The Transition Toolkit
For
Parents & Students

This Toolkit is provided by the Family Resource Center for Disabilities and Special Needs with funding from the South Carolina Department of Education. Input on the content of this Toolkit has been provided by area stakeholders that include parents, educators, service providers, agency representatives, medical professionals, disability advocacy groups, and other community members.

Transition Toolkit Project Director: Melinda Hawk
Transition Toolkit Project Advisor: Beverly McCarty
(843) 266-1318
www.frcdsn.org
Introduction

The Family Resource Center for Disabilities and Special Needs is pleased to provide this resource to aid students with disabilities and their parents or guardians in planning for successful transition into the postsecondary world of education, employment, and independent living. We hope you will use this Toolkit to assess the level of support needed in planning your future so that appropriate, and measurable, IEP goals can be developed.

This Introduction provides you with an overview of the current approach taken to transition services by the US Department of Education and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 04). Attention to successful transition for students with disabilities has risen to the forefront in recent years and there is a wealth of good information available to families and educators.

By way of Introduction this Section includes:

Introduction to The Transition Toolkit for Parent and Students

- Key Areas for Transition Planning
- Areas for Consideration in Transition Planning
- Transition Glossary
- Commonly Used Acronyms
- The Taxonomy for Transition Planning
- Recommendations in Three Areas of the Taxonomy for Transition Planning
- Transition and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004
- Transition and the South Carolina State Performance Plan (SPP)
- Transition and Indicator 13

The remaining content of the Toolkit is organized into these Sections:

1. Education
2. Employment
3. Independent Living
4. Resources
5. For Spanish Speakers
The Transition Toolkit for Parents and Students

Every parent is anxious about their child’s future; this is especially true when their child experiences a life-long disability. Success after public school is dependent upon careful preparation that should begin when transition planning first becomes part of a student’s Individual Education Program (IEP) – in South Carolina at age thirteen. The Family Resource Center for Disabilities and Special Needs is committed to helping families prepare for important decisions regarding their child’s future. In partnership with key stakeholders, we have developed a Transition Toolkit to provide tools to help with the process.

Although every student is unique and their education plans individualized, most post-secondary planning can be categorized into three critical areas: Education, Employment, and Independent Living. This Transition Toolkit is organized to reflect this. Each of these areas can impact the other and information throughout the Toolkit may overlap. The Toolkit has been designed to provide guidelines and suggestions related to information young adults need to know – and the skills they need to develop – to experience the best postsecondary outcomes. We expect that you will use the information provided in each category to develop IEP goals that will help to assure that students leave high school prepared for the future. We hope this resource will help the user identify realistic, challenging, and achievable post-secondary goals and assist in planning the special education programs that will help students attain them.

Key Areas for Transition Planning

**Education**- All students with disabilities have the right to a free appropriate public education through age 21. Support should be provided to the young person who would like to go on to higher education. Educate yourself and your student so that they may understand what skills are needed to prepare for postsecondary education and to learn ways to advocate on their own behalf (self-advocacy). Investigate resources that will enable a smooth transition from high school to postsecondary education.

**Employment**- When assisting a youth in developing a career plan do not limit their scope unnecessarily. Build upon their strengths and interests and do not make assumption about a young person’s ability based solely on your view of their disability. Plan IEP goals that will improve the technical skills necessary to obtain and maintain employment. Don’t forget to pay attention to the “soft-skills” that will be needed to be successful in any work environment.

**Independent Living**- Foster your child’s independence and decision making ability. Being independent is about knowing one’s own limitations yet still finding ways to have needs met. Young adults must have the tools to make their own informed decisions and the IEP can include goals that will help them gain those tools. Independent living includes meaningful community participation and inclusion. Fulfilling the need to form social bonds and be accepted as part of the community is essential in positive development. Young people with disabilities must be accepted and accommodated in their communities, allowing them to build experiences and explore interests. Independent living includes understanding adult services, civic responsibilities, and the fundamental elements of living healthy and safely.
Areas for Consideration in Transition Planning

**Education**
- College or university
- Community college
- Technical college
- Vocational training
- On-the-job training
- GED
- Adult Education

**Employment**
- Full/Part-time regular job (Competitive Employment)
- Full/Part-time (Supported Employment)
- Self Employment
- Volunteer Work
- Sheltered Workshops
- Military Service

**Employment Development**
- Awareness of job possibilities
- Understanding personal strengths
- Being mindful of work habits
- Appropriate behaviors

**Independent Living**

**Community Participation**
- Register to Vote
- Obeying law
- Locate and use local businesses
- Volunteer in the community

**Medical/Support Services**
- Seeking medical/dental care
- Counseling
- Managing personal medications
- Personal care services
- Assistive technology

**Housing Options**
- Live Alone
- Live with a roommate
- Live with existing family
- Live with other family member
- Apartment
- House
- Supervised apartment/House
- Host home
- Group Home

**Transportation**
- Driver’s license/access to car
- Walk/ride bike
- Ride bus/taxi/train
- Specialized service
- Finding way around community
- Knowledge of traffic rules

**Life Skills**
- Appropriate dress
- Personal hygiene
- Social skills
- Appropriate behavior in public
- Respect for others
- Safety
- Self-confidence
- Respect for authority
- Developing friendships
- Marriage, children, parenting
- Handling praise and criticism

**Financial/Legal Concerns**
- Earned Income
- Insurance
- Wills/Trusts
- Social Security Benefits
- Supplemental Security Income
- Guardianship
- Bank account
- Budgeting
- Understanding credit
- Paying bills
- Self-advocacy
- State Identification
- Sign up for Selective Service
Transition Glossary

Accommodations: Are modifications or adjustments to an environment or to the circumstances under which a particular task is customarily performed that enable a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of that position (including jobs, education, and community involvement).

Activities of Daily Living (ADL): Basic skills such as housekeeping, meal planning and preparation, money management, arranging social activities, use of public transportation and self-medication.

Adult Activity Center (AAC): Is a goal oriented program of developmental, prevocational services designed to develop, maintain, increase or maximize an individual’s functioning in activities of daily living, physical growth, emotional stability, socialization, communication, and vocational skills. The minimum participant/staff ratio for an AAC is 7:1.

Age of Majority: Age 18

American College Test (ACT): A standardized test for high school achievement and college admissions.

Apprenticeship: Is a federally recognized training system for occupations requiring a wide and extensive range of skills and knowledge. It involves on-the-job training combined with related (i.e., classroom) instruction.

Assessment: Is the process of collecting data for the purpose of making decisions? Four domains of assessment include educational, vocational, psychological, and medical.

Accessible: Activities or places that can be used by people with disabilities; the term is generally used to refer to places where wheelchairs can go but can include such things as recreational activities in which a person with a disability could participate with a non-disabled buddy.

Advocacy: Refers to speaking for or urging a cause, such as equal access to community service.

Assistive Technology (AT): Includes both devices and services. An AT device is any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off-the-shelf, modified or customized, that increases, maintains, or improves functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. An AT service is any service that helps a person select, obtain, or use an assistive technology device. Examples are evaluation, financial assistance, training, repair, etc.

Career / Vocational Assessment: Is the systematic collection of information about the student’s vocational aptitudes, abilities, expressed interest, and occupational awareness used in planning his or her transition to competitive employment or postsecondary education.
**Caregiver:** Is one who looks after or spends time caring for someone who is unable to be independent.

**Community Based Instruction (CBI):** Refers to regular and systematic instruction in meaningful, functional, age appropriate skills in integrated community settings, using materials and situations, designed to help students to acquire and generalize life-skills that enhance his or her opportunities for meaningful experiences and relationships within the general community.

**Community Residence:** Is a facility in the community providing room, board, and clinical supervision and homelike environment. Two examples are group homes and halfway houses.

**Competitive Employment:** Is a job in the community in which the hiring, salary, job description, and evaluations are handled equally for all employees regardless of disabling conditions.

**Conservatorship:** Is a person that court appointed for a minor or incapacitated person to oversee that protected person’s assets and finances.

**Counseling:** Is advice or guidance provided by trained, licensed professional such as a psychiatrist, psychologist, or a social worker.

**Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN):** Is the state agency that plans, develops, oversees, and funds services for South Carolinians with severe, lifelong disabilities.

**Department of Social Services (DSS):** Is the department that provides a wide array of services for people who are economically and socially disadvantaged. The department also supervises residential facilities to protect the rights of clients and ensure adequate levels of care.

**Diagnosis:** The name of a condition (physical, developmental, or mental) for which a person is being treated.

**Disability:** The broadest definition of disability can be found in the Americans with Disabilities Act: 1) A person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; 2) A person who has a history or record of such an impairment; or 3) A person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment. This broad definition forms the basis of civil rights of people with disabilities and is used as the core definition of disability for all the federal government legal and regulatory compliance responsibilities as it relates to both physical and programmatic access.

**Employment Network (EN):** An EN consist of any agency or instrumentality of a private or public entity that enters into a contract with SSA to assume responsibility for the coordination and delivery of appropriate employment, employment activities, and other support services under the Ticket to Work Program. An EN must provide the full range of services necessary to prepare and place beneficiaries in employment.

Equal Opportunity Act: Prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or familial status. Added as an amendment to Title VII, it expands the protection of Title VII to public and private employers with 15 or more employees, both public and private labor organizations with at least 15 members, and employment agencies.

Evidence Based Practices: Are based on rigorous research designs that have demonstrated a record of success for improving student outcomes and have undergone a systematic review process using quality indicators to evaluate level of evidence.

Externship: Externships are experiential learning opportunities, similar to internships, offered by educational institutions to give students short practical experiences in their field of study.

Fair Housing Act (FHA): Refers to Section 804 of the civil rights act of 1968 which prohibits certain landlords from discriminating against persons with disabilities on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin.

Family Support Service: Are services provided to families that enable them to provide the extra care needed to keep their child with a disability at home with the family. Examples include respite care, counseling, adaptive equipment, specialized transportation, financial assistance, support groups, information, and training.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): Refers to “educational records” that are directly related to a student and maintained by an educational agency. FERPA protects the privacy and interests of parents and students with educational records maintained by educational agencies. Parents have a right to access of student records.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE): Is the special education and related services that are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge. This applies to preschool, elementary school, and secondary education and State Department of Education standards must be met. Under federal laws, any child with a disability is entitled to a free appropriate public education.

Functional Education: Is the training of skills needed to succeed in real life. Life skills training, on-the-job vocational experience, and social skills taught both in school and in the community.

General Educational Development (GED): A group of five multiple choice tests that are designed to measure the general knowledge and thinking skills that it takes to earn a high school diploma.

Guardian: Is a person who is court appointed and has the same powers respecting his or her ward that a parent would have. For example, he or she would be able to make medical and educational decisions on behalf of the child. A guardian can also be
appointed for an incapacitated person who lacks sufficient understanding or capacity to make or communicate responsible decisions concerning his or her person or property.

**Health Maintenance Organization (HMO):** Is a type of managed care organization (MCO) that provides a form of health care coverage in the United States that is fulfilled through hospitals, doctors, and other providers with which the HMO has a contract. The Health Maintenance Organization Act of 1973 required employers with 25 or more employees to offer federally certified HMO options if the employer offers traditional healthcare options.

**High School Assessment Program (HSAP):** Used to measure a student’s academic achievement on South Carolina standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

**Home Health Services:** Are provisions of health care services in a person’s home. This may include nursing, nutrition, and respiratory services.

**Housing and Urban Development (HUD):** The department that oversees homes owned by the government, and ensures that tenants and renters are treated fairly under the law. HUD can provide housing and shelter assistance for persons with disabilities.

**Inclusion:** The act of being included in a group or structure. In the context of education or disability services, inclusion refers to providing services, supports, education, or employment consistent with what is offered and available to individuals without disabilities.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):** Is the federal law that requires a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) be provided to any child with a disability. Enacted in four parts, the IDEA mandates the provisions under which services are provided to all eligible students regardless of the severity of the disability. The IDEA identifies disability categories, evaluation processes, service delivery, due process rights and parent participation.

**Individual Education Program (IEP):** Is a written and documented education plan for a student with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised annually and in accordance with state and federal regulations. The IEP directs all aspects of the student’s special education program and **must** include: 1) the student’s present levels of educational performance, 2) specific measurable educational goals and objectives, 3) related services and supplemental aids and program modifications or supports for school personnel, 4) the extent to which the student will participate with students without disabilities, 5) any modifications in state or district assessments of student achievement, 6) the projected dates for the initiation and duration of services, 7) transition plans and/or services for students age fourteen and older, and 8) a statement of how the student’s progress will be measured and reported to parents. For those students whose behavior interferes with learning (including the learning of others) a Behavior Intervention Plan is required.

**IEP Team:** Is the group responsible for developing and reviewing a student’s IEP annually. The IEP Team must include: the parent(s)/guardian, a special education teacher, a regular education teacher, a person knowledgeable about general curriculum, a person who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results, a Local Education
Authority (LEA), and, when appropriate, the student. When transition issues are being discussed, the team should include a career or technical education representative.

**Individual Graduation Plan (IGP):** This plan includes information on the students post secondary goals, career cluster of choice, courses required for graduation, and electives that coordinate with the student’s career goals.

**In-Home Respite/Respite Care:** Are services in the home of the disabled individual to relieve the usual caregiver (parent, spouse, sibling, etc.) of the care of the individual for period of time.

**Independent Living (IL):** A living arrangement that maximizes independence and self-determination. IL also refers to a social movement asserting that people with disabilities should have the same civil rights and life choices as people without disabilities.

**Independent Living Center (ILC):** Independent Living Centers are typically non-residential, private, non-profit, consumer-controlled, community-based organizations providing services and advocacy by and for persons with all types of disabilities. Their goal is to assist individuals with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential within their families and communities.

**Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE):** Under the Social Security Administrations Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act (TWWIIA), an IPE is a plan developed by a State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency and the client for the services that the client needs to assist them in reaching their work goal.

**Individualized Transition Plan (ITP):** Is a written plan that outlines what a student will need to live and work as an adult. This plan works as a bridge between the IEP and other transition plans.

**Intensive Day Treatment (IDT):** Is an educational program designed to support children and adolescents who are not currently dangerous and who are experiencing a crisis at home and/or school. The program provides short-term, intensive intervention, treatment, and educational support. The goal of the IDT program is to return the student to the home school within 30 days.

**Interest Inventory:** Is an assessment tool, used in career planning, that assesses one's likes and dislikes of a variety of activities, objects, and types of persons; the premise is that people in the same career (and satisfied in that career) have similar interests.

**Internship:** Is an opportunity to expand and connect classroom learning in a full-time/part-time supervised work-based setting, grounded in experiential learning with an emphasis on reflection, and intended to provide the intern with hands on professional experience in an occupational career field he or she is considering.

**Interpreter:** Is a person who translates orally from one language into another.

**Job Coach:** Is a person who provides assistance to an individual with a disability to learn or maintain a job. This can include training and support at the job site.
Least Restrictive Environment (LRE): Refers to work, school, or living situations that allow individuals as much freedom of choice and independence as possible without endangering their health, physical safety, or ability to learn.

Letter of Intent: Is a document written by you (the parent or guardian) that describes your son or daughter’s history, his or her current status, and what you hope for him or her in the future. It would be wise to write this letter today, and add to it as the years go by, updating it as information about your son or daughter changes. The letter is then ready at any moment to be used by all the individuals who will be involved in caring for your son or daughter, should you become ill or disabled yourself, or when you should pass away. Even though the Letter of Intent is not a legal document, the courts and others can rely upon the Letter for guidance in understanding your son or daughter, as well as your wishes. In this way you can continue to “speak out” on behalf of your son or daughter, providing insight and knowledge about his or her own best possible care.

Local Education Authority (LEA): Is a representative of the school or school district qualified to supervise the provision of special education and to ensure that the educational services specified in the IEP are provided. The LEA will have knowledge regarding school district resources and the authority to commit those resources.

Medicaid: A health assistance program financed by federal, state, and local taxes to help pay hospital and medical costs for persons of low income.

Medicare: A federal health insurance program mainly for persons aged 65 or older, with some limited benefits for younger persons who have been eligible for Social Security disability benefits for more than two years.

Multi-Disciplinary Team: Is a group of professional and non-professional staff, such as teachers, nurses, social workers, doctors, speech therapist, physical therapists, etc. This team usually includes family members and the student in the planning and decision-making process.

National Career Readiness Certificate: Is a portable, evidence-based credential that measures essential workplace skills and is a reliable predictor of workplace success.

Natural Supports: Are personal associations and relationships typically developed in the community that enhance the quality and security of life for people, including, but not limited to, family relationships; friendships reflecting the diversity of the neighborhood and the community; association with fellow students or employees in regular classrooms and workplaces; and associations developed through participation in clubs, organizations, and other civic activities.

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB): Is a federal law enacted by Congress concerning the education of children in public schools. NCLB supports standards-based education reform, which is based on the belief that setting high standards and establishing measurable goals can improve individual outcomes in education.

One-Stop-Center: Refers to the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) requires that a number of employment-related services be provided through a system of One-Stop
Centers, designed to make accessing employment and training services easier for job seekers. One-Stop Centers are also required to help employers identify and recruit skilled workers. The One-Stop system is required to be a customer-focused and comprehensive system that increases the employment, retention, and earnings of participants. WIA names 17 categories of federally-funded programs that are to be mandated partners within the One-Stop system.

**Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS):** Is a program of the United States Department of Education. OSERS' official mission is to provide leadership to achieve full integration and participation in society of people with disabilities by ensuring equal opportunity and access to, and excellence in, education, employment and community living. Included in this division is the **Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)** which provides leadership and support for professionals working with children with disabilities. Another critical role of OSEP is to protect the educational rights of children with disabilities from age three through twenty-one.

**Plan for Achieving Self Support (PASS):** Is a work incentive for individuals who receive SSI that allows the individuals to set aside income for achieving a specific life goal in a specified period of time. This set aside income is not included when determining overall assets. As a result, the consumer is not punished with reduced benefits for working.

**Person Centered Planning:** Is the planning process that focuses on an individual's needs and desires and promote self-determination. In transition, person-centered planning focuses on the interests, aptitudes, knowledge, and skills of an individual, not on his or her perceived deficits.

**Personal Care Attendants/Services:** Persons who provide the services/care necessary that enables persons with disabilities (or the elderly) to remain in their own homes or residential care facilities instead of institutions or health care facilities.

**Peer Counseling:** Is a type of guidance in which persons of the same age, disability, or other similar interest are trained to help or guide others.

**Positive Behavior Interventions:** Are procedures used to provide positive intervention whenever a student displays, or is likely to display, a targeted serious behavior problem. Positive Behavior Interventions are implemented as a part of a student’s Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP).

**Positive Behavior Support (PBS):** Involves the assessment and reengineering of environments so people with problem behaviors experience reductions in their problem behaviors and increase social, personal, and professional quality in their lives.

**Post Secondary:** Is the term used to describe settings that follow high school (such as trade school, college, or employment).

**Power of Attorney:** Is written documentation giving someone else the authority to make certain decisions for you and to act on your behalf. Having a POA does not mean that you can no longer make decisions; it just means that another person can also act for you.
**Practical Assessment Exploration System (PAES):** Is a curriculum for students in middle and high school. PAES is comprehensive and provides complete instruction in basic fundamental vocational skills. Skills that are needed for job entry, training entry, and everyday life skills. PAES also provides instruction in proper work behavior.

**Pre-Vocational:** Is the term referring to activities designed to prepare an individual for a job and teach job-related behaviors.

**Promising Practices:** Are based on research. These practices have demonstrated limited success and have used a weak research design.

**Psychological Evaluation:** An assessment of performance and capabilities which uses psychological tests to guide the establishment of appropriate interventions.

- Examples:
  - Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children 4th Edition (WISC IV)
  - Wechsler Intelligence Scale 4th Edition (WAIS IV)

**Recreational Therapy:** Is a structured plan to develop a healthy body and mind through fun and relaxation.

**Referral:** Is sending a client to another source or provider to get advice or treatment.

**Rehabilitation:** Is the process of regaining lost functions and skills.

**Research Based Practices:** Are based on rigorous designs that have demonstrated a record of success for improving student outcomes.

**Residential Care/Treatment:** Are programs providing therapeutic living environments in community-based facilities.

**Residential Habilitation:** Are services that include the care, skills training and supervision provided to individuals in a non-institutional setting. The degree and type of care, supervision, skills training and support of individuals will be based on the plan and the individual’s needs.

**Residential Services:** Refer to a range of options provided by local Disabilities and Special Needs (DSN) Board for eligible adults. The level or types of residential services are determined by availability and individual needs. All offer people the opportunity to live in a home like environment under the supervision of qualified and trained staff.

**Respite/Respite Provider:** Time away from the responsibilities of caring for someone who cannot care for him/herself. Respite providers deliver this service.

**Resume:** Is a brief, neatly typed and professional-looking summary page outlining your personal history, skills, employment objective, education, and employment experience. The resume serves to highlight your strengths and accomplishments.

**Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT):** Measures literacy and writing skills needed for academic success in college.
School to Work Opportunities Act: Is the federal act that provides funding for systemic change that includes work-based, school-based and connecting activities to create quality opportunities for all students.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or “Section 504”: Is a civil rights declaration that prohibits discrimination against persons for reasons of disability. Section 504 prevents exclusion “from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or any activity receiving Federal financial assistance”. It is important to note that the definition of disability under Section 504 is much broader than under IDEA, thus students who do not meet eligibility requirements under IDEA may qualify for protection under Section 504. As in IDEA, Section 504 has specific procedural requirements for the identification, evaluation, placement and procedural safeguards of students.

Section 504 Plan: Is the documented plan designed to identify and eliminate impediments to full participation in activities by students with disabilities. The 504 Plan specifies accommodations to the regular education environment in order to insure a student’s receipt of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). For those students whose behavior interferes with learning, the 504 Plan should include a BIP.

Self Determination: Is the belief that people with disabilities have the right and ability to choose and control their own quality of life, their own goals and dreams, and what services they need to obtain them.

Sheltered Workshop: Is a work program whose purpose is to assist participants to achieve their potential through the use of individual work goals, remunerative employment, supportive services in a controlled environment. The workshop will maintain a certificate with US Department of Labor, which designates it as a “regular work program.” The minimum participant/staff ratio for a Sheltered Workshop is 10:1.

Social Security Administration (SSA): The Social Security Administration is an independent agency of the United States federal government that administers Social Security, a social insurance program consisting of retirement, disability, and survivors' benefits. To qualify for these benefits, most American workers pay Social Security taxes on their earnings; future benefits are based on the employee’s contributions.

Social Security Disability Income (SSDI): Is based on an individual’s work history or on the work history of an uninsured eligible worker (whether retired, disabled, or diseased). Individuals who receive SSDI become eligible for Medicare coverage after two years.

Special Education: Refers to specially designed instruction, at no cost to parents, to meet the unique needs of the child with a disability, including instruction conducted in the classroom, homes, hospitals and institutions, and in other settings.

Special Needs Trust (SNT): Is a formalized document that establishes a trust (with a duly appointed trustee) that can hold property for the benefit of an individual with disability. Establishing a special needs trust may allow the individual to retain resources without disqualifying him/her from benefits received from government entitlement
programs such as Social Security and Medicaid. An SNT is an irrevocable, public-private partnership that can provide such things as extra education, training, recreation, vacations, habilitation, treatment, and luxury items not typically paid for by Medicaid.

**Summary of Performance (SOP):** Is a summary of the student’s academic achievement and functional performance, which shall include recommendations on how to assess the student in meeting the student’s post secondary goals.

**Supplemental Security Income (SSI):** Administered by the SSA, this is a Federal income supplement program funded by general tax revenues (not Social Security taxes). It is designed to help aged, blind, and disabled people, who have little or no income and provides cash to meet basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter. Many students with disabilities will qualify for SSI at age eighteen, if not before. Once eligible for SSI, students will automatically receive Medicaid as well. This is a “needs based” program.

**Support Groups:** Are groups of people with similar needs and concerns who meet together to support each other and to share information.

**Supported Employment:** Is a service that can assist people with the most significant disabilities to become and remain successfully and competitively employed in integrated workplace settings.

**Transition:** Is the passing from one condition, activity or place to another such as moving from school to adult life and the world of work. This type of transition is complex and involves decisions about career, living arrangements, social and financial goals.

**Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID):** A federally funded grant program that serves students with intellectual disabilities and provides individual supports and services for the academic and social inclusion, while focusing on academic enrichment, socialization, independent living skills, including self-advocacy, and integrated work experience and career skills that lead to gainful employment. For example, programs such as the College of Charleston’s REACH and USC’s CarolinaLIFE.

**Transition Services:** Is a coordinated set of activities for students as part of the IEP, designed to promote movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, related services, independent living, or community participation. Transition planning becomes a part of the IEP process for students beginning at age 13.

**Unclassified Program:** Is a program that provides a beneficial service and observes appropriate standards to safeguard the health and safety of clients, staff and the public. The minimum participant/staff is 10:1.

**Unestablished Practices:** Are practices not based on research and have no data to support effectiveness. They are usually based on anecdotal evidence and/or judgments.
Universal Design (UD): The design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without adaptation or specialized design. It is a user-friendly approach to design in the living environment where people of any culture, age, size, weight, race, gender and ability can experience an environment that promotes their health, safety and welfare. UD refers to broad-spectrum ideas meant to produce buildings, products and environments that are inherently accessible to both people without disabilities and people with disabilities.

Vocational (Career) Assessment: Is the systematic collection of information about the student’s vocational aptitudes, abilities, expressed interests, and occupational awareness used in planning a transition to competitive employment or post secondary education.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR): Is the state agency which is designed to help restore or develop the working ability of persons with mental, emotional, or physical disabilities.

Work Activity Center (WAC): A workshop having an identifiable program designed to provide therapeutic activities for intellectually/developmentally disabled workers whose physical or mental impairment is so severe as to interfere with normal productive capacity. Work or production is not the main purpose of the program; however, the development of work skills is its main purpose. The program must have a certificate from the US Dept. of Labor designating it as a Work Activity Program when applicable. The minimum participant/staff ration for a WAC is 7:1.

Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA): Assists the Social Security Administration in providing disability beneficiaries with information about work incentives, benefits planning, and making good choices about work.

Work Adjustment Training (WAT): Is a Department of Vocational Rehabilitation’s sponsored training period to determine an individual's readiness to work.

Commonly Used Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AC:</td>
<td>Augmented Communication (as in Assistive Technology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT:</td>
<td>American College Testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADA:</td>
<td>American’s with Disabilities Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADL:</td>
<td>Activities of Daily Living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFDC:</td>
<td>Aid to Families with Dependent Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASL:</td>
<td>American Sign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT:</td>
<td>Assistive Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBI:</td>
<td>Community Based Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBM:</td>
<td>Curriculum Based Measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMHC:</td>
<td>Community Mental Health Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPRC:</td>
<td>Community Parent Resource Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDSN:</td>
<td>Department of Disabilities and Special Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE:</td>
<td>US Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHHS:</td>
<td>Department of Health and Human Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPH:</td>
<td>Department of Public Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSS:</td>
<td>Department of Social Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVR:</td>
<td>Division of Vocational Rehabilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEOC:</td>
<td>Equal Employment Opportunity Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EOA:</td>
<td>Equal Opportunity Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN:</td>
<td>Employment Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESY:</td>
<td>Extended School Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAPE:</td>
<td>Free Appropriate Public Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FERPA:</td>
<td>Family Education Rights and Privacy Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FHA:</td>
<td>Fair Housing Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRC:</td>
<td>Family Resource Center for Disabilities &amp; Special Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GED:</td>
<td>General Educational Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMO:</td>
<td>Health Maintenance Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUD:</td>
<td>Housing and Urban Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSAP:</td>
<td>High School Assessment Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I&amp;R:</td>
<td>Information and Referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDT:</td>
<td>Intensive Day Treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEA:</td>
<td>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEP:</td>
<td>Individual Education Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGP:</td>
<td>Individual Graduation Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL:</td>
<td>Independent Living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILC:</td>
<td>Independent Living Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPE:</td>
<td>Individual Plan for Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRWE:</td>
<td>Impairment Related Work Expense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITP:</td>
<td>Individual Transition Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JTPA:</td>
<td>Job Training Partnership Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-12:</td>
<td>Kindergarten through 12th Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEA:</td>
<td>Local Education Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRE:</td>
<td>Least Restrictive Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MH:</td>
<td>Mental Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NICHCY:</td>
<td>National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCLB:</td>
<td>No Child Left Behind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OJT:</td>
<td>On the Job Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSEP:</td>
<td>Office of Special Education Programs (US Dept. of Ed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSERS:</td>
<td>Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (US Dept. of Ed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OT:</td>
<td>Occupational Therapy (or Therapist)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTR:</td>
<td>Registered Occupational Therapist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P&amp;A:</td>
<td>Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS:</td>
<td>Personal Assistant Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCA:</td>
<td>Personal Care Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAES:</td>
<td>Practical Assessment Exploration System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS:</td>
<td>Plan for Achieving Self-Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBS:</td>
<td>Positive Behavior Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT:</td>
<td>Physical Therapy (or Therapist)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTI:</td>
<td>Parent Training and Information Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTRC:</td>
<td>Parent Training and Resource Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT:</td>
<td>Scholastic Assessment Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDE:</td>
<td>State Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGA:</td>
<td>Substantial Gainful Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLS:</td>
<td>Supported Living Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNT:</td>
<td>Supplemental Needs Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOP:</td>
<td>Summary of Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED:</td>
<td>Special Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSP:</td>
<td>State Performance Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA:</td>
<td>Social Security Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSI:</td>
<td>Supplemental Security Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSDI:</td>
<td>Social Security Disability Insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STW:</td>
<td>School-to-Work; School-to-Career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPSID:</td>
<td>Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TT:</td>
<td>Text Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTY:</td>
<td>TeleTypewriter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWP:</td>
<td>Trial Work Period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VE:</td>
<td>Vocational Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VR:</td>
<td>Vocational Rehabilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAT:</td>
<td>Work Adjustment Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDC:</td>
<td>Workforce Development Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIPA:</td>
<td>Work Incentives Planning and Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIA:</td>
<td>Workforce Investment Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOTC:</td>
<td>Work Opportunities Tax Credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WS:</td>
<td>Waivered Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** Not all of the above listed acronyms are used in the Transition Toolkit. However, you may see them used in other places. Consider using the following area to add any acronyms you may encounter that aren’t listed here.
The Taxonomy for Transition Programming (Kohler, 1996) is an applied framework of secondary (high school) education practices associated with improving post-school outcomes for youths with disabilities. The effective practices identified were organized into five major categories:

1) **Student-focused planning.** Student-focused planning practices focus on using assessment information and facilitating students’ self-determination to develop individual education programs based on students’ post-school goals.

2) **Student development.** Student development practices emphasize life, employment, and occupational skill development through school-based and work-based learning experiences. Student assessment and accommodations provide a fundamental basis for student development that results in successful transition.

3) **Interagency collaboration.** Interagency collaboration practices facilitate involvement of community businesses, organizations, and agencies in all aspects of transition-focused education. Interagency agreements that clearly articulate roles, responsibilities, communication strategies, and other collaborative actions that enhance curriculum and program development foster collaboration.

4) **Family involvement.** Family involvement practices are associated with parent and family involvement in planning and delivering education and transition services. Family-focused training and family empowerment activities increase the ability of family members to work effectively with educators and other service providers.

5) **Program structure.** Program structures and attributes are features that relate to efficient and effective delivery of transition-focused education and services, including philosophy, planning, policy, evaluation, and human resource development. The structures and attributes of a school provide the framework for a transition perspective.

**References**


*Taxonomy, in this context, is a means for organizing similar things into groups based on shared features.*
Recommendations in Three Areas of the Taxonomy for Transition Planning

**Student Focused Planning**

**IEP Development**

- Options identified for each outcome area or goal
- Post-secondary education or training goals and objectives specified in the IEP
- Vocational goals and objectives specified
- Community-related and residential goals and objectives specified (e.g., voting)
- Recreation and leisure goals and objectives specified
- Educational program corresponds to specific goals
- Goals are measurable
- Personal needs are addressed in planning (e.g., financial, medical, guardianship)
- Specific goals and objectives result from consumer choices
- Progress or attainment of goals is reviewed annually
- Responsibility of participants or agencies specified
- Evaluation of participant fulfillment of responsibilities

**Student Participation**

- Planning team includes student, family members, and school and participating agency personnel
- Assessment information is used as basis for planning
- Transition-focused planning begins no later than age 14
- Meeting time adequate to conduct planning
- Preparation time adequate to conduct planning
- Planning meeting time and place conducive to student and family participation
- Accommodations made for communication needs (e.g., interpreters)
- Referral to adult service provider(s) occurs prior to student’s exit from school
- Planning team leader identified

**Planning Strategies**

- Self-determination facilitated within the planning process
- Planning decisions driven by student and family
- Planning process is student-centered
- Student involvement in decision making
- Documentation of student interests and preferences
- IEP involvement training for students
- Career counseling services provided to student
- Student self-evaluation of process

**Student Development**

**Support Services**

- Identification and development of environmental adaptations
- Identification and development of accommodations
- Identification and development of natural supports
- Provision of related services (e.g., OT, PT, speech therapy, transportation)
• Use of mentors

**Assessment**
  • Vocational assessment (including curriculum-based and situational assessment)
  • Academic, cognitive, and adaptive behavior assessments

**Structured Work Experience**
  • Apprenticeships
  • Paid work experience
  • Work study program
  • Job placement services (prior to school exit)

**Family Involvement**

**Family Training**
  • Training about promoting self-determination
  • Training about advocacy
  • Training about natural supports
  • Training focused on their own empowerment
  • Training on transition-related planning process (e.g., IEP, ITP)
  • Training about agencies and services

**Family Involvement**
  • Participation in program policy development
  • Participation in service delivery
  • Involvement in student assessment
  • Participation in evaluation of student’s program
  • Parents/families exercise decision making
  • Parent/family attendance at IEP meeting
  • Parents/family members as trainers
  • Parents/family members as mentors
  • Parents/family role in natural support network

**Family Empowerment**
  • Pre-IEP planning activities for parents/families
  • Parents/families presented with choices
  • Transition information provided to parents/families prior to student’s age 13
  • Structured method to identify family needs
  • Parent/family support network
  • Child care for transition-related planning meetings (e.g., IEP, ITP)
  • Respite care
  • Information to parents/families provided in their ordinary language
  • Training on legal issues


Transition and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004

The purposes of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA) include ensuring that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living. [34 CFR 300.1(a)] [20 U.S.C. 1400(d)(1)(A)]

The IDEA requires parent participation in the planning of their child’s Individual Education Program (IEP). Further, IDEA provisions insist that the student participate in their transition planning to the greatest extent possible. Therefore, the LEA (Local Education Authority – the child’s school) must invite a child with a disability to attend their IEP Team meeting if a purpose of the meeting will be the consideration of the postsecondary goals for the child and the transition services needed to assist the child in reaching those goals under §300.320(b). [34 CFR 300.321(b)] [20 U.S.C. 1414(d)(1)(B)]

According to IDEA, transition planning must be a part of a child’s IEP not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team. In South Carolina, the law requires that transition services begin not later than the first IEP in effect when the child turns 13. Otherwise, ALL other mandates for transition services for students in South Carolina are in accordance with the IDEA. Transition services in the IEP are updated annually and must include:

- Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment and, where appropriate, independent living skills;
- The transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals; and
- Beginning not later than one year before the child reaches the age of majority under State law (18 in South Carolina), a statement that the child has been informed of the child’s rights under Part B, if any, that will transfer to the child on reaching the age of majority under §300.520 [see 20 U.S.C. 1415(m)]. [34 CFR 300.320(b) and (c)] [20 U.S.C. 1414 (d)(1)(A)(VIII)]

In the IDEA, the term “transition services” means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that:

- Is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment); continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;
- Is based on the individual child’s needs, taking into account the child’s strengths, preferences, and interests; and
- Includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.
This Transition Toolkit is a resource for families that can be used to maximize their contributions to transition planning. Transition planning should be based on a solid working knowledge of the array of postsecondary options that relate to education, employment, housing, health services, recreation, disability entitlements, and community access. Parents (and students to the greatest extent possible) must consider all aspects of transition as they work with the IEP team to assure programming that accurately addresses the student competencies necessary to reach identified post-secondary goals.

**Transition and the South Carolina State Performance Plan (SPP)**

When the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) was reauthorized in December of 2004 and its regulations issued in August of 2006, performance plan requirements were included for State Education Agencies (SEAs). States were required to prepare a State Performance Plan (SPP) to guide in their implementation of IDEA and in how they report their progress and performance to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) at the US Department of Education around 20 specific Indicators. (For more information on the 20 OSEP Indicators visit: [http://nichcy.org/laws/idea/partb/indicators-partb](http://nichcy.org/laws/idea/partb/indicators-partb)). Among other things, the revised IDEA sought to improve post secondary results for students with disabilities by requiring public high schools to provide better transition planning. Indicators 8, 13, and 14 refer to transition and are defined as follows:

**Indicator 8 relates to Parent Participation.** Schools must facilitate parent involvement as a means to improving services and results. In order to make informed decisions and act as equal partners in planning the education of their children, parents must understand all information received in writing or discussed in IEP meetings. It is the responsibility of schools to help parents understand their rights and responsibilities and have the information they need to participate fully in the decision making process.

**Indicator 13 relates to Transition Services.** Students age 13 and above with an IEP must have clear appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and are based upon age appropriate transition assessments, transition services, including course of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet the postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student’s transition service needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are to be discussed, and if appropriate, a representative from any participating agency was invited to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority.

**Indicator 14 relates to Drop Our Reductions.** Schools must be able to ensure that youth who had an IEP and are no longer in secondary school, have been competively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school. Recognizing that the graduation rates for students with disabilities continue to improve, Congress stated that providing effective transition services to promote successful post-school education or employment becomes an important for the postsecondary performance of its students.
The Transition Toolkit for Parent and Students supports South Carolina’s SPP by addressing these Transition Indicators but a special emphasis is on Indicator 13 with the intent that contents of this manual will assist in developing appropriate transition goals.

**Transition and Indicator 13**

OSEP has provided states with a framework to use in measuring their success in providing students with appropriate transition services as required by Indicator 13. According to the language used for measurement, states must report the:

“Percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 (remember – aged 13 in South Carolina) and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student’s transition services needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority.” (20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B)

To help states collect data to meet Indicator 13, the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC) has developed the NSTTAC I-13 Checklist. The NSTTAC I-13 Checklist is offered as an OSEP-approved resource for states to use for data collection. As such, it is an excellent tool for families as they review an IEP that includes transition services. In order to meet Indicator 13, the NSTTAC I-13 Checklist recommends this IEP checklist:

1. Is there a measurable postsecondary goal or goals that cover education or training, employment, and, as needed, independent living?
2. Is (are) there annual IEP goal(s) that will reasonably enable the child to meet the postsecondary goal(s)?
3. Are there transition services in the IEP that focus on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child to facilitate their movement from school to post-school?
4. For transition services that are likely to be provided or paid for by other agencies with parent (or child once the age of majority is reached) consent, is there evidence that representatives of the agency(ies) were invited to the IEP meeting?
5. Is there evidence that the measurable postsecondary goal(s) were based on age-appropriate transition assessment(s)?
6. Do the transition services include courses of study that focus on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child to facilitate their movement from school to post-school?

These fundamental questions should guide the development of the Transition IEP. We hope the contents of this Transition Toolkit will provide resources to help you consider how these guidelines apply to the individual student.
Education

In this section of the Transition Toolkit, education resources are given two perspectives: 1.) planning and maximizing education while still in public school, and 2.) addressing the information needs of those considering postsecondary education.

The education program developed through the IEP process must have a clear focus on the transition needs of the student. In fact, the IDEA requires that the IEP help prepare students for future education – as well as employment and independent living. This section includes material that will help you plan transition IEPs as well as provide options to the state high school diploma.

All students, including those with disabilities, should be encouraged to obtain the highest level of education possible. For some this will include college and advanced degrees, for others trade schools or on-the-job training will be the chosen path. Of course planning for postsecondary education can – and should – begin during middle school.

It is important to remember that the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) end when a student with a disability either completes their secondary education experience with a state high school diploma or ages out of the system at 21. For students going on to an institution of higher learning, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act are the guidelines in determining necessary accommodations within postsecondary education environments.

Users of this Toolkit should remember that the material in all sections should be considered when transition goals are being determined for the student’s Individual Education Program (IEP).
## Education Section
### Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Number of Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent Tips for Transition Planning</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualized Education Program (IEP) and Transitioning Planning</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition Planning Timelines</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping the Student Prepare for the Age of Majority</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC Vocational Rehabilitation’s Coordination with School Districts</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Appropriate Transition Assessments</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistive Technology and IDEA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurable IEP Goals</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition Goals in the IEP</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Assessment Exploration System (PAES)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina Diploma Options</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WorkKeys</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The National Careers Readiness Certificate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postsecondary Options</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Exit Testing: SAT, ACT, and HSAP</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting Postsecondary Students with Disabilities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitioning to Postsecondary Education-Checklist for Parents</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School &amp; College - Key Differences</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GED Application &amp; Information</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Education and Special Education</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Educational Accommodations</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parent Tips for Transition Planning

A truly successful and meaningful transition process is the result of comprehensive team planning that is driven by the dreams, desires, and abilities of the student. Such planning enhances not only the student’s participation in school but in his or her home and community living as well.

A transition plan provides the basic structure for preparing students to live, work, and play in the community, as fully and independently as possible. As in all aspects of life, the more transition planning that takes place while still in school, the better prepared students and their families will be when decisions need to be made and action must be taken.

Transition and the IEP Plan

Since 1987, a transition plan has been a required component of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) for students in South Carolina no later than age 13. Federal legislation now requires transition planning in all states for students even earlier if the planning benefits the student.

- Transition services must be based on the student’s needs, taking into account his or her preferences and interests.
- The services should include instruction, community experiences, the development of employment and other post school adult living objectives, and, if needed, training in daily living skills and access to functional vocational evaluations.
- All of these services must be provided in a manner that recognizes the student’s cultural background and is sensitive to his or her native language, if other than English.
- Schools are required to invite students to participate in their IEP meetings whenever transition services are considered. Transition services are a required component of IEPs for students during their transition years, and, therefore, those services are routinely discussed at IEP meetings.
- If the student does not attend the IEP meeting, school personnel must take steps to ensure the student’s preferences and interests are considered.
- The best transition plans are those that help the student achieve his or her dreams and aspirations. To ensure this, the student should be included in all aspects of planning and goal setting, and encouraged to participate at IEP meetings. It also helps the student develop his or her own decision making abilities and self-advocacy skills.
- Advance preparation assists students and their parents throughout the transition process and contributes to a comprehensive transition plan by providing a direction for goals and objectives.
- By being proactive and expanding their knowledge and awareness of transition issues, parents and students can become powerful members of the transition team.
Meeting a student’s transition needs

In order for the IEP to appropriately meet the student’s transition needs, both parents and school personnel must assess the student’s abilities, skills, and interests. The school accomplishes this through diagnostic assessments, evaluations, and informal observations. Parents can do it through their day-to-day knowledge of their son or daughter and conversations with him or her about future goals.

Parents and students should consider the following points when beginning the transition process and preparing for or participating in an IEP transition meeting or staffing:

- Ask your teenager what he or she would like to do with his or her life. What are his or her dreams, goals, etc? Incorporate the responses into all aspects of transition planning. If your son or daughter is nonverbal or has difficulty communicating these thoughts, use your knowledge of him or her to make sure transition plans reflect likes, dislikes, etc.
- Know your son or daughter’s needs, abilities, and skills. Be familiar with how much assistance he or she needs or does not need to accomplish tasks.
- Know what outcomes you and your teenager want. Bring suggestions to meetings on what actions you feel are needed to meet or move toward goals in the transition plan.

Parent Tips for Transition Planning

- Encourage your son or daughter to attend the IEP meetings. He or she will be invited. Together, prepare for the meeting.
- Encourage self-advocacy skills for your son or daughter. Have the staff direct questions to your teenager.
- Know what programs, services, accommodations, or modifications you and your teenager want. Be clear on the transition needs or issues of your son or daughter.
- Determine who will be responsible for what on the transition plan. Ask for specific timelines.
- Decide whether educational and transition programs should emphasize practical or academic goals or a combination of both.
- Become aware of community-based training opportunities your school provides. Parents and their son or daughter should decide how much the student should participate in those activities currently, as well as in the future.
- Request a copy of your son or daughter’s daily schedule each quarter or each semester.
- Request information on all classes available to students so your son or daughter can participate in the class selection and scheduling process.
- Determine how your son’s or daughter’s educational and transition program could be more integrated into regular programs.
- Learn who will attend the IEP meeting. Become familiar with the roles and functions of team members.
- Arrange for a family member, friend, or advocate to accompany you and your son or daughter to planning meetings for support or note taking, if needed.
The Individualized Education Program (IEP) and Transitioning Planning

Taking an Early, Long-Range Approach
Generally, an IEP addresses services to be provided to the student during one school year. But when it comes to transition requirements, the IEP team must think and plan several years ahead. The highest incidence of dropping out and of disciplinary actions such as suspension or expulsion occurs during the first two years of high school. To combat this pattern, IDEA requires that the IEP team carefully consider post-school goals when the student is about to enter high school at age 13. Beginning at age 13 (or younger, if appropriate) a statement of transition services needed by the student must be included in the IEP.

High school experiences, both academic and social, greatly influence future options for all students. For adolescents with disabilities, these experiences are pivotal. Decisions about any transition service needs or a student's course of study should be grounded in the answers to the following questions:

- What are his/her dreams? His vision for life as a young adult?
- What are his/her strengths? How will she use them to build success during high school?
- Will he/she seek a regular high school diploma requiring a prescribed course of study with possible accompanying proficiency tests?
- Will he/she work toward a vocational completion certificate?
- Does he/she have a career interest now? If not, when and how can the team help his/her discover her interests and preferences?
- Does this team believe that he/she will remain in public school through the maximum age of eligibility? If so, what age-appropriate experiences may be available after 18?
- What skills need to be developed or improved to help him/her make progress toward her goals?
- Are there any at-risk behaviors that might interfere with his success during high school?
- In what school and community activities will he/she participate?
- What does the team believe his/her high school course of study will look like?
- What transition services, supports and accommodations does he/she need for success in high school?

Discussing and answering these questions will meet the intent of the IDEA regulations, assist in preventing school failure, and promote success in high school for students.

Although IDEA does not require formal transition planning earlier than age 13, approaching the elementary IEP process with an eye to the future builds a foundation for secondary school transition planning. All IEP decisions should be made in the context of how that decision may affect the child's future school or post-school experiences. For example, participation in the general curriculum or the state testing program as an elementary student may increase the likelihood of continued involvement in those aspects of schooling needed to earn a high school diploma. Early career education will increase self-awareness and self-determination.
Developing a Comprehensive Plan

Section 300.29 of the IDEA regulations defines transition service as a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that:

- Is designed within an outcome-oriented process that promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.
- Is based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests.
- Includes instruction; related services; community experiences; the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives; and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

Realistic transition activities must be outlined in the IEP. Developing skills for an unneeded labor market does not promote employment, and obtaining a job without transportation options compromises the possibility of success. Roles and responsibilities should be written into the plan. Examples of transition activities include:

- Assessing student needs, interests, or preferences for future education, employment, and adult living and setting future goals in these areas.
- Identifying, exploring, and trying out transition placements that match the student's assessment and vision and providing community experiences related to future goals.
- Instructing the student in the academic, vocational, and adult living skills needed to achieve transition goals, including self-determination.
- Identifying and providing the accommodations, supports, or related services the student needs.
- Coordinating with adult services organizations and helping families identify resources and natural supports.
- Providing or planning follow-up or follow-along support once the student develops independence in a transition activity or graduates.

Participants in Developing the Transition Plan

IDEA requires that the following attend the IEP meeting:

- Parent (and if desired, the family)
- The student's special education teacher or related services provider
- The student's regular education teacher
- A local educational agency representative
- Other agency personnel who have knowledge or expertise required to best serve the student's needs

The law makes it clear that the student is the most important member of the team. In fact, according to the IDEA regulations at §300.344, the student must be invited to participate in the IEP meeting whenever the purpose of the meeting is related to transition (that is, any IEP meeting after reaching age 13). If the student does not attend the meeting, then IDEA regulations expect schools to take other steps to ensure the student's preferences and interests
are considered. Before the IEP meeting, students should be coached and taught the skills they will need to participate in or lead their IEP transition meetings. With support and direct instruction, students can become aware of their strengths and needs, learn to advocate for themselves, and learn to set and evaluate goals.

When the purpose of the IEP includes developing a transition plan, families must be advised of this purpose. Prior to the meeting, many schools send families materials to help them think about their child's future. At the meeting, the staff asks family members to describe their vision for their child's future. The IEP team uses the family's knowledge of the student in planning and identifies resources the family can use during the transition process. Effective transition planning adopts an approach that is sensitive to the culture and context of the family, thus empowering the family for its role in guiding their adult child with a disability. Transition planning should help students and families connect with the adult service system. Adult service organizations that may provide or pay for transition services must be invited to participate in the development of the IEP transition plan. If they are unable to attend, then the school must find alternative ways of involving them in planning any transition services that they might pay for or provide. Each transition activity should include someone who consents to monitor the provision of that service as outlined in the IEP.

Guidance counselors, related service providers, vocational educators, and administrators all have a potential place and voice in designing transition plans for students. These participants may vary depending on the goals and needs of the student.

Preparing Your Child for Making Good Choices
Parents want their children to have the skills they need to succeed as adults. While this is important for every young person, youth with disabilities often face extra challenges. That’s why they need to be actively involved in setting their high school goals and planning for their transition to adulthood well before they reach the age of majority. In South Carolina, the age of majority is 18.  Please refer to the “Age of Majority” section of this Manual.

What Related Services will you continue to need after graduation
Examples might include: orientation and mobility assistance, help with obtaining and learning to use a new piece of technology, counseling, using public transportation or arranging rides to work, physical therapy, nursing services, personal care…

Here are some activities to help plan for the services needed after you graduate.

- Research what physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy services are available in your area for adults. Find out who provides these services.
- Learn how to hire and direct your own personal care attendant.
- Make a list of all the activities your family helps you with now that a personal care attendant would need to provide in a new situation, such as college.
- Meet with Vocational Rehabilitation to ask about funding for services for people who are deaf and hard of hearing, blind, and/or who uses technology.
- Connect with Personal Care Services if you need medical assistance at home.

Putting it All Together
A transition plan is an ongoing process. Minimally, the IEP team reviews the transition plan as part of the annual review. The written plan provides the framework, but like any good plan
the process remains open to new information. All team members need to be aware of the goals and planned activities so that everyone can reinforce progress toward the student's goals. Implementing the transition plan and the coordinated set of activities requires all IEP team members to make a commitment to promoting adult success for youths with disabilities.

**What are the legal requirements in IDEA for transition?**

**Student Notification and Participation:**
Although IDEA requires that for students, beginning no later than age 14, South Carolina has determined that transition planning should begin no later than age 13, or even earlier if appropriate. One of the purposes of the annual meeting will always be a discussion of transition service needs. Beginning at least by age 13, the discussion will focus upon planning for needed transition services. The school shall invite a student of any age with a disability to attend the IEP meeting if the purpose of the IEP meeting will be the consideration of transition services. This may include discussing what the student wants for his or her future, what needs or challenges are perceived as barriers to reaching student goals, and what accommodations and supports will support student efforts. This reflects the importance of self-determination for the student in conjunction with the shared responsibility of agencies and personnel in attaining the student’s long-and short-term goals. If the student does not attend the IEP meeting, the public agency shall take other steps to ensure that the student’s preferences and interests are considered.

**Parent Notification and Participation:**
Parents must be notified that the purpose of the IEP meeting will be to develop a statement of transition services needs for their son or daughter, who is also invited to attend the meeting. Beginning at age 13, or younger, if appropriate, this notification must also include any other agencies that will be invited to send a representative. Ensuring that parents are informed in advance gives them an opportunity to prepare for discussion about the future. Informing parents that their child will also be invited provides them with the opportunity to talk with their child prior to the actual meeting. With an understanding that outside agencies may be invited, families can begin to think about what services they may need, want, and how to include additional community members.

**Agency Notification, Participation, and Responsibility:**
IDEA also requires that the school invite a representative of any other agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services. This reflects the value of long-term, child-centered coordination and shared responsibility. School staff needs to be knowledgeable about the services and policies of community agencies in order to invite the appropriate people. Some of the possible agencies may include: vocational rehabilitation, employment and training, mental health, mental retardation/developmental disabilities, social security, housing, recreation, and others relevant to the individual’s needs and preferences.

If an agency does not attend, the school shall take other steps to obtain the participation of the agency in the planning of transition services. If the agency fails to provide the transition services described in the IEP, the school must reconvene the IEP team to identify alternative strategies to meet those objectives. Nothing in this part relieves any participating agency, including a state vocational rehabilitation agency, of the responsibility to provide or pay for
transition services that they would otherwise provide to students with disabilities who meet their eligibility criteria. The financial responsibility for meeting a student’s transition goals are not meant to apply solely to the education system, but also to the agencies that the IEP team involves in meeting the transition objectives set out in the IEP.

**Content of the IEP:** IDEA final regulations state the importance of three core concepts:

- The involvement and progress of each student with a disability in the general education curriculum;
- The involvement of parents and students, together with general and special education personnel, in making decisions to support each student; and
- The preparation of students with disabilities for employment and other post school outcomes.

The actual IEP document includes:

- present level educational performance—may include information as it relates to post school goals and information from families, employers, and others;
- statement of transition service needs (age 13 in South Carolina)—generally based on such factors as transition assessment, environmental barriers, and future adult goals;
- statement of needed transition services (age 13 in South Carolina)—may include instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation;
- annual goals—generally based on long-term future adult goals (using assessment information and adult goals);
- short-term objectives or benchmarks—are measurable and represent steps to meet annual goals;
- statement of interagency responsibilities—generally includes information about who will provide needed transition services outside of the local education agency;
- statement of participation in state and district-wide tests—describes the modifications in the administration of these tests that the student will need. If a test is not appropriate for the student, the IEP must state why the test is not appropriate and how the student will be tested instead; and
- list of special education and related services—to be provided to or on behalf of the child, including supplementary aids and services, modifications to the educational program, and supports for school personnel, such as training or professional development, that will benefit the student.

**Transfer of Rights:** In a State that transfers rights at the age of majority, beginning at least one year before a student reaches the age of majority under State law, the student’s IEP must include a statement that the student has been informed of his or her rights, if any, under Part B of the Act, that will transfer to the student on reaching the age of majority. In addition, parents must be notified that all rights will transfer to their youth.
Transition Planning Timeline
Required & Suggested Practices (Charleston County School District)

Required Practices
On or before the student’s 13th birthday

- Review the previous IEP or Transition IEP.
- Invite the student to his or her Transition IEP meeting
- Provide notice to parent of the Transition IEP meeting, indicating that the student will be invited to attend and the purpose of the meeting is the development of a statement of transition service needs.
- Develop desired post-secondary goals on the Transition IEP.
- Check the transition IEP for transition needs focusing on course of study and services.
- Document the exit option: Standard Diploma, Occupational Credential or Certificate of Achievement. Note: This requirement must be addressed in the IEP or transition IEP developed prior to the student’s first year in high school.
- Document provisions for instruction or information for the student in the area of self-determination to effectively participate in Transition IEP meetings & self advocate.
- If the student does not attend the Transition IEP meeting, document other steps taken to ensure that the student’s needs, preferences, and interests were considered.
- Obtain signed permission to invite agency representatives before each meeting.

Age 13-14 Suggested Practices

- Identify agencies that may need to be involved and therefore invited to the transition IEP meeting held on or before the student’s 16th birthday, or younger as appropriate.
- Invite a representative of any agency already providing or likely to provide transition services to the student to attend the transition IEP meeting.
- Ensure that each member of the Transition IEP team contributes relevant information about the student and assists in developing the Transition IEP.
- Obtain a signed release of information from the student’s parent prior to sharing written information with agency representatives.

Required Practices
On or before the students 15th birthday

- Review the previous IEP or Transition IEP.
- Invite the student to his or her Transition IEP meeting
- Provide notice to parent of the Transition IEP meeting, indicating that the student will be invited to attend and the purpose of the meeting is the development of a statement of transition service needs.
- Develop desired post-secondary goals on the Transition IEP.
- Check the transition IEP for transition service needs that focus on course of study and services.
- Document the exit option: Standard Diploma, Occupational Credential or Certificate of Achievement. Note: This requirement must be addressed in the IEP or transition IEP developed prior to the student’s first year in high school.
- Document provisions for instruction or information for the student in the area of self-determination to effectively participate in Transition IEP meetings & advocate for self.
- If the student does not attend the Transition IEP meeting, document other steps taken to ensure that the student’s needs, preferences, and interests were considered.
- Obtain signed permission to invite agency representatives before each meeting.

**Age 15 Suggested Practices**

- Identify agencies that may need to be involved and invited to the transition IEP.
- Meeting held on or before the student’s 16th birthday, or younger as appropriate
- Invite a representative of any agency already providing or likely to provide transition services to the student to attend the transition IEP meeting.
- Ensure that each member of the Transition IEP team contributes relevant information about the student and assists in developing the Transition IEP.
- Obtain a signed release of information from the student’s parent prior to sharing written information with agency representatives.

**Required Practices**

*On or before the student’s 16th birthday*

- Review the previous Transition IEP.
- Invite the student to the Transition IEP meeting.
- Invite any agency likely to provide or pay for any transition services, or already providing or paying for services, to send a representative to the Transition IEP meeting.
- Obtain signed permission to invite agency representatives before each meeting.
- Provide parent with a notice of the Transition IEP meeting indicating that the purpose of the meeting is the consideration of needed transition services, and the student will be invited to attend; and identify any agencies invited to send representatives.
- Update desired post-secondary goals on the Transition IEP.
- Update transition service needs that focus on courses of study and services.
- On the Transition IEP check needed transition services in the required transition services activity areas (i.e., instruction, related services, community experiences, employment, post-school adult living) and, if appropriate, daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.
- When appropriate, develop statement of agency linkages.
- Review and if needed revise the exit option: Standard Diploma, Occupational Credential or Certificate of Achievement.
- Document provisions for instruction or information for the student in the area of self-determination to effectively participate in Transition IEP meetings & advocate for self.
- If the student does not attend the Transition IEP meeting, document other steps taken to ensure that the student's needs, preferences, and interests were considered.
Age 16 Suggested Practices

- Ensure that each member of the Transition IEP team contributes relevant information about the student and assists in developing the Transition IEP.
- Obtain a signed release of information from the student’s parent prior to sharing written information with agency representatives.
- Investigate the need for a referral to SC Vocational Rehabilitation who typically can provide support to students who will obtain competitive employment.

Required Practices
On or before the student’s 17th birthday

- Review the last Transition IEP.
- Invite the student to the Transition IEP meeting.
- Invite any agency likely to provide or pay for any transition services, or already providing or paying for services to send a representative to the Transition IEP meeting.
- Obtain signed permission to invite agency representatives before each meeting.
- Provide parent with a notice of the Transition IEP meeting indicating that the purpose of the meeting is the consideration of needed transition services and the student will be invited to attend; and identify any agencies invited to send representatives.
- Update desired post secondary goals on the Transition IEP.
- Update transition service needs that focus on course of study and services.
- On the Transition IEP check transition services in the required transition services activity areas (i.e., instruction, related services, community experiences, employment, post-school adult living) and, if appropriate, daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.
- When appropriate, develop or update statement of agency linkages.
- Review and if needed revise the exit option: Standard Diploma, Occupational Credential or Certificate of Achievement.
- Document provisions for instruction or information for the student in the area of self-determination to effectively participate in Transition IEP meetings & self-advocate.
- If the student does not attend the Transition IEP meeting, document other steps taken to ensure that the student’s needs, preferences, and interests were considered.
- Inform the parent and the student of the rights that will transfer to the student, at least one year prior to the student’s 18th birthday.
- Document on the Transition IEP that the parent and the student have been informed of the rights that will transfer to the student.

Age 17 Suggested Practices

- Ensure that each member of the transition IEP team contributes relevant information about the student and assists in developing the transition IEP.
- Ensure that the student’s parent has signed a release of information form prior to sharing written information with agency representatives.
**Required Practices**  
**On or before the student’s 18th birthday**

- Review the previous Transition IEP.
- Invite the student to the Transition IEP meeting.
- Invite any agency likely to provide or pay for any transition services, or already providing or paying for services to send a representative to the Transition IEP meeting.
- Obtain signed permission to invite agency representatives before each meeting.
- Provide parent with a notice of the Transition IEP meeting indicating that the purpose of the meeting is the consideration of needed transition services and the student will be invited to attend; and identify any agencies invited to send representatives.
- Update post secondary goals on the Transition IEP.
- Update transition service needs that focus on course of study and services.
- On the Transition IEP check needed transition services in the required transition services activity areas (i.e., instruction, related services, community experiences, employment, post-school adult living) and, if appropriate, daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.
- When appropriate, develop or update statement of agency linkages.
- Review and if needed revise the exit option: Standard Diploma, Occupational Credential or Certificate of Achievement.
- Document provisions for instruction or information for the student in the area of self-determination to effectively participate in Transition IEP meetings & advocate for self.
- If the student does not attend the Transition IEP meeting, document other steps taken to ensure that the student’s needs, preferences, and interests were considered.
- Provide the parent and student a notice regarding the transfer of rights when the student attains his/her 18th birthday.
- Provide the student’s parent with all notices required by IDEA.

**Age 18 Suggested Practices**

- Ensure that each member of the Transition IEP team contributes relevant information about the student and assists in developing the Transition IEP.
- Continue to work closely with the student’s parent where there are concerns about the student’s ability to participate in the process of educational decision-making.
- Ensure that the student or student’s parent has signed the release of information form prior to sharing written information with agency representatives.

**Required Practices**  
**Age 17-21 if the student has not received a standard diploma or its equivalent**

- Invite the student to the Transition IEP meeting.
- Invite any agency likely to provide or pay for any transition services, or already providing or paying for services to send a representative to the Transition IEP meeting.
- Obtain signed permission to invite agency representatives before each meeting.
- Provide parent with a notice of the Transition IEP meeting indicating that the purpose of the meeting is the consideration of needed transition services and the student will be invited to attend; and identify any agencies invited to send representatives.
- Update desired post secondary goals on the Transition IEP.
- Update transition service needs that focus on courses of study and services.
- On the Transition IEP check transition service needs in the required transition services activity areas (i.e., instruction, related services, community experiences, employment, post-school adult living) and, if appropriate, daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.
- Review the previous Transition IEP.
- When appropriate, develop or update statement of agency linkages.
- Review and if needed revise the exit option: Standard Diploma, Occupational credential or Certificate of Achievement.
- Document provisions for instruction or information for the student in the area of self-determination to effectively participate in Transition IEP meeting, & advocate for self.
- If the student does not attend the Transition IEP meeting, document other steps taken to ensure that the student’s needs, preferences, and interests were considered.
- Provide the parent with all notices required by IDEA.

**Age 19-21 Suggested Practices**

*If the student has not received a standard diploma or its equivalent*

- Ensure that each member of the Transition IEP team contributes relevant information about the student and assists in developing the Transition IEP.
- Continue to work closely with the student’s parent where there are concerns about the student’s ability to participate in the process of education decision-making.
- Ensure that the student’s parent has signed the release of information form prior to sharing written information with agency representatives.

Adapted From: Florida Department of Education Services/Bureau of Exceptional Education & Student Services/05. Used with permission from the Charleston County School District
Helping the Student Prepare for the Age of Majority

As parents, we can begin to help our children prepare for adulthood by looking at the role we play in their lives. Do we try too hard to sway our children’s decisions? Do we tend to speak for our children instead of letting them speak for themselves? Can we separate our own desires from our children’s wishes? It can be hard to let go of our parental role when we love our children and worry about their future. But we may need to step back and look at our own actions. Our role is to help our children to become comfortable making their own decisions and capable of making good choices. Children develop decision-making skills over time. Young children can practice these skills within the family. Older children can take increasing responsibility for the decisions that affect their lives.

Teaching Young Children How to Make Decisions

- Include your child in purchasing decisions. Does your child help select his or her own clothing and help with grocery shopping and meal planning?
- Discuss important decisions such as vacation plans and major purchases as a family. Routinely state your thoughts out loud so your children have a model for good decision making: “We are not ready to decide on that yet, let’s talk about it tomorrow after dinner;” or “Let’s gather more information before we buy this.”
- Practice with your child what he or she should do if lost.

Teaching Older Children How to Make Decisions

- Encourage your child to participate in planning his or her IEP and even leading the IEP meeting.
- Role-play IEP meetings with your child ahead of time to help him or her clarify what he or she wants from the meeting. Practice how to step out of the meeting to discuss a decision in private. Ask your child if he or she wants to invite anyone to the meeting for support.

Additional Tips for Helping Your Child Make Informed Decisions

- Help your child develop good working relationships with school personnel and other IEP team members so there is little disruption when he or she reaches the age of majority.
- Do not allow educators to pressure your child into making decisions he or she is not capable of handling.
- Avoid being overprotective. Do not interfere with your child’s desires when it is not truly necessary.
- Stay involved even after you are no longer the primary participant in the development of your child’s IEP. IDEA does not address parent’s attendance at IEP meetings.
South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation’s Coordination with School Districts

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) has designated state plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services, including provisions for the development and approval of an individualized plan for employment before each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting or, before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting.

Information must be provided on the formal interagency agreement with the state educational agency with respect to:

- The South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department (SCVRD) considers service provision to high school students with disabilities a significant priority. In collaboration with local education agencies, SCVRD identifies students pursuing high school diplomas, local district occupational diplomas/credentials, and those who will receive certificates of attendance and will require services to successfully enter employment. These collaborative efforts are coordinated at both the state and local levels. Consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services;
- Transition planning by personnel of the designated state agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs;
- Roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;
- Procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

What will VR do for me while I’m still in school?

If you are eligible for VR services, you’ll have a counselor who will help you develop a plan to achieve successful employment. Your counselor and the rest of your VR team can:

- Help you explore different career opportunities.
- Give you information about the work skills, abilities and training you would need for a specific job.
- Help you find out about the types of jobs available in your community.
- Arrange for you to use the nearest vocational rehabilitation training center during the summer before your senior year to strengthen your ability to meet work requirements.
- Work with you and your parents to locate training programs to help you meet your employment goals.
Who makes the decisions?
You and your parents do. An assessment will indicate your strengths, abilities and interests and you decide what your employment goal will be. Good planning is the key to success. Your counselor will work with you, your parents and other people involved with you're planning to help you make informed choices about the kinds of jobs and careers you might want to consider.

What happens after I graduate?
After you leave high school, your VR team will work with you to:
- Implement your employment plan and coordinate services if you need assistance to learn a job.
- Provide any help you need to look at career alternatives.
- Offer counseling and guidance as you work towards your employment goal.
- Arrange for special training if you need it.
- Help you find a job.
- Follow up after you are working to make sure you and your employer are satisfied.
- Explore other services if needed.

Who pays for all this?
There is no cost for determining if and how SCVRD can help you. Planning and job placement assistance can also be provided by your vocational rehabilitation counselor at no cost to you. If we need to purchase things to help you accomplish your employment goal, such as tools or training, family resources and financial need will be considered.

What if I don’t want people to know I have a disability?
All the information we have about you is kept confidential. Only you, your parents and your counselor need to know. We share your information only if you give permission.

What about my SSI or SSDI benefits?
Your counselor can give you and your parent’s advice about how your benefits may be affected when you begin earning wages. Work incentives allowances are available and your counselor can refer you to a community work incentive coordinator who can explain them to you.

How do I qualify?
You must have a physical or mental impairment that interferes with your ability to work. You must also need and be able to benefit from VR services that would lead to competitive employment.
**Age Appropriate Transition Assessments**

IDEA 2004 states that “Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 13, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually, thereafter, the IEP must include—(1) Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills” [§300.320 (b) (1)]. While age-appropriate transition assessment is not defined in the law, there are some clues as to the intent within the NSTTAC Indicator 13 FAQ (www.nsttac.org) that was approved by Office of Special Education Programs, US Department of Education. “Age appropriate” means a student’s chronological, rather than developmental age (Wehmeyer, 2002).

Transition assessment was defined using the Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT) of the Council for Exceptional Children definition of transition assessment which is “…ongoing process of collecting data on the individual’s needs, preferences, and interests as they relate to the demands of current and future working, educational, living, and personal and social environments. Assessment data serve as the common thread in the transition process and form the basis for defining goals and services to be included in the Individualized Education Program (IEP)” (Sitlington, Neubert, & Leconte, 1997, p. 70-71).

**What are the types of Transition Assessment?**

Transition assessments can be formal or informal. Formal assessment typically involves using a standardized procedure for administering, scoring, and interpreting an assessment. By clearly defining how an assessment is administered, scored, and interpreted, this allows a student’s score to be interpreted relative to other students (e.g., norms), although not all standardized assessments are norm-referenced. Informal assessment procedures are less structured and do not allow comparison with other students. However, because informal procedures allow assessment of student performance over time, they are useful in designing and evaluating the effects of instructional interventions. In addition, informal assessment includes data to be collected from a variety of individuals (e.g., parents, teachers, employers) using a variety of non-standardized methods.

**Formal Transition Assessment Methods**

- **Adaptive Behavior/Daily Living Skills Assessments** can help determine the type and amount of assistance that people with disabilities may need. This assistance might be in the form of home-based support services for infants and children and their families, special education and vocational training for young people, and supported work or special living arrangements such as personal care attendants. Each assessment relies on a respondent such as a parent, teacher, or care-provider to provide information about an individual being assessed.

- **General and Specific Aptitude Tests** measure a specific skill or ability. There are two types of aptitude tests: multi-aptitude test batteries and single tests measuring specific aptitudes. Multi-aptitude test batteries measure a wide range of aptitudes and combinations of aptitudes (e.g., general knowledge, spatial relations, form perception, color discrimination) and provide information that can be used in career decision making. Single aptitude tests measure specific aptitudes such as manual dexterity, clerical ability, artistic ability, or musical ability.
• **Interest Inventories** provide information about an individual’s preferences for certain careers, occupational activities, or types of work.

• **Intelligence Tests** involve a single test or test battery to assess a person's cognitive performance.

• **Achievement Tests** measure learning of general or specific academic skills. Results can be linked to occupational requirements while helping to identify potential areas needing remediation.

• **Temperament Inventories/Instruments** identify students’ dispositions towards various types of careers and work (e.g., careers that emphasize data, people, or things). The reports alone should not be viewed as a predictor of success or failure but rather should be compared with other data, including abilities and interests.

• **Career Maturity or Employability Tests** are designed to assess developmental stages or tasks on a continuum.

• **Self-Determination Assessments** provide information as to one’s readiness to make decisions related to their postsecondary ambitions. Such assessments provide data to help a student identify his or her relative strengths and needs related to self-determination and factors that may be promoting or inhibiting this outcome.

• **Transition Planning Inventories** can help identify transition strengths and needs in various aspects of adult living, including employment, postsecondary schooling and training, independent living, interpersonal relationships, and community living. They also question and identify students’ goals and awareness of what is needed or required to achieve those goals. Results of questioning parents or guardians (and possibly siblings), and educators can be correlated to create an accurate account of transition goals and steps necessary to attain a satisfying quality of life.

**Informal Transition Assessment Methods**

• **Interviews and questionnaires** can be conducted with a variety of individuals for the purpose of gathering information to be used to determine a student’s strengths, needs, preferences, and interests relative to anticipated post-school outcomes. In other words, what is currently known about a student, and her or his family, that can be used to help develop postsecondary outcomes and to plan a course-of-study that will help the student reach his or her goals? An important part of this data collection process involves gathering information about a student and his or her family’s current and future resources. For example, if a student’s future education choice is to enroll in postsecondary education, it is helpful to know as soon as possible the financial resources a family might have or need. Another example might involve current and future transportation needs to get to work or to various activities/places in the community. Finally, families can often provide current and future resources in terms of employment options for their daughter or son or for other students in a high school program.

• **Direct observation** of student performance should be conducted within the natural environment, or school, employment, postsecondary, or community setting (Sitlington, Neubert, & Leconte, 1997). Sometimes called “community-based or situational assessment” (Sitlington, Neubert, Begun, Lombard, & Leconte, 2007), direct observations can be often done by a job coach, co-worker, recreation specialist, general/vocational educator, and/or student.
Direct observation data typically includes task analytic data of steps in completing a task, work behaviors (e.g., on-task, following directions, getting along with coworkers), and affective information (e.g., is student happy, excited, frustrated, or bored?). For example, if you are observing at a worksite, and a student quickly and accurately completes his or her tasks, interacts well with co-workers, and appears happy, this could provide evidence that this type of job is one that the student likes. However, after visiting a community residential setting where a student appears withdrawn, this may be an indication that the particular situation may not be suitable or satisfying for him or her.

- **Curriculum-based assessments (CBA)** are typically designed by educators to gather information about a student’s performance in a specific curriculum and to develop instructional plans for a specific student. To gather these data, an educator might use task analyses, work sample analyses, portfolio assessments, and/or criterion-referenced tests.

- **Environmental analysis**, sometimes referred to as ecological assessment and/or job analysis, involves carefully examining environments where activities normally occur. For example, a student may express an interest in attending karate classes at the local YMCA. In this case an environmental analysis might be conducted to investigate transportation needs and the expectations at the YMCA for attending (e.g., being a member, using the locker room, taking a shower). In a second example, if a student expressed interest in a specific type of job, a job analysis could be conducted comparing requirements of the job to the student’s skills (Griffin & Sherron, 1996). A critical part of the analysis should be to identify types of accommodations that could be provided to help a student perform the necessary functions of a particular job (e.g., job restructuring, modifying equipment, acquiring an adaptive device, re-organizing the work space, hiring a personal assistant (Griffin & Sherron, 1996).

**Whatever type of transition assessments used, remember that the results need to help:**
- develop realistic and meaningful IEP goals and objectives,
- make instructional programming decisions,
- provide information for the present level of performance related to a student’s strengths, interests, preferences, and needs,
  - learn about individual students, especially their strengths outside of academics and their career ambitions (Kortering, Sitlington, & Braziel, 2004),
- help students make a connection between their individual academic program and their post-school ambitions, and
- inform the Summary of Performance.

**How does one conduct an age appropriate transition assessment?**

The transition assessment process will vary depending on the actual instrument(s) and procedures being used and various student characteristics. Although formal instruments may be easier and quicker to administer, they should be used primarily to verify observations of student behaviors and performances. Students should always be asked to verify results of both formal and informal assessments to determine if their opinions, evaluations, and feelings confirm the results. Following are two examples of different approaches to transition assessment.

- One approach uses three levels of transition assessment (Rojewski, 2002). Level one is for most students and might include a review of existing information (e.g., intelligence and achievement data from the student’s most current psychological report), student interview,
interest assessment, temperament assessment, and, if indicated (e.g., a student shows promise in a given aptitude), aptitude testing. Level two assessment targets students who are having difficulty making a career choice or clarifying their interests, preparing for adult living, or contemplating leaving school as a dropout. Level two could expand to include assessments targeting information as to one’s work-related behaviors, general career maturity, and daily or independent living skills. Level three assessment is for students needing additional assistance with identifying long term employment, education, and/or independent living goals, when earlier transition assessments were inconclusive, or for those with more significant disabilities. This level generally takes several days and is conducted by a vocational assessment specialist (Sarkees-Wircenski & Scott, 1995).

A second process is called the Assess, Plan, Instruct, and Evaluate (APIE) model for transition assessment (Test, Aspel, & Everson, 2006). In the first step (assess), educators assess the student’s interests, preferences, and needs related to his/her postschool outcomes using both formal and/or informal assessments. The second step (plan) involves interpreting the results from these assessments and incorporating them into the student’s transition plan. In the third step (instruct), students learn the skills they will need to reach their postschool goals. In the last step (evaluate), students and educators evaluate whether progress has been made toward achieving the transition activities and IEP goals and objectives.

It is important for assessment information to be collected continuously with periodic checkpoints, because students may change their minds (e.g., interests, preferences) and attributes (e.g., skills, knowledge, strengths).

Whatever the process followed, Sitlington, Neubert, and Leconte (1997) suggest the following when conducting a transition assessment:

1. Methods must incorporate assistive technology or accommodations that allow an individual to demonstrate his or her abilities and potential.
2. Methods must occur in environments that resemble actual education/training, employment, independent living, or community environments.
3. Methods must produce outcomes that contribute to ongoing development, planning, and implementation of “next steps” in an individual’s transition process.
4. Methods must be varied and include a sequence of activities that sample an individual’s behavior and skills over time.
5. Data must be verified by more than one method and by more than one person.
6. Data must be synthesized and interpreted to students with disabilities, their families, and transition team members.
7. Data and results must be documented in a format that can be used to facilitate transition planning.
8. Methods should be appropriate for learning characteristics of the individual, including cultural and linguistic differences.
9. Information should be current, valid or verified, and relevant to transition in order to better inform the Summary of Performance.

How do I select assessment instruments?

• Become familiar with the different types of transition assessments and their characteristics. It is recommended that you use multiple assessments on an on-going basis.
• Select methods that assist students by helping them answer the following questions:
  1. Who am I?
  2. What do I want in life, now and in the future?
  3. What are some of life’s demands that I can meet now?
  4. What are the main barriers to getting what I want from school and my community?
  5. What are my options in the school and community for preparing me for what I want, now and in the future?

• Select approaches that are appropriate for your students in terms of cognitive, cultural sensitivity, and language comfort.

• Always interpret and explain assessment results in formats that students and families can understand easily.

References


This Fact Sheet is a collaborative effort between DCDT and the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC). NSTTAC is funded through the Office of Special Education Programs, OSERS, U.S. Department of Education (Grant #H326J050004). However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of these agencies and endorsement by the federal government should not be assumed.
Assistive Technology and IDEA

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) defines Assistive Technology (AT) as both a device and a service:

**Assistive Technology Device**
Any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customize, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of a child with a disability.

**Assistive Technology Service**
Any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device.

**What does this mean for students and schools? (Sec. 300.105)**

School districts are required under law to provide Assistive Technology to students with disabilities when it supports their acquisition of a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). In order to support inclusion and participation of students with disabilities in regular education classrooms, all IEP’s developed for children identified as needing special education services, must indicate that AT has been considered “to provide meaningful access to the general curriculum”. More specifically, IDEA indicates that AT devices and services must be made available to a student with a disability if required as part of the student’s-

1) Special education;
2) Related services; or
3) Supplementary aids and services.

There have been several clarifications from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) on the use of AT by students with disabilities. These include:

- AT must be provided by the school district at no cost to the family.
- AT must be determined on a case-by-case basis; it is required if needed to ensure access to free and appropriate public education (FAPE).
- If the IEP team determines that AT is needed for home use to ensure FAPE, it must be provided
- The student's IEP must reflect the nature of the AT and amount of supportive AT services required.
- A parent is accorded an extensive set of procedural safeguards, including the provision of AT to the child.

Keep in mind that AT is any item that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of a student with a disability. For some students with disabilities, AT may be the *only way* that access to the general curriculum can be ensured!
Measurable IEP Goals

First of all, you will find it more difficult to write clear and measurable goals if you have not first written a clear and measurable present level of performance. Remember that "measurable" means you can count it or observe it. When you are tempted to write immeasurable terms such as "difficulty," "weak," "unmotivated," "limited," "defiant," "irresponsible," "uncooperative," and so on, stop and ask yourself, "What do I see the student doing that makes me make this judgment call?" What you actually see the student doing is the measurable content you need to identify in your present level.

Identify the category of instruction for each deficit area. These may include the following:

A. Social Skills  
B. Communication  
C. Leisure/Recreations Skills  
D. Vocational Skills  
E. Personal Management  
F. Academics  
G. Perceptual Skills  
H. Behavioral Skills  
I. Physical Skills

Samples of IEP Measurable Goals

Sample 1: Kevin and Keyboarding

Our IEP goal says that "Kevin will learn keyboarding [or typing] skills."
If Kevin's progress toward this goal is measured subjectively, his IEP may state that Kevin’s progress toward learning keyboarding or typing will be determined by "Teacher Judgment" or "Teacher Observation" or "Teacher - made Tests" with a score of "80%" as the criteria for success.

If the IEP is written properly, measuring progress objectively, the IEP may say "By the end of the first semester, Kevin will touch-type a passage of text 15 words per minute with not more than 5 errors on a 5 minute test. By the end of this academic year, Kevin will touch type a passage of text for 5 minutes at 35 words per minute with not more than 5 errors."

Sample 2: Megan and Reading

Let's look at Megan who is having trouble learning to read. Megan is in the fifth grade. According to educational achievement tests, her reading decoding skills are at the beginning second grade level. Megan's parents request special education services to remediate their daughter's reading problems. How will her parents know if Megan is benefiting from the special education program?

If Megan is being appropriately educated, her test scores in reading will begin to improve as she goes through the process of remediation. An appropriately written IEP should indicate that after a year of remediation, Megan will make progress toward closing the gap between her ability and her problems in reading, and that her educational progress will be measured objectively with educational achievement tests.

The IEP may state that after a year of specialized instruction "Megan will be reading at the 4th grade level as measured by her scores on the Reading subtests of the Woodcock Johnson Achievement Test." During the next year, Megan's IEP should include more goals in reading - with the ultimate goal of closing the gap between Megan's ability and her reading skills.
Parents can use percentile ranks in the IEPs, instead of grade equivalent scores. Let's assume that Megan's reading test scores show that she is reading at the bottom 10th percentile, when compared to other children her age. After a year of appropriate special education, Megan probably will not be reading at the 50th percentile level (i.e. the "average" level for children her age). An objective may state that after a year of special education, "Megan will be reading at the 25th percentile level" If Megan moves to the 25th percentile level in reading, she will be making progress toward closing the gap.

Although Megan's reading skills are still below average, you see that she is making steady progress. Megan's progress in reading is being measured objectively with standardized tests. Her progress is reported with numbers that can be compared over time.

**The Stranger Test**
The stranger test refers to goals and objectives for students that are described in a fashion that a person unfamiliar with the student could read the description and understand it. Because various persons involved in the implementation of the student’s educational plan interpret a construct such as “hostility” differently, it is necessary to describe the student behavior in terms that would pass the Stranger Test. For example, if a student’s goal was to decrease “hostility” a stranger might interpret it as hits, kicks, bites others while the student’s team may have meant verbal threats or profanity directed towards peers. On the other hand, the stranger might interpret “hostility” as any instance of hitting, whether or not it was provoked, while the teacher might have meant only unprovoked hits. If the teacher had defined “hostility” for the stranger as “each instance of an unprovoked hit” where “unprovoked” means that it was not in retaliation for a physical or verbal attack from a peer, both the stranger and the teacher would be likely to obtain the same results, since they would both be looking for the same thing.

**The Dead Man’s Test**
The question posed by the dead man’s test is this: Can a dead man do it? If the answer is yes, it doesn’t pass the dead man’s test and it isn’t a fair pair; if the answer is no, you have a fair pair. For example, suppose that you wanted a fair pair target behavior for “swears at peers.” Let’s say that you came up with this target behavior “does not swear at peers.” Does this pass the dead man’s test? No. A dead man could refrain from swearing at peers. What would be better? How about “speaks to peers without swearing”? This passes the dead man’s test because a dead man does not have the power to speak.

Source: Wrightslaw
Transition Goals in the IEP

Following are the IDEA’s provisions at §300.320(b) regarding what must be included in a student’s IEP no later than when that student turns 16 (13 in South Carolina):

(b) **Transition services.** Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually, thereafter, the IEP must include—

1. Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and
2. The transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals.

Breaking the provisions at §300.320(b) into their component parts is a useful way to see what needs to be included, transition-wise, in the student’s IEP. For example, consider:

- **Postsecondary goals must be**...Appropriate, measurable
- **Postsecondary goals must also be based on**...Age-appropriate assessments
- **Transition assessment considers**...Training, education, employment, independent living skills, where appropriate
- **Transition services include**...Courses of study
- **Transition services for a student are needed**...To assist the student in reaching postsecondary goals

**Checklist of Questions to Ask**

NSTTAC is the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center, an OSEP-funded project whose expertise is secondary transition. As part of its work, NSTTAC has developed extensive training materials to help states collect data about the transition services they provide to youth with disabilities (called Indicator 13). Those materials are also useful in providing a close look at the type of transition information to include in a student’s IEP.

NSTTAC’s materials include a checklist of questions to ask, which are adapted here for use by IEP teams as they plan a student’s transition services and craft statements to include in the student’s IEP.

- Is there a measurable postsecondary goal or goals for the student?
- Can the goal(s) be counted?
- Does the goal(s) occur after the student graduates from school?
- Are the postsecondary goals based on an age-appropriate transition assessment?
- Are there annual IEP goals that reasonably enable the child to meet the postsecondary goal(s) or make progress toward meeting the goal(s)?
- Are there transition services (including courses of study) in the IEP that focus on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child to facilitate his or her movement from school to post-school?
• Do the transition services listed in the IEP relate to a type of instruction, related service, community experience, development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives (and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills), and provision of a functional vocational evaluation?
• Are representatives of other agencies invited (with parent consent or the student’s) to IEP meetings when transition services are being discussed that are likely to be provided or paid for by these other agencies?

NSTTAC also provides real-life examples that are as illuminating as they are helpful, especially since examples are included for three key domains of transition planning:
• education/training,
• employment, and
• independent living.

The following are some examples, adapted from NSTTAC’s examples, to make them more appropriate for use by IEP teams. The original material is cited as: National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (2007). Indicator 13 training materials. Charlotte, NC: Author. You can find it online (and share it as widely as you like) at: http://www.nsttac.org/tm_materials/Default.aspx

**NSTTAC Example: Education/Training**

Here’s an example of a measurable postsecondary goal in the domain of **education/training**.

• Upon completion of high school, John will enroll in courses at Ocean County Community College.

This goal meets NSTTAC’s standard because of specific reasons:
• Participation in postsecondary education is the focus of this goal.
• Enrollment at a community college can be observed, as in John enrolls in courses or he does not.
• The expectation, or behavior, is explicit, since John enrolls at the community college or he does not. Enrollment at a community college occurs after graduation, and it is stated that this goal will occur after graduation.

NSTTAC also generously provides nonexamples. For the goal statement above:

**Nonexample:**
• Upon graduation, John will continue to learn about life skills and reading.

NSTTAC says that this statement does not meet the standard, because:
• Participation in learning is the focus of this goal, but no specific place or program is specified.
• The expectation for learning, or behavior, is not explicitly stated.

Also consider these two NSTTAC comments about the writing of education/training goals:
• There would likely be less specificity in the postsecondary goals articulated by younger students, than those in their last years of high school. John’s goal could be made more specific by including a phrase such as “will enroll in the general Associates Degree program at….”
• It is not necessary to specify the student’s major for the goal to be measurable. However, increased specificity in postsecondary goal statements (when the student
articulates this information) can improve the relevance of services provided during high school.

If you’d like to see more examples (and nonexamples!) of postsecondary goals for education/training, you can find them at:

**NSTTAC Example: Employment**

Here is an example of a measurable postsecondary goal in the domain of employment.

- John will work in an on-campus part-time job while in college.

This goal is well-crafted, because:

- Obtaining employment is the focus of the statement.
- Working part-time is an explicit outcome that can be observed.
- The phrase “while in college” indicates that the goal will occur after John has graduated from high school.

Would you like to see the nonexample?

- John will attend a job fair on the college campus.

Why doesn’t this goal meet the standard and, so, is used here as a nonexample?

- While “attending a job fair” is measurable, this statement suggests an activity toward a postsecondary goal.
- This activity could occur while John is still in high school. (Thus, it’s not a postsecondary goal.)

Find more examples & nonexamples of postsecondary goals in the domain of employment at: http://www.nsttac.org/tm_materials/gemploymentpostsecondarygoals.aspx

**NSTTAC Example: Independent Living**

Here is an example of a measurable postsecondary goal in the domain of independent living.

- Upon completion of high school, Lissette will learn to use public transportation, including the public bus and uptown trolley.

This goal statement is acceptably crafted, because:

- Participation in independent living skill development, specifically community participation, is the focus of this goal.
- Use of the bus can be measured, as in Lissette performs the necessary activities or does not perform the activities.
- The expectation, or behavior, is explicit, as in Lissette performs the required activities or she does not.
- It is stated in this goal that the instruction will occur after graduation.

And the nonexample:

- Lissette will learn to use the bus system.

This goal is not acceptably crafted, because:

- The expectation for learning, or behavior, is not explicitly stated.
- It is not stated that the goal will occur after high school.

Find more such examples and nonexamples in the domain of independent living, at: http://www.nsttac.org/tm_materials/hindependentlivingskills.aspx
IEP Goals to Help the Student Achieve Postsecondary Goals

All right, so the IEP team (including the student) has crafted statements that describe the student’s postsecondary goals—what he or she is going to do or achieve after leaving high school. These goals pertain to the domains of education/training, employment, and (as appropriate for the student’s needs) independent living. Now it’s time to write corresponding IEP goals that will reasonably enable the child to meet the postsecondary goals.

IEP Goals: Education/Training

Continuing with John as the example, remember that his postsecondary goal for education/training was: Upon completion of high school, John will enroll in courses at Ocean County Community College.

An appropriate IEP goal to help John achieve the postsecondary goal might be:

- Given Ocean County Community College information, John will demonstrate knowledge of the college’s admission requirements by verbally describing these requirements and identifying admission deadlines with 90% accuracy by November of this year.

This annual goal meets standards, because:

- Participation in education is the primary focus of this objective.
- Learning about the college’s admission requirements is a step that will help John meet his goal of attending Ocean County Community College.
- The criterion for meeting the goal is clearly stated (“…with 90% accuracy”).

Now for the contrast of a nonexample:

- Given an Ocean County Community College Undergraduate Handbook, John will choose and participate in two intramural sports that interest him.

Are there problems with this statement? Yes, according to NSTTAC—two.

- The behavior of choosing and participating in two intramural sports is not considered a step in helping John reach his post-secondary goal of attending Ocean County Community College.
- This nonexample is also considered to be a short-term objective because the behavior described in this annual goal will not take a year for the student to accomplish.

IEP Goals: Employment

Good old John, again the example. Remember that John’s postsecondary goal for employment was: John will work in an on-campus part-time job while in college.

An appropriate IEP goal to help John achieve this postsecondary employment goal might be:

- John will be able to report 3 possible occupations for part-time employment, based on the results of career assessments through career counseling with the guidance counselor.

This IEP goal is acceptably written, because the behavior of assessing job interest is a step in helping John determine jobs in which he would be most successful during college.
How about a nonexample?
- John will attend the annual job fair and participate in mock interviews with prospective employers.

This nonexample does not reach acceptable standards for goal-writing, because:
- While this is an appropriate activity in preparation for employment after high school, it is not relevant to John’s postsecondary goal of working part-time on campus while attending the community college.
- This goal statement indicates an activity that John could complete, but does not clearly indicate what knowledge or skill will be developed.

**IEP Goals: Independent Living**

Now the example will relate to Lissette. Recall that Lissette’s postsecondary goal in the domain of independent living was: Upon completion of high school, Lissette will learn to utilize public transportation, including the public bus and uptown trolley.

NSTTAC’s example for an appropriate and corresponding IEP goal is:
- Given travel training situations, Lissette will demonstrate sitting quietly and refraining from talking to strangers while utilizing public transportation at least two times across three opportunities.

The reasons that this goal meets the standard and is acceptably written are:
- The annual goal describes a skill Lissette would need to have in her repertoire of skills in order to travel using public transportation.
- The annual goal is a skill that will be worked on during high school.

And, keeping with our pattern here (NSTTAC’s, actually), here’s the nonexample for contrast:
- Given several coins, Lissette will match the coin with its amount six out of eight times by November 3 of this year.

Here are the reasons why this serves as a nonexample of an IEP goal to help Lissette toward achieving her independent living goal:
- According to Lissette’s present level of performance, Lissette already knows the value of coins.
- Therefore, it is not necessary to include this as a goal to help her meet her post-secondary goal of using public transportation.

**Matching Transition Services to the Postsecondary Goals and the IEP Goals**

You’ll recall that transition services are determined by the combination of a student’s stated postsecondary goals, corresponding IEP goals, and what he or she needs, support-wise, in order to move toward achieving those goals. By definition, transition services can include:
- Instruction;
- Related services;
- Community experiences;
- The development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives;
- If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation. [§300.43(a)(2)]
The IEP team’s task is to identify and specify the transition services that a student will receive in order to support him or her in reaching the shorter-term IEP goals and the longer-term postsecondary goal. How does the IEP team do that? Let’s look at some examples, again from NSTTAC.

**Transition Services: Education/Training**

Back to John. His education/training goal is: John will enroll at Ocean County Community College. What transition services could be provided to support John in reaching that goal?
- Instruction related to word processing / keyboarding skills
- Tutoring (peer or teacher) in reading comprehension strategies
- Self-monitoring instruction related to on-task behavior
- Self-advocacy training

Nonexamples might include:
- Filling out an application
- Touring a community college campus
- Adapted physical education course
- Paid work
- Field trips to the grocery store
- Volunteer experiences at the local elementary school

**Transition Services: Employment**

Here’s an interesting example from NSTTAC that looks at what transition services would be appropriate for a young adult named Jodi. Jodi’s postsecondary goals for education/training and employment are:
- Jodi will enroll in courses (non-degree) at Gaston Community College.
- Jodi will attain a part-time position in a community retail environment independently.

What transition services does Jodi need to support her in reaching these two goals?
- Travel instruction
- Instruction related to hygiene
- Instruction related to functional math skills
- Personal banking instruction
- Community based instruction at Wal-Mart to introduce to retail employment skills
- Instruction related to social skills in school and work settings

What would qualify as a nonexample—in other words, a transition service that would not be appropriate support for Jody in reaching her postsecondary goals?
- Instruction related to janitorial skills
- Community-based instructional experiences in restaurant settings

**Transition Services: Independent Living**

Working with Lizette as our example this time, recall that her independent living goal reads: Upon completion of high school, Lissette will successfully utilize public transportation, including the public bus and uptown trolley.

Her IEP team decides that Lissette will need specific transition services to help her move toward achieving that goal after she completes high school. The services they specify are:
• Instruction on community safety skills
• Travel instruction
• Math instruction related to money usage
• Literacy instruction related to sight word identification
• Instruction related to community safety and self defense at the YMCA
• Math instruction related to telling time on a variety of watches and clocks

Nonexamples, on the other hand, might include such transition services as:
• Instruction related to life science
• Intelligence testing
• Job shadowing with school bus driver
• Participating in chorus

**In Conclusion**
Hopefully, NSTTAC’s excellent work, adapted here, will help you when it comes time to help students plan for transition to life after high school and especially to write an IEP that will:
• capture the student’s postsecondary goals in concrete, measurable terms;
• write corresponding IEP goals to support and prepare the student to achieve the postsecondary goals after leaving high school;
• reflect the IEP team’s decisions about the transition services the student needs (including what the student will study while still in high school) in order to achieve the postsecondary goals.

Transition planning is complicated and involved. There are so many dimensions of adulthood to consider! That’s why, for students with disabilities, planning ahead is critical. The more significant the disability is, the more imperative it is to prepare, plan, specify, investigate, coordinate, and support. Adulthood’s coming.
Practical Assessment Exploration System (PAES)

PAES is a comprehensive curriculum that provides exploration, training, and assessment through hands-on experience, in a simulated work environment, while learning important career/vocational and life skills. Skills are taught in a systematic format that helps students become more independent. PAES determines students’ interest in specific work areas, competitiveness with peers, and assesses present barriers to future success, and then helps change them to positive work behaviors.

Participation in over 250 activities provides data that is used for school-to-work transition plans.

The PAES curriculum works in five career areas:
- Business/Marketing
- Construction/Industrial
- Consumer/Service
- Processing/Production
- Computer/Technology

PAES operates in a simulated work environment commonly known as PAES labs. Students become employees; teachers become supervisors. Strict procedures are followed so students get the feel of real work, at the same time learn and explore new career vocational areas.

Each area has a comprehensive array of tasks for the students to perform. The instructor monitors the tasks and provides feedback and assistance where needed. Students are encouraged to become as independent as possible. Students completing PAES have a thorough knowledge of many job skills and have a better understanding of the real working world.

PAES provides:
- Training in basic, generalizable vocational and life skills that relate to almost every type of career. Training is provided to build the skills needed for vocational training, placement and independent living.
- Assessment of basic, generalizable skills and determining interest, aptitudes, competitiveness, work behavior barriers, and best teaching methods.
- Exploration through HANDS-ON experiences that provide real and meaningful career information and knowledge of what a student can do!
- Work Behavior Development by assessing and training in proper work behaviors, eliminating many barriers to successful job placement.

Although the tasks are encouraged to be done independently, they are to be repeated until a passing score is attained, however, this repetition can become tedious and boring and cause the students to become disengaged. I would suggest after two or three tries moving to a different work area and then come back to the incomplete task after completing two or three different tasks. This will be especially helpful to those students with disabilities that have trouble concentrating or staying on task.
South Carolina Diploma Options

State High School Diploma

- For a public school student to receive a state high school diploma, the student must: (1) complete a minimum of twenty-four units of credit as prescribed; and, (2) meet the standard on all subtests of the Exit Examination.
- The prescribed unit requirements for a state high school diploma are as follows: Language Arts, four; math, four; physical education or JROTC (Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps), one; U.S. history, one; economics one-half; American government, one-half; other social studies, one; science, three; computer science, one; foreign language or Career and Technology Education, one; and electives seven. Note: for an adult education student, the one unit of physical education is not required; eight elective units are acceptable.
- No student shall apply to the twenty-four units required for the state high school diploma more than six units of credit earned in summer school, and/or through approved correspondence courses, and/or adult education programs. The State Board of Education accepts high school credit for courses completed in approved adult education programs if the following requirements are met: (1) the student has spent a minimum of one hundred twenty hours in class time in that course, and (2) the teacher is properly certified to teach the course.

State High School Certificate of Attendance

- For a student to receive a state high school certificate, the student must: (1) complete a minimum of twenty-four units of credit as prescribed and (2) have failed to meet the standard on all subtests of the Exit Examination.
- The prescribed unit requirements for a state high school diploma are as follows: Language Arts, four; math, four; physical education or JROTC (Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps), one; U.S. history, one; economics one-half; American government, one-half; other social studies, one; science, three; computer science, one; foreign language or Career and Technology Education, one; and electives seven.

Academic Honors Award

- For a student to receive an Academic Achievement Honors Award, the student must (1) complete twenty-four units of credit as prescribed; (2) meet the standard on all subtests of the Exit Examination; (3) receive a minimum grade of “B” for each semester course in grades 9-12 through the seventh semester; and (4) achieve either a score of 710 on the SAT verbal or a score of 690 on the SAT math, or an ACT score of 30 on English or 33 on mathematics - OR – (1) Each student shall have completed twenty-four units of high school credit; (2) be eligible for graduation with a state high school diploma; (3) have a combined score of 1400 on the SAT verbal and math sections, or an ACT composite score of 31.
- Of the twenty-four units earned, eighteen units must be college preparatory coursework, four units in additional electives, and two units in one or more of the following: English, science, social studies or mathematics.
• College preparatory coursework includes: English [English I or above] (four units); Mathematics [Algebra I or above] (four units); laboratory science (three units); social studies [United States/South Carolina studies, Economics/Government, and one unit of global studies/world history, global studies/world geography, or western civilization] (three units); computer science (one unit); physical education (one unit); and foreign language (two units).

Additional Information for Students with Disabilities
If a student with a disability graduates with a regular diploma, the student loses eligibility for a free appropriate public education (FAPE). However, if a student graduates with any other type of diploma or certificate, the student may retain eligibility for education services through the age of 21. This applies even if the student has participated in a graduation ceremony as long as the student has not obtained the state diploma.

Schools must notify parents before proposing to graduate a student with an Individual Education Program (IEP) because it is considered a change in placement.

Please Note: This information is accurate until such time that it is revised by the SC State Legislature.
WorkKeys® Assessment System Overview

What is WorkKeys®?

The WorkKeys® Assessment System is a comprehensive system for measuring, communicating and improving the common skills required for success in the workplace. It allows these skills to be quantitatively assessed in both individual persons and in actual jobs. Therefore the WorkKeys System can allow you to identify individuals who have the basic skills required to be successful in a given position or career. When properly used, businesses can make hiring and promotion decisions based on WorkKeys with confidence and security.

The WorkKeys Assessment System is rapidly becoming the nationwide standard for measuring and communicating basic workplace skills. It is currently in use in all 50 states in the United States. The WorkKeys System was developed by ACT, Inc., the creators of the college entrance exam.

The WorkKeys System is a Flexible System of Components which include:

- Job Profiling - Determining the basic skills required for individual jobs and occupational careers
- Assessment - Measuring the basic skills that individuals can apply to workplace situations
- Training - Curriculum guidelines from ACT and curriculum from ACT Level 1 publishers designed to improve an individual's skills so that they can be successful in jobs of their choice
- Research - ACT's extensive research and validation efforts results in a tool that can be applied with the highest levels of reliability and confidence to a wide range of education, employment and workforce development objectives.

Note that the WorkKeys System deals with the foundation skills required by all jobs, such as reading, mathematics, teamwork and others. These skills are required by essentially all jobs, from entry-level positions to white-collar professionals, although to different degrees in each job. It allows you to see how much and to what degree of complexity each skill is required in an individual position. The WorkKeys System does not deal with job-specific training. For instance, it would not train or measure the performance of a person to be a printing press operator. However WorkKeys assessments do ensure that a prospective employee could read and understand a typical press operation manual, read the gauges and dials on the machine, work with others in the company, and with the proper guidance become a successful press operator. Without first knowing that a person possesses these basic abilities, efforts to train a potential press operator could be wasted. In this way, WorkKeys assessments help a business to avoid mistakes in hiring and training a person who is not ready to absorb the information presented in the training.
The National Career Readiness Certificate

The idea of Career Readiness Certificates (CRC) has become popular nationwide as a system for certifying the basic skills necessary for success in typical jobs. A Certificate gives specific information about a person's ability to perform common tasks that all employers require. Over 35 states have or are implementing or are in the process of implementing programs affiliated with ACT's National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) or at least using the same model based on ACT's WorkKeys® assessments.

ACT's nationwide credentialing initiative identifies job seekers who have the essential foundational skills to succeed in the workplace. For current employees, it identifies the skills needed for promotions and greater productivity.

The basis of the National Career Readiness System is ACT's WorkKeys job skill assessments, which examine the essential foundational skills needed for virtually every occupation. For nearly two decades, WorkKeys has been used by thousands of organizations for employee hiring and development. Companies that have used WorkKeys have seen reduced turnover among employees, as well as improved productivity and training efficiency.

By earning a National Career Readiness Certificate, individuals can demonstrate that they possess key foundational job skills that are needed for virtually every job. This gives the job seeker an advantage when applying for jobs, a complement to a diploma and resume. For employees already on the job, a certificate can demonstrate skills needed for a promotion or for training that leads to greater productivity and effectiveness.

How is The Certificate being used in schools?

Educators can use the skill levels required by the National Career Readiness Certificate as benchmarks in communicating with economic developers and businesses—to help prepare students for the workplace. Because WorkKeys is tied to specific training and curriculum for skill improvement, educators can offer programs for individuals wishing to improve their skills and enhance job opportunities. WorkKeys provides a common language for employers, schools, and students.

WorkKeys helps students:

- Compare their WorkKeys skill levels to the skill levels required for the jobs they want.
- Submit their WorkKeys scores to specific companies to target job search efforts.
- Demonstrate to others (employers, educators, instructors, and counselors) their transferable employability skill levels.
- Use information from skill reports and job profiles to identify areas in which they need further training.

Copyright 2011 ACT, Inc. All rights reserved. KeyTrain and WorkKeys are registered trademarks of ACT, Inc. Career Ready 101 and the National Career Readiness Certificate are trademarks of ACT, Inc.
Postsecondary Options

Depending on your career path and educational needs, there are many different college options. All colleges offer some type of disability support, but it varies greatly. It is important to take your personal needs and wants into consideration and to investigate the levels of available support in each college setting. The following are some of the most common college options:

- **Four Year colleges or universities** are educational institutions where you can earn a Bachelor of Arts (BA) or Bachelor of Science (BS) degree. You can attend a public or private institution and each college offers different majors and fields of studies. Depending on the college, you can study almost anything ranging from psychology to business to health or technical sciences. The admissions criteria varies for each school and some are extremely competitive. College is a rewarding experience, but it is important to remember that being a college student requires a lot of self-discipline and personal responsibility. It is also important to note that although we are referring to these schools as four year colleges, many students take four and a half to five years to complete their bachelor’s degrees.

- **Two year colleges** are schools that offer associate’s degrees, either Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degrees. There are public and private options and the admissions process is generally simpler than that of a four-year school. An Associate’s degree is a minimum requirement for some jobs and can prepare you for a career in two years. After two years, many students decide to continue with their studies and transfer to a four year college to earn a bachelor’s degree. Depending on the number of credits that transfer and your school’s requirements you may able to complete your bachelor’s degree in another two years. Public community colleges usually do not provide housing in dormitories, but they are widely accessible and often the cheapest option. Private junior colleges are similar to four-year colleges, but only award Associate’s degrees. Associate’s degrees are also available in a number of academic fields including accounting, business administration, criminal justice, and technical theater.

- **Continuing or adult education classes** are available at most community colleges and some four-year colleges and universities. These courses or programs often have minimal pre-requisites (e.g. high school diploma or placement tests) and are offered in a variety of fields. Classes and certificate programs require registration and payment of registration fees. Some certificate programs at local community colleges include classes in fields such as marketing, health sciences, food management and technology.

- **Work programs are available for students who earn a special education certificate.** Work, community service programs, job training and college programs can all be options for students who earn a high school certificate. Each job or educational program has its own requirements that may or may not include a diploma. It is important to be aware of your own strengths and needs and to be able to identify how you could be successful at particular job or program.
Although degree-bearing programs at colleges may require a high school diploma, you can still take classes at colleges. You need to be aware of the various types of supports and accommodations that are available at different schools and work environments. For example, Trident Technical College in Charleston County offers certain certificate programs available for students who have not attained a regular high school diploma or GED. Eligibility for admission into these programs is based on a TTC entrance exam. Contact Trident Technical College for more information.

Source: Lumina Foundation for Education & HEATH Resource Center, the George Washington University Graduate School of Education and Human Development.
SAT – Scholastic Assessment Test
The College Board states that the SAT measures literacy and writing skills that are needed for academic success in college. They state that the SAT assesses how well the test takers analyze and solve problems—skills they learned in school that they will need in college. The SAT is typically taken by high school sophomores, juniors and seniors. Specifically, the College Board states that use of the SAT in combination with high school grade point average (GPA) provides a better indicator of success in college than high school grades alone, as measured by college freshman GPA. Various studies conducted over the lifetime of the SAT show a statistically significant increase in correlation of high school grades and freshman grades when the SAT is factored in. The SAT Reasoning Test or (Scholastic Assessment Test) is a standardized test for college admissions in the United States. The SAT is owned, published, and developed by the College Board, a not-for-profit organization in the United States. It was formerly developed, published, and scored by the Educational Testing Service which still administers the exam. The test is intended to assess a student's readiness for college.

The current SAT Reasoning Test, introduced in 2005, takes three hours and forty-five minutes to finish, and costs $49 ($75 International), excluding late fees. Possible scores range from 600 to 2400, combining test results from three 800-point sections (Mathematics, Critical Reading, and Writing).

Historically, the SAT has been more popular among colleges on the coasts and the ACT more popular in the Midwest and South. There are some colleges that require the ACT to be taken for college course placement, and a few schools that formerly did not accept the SAT at all. Nearly all colleges accept the test now.

The SAT is sometimes given to students younger than 13 by organizations such as the Study of Mathematically Precocious Youth, who use the results to select, study and mentor students of exceptional ability.

ACT-American College Testing
The ACT is a standardized test for high school achievement and college admissions in the United States produced by ACT, Inc. It was first administered in November 1959 by Everett Franklin Lindquist as a competitor to the College Board's Scholastic Aptitude Test, now the SAT Reasoning Test. The ACT test has historically consisted of four tests: English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science Reasoning. In February 2005, an optional Writing test was added to the ACT, mirroring changes to the SAT that took place later in March of the same year. All four-year colleges and universities in the U.S. accept the ACT, but different institutions place different emphases on standardized tests such as the ACT, compared to other factors of evaluation such as class rank, G.P.A., and extracurricular activities. The main four tests are scored individually on a scale of 1-36, and a Composite score is provided which is the whole number average of the four scores. In 2005 the company established ACT International. This organization is composed of ACT Education Solutions, Limited, and ACT Business Solutions, B.V. ACT Education Solutions is directed toward helping non-native speakers learn English in preparation for studying at an English-speaking educational
institution. ACT Business Solutions attempts to help employers assess their employees' level of English proficiency through use of the Work Keys assessment.

ACT, Inc. says that the ACT assessment measures high school students' general educational development and their capability to complete college-level work with the multiple choice tests. Specifically, ACT states that its scores provide an indicator of "college readiness", and that scores in each of the subtests correspond to skills in entry-level college courses in English, algebra, social science, humanities, and biology.

To develop the test, ACT incorporates the objectives for instruction for middle and high schools throughout the United States, reviews approved textbooks for subjects taught in Grades 7–12, and surveys educators on which knowledge skills are relevant to success in postsecondary education. ACT publishes a technical manual that summarizes studies conducted of its validity in predicting freshman GPA, equating different high school GPAs, and measuring educational achievement.

**HSAP-High School Assessment Program**
The High School Assessment Program (HSAP) is used to measure a student's academic achievement on South Carolina high school standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Scores will be used to report annual yearly progress in accordance with the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Individual students are required to pass both parts of the HSAP in order to receive a South Carolina high school diploma. Students not achieving a level 3 or 4 on the HSAP will be provided with remedial support and multiple opportunities to retake the test.

The English portion of the HSAP consists of multiple-choice and constructed-response items and an extended-response writing item. Students may use dictionaries only during the extended-response writing portion of the examination.

MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) results can be used as an indicator for how well students will perform on the HSAP. Your child has most likely taken MAP twice a year, in the fall and spring, for several years. Remember, students must achieve a level 3 or 4 on both HSAP exams to pass. We need to recognize that, while important, the HSAP is only one measure of student achievement.
Parenting Postsecondary Students with Disabilities: Becoming the Mentor, Advocate, and Guide for the Young Adult

The importance of involving parents in the education of elementary and secondary school students is widely encouraged. In fact, federal law—the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)—has created a process to involve parents in the education of their children with disabilities. Once youth with disabilities graduate from high school, however, resources and guidance to help parents with this challenging new phase of parenting become difficult to find. Yet, parents continue to be important role models and guides for their young adult sons and daughters. For students with disabilities, parents may be a key part of the support network they need to succeed in the postsecondary environment.

Experts on human development consider late adolescence a very important time of life for all individuals. It is a “launching period” when parents help youth develop the skills they will need as adults. This “launching” process does not end because a student graduates from high school, reaches the legal age of adulthood (“age-of-majority”), or enrolls in a college or other training program. New and important parenting issues continue to arise as young adults grow up.

Parents as Mentors

Although parents of young adults with disabilities no longer have the same authority they once had in the lives of their children, they can provide guidance and support through a mentor or advisor role. Mentors teach, challenge, and support their protégé. A parent's mentoring relationship must be based on an underlying trust and respect for one's child as someone capable of learning how to manage his or her own life.

Whether a student has a disability or not, the greatest challenge for parents of postsecondary students is learning when and how to be supportive while still encouraging self-determination and independence. It may require a giant leap of faith for parents to trust that their sons and daughters have all the resources they need to deal with the unfamiliar challenges of postsecondary education. Nonetheless, postsecondary schools treat students as legal adults. It is important for parents to do all they can to reinforce their faith in their child's ability to manage life at school.

Effective mentoring takes clear communication skills. Parents may find it helpful to learn about and practice these skills so they can use this technique consistently and well. This approach is explored in depth in the book Don’t Tell Me What to Do—Just Send Money: The Essential Parenting Guide to the College Years by Helen E. Johnson and Christine Schelhas-Miller.

Parents as Advocates

No matter how much parents respect and trust their children, it is difficult to let them learn from mistakes when the consequences are serious. Although parents must be careful not to “take over” the problems of their young adult sons and daughters, situations may arise when parents need to take a more active role.
Young adults often unload everyday worries on parents and then go on about their lives. Parents must distinguish between these kinds of situations and more serious circumstances—such as substance abuse, mental or physical illness, other threats to their child’s health or safety, serious financial issues, and, for youth with disabilities, discrimination.

Once parents decide to act, their first involvement should always be directly with their son or daughter — to whom parents can provide resources, information, and emotional support. Parents may also want to contact the post-secondary program to ask for help assessing the situation. If the child is in college, the Disability Services Offices is a good place to start. Other offices may also be appropriate depending on the nature of the concern. These include health services, the Dean of Students, ADA coordinators, and Section 504 coordinators. Many colleges and universities also have a parents' program office.

Parents of students with disabilities who are concerned about their child’s educational program or academic accommodations can draw on their experience as special education advocates. However, they will need to understand the differences between special education laws, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Parents may encounter some resistance to their involvement. Postsecondary professionals are not used to working with parents and may see it as inappropriate or even harmful. In fact, school staff cannot legally share information with parents without a student’s written permission.

Young adults of legal age are responsible for making their own decisions even in serious situations. Unless parents are the legal guardians of their adult child, their role is to support their son or daughter as the young adult solves his or her problems. Parents may only need to help them gather information and understand their options. Ultimately, a student’s maturity, cultural values, and other individual characteristics will determine the kind of involvement and family support that is appropriate and helpful for each student.

**So What’s a Parent to Do?**

The post-secondary years provide students with both new freedoms and new responsibilities. Many students are living away from home for the first time or are new to making personal decisions on their own. Parents are naturally concerned about the safety, health, and social adjustment of their sons and daughters. Disability-related issues can make this an even more challenging time for students and parents. However, there is help available.

Materials for parents of college students, such as the previously mentioned book by Helen E. Johnson and Christine Schelhas-Miller, can be found on the shelves of local bookstores and libraries. Several Web sites have also been created for the parents of college students. Many colleges and universities, for example, provide tips for parents on their Web sites. Unfortunately, these resources do not address the many unique challenges faced by students with disabilities and their families.

Information developed specifically for the parents of high school students with disabilities, on the other hand, does not cover parenting issues during the college years.
These materials generally try to help parents prepare youth for the transition to post-secondary education, find financial aid, and learn about the ADA and Section 504. The benefits of family support may be mentioned, but what this support looks like at the post-secondary level is not described. In fact, an emphasis in recent transition literature on overprotective parenting and learned helplessness has given some parents and educators the mistaken impression that parent involvement is wholly undesirable at the post-secondary level.

Although not widely available, a handful of recent studies confirm the value of the supports parents provide at the post-secondary level and indicate that active parent involvement can foster, rather than hinder, self-determination. Additional studies and research-based guidance on these issues is needed to help parents effectively support their sons and daughters with disabilities in the post-secondary years.

**Resources**

Visit the PACER Center ([www.pacer.org](http://www.pacer.org)) or National Center on Secondary Education and Transition Web sites for more online resources that can help parents of post-secondary youth with disabilities.

National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Education Supports, [http://www.rrtc.hawaii.edu/](http://www.rrtc.hawaii.edu/)

HEATH Resource Center, [http://www.heath.gwu.edu/](http://www.heath.gwu.edu/)


- Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention, [http://www.edc.org/hec/parents/](http://www.edc.org/hec/parents/)

For individualized information, advocacy and referral services contact your nearest Parent and Information Training Center ([http://www.taalliance.org/Centers/PTIs.htm](http://www.taalliance.org/Centers/PTIs.htm)) or your Centers for Independent Living ([http://www.virtualcil.net/cils/](http://www.virtualcil.net/cils/))

*The Parent Brief is produced by the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET) and PACER Center.*
Transition to Post-Secondary Education – Checklist for Parents

(Adapted with permission from Jerri Roach Ostergard, Transition Specialist, Worcester MA Public Schools)

- Help your child understand what choices are available.
- Set postsecondary education & career goals.
- Ensure that your child is enrolled in academic courses throughout high school that will earn a state high school diploma.
- Understand the laws that govern education at the post-secondary level.
- Encourage your child to participate in and/or lead their own IEP Meeting.
- Help your child learn self-advocacy skills while in high school. Discuss with your son/daughter the nature of their disability and how it affects their school work.
- Review college catalogue(s) with your child seeking assistance from school staff (e.g., guidance counselor, transition coordinator) as needed.
- Ensure that documentation of your child’s disability is up-to-date.
- Ask teachers to document what accommodations and technology your child uses now and what may be needed in college (e.g., reader, note taker, scribe, books-on-tape, speech-to-text software, screen reader, tape recorder, PDA, etc.). Create a list of these accommodations and supports.
- Visit college(s) together to obtain good information to make a final choice.
- Prepare your son/daughter to meet with college Disability Services Office (DSO) staff to talk about documentation. Practice how they refer to their disability and how to access specific accommodations and supports. Discuss learning needs and how to access specific accommodations.
- Figure out and set-up transportation prior to the start of school (e.g., driving, carpooling, learning to use public transport, travel vouchers).
- Be aware of financial aid resources available and make sure that funding for all costs is arranged before school starts (e.g., tuition, books, fees, transportation).
- Identify how financial support your child may receive impacts other benefits (e.g., SSI, SSDI).
- Know what services are available through adult human service agencies (e.g., vocational rehabilitation - tuition, books, transportation, employment supports; One-Stop Career Centers - Individual Training Accounts, Development Disability agencies). Representatives from these groups should be at the transition IEP Meeting. Your son/daughter should have the phone numbers for relevant agencies in their cell phone.
- Be prepared for the fact that you, the family member, need written consent from the student to obtain access to their records at the college level.
High School & College for Students with Disabilities

Key Differences

**HIGH SCHOOL**

*Applicable Laws*
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA)
- Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973

*Required Documentation*
- Individual Education Program (IEP), 504 Plan, & Summary of Performance
- School provides evaluations at no cost
- Documentation focuses on determining if student is eligible for services under one or more IDEIA disability category

*Self-Advocacy*
- District/School staff responsible to identify the student as having a disability
- School staff have responsibility for arranging accommodations

*Parental Role*
- Parent has access to student records & can participate in accommodation process
- Parent advocates for student

*Instruction*
- Teachers modify curriculum & alter assignments as outlined by IEP

*Grades & Tests*
- IEP or 504 Plans may include modifications to test format or grading
- Makeup tests are usually available

**COLLEGE**

*Applicable Laws*
- ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title II)
- Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973

*Required Documentation*
- Current documentation of an existing disability is needed; high school IEP or 504 Plan not sufficient.
- Documentation must provide information on specific functional limitations & need for specific services or accommodations

*Self-Advocacy*
- Student must self-identify to Disability Support Services or ADA/504 Coordinator
- Student has responsibility for self-advocacy & arranging accommodations

*Parental Role*
- Parent does not have access to student records & can not represent the student without their written consent
- Students advocate for themselves

*Instruction*
- Professors are not required to modify design or alter assignment deadlines

*Grades & Tests*
- Grading & test format changes (e.g.: multiple choice vs. essay) are generally not available. Accommodation in HOW tests are given (e.g.: extended time) may be available when supported by disability documentation.
- Makeup tests are seldom an option; if they are, students are responsible for requesting them
GED Application & Information

What are GED Tests? The General Educational Development (GED) tests are a group of five multiple choice tests that are designed to measure the general knowledge and thinking skills that it takes to earn a high school diploma.

Why should I take the GED Tests? Most employers and colleges require a diploma or its equivalent for employment, promotion, or admission. If you do not own a credential proving that you completed high school, then you could be missing out on special opportunities.

Who can take the GED Tests? Anyone who is at least 17 years of age, not enrolled in school, and does not already have a high school diploma from an accredited school may take the GED tests.

What if I am still in school? If you are in school, stay there. The GED examination is not supposed to offer the first opportunity to graduate. Talk to your guidance counselor about your options. If you are at least 17 years old and have chosen to quit school, then read inside about age eligibility. Students enrolled in alternative school programs are not eligible to take the GED. Students enrolled in adult education programs, who are at least 17 years of age, may take the GED.

Can I pass the GED Tests? Yes, because the tests measure general knowledge and thinking skills, you may be learning at your job or by reading the newspaper each day. The tests are scored for correct answers only. No one is expected to answer all questions correctly. Approximately 72% of those tested in South Carolina each year earn a passing score. But, if it has been a while since you were in school, then it is a good idea to call the adult education office in your local school district. The people there can give you a GED practice test and help you prepare for the actual examination. If you cannot attend classes, you may qualify for the GED online program offered by your local adult education program. GED lessons are also available on South Carolina Educational Television. Also, ask your employer if there are GED study classes available where you work.

What will I get if I pass the GED Tests? The South Carolina Department of Education issues a South Carolina High School Equivalency Diploma to those who successfully pass all five GED tests with an average score of 450, for a total score of 2250 and a minimum score of 410 on each of the five tests.

Warning: Please be advised that the South Carolina GED® Diploma can be neither earned nor obtained via the Internet or through correspondence programs. The Tests of General Educational Development (GED Tests)—developed by the General Educational Development Testing Service of the American Council on Education (GED Testing Service)—require extensive preparation and the demonstration of a high level of high school knowledge and academic skills. The GED Tests are administered in South Carolina only at Official GED Testing Centers under the direction of the South Carolina Department of Education’s GED Testing Office. Any other high school equivalency
diploma not issued by the South Carolina Department of Education or another jurisdictional GED testing authority may be of dubious value and may not be accepted by employers, colleges/universities, or the military.

You are encouraged to register for the GED test as far in advance as possible. Paper applications or on-line registration will be accepted as long as there are seats available. Registration for the test may be accepted up to five days prior to the test date. To register on-line for the GED test go to www.scged.org.

**Beginning June 21, 2010, Confirmation Letters Are No Longer Mailed to Examinees.**

If you are unable to register on line you may call our office at (803) 734-8347 ext 12 for a paper application and demographic form. To confirm that we have received your registration and payment go to www.scged.org and click on “Check the Test Roster for Your Test Date.” This is NOT a Confirmation, this states that we have received your registration and payment and as long as you have completed the account information and demographic form in GED Wizard, you will be on the test roster.

ALL first time testers in South Carolina must go to https://secure.gedwizard.com (you may access this through www.scged.org) and complete this step in order for us to generate answer sheets.

If you are unable to access the Internet you may call our office TWO days prior to the selected test date to verify that we have received your registration and payment.

**Age Eligibility**

You must be at least 17 years of age and not enrolled in any secondary level school other than adult education. If you are over 18, but still enrolled in high school, you may not take the GED examination.

Until you reach the age of 19, you must have a South Carolina Verification of School Withdrawal form completed by the principal or attendance supervisor of the last school you attended. You may pick up this form at your local high school or adult education office, or at www.scged.org. If you are 19 years of age and attended high school any time during the current school year, you must also have the South Carolina Verification of School Withdrawal form completed.

If you attended school in another state, you may either obtain a letter from the superintendent of the school district in which you live, indicating that you are not enrolled in any schools within the district or obtain a signed letter from the principal of the last school you attended out-of-state, indicating your last date of attendance and date of birth.

If you are enrolled in a home school association, you must also have the South Carolina Verification of School Withdrawal form completed by an official of the home school association. If you are not part of a home school association, you may obtain a letter from the superintendent of the school district in which you reside, indicating that you are not enrolled in any K-12 schools within the school district.

**Residency Requirement**
You are considered a resident of South Carolina if you are living here permanently and present either a current South Carolina driver's license or State identification card issued by the Division of Motor Vehicles. You may take the GED test as a non-resident if you are temporarily living in South Carolina, but you will NOT be eligible for a South Carolina Equivalency Diploma. Examples of non-residency include military personnel identification, legal immigrant documents, or visitors from another state that do not have a valid South Carolina ID or driver’s license.

A non-resident applicant must indicate a permanent address on the GED application. Non-resident examinees are NOT eligible to be awarded a South Carolina High School Equivalency Diploma, but our office will send your GED scores to your home state at your request. Examinees presenting a Federal Identification Number instead of a Social Security Number are NOT eligible for the South Carolina High School Equivalency Diploma.

Non-residents may qualify for a South Carolina High School Equivalency Diploma if they can provide proof that the last school attended, not counting adult education, was in South Carolina.

**Testing Fees**

Testing fees must be paid at the time the GED application is submitted. Testing fees may be paid by money order, bank cashier's check, state agency check, business check, or cash only. If you register on-line at www.scged.org, you may pay by credit card. Make your money order payable to S. C. Department of Education. If you are taking Tests 1 & 2 for the first time, you must submit the full fee with the first application. Testing fees are not refundable.

**South Carolina Residents:**

- **South Carolina Residents:**
  - $80.00 for full 5-test examination.
  - $16.00 for each separate retest.

- **Out-Of-State Residents:**
  - $160.00 for full 5-test examination.
  - $32.00 for each separate retest.

**South Carolina Residents:** It will be the responsibility of examinees that are absent to submit a new application and fee. If you were absent for the first time, you will have six months to submit one-half of the original amount. If it has been longer than six months since you were absent, you will have to submit the entire fee. If you have been absent twice, you must submit a new application with the entire fee. This policy reflects the fact that certain costs are incurred regardless of whether or not you actually take the GED examination.

If you register and take the tests in two parts (Part 1 and Part 2) you must complete both parts within one year of the date you started testing. Absentee fee for either part 1 or 2 is $40.00. If you took Part 1 over a year ago, you must pay the individual test fee for each
remaining test needed to complete the test battery. You will not be able to repeat any test until you have completed taking all five parts of the GED battery.

**Security and Identification**

In order to be admitted to the GED examination site, you must show proof of your identification. THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF IDENTIFICATION FOR SOUTH CAROLINA RESIDENTS ARE A CURRENT, NON-EXPIRED, VALID SOUTH CAROLINA DRIVER'S LICENSE OR A STATE ISSUED IDENTIFICATION CARD.

If you fail to show a valid ID, you will be considered absent, and you will have to register for another test and submit one half of the original amount.

Please bring your social security card or a document with your social security number on it.

If you are a non-resident, you must present a current, non-expired, valid out-of-state driver's license, military ID card, legal immigration card, or passport. School ID's, work ID's, and other forms of identification are NOT ACCEPTABLE. Any other form of ID must be approved in advance by the GED Administrator.

If an examinee who has registered as a South Carolina resident does not present an acceptable South Carolina identification card, but does have an acceptable non-resident identification, he or she may take the GED examination. The examinee will have 30 days to pay the additional testing fee. No GED scores will be mailed until the proper GED testing fee is submitted. If you do not have one of the acceptable forms of identification, you will not be admitted to the testing room. Broken, badly damaged, and/or faded identification cards may be rejected. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE BY THE EXAMINERS. You should address all questions regarding identification to the GED Office before the exam date.

On the morning of the examination, the examiners will check your identification, obtain your signature, and obtain a fingerprint. Anyone caught violating test security will be subject to investigation, indictment, prosecution, and invalidation of the tests.

These steps are necessary to comply with the State laws and South Carolina Board of Education regulations which state: "Any individual(s) who knowingly engage(s) in any activities during [GED] testing which result in invalidation of scores," or allows the "presentation of forged, counterfeit, or altered identification for the purpose of obtaining admission to any test administration...shall forfeit all opportunities to retake the test(s)."

**Learning and Physical Disabilities & Other Special Circumstances**

Although everyone must take the same level of GED tests, there are some changes which are allowed in the way the tests are given. If you feel that you need modifications to the tests and/or schedules, please call the GED Testing Office before mailing the application. Please call our office for information regarding special test situations.
Learning Disability - If you have a diagnosed learning disability, please call the GED Testing Office to determine what test modifications can be made for you. Documentation of the disability is required.

Physical Disability - If you have a physical disability, please call the GED Testing Office to determine what arrangements can be made to accommodate you. Documentation of the disability is required.

Large Print Testing - If you have minor visual difficulties and need a large print GED test booklet, please attach a note to your application indicating that you would like a large print test.

How to apply
If you took the GED exam between January 1, 2002 and December 30, 2009, you may apply for the GED exam on line at www.scged.org. If you have previously taken the exam call the GED Testing Office for your user name and password to reschedule your next exam on line.

If you are taking the GED examination for the FIRST time, you may apply to take all five tests at once, or you may take Tests 1 (Mathematics) and 2 (Language Arts Writing) the first day, and Tests 3 (Science), 4 (Social Studies), and 5 (Language Arts Reading) later. No partial scores will be mailed. However, you must reapply on a new application (if you are mailing in an application) for tests 3 (Science), 4 (Social Studies), & 5 (Language Arts Reading) within one year (YOU CAN NOT USE THE SAME APPLICATION TO APPLY FOR BOTH DATES). The full testing fees are required with the first application. Please mark in the appropriate area on the application how you would like to be tested. YOU MUST CHOOSE TEST DATES FROM THE PRINTED SCHEDULE.

Restesting
If you do not pass the examination, you may take the tests over as many times as you need. Your transcript will indicate the highest test score from each of the five tests.

There are some restrictions when applying to be retested:

In most cases, if your total standard score is under 2150, you must take the entire five-part examination again. If you score a zero in Language Arts Writing, you may not have to take the entire examination. This will be determined by the GED Testing Office.

If your total standard score is 2150 or above, you may take any individual tests that you choose. You must, however, repeat any tests on which you received a score that is less than 410.

Those who have taken the test in another state and wish to retest in South Carolina MUST request an official transcript of previous test scores from the state in which the tests were taken. These scores must be sent directly to the GED Testing Office from an official GED test center before you submit your application. Scores sent from the examinee will not be accepted. These scores MUST be received in the GED Testing Office prior to scheduling the GED test in South Carolina.

You may not take more than three different test forms (per subject) of the GED test from January-December of each calendar year.
Testing Times
Full Tests begin at 8:00 a.m. and last until about 5:00 p.m. If you are taking a partial exam, you will be admitted at various times. Math test will begin testing at 8:00 am. Writing test will begin testing at 10:00 am, Social Studies begins at 1:00 pm, Science test begins at 2:20 pm, and Reading tests begin at 3:40 pm. Please arrive 15 minutes prior to your scheduled testing time. Examinees arriving late will NOT be admitted. The lead examiner will determine admittance to the test area.

If you arrive late and you are not admitted to the test, but you have other tests to complete, you may come back at your next scheduled test time. To register for your missed exam, please go to www.scged and register as a retester and select the test you missed. You may pay on-line or “print and mail” your receipt with your fee to the GED Testing Office. Each test will be $16.00.

South Carolina Passing Requirements

SOUTH CAROLINA HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMAS AND TRANSCRIPTS WILL BE MAILED ONLY TO THOSE WHO PASSED THE ENTIRE BATTERY OF FIVE TESTS. YOU MAY CHECK YOUR SCORES ON-LINE THROUGH GED WIZARD USING YOUR USER NAME AND PASSWORD. In order to pass the tests, you must (1) make a total standard score of 2250 or more (an average of 450 on all five tests, the total standard score divided by 5), and (2) make no individual standard score below 410.

You will be awarded a South Carolina High School Equivalency Diploma only if you are a permanent resident of South Carolina or a former resident whose most recent elementary or secondary school attendance was in South Carolina (see Residency Requirements).

If you are a resident of a state other than South Carolina, or if you are a foreign national, we will be happy to send your scores to another state, upon request. Your home state will require an official copy of your transcript and require you to complete an application form for a credential. North Carolina requires all residents to attend their adult education courses in order to receive a North Carolina credential. Please contact the North Carolina GED Testing Office for further information.

Score Reports

You may check your scores on-line through GED WIZARD approximately one week after testing. You may print an unofficial score report from the GED WIZARD. If an official transcript is required, please contact the SC GED Testing Office at 1429 Senate Street, Suite 402, Columbia, SC 29201. Or you may contact us at (803) 734-8347. You may also go to www.scged.org and request a transcript or a duplicate diploma on-line.

Test Day Regulations

GED testing regulations now prohibit purses, tote bags, book bags, and similar items from being brought into the testing room. Please leave these items in your vehicle or at home. Remember to bring your ID. Math starts at 8:00 am Writing starts at 10:00 am Social Studies starts at 1:00 pm Science start at 2:20 pm Reading Starts at 3:40 pm
PLEASE ARRIVE 15 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR TEST TIME.

**Description of the 5 GED Tests**

There are five multiple choice tests on the examination. Of them, the Writing Skills and Mathematics tests have two parts. THE TESTS ARE SCORED FOR CORRECT ANSWERS ONLY. NO ONE IS EXPECTED TO ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS CORRECTLY. The five tests are:

1. **Mathematics – Both halves equally weighted**
   - Part I - (25 QUESTIONS, 45 MINUTES) WITH CALCULATOR
   - Part II – (25 QUESTIONS, 45 MINUTES) NO CALCULATOR
   Number Operations and Number Sense, Measurement and Geometry, Data Analysis, Statistics and Probability, Algebra Functions, and Patterns

2. **Language Arts: Writing**
   - Part I - (50 questions, 75 minutes) Sentence Structure, Usage, Mechanics, Organization, Literary Texts, Non-Fiction Texts
   - Part II - (ESSAY) (45 minutes) 1 – 4 Point Scoring Guide

3. **Social Studies**
   - (50 questions, 70 minutes)
   History, Civics and Government, Economics, Geography

4. **Science**
   - (50 Questions, 80 Minutes)
   **Life Science, Earth and Space Science, Physical Science**

5. **Language Arts – Reading**
   - (40 questions, 65 minutes)
   Literary Texts, Non-Fiction Texts

Full tests begin at 8:00 AM and last until about 5:00 PM. If you are taking a partial exam, you must follow the times listed above, but you may leave after completing the test(s). Each of the five GED tests is timed separately. Once you begin a test, you may not leave until you have completed the test. You may not return to the testing room until the next test begins.

**GED TESTING OFFICE**
**SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**
**1429 SENATE STREET, MAIL ROOM BOX GED**
**COLUMBIA, SC  29201**

Toll free statewide at 800-277-7323 or in the Columbia area 803-734-8347 - www.scged.org

For test contact information please refer to Resources by county.
Adult Education and Special Education

General Questions and Answers

May students with disabilities who qualify for special education services receive these services in an adult education program?

According to 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. § 43-259 (Supp. 2002) and the federal adult education provisions in the Workforce Investment Act, membership in adult education programs is limited to individuals who are eighteen years of age or over and have left the elementary or secondary school, except when the local school board assigns students of less than eighteen years of age who are not officially in membership in a regular school. Therefore, a student with a disability cannot retain enrollment in his or her regular school and enroll in an adult education program at the same time. The student must either receive special education and related services exclusively through his or her regular school or withdraw from enrollment in the regular school and enroll in the adult education program.

What should an adult education program do if a student who was previously identified as having a disability enrolls in the adult education program?

The adult education program should always contact the programs for students with disabilities if a student who was previously identified as having a disability enrolls in the adult education program. The school district is still responsible for providing a free and appropriate program for students with disabilities enrolled in any program in the district.

What should be done if a student enrolled in an adult education program has not been previously identified as a student with a disability, but is suspected of having a disability that may require special education and related services?

A student, under the age of twenty-two, who was not previously identified as a student with a disability and is suspected as having a disability and needing special education and related services must receive a complete evaluation by the school district. The evaluation must be used to assist in determining if the student has a disability in one of the thirteen categories under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and if the student needs special education and related services in order to receive a free and appropriate public education. Under the Child Find requirements in § 300.125 of the IDEA regulations, all students, ages three through twenty-one, who are suspected of needing special education and related services must be located, identified, and evaluated at no cost to the parent or student. Students who have graduated with a regular state high school diploma or who are over the age of twenty-one and have aged out of the special education program are not eligible for any services under the IDEA.

When a student enrolled in the adult education program is suspected of having a disability and needing special education, the adult education program should contact the district’s programs for students with disabilities.

Adult education programs and programs for students with disabilities should work collaboratively to ensure that these students receive the appropriate special education and related services where they are enrolled. Both programs are a part of the school district, and the school district is responsible for ensuring that all students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education under the IDEA, regardless of where the student is enrolled. Therefore, just as students with disabilities cannot be compelled to enroll in adult
education programs in order to receive services, students cannot be required to withdraw from adult education programs on the basis of a disability.

**Are the requirements for an adult education program the same as for a regular school program for a student with a disability?**

When a student enrolled in an adult education program meets the eligibility criteria for a program of special education, the services provided through the adult education program must meet all of the IDEA requirements, including the requirements for teacher certification, procedural safeguards, and individualized education programs (IEPs). The student must receive special education services on the same basis as any student with a disability who is regularly enrolled in a school district. This applies to students under the age of twenty-two who were previously identified as having disabilities before enrolling in an adult education program and those who were identified after enrolling in an adult education program.

**What funds are available for students with disabilities enrolled in the adult education program?**

Because adult education programs are considered a part of the school district, under the reporting guidelines for special education funding, the school district can continue to count the student for funding under the IDEA. The student may also be counted for funding purposes under the adult education program. The student cannot, however, be counted for funding purposes under the Education Finance Act. If the student is reevaluated and the IEP team determines that the student no longer qualifies for special education and related services, the student can be dismissed from the special education program. No special education funding will be available for a student who is dismissed from the special education program.

**How are appropriate services determined for a student with a disability?**

The student’s IEP team is responsible for determining the appropriate special education and related services that must be provided by the school district. An adult education representative must always be a part of the IEP team when decisions are made regarding how special education services will be provided in an adult education program.

**May a student with a disability be removed for disciplinary purposes from an adult education program?**

If the student still meets the eligibility requirements for special education and has not “aged out” of the program, he or she still retains all rights as a special education student under the IDEA and the SBE regulations. The adult education program is a part of the school district; therefore, the student’s rights follow him or her into the adult education program.

**Is it permissible for all IEPs to be changed to Section 504 plans prior to students being permitted to enroll in an adult education program?**

No. All decisions must be made on an individualized basis by the IEP team. It is never permissible for decisions to be made on a group basis. Unless the student has been reevaluated and determined to no longer qualify as a student with a disability in need of special education and related services, this student must continue to have an IEP. If a
student has been reevaluated and determined to no longer need special education and related services, a Section 504 plan may be appropriate.

May a student with a disability be required to remain in the regular high school program in order to receive special educational services?
   No. Students with disabilities cannot be required to remain in the regular high school program in order to receive special educational services, nor can they be compelled to enroll in an adult education program in order to receive special education services.

May a student be dismissed from an adult education program if a disability is diagnosed after enrolling in the program?
   No. Students with disabilities cannot be compelled to withdraw from an adult education program on the basis of a disability. When a student enrolled in an adult education program meets the eligibility criteria for a program of special education, the services provided in the adult education program must meet all of the state and federal requirements, including those related to teacher certification, procedural safeguards, and IEPs.

Is a GED the equivalent of a regular high school diploma in terms of determining whether a student with a disability can return to school?
   No. The SDE’s Office of General Counsel has determined that a GED, although considered to be an equivalency diploma, does not end the responsibility of the school district to provide a student with a disability with a FAPE. If a student with a disability has received a regular state high school diploma, a school district would not be required to permit him or her to attend school.

What role does the adult education representative play in the IEP process?
   The adult education representative is an equal member of the IEP team and must be knowledgeable of all of the programs available within the adult education program. He or she should be prepared to participate in the determination of whether an individual student could appropriately participate in the adult education program.

What information and/or materials need to be prepared or discussed in the IEP meeting by the adult education representative? Should the previous IEP used by the student while in the high school setting is provided to the adult education representative prior to the IEP meeting?
   It may be helpful for the school district to have a planning meeting prior to the actual IEP meeting to assist all participants, including the adult education representative, in learning more about the needs of the student who may be placed in the adult education program. On a case-by-case basis, it should be determined if the previous IEP should be provided to all of the participants. This does not need to be an “across-the-board” policy.

What should be done if students are directed to the adult education program after rejecting services from school district special education programs?
   Students should be advised that they are still entitled to services in the school district special education program through age twenty-one to receive services. An IEP team
should be convened to determine the appropriate services for each student on an individual basis.

**Is it permissible for the adult education program to charge a registration fee for adult education classes?**

It is not permissible to charge a fee if the student of legal school age is placed in an adult education program by an IEP team. If a student is seeking enrollment on his or her own after having been properly dismissed from special education through being reevaluated or aging out or graduating with a high school diploma (and therefore no longer eligible for special education services from the high school), even if the student now has a Section 504 plan, then a fee may be charged if everyone is charged the same fee.

**May an adult education director refuse to admit students with disabilities?**

No. This would constitute discrimination on the basis of a disability and as such would not be permitted by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. An individual determination of whether the adult education program is appropriate for a specific student with a disability must be made by the IEP team.

**Must the previous IEP for a student with a disability be rewritten before being used in the adult education program?**

The IEP team must meet to review the IEP and determine any revisions that may need to be made.

**May a former special education student be removed from the adult education program for behavioral issues?**

It may be possible if the student was properly dismissed from a special education program. If the student dropped out of school without being properly dismissed from a special education program, however, the discipline procedures described in the IDEA regulations will apply. If the student was properly dismissed from the special education program, then the student would be subject to the same disciplinary procedures as any other student. If, however, it is suspected that the student may now qualify again as a student with a disability in need of special education and related services, then the disciplinary procedures described in the IDEA regulations could apply. Refer to Section 300.527 of the IDEA regulations and the district’s director of special education with respect to protections for children not yet eligible for special education and related services.

**Who is responsible for writing the IEP, defining and measuring annual goals, short-term objectives, and support services? How is the potential cost of these services determined and paid?**

The IEP team is responsible for the development of the IEP and for ensuring that appropriate services are provided to the student. It is a district decision with respect to how resources are allocated to pay for the services.

**What type expectations or demands can an adult education program place on a student with a disability who has an IEP? What about a student who has a Section 504 plan and who is age twenty-two or older?**
For a student of legal school age, an individualized determination must be made by the IEP team regarding the goals and objectives and services in the IEP. For a student who is above the legal school age and who has a Section 504 plan, the Section 504 team must determine what is needed in order for the student to have access to the adult education program.

Is it possible for a student who is enrolled in adult education to refuse special education services?

The IEP team should ensure that the student has all of the information he or she needs to understand the necessity for special education services. The IEP team must make all decisions with respect to a student who has been determined to be a student with a disability through the age of twenty-one who needs special education and related services. The student must be invited to participate as an equal member of the IEP team. A school district may not permit a student who continues to qualify for special education services to sign him or her out of the special education program unless he or she can be properly dismissed from special education. The three ways a student can be properly dismissed are through being reevaluated or aging out or graduating with a high school diploma (and therefore no longer eligible for special education services from the high school). An IEP team, using reevaluation procedures, may determine that a student could be properly dismissed from special education. They could determine that a Section 504 plan would be appropriate since the student will be in an environment with more individualized attention.
Understanding Educational Accommodations for People with Disabilities

One easy way to think about reasonable accommodations is to think of them in three basic categories:

1. Changes to facilities and equipment (such as putting in ramps and parking spaces, making materials available in large print, or providing low- and high-tech assistive technology);
2. The provision of special services (such as sign language interpreters or qualified readers); and
3. Creative thinking and problem solving!

There are many types of accommodations, including but not limited to the following:

- Educational accommodations;
- Workplace accommodations; and
- Community accessibility that serves to accommodate.

The following are a few common examples of these various types of accommodations available to people with disabilities are listed below:

**Educational Accommodations**

- Accessible classrooms.
- Modified instruction (for example, use of small groups).
- Modified curricula (for example, different learning outcomes or different materials from those for other students).
- Modified class schedules (for example, block schedules).
- Providing supervised breaks or allowing extra response and processing time during testing sessions, and administering the test at best time for the individual.
- Providing special seating in a general education classroom (for example, seating in the front of the room or in a study carrel) or a small group setting.
- Providing large print materials, Braille materials, calculators, computers with spelling and grammar checkers, and electronic dictionaries.
- Providing written copies of orally presented materials found in examiner’s manual, closed-caption of video materials, or sign language interpreters.
- Allowing individuals to answer by pointing rather than marking in a test booklet, by dictating responses to examiners for verbatim transcription, or by responding to an interpreter for transcription.
Employment

The transition from youth to adulthood is challenging for almost every young person. This is particularly true for young people with disabilities. Yet, it is in those critical transition-age years that a young person’s future can be determined. Part of a successful future includes finding and keeping work.

Career preparation and work-based learning experiences are essential in order for youth to form and develop aspirations and to make informed choices about careers (National Collaborative on Workforce & Disability for Youth). Greater demand for a skilled workforce has increased awareness that many employable people, who in the past were not considered as potential sources of skilled labor, are ready and able to work. This includes people who experience a full range of disabilities. People with disabilities represent the single largest minority group seeking employment in today’s market. Both large and small companies have benefited by recruiting people with disabilities for years. Many leading companies attribute much of their success to employing a diverse workforce that includes people with disabilities.

There are compelling reasons to hire people with disabilities.

- People with disabilities possess valuable problem-solving skills because they are experts in finding creative ways to perform tasks others may take for granted.
- Employees with disabilities have proved to be dependable, dedicated, hardworking and productive employees.
- Many businesses report that the experience of working with people with disabilities increases every employee’s morale and productivity.
- Employees with disabilities reflect the customer base and can help craft effective marketing strategies to reach this lucrative market for companies that hire them.

We hope this section of the Transition Toolkit will help you identify specific skills that will be needed to make informed decisions regarding future employment. Use this content to develop measurable goals for the Individual Education Program that will help the student obtain – and maintain – competitive employment (when possible).

Users of this Toolkit should remember that the material in all sections should be considered as transition goals are being determined for the student’s Individual Education Program (IEP).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Number of Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why Planning is So Important</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Guidance &amp; Exploration: Frequently Asked Questions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Options &amp; Supports</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americans with Disabilities Act</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Guide for People with Disabilities Seeking Employment</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas for Writing an Accommodations Request Letter</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Workplace Accommodations for People with Disabilities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career and Employment Skills List</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping Youth Develop Soft Skills for Job Success</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Pre-Employment Process</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Disclosure</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Military Enlistment Standards (with AmeriCorps)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina Child Labor &amp; Wages Regulations Summary</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department (SCVRD)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Security Disability Programs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Youth with Disabilities and Employment
Why Planning is So Important

Unable to Find or Keep Jobs
- Youth with disabilities often find it difficult to find competitive employment or keep the jobs they have.

Jobs That Don’t Meet Strengths or Interests
- Often, youth with disabilities are “placed” into jobs or work experiences that don’t match their strengths and interests. This placement may be done through a school work experience program or through an employment services provider. Many times the result of this poor job match is a disappointing employment experience or the loss of the job all together.
- We all seek to work in jobs that match what we like to do.
- Families should be encouraged to identify what their youth is interested in and help their youth find careers that meets those interests. Sometimes, specific disabilities might bring difficulties with certain types of jobs. For example, a person with autism might not enjoy working a cash register because the unpredictable nature of the interpersonal interactions.
- Families can advocate for appropriate job settings based on their knowledge of their youth.

Waiting for Services
- Once a young person leaves high school, they may qualify for adult employment services such as supported employment of Vocational Rehabilitation. When those services work perfectly, a young person is placed into a job and given some supports to be successful. Unfortunately, there are often long periods of time when a young person may be waiting for the service to find them a job.
- Families need to know that they can work with the service provider to cultivate job opportunities.
- Youth also need to be encouraged to continue filling out applications and exploring job fields even though they are a customer of an employment service “They haven’t found me a job yet” is no excuse for a young person to be inactive.

Disclosed Disability
- Most disability employment programs are predicated on the customer openly disclosing that they have disability.
- If youth are not knowledgeable about their disability or deny even having a disability, then these programs will have a tougher time being successful.
- It is necessary for youth to disclose their disability to an employ if they are seeking job accommodations.
- Families are encouraged to work with their youth so they can openly talk about their disability.
- It may not always be necessary to disclose a disability, but knowing how to talk about a disability is a good skill to have.
Career Guidance & Exploration: Frequently Asked Questions

Why is career guidance important?
Students with disabilities face many obstacles as they transition from school to work. The process of deciding future career options can be challenging and involves careful considerations. Although there are many careers to choose from, individuals with disabilities have traditionally been limited in their career options, especially if they are unprepared for the requirements of the workplace, underestimate their capabilities, or are unaware of the range of workplace accommodations that can broaden their career options. Career guidance provides access to the skills and resources students need to overcome these obstacles and prepares them to make choices relevant to their personal strengths and interests.

Does career guidance make a difference?
Studies evaluating the relationship between guidance programs and student achievement report a positive impact (Whiston & Sexton, 1998; Borders & Drury, 1992). One study concluded that a major attribute of highly successful adults with learning disabilities is a “strong sense of control over career-related events and a conscious decision to take charge of their life” (Hitchings et al., 2000, p. 8). In order for students with disabilities to have a strong sense of control over career-related events, they need current and comprehensive career information and skills.

What information should career guidance provide?
Career guidance should provide students with an understanding of their own strengths and interests (e.g., through valid assessment), an awareness of the varieties of vocational opportunities that exist, and the opportunity to explore desired vocations (e.g., through job shadowing or internships). Students with disabilities need to know how to identify careers that play on their strengths, the specific ways their disability impacts their work, and the supports necessary for success in the workplace. In addition, some career guidance curricula also help students to develop a portfolio showcasing their skills and explore the benefits of accommodations to the workplace.

What skills should students with disabilities develop?
Self-determination skills are important skills for students to develop as they prepare to shoulder more responsibility for managing necessary supports and making adult life decisions. Self-determination skills include self-advocacy, decision-making, and self-awareness (see NCSET Web Topics Self-determination for Middle and High School Students and Self-determination for Postsecondary Students). Career guidance strategies and approaches should aim at developing these skills, along with other adult life skills such as managing finances and social skills. As with all students, career guidance programs should teach students job-search, goal-setting, résumé writing, and interviewing skills. Additionally, students with disabilities should develop a clear understanding of helpful accommodations and the specific ways in which their disability affects their desired work goals (i.e., both positively and negatively). Doing actual job searches and practicing interviews in class are recommended.
What is the relationship between postsecondary education and employment?

Career guidance should provide students with information about the postsecondary requirements of their chosen career options. Since this type of career preparation tends to be a long process, students will also need to break it down into steps and consider how to prepare for each step while still in secondary school. Students should ask the following questions:

- What are the requirements to enter these programs and schools?
- What kinds of postsecondary programs lead to the best career outcomes?
- What secondary curriculum changes need to be made to meet these requirements and prepare for the program (e.g., some programs require a specific number of years of foreign language or a certain level of mathematical knowledge)?
- Which schools have the best resources for specific career preparation?
- Which schools have the capacity to provide for a student’s specific support needs?
- What other programs might supplement postsecondary education in preparation for a chosen career (e.g., internships or work-study programs)?

How can the IEP team help with career guidance?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that Individual Education Programs (IEP) include consideration of students’ transition service needs beginning at age 14 (or earlier if determined appropriate). Assessment conducted for transition purposes can generate valuable information for career preparation (student strengths, interests, challenges, and support needs). Transition goals in the IEP can include workplace experiences that allow students to learn about employment settings and vocational opportunities. IEPs should also include specific plans for developing or strengthening self-determination skills. Students need to participate in the planning process as much as possible. Community professionals, such as vocational rehabilitation counselors, postsecondary education representatives, and others, should be actively involved in transition planning. Interagency collaboration can make students’ transition experiences more successful and less frustrating.

What other agencies can help to provide career guidance success?

- **Vocational rehabilitation (VR).** There are VR offices in every state as well as U.S. territories. The mission of VR is to enable South Carolinians with disabilities to prepare for, achieve and maintain competitive employment. VR offers services such as assessment, counseling and guidance, job search and placement, vocational training, transportation, on-the-job assistance, technical assistance, and rehabilitation technology. VR can begin working with individuals with disabilities as young as age 15, although state policies vary. Wherever possible, VR counselors should be involved in students’ transition planning. VR centers should be listed in the telephone directory under state departments.

- **One-Stop centers.** The Department of Labor has a network of One-Stop centers, established by the Workforce Investment Act, in each state and some U.S. territories. These centers usually house employment-related services in one place. Services include applying for unemployment, information on training for employment, use of computers for job searching, and more. Often the centers provide aptitude tests and job recruitment at local and national levels as well as free publications. As with VR
centers, One-Stop centers are listed in the telephone directory under state departments (sometimes under the keywords Workforce Development).

- **Postsecondary education programs.** Many postsecondary institutions have career-guidance counseling as well as outreach programs for high school students. In addition, most have disability service offices and orientation programs for students with disabilities. Contact the postsecondary institutions you are considering to find out what types of programs they offer and what information and services they provide to aid in career guidance. For example, the University of Washington has the DO-IT Program, which provides technological training for students with disabilities. For more information on this program, see the NCSET topic on Preparing for Postsecondary Education.

- **Special education.** All state departments of education have special education programs, which provide the services of career guidance counselors to prepare students for career success.

**How can parents participate in providing career guidance to their child?**
Parents have daily contact with their child and are experts in the area of what makes their child unique. Their guidance and encouragement can make a significant difference in their child's career success. Parents of students with disabilities should:

- Pay close attention to their child's skills and interests;
- Provide opportunities for their child to make choices and practice self-determination skills;
- Provide opportunities for their child to experience work settings;
- Provide disability-specific and career-specific information;
- Make use of community connections and resources;
- Encourage their child to dream and to plan;
- Participate in services, trainings, and workshops on career guidance that improve their ability to support their child in this process; and
- Accept assistance rendered by peers, friends, community, agencies, and professionals in career guidance.

**References**
The following sources were cited in this Frequently Asked Questions. For additional research and resources, see our links to other pages on this topic below.


Employment Options & Supports

Different types of employment may allow different levels of on-the-job support. Some types of employment are:

- **Full or part-time competitive paid employment:** These are jobs in the community that may be found using want ads, family, friends, or other sources. A job coach may be available to support you in maintaining this type of employment. These jobs pay at least the minimum wage and may offer benefits such as health insurance, sick leave, and vacation time.

- **Supported employment:** A vocational rehabilitation counselor or other agency representative (i.e.: Disability Board job coach) will locate this job. It will be real work in a supported workplace, with some pay and can continues as long as needed.

- **Volunteer work:** This is work that is done without pay. Volunteer work experience can add to a resume with job skills that can help get a paying job later.

**Supported Employment is for persons:**

- with the most severe disabilities,
- who need intensive or ongoing job support,
- who have traditionally been excluded from competitive work settings, or
- whose work has been interrupted or intermittent because of their disabilities.

Supported employment is based on the principle that individuals with severe disabilities have the right to be employed by community businesses where they can earn comparable wages, work side-by-side with co-workers with or without disabilities, and experience all of the same benefits as other employees of the company. Supported employment assists individuals with severe disabilities by providing individualized supports that enable them to choose the kind of job they want and to become successful members of the workforce.

**Volunteer Experiences**

The value of involving students with and without disabilities in volunteer and community service activities has received increasing attention in recent years. Participation in volunteer activities has been linked to increased engagement in democratic processes, lowered likelihood of dropping out, improved transition from school to work, and improved educational attitudes and performance.

Typically, youth with disabilities have been seen as the recipients of philanthropic services rather than as providers of such services themselves. However, voluntary service, community service, and service learning offer many possibilities for youth with disabilities. They can contribute to their communities and experience the resulting benefits -- opportunities to learn, work experience, a sense of belonging, and respect. Such service also promotes full participation of people with disabilities in society.

