

# cash & counseling consumer story

*Ms. Karla Herrera, Miami, Fla.*



Karla Herrera, 22, was born with microcephaly, cerebral palsy, and spastic quadriplegia. Her disabilities are severe and she requires constant help and supervision. But her mother, Yolanda Herrera, has big plans for her. “By next year,” Yolanda says, “she will be living a typical life, with assistance.”

With the resources and flexibility provided by Florida’s Cash & Counseling program, called Consumer Directed Care Plus (CDC+), Karla has made quantum leaps developmentally. Before enrolling in CDC+ five years ago, Karla received personal assistance services, mostly for basic hygiene, from a home health agency. Today, with assistance, Karla performs many of the day-to-day activities previously done for her by a home health aide. She reads on a first-grade level. She walks. She uses a portable picture-based computer system to communicate. Karla recently graduated from high school and will soon begin attending a culinary program at a vocational school.

“Karla’s disabilities are so severe that she will always need someone to guide her,” says Yolanda, “but she has done a lot in a very short time. And we’re not done yet.”