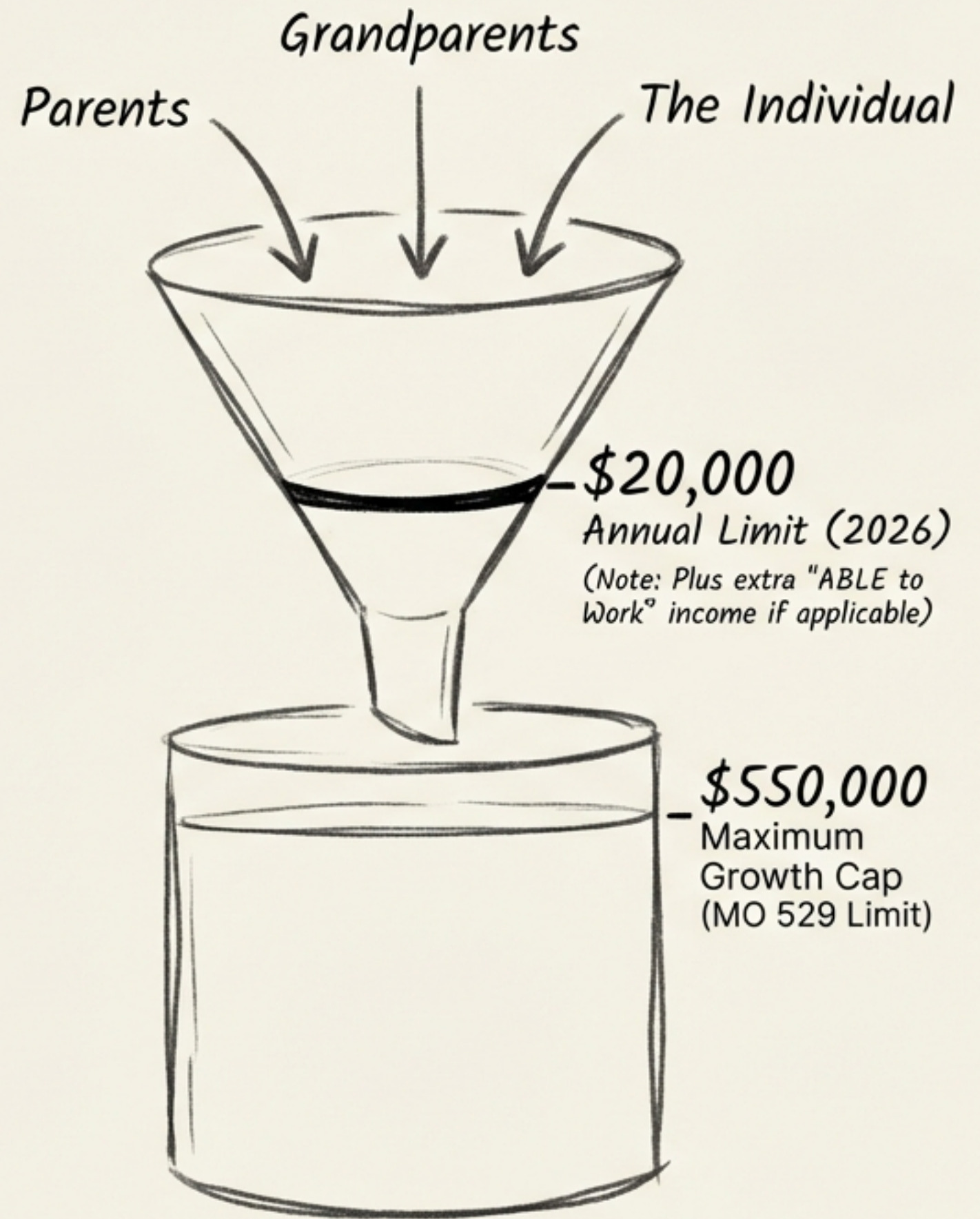


Education

Specific Examples: The electric bill that spikes in January. The co-pay insurance doesn't cover.
The adaptive device denied because it wasn't "medically necessary."

Funding the Account

Contributions can come from any source. The annual limit is \$20,000 combined. If the beneficiary earns income, they may contribute additional funds above this limit. The account can grow tax-free up to the state cap.



Tax Incentives for Missouri Families

Tax Deduction

MO State Income Tax Deduction



- \$8,000 for Single Filers
- \$16,000 for Married Filing Jointly

Plus: Federal Saver's Credit available for beneficiaries contributing to their own accounts.

The state wants to help you save. These incentives reduce the effective cost of setting aside money for the future.

The Vault vs. The Checking Account

These are companion tools, not competitors.

Special Needs Trust (SNT)	MO ABLE Account
	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Role: The Vault• Best for: Large assets, inheritance, life insurance.• Control: Trustee Managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Role: The Checking Account• Best for: Daily spending, smaller savings, wages.• Control: Beneficiary Owned.

Most comprehensive plans utilize both vehicles.

The Trade-Off: Medicaid Payback

Priority List of Claims Upon Death



1. Funeral & Burial Expenses (Paid First)



2. Outstanding Qualified Disability Expenses



3. Medicaid Reimbursement (The State claims remaining funds)



The Rule: Upon death, the state may file a claim to recover Medicaid expenses paid after the account was opened.