Students get a chance to apply academic skills to a work or volunteer setting and develop relevant soft skills such as teamwork and time management. Getting involved in meaningful activities outside the classroom helps students feel more committed to their education, making them more likely to stay in school. In addition to exploring potential careers, students develop networks that can help them find employment. Students with disabilities
have an opportunity to assess the impact of their disability in employment or volunteer settings and consider issues such as disclosure of a disability and job accommodations.

**What is “support” in the workplace?**

Success in the workplace for young people often depends on the availability and effectiveness of accommodations and supports. These accommodations and supports ensure that youth have full access to the workplace, and are successful in performing the necessary job tasks.

**Natural Supports**

Natural supports in the workplace can be any assistance, relationships, or interactions that allow a person to work in a job of his or her choice in ways similar to other employees. Use of natural workplace supports allows consumers to direct their own careers and choose the type and amount of assistance they want to receive.

Natural supports are based on ordinary social relationships at work and in the community. They may occur spontaneously, although school or human service agency staff often facilitates natural support relationships. Examples of natural supports include co-workers who provide job training for the supported employee or mentoring relationships between the supported employee and others. An individual's family and friends or volunteers from the community can provide natural supports. Individuals providing natural supports may do so with or without compensation.

Although a natural supports approach makes the most of normal social relationships, job coaches or employment specialists may continue to play an ongoing role for many supported employees. They can play a variety of roles acting as consultants, trainers -- to either the supported employee or to individuals providing natural supports, advocates, evaluators, problem solvers, and job accommodations specialists.

**Accommodations & Supports**

There have been significant advances in the identification and application of accommodations and supports that enable people with all manner of disability to successfully perform in the workplace. These advances include an array of technologies and methodologies, including, but not limited to:

- assistive devices
- alternative and augmentative communication strategies
- architectural modifications
- telecommuting
- re-structured job assignments
- mentors and coaches
- flex time and other scheduling accommodations, and
- employee assistance and other employer human resource management programs

These advances, along with legal protections from discrimination available through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the federal civil rights law designed to protect individuals with disabilities from discrimination, have created an environment in which job seekers with disabilities can better promote their job qualifications and advocate for necessary accommodations.
Americans with Disabilities Act

A Guide for People with Disabilities Seeking Employment

If you are seeking a job or are new to the workforce, you should become familiar with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a federal civil rights law designed to protect individuals with disabilities from discrimination in the workplace, school and other settings enabling their full participation in all aspects of society. One fundamental principle of the ADA is that individuals with disabilities who want to work and are qualified to work must have an equal opportunity to work.

How do I know if I am protected by the ADA?
To be protected, you must be a qualified individual with a disability. This means that you must have a disability as defined by the ADA. Under the ADA, you have a disability if you have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity such as hearing, seeing, speaking, thinking, walking, breathing, or performing manual tasks. You also must be able to do the job you want or were hired to do, with or without reasonable accommodation.

What are my rights under the ADA?
The ADA protects you from discrimination in all employment practices, including: job application procedures, hiring, firing, training, pay, promotion, benefits, and leave. You also have a right to be free from harassment because of your disability, and an employer may not fire or discipline you for asserting your rights under the ADA. Most importantly, you have a right to request a reasonable accommodation for the hiring process and on the job.

What is a "reasonable accommodation"?
A reasonable accommodation is any change or adjustment to a job, the work environment, or the way things usually are done that would allow you to apply for a job, perform job functions, or enjoy equal access to benefits available to other individuals in the workplace. There are many types of things that may help people with disabilities work successfully. Some of the most common types of accommodations include:

- physical changes, such as installing a ramp or modifying a workspace or restroom;
- sign language interpreters for people who are deaf or readers for people who are blind;
- a quieter workspace or making other changes to reduce noisy distractions for someone with a mental disability;
- training and other written materials in an accessible format, such as in Braille, on audio tape, or on computer disk;
- TTYs for use with telephones by people who are deaf, and hardware and software that make computers accessible to people with vision impairments or who have difficulty using their hands; and
- time off for someone who needs treatment for a disability.

What should I do if I think I might need a reasonable accommodation?
If you think you might need an accommodation for the application process or on the job, you have to request one. You may request a reasonable accommodation at any time during the application process or any time before or after you start working.
How do I request a reasonable accommodation?
You simply must let your employer know that you need an adjustment or change because of your disability. You do not need to complete any special forms or use technical language to do this. For example, if you use a wheelchair and it does not fit under your desk at work, you should tell your supervisor. This is a request for a reasonable accommodation. A doctor’s note requesting time off due to a disability or stating that you can work with certain restrictions is also a request for a reasonable accommodation. However, it may be a good idea to put your request in writing, such as a letter, to assure documentation of your request. A sample of such a letter is included in this section of the Transition Toolkit.

What happens after I make a request for a reasonable accommodation?
Once you have made a request for a reasonable accommodation, the employer should discuss available options with you. If you have a disability that is not obvious, the employer may request documentation from you demonstrating that you have a disability and explaining why you need a reasonable accommodation. You and the employer should work together to determine an appropriate accommodation.

What should I do if I think my ADA rights have been violated?
You should contact the nearest office of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Someone will help you determine whether you should file a charge of discrimination. Charges may be filed with the EEOC in person, by mail, or by telephone.

The ADA - Know Your Accommodations
A growing body of research highlights how important it is for students with disabilities to develop self-determination and self-advocacy skills before they leave school. To do this they need to be provided with opportunities to learn about their disability and how it affects them, understand the accommodations they need to be successful, express their accommodation needs in school and other settings, and know the basics of laws that address the rights of people with disabilities.

One of the most important laws for people with disabilities is the ADA. Although the law prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities, an employee who requires accommodations in order to perform a job must disclose information about the disability and the need for specific accommodations to the employer in order to be protected by the law. That's why it is important that students develop the skills to do this effectively before they enter the workforce.

A reasonable accommodation is any change or adjustment to a job or work environment that permits a qualified individual with a disability to participate in the job application process and to perform the essential functions of a job. Reasonable accommodations are usually less expensive than people think. In most cases, an appropriate reasonable accommodation can be made without difficulty and at little or no cost. Examples of reasonable accommodations include making existing facilities used by employees readily accessible to and usable by an individual with a disability; restructuring a job; modifying work schedules; acquiring or modifying equipment; providing qualified readers or interpreters; or modifying examinations, training, or other programs.
Ideas for Writing an Accommodation Request Letter

The ADA requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified employees and applicants with disabilities, unless such accommodations would pose an undue hardship (e.g., too costly, too extensive, too substantial, too disruptive). In general, the applicant or employee with a disability is responsible for letting the employer know that an accommodation is needed to participate in the application process, to perform essential job functions, or to receive equal benefits and privileges of employment. Employers are not required to provide accommodations if they are not aware of the need.

According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency charged with enforcing the ADA, an accommodation request does not have to be in writing. However, the EEOC suggests that individuals with disabilities might find it useful to document accommodation requests in the event there is a dispute about whether or when they requested accommodation. One way to document an accommodation request is to make a written request.

The ADA does not include specific guidelines or forms for requesting reasonable accommodation. However, some employers have developed in-house forms. If so, employees should use the employer’s forms for requesting accommodation. Otherwise, individuals with disabilities can use any method that is effective; the ADA does not require specific language or format. The following information provides an example of an accommodation request letter. Please note that the information is to be used as a guide only and is not legal advice. If legal advice is needed, contact a legal service.

For additional information regarding the ADA and reasonable accommodation, contact the Job Accommodations Network (JAN), by Linda Carter Batiste, JD. Updated 03/24/10

Accommodations Request Example Letter

Date of Letter
Your name
Your address
Employer's name
Employer’s address
Dear (e.g. Supervisor, Manager, Human Resources, Personnel):
Content to consider in body of letter:
  • Identify yourself as a person with a disability
  • State that you are requesting accommodations under the ADA or Section 504
  • Identify your specific problematic job tasks
  • Identify your accommodation ideas & Request your employer's ideas
  • Refer to attached medical documentation if appropriate*
  • Ask that your employer respond to your request in a reasonable amount of time
Sincerely,
Your signature
Your printed name
Cc: to appropriate individual
* You may want to attach medical information to your letter to help establish that you are a person with a disability and to document the need for accommodation.
Understanding Workplace Accommodations for People with Disabilities

One easy way to think about reasonable accommodations is to think of them in three basic categories:

1. Changes to facilities and equipment (such as putting in ramps and parking spaces, making materials available in large print, or providing low- and high-tech assistive technology);

2. The provision of special services (such as sign language interpreters or qualified readers); and

3. Creative thinking and problem solving!

There are many types of accommodations, including but not limited to the following:

- Educational accommodations;
- Workplace accommodations; and
- Community accessibility that serves to accommodate.

The following are a few common examples of these various types of accommodations available to people with disabilities are listed below:

**Workplace Accommodations**

- Changing an employee’s workstation arrangement.
- Modifying equipment or devices (for example, computer software).
- Reassigning non-essential functions through job restructuring.
- Providing qualified readers and interpreters.
- Providing part-time or modified work schedules.
- Telecommuting options.
- Personal assistance services.
- Adjusting or modifying examinations, training materials, and policies.
Career and Employment Skills List

Here’s a quick assessment tool to help decide which employment skills you have mastered and in what areas you may still need some instruction. Can you:

1. Specify your future career or work choice?
2. Successfully complete a job or training application?
3. Qualify for a position in your vocational choice area?
4. Qualify for postsecondary training in your vocational choice area?
5. Perform well in a job interview?
6. Prepare a resume?
7. Get along with a boss and co-worker?
8. Work effectively as a member of a work group/team?
9. Schedule your work so it always gets done?
10. Seek extra help if you are having trouble with a job assignment?
11. Consistently complete work at an acceptable rate?
12. Consistently complete good quality work with few errors?
13. Remain calm even under stress?
14. Follow work place policies and rules?
15. Follow written and oral instructions?
16. Use equipment safely?
17. “Figure out” what’s wrong with tools or equipment that is broken?
18. Correct your mistakes?
19. Dress appropriately for work and be neat and clean?
20. Make constructive suggestions to improve how work is completed?
21. Accept criticism?
22. Use break time appropriately?
23. Be on time for work?
24. Notify your boss when you are going to be late or absent?
25. Interpret a paycheck statement?
Helping Youth Develop Soft Skills for Job Success

Soft skills are personal attributes that enhance an individual's interactions, job performance and career prospects. Unlike hard skills, which are about a person's skill set, education, and ability to perform a certain type of task or activity, soft skills are interpersonal and broadly applicable. Soft skills are about how we get along with people, the way we communicate, and the attitudes we demonstrate.

Soft skills help youth succeed in life no matter what they are doing. By improving these skills, a youth can enhance his or her social life, do better in postsecondary studies, and be more successful at finding and maintaining employment. Soft skills are necessary for youth to succeed in education, job training, independent living, community participation, and, ultimately, in the workplace. It is necessary that students develop these important skills by the time they leave high school.

Learning soft skills is a process.

Many youth experience difficulties as they transition from classroom to the workplace. For youth with disabilities, who face higher unemployment rates than their peers without disabilities, soft skills are especially important and may need more focused attention to master. Some youth have specific disabilities that make it hard for them to control impulses. Other youth may have limited insight into themselves or difficulty getting along with others. Youth have varying amounts of exposure to the working world. Some young people need to learn the importance of being at work on time, calling in when they are ill, and getting along with co-workers. For these reasons, it's vital that families help youth with disabilities develop soft skills.

Families can help build soft skills

Families of youth with and without disabilities play a key role in helping their children learn expected behaviors, understand the unspoken rules of the workplace, and deal with personality conflicts. Parents are also aware of their child's strengths and can build upon those assets in the process of developing soft skills. In addition to promoting soft skills at home, families of youth with disabilities can make sure that the development of soft skills is adequately addressed at school through their child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) during the transition planning process of high school. If your family member does not have an IEP, soft skills development can also be addressed through other formal and informal goal setting plans. Another effective way for parents to help their family member develop basic employment skills, including soft skills, is to ensure that youth access, learn, and understand their career interest assessments, and engage in career exploration and real work experiences during the high school years.

Research shows that work experience during high school, paid or unpaid, helps youth get jobs at higher wages after they graduate - this is true even for youth with significant disabilities. Parents and family members can use this information to advocate for work-based learning programs at school or help their son or daughter find summer jobs or volunteer opportunities in the community. When considering transition programs or community rehabilitation providers during and after high school, remember that real work experiences linked to classroom instruction is a much more effective approach than classroom instruction alone.
Does your child need to work on speech communication skills?
According to annual surveys done by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, communication skills consistently rank among the top skills employers look for in a new employee. Helping youth improve communication skills will not only help them get a job, it can help them advance in their careers.

How families can help build these skills at home:

- Use a flip cam or cell phone to record your child giving directions for using the microwave or doing something they are good at, such as playing a computer game. Review the video with them. Did they speak clearly? Were the instructions clear? Other family members and friends can provide feedback as well.
- Help the student build vocabulary by learning one new word each day by using resources such as Word of the Day (http://dictionary.reference.com/wordoftheday) or a dictionary.
- Encourage your youth to participate in school activities that promote clear communication, such as a debate team.
- Discuss the different types of communication one might use in different environments such as with friends, in the classroom, in a professional setting, and with family. Doing so, would help your son or daughter understand what might be acceptable and expected in one setting may not be appropriate in another setting.
- Use a five-point scale to teach appropriate speaking volume or standing distance. For example, if your child tends to use a loud voice, teach him to equate his voice with a number. If the loudest voice is a five and a one is a soft voice teach him that using a two or three level voice is good at work.
- Suggest programming job-related phrases into your child's augmentative communication device, if he or she uses one. These may include “How may I help you?” and “Please wait while I find the answer to your question.”

Does the student pay attention to what others are saying and remember what was said? Listening to other’s needs and opinions is part of being a good communicator. Understanding and remembering what is said are important skills for the workplace when interacting with employers and customers.

How to help:
Encourage your child to have conversations with family and friends. Listening to others and contributing to the conversation will help him develop listening skills.

- Model listening skills for your youth. Pay attention to speakers, repeat what was said, and ask questions.
- Give your family member directions for doing a chore such as laundry, mowing the lawn, or straightening a room, and then have him repeat the instructions in his own words.
- Have your child take beverage orders when guests visit. If needed, your son or daughter can take notes to remember who ordered what.
- Consider the accommodations your child may use in school. If your child uses accommodations to help pay attention to and understand the instructors in school, discuss how similar accommodations could be used in employment settings.
Does the student communicate nonverbally in an effective way?

Much communication is nonverbal. Nonverbal communication is important when interacting with employers, coworkers, and customers. Youth may need to improve aspects of nonverbal communication, such as making proper eye contact. In addition, some youth have disabilities that make it difficult to read the nonverbal communication of others such as facial expressions and gestures. Families can help their youth improve these skills by practicing at home.

How to help:

- Have your family member look people in the eye and shake hands when introducing him to other adults. Practice the nonverbal language that would take place at a job interview. Let your son or daughter know that it’s important to have eye contact with the person doing the interviewing and to limit fidgeting or nervous movements.
- Model proper posture, such as standing up straight instead of slouching. Remind youth that proper posture communicates confidence.
- Show and explain that communication skills and personal boundaries may differ based on the setting and situation. For instance, a friend could demonstrate an acceptable distance between two people who are not related to one another, usually 1.5 to 4 feet. Have youth practice this.
- Discuss other potential strategies to improve communication skills with a young person’s IEP team and include a related goal, if he has a disability. If your child does not have an IEP, discuss strategies and related goals with his teachers and instructors. One strategy could be to have him look at a person’s nose or cheek if looking in someone’s eye is too distressing. It will appear as though he is making eye contact.

Is your child ready to take direction from and work cooperatively with others?

Teamwork and the ability to work well with others consistently appear among the highest ranked qualities employers are looking for in an employee in the annual surveys of National Association of Colleges and Employers. In today’s world, this includes the ability to communicate and work with people from different racial, religious, ability, and ethnic groups.

How to help:

- Encourage the young adult to help an elderly neighbor with yard work or volunteer as a family to serve a meal at a homeless shelter. Youth can learn about working with others by volunteering.
- Play games as a family and encourage team work. Board games help youth build many skills that apply to work: cooperating with others, taking turns, following rules, controlling emotions, and learning new knowledge and skills.
- Encourage your son or daughter to play a team sport. Sports help youth learn communication skills, decision making, self-control, and self-discipline as well as learning how to work on a team. If your child isn’t skilled enough to play on the school team, consider opportunities to play sports at the local “Y”, community center, or with a faith-based center.
• Introduce your child to people who are different from him through taking part in community festivals that feature different cultures, attending various places of worship, or through books, magazines, film, television, or the internet.
• Start conversations about differences. Acknowledge that some people have ideas about people who are different from them.
• Discuss the situation if your family member experiences any type of discrimination. Talk about why discrimination exists. Reflect upon the feelings that come up when someone discriminates against a person and use it as an opportunity to teach the importance of not acting that way towards another.

Does your youth know how to handle conflicts?
Self-control, respecting others, and being able to deal with conflict are important soft skills. Refusing to follow directions and orders and the inability to get along with other people are among the most common reasons people get fired.

How to help:
• Help your child understand how his behavior may contribute to a misunderstanding. If he talks about a social mishap that happened at work, help him reflect on the situation. Ask your child to determine what he did right, and also discuss if there was anything he or his work colleagues could have done differently. If necessary, discuss next steps to address the misunderstanding.
• Practice how to handle challenging situations with role play. Choose roles and have your son or daughter respond. Talk about appropriate behaviors.
• Discuss ways that people on television shows handle anger. Many shows involve people fighting or otherwise acting out their anger. While watching one of these shows with your youth, talk about ways people can handle anger appropriately, such as counting to ten, taking a time out, or going for a run. Ask your family member what might work for him.
• Explain to your son or daughter that taking directions and accepting constructive criticism is a part of being an employee. Reinforce this skill by giving directions in the home for such things as chores. Make sure your child responds appropriately to the directions given, and practice more appropriate responses if she does not.
• Remind your child to treat others the way she wishes to be treated. Acknowledge that this is difficult when others are being rude, disrespectful, or mean. Talk about when it’s important to stand up for oneself, and when it’s best to just walk away.
• Apologize to your son or daughter if necessary. Nothing makes a bigger impression on teens than adults admitting they were wrong.

Is your child careful with their appearance?
Good personal hygiene and appearance promotes social interaction with others while poor hygiene can give employers and co-workers a bad impression.

How to help:
• Discuss personal cleanliness, stressing that most workplaces require employees to dress in a specific way and to be clean.
• Require that your youth be dressed appropriately and have good hygiene when attending school, family functions, shopping trips, restaurants and/or faith based organizations.
• Model personal hygiene and dress to reflect what dressing professionally looks like.

**Is your son or daughter friendly, courteous, and tactful?**
Employers are looking for employees with good people skills. While especially important in jobs where employees interact with customers, people skills can also help interactions with co-workers, avoid conflict, and stand out from other job applicants or employees.

**How to help:**
• Teach the student phrases she can use on the phone: “May I please speak to Mr. Smith?” or in the workplace, “I’m Deborah. It’s nice to meet you.” Have your son or daughter answer the phone at home in a professional and courteous manner.
• Teach your family member to allow others to finish speaking before beginning to talk.
• Identify areas of social difficulty for your child and role play how to handle new or unfamiliar situations. Role playing gives an opportunity to practice what they would say and do in various situations.
• Sign up your child with a disability for social skills trainings at school, independent living centers, disability groups, or self-advocacy organizations. These organizations and others provide youth with a structured opportunity to learn and practice social skills such as taking turns or giving compliments.

**Does your family member demonstrate personal responsibility, initiative, self-management, and perseverance?**
A strong work ethic, initiative, and decision-making skills are other skills employers consistently rank highly in the annual surveys of the National Association of Colleges and Employers.

**How to help:**
• Have your son or daughter take responsibility for taking care of a pet or getting ready for school or work.
• Give your youth full responsibility for planning and preparing a family meal at least once a month. Help at first, until all the steps it takes to cook a family meal are learned.
• Have your youth take charge of a task. For example, if planning to get a driver's license, have them call the Department of Motor Vehicles and make a list of the steps involved (getting a permit, enrolling in driver's education, taking written and behind-the-wheel tests, getting insurance).
• Help your son or daughter understand the unspoken expectations of employers: showing up on time, avoiding personal calls or texting at work, or if working in a public place such as a retail store or the food court at the mall, not having friends hang out at work.
• Have your family member visit a parent’s workplace, if the job allows this. Different tasks can be learned associated with the job or follow other employees to learn what is involved in their jobs.

• Enroll your son or daughter in a mentor program. Mentors can help youth on many levels: building self-esteem, learning to stick with challenging activities, managing time, and communicating with other adults.

**Does your youth try to learn new things?**

• Take your youth to concerts, sporting events, or encourage participation in activities that match their interests.

• Ask your child to identify a simple, fun skill to learn. This could include cooking a certain recipe, working with a specific computer program, or learning a new game. Have them research information on steps for learning the skill and then help them follow the steps.

• Call or check online to find out about events that are open to the public at local colleges, art schools, music academies, museums or libraries. Family members can attend together and learn something new.

• Help your family member be independent by having him or her plan an outing using public transportation. Have your youth look up online or call the bus or subway department to find out routes, costs, bus stops, etc. Have your child look into using accessible transportation services, if he or she is eligible. Make sure your child identifies which bus or subway to take, its departure time, and the right time to leave the house. If public transportation services are not available, have your son or daughter arrange for a ride from a friend.

In a nutshell, soft skills mesh with work ethic. For employers, these go hand in hand. Here are some final tips when it comes to making a good impression once employed:

• Dress properly for the work setting.

• Arrive on time and stay productive until you leave.

• Turn cell phone ringers off while at work and return personal phone calls and text messages while on breaks or after work hours.

• Use computers, if you have access to them, only for work-related tasks.

• Speak in a respectful manner with supervisors, peers, and customers or clients.

• Know when and how to ask for help.
The Pre-Employment Process

Below are some guidelines for dealing with disability issues in the pre-employment process:

**Step One: Start with a Good Resume**
Take time to write a good resume. This is a written summary of your education, training, work experience, and most importantly, contact information.

A resume should have three basic components:
- Name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address
- Education and training experiences
- Work history and experience

Do not overlook the value of non-paid work experience such as internships, volunteer activities, and work that you have done for non-profit organizations such as a church, civic organization, or political party.

**Step Two: Write a Cover Letter**
A cover letter is used to introduce you to the perspective employer. It should briefly identify who you are and why you are applying for the position. It also should invite the employer to contact you for an interview. Be sure to enclose a copy of your resume with this letter. A cover letter also gives you your first opportunity to disclose your disability.

This would be to your advantage if:
- You are applying for a job with a state or federal agency that must comply with affirmative action policies;
- The job you are applying for directly relates to your experience as a person with a disability such as a rehabilitation counselor; or
- Having a disability is a qualification for the position.

**Step Three: Completing Applications**
For most people, the employment process begins with a company's job application. How you obtain and fill out this application can be the first impression the employer has of you. If you go to the job site to obtain an application, be mindful of your appearance. While it may not be necessary to wear your best interview suit it is important to wear clothes that are clean, ironed, and free from tears or holes. Be polite and come prepared with a pen or pencil and a copy of your resume. If possible, take the application home with you. This will allow you to complete the information in a calm, stress-free environment. Remember that neatness counts.

The Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits employers from asking medical or disability-related questions on a job application. The exception to this is that a government agency can ask an applicant to voluntarily disclose a disability for affirmative action purposes.

Otherwise, if you encounter specific questions about your disability or medical history, leave them blank. If necessary, this can give you the opportunity to explain why you did not answer the questions instead of why you intentionally gave false answers.

**Step Four: The Interview**
For most job seekers, the interview is the "make it or break it" point. Remember that you
have about a minute to make a good first impression, and first impressions mean -everything during this stage of the employment process. Disclosure of your disability is critical at this point if accommodations, such as access to the building, are necessary to do the job. Do your homework! If you know the location for the interview is not accessible to you, contact the person who will be interviewing you and request an alternative location. It is a good idea to have a location in mind, just in case the interviewer needs some suggestions.

If you do not know if the location is accessible, call and ask questions about whether there are accessible parking spaces available or whether the building has an elevator. It is better to deal with these issues ahead of time than 15 minutes before your interview. This also shows your perspective employer that you are able to deal with these situations effectively.

The best way to handle difficult questions during the interview is to be prepared for them. Make a list of the questions you know you are going to have trouble with and formulate an answer, and then practice your delivery of these answers so you will be ready from them. For example, "I see that there is a two year gap in your work history. What have you been doing during this time?" This is an opportunity to talk about what you have been doing, not what you have not been doing. Think about valuable life experiences that you have gained during this time. Have you been taking care of children or a parent, going to school, taking art classes, or volunteering? This question may prompt you to disclose your disability if you have not already done so. Be sure to do it in a way that shows how you have dealt with a difficult situation in a positive manner. Remember to keep the past in the past, stating that you are ready to move forward and are qualified and able to do the job you want.

Remember to talk about your abilities, not your disabilities. Employers need qualified, capable individuals to fill positions. Find a way to show that you are that person. Sell them on what you can do, not on what you cannot do and the interview will go better than you expect. Be positive about yourself and be honest.
**Disability Disclosure**

Students need to know how and when to disclose information about disability.

Disclosing means intentionally releasing information for a specific reason. People may disclose disability information in order to receive an accommodation, explain behavior, or obtain service. Disclosure does not mean telling everything about a disability it means sharing only information that will result in accommodations that promote success in the workplace or at school.

**Make sure you know these three things in order to request an accommodation:**

- General and specific information about the disability. Naming the disability can increase your young adult’s confidence and self awareness.
- Types of accommodations that have worked in the past. Knowing which supports have worked (and which haven’t) will help identify the types of accommodations that may be useful in the future.
- Types of accommodations that may help in adult roles. Moving into postsecondary education or employment situations will present students with new challenges. Think about which accommodations have worked in the past, how they might be modified for these new situations, and what new supports might be useful.

**When it comes to disclosing your disability, be aware of the following:**

- It’s your personal choice.
- You’re not required to disclose your disability unless you need to request an accommodation.
- Employers may only inquire about your ability to perform essential job functions, not inquire about your disability.
- If you don’t need an accommodation, you don’t need to disclose, and you can choose not to – but be aware that if you don’t disclose, you’re not covered under ADA.
- Most disability employment programs are predicated on the customer openly disclosing that they have disability.
- If you are not knowledgeable about your disability or deny even having a disability, then some programs will have a tougher time being successful.
- It is necessary for you to disclose your disability to an employer if you are seeking job accommodations.
- It may not always be necessary to disclose a disability, but knowing how to talk about a disability is a good skill to have.

**Advantages to Disclosure:**

- Allows an individual to begin a dialogue with employers, educators, or others with regard to accommodations and to pursue work, school, or community activities more effectively.
- Provides legal protection against discrimination (Americans with Disabilities Act).
- Gives an individual a clear impression of what kind of expectations people may have of them and their abilities.
• Ensures that an individual is getting what they need (e.g., accommodations or assistive technology) in order to be successful.
• Provides full freedom to examine and question health insurance and benefits.
• Provides greater freedom for the individual to communicate his or her needs.
• Improves self-image through self-advocacy.
• Allows an individual to involve other professionals (e.g., educators, and employment service providers) to help him or her learn skills and develop accommodations.

Disadvantages to Disclosure:
• May cause an individual to feel excluded.
• May cause an individual to become an object of unwanted curiosity.
• May lead to a blame of the individual if something doesn’t go right.
• May cause others to treat the individual differently.
• May bring up conflicting feelings about self-image.
• May lead to an individual being viewed as being needy or unable to perform on par with his or her peers.
• May cause an individual to be legally or illegally rejected or overlooked for a job, team, group, or organization.

In Summary
Disability disclosure is an important aspect of securing accommodations in work and academic settings. It also plays a role in meaningful social and community participation. Disclosure is always a personal choice, and comes with advantages and disadvantages. Students with disabilities need to recognize the value of preparing to disclose appropriately. By having a clear understanding of their disability and developing self-advocacy skills, students will not only gain an improved self-image, but in addition will be able to effectively access disability related accommodations they may need for success in the adult world.
US Military Enlistment Standards

There is no right granted to anyone to serve in the United States Military. The respective military departments have the absolute right to reject you for any reason it deems appropriate. Regardless of how recruiting commercials may "sell" the military, it is not a "jobs program." It's serious business, involving the security of the United States of America, and our country's national interests. Congress and the courts have held that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which ensures all individuals are treated equally before the law with respect to civilian employment, does not apply to the military profession. No less than seven major Supreme Court decisions support this. The military doesn't accept just anyone who wants to join. You must be qualified, under current federal laws and regulations and/or you must receive an approved waiver for the condition which may make you disqualified. Following are SOME of the general qualifications to enlist in the military that may apply to you or your child:

Age:
One would think that age to enlist in the US military would be a simple category. One is old enough, or too old, right? Unfortunately, it doesn't quite work that way. By federal law (10 U.S.C., 505), the minimum age for enlistment in the United States Military is 17 (with parental consent) and 18 (without parental consent). The maximum age is 42. However, DOD policy allows the individual services to specify the maximum age of enlistment based upon their own unique requirements.

Education:
For enlistment purposes, the military breaks education into three overall categories: Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III. Over 90 percent of all enlistments are from the Tier I category. The Armed Forces requires an entrance test to enlist in the US Military. You can't enlist in the US Military without taking the Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). The ASVAB has two primary purposes: First, it determines whether you have the mental aptitude to enlist in the military branch of your choice, and second, the results help the service(s) determine which military job(s) you have the mental aptitude for.

Tier I
Applicants in Tier I have a high school diploma, or at least 15 college credits. This means a high school diploma, not a GED. Depending on state law, completion of high school by home study may or may not be considered equivalent to a high school diploma.

Tier II
Tier II includes GEDs, home study (in some states), Certificate of Attendance, Alternative/Continuation High School, Correspondence School Diplomas, and Occupational Program Certificate (Vo/Tech). The services limit the number of Tier II candidates it will allow to enlist each year. In the Air Force, the limit is less than 1% each year. In such cases, the applicant must score a minimum of 50 on the AFQT to qualify. The Army will allow up to 10% each year of Tier II candidates, but they must score a minimum of 50 on the AFQT. The Marines allow about 5% each year and the Navy about 10% who score a minimum of 50 on the AFQT to qualify. The Coast Guard only accepts Tier 2 candidates if they have prior military service, and even then requires them to score higher on the AFQT (50 for prior Coast Guard Service, 65 for prior service in other branches).
Tier III
Tier III are individuals who are not attending high school and are neither high school graduates nor alternative credential holders. The services almost never accept a Tier 3 candidate for enlistment. If you fall into this category, your best bet is to get at least 15 college credits, so that you will be qualified as Tier I.

Citizenship:
In order to join the US Military, you must either be a US citizen, or you must be a legal permanent immigrant, physically living in the United States, with a green card. The US military cannot and will not assist with the immigration process.

For enlistment purposes, United States include citizens of: Guam, Puerto Rico, The U.S. Virgin Islands, The Northern Marianas Islands, American Samoa, The Federated States of Micronesia, and The Republic of the Marshall Islands. Not all legal immigrants may be eligible to enlist. Applicants who have been residents of countries considered hostile to the interests of the United States require a waiver. While non-citizens may enlist, their job choices are limited to those jobs which do not require a security clearance.

Single Parents:
Single Parents are not allowed to enlist in the US Military, period. Except for the Army National Guard, waiver approvals are very, very, very rare, and most recruiters won't even submit one.

Dependents:
The military has regulations that require you to provide adequate financial support for your dependents and limits the number of dependents an applicant can have. Those who exceed the stated number of dependents require a waiver. Before a dependency waiver is granted for any of the services, the recruiting service will conduct a financial eligibility determination. The Navy requires a waiver for any applicant with more than one dependent (including spouse). In the Marine Corps, a waiver is required if an applicant has any dependent under the age of 18. The Air Force conducts a financial eligibility determination if the member has any dependents. The Army requires a waiver for applicants with two or more dependents (other the spouse). The Coast Guard requires a waiver if there is more than one dependent (other than spouse).

For enlistment purposes, a "dependent" is: a.) A spouse, to include a common law spouse if the state recognizes such; b.) Any natural child (legitimate or illegitimate) or child adopted by the applicant, if the child is under 18 years of age and unmarried, regardless of whether or not the applicant has custody of the child; c.) A stepchild under 18 who resides with the applicant; and d.) Any parent or other person(s) who is/are, in fact, dependent on the applicant for more than one-half of their support.

Height/Weight
The military only accepts candidates who fall into a specific height range. The cause for rejection for Armed Forces male applicants is height less than 60 inches or more than 80 inches. For female applicants the rejection is for height less than 58 inches or more than 80 inches. For the Marines, height standards for male applicants range from 58 to 78 inches. Height standards for female applicants range from 58 to 72 inches. The services don't really
have "weight standards." What they have are "body fat standards." However, at initial screening the services use weight charts. Individuals who weigh more than the limits on the chart are measured to ensure they fall within the service's body-fat standards. There are no waivers for exceeding required body fat limits. In order to qualify for enlistment in the US Military, you must first travel to a Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS), and pass a medical physical. MEPS will classify you as follows:

- **Medically Qualified.** This means you don't have any disqualifying medical conditions, and can be further processed for enlistment.
- **Temporarily Disqualified.** This means you have a medical condition which is disqualifying right now, but won't be, once it is resolved. An example would be recent broken arm.
- **Permanently Disqualified.** This means you have a medical condition or a history of a medical condition which is disqualifying. To enlist, the service you are trying to join would have to process a medical waiver through their individual medical chain of command.

**Miscellaneous Exclusions:**
Following are some, not all, of the additional conditions that will render one ineligible for enlistment, and waivers will not normally be granted:
Intoxicated or under influence of alcohol or drugs at time of application, or at any stage of processing for enlistment.
- History of psychotic disorders or state of insanity.
- Alcoholism.
- Drug dependence.
- History of antisocial behavior.
- Criminal or juvenile court charges filed or pending against them by civil authorities.
- Persons under civil restraint, such as confinement, parole, or probation.
- Subject of initial civil court conviction or adverse disposition for more than one felony.
- Civil conviction of a felony with three or more offenses (convictions or other adverse dispositions) other than traffic. Applicants with juvenile felony offenses who have had no offenses within 5 years of application for enlistment may be considered for a waiver in meritorious cases.
- Subject of initial civil court conviction or other adverse dispositions for sale, distribution, or trafficking (or intent to) of cannabis (marijuana), or any other controlled substance.
- Three or more convictions or other adverse dispositions for driving while intoxicated, drugged, or impaired in the 5 years preceding application for enlistment.
- Confirmed positive drug test at MEPS. (Note: The Navy, Marine Corps, and Army may waive this, after a waiting period. The Coast Guard and Air Force never waive this).
- Persons with convictions or other adverse dispositions for 5 or more misdemeanors preceding application for enlistment.

**Disqualifying Medical Conditions**
The disqualifying medical conditions are listed below. The International Classification of Disease (ICD) codes are listed in parentheses following each standard. The causes for
rejection for appointment, enlistment, and induction (without an approved waiver) are an authenticated history of:

**Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder**
Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (314), or Perceptual/Learning Disorder(s) (315) is disqualifying, unless applicant can demonstrate passing academic performance and there has been no use of medication(s) in the previous 12 months. Current or history of academic or perceptual defects (315) secondary to organic or functional mental disorders, including, but not limited to dyslexia, that interfere with school or employment, are disqualifying. Applicants demonstrating passing academic and employment performance without utilization of accommodations during the previous 12 months may be qualified.

**Mood Disorders**
Current mood disorders including, but not limited to, major depression (296.2–3), bipolar (296.4–7), affective psychoses (296.8–9), depressive not otherwise specified (311), are disqualifying. History of mood disorders requiring outpatient care for longer than 6 months by a physician or other mental health professional (V65.40), or inpatient treatment in a hospital or residential facility is disqualifying. History of symptoms consistent with a mood disorder of a repeated nature that impairs school, social, or work efficiency is disqualifying. Current or history of adjustment disorders (309) within the previous 3 months is disqualifying.

**Behavioral Disorders**
Current or history of conduct (312), or behavior (313) disorders is disqualifying. Recurrent encounters with law enforcement agencies, antisocial attitudes or behaviors are tangible evidence of impaired capacity to adapt to military service and as such are disqualifying. Current or history of personality disorder (301) is disqualifying. History (demonstrated by repeated inability to maintain reasonable adjustment in school, with employers or fellow workers, or other social groups), interview, or psychological testing revealing that the degree of immaturity, instability, personality inadequacy, impulsiveness, or dependency will likely interfere with adjustment in the Armed Forces is disqualifying. Current or history of other behavior disorders is disqualifying, including, but not limited to conditions such as the following: (1) Enuresis (307.6) or encopresis (307.7) after 13th birthday. (2) Sleepwalking (307.4) after 13th birthday. (3) Eating disorders (307.5), anorexia nervosa (307.1), bulimia (307.51), or unspecified disorders of eating (307.59) lasting longer than 3 months and occurring after 13th birthday. Disorders with psychotic features such as schizophrenia (295), paranoid disorder (297), and other unspecified psychosis (298) are disqualifying.

Any current receptive or expressive language disorder, including, but not limited to any speech impediment, stammering and stuttering (307.0) of such a degree as to significantly interfere with production of speech or to repeat commands, is disqualifying. History of suicidal behavior, including gesture(s) or attempt (s) (300.9), or history of self-mutilation, is disqualifying. Current or history of anxiety disorders (anxiety (300.01) or panic (300.2), agoraphobia (300.21), social phobia (300.23), simple phobias (300.29), obsessive-compulsive (300.3), other acute reactions to stress (308), and posttraumatic stress disorder (309.81) are disqualifying. Current or histories of other mental disorders (all 290–319 not listed above) that in the opinion of the civilian or military provider will interfere with, or prevent satisfactory performance of military duty, are disqualifying.
AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps is an opportunity to make a big difference in your life and in the lives of those around you. It’s a chance to apply your skills and ideals toward helping others and meeting critical needs in the community.

Benefits of Service
In addition to helping others, full-time members who complete their service earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award to pay for college, graduate school, or to pay back qualified student loans; members who serve part-time receive a partial Award. Some AmeriCorps members may also receive a modest living allowance during their term of service.

AmeriCorps Programs
AmeriCorps is made up of three main programs: AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps VISTA, and AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps).

- **AmeriCorps State and National**: AmeriCorps State and National supports a broad range of local service programs that engage thousands of Americans in intensive service to meet critical community needs.

- **AmeriCorps VISTA**: AmeriCorps VISTA provides full-time members to community organizations and public agencies to create and expand programs that build capacity and ultimately bring low-income individuals and communities out of poverty.

- **AmeriCorps NCCC**: The AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) is a full-time residential program for men and women, ages 18-24, that strengthens communities while developing leaders through direct, team-based national and community service.

AmeriCorps State and National
AmeriCorps members serve in AmeriCorps State and National projects in every state, U.S. territories, and on tribal reservations. Programs are open to U.S. citizens, nationals, or lawful permanent resident aliens age 17 and older. Members may serve full- or part-time over a period not to exceed 12 months. AmeriCorps members receive a modest living allowance, student-loan forbearance, health coverage, and child care for those who qualify. After successfully completing their term of service, they receive an AmeriCorps Education Award of up to $5,350.

AmeriCorps VISTA
AmeriCorps VISTA is the national service program designed specifically to fight poverty. VISTA members commit to serve full-time for a year at a nonprofit organization or local government agency, working to fight illiteracy, improve health services, create businesses, strengthen community groups, and much more. In return for a year of full-time service, members receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award or post-service stipend, a modest

This document is an overview of Military Enlistment Standards and does not contain ALL standards, specifically those associated with prior service. It is wise to visit the local military recruitment office for further information. This document provides information obtained from: United States Military Enlistment Standards. Do You Qualify to Enlist in the United States Military? By Rod Powers, About.com and may be found On-Line at: http://usmilitary.about.com/od/joiningthemilitary/a/enlstandards.htm
AmeriCorps NCCC

National Civilian Community Corps is a full-time, team-based residential program for men and women age 18–24. Members are assigned to one of five campuses, located in Denver, Colorado; Sacramento, California; Perry Point, Maryland; Vicksburg, Mississippi; and Vinton, Iowa. AmeriCorps NCCC requires an intensive, 10-month commitment. Members serve in teams of eight to twelve and are assigned to projects throughout the region served by their campus. They are trained in CPR, first aid, public safety, and other skills before beginning their first service project. AmeriCorps NCCC serves communities in every state. AmeriCorps NCCC members receive a living allowance of approximately $4,000 for the 10 months of service (about $200 every two weeks before taxes), housing, meals, limited medical benefits, up to $400 a month for childcare, if necessary, member uniforms, and a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award upon successful completion of the program.

Eligibility

Eligibility for AmeriCorps varies by program. To qualify for AmeriCorps State and National, you must be a United States citizen, United States national or lawful permanent resident of the US and at least 17 years of age. Individual programs may have additional qualifications, and you should review them when you apply. To qualify for AmeriCorps VISTA, you must be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national or lawful permanent resident, be team-oriented, and be willing to take on a wide range of challenges. Most AmeriCorps*VISTA programs seek members with college degrees or at least three years of work experience. Fluency in Spanish or other languages can be helpful in certain programs. You must be available to serve full-time for one year. The application process also requires a criminal history background check. To qualify for AmeriCorps*NCCC, you must be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or lawful permanent resident, between 18 and 24 years old. Your education level doesn't matter—just your commitment, energy and flexibility. A high school diploma is not required to qualify for NCCC. All members develop an individual learning plan at the beginning of the year that outlines their personal learning goals while they are in the program. NCCC staff will help the member develop a plan to achieve those personal learning goals, including getting a GED. Relocation to one of five AmeriCorps*NCCC campuses is required.

How To Join?

There are thousands of opportunities to serve in AmeriCorps. Each one provides an incredible opportunity to make a difference in your life and in the lives of those around you. To search for an AmeriCorps national service opportunity that fits your interests and desired location visit http://www.nationalservice.gov. Applications for any position can be submitted online by creating a user profile. For additional assistance call 1-800-942-2677.
South Carolina Child Labor & Wages Regulations Summary

**Minors Under Age 14**

Generally no employment is authorized for minors under the age of 14, as interpreted under South Carolina Child Labor Statute 41-13-20. Employment of any minor under age 14 is defined as oppressive child labor. Exemptions from this restriction apply under the following specific circumstances:

1. Minors under age 14 may work in any aspect of show business, such as acting or performing in a theatrical, television, radio, or film production.

2. Minors ages 12 and 13 may work during non-school sessions in non-hazardous farm jobs with written parental consent. Minors ages 12 and 13 may engage in farm labor at any agricultural establishment at which the minor's parents are employed.

3. At any age, minors may work in any business or establishment which is 100 percent owned and operated by the parent of the minor.

The parental supervision exemption is precluded in occupations deemed hazardous, as defined in the 17 Hazardous Occupations Orders of the Fair Labor Standards Act. (See list below)

At any age, minors may deliver newspapers to consumers.

**Minors Ages 14 & 15**

Minors ages 14 and 15 must work within prescribed scheduling restrictions, as outlined below:

- Normal school sessions include all days in which the school observes a standard academic calendar. During normal school sessions, minors ages 14 and 15 may work a maximum of three hours per day, up to 18 hours per week. Work hours must fall within the hours of 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Minors who attend school should anticipate a work schedule of 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., for example, in order to comply with these hourly restrictions.

- During non-school sessions (i.e., summer vacations), minors ages 14 and 15 may work up to eight hours per day, 40 hours per week. Work schedules for non-school sessions must fall between the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 p.m.

Appropriate employment for minors ages 14 and 15 includes, but is not limited to: cashiering, serving food, custodial duties, bussing tables, car washing, and delivery work not involving the operation of a motor vehicle.

Minors ages 14 and 15 may not engage in the following work activities: warehousing and storage; car repair; public utility duties; work involving the use of ladders or scaffolding; work involving food preparation; the use of grinders; or the operation of lawnmower and golf carts. Further, minors ages 14 and 15 may not engage in any occupation deemed hazardous, as defined under 17 Hazard Occupations Orders of the Fair Labor Standards Act. (See list below.)

**Minors Ages 16 - 18**

Minors ages 16 and older are exempt from the hour and scheduling restrictions.
These minors may work as many daily and weekly hours as the job responsibilities require or the employer requests.

Minors ages 16 and 17 may not engage in any occupation deemed hazardous, as defined under the 17 Hazardous Occupations Orders of the Fair Labor Standards Act. (See list below.)

**Workers Over 18**

No jurisdiction is established in the enforcement of child labor laws for employees who are 18 or older.

**Hazardous Occupations Orders**

If you are 18 years old, you may work at any time in any job.

If you are 16 or 17 years old, you may work in any occupation except those declared hazardous by the Secretary of Labor. The 17 Hazardous Occupations Orders for non-farm work deal with the following:

1. Manufacturing or storing explosives
2. Driving a motor vehicle and being an outside helper
3. Coal mining
4. Logging and sawmilling
5. Power-driven woodworking machines
6. Exposure to radioactive substances and to ionizing radiations
7. Power-driven hoisting apparatus
8. Power-driven metal-forming, punching, and shearing machines
9. Mining, other than coal mining
10. Meat packing or processing
11. Power-driven bakery machines
12. Power-driven paper products machines
13. Manufacturing brick, tile, and related products
14. Power-driven circular saws, band saws, and guillotine shears
15. Wrecking, demolition, and ship-breaking operations
16. Roofing operations
17. Excavation operations

Questions or requests for additional information may be directed to:

South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation
Office of Wages and Child Labor
110 Centerview Drive
P. O. Box 11329
Columbia, S.C. 29211-1329
(803) 896-7756

The SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department (SCVRD)

The South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department serves people who want to work but are hindered from doing so by a physical or mental disability. South Carolinians who have a documented physical or mental impairment that substantially interferes with their ability to work can be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. Applicants also must require and be able to benefit from VR services that would lead to competitive employment.

The SCVRD provides an individualized array of services to help people with disabilities find employment. Many clients are highly motivated but need help developing work skills. A VR team helps each new client understand the options available in setting and reaching a vocational goal. SCVRD’s informed choice policy makes each client a full partner in the vocational rehabilitation process with access to all the information needed to make necessary decisions.

Eligibility
A team of vocational rehabilitation specialists helps determine eligibility and explains the options available for setting and reaching vocational goals. Existing records are used in determining eligibility.

After eligibility is established, each client participates in an assessment to determine which vocational rehabilitation services are needed to help the client prepare for employment. The client is totally involved in the development of an Individualized Plan for Employment tailored to his or her abilities and interest. Clients participate fully in all decisions made during the course of the rehabilitation.

Clients in area offices and work training centers learn work skills and employment behaviors while performing contract work for local businesses. The businesses receive quality work at a reasonable cost while the clients improve their employability.

Employers look to SCVRD for job candidates who are trained in a wide variety of skills and have learned good work habits. Clients who are job-ready are then considered for employment. These new workers become taxpaying citizens, proud of what they have achieved and building fulfilling lives for themselves and their families.

Rehabilitation Planning
An eligible VR client works as a partner with their Career Planning and Employment team, their counselor and other staff to decide on a vocational goal. Clients then develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) with the help of their counselor, by themselves or with someone else's assistance. The IPE details the services necessary to reach the vocational goal and becomes the roadmap for achievement.

Clients are at the center of the decisions leading toward their vocational goals. SCVRD staff members work closely with each client to provide all the information necessary for the client to make informed choices.
**Classes**
Classes to help clients prepare for employment include:
- Classes that address how specific disabilities affect work ability.
- Pre-employment classes on how to fill out job applications, develop interview skills and develop an understanding of an employer’s expectations.
- Employment classes for “job ready” clients include job-seeking groups, advanced interview skills and other topics.

**Training**
Job-readiness training helps develop positive work behaviors and the physical stamina needed for successful adjustment to a new job. This training involves working on outsource contracts at an SCVRD work training center.

On-the-job training can be provided by a prospective employer. A “job ready” client works for an hourly rate of at least minimum wage while learning the skills of the job. If the training is successful, the client is expected to be employed in the same or a comparable position.

Assistance with post-secondary training leading to an associate or baccalaureate degree may be provided if it is in an area of study leading to an appropriate career field.

**Supported Employment**
Job coaching assistance is available for clients who need some extra help learning a new job. The job coach works at the job site with the client until the client can successfully perform the job duties alone. The employer pays only the client.

**Restoration Services**
SCVRD may provide medical or other services to help clients meet physical or mental disability needs that require attention before employment goals can be reached. These services are based on individual need.

**The Power of Youth**
- SCVRD’s youth programs work to reduce the dropout rate of youth with disabilities and improve their participation in employment-related activities. These programs focus on building self-esteem, developing leadership skills, and preparing young adults with disabilities for life beyond high school.
- Through High School/High Tech students are encouraged to set their sites on a college and career in the fields of science, technology, engineering or math. Students with disabilities enrolled in High School/High Tech sites take field trips to science and technology-related businesses and attractions. They are offered on-the-job experiences through job shadowing activities and internships.
- The SC Youth Leadership Forum is an annual career and leadership training program that is both educational and motivational. High school juniors and seniors are selected each summer to spend a week learning about disability history, community and academic resources, career options and personal leadership. They take part in social activities enabling them to network and learn from each other and build friendships that will last a lifetime.
Social Security Disability Programs

The Social Security Administration (SSA) manages two programs that provide benefits based on disability or blindness, the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) program and the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program.

Social Security Disability Insurance Program (SSDI)
SSDI provides benefits to disabled or blind persons who are “insured” by workers’ contributions to the Social Security trust fund. These contributions are based on your earnings (or those of your spouse or parents) as required by the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA). Title II of the Social Security Act authorizes SSDI benefits. Your dependants may also be eligible for benefits from your earnings record.

SSDI Employment Supports
The SSDI employment supports provide help over a long period of time to allow you to test your ability to work, or to continue working, and gradually become self-supporting and independent. In general, you have at least 9 years to test your ability to work. You may continue to have Medicare coverage during this time or even longer.

Supplemental Security Income Program (SSI)
The SSI program makes cash assistance payments to aged, blind, and disabled persons (including children) who have limited income and resources. The Federal Government funds SSI from general tax revenues. Many states pay a supplemental benefit to persons in addition to their Federal benefits. Some of these states have made arrangements with us to combine their supplemental payment with our Federal SSI payment into one monthly check to you. Other states manage their own programs and make their payments separately. Title XVI of the Social Security Act authorizes SSI benefits.

Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) and Community Work Incentives Coordinators (CWICs)
The 102 Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) projects across the U.S. and the U.S. territories work with SSA beneficiaries with disabilities, including transition-to-work aged youth, on job placement, benefits planning, and career development. By working with a WIPA, SSA beneficiaries will be better equipped to make informed choices about work. Each WIPA is staffed with Community Work Incentive Coordinators (CWICs) to:

- Provide work Incentives planning and assistance directly to SSA’s beneficiaries with disabilities to assist them in their employment efforts;
- Conduct outreach efforts in collaboration with SSA’s Program Manager for Recruitment and Outreach contractor to beneficiaries with disabilities (and their families), who are potentially eligible to participate in Federal, State, and private agencies and nonprofit organizations that serve beneficiaries with disabilities;
• Refer beneficiaries with disabilities to appropriate Employment Networks based on the beneficiary’s expressed needs and type of impairments;
• Provide general information on the adequacy of health benefits coverage that may be offered by an employer of a beneficiary with a disability and the extent to which other health benefits coverage may be available to the beneficiary in coordination with Medicare and/or Medicaid; and
• Provide information on the availability of Protection and Advocacy services for beneficiaries with disabilities and how to access such services.

**Ticket to Work Program**

The Ticket to Work Program provides most people receiving Social Security benefits (beneficiaries) more choices for receiving employment services. Under this program the Social Security Administration (SSA) issues ticket to eligible beneficiaries who, in turn, may choose to assign those tickets to an Employment Network (EN) of their choice to obtain employment services, vocational rehabilitation services, or other support services necessary to achieve a vocational (work) goal. An Employment Network is any agency or instrumentality of a state (or political subdivision), or a private entity that takes responsibility for the actual delivery of services or the coordination/referral of services. The Ticket Program is part of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improve Act of 1999- legislation designed to remove many of the barriers that previously influenced people’s decisions about going to work because of the concerns over losing health care coverage.

**How Does the Program Work?**

The Ticket Program is flexible and voluntary- Social Security Administration beneficiaries are not mandated to participate and in most cases, ENs can chose which services they want to provide, where, and to whom. Beneficiaries receiving Ticket can contact one or more ENs to discuss services and once an agreement between the beneficiary and En is reached, the two work together to develop a work plan to assist the beneficiary in reaching his or her employment goal.

MAXIMUS, a private company, has been contracted by the Social Security Administration to function as the Operations Support Manager (TPDOCM). It is MAXIMUS process responsibility to administer oversight and process support necessary to sustain ongoing Ticket Program Operations.
Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS)

What is a PASS?
It is a Supplemental Security Income (SSI) provision to help individuals with disabilities under that program return to work.

How does a PASS help someone return to work?
SSI eligibility and payment amount are based on income and resources (things of value that an individual owns). PASS lets an individual with a disability set aside money and/or resources to pay for items or services needed to achieve a specific work goal.

How does PASS work?
The Applicant finds out what training, items, or services are needed to reach work goals. These can include supplies to start businesses, school expenses, equipment and tools, transportation, and uniform requirements. Applicants find out the cost of those items and services and PASS can help a person save to pay these costs. PASS allows a person to set aside money for installment payments as well as a down payment for things like a vehicle, wheelchair or computer if that is what is needed to reach the work goal.

How do you set up a PASS?
Decide on a work goal and determine the items and services necessary to achieve that goal. You can get help in setting up a plan from the following:
- A vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselor;
- A disabilities benefits specialist;
- Protection and Advocacy organizations who have contracts with the Social Security Administration (SSA);
- Employment Networks involved in the Ticket to Work program;
- Local Social Security office;
- Independent Living Centers, organizations that helps people with disabilities or anyone else willing to help.

Contact local SSA office, SSA work site, or some third party such as shown above to get a PASS form (SSA-545-BK) to complete. Bring or mail it to the Social Security office. SSA usually approves plans prepared by VR. If the work goal is self-employment, there must also be a business plan included.

What happens to the PASS?
The SSA sends the PASS to their employees who are trained to work with PASS; these staff works directly with the applicant. The PASS expert looks over the plan to see if the work goal is reasonable. Then, the SSA reviews the plan to make sure those items and services listed on PASS are needed to achieve the work goal and that the items/services are reasonably priced. If changes are needed, the PASS expert will discusses them with the applicant. If PASS is not approved, the decision can be appealed.
Independent Living

Independent Living can refer to both a philosophy of living and a way of living.

The Independent Living (IL) philosophy proposes that people with disabilities are the best experts on their needs, and therefore they must take the initiative (to the greatest degree possible) in making life choices and determining necessary services. This philosophy looks at individuals with disabilities as citizens first and secondarily as consumers of healthcare, rehabilitation or social services. As citizens in democratic societies, persons with disabilities have the same right to participation, to the same range of options, degree of freedom, control and self-determination in every day life as those without disabilities. As Dr. Adolf Ratzka, Director of the Institute on Independent Living, has said: “Independent Living does not mean that we want to do everything by ourselves, do not need anybody or like to live in isolation. Independent Living means that we demand the same choices and control in our every-day lives that our non-disabled brothers and sisters, neighbors and friends take for granted. We want to grow up in our families, go to the neighborhood school, use the same bus as our neighbors, work in jobs that are in line with our education and interests, and raise families of our own. We are profoundly ordinary people sharing the same need to feel included, recognized and loved.”

Independent Living also means how self-sufficient we are. The more independent a person lives, the less they rely on others for their fundamental needs. This section of the Transition Toolkit provides information on some of the areas of Independent Living that require planning and skill building. We hope you will use this information to plan measurable IEP goals that will lead to the greatest degree of independence possible. Materials in this Section include:

Users of this Toolkit should remember that the material in all sections should be considered as transition goals are being determined for the student’s Individual Education Program (IEP).
## Independent Living

### Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Number of Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protection &amp; Advocacy Fact Sheet When a Child Grows Up</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Legal Effects of Becoming an Adult</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americans with Disabilities Act</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Determination</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becoming My Own Self-Advocate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Good Table &amp; Telephone Manners</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Social Skills to Remember</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Recommendations for Transition to Adult Care</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Wellness</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Planning</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Assistant Services</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping Important Records and Papers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What to Do in an Emergency</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Safety</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Preparedness</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation and Leisure</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports and Recreation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cybersmart – Internet Safety Tips</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina Department of Disabilities &amp; Special Needs (DDSN)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDSN: Residential Services</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair Housing Act</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking and Finances</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worksheet for Developing a Prorated Monthly Budget</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Needs Trust - A Brief Summary for Estate Planning</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying for a New Driver’s License In South Carolina</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Protection & Advocacy Fact Sheet

When a Child Grows Up
The Legal Effects of Becoming an Adult

When a child turns 18, he or she becomes entitled to the legal rights and duties of an adult. Generally, it does not matter whether the person has a disability. At age 18, a person is considered to be capable of making his or her own decisions unless a court has decided that the person is incompetent. This information sheet describes some of the legal effects of becoming 18, as well as some adult rights that apply even before age 18.

1. Age Of Majority Is 18:
The South Carolina Constitution, Article XVII Sec. 14, states that individuals become legal persons at 18. Generally, adult citizens have the right to: vote, serve on juries, enter into contracts, decide where to live, make health care decisions and make a will. (This does not include the right to purchase alcoholic beverages until age 21)

2. Special Education:

a. Maximum age 21: The right to be in public school continues until age 21. Generally, if the 21st birthday occurs after school starts; a student can enroll and finish that school year. If the 21st birthday occurs prior to the start of the school year, the student is not eligible to enroll that year. SC Code Ann 59-63-20 (2) states that when a student is in the graduating class and becomes 21 before graduation, the student is allowed to stay in school and graduate. Based on this law, students with disabilities who have not graduated may continue to receive special education until the end of the school year when they turn 21.1

b. IDEA rights transfer to student at 18: At age 18, the right to make decisions about special education transfers to the student from the parents.2 For example, when a student turns 18 he or she starts signing the Individualized Education Program (‘IEP’) plan. Parents still keep their right to receive notices from the school and to have access to the student’s school records.3 A student who is 18 or over may sign a power of attorney giving parents or another adult the authority to exercise the student's education rights. If a student who is age 18 or over has a court-appointed guardian, the guardianship order may include authority to make educational decisions for the student. At least one year before a student turns eighteen; schools must notify the student and parents about the upcoming transfer of rights to the student. The transfer of rights is further described in The Parent Guide to Special Education Services in South Carolina. The Guide is available at the “Parent Resource” section of the website of the SC Department of Education: http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/Standards-and-Learning/Exceptional-Children/

c. Transition services prior to age 18: At age 18 many students leave high school to go to work or college. So, beginning at age 13 in South Carolina, special education IEPs must

---

1 SC Code Ann 59-33-10 states that education for children with disabilities will be provided in public schools between the ages designated in §59-63-20.
2 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 U.S. Code 1415 (m); 34 Code of Federal Regulations Section 300.520; and SC Code Ann. Regulation 43.243 V 21
3 The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 20 U.S. Code 1232g et seq., also provides parents with access to student records if the student continues to be a dependent of the parent for tax purposes.
include goals and services needed to transition the student from school to later life. Post-high school activities may include post-secondary education (college), vocational training, employment, and independent living skills. For example, the IEP team may do transition planning to decide if the student will take classes leading to a regular high school diploma or an alternative diploma (e.g. employment diploma). Transition planning can begin earlier than age 13 if the IEP team determines it is appropriate. The school must invite the student to attend IEP meetings where transition services are discussed and identify any other agency being invited to attend the IEP meeting (such as the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation).

4. Rights to school records: The Family Educational Records and Privacy Act of 1974 and its regulations give parents the right to access school records, the right to confidential treatment of records, and the right to seek correction of records. These rights pass to the student at age 18. Parents continue to have access to records of a student who is still their income tax dependent.

3. Health Care Decisions:
   a. Age 16. A child is able to consent to all his/her own health care decisions except operations.
   b. Age 18. As an adult, a person makes all his/her own health care decisions, unless incapable because: (1) a court has previously declared the person incapacitated and appointed a guardian OR (2) under the South Carolina Adult Health Care Consent Act, two physicians have determined the person is unable to consent. Then health care decisions for the person are made either by (a) someone who holds a medical power of attorney from the person or (b) family members in the order named in the law. Unless a single person has adult children, the person's parents continue to be primary decision makers.

4. Guardianship/Conservatorship:
If person of any age is unable to make decisions about personal affairs OR about property, a court can declare the individual an "incapacitated person" (incompetent).
   a. Guardianship relates to personal affairs, such as health care decisions or where to live. It can also include the right to make educational decisions. If guardianship is ordered, the person is called a "ward" and the person exercising authority is called the "guardian." The court cannot give more authority to the guardian than is actually necessary.
   b. Conservatorship: If a person is unable to take care of business/financial affairs, a court may appoint a "conservator." A person who has a conservator is called a "protected person."
   c. Procedure: Both guardianship and conservatorship are handled in probate court. Both involve examination by two persons, including at least one physician. The examiners then testify whether they believe person is or is not incapacitated. The person has the right to an attorney. The court can order either or both guardianship/conservatorship depending on what

---

4 IDEA: 20 US Code § 1414 d(1)(A)(i)(VIII), and SC Code Ann. Regulation 42.243 IV D 3 (b)(2)
5 34 Code of Federal Regulations Part 99
6 SC Code Ann. 20-7-280
7 SC Code Ann. 20-7-280
8 SC Code Ann. 20-7-280
9 SC Code Ann. 20-7-280

is needed. If a person has a guardian, but not a conservator, the guardian has basic authority
to handle the person’s financial matters.

**Legal settlements over $25,000:** Must be approved by circuit court to ensure they are in
the best interest of any incapacitated person. Example: motor vehicle accident settlement
with insurance company, even if the case is otherwise being settled "out of court."

5. **Social Security:**
   **a.** After age 18, only a person's own income/resources affect eligibility: Many children with
disabilities are not eligible to get Supplemental Security Income (SSI), because eligibility
depends on (1) having a disability and (2) having only limited income and property. Until age
18, a part of the parents' income/property is counted as belonging to their child. Unless the
parents have very low income/property, a child may be disqualified. An 18 year old should
apply for SSI as an adult. In 2009, the SSI benefit was $674 per month and in South Carolina
automatically qualifies a person for Medicaid health coverage.

   Note: An adult can work and earn some income without losing SSI. Complex
formulas exist that exclude some earnings and even allow some income to be "saved" for
education or transportation expenses. Individuals should get advice about how working could
affect the amount of SSI they get. The Social Security Administration has free counselors
known as Community Work Incentive Coordinators (CWICs). You can find one of them by
checking the P&A fact sheet “Community Work Incentive Coordinators.” It is available in
the News and Resources section of the P&A website: [www.pandasc.org](http://www.pandasc.org)

   **b.** Reduction of SSI for adults living rent free: If a person on SSI is living rent free in
someone else's home, Social Security may reduce the SSI payment up to 1/3. This includes
an adult child who continues to live with his/her parents. However, if the person pays
reasonable rent to parents, there will be NO reduction in SSI. When child becomes 18,
consider setting up a lease. Money paid as rent can be used to benefit the SSI recipient for
anything other than food, clothing or shelter. It can be used for medical expenses, travel etc.
without causing problems. Small household or personal items can also be given without
affecting SSI. Caution: rent paid to the parents may count as income on their tax return.

   **c.** Representative Payee: If a child under 18 receives SSI, it is payable to his/her parent or
guardian. Once a person is 18, it is payable directly to him/her. If a physician determines that
the person is incapable of handling SSI, Social Security allows a representative payee to be
appointed. A court order is not necessary. A parent/family member is the most common
person designated as a representative payee. It can be a private organization or the
Department of Social Service in some counties. The "Rep payee" receives the SSI check and
controls how it is spent. If a physician later determines the person IS capable of handling
his/her own SSI check, Social Security can be notified and the check can start going directly
to the individual with the disability.

For information, call Social Security (800) 772-1213 (voice) or 1-800-325-0778 (TTY) or go
to their website at: [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

6. **Voting:**
   At age 18, a person is presumed eligible to vote. The SC Constitution, Article II, Section 4
states: "Every citizen of the United States and of this State of the age of eighteen and
upwards who is properly registered is entitled to vote as provided by law" (emphasis added).
Having a disability does not disqualify a person from voting (unless that person has been declared incompetent by a court). He/she can register at the local voter registration board or at most public agencies (Department of Social Services, Department of Motor Vehicles etc.). When it comes time to vote, a person with a disability may vote at regular polling places. The voter may have an assistant help in the voting booth. A person may also vote in advance by requesting and then sending back an absentee ballot if the person has a disability or meets other requirements for using an absentee ballot.

7. Selective Service (The "Draft"): Federal law requires ALL men between 18 and 26 to register for the draft. There is no exemption for physical or mental or cognitive conditions. However, if a man is hospitalized, institutionalized, homebound, or would not comprehend the nature of registration, evidence can be sent to Selective Service. The case will be reviewed to see if registration will be required.

Register by:
(a) Returning a Selective Service card, if it is received in the mail;
(b) Getting a Selective Service card at a post office and mailing it;
(c) Signing up at high school;
(d) Registering "on line."

Failure to register is a crime that could be prosecuted AND will result in being permanently barred from student financial assistance ("student loans"), federal job training programs, and most federal employment. Individuals may be excused from these penalties if they are later able to convince the Selective Service program that their failure to register was not "knowing and willful." See information available at http://www.sss.gov/ or write to the Selective Service System at P.O. Box 94638, Palatine IL 60094-4638. Telephone: 847 688-6888 or 888 655 1825 (voice); 847 688-2567 (TTY)

8. Making A Will: Generally, anyone can make a will once he/she turns 18, even if the person has a disability. SC law states any person “who is of sound mind and who is not a minor….may make a will.”

Knowing if someone is “of sound mind” can be a difficult. Witnesses who sign their names to a will must be able to say they believe the person was “of sound mind.” Whether a person was “of sound mind” is ultimately decided by the probate court. If the court decides the person was not “of sound mind” when the will was signed, the will is not valid. The deceased person’s property is then be disposed of according to state law covering people who die without a will.

A disability that keeps a person from personally signing a will is not a problem. SC law allows a person to direct someone else to sign the person’s name for him/her.

---

10 SC Code Ann 62-2-501. A “minor” is defined in SC Code Ann 62-1-201(24) as a person under age 18, except individuals under 18 are NOT minors if they are married or have been declared “emancipated” by a court order.
11 SC Code Ann 62-2-101 and following
12 SC Code Ann 62-2-502
Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act, is a U.S. civil-rights law, enacted 1990, that forbids discrimination of various sorts against persons with physical or mental handicaps. Its primary emphasis is on enabling these persons to enter the job market and remain employed, but it also outlaws most physical barriers in public accommodations, transportation, telecommunications, and government services. The goal of the ADA is to make sure that no qualified person with any kind of disability is turned down for a job or promotion, or refused entry to a public-access area.

Basic Facts

Title I – Employment

• Employers may not discriminate against an individual with a disability in hiring or promotion if the person is otherwise qualified for the job.

• Employers can ask about one’s ability to perform a job, but prior to offering a job they cannot inquire if someone has a disability or requires medical examinations.

• Employers cannot use tests that tend to screen out people with disabilities unless the tests measure job-related skills.

• Employers need to provide “reasonable accommodation” to individuals with disabilities. This includes steps such as job restructuring and modification of equipment.

• Employers do not need to provide accommodations that impose an “undue hardship” on business operations.

• Who needs to comply:
  – Private employers with 15 or more employees.
  – State and local government employers, regardless of the number of employees.

Title II – State and Local Governments

• State and local governments may not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities.

• State and local government agencies must make reasonable modifications to their policies and procedures to allow equal opportunities for individuals with disabilities to participate.

• All government facilities, services, and communications must be accessible consistent with the requirements of section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

• All new construction must be accessible.

• New public transit buses must be accessible to individuals with disabilities.

• Transit authorities must provide comparable paratransit or other special transportation services to individuals with disabilities who cannot use fixed route bus services, unless an undue burden would result.

• Existing rail systems must have one accessible car per train.
• New rail cars must be accessible.
• New bus and train stations must be accessible.
• Key stations in rapid light and commuter rail systems must be made accessible by July 26, 1993, with extensions up to 20 years for commuter rail (30 years for rapid and light rail).
• All existing Amtrak stations must be accessible by July 26, 2010.

Title III – Public Accommodations
• Private businesses such as restaurants, hotels, banks, and retail stores may not discriminate against individuals with disabilities.
• Auxiliary aids and services must be provided to ensure effective communications with individuals with vision or hearing impairments, unless an undue burden would result.
• Physical barriers in existing facilities must be removed, if removal is readily achievable. If removal is not readily achievable, alternative methods of providing the services must be offered, if they are readily achievable.
• All new construction and alterations of facilities must be accessible.

Title IV – Telecommunications
• Companies offering telephone service to the general public must offer telephone relay services to individuals who use telecommunications devices for the deaf (TDDs) or similar devices.
• All television public service announcements produced or funded in whole or in part by the federal government include closed captioning.

Title V – Miscellaneous Provisions
• Title V includes information regarding the ADA’s relationship with other federal and state laws such as the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
• Retaliation and coercion are prohibited.
• The U.S. Congress and the agencies of the federal legislative branch are covered; discrimination against individuals with disabilities is prohibited in employment and other programs.

The U.S. Department of Justice provides information about the ADA through a toll-free Information Line. This service permits businesses, State and local governments, or others to call and ask questions about general or specific ADA requirements including questions about the ADA Standards for Accessible Design. ADA specialists are available Mon. - Fri. from 9:30 AM until 5:30 PM (Eastern Time) except on Thursday when the hours are 12:30 - 5:30 PM. For general ADA information, answers to specific technical questions, free ADA materials, or information about filing a complaint, call: 800-514-0301 (voice); 800-514-0383 (TTY). Spanish language service is also available. The Justice Department may file lawsuits in federal court to enforce the ADA and courts may order compensatory damages and back pay to remedy discrimination if the Department prevails.
Self-Determination

Self-determination means having the freedom to be in charge of your own life, choosing where you live, who you spend time with, and what you do. It means having the resources you need to create a good life and to make responsible decisions. It also means choosing where, when, and how you get help for any problems you might have.

Self-determination is a combination of attitudes and abilities that lead people to set goals for themselves and to take the initiative to reach those goals. It is about being in charge, but is not necessarily the same thing as self-sufficiency or independence. It means making your own choices, learning to effectively solve problems, and taking control and responsibility for one's life. Practicing self-determination also means one experiences the consequences of making choices.

The development of self-determination skills is a process that begins in childhood and continues throughout one's life. Self-determination is important for all people, but it is especially important, and often more difficult to learn, for young people with disabilities. Well-meaning individuals sometimes "protect" children with disabilities by making all their decisions for them. Also, sometimes people assume that people with disabilities can't think for themselves.

Self-determination involves many attitudes and abilities including: self-awareness, assertiveness, creativity, and pride, and problem solving and self-advocacy skills. To take charge of your own life, you must be able to set goals, evaluate options, make choices and then work to achieve your goals. Since self-determination skills are most effectively learned and developed by practicing them, students with disabilities should be given ample opportunity to use their self-advocacy, decision-making and socialization skills well before they leave high school to prepare themselves for working and living in their community.

Here are some examples of statements that are based on self-determination:

- I decide whether to live alone or with someone else.
- I control who can and can’t come into my home.
- I can choose where I live.
- I choose my own friends.
- I decide whether or not to have a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- I decide how to be part of my community.
- I can choose how I spend my leisure time.
- If I want to go somewhere, I can arrange transportation.
- I’m able to stand up for myself to get what I need.
- I’m free to choose the kinds of goals I want to pursue.
- I decide how involved I want to be in my medical treatment.
- I have the final say over how I spend my money.
- I’m able to control my finances in a way that enhances my life.
- I choose what kind of work I do.
- I can avoid people who show prejudice toward me.
- I have people in my life who accept me for me.
Becoming My Own Self-Advocate

As an adult, you will need to speak up for yourself and the things you need. When you do this it is called self-advocacy and you are being a “self-advocate.” Good self-advocates are informed about the topic they are discussing. They speak calmly and clearly. They listen while others speak and consider the importance of what they are hearing.

Times I might need to be a self-advocate:
- My IEP meeting
- When asking for accommodations for classes in high school or college
- On the job
- Being involved in my community

What do I need to help me become a better self-advocate?
- Understand my rights and responsibilities
- Learn to be assertive
- Know the types of accommodations I need
- Find opportunities to make choices
- Know how to contact support people I need
- Other: ____________________________

Skills I need to be More Assertive:
- Greet people by name
- Use correct titles (for example: Mr., Mrs., or Dr.)
- Look people in the eyes
- Sit or stand up straight (don’t slump)
- Speak calmly and clearly
- Wear clean and neat clothing
- Listen carefully to others
- Don’t be too loud
- Realize when I need help and ask for it
- Show a positive attitude to others at all times
- Expect to try again if things don’t work out right now

Signs that I’m not being assertive
- I feel responsible when things are not my fault
- I do things I don’t want to do because I feel pressured
- I agree with the people in charge only because they are in charge
- I leave everything to others because I believe “they always know what’s best”
- I am afraid to speak up so that others can hear me
- I give in to defeat and become discouraged

Signs that I am too aggressive
- When someone does something I don’t like, I tell them off
- I say things that attack another person instead of talking about the issues
- If I get upset, I might yell
- I make threats
Using Good Table & Telephone Manners

Manners are something used every day to make a good impression on others and to feel good about oneself. No matter where you are - at home, work, or with friends - practicing good manners is important. Being polite and courteous means considering how others are feeling. If you practice good manners, you are showing those around you that you are considerate of their feelings and respectful.

**Table Manners**

**Do:**
- Sit properly (and straight) in your chair
- Talk about pleasant things
- Place your napkin on your lap
- Wait until everyone is seated before starting to eat
- Watch others, or ask, if you're not sure how to eat something
- Ask someone to pass the food, rather than reach across the table
- Chew with your mouth closed
- Use a knife and fork to cut your meat
- Say "excuse me" or "I'm sorry" if you burp
- Say "no thank you" if you don't want a certain dish or are full
- Say "may I please be excused" before leaving the table

**Don’t**
- Talk about gross things
- Ask for seconds before others have had firsts
- Take more than your fair share
- Overload your fork or plate
- Gobble your food
- Chew with your mouth open
- Talk with your mouth full
- Play at the table
- Hum or sing at the table
- Tip your chair or lean on the table
- Eat with or lick your fingers
- Push your plate away when you're finished

**Telephone Manners**

Good phone manners are important both at work and at home. When you are on the phone with someone, your only interaction is verbal, so saying the right things is important to make the right impression.

If you are answering the phone at a job, your employer may have a specific way they would like you to answer the phone. If they haven't told you, take the initiative and ask - it will show that you care about your performance and how your company is perceived. If your company doesn't have any standards for telephone procedures, follow the same standards that you would if you were answering the phone at home or at a friend's. Speak clearly, be polite, and offer to take a message or help out if you are answering the phone for someone else.
**Answering the Phone:** Some people like to let people know who they've reached as soon as they pick up the phone. Companies and some individuals may answer the phone "You've reached the John Smith Corporation" or "Hello, this is John Smith." When in doubt, a simple "Hello" or "Hello, this is John" will do. Unless someone (such as an employer) asks you to answer the phone in a particular way, choose a style that's comfortable for you and polite to others. Just avoid answering the phone in a way that may make the person on the other end feel uncomfortable or put on the spot (such as, "What?" or "Who is this?")

**Taking Messages:** If you answer someone else's phone or answer for someone who is not around, you should always offer to take a message. This can be as simple as saying "I'm sorry, John's stepped out. May I take a message?" or "I'm sorry, he's busy at the moment. May I take your name and number and have him call you back?"

If the person who is calling asks you to help out instead and you don't feel comfortable or don't know the answer to their questions, it is always polite to say, "I'm sorry I don't know but I'd be happy to pass the message on to John." Just remember to pass the message on! If someone leaves a message, be sure to write down their name, phone number, time they called and the message - then be sure to give the message to the person they were calling.

**Interrupting Others Who are on the Phone:** Wait until someone has finished their phone conversation before talking to them. If it's urgent and you need to use the phone or talk to someone who is on the phone, say "Excuse me, may I talk to you for a second?" or "I'm sorry, but I need to make an urgent call, do you mind if I use the phone?"

**The Phone is Your Tool**
There are times when the people who call you can be too demanding. Being polite doesn't mean you have to sacrifice your own time or drop whatever you are doing. If you are at a job or answering someone else's phone, it is your responsibility to be as polite and helpful as possible, including taking messages. (You shouldn't be answering someone else's phone if you aren't going to take the time to help out.) However, if someone calls you at home or catches you in the middle of something urgent, it is fine to offer to call them back. You can say, for example, "I'm sorry, but we were just about to sit down to dinner, can I call you back after we finish?" or "I'm sorry, but I was just about to run out the door, can I call you when I get back?"

Nowadays, many companies call people at home to try to sell them services; it's fine to tell these people that you aren't interested (it's even fine to ask them not to call you at home anymore!), as long as you do it nicely. Again, a simple "I'm sorry, but I'm not interested" or "I'm sorry but I don't make decisions over the phone; please don't call again" can put an end to some of these calls.
Some Social Skills to Remember

Secrets
Respecting other people means you also respect their wishes. If someone tells you a secret or asks you to keep something in confidence, you should. If you don't feel comfortable doing this, it's fine to say that you don't feel comfortable keeping secrets -- just be sure to do this before the person shares their secret with you.

There are some very rare exceptions to this rule: if you find out that someone is being hurt or is in danger and they are afraid to tell anyone, you should encourage them not to keep their secret. If that person is too afraid to talk, you may want to ask an expert (such as a doctor, therapist, or policeman) for their advice - you don't have to give away your friend's secret, but they may be able to help.

Body Language
Consider this, someone starts to tell a story and you sigh and roll your eyes -- your body is telling that person that you're not interested in their story and find it (and perhaps them) boring. If, on the other hand, you make eye contact with them while they are talking and nod or smile in response to what they are saying, your body is telling them "I'm paying attention to what you are saying and find your story and you interesting."

How we carry ourselves can send a message just as clearly as what we say. Standing or sitting up straight, appearing confident, looking people in the eye, and having a smile or pleasant expression gives people the impression that you are polite, confident and pleasant. Scowling, crossing your arms, slouching, or staring off into the distance (even if these are just nervous habits) may make people think that you are angry, unapproachable, or disinterested.

Actions can speak as loudly as words, so the next time you're in a social setting, ask yourself what your body language is saying to people. If you are having a hard time judging the message your body is sending, you may want to ask friends or people you know and trust what they think. Or, you may want to get the opinion of someone who doesn't know you as well. The MTSTCIL staff could help you if you want to work on your body language. Call the center nearest you for advice, tips, or even to set up a meeting and practice role-playing and body language in different settings.

Appearance
The first thing people notice about other people is the way they look. And whether we like it or not, how you look makes an impression on people. But you can use this knowledge to your advantage.

If you look neat and clean, people will feel as though you're the kind of person who makes an effort. A nice appearance shows that you value yourself and what other people think of you. Putting forth a nice appearance doesn't mean you have to spend a lot of money on clothes or accessories. Someone can look slovenly and messy in an expensive suit if they don't brush their hair or clean their clothes. Someone else can appear put together in an old shirt and slacks that have been cleaned and pressed. Showing that you take care over your appearance is more important than what you wear or how expensive your hair cut is.
In addition to taking care over your appearance, it's also important to consider if your appearance is appropriate for the situation. You may look lovely in your party clothes or feel confident in your business suit, but these would look out of place in a more casual setting such as at a picnic or at the movies.

It's important to be comfortable in what you're wearing, but you also want to fit in (within reason!) with what other people will be wearing. Wear what suits both you and the situation best: jeans and t-shirts are fine for friends and the movies; a nice shirt and slacks or suit is more appropriate for work; party clothes should be saved for parties or fancy occasions. The same goes for accessories and make up: glitter eye shadow and elaborate hair might be fun after work, but look odd for a business meeting; you may feel most comfortable lounging in sneakers and a baseball cap, but not at a fancy restaurant or party. Think about what the majority of people will be wearing in the situation and wear something that fits in and makes you feel comfortable.

Goodwill has a jobs program to help people get back into the work force. They provide training and help you to put together a resume and they video tape you doing a mock interview, so you can see how you do in the interview and what you need to improve on. They also provide training on how to dress professionally.

**Getting Along With People**

How you express yourself shows the kind of person you are - rude or considerate, selfish or generous. The really polite person is tuned in to other people's feelings and can put themselves in another person's place. They can understand how it would feel to be new to the neighborhood or job, or what it's like to be the shortest person in the class or the shyest person at a party. They react with understanding and with the kind of manners that matter because they come from the heart.

Treating others the way you would like to be treated is the easiest rule to follow and encourages others to treat you in kind. Even the most polite people in the world can occasionally say the wrong thing or make mistakes, but being kind, considerate, and generous on a daily basis shows true manners. We can't police ourselves all the time, but before you say or do something, ask yourself how you would feel if others said or did that to you. The more you practice this rule, the more natural and easier it becomes.

Good manners show the best you have to offer and encourage others to be their best. Practicing these manners on a daily basis makes for a more pleasant life.

- Be thoughtful
- Be cheerful
- Be generous
- Be cooperative
- Be helpful
- Don't be bossy
- Don't put people down or say rude things
- Respect other's privacy
- Take care of personal property
Medical Recommendations for Transition to Adult Care

As your child reaches early adulthood, check and see how long his or her pediatrician will continue to see him/her. Most pediatricians will follow kids until 21 or 22 years of age. When it’s time to move on, find a good family medicine doctor or an internist that will take Medicaid. You will need to be an advocate for your adult child in the medical system: it is documented that adults with disabilities are not screened for chronic diseases or cancers (ex. mammograms for women) as frequently as adults without disabilities.

Make sure the doctor is aware of any family history of chronic diseases or cancers so that your child can be monitored closely. Also, let the doctor know about any chronic issues your child might have already, such as allergies/sinus infections, indigestion/reflux, or menstrual discomfort. Children who have minimal verbal skills cannot inform others of discomfort and may resort to significant behavior changes. Your child’s health provider should get a good “review of systems” at each annual check-up so that chronic sources of discomfort can be monitored and medicated as necessary. For example, if your child has a history of seasonal allergies, make sure that he/she is on antihistamine in the spring, to reduce chances of discomfort from congestion, sneezing, etc.

It is also essential to establish a relationship with a dentist who is comfortable seeing adults with developmental disabilities. The following is a website that may be helpful in finding a special needs dentist in South Carolina.
http://www.handsonhealth-sc.org/A/resources/dentist.php

It is not well known that adults with developmental disabilities are at high risk for having psychiatric illnesses, for example, depression and anxiety disorders. The risk is higher than in the typical adult population. For adults with mild disabilities, the symptoms, making the diagnosis, and starting treatment is not much different than in the typical population. However, for those persons with minimal abilities to communicate, the diagnosis is much more difficult as the symptoms again, may be manifested by changes in behaviors. It is important that for any change in behavior the health provider do a complete physical exam and get a good review of the child’s current health, sleep habits, mood, and appetite to rule out any physical reasons for the behavior change. If a treatable medical condition can be ruled out, then consideration of a psychiatric issue should be discussed. Make sure that the doctor is aware of any family history of psychiatric disorders like depression, since these disorders frequently run in families.

Some genetic disorders have common physical issues that must be monitored throughout adult life, for example, those with Down Syndrome must have thyroid levels monitored periodically. Give your child’s physician information about your child’s disorder so that appropriate health care can be provided. Anything that was monitored in childhood will need to be followed in adulthood along with typical adult concerns such as cholesterol and triglycerides, and diabetes.
Health and Wellness

Once you turn 18 you are responsible for your own medical choices. Developing a medical plan with the support system of your choice can be advantageous should a medical emergency arise.

When relaying your healthcare needs to your doctor always makes your messages clear and understandable. Think about and plan what you want to say. Use the following guidelines to develop clear messages: Who, What, Where, When, and How.

People with disabilities are often limited in their opportunity to access healthcare. Many individuals are limited to Medicaid or Medicare. There are changes to healthcare within the Affordable Care Act that will hopefully open up more opportunities for people with disabilities to have access to healthcare.

**Remember, you have the right to:**

**Ask questions.**
Don't be afraid to ask a doctor, nurse or counselor, about a diagnosis, recommended treatment, or prescribed drug. You may worry that their time is important but so are your time and your health. You have a right to ask and receive a full explanation about anything pertaining to your health.

**Get a second opinion.**
Doctors, nurses, and counselors are not infallible. If you are concerned about a diagnosis or recommended treatment, even after a healthcare professional has explained it to you, it's your right to go see someone else. (Although you may have to discuss this with your insurance company before doing so.) If the information you're being given could drastically affect your life, don't feel as though you have to rely on one person's word. Healthcare professionals are right more often than they are wrong (otherwise they wouldn't be practicing), but it doesn't hurt to see other professionals for their opinion.

**Refuse treatment and/or seek alternative treatment.**
This is often a scary and difficult decision, but if you are a competent adult, you do have the right to refuse medical treatment. You may choose to do so because you have received a different opinion from another expert in the field; you may do so because you are afraid the drawbacks of the treatment will outweigh the benefits (for example, undergoing chemotherapy when there's only a small chance your cancer will spread); or you may do so for other, personal reasons. Deciding to refuse treatment or seek alternative treatments against your healthcare professional's advice can be very risky and should be considered very carefully. If you have doubts about a treatment or diagnosis, even after getting a second opinion, consider doing research (focusing on reliable resources!), talking to others who have experienced the treatment or diagnosis, and getting even a third or fourth opinion.

**Stay Informed.**
Some of your options may be limited by time, availability, or what you or your insurance is willing and able to pay, but your right to be informed doesn't have to be limited. Your local library, the Internet, health care and community centers, and advocacy groups are all
you find -- ask questions like, "Who is distributing this information?"; "What is their agenda?"; "What are their credentials?"; and "What are they not addressing?"

**Health and Wellness - Talking to Your Doctor**

As you get older, the issues you face can get more complicated and personal. It's important to find someone to talk to who is both knowledgeable and someone you can trust. Doctors and nurses are trained to help you with your health and emotional concerns. You can talk with them, they can ask you questions, and they can check out what worries you. That's their job. Even if you feel embarrassed at first about raising personal subjects it's helpful to know that doctors deal with those concerns — and all sorts of things — every day.

**It is important to talk to your Doctor, Dentist, or other professionals about:**

- Regular Checkups – To remain healthy
- Adequate exercise – You will feel and look better
- Eating problems – Not eating or over eating
- Avoiding smoking, alcohol, or recreational drugs
- Depression or anger
- Body odor
- Suicidal thoughts
- Persistent thoughts about harming others
- Sexual feelings & sexual orientation
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Birth control and family planning
- Allergies or other health concerns
- Persistent aches and pains
- Persistent flu symptoms
- Dental hygiene
- Acne & other skin problems
- Sudden changes in the way your body or skin looks

**Good Nutrition**

Practicing good nutrition pays off in several ways. We feel and look healthier and our bodies are getting the necessary vitamins and minerals. The US Government is using a picture to help us remember the correct proportions of foods that makes a balanced meal. Nutrition experts recommend that you eat more vegetables than fruit and more grains (bread/pasta/rice/etc.) than proteins (meat/fish/eggs).

The plate features four sections (vegetables, fruits, grains, and protein) plus a side order of dairy. The big message is that fruits and vegetables take up half the plate, with the vegetable portion being a little bigger than the fruit section. The plate also shows how to balance your food groups. There's a reason the protein section is smaller: You don't need as much from that group. Eating more fruits and vegetables will help you eat fewer calories overall, which helps you keep a healthy weight. Eating fruits and veggies also gives you lots of vitamins and minerals.
Family Planning

South Carolina’s Family Planning Clinics provides high quality and confidential reproductive services to women, men and teens. You can receive quality health care at affordable rates. Services are based on a sliding fee scale, which means you pay according to your income. Family Planning services are available in all 46 counties.

These are some of the many services provided:

- Birth Control Available on Site (providing up to one year of birth control supplies)
- Low or no-cost services for women, men and teens
- Educational and Counseling Services
- Physical Exams
- Pap Smear Exams
- Family Health History
- Laboratory and Pregnancy Testing
- HIV Risk Assessment (education, counseling and testing)
- Follow up of Abnormal Test Findings (as required by program policy or federal guidelines)

Sexually active clients, who are at-risk of an unintended pregnancy, are offered a broad range of acceptable and effective medically approved birth control methods, including:

- Instruction in Abstinence
- Hormonal Contraceptives
- Intrauterine Devices
- Barrier Contraceptives
- Instruction in Natural Family Planning Methods
- Permanent Methods of Contraception for Women and Men available to clients 21 or over (following stringent federal regulations)

All services are:

- Provided as required by Federal Regulations
- Provided solely on a Voluntary Basis
- Confidential
- Offered in accordance with State and Federal Laws and Regulations pertaining to discrimination

Contact your local Family Planning Clinic if you have questions about your reproductive health care, or need a birth control method. To find a clinic near you, please visit: http://www.opaclearinghouse.org/db_search.asp or call 800-868-0404
Personal Assistance Services

Personal Assistance Services (PAS) sometimes referred to as Personal Care Attendants (PCA), or caregivers, typically work in patients' homes or in residential care facilities. They assist the elderly and persons with disabilities to live in their own homes or in a residential care facility instead of in an institution or health care facility. These attendants can help patients by cleaning their homes; changing bed linens; helping patients to get out of bed, bathe, dress and eat; advising patients and their families on diet, cleanliness and health care needs; and may have other duties. Their presence is often required for the elderly or the physically or mentally impaired, who need more help than their family or friends are able to sustain. They may also provide their services outside of the home to keep the clients involved in community activities.

Personal Care Attendant Job Duties

Personal care attendants offer services based on the specific needs of their clients, so their daily tasks vary. Some may do minor housework such as laundry, food shopping and meal preparation.

Aides will often help clients get into and out of bed and dress and undress. Depending on the personal care attendant's specialty, one may also provide psychological support and instruction for their families on nutrition and medicine. Other tasks that aides perform are emptying bedpans, changing soiled bed linens and caring for disoriented patients.

It is important for personal care attendants to be able to communicate with their clients, be able to read nonverbal and verbal body language and be able to respond properly to emergency situations.

If a patient is bedridden, it can be the PCA's responsibility to ensure the bed sheets and blankets are washed and changed out on a daily basis. Dirty clothing is laundered and the house is cleaned and kept in order. Similar duties are maintained at a hospice or nursing home, though on a wider scale as there are many more patients to be tended to each day.

Depending on the abilities of the patient, a PCA will need to attend to bathing, brushing teeth, and trimming nails and hair to maintain a person's standard of cleanliness. Not only the patient, but the environment needs to be kept sanitary, so bedpans must be emptied and cleaned, soiled bedding must be switched out, and the PCA must ensure the area remains clear of trash.

Since patients who require PCA care can easily become isolated and lonely because of their restricted ability to get out and socialize, a PCA provides a vital link for them to connect with the outside world. PCAs provide transportation to and from social events the patient attends.

A comprehensive resource on this topic is: Making the Move to Managing Your Own Personal Assistance Services which can be viewed at: http://www.ncwd-youth.info/PAS-Toolkit
Keeping Important Records and Papers

It is important to keep record and papers organized and together. Document everything, including phone calls; note date, time, person spoken to, and information you received.

Some of the records which you may need are:

Personal records including:
- Birth certificate
- Social Security Card
- Family Information (who to contact in case of emergency)
- Records from agencies who provide services for you

Medical records including:
- Medical Insurance Card
- Names and addresses of doctors, dentists and therapists
- Immunization records
- Dates and results of any surgeries or medical procedures
- Specialist and therapist reports

Education records include:
- Copies of IEP’s
- Educational testing reports
- School progress reports and report cards
- Evaluation reports

Vocational information including:
- Reports from vocational assessments
- Vocational courses taken
- Work record including dares, contact person and phone numbers
- Letters of reference
- Your resume
- Job portfolio
What to Do in an Emergency

Have a list of important emergency phone numbers next to each phone in your home. These numbers may include:

- 911 or your local emergency number if your area doesn't use the 911 system
- Fire Department
- Poison Control
- Hospital
- Personal Physician
- Relative or Friend who can help out in emergency

Every household should keep in plain sight, emergency contact information. Also, Cell phone’s should include Emergency Contact Information. Emergency responders know to look for ICE on cell phones.

You may also want to note on a paper if you or anyone in your home is taking medications or has special medical needs, in case the person who is calling 911, or helping in the emergency does not know.

Every home should have a first-aid kit in case of accidents. Many large discount stores and online stores sell ready-made kits for a reasonable price (some for less than $10), or you can make your own. Some items you'll want to consider including are:

- Antibiotic ointments (such as Neosporin [T])
- Antiseptic (such as alcohol or hydrogen peroxide)
- Bandages and/or gauze
- Cotton balls or swabs
- Eye drops
- First Aid Guide (simple first-aid instructions on how to treat burns, cuts, and other minor injuries)
- Hot/cold compresses
- Pain relievers (such as aspirin or ibuprofen)
- Soap and water (or soap towelettes)
- Scissors
- Special medications for your family (Does someone in your family have asthma or need an inhaler? Is someone diabetic or allergic to bees? Be sure to have extra supplies for their special needs)
- Tweezers
Fire Safety

Fire Prevention: Kitchen

More fires start in the kitchen than anywhere else in the home - but that doesn't mean you have to get rid of your stove or eat out all the time. There's a lot you can do to help fireproof your kitchen and reduce the chances of a fire starting from cooking. Both gas and electric stoves can cause fires, as can toasters, toaster ovens, and any electrical appliance that can overheat. Be sure to follow the instructions when using your appliances. Here are some quick tips to help keep your kitchen a safe place.

- Don't store things on top of, in, or around your oven. Keep flammable things like dishtowels, paper bags, or cereal boxes, away from your stove. Don't use your oven as 'extra storage' for flammable things like paper or plastic bags, plastic containers, or dishtowels.
- Turn pot handles toward the center of the stove when cooking on the stove top.
- Don't leave cooking unattended.
- Use caution when cooking and handling hot objects. Use potholders (as opposed to rags, that may catch fire) when moving any hot object, even from the microwave.
- Avoid wearing clothes with long, loose-fitting sleeves that may catch fire easily. If your clothing catches fire, STOP, DROP AND ROLL!
- If a pot catches fire, turn off the burner and cover the pot with a lid.
- Keep cooking appliances free of food crumbs and scraps. Clean your stove top, oven and toaster regularly. Use caution when cleaning your appliances - unplug any electrical appliances and follow the cleaning instructions closely.
- Keep electrical appliances away from water (the sink) and fire (the stove top/oven).
- Don't try to put out grease or electrical fires with water - this makes them worse! You can use baking soda to extinguish a grease fire – keep a box handy.
- Use your stove only as directed. If you have a gas stove, make sure you’ve been taught how to use it properly. Your stove should not be used to heat the room.

Fire Prevention: Household

Taking a few precautions around your home can greatly reduce the risk of fires. Here are some quick tips to help keep your home a safe place:

- Store and use matches, lighters, and candles carefully. Store them in a cool, dry place away from heat sources (such as stoves or heaters). Don't light matches or burn candles around objects that can catch on fire such as newspapers, cardboard boxes, or curtains. Never leave candles burning unattended.
- Overload electrical outlets.
- Store and use flammable liquids (liquids that can catch on fire) carefully. If possible, store paints, paint thinners, and gasoline at least 30 feet away from your home. If you don't have access to outside storage, store in well-sealed containers in a cool, dry place away from electricity and heat sources. Never use flammable materials like aerosol cans and nail polish remover around fire or lit cigarettes.
- Use caution around fireplaces and wood stoves. Don't stand too close to a fireplace or wood stove. If you have an open fireplace or stove, make sure it has a screen to
protect you (and the surrounding furniture) from sparks. Don't stack flammable things like newspapers, bags, or even firewood too close to a fireplace or stove and never leave a fire unattended. If you are using your fireplace on a regular basis, make sure you have your chimney professionally cleaned every year.

- Never put anything over a lamp, like clothes or a blanket. Be sure your lamps have fire-resistant lampshades and are a safe distance from flammable objects. Also be sure that the light bulbs you use are the correct wattage for your lamp.
- Have more than 1 safe and easy-to-use entrance/exit to your home.
- Check appliances and electrical cords regularly. Make sure they are not frayed or wires exposed. Cords and plugs for appliances should not feel hot when in use.
- Keep at least three feet between heaters and anything that can burn.
- Make sure that your heating system is maintained, cleaned, and checked yearly.
- Always have at least one working smoke detector. If you rent, your landlord is required to have working smoke alarms in your apartment or house. Test smoke alarms monthly and replace batteries at least once a year.
- Use a licensed electrician for repairs.

Fire Prevention: Smoking
Smoking is not only dangerous to your health because it causes cancer; it is also the number one cause of fires. Careless smoking is the leading cause of fire deaths. If you are a smoker or live with one, there are some things you can do to reduce the risk of fire.

- Never smoke in bed.
- Never leave burning cigarettes unattended.
- Don't empty recently used ashtrays into a trashcan or other container. Don't smoke around flammable materials. Don't smoke around gas, paints, aerosol cans, newspapers, and other flammable objects.
- Keep ashtrays away from flammable objects and windows or breezes.
- When smoking outside, dispose of cigarettes and matches properly.

Be Prepared: Escape Plans
Fires can spread quickly and fill the home with smoke that makes it hard to both see and breathe. Plan what you would do in case of a fire before a fire occurs. Here are some important steps to any fire escape plan.

1. Identify your exits. Even if you are staying away from home. Exits can be a door or window. If you live in an apartment building, your apartment should have access to both the main stairwell and an alternate fire escape. If you live in a two-story home, consider buying fire escape ladders for the bedrooms. If you or someone in your family is physically disabled, make sure that their bedroom has exits that are easily accessible.
2. Get out fast. Don't stop to call the fire department or take time to get dressed or grab any belongings. If you can already smell smoke or see flames, you need to move quickly.
3. Check doors for heat before opening. If the door is hot, find another exit. The fire may be right on the other side and opening the door can give it the oxygen it needs to spread.
4. Stay low to the ground to avoid breathing smoke.
5. If anything on your person catches on fire, STOP, DROP and ROLL.
6. Don't use elevators during a fire.
7. If you can't get out place wet towels, blankets or clothing under the door to keep out the smoke. If possible, get to the bathroom and fill the tub with water. Stay low and cover your face (preferably with a wet cloth) for easier breathing.
8. Set up a safe and easy-to-remember place to meet others once you have escaped.
9. After you get out, call the fire department. Dialing 911 will get you emergency services.
10. Don't go back inside a burning building! Once you have escaped, stay out!
11. Practice your escape plan regularly.

**Special Considerations**
Some people require accommodations, alterations to safety equipment, or other special considerations. Some people may need extra help during emergencies.

Smoke alarms with a vibrating pad or flashing light are available for the deaf and hard of hearing. Additionally, smoke alarms with strobe light outside the house to catch the attention of neighbors and emergency call systems for summoning help are also available.

Service animals have been trained to assist people during emergencies, or partnering with individuals (coworkers or neighbors) and developing emergency escape plans.

Although people have the legal right to live where they chose, some may be safest on the ground floor if you live in an apartment building. Being on the ground floor and near an exit will make your escape easier.

It may be a good idea to:

- Contact your local fire department's non-emergency line and explain your needs. They will probably suggest escape plan ideas, may perform a home fire safety inspection and offer suggestions about smoke alarm placement and maintenance.
- Speak to your family members, building manager, or neighbors about your fire safety plan and practice it with them.
- Ask emergency providers to keep your needs information on file.
- Keep a phone near your bed and be ready to call 911 or your local emergency number if a fire occurs.
**Disaster Preparedness**

It is important to prepare for possible disasters and other emergencies. Disaster conditions can result from weather occurrences such as tornadoes or hurricanes, environmental conditions such as oil or chemical spills, or household misfortunes such as fire or flooding. Disasters can strike suddenly, at anytime and anywhere, and there are three actions that anyone can take that can help make a difference.

1. **Make a Disaster Kit**

   At a minimum, have the basic supplies listed. Keep supplies in an easy-to-carry emergency preparedness kit that you can use at home or take with you in case you must evacuate.
   
   1. **Water** – one gallon per person, per day (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home).
   2. **Food** - non-perishable, easy-to-prepare items (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home).
   3. **Flashlight** w/extra batteries.
   4. **Radio** w/extra batteries or hand-cranked (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible).
   5. **First aid kit**.
   6. **Personal Medications** and medical items. (7-day supply)
   7. **Multi-purpose tool** (can opener, knife, file)
   8. **Personal care and hygiene items**.
   9. **Copies of personal documents** (medication list and pertinent medical information, proof of address, deed/lease of home, passports, birth certificates, insurance policies).
   10. **Cell phone** with chargers.
   11. **Emergency contact & family information**
   12. **Extra cash**.
   13. **Emergency blanket**.
   14. **Map(s) of the area**.

   Consider the needs of all members of your household and include any additional supplies to your kit. Suggested items to help meet the needs of others might be:

   - Medical supplies.
   - Baby supplies.
   - Two-way radios.

   There may be additional supplies to keep at home or in your kit based on the type of disasters common to your area:

   - Whistle.
   - Towels.
   - Duct tape.
   - Tools/supplies for securing your home.
   - Surgical masks.
   - Work gloves.
   - Scissors.

   There are:
   - Matches.
   - Rain gear.
   - Extra clothing.
   - Plastic sheeting.
   - Blankets or sleeping bags.

2. **Make a Disaster Plan**

   At least once a year, it is a good idea to meet with your family or household members to discuss how to plan and prepare for emergencies that are most likely to happen where you are. These things should be considered while planning:
• Identify responsibilities for each member of your household.
• If a family member is in the military, plan how you would respond in their absence if they are deployed.
• Plan what to do if you are separated during an emergency. For example, choose two places to meet: 1) Right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, such as a fire. 2) Outside your neighborhood, in case you cannot return home or are asked to evacuate.
• Choose an out-of-area emergency contact person. It may be easier to text or call long distance if local phone lines are overloaded or out of service. Everyone should have emergency contact information in writing or programmed into their cell phone.
• Plan what to do if you have to evacuate. For example, decide where you would go and what route you would take to get there. You may choose to go to a hotel/motel, stay with friends or relatives in a safe location or go to an evacuation shelter if necessary.
• Practice evacuating your home twice a year. Drive your planned evacuation route and plot alternative routes on your map in case roads are impassable.
• Plan ahead for your pets. Keep a phone list of pet-friendly hotels/motels and animal shelters that are along your evacuation routes.

3. Be Informed
Learn what disasters or emergencies may occur in your area. These events can range from those affecting only you and your family, like a home fire or medical emergency, to those affecting your entire community, like an earthquake or flood.

• Identify how local authorities will notify you during a disaster and how you will get information, whether through local radio, TV, or NOAA Weather Radio stations or channels.
• Know the difference between different weather alerts such as watches and warnings and what actions to take in each.
• Know what actions to protect yourself during disasters that may occur in areas where you travel or have moved recently.
• When a major disaster occurs your community can change in an instant. Loved ones may be hurt and emergency response is likely to be delayed. When possible, at least one member of your household should be trained in first aid and CPR.
• Share what you have learned with your family, household, and neighbors and encourage them to be informed.
Recreation and Leisure

Leisure is the time used to do what you want to do. It is personal and usually involves fun activities. People can participate in these activities at home, in school, and in the community. It is good to have a repertoire of preferred individual and group activities. Leisure activities can develop and increase social skills that are necessary to function appropriately and as independently as possible.

Recreational activities are those that people engage in for pleasure, learning, relaxation, a change of pace, fun, and socialization. These activities can also provide a means to socialize and spend time with your peers in the community.

Recreational activities vary depending on their nature, purpose and characteristics. The following questions could be asked when selecting an activity:

- Is it an individual or a group activity?
- Is it structured or unstructured?
- Is it a skilled or an unskilled activity?
- Is it a simple or a complex activity?
- Is it cooperative or competitive?
- Are there space and time considerations?

A few examples of:

**Indoor Leisure**

- Table games: Bingo, Board & Card Games (i.e.: Uno, Trouble, Checkers, Chess)
- Hobbies and Crafts: Woodworking, Photography, Needlework/Sewing, Collecting, Drawing & Painting
- Computer: Games, Social Networks, YouTube, General Surfing
- Electronic Games: Xbox, Playstation, Nintendo Wii
- Reading: Books, Magazines, Newspapers, Books on Tape

**Indoor Recreation**

- Physical Fitness: Fitness walking, Swimming, Rollerskating/blading, Weight Training, Aerobics.
- Lifetime Skills: Bowling, Pool, Ping Pong, Foosball, Darts, Air Hockey, Racquet Sports, Climbing Wall / Rock Climbing
- Dance

**Outdoor Leisure**

- Attending Community Events: Movies, Sporting Events, and Theater
- Playground: Using Equipment, Games
- Parks: Frisbee Golf, Attending a park-sponsored function
- Fishing & Hunting

**Outdoor Recreation**

- Physical Fitness: Rollerblading, Walking/Jogging/Running/Wheeling, Swimming, Biking, Winter Sports (sledding, snowshoeing, ice skating, skiing)
- Lifetime Skills: Golf / mini golf, Croquet, Bocce Ball, Horseshoes, Racquet Sports, Basketball, Football, Base (of Soft) Ball, Boating/Canoeing/Kyaking, and Surfing
Sports and Recreation

The Charleston Miracle League

The Charleston Miracle League makes memories by providing a life-changing experience for children and adults with mental and physical challenges through a community supported baseball league. The children and adults leagues play in a state-of-the-art complex built specifically for them. In addition, the CML teaches volunteers of all ages, who typically serve as buddies for the players, the value of giving back to others and their community. Baseball games are played at the Charleston Miracle League complex in the City of Charleston’s Forrest Park Playground located in West Ashley. The heart of the complex is the specially designed, rubberized-surface Joe Griffith Field, which allows players to fully participate regardless of their challenges. In addition, the complex boasts a fully functional concession stand, press box, covered picnic pavilion and handicap accessible restroom suites complete with lifts. Covered stands with viewing platforms ensure that everyone, regardless of his or her disabilities, can enjoy watching a Miracle League game.

Field Address:  
780 West Oak Forest Drive  
Charleston, SC 29407

Mailing Address:  
Charleston Miracle League  
P O Box 22072  
Charleston, SC  29413

Charleston Miracle League: (843) 763-2514

Special Olympics

The mission of Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for persons eight years of age and older with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes, and the community.

Special Olympics is founded on the belief that people with intellectual disabilities can, with proper instruction and encouragement, learn, enjoy, and benefit from participation in individual and team sports. These must be adapted only as necessary to meet the needs of those with mental and physical limitations. Special Olympics believe that consistent training is indispensable to the development of an individual's sports skills. In addition, competition among those of equal abilities is the most appropriate means of testing these skills, measuring progress, and providing incentives for personal growth.

Lucy Swaffield, CTRS   Lynn Scott  
District 2 Program Director  
Office/Fax: 843-795-6226  
LucySwafffield@bellsouth.net  
Area Director  
843-795-6226  
lthunt6969@bellsouth.net
Cybersmart - Internet Safety Tips

Sometimes it is OK to share personal information on-line. But often it can be a bad idea. An example of when it’s OK would be if you were visiting a website such as Amazon.com or E-Bay. You know those sites are safe and you have initiated the transaction to purchase an item. Another example might be a social network such as Facebook. But even under those circumstances it’s not a good idea to share all of the personal information about yourself. *Your social security number should never be shared on-line.*

Personal information includes full name, address, date of birth, phone numbers, email addresses, usernames and passwords, bank details, student identity card details or passport details.

Sometimes you can meet someone or see something online that is unpleasant or makes you feel uncomfortable. This could be communication from someone you met online that starts asking personal questions or sends you photos or material that are upsetting or that you don’t like. It can sometimes be from someone you know.

**What should you do?**

- **Tell someone.** Tell your mom, dad, an older brother or sister, or another adult you trust.
- **Don’t respond** to messages and leave the site or chat session immediately.
- **Set your profile to ‘private’** so your personal details are kept secret and it’s harder for people you don’t know to contact you.
- **Don’t open messages or attachments** from people you don’t know. They could contain offensive information, be scams or sales pitches to trick you out of money, or contain viruses that will harm your computer.
- **Think** before you hit, send, or post. Once posted, it can be difficult to remove content.
- **Remember** that private images and videos you send to friends or post on a social networking site may be passed on to others and uploaded to public sites.

**Be respectful** of other people’s content that you post or share. For example, a photo that your friend took is their property, not yours. You should post it online only if you have their permission and make a note about where you got it from.

**Be careful who you trust online.** A person can pretend to be someone they are not.

**Always keep your password(s) secret.** Don’t even share it with your friends.

**Has something happened online that makes you feel uncomfortable, scared or sad?** Talking to friends and family can help a lot. It can also help to talk to someone who’s an expert in the types of things you might be going through.
SC Department of Disabilities and Special Needs

SC Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN), is the state agency that plans, develops, oversees and funds services for South Carolinians with severe, lifelong disabilities of mental retardation, autism, traumatic brain injury and spinal cord injury and conditions related to each of these four disabilities.

While DDSN provides services that address these specific disabilities, we recognize that our consumers may routinely need services provided by other state agencies - such as education, public health, mental health, housing, and social services. DDSN works with other state agencies to coordinate, arrange for and deliver services to eligible persons.

In-State Regional Centers
DDSN also provides 24-hour care for individuals with more complex, severe disabilities in Regional Centers, located in Columbia, Florence, Clinton, Summerville and Hartsville. DDSN directly oversees the operation of these facilities, which are managed by a facility administrator.

In Local Communities
DDSN provides services to the majority of eligible individuals in their home communities through contracts with local service-provider agencies. Many of these agencies are called Disabilities and Special Needs (DSN) Boards, and they serve every county in South Carolina. There are also other qualified service providers available in many locations around the state. Locally, these agencies are:

- Disabilities Board of Charleston County, 995 Morrison Drive, Suite 100, Charleston, SC; (843) 805-5800
- Berkeley Citizens, 1301 Old Highway 52 S., PO Box 429, Moncks Corner, SC 29461 (843) 761-0300
- Dorchester County Board of Disabilities, 2717 W. 5th N, Summerville, SC 29483, (843) 871-1285

Types of DDSN Services Available
DDSN strives to serve all South Carolinians who are eligible for services and to ensure that services meet high standards. The Department recognizes that existing programs or services may not always meet the needs of individuals with unique or multiple disabilities. Since someone with a disability often needs other services not related to their disability, the DDSN staff works with other federal, state and local service agencies to coordinate educational, medical, mental health, social, public health and housing services provided by these agencies.

Early intervention is a family-focused, in home service for children from birth to age 6. An Early Interventionist helps families understand their child’s development and gives specific training to address areas of delay. Service Coordination is provided in accordance with an Individualized Family Service Plan. DDSN’s Early Intervention program serves children and families, some of whom are eligible for BabyNet in their own home or in the child’s natural environment.
**Genetic evaluation, treatment and counseling services** are available to families in which a developmental disability has occurred and to families at risk of having a child with a disability or a special need. Emphasis is on preventing disabilities, when possible.

**Respite services** provide temporary care to individuals, allowing families or caregivers to handle emergencies and personal situations or take a break. Respite may be provided in the individual/family home, a qualified caregiver’s home, regional center or other locations.

**Financial Assistance** is available to help individuals/families afford the cost of care for an individual in their own home. Funds are available for transportation, specialized equipment, child care, recreation and other needs.

**Individualized summer services** provide financial assistance for families whose family members with a disability attend activities selected by the person or the parents. Participants attend various types of summer activities, from traditional camps to highly individualized services and activities.

**Summer camps** provide supervised recreational activities for children and adults. Day camps and residential camps are available.

**Individual Rehabilitation Support Services** are interventions designed for each person to develop an enhanced capacity for independence, self-direction and participation in community activities. Supports include interventions intended to develop or restore functional abilities, personal identity, responsibility and self-direction. The services are provided in the person’s own community and home.

**Supported Employment**
Supported employment provides assistance to obtain and sustain employment. This service enables people to earn wages and opportunities to interact with non-disabled workers. Supported employment includes job coaching and enclave and mobile work crew opportunities.

- **Job coaches** develop employment opportunities and work with participants on a one-to-one basis to teach them the skills necessary to perform and maintain a particular job. Assistance is also provided to help individuals develop job-related skills such as money management, use of transportation and interpersonal skill development.
- **Enclaves** provide work for groups of adults at a local industry or business. Participants work on-site. These jobs often lead to competitive employment.
- **Mobile work crews** train teams of adults to work in their community and perform services such as lawn care, janitorial or landscaping services.
- **Center-based services** provide a safe and healthy environment for people to develop social and personal care skills for more independent and productive lives. Participants may receive competitive wages for work.
Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN)

Residential Services for Eligible People with Disabilities in South Carolina

Intermediate Care Facility: Services may be provided in a large residential home or in an institutional setting for individuals who require assistance with challenging behaviors and medical needs. Each facility has staff that remains awake during all shifts. Services within this system can include medical, psychiatric, psychological, occupational, and physical therapies, speech and dietary supports.

High Management Group Home: The target population includes dually diagnosed children and adolescents who have been classified as severely emotionally disturbed with mild to moderate mental retardation.

Community Residential Care Facilities (CRCF): Under South Carolina law, a CRCF is defined as providing room and board, plus a degree of personal assistance. The extent of the assistance provided can vary greatly from facility to facility. The size and character of CRCFs can also be quite different, with CRCFs ranging from relatively small settings in a converted private residence to very large facilities built especially to serve in this role. CRCFs often market their services under the umbrella of "assisted living." Facilities are staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The treatment team composition is dictated by the needs of individuals. DHEC monitors state licensing regulations and SCDDSN monitors for the programmatic regulations. A "Community Residential Care Facility" (CRCF) falls somewhere along the spectrum between a nursing home and an individual's residence. CRCFs provide a valuable alternative for an individual who does not yet require nursing home care, but is also not able to remain at home.

Community Training Home II (CTH II): The CTH II program offers individuals the opportunity to live in local neighborhoods with the 24 hour-a-day supervision and assistance of agency employees. Personalized care, individualized training, recreation and other activities within the community are provided to meet the needs of each individual.

Community Training Home I (CTH I): The CTH I caregivers are trained private citizens who provide care in their own homes for one or two individuals. Homes and caregivers are licensed by the South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs.

Supervised Living Program (SLP): State funded apartment or home placements for individuals. These placements are not staffed 24 hours a day due to the independence demonstrated by the program participants. SLP Coordinators frequently check in on people and assist with such tasks as grocery shopping and banking. SCDDSN monitors the program standards for Supervised Living. One or two people live in each setting.

Residential Habilitation: Are services that include the care, skills training and supervision provided to individuals in a non-institutional setting. The degree and type of care, supervision, skills training and support of individuals will be based on the plan and the individual’s needs. Services include assistance with acquisition, retention, or improvement in skills related to activities of daily living, such as personal grooming and cleanliness, bed making and household chores, eating and the preparation of food, and the social and adaptive skills necessary to enable the individual to reside in a non-institutional setting.
**Fair Housing Act**

The Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988 establishes an administrative enforcement mechanism, provides stiffer penalties than the present act, and expands its coverage to include disabled persons and families with children. The act, among its more important provisions:

- bars discrimination in the sale or rental of housing on the basis of a disability, and requires the design and construction of new covered multifamily dwellings to meet certain adaptability and accessibility requirements
- bars discrimination in the sale or rental of housing because there are children in a family, but exempts housing for older persons, e.g., Section 202 housing
- provides HUD with the ability to initiate complaints
- gives HUD new enforcement authority for handling complaints of discrimination in the sale or rental of housing
- if after investigation HUD finds reasonable cause to believe that a violation has occurred, the department issues a charge on behalf of the aggrieved person
- requires HUD to prepare an annual report to the congress on progress in eliminating housing discrimination
- requires HUD to make data available to the public on the race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, and family characteristics of persons and households eligible for or assisted by HUD programs
- requires HUD to issue regulations implementing this act within 180 days of enactment

Housing services that are currently offered by all the centers for independent living are listed below. As an established part of their program, they:

- provide outreach assistance to distribute information and materials
- identify persons with disabilities who need housing and make referrals
- provide technical assistance in development and construction of barrier free designs
- supply housing data from specific surveys and ongoing assessment
- provide training to persons with disabilities to facilitate their efforts to live independently and maintain a housing unit
- provide counseling to persons with disabilities, regarding their responsibilities in housing
- offer consultation services to support the development of accessible housing resources

**Service animals as a reasonable accommodation**

One of the areas of disability discrimination that generates many calls to the HUD office is the subject of service animals for persons with disabilities. Housing providers who have "no pets" policies must make a reasonable accommodation to a person with disabilities whose physician has determined that an animal would be beneficial to the treatment and well being of their patient.
If a tenant with a disability provides the housing provider with a written statement from
the tenant's treating physician stating that the tenant is under his/her care, and the tenant's
mental or physical condition would benefit from having a service animal, the housing
provider must allow such animal.

Legal Structural Accessibility Requirements

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) covers:**

- Public service buildings, programs, and services of public entities
- Public accommodation commercial buildings owned by private entities

**Section 504 covers:**

- Projects federally funded, common areas and 5% of housing units to Uniform
  Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) standards
- Access to buildings and programs federally funded

**Fair Housing Amendments Act (FHAA) design and construction covers:**

- Multi-family units of four or more
- 100% of units on ground and elevator floors must be accessible
- Funded by public or private monies
- Includes garden apartments, condos, timeshares, traditional units, elderly housing

**Exemptions:**

- Interior of housing units
- Privately funded housing
- Multi-family housing less than four units
  - Two story townhouses
  - Single family homes
  - Group homes in single family residences
  - Housing that had 1st occupancy before March 13, 1991, or had its last
    building permit or renewal thereof before June 15, 1990

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 has five titles. Title II and Title III pertain to
public services and public accommodations, and common area of housing, excluding unit
interiors.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 only applies to federally funded programs
and activities, including housing.

The Fair Housing Act makes it illegal to refuse an individual with a disability permission
to make reasonable modifications to an existing unit, at their own expense, necessary to
allow full enjoyment of the unit.
It is illegal to refuse to make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices, or services to allow a disabled person equal opportunity to use a dwelling.

It is illegal to ask whether an applicant has a disability or to ask any questions which attempt to determine the nature or extent of the disability

**Design and construction requirements of the Fair Housing Amendments Act**

Multi-family housing of four or more units with first occupancy after March 13, 1991, or having its last building permit issued on or after January 13, 1990, must be designed and built to be accessible and adaptable for persons with mobility impairments via pathway to the units, accessible entrance, interior of units, and common areas. This applies regardless of the source of funding, whether financed with private or federal funds.

All units on ground floors must be accessible into and throughout the units. If the building has more than one floor and has an elevator, all units on all floors must be accessible into and throughout the units.

Included in covered dwellings are condominiums, timeshares, and standard apartment units. Excluded are two story townhouses and buildings on terrain that cannot achieve accessibility.

Persons contemplating construction of multi-family units are urged to order and use the Fair Housing Act design manual.

**Federally financed housing**

Housing that is federally financed is covered by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, in addition to the federal fair housing law.

Section 504 prohibits a recipient of federal funds from providing a qualified individual with disabilities any housing, aid, benefit, or service that is not as effective in affording the individual an equal opportunity to obtain the result, to gain the same benefit, or to reach the same level of achievement as that provided to others. Unlike the Fair Housing Act, Section 504 requires the federal recipient to modify a unit to accommodate an individual with disabilities. The modifications are made at the expense of the federal recipient.

In the case of historic preservation programs or activities, a recipient shall give priority to methods that provide physical access to individuals with disabilities, where feasible.

A recipient may be exempt from certain requirements if they can demonstrate that an action would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of its program or activity or in undue financial or administrative burden. In such case, the recipient shall take any action that would not have the undesired result and would nevertheless ensure that individuals with disabilities receive the benefits and services of the program or activity.
Banking and Finances

Managing Your Finances

One of the biggest steps toward leading an independent life is financial independence. This means taking control of your money - both the money that you earn or receive and the money that you spend. You only have so much money – you need to determine where it is going and make sure you’re spending it in the right place. In order to “make ends meet” it is a good idea to follow a budget. That way, you’ll know that you will have enough money to pay your monthly financial responsibilities before you start spending your money on recreation and luxuries. Budgeting your money means that you compare the amount of money that you have and the amount of money you spend. If you spend more money that you bring in then you will find yourself in debit. If you are in debt, it is harder to be independent.

When learning how to manage your money, it is first important to understand how much money you have, where it comes from, whether you are paying taxes, and, if so, what you are being taxed for. This money that you are receiving (either from a job, investments, or through the government or your family) is called your income.

A second important reason to know your income is to understand your taxes. People who live and work in the United States are usually required to pay federal taxes (taxes that apply to everyone in the United States) and state taxes (taxes decided upon by the state in which you live.) The amount of taxes you pay is based on your yearly income and expenses.

When figuring out your income and setting a budget, it is important to remember that you may never see all of the money that you earn. This is because a portion of your income goes to taxes and is usually taken directly from your paycheck.

Therefore, there are two types of income. Gross income is the total amount of money you earn. The amount a person receives after taxes is called their net income. When creating a budget, you want to use your net income (the actual amount of money you have available) rather than your gross income.

Each month you should set aside the total amount of money that you will need to pay for your food and lodging. You must budget for costs associated with employment, transportation, and health care. These are the necessities. After budgeting for these expenses, you can then prioritize how you spend the rest of your money. You may even want to save some of it! It takes practice – and some self-control – to keep within your budget and it is OK to make changes when needed. Good planning will help reduce your worries and improve your independence.

Banking

A checking account allows you to put your money (either checks or cash) into one account from which you can then write checks or withdraw cash. Checking accounts are convenient for many reasons.
While cash may be convenient for small purchases, you may want to write a check for more expensive purchases (for example medications). Some companies, such as utilities or insurance companies require payment by check or money order.

When using a checking account, it's important to remember the following things:

- You can't write a check for more money than is in your account.
- You may be required to keep a minimum balance (a certain amount of money) in your account at all times - this may be as little as $10 or as much as several hundred dollars.
- Keep track of each check that you write and balance your checkbook regularly.
- Don't write blank checks to people or companies (allowing them to fill in the amount) or let others write checks for you.
- Before opening a bank account, you may want to 'shop around' and find a bank that is not only convenient to you, but also offers you the best deal. Below is a list of questions to help you make your decision.

Once you have decided upon the bank you like, be sure to ask them what information you may need to bring when you open your account or accounts. Generally, banks require:

- Picture identification (such as a driver's license or state ID)
- Proof of your social security number (this may be your social security card, a valid identification with your social security number on it, or a pay stub with your social security number)
- Proof of residence/address (your lease or rental agreement or utility bills with your name and address)
- Initial deposit
- Creating a budget is an easy way to manage your money, pay your bills on time, and even set aside money for extras like vacations or large purchases. When creating a budget you need to consider both your income and your expenses. You then need to figure out how your income can meet your expenses (hopefully with some money left over for the fun stuff!)
- Although this sounds difficult, it can actually be quite easy. The hardest part is often making yourself stick to your budget! But the first step to doing that is to set a goal for yourself (this can be as simple as "I want to pay my bills on time and in full" or as fun as "I want to save money for a car by the end of the year"). Then create a realistic budget that will help you meet your goal.

No matter where you live, opening a bank account can be an essential part of life, but you have to check around to find out what services a bank provides. Banks offer a wide variety of services and you probably won't need them all. Ask yourself what banking services are important to you at this time and then look around to find a bank in your area that might meet your needs, including online banking options. You will need to find a bank if you want to:

1. apply for a credit card
2. buy traveler's checks
3. cash a check
4. check your account balance
5. deposit money
6. exchange money
7. fill out a withdraw slip
8. open a checking account
9. open a savings account
10. order checks
11. pay off a loan
12. pay your bills online
13. rent a safety deposit box
14. review your bank statement
15. take out a loan
16. talk with a bank teller
17. talk with the bank manager
18. transfer money
19. use a debit card
20. withdraw money
## Worksheet for Developing a *Prorated* Monthly Budget

### INCOME:
- Government Benefits (i.e.: SSI/SSDI)  \_
- Employment  \_
- Other  \_

**TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME**  \_

### EXPENSES:
- **Housing:**
  - Rent  \_
  - Utilities  \_
  - Maintenance  \_
  - Other  \_

- **Care Assistance:**
  - 24-Assistance (if required)  \_
  - Housekeeping/Custodial  \_
  - Other  \_

- **Personal Needs:**
  - Haircuts, beauty shop  \_
  - Telephone/Internet/Cable TV  \_
  - Clothing  \_
  - Pocket Money  \_
  - Other  \_

- **Employment:**
  - Transportation/Parking  \_
  - Uniforms  \_
  - Other  \_

- **Education:**
  - Transportation/Parking  \_
  - Tuition  \_
  - Fees/Dues  \_
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books, materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical/Dental Care:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Med/Dental visits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs, medicine, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation/parking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinarian Visits (pet owners)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; Groceries:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals/Snacks/Packed Lunches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaning/Laundry Supplies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Care/Hygiene Items</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pet Food</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure/Social/Recreational:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports/Special Olympics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(movies, concerts, sporting events, etc)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movie/game Rentals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dining/evenings out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees/Dues (i.e.: gym, clubs, etc)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscriptions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Vehicle:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas/Oil/Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>License/Registration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Insurance:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical/Dental</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Vehicle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Property</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special Needs:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment repair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramp</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide dog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Aids/Batteries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheelchair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL MONTHLY EXPENSES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUMMARY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expenses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposable Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Special Needs Trust  
A Brief Summary for Estate Planning

Parents of disabled children face unique challenges in planning for their children's social, medical and financial needs. Planning for the unthinkable allows you to take control of your child's emotional and financial security. It will also give you peace of mind to know that your child will be cared for in the way you intended.

Many families believe that they have so few assets that an estate plan is not necessary. This is not true. We often have more assets than we realize, although some assets may become important only after our death. The most notable asset of this type is life insurance. Therefore, whether you consider yourselves a family of substantial means or with little or no assets, estate planning should be done.

The primary factor will be whether or not your son or daughter receives (or may one day need to depend on) government benefits such as Supplemental Security Insurance (SSI), subsidized housing, personal attendant care, or Medicaid. If, he or she acquires too many assets through inheriting all or part of your estate, he or she may be ineligible for these benefits. Therefore, in order to protect your son or daughter's eligibility for government benefits at some point in the future and to provide for his or her long-range needs, you may need to consider establishing a special estate plan.

If your son or daughter's disability affects his or her mental capability, the need to create a special estate plan is more clear-cut. Mental illness and cognitive disabilities often impair a person's ability to manage his or her own financial affairs, while simultaneously increasing financial need. As a result, you must take care to ensure that there are assets available after your death to help your son or daughter, while also providing that the assets are protected from his or her inability to manage them.

What to Consider When Planning Your Estate:

First: Realistically assess your son or daughter's disability and the prognosis for future development. If necessary, obtain a professional evaluation of your child's prospects and capability to earn a living and to manage financial assets. If your child is younger, it may be more difficult to predict the future. In such cases, you should take a conservative view. It is better to anticipate all possibilities, good and bad, in such a way that you do not limit your loved one's potential or set him or her up for unrealistic expectations. Remember, too, that you can change your estate plan as more information about your child becomes available.

Second: Carefully inventory your financial affairs. Estimate the size of your estate (what you own) if you should die within the next year or the next ten years. Keep in mind that the will you write governs your affairs at the time of your death, and so it must be flexible enough to meet a variety of situations. Of course you can always write a new will, but you may never actually write it due to hectic schedules, procrastination, or oversight. Thus, the will you have written must have sufficient flexibility to meet life's ever-changing circumstances.

Third: Consider the living arrangements of your son or daughter with a disability. The prospective living arrangements of your son or daughter will have a tremendous impact on
how your estate should be distributed. If you conclude that a guardian or conservator is necessary, you should be prepared to recommend a potential guardian or conservator in your will.

Fourth: Analyze the earning potential of your son or daughter. If your child is presently too young to be employed, you will have to project into the future. In many cases, even if your son or daughter is employed or expected to be employed at some point in the future, he or she will require additional financial assistance.

Fifth: Consider what government benefits your son or daughter needs and is eligible to receive. Support for a person with a disability will usually come from state and federal benefits. These might be actual case grants, such as social security or supplemental security income, or they might be in-kind support programs, such as subsidized housing or sheltered workshop employment.

Government benefits can be divided into three categories. First are those categories that are unaffected by the financial resources of the beneficiary. For example, social security disability insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries receive their benefits without regard to financial need. Regardless of what the parents leave to a son or daughter with a disability, the social security payments will still be forthcoming once the person has qualified for them.

Second, some government benefits, such as supplemental security income (SSI) and Medicaid, have financial eligibility requirements. If a person with a disability has too many assets or too much income, he or she is not eligible to receive any or all of these benefits. Someone who is eligible due to a lack of financial resources can become ineligible upon inheriting money, property, or other assets. Therefore, if your son or daughter is receiving government benefits that have financial eligibility requirements, it is important to arrange your estate in a manner that will minimize his or her loss of benefits, especially SSI or Medicaid.

Finally, there are government programs available to individuals with disabilities where payment for services is determined according to the person's ability to pay. Many states will charge the individual with a disability for programmatic benefits if he or she has sufficient assets or income.

The Special Needs Trust
Families should be aware that, while the services available through government benefit programs may be substantial (e.g., medical coverage through Medicaid), the actual cash benefits are generally quite small and force the individual to live way below the poverty level. This means that, for an individual with a disability to have any type of meaningful lifestyle, the family or local charities have to provide supplemental assistance.

With recent changes in the Social Security Administration, the primary government benefit programs are recognizing that family contributions to the person's well-being can only improve his or her overall quality of life. As long as the family's contributions are supplementary in nature, as opposed to duplicating government benefit programs, they are permitted. Thus, the current government benefit programs do permit the family to provide some supplementary income and resources to the person with a disability. However, the government regulations are very strict, and they are carefully monitored.
A reliable method of making sure that the inheritance actually has a chance of reaching a person with a disability when he or she needs it is through the legal device known as a Special Needs Trust (SNT). The SNT is developed to manage resources while maintaining the individual's eligibility for public assistance benefits. How is this done? Simply put, the family leaves whatever resources it deems appropriate to the trust. The trust is managed by a trustee on behalf of the person with the disability.

While government agencies recognize special needs trusts, they have imposed some very stringent rules and regulations upon them. This is why it is vital that any family contemplating using a SNT consult an experienced attorney -- not just one who does general estate planning, but one who is very knowledgeable about SNTs and current government benefit programs. One wrong word or phrase can make the difference between an inheritance that really benefits the person with a disability and one that causes the person to lose access to a wide range of needed services and assistance. As an illustration of this, suppose that the trust instructed the trustee (manager) to pay the person with the disability $100 a month for life. Such a mandatory income might jeopardize government benefit programs, which only allow him or her to have $70 of income each month.

The first thing that may come to mind for most families who have had experience with government benefits is that the government says that a person with a disability cannot have a trust. Correct. However, the special needs trust does not belong to the person with a disability. The trust is established and administered by someone else. The person with the disability does not have a trust. He or she is nominated as a beneficiary of the trust and is usually the only one who receives the benefits. Furthermore, the trustee (manager) is given the absolute discretion to determine when and how much the person should receive.

Given the government's stringent requirements (see the text below labeled "What the Social Security Administration Has to Say About Special Needs Trusts"), it is critical that the trust be carefully worded and show clearly that the trust:

- is established by the family (persons other than the person with the disability);
- is managed by a trustee (and successor trustees) other than the person with the disability;
- gives the trustee the absolute discretion to provide whatever assistance is required;
- should never give the person with the disability more income or resources than permitted by the government;
- must be used for supplementary purposes only; it should add to the things provided by the government benefit program, not supplant (replace) them;
- defines what it means by supplementary/special needs in general terms, as well as in specific terms related to the unique needs of the person with the disability;
- provides instructions for the person's final arrangement (families should assume that when the individual with the disability dies no relatives will be alive who know what the mother and father would have wanted);
- determines who should receive the remainder (what is left over) of the trust after the individual with the disability dies;
- provides choices for successor trustees -- people or organizations that might be able to take a personal interest in the welfare of the person with the disability; and
- protects the trust against creditors or government agencies trying to obtain funds to pay for debts of the person or the family.
Since the trust is a legal arrangement that is regulated by the laws of your state, there will be other sections that your attorney may need to insert. It is important to know that, while the majority of public assistance funds come from the federal government (which provides guidelines for SNTs), it is the responsibility of each state government to regulate trusts and administer the federal benefits. As long as the federal guidelines are followed to the letter, the state will accept the SNT, and the trust will fulfill its function.

Most families are surprised to learn that they do have a variety of resources within their reach that can be directed to the Special Needs Trust. The options open to a family include:

- Standard government benefits. These benefits form the foundation for the future.
- Savings. No matter how you look at it, the family will have to SAVE for the future. The government benefit programs have never provided enough for even poverty level existence. A regular savings program is essential to meet the person's supplementary needs in the future.
- Family assistance. Family members may wish to provide residential care, supervision, and supplemental assistance in the future.
- Parents' estate. Parents may leave a portion or all of their estate to the trust. To keep peace in a large family, parents should leave something for the other children as well.
- Inheritances. Relatives or friends who have expressed an interest in the person with the disability should be given instructions and assistance on how to leave a gift to the trust.
- Property. Some families want their loved one to live in the same house. The house can be placed in the trust and managed by a local nonprofit agency for the benefit of the person, or expanded into a group home setting.
- Investments. Certificates of Deposit, IRAs, KEOGHs, and so on can be directed to the trust.
- Military benefits. Some families have elected a Survivor Benefit Option (SBO), so the person with the disability will always have some income and medical care. They may still want a special needs trust to manage the other resources which will supplement the military benefits.
- Insurance. For the average family, life insurance may be the only way that they can leave a large lump sum for the future by making small monthly payments. It is also one of the few guaranteed methods of funding a trust. While the above items may fizzle out as people change their minds or the economy falters, a paid-up life insurance policy in an irrevocable trust will guarantee future funds.
- Other resources. Many families have resources that are unique to them. The financial planner will help you determine which ones are appropriate for funding the trust.

As families examine ways to fund the trust, they need to keep in mind something very important. Do not forget the other brothers and sisters. While the siblings may be pillars of love and understanding when it comes to their brother or sister with a disability, they have probably seen a great deal of your time and energy spent in the disability arena. They should not be left out at the end. Families tend to assume that, while they must pay for the services of a bank trustee and a guardian/advocate, relatives who take on these
responsibilities should do so for free, because that is what families do! The trustee should be directed to pay for whatever services are necessary, whether an agency or relative performs the service. This may mean the difference between a brother driving the fifty miles to his sibling's group home once a week or once every three months.

With proper legal and financial planning, the family can guarantee that the person with the disability will enjoy a comfortable lifestyle after the parents are gone.

The Letter of Intent
Simply put, the Letter of Intent is a document written by you (the parents or guardians) or other family members that describes your son or daughter's history, his or her current status, and what you hope for him or her in the future. You would be wise to write this letter today and add to it as the years go by, updating it when information about your son or daughter changes. To the maximum extent possible, it is also a good idea to involve your child in the writing of this Letter, so that the Letter truly "presents" and represents your child. The Letter is then ready at any moment to be used by all the individuals who will be involved in caring for your son or daughter, should you become ill or disabled yourself, or when you should pass away.

Although the Letter of Intent is not a legal document, the courts and others can rely upon the Letter for guidance in understanding your son or daughter, their needs and your wishes. In this way, you can continue to "speak out" on behalf of your son or daughter, providing insight and knowledge about his or her own best possible care.

Why is it Important to Write a Letter of Intent?
A Letter of Intent serves many purposes. First, it spells out in black and white your son or daughter's background and history and his or her present situation. It also describes your wishes, hopes, and desires for his or her future care and, where possible, describes your child's feelings about the present and desires for the future. While you are still living, the Letter can be used by your lawyers and financial planners to draft the proper legal documents (wills and/or trusts) to ensure your wishes are carried out. Once you are no longer able to take care of your son or daughter, due to death or illness -- and this is the most important reason to write a Letter of Intent -- the Letter gives your son or daughter's future caregivers some insight into how to care for him or her. It provides advice on possible alternatives for his or her care. If your child has a severe disability, caregivers will not have to waste precious time learning the most appropriate behavior or medical management techniques to use. If your child is used to doing things independently and only requires occasional assistance, the Letter can spell out exactly what is needed. The Letter of Intent can describe this very concrete information and much, much more, including valuable information about the personality of your son or daughter -- his or her likes, dislikes, talents, special problems, and strengths. Thus, the Letter is a crucial part of any life or estate plan, because it speaks both for and about the person with a disability and his or her family.

When Should Parents Write the Letter of Intent?
The answer is a simple one. Start now. Start today. Procrastination is easy, when your health is good, the future looks bright, and there are a hundred other pressing tasks to be done. But none of us can predict the future. What will happen to your son or daughter, if
something happens to you? Will your relatives, friends, lawyer, or the police know where to contact your son or daughter - and will that person know enough about your loved one to know what kind of care is needed and how best to provide it?

Writing the Letter of Intent now is a way to protect your son or daughter from unnecessary chaos and turmoil when he or she must depend upon someone other than you for the care and support that is necessary. The Letter of Intent helps pave your son or daughter's transition by giving future caregivers the information about him or her that they so vitally need.

Preparing the Letter is often an emotional experience for parents and their children. You will need self-discipline and motivation to work past the many painful questions and issues that must be addressed when considering your son or daughter's future.

What Information Goes Into the Letter of Intent?
How can you summarize the life of a person you have watched grow and develop over many years? What can you say that will give insight into and perhaps touch the heart of a care provider who must suddenly assume some measure of responsibility for your son or daughter?

Basically, the procedures for developing a Letter of Intent are fairly simple. You can write the Letter out longhand, or you can use a computer or typewriter. Don't worry about perfect spelling or grammar; your major concern is that anyone who reads the Letter in the future can understand exactly what you meant and what you would like to see happen in your son or daughter's life. Begin by addressing the Letter to "To Whom It May Concern." In the first paragraph list the current names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the people who should be contacted if anything should happen to you (i.e., other children, case manager, your son or daughter's school principal or employer, lawyer, financial planner, priest, etc.). You might then briefly state the family history; include names, birthdates, and addresses of family members.

The Letter will then need to focus in upon seven potentially major areas of your son or daughter's past, present, and future life. Depending upon your child's needs, these areas may be: housing/residential care, education, employment, medical history and care, behavior management, social environment, and religious environment. You might begin by summarizing your son or daughter's background and present status in each of these areas. Then summarize your wishes, hopes, and desires for his or her "best" future, listing three or four options in each of these areas. Be sure to discuss your ideas with your son or daughter and to take into consideration his or her feelings on the future (more is said about this below). The worksheet shown at the end of this article is useful for this "future planning" step, which may require much thought and planning before you actually begin to write information into the Letter of Intent.

How Do I Involve My Son or Daughter in Writing the Letter?
How much you involve your son or daughter in writing the Letter of Intent will depend in large part upon his or her age and the nature and severity of the disability. It is only fitting that young adults and adult children be involved in planning their own lives to the maximum extent possible. Many individuals have disabilities that do not prevent their full
or partial participation in the Letter-writing process. Before involving your child, however, you, as parents, might want to talk first among yourselves about the content of the Letter and your ideas regarding your child's future. When you've agreed upon the basic information you feel should go in the Letter, discuss each area with your son or daughter. Ask for your child's input about his or her favorite things to do, what type of education has been enjoyable and what might be pursued in the future, what type of employment he or she enjoys or envisions. Equally crucial to discuss are your child's future living arrangements: How does your child feel about the options you are considering listing in the Letter of Intent?

It's important that your child realize that the Letter is not a binding, legal document; it is written to give guidance, not edicts, to all those involved in care giving in the future. If you fear that your child will be upset by talking about a future that does not involve you as parents, then you may wish to let the discussion simply about the future -- what will happen when your child leaves high school or a postsecondary training program, what your child wants to be or do in the next ten years, where he or she wants to live. You may be surprised to find that discussing the future actually relieves your child. He or she may very well be worrying about what will happen when you are no longer there to provide whatever assistance is needed.

Involving your child in discussing and making decisions about the future may be more difficult if the individual has a disability that severely limits his or her ability to communicate or to judge between a variety of options. You, as parents, are probably the best judges of how much -- and how -- you can involve a son or daughter with a severe cognitive disability. For these children, the Letter is especially critical; it will serve to communicate the vital information about themselves that they cannot.

**What Happens Once the Letter of Intent Is Written?**

Once you've written the Letter of Intent about your son or daughter, the first, most important thing to do is to let people know that there is a Letter of Intent available to be consulted. This might mean telling your other children (or relatives, neighbors, friends, workshop director, pastor, or case manager) why you have written the Letter, what type of information it contains, and where the Letter can be found. Put the Letter in an easily accessible place, and make it clearly identifiable. Many parents also make copies of the Letter and give it to their other children (or persons such as a neighbor).

Secondly, you should update the Letter on a regular basis. Select one day out of each year (such as the last day of school or perhaps your son or daughter's birthday) where you will review what you have written and add any new information of importance. Talk with your child each time and incorporate his or her ideas. After each addition, sign and date the Letter. Should something change in your son or daughter's life, such as his or her caseworker or the medication he or she is taking, update the Letter immediately.

To learn more about Special Needs Trusts, please visit the following website: Autism-pdd.net/estate.html for a comprehensive document on estate planning for your child with special needs. The website includes samples of a Letter of Intent as well as other useful information.
Applying for a New Driver’s License In South Carolina

Two reasons for applying for a new license in South Carolina would be if you are a new resident to the state, or if you have never held a driver’s license. If you have never owned a driver’s license, you must hold a beginner’s permit for a minimum of 180 days before being cleared to apply for a license.

Choose Your License:
Class D (regular passenger license), Class E (non-commercial single unit vehicles), Class F (non-commercial combination vehicles), Class G (moped), Class M (motorcycle), and Commercial (CDL) A, B and C

Take a Driver’s Education Course:
Younger than 18 – Driver education is required, 18 and older – Although not mandated by the state, you should consider enrolling in a driver education course. A supplementary driver education course will provide you with valuable tips on how to be a better driver.

Prepare for the Test: South Carolina’s Driver’s Manual is your single-best source on preparing for the written exam. All of the questions on the test are based on material contained in the manual.

Locate a DMV Office: Written test are given on a walk-in basis at any Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) office.

Make Test-Day Preparations: BRING WITH YOU: Your Social Security number, Proof of identity, Proof of U.S. citizenship, Proof of insurance, a parent or guardian if younger than 18, and Cash or check to pay a $2 test fee and, if you pass, a $2.50 beginner’s permit fee.

Take the Written Test:
After studying the Driver’s Manual and meeting all of the requirements described above, you will be ready to take the written and vision tests. If you fail you must wait at least one business day to take the test again.

Get a Car:
As you get closer to obtaining a license, you will eventually need a car. Owning a vehicle will allow you to practice and give you the needed confidence before taking the road test. Before buying, be sure to get a vehicle history report on any used car you are considering. This will help shield you from any undetected defects (such as odometer fraud) and potentially extensive repair costs.

Get Car Insurance:
Car insurance, regardless if you own a permit or a license, is mandatory.

Take the driving test:
Bring to the test: (a) Proof, if under 18, that you completed a driver education course and you have held a permit for a minimum of 180 days. (b) A car in good working condition that’s legally registered and insured.
Resources

This Transition Toolkit is meant to be a resource tool that is useful, relevant, and of high quality. It has been developed by key stakeholders who understand the transitioning needs of students. The Toolkit has been bound in such a way that additional information can be added easily. We hope you will use the information provided here to build upon your Transition Toolkit so that it becomes a ready resource for years to come.

Resource Section

Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Number of Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agencies &amp; Services</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Internet Resources</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition Toolkit Sources</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Agencies, Programs, and Services

**Berkeley County School District**
229 East Main Street, Moncks Corner, SC 29461; Phone: (843)-899-8600; 
[http://www.berkeley.k12.sc.us/in](http://www.berkeley.k12.sc.us/in)

Building upon our rich Lowcountry traditions, we will ignite, in every student, a passion for life-long learning. Through dynamic instruction, creative partnerships and exceptional support, we will foster opportunities for each student to build a legacy of success.

**Carolina Autism**

Carolina Autism Supported Living Services (CASLS); 4 Carriage Lane, Suite 302, Charleston, SC 29407; Phone: (843) 573-1905; Web: [www.info@CarolinaAutism.org](http://www.info@CarolinaAutism.org)

Carolina Autism provides community group homes for people with autism, serving 3 to 4 people in each house. These homes provide supervised living with an emphasis on client choice, dignity and community presence. Community schools, Job Coaching, training in independent living skills and behavior support are key components of this program. Carolina Autism Applied Behavior Services, a program of Carolina Autism Supported Living Services, provides specialized treatment to clients diagnosed with autism and pervasive developmental disorders (PDD). Specialists work with clients and their families to implement interventions that are appropriate for each client. Consultation services are available.

**CARTA**

Charleston Area Transportation Authority, 36 John Street, Charleston, SC 29403; Phone: (843) 724-7420; Web: [www.ridecarta.com/](http://www.ridecarta.com/)

CARTA is the public transportation system with routes serving North Charleston, Downtown Charleston, Mt. Pleasant, James Island, and West Ashley. Guide, signal, service and police dogs are the ONLY pets permitted on CARTA Vehicles. All CARTA vehicles are wheelchair accessible and have wheelchair tie down straps.

**Tel-A-Ride Vehicles:** This transportation option provides curb-to-curb service for those who meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) Certification Requirements. If you are unable to get to the bus, Tel-A-Ride comes to you within the defined Tel-A-Ride Service area. Pick up an application from CARTA, Tel-A-Ride, area hospitals and many social service agencies, or call (843) 724-7420, extension 3. Fill it out completely and return. Notice of your eligibility will arrive within 21 days. Call (843) 747-0007 to schedule a trip.

**Charleston County School District**

75 Calhoun Street, Charleston, SC 29401; Phone: (843)-937-6300; 

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is the second largest school system in South Carolina representing a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools that span 1,000 square miles of coastal lands. CCSD serves approximately 44,000 students in 80 schools and several specialized programs.
Charleston Miracle League
Field Address: 780 West Oak Forest Drive, Charleston, SC 29407; Mailing Address: Charleston Miracle League, P O Box 22072, Charleston, SC; Phone: (843) 763-2513
The Charleston Miracle League makes memories by providing a life-changing experience for children and adults with mental and physical challenges through a community supported baseball league. The children and adults leagues play in a state-of-the-art complex built specifically for them. In addition, the CML teaches volunteers of all ages, who typically serve as buddies for the players, the value of giving back to others and their community. Baseball games are played at the Charleston Miracle League complex in the City of Charleston’s Forrest Park Playground located in West Ashley. In addition, the complex boasts a fully functional concession stand, press box, covered picnic pavilion and handicap accessible restroom suites complete with lifts. Covered stands with viewing platforms ensure that everyone, regardless of his or her disabilities, can enjoy watching a Miracle League game.

ClemsonLife Program
E.T. Moore School of Education, Clemson University, 102 Tilman Hall, Clemson, SC 29634; James C. Collins, Director Email: jccolli@clemson.edu. Web: www.Clemson.edu/culife/index.html.
The ClemsonLife Program at Clemson University provides students with intellectual disabilities with a coordinated course of study that includes career exploration and preparation along with self-awareness, discovery, and personal improvement through the framework of courses, job internships, and community participation. ClemsonLife is a two year program. However, for select students, an optional third year is available to assist with job placement and community integration following completion of the ClemsonLife Program. Curriculum includes coursework and job internships. College campus setting provides access to extra-curricular activities. Peer mentor support is provided.

Client Assistance Program (Office of the Governor)
1205 Pendleton Street, Columbia, SC 29201; Phone: (800) 868-0040; E-mail: cap@oepp.sc.gov
The purpose of this program is to advise and inform clients, client applicants, and other individuals with disabilities of all the available services and benefits under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and of the services and benefits available to them under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In addition, grantees may assist and advocate for clients and client applicants in relation to projects, programs, and services provided under the Rehabilitation Act. In providing assistance and advocacy under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, a CAP agency may provide assistance and advocacy with respect to services that are directly related to employment for the client or client applicant.

Coastal Carolina University LIFE Program
642 Century University, 642 Century Circle, Conway, SC 29526; Mailing Address: PO Box 261954, Conway, SC 29528-6054; Phone: (843) 349-2665; Web: www.coastal.edu/cec/LIFEprogram.html; Email: BiddleCenter@coastal.edu
Coastal Carolina University LIFE Program is a four year post-secondary education program for students with intellectual disabilities. The LIFE Program is designed to provide both residential and non-residential options to enrolled students. The purpose of
this program is to promote a smooth and effective transition from secondary schools to a four-year higher education institution, as well as provide post-secondary opportunities on a college campus. This program will allow for the student’s full inclusion within the campus community, as well as provide supportive and developmentally appropriate scheduling and coursework to the student’s smooth, effective transition, guidance, and success throughout the program.

**College of Charleston REACH Program**
College of Charleston, 66 George Street, Charleston, SC 29424; Phone: (843) 953-4811; Email: cusackel@cofc.edu; Web: www.reach.cofc.edu

The R.E.A.C.H (Realizing Educational and Career Hopes) program at the College of Charleston is a four-year inclusive non-degree seeking program for students with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities. The purpose of the program is to provide the opportunity for all students to realize their intellectual and personal potential, and to become responsible, productive members of society. REACH students will participate in the academic, residential, social, and cultural experiences offered by the College, with appropriate support for success. Participants in the program must be over the age of 18, meet the disability eligibility requirements, and capable of an identified level of independence. There are additional admission criteria for the program.

**Continuum of Care (SC Governors Office)**
1205 Pendleton Street, Suite 372, Columbia, SC 29201; Phone: (803) 734-4500; For Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester Counties: 7410 Northside Drive, Suite 201, N. Charleston, SC 29420; Phone: (843) 569-3079; Web: www.continuumofcaredesc.gov

The Continuum of Care is a program that serves children with severe emotional disturbance. It is housed within the Governor's Office of Executive Policy and Programs. The Continuum has one administrative office (State Office) in Columbia and four regional offices. The Continuum of Care focuses on the unmet needs of their target population by supplementing existing services and promoting support that encourage family strength and self-sufficiency. Children under 18, or up to 21 if receiving special education services in public school, with a diagnosis of emotional disturbance can be eligible for services.

**The disAbility Resource Center (dRC)**
7944 Dorchester Road Suite 5 - North Charleston, SC 29418; Toll Free TTY: (866) 874-7730; Phone: (843) 225-5080; Web: www.drcilc.org; Email: info@drcilc.org

The dRC, a nonprofit organization, is grounded in the philosophy of independent living and dedicated to the empowerment of people of all ages and with all types of disabilities to live independently and fully integrated into community life and work. To that end, dRC offers community-based programs that foster self-determination and support to enable community members to advocate for themselves and to serve as advocates and peer counselors for others. The center is operated by individuals with disabilities and is consumer-controlled. Advice will be based on real life experiences of people who have been there. The dRC operates a durable medical equipment loan closet.

**Dorchester County School District 2**
102 Green wave Blvd. Summerville, SC 29483; Phone: (843) 873-2901; http://www.dorchester2.k12.sc.us/
The Division of Pupil Personnel Services; Information for Parents, Teachers, Students; The Division’s Mission: As a Professional Learning Community maximize and foster the learning potential of all students by providing balanced support through collaboration among all shareholders to include district and school staff, parents and the community.

Dorchester County School District 4
500 Ridge Street, St. George, SC 29477; Phone: (843) 563-4535; http://www.dorchester4.k12.sc.us/
With the support of a culturally diverse community eager to accept the opportunities of the future, is to develop citizens who can function successfully in a changing global society by providing challenging educational experiences, utilizing all available resources, encouraging lifelong learning and promoting character development in an environment conducive to learning.

Family Connection of South Carolina
2712 Middleburg Dr., Suite 103-B, Columbia SC 29204; (800) 578-8750
Web: infofamilyconnectionsc.org
Lowcountry: 4 Carriage Lane, St-406 B Charleston, SC 29407 Phone:(843)556-5010 or (800) 578-8750; Email: charlestoninfo@familyconnectionsc.org
Family Connection of South Carolina, Inc. is a network of parents working with community professionals to provide parent-to-parent support and assurance to families with children of all ages who have special needs. The Vision of Family Connection is that every child with special needs will reach their full potential. The Mission of Family Connection is to strengthen families of children with special needs through parent support.

Family Resource Center for Disabilities & Special Needs (FRC)
Parent Training and Resource Center (PTRC)
1575 Savannah Highway, Suite 6, Charleston, SC 29407; Phone: (843) 266-1318;
Email: bevmccarty@frcdn.org; Web: www.frcdn.org
The Family Resource Center was organized to promote opportunities for learning, inclusion, and empowerment for individuals with disabilities and special needs, their families, and their communities through such means as education, advocacy, and outreach. Their mission is met through programmatic grant projects, community collaborations, and parent/family involvement. This Transition Toolkit is a project of the FRC. The PTRC is a community parent resource center funded through the US Department of Education to provide a comprehensive program of training and education to families of children with disabilities (or suspected disabilities), age zero to twenty-six, in Berkeley, Dorchester, and Charleston Counties. Services include training workshops, newsletter, bi-annual conference, IEP Fairs, information/referral, and direct Peer Parent Mentoring.

Family Services, Inc.
4925 Lacross Road, Suite 215, North Charleston, SC 29406; Phone: (843)735-7802;
Email: info@fsisc.org
Family Services, Inc. seeks to provide a secure environment to strengthen the values of individuals and families. This is accomplished through carefully constructed programs designed to assist clients to better realize their potential and live their dreams. A staff of certified counselors offers an array of programs that will assist in specific situations.
Bankruptcy Counseling offers clients the opportunity to complete Pre- and Post-Filing Bankruptcy Counseling in a group session, by phone or online.

Behavioral Health Services division offers counseling programs for victims of domestic violence, family violence intervention and anger management.

Conservatorship Program provides financial management and protection of assets for individuals who need assistance to manage their estate and protect the estate from potential exploitation. Most individuals are appointed through the Probate Court Process, however, service is also provided for individuals who are referred by other interested and concerned entities.

Consumer Credit Counseling Services helps families and individuals find workable solutions to managing money, including creating and working with a budget and addressing credit and debt issues.

Representative Payee Program manages the day-to-day financial obligations for individuals who are on a fixed income of Social Security or Social Security Disability Benefits. Using the client's personal funds, the program handles payments for rent, utilities, food, and clothing to allow the individual to remain as functionally independent as possible.

Homeownership Resource Center promotes homeownership for