The Calculation: For many families, the benefits of tax-free growth and autonomy *during life* outweigh the risk of payback *after death*. But it must be understood clearly.

Growth vs. Safety

Conservative

Aggressive



FDIC-Insured Savings

Risk: None / Growth: Low



Investment Portfolios (Vanguard Funds)

Risk: Market-based / Growth: Higher

Investment options are tailored to your risk tolerance.
There are no monthly maintenance fees for Missouri residents.
Includes a reloadable prepaid debit card for practical spending.

Getting Started Takes 10 Minutes

No court approval. No lawyers needed.

1

Go Online

Visit the MO ABLE / STABLE platform.



2

Gather Info

Child's SSN, Date of Birth, and Address.



3

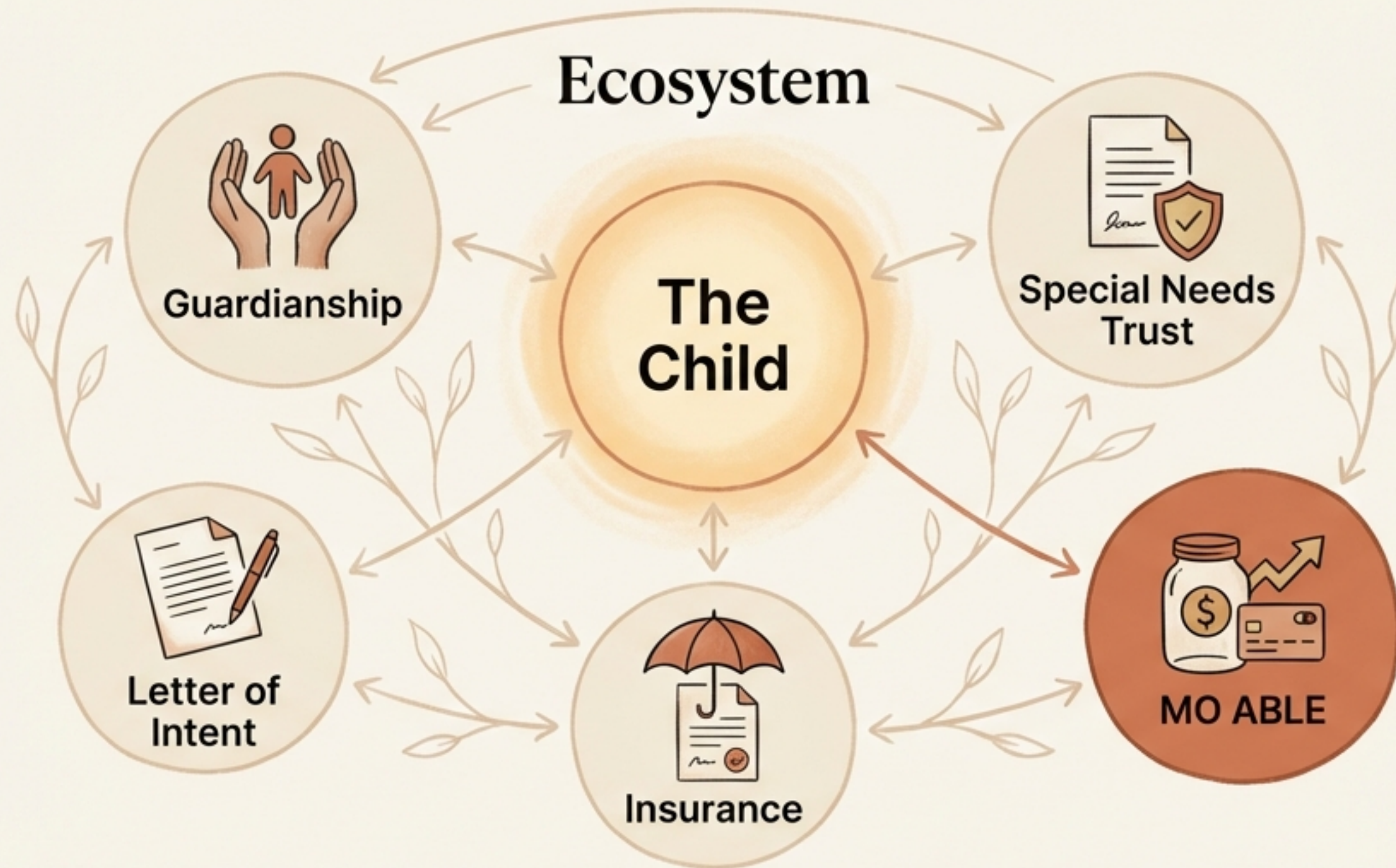
Deposit

Minimum opening deposit is just \$25.



Start small. Redirect birthday gifts or small monthly transfers to build the cushion over time.

Planning is a System, Not a Document



The ABL account fits inside the larger structure. Coordinate with Trust planning and Guardianship decisions. Do not treat it casually; it creates a lever of stability wty the binder alone cannot provide.



What This Tool Is For

The binder won't disappear. But this account gives your child a measure of financial breathing room.

It is not abstract financial planning. That is groceries. That is rent. That is a therapy co-pay paid on time. That is a young adult feeling independent.

**Open the account.
Create the breathing
room.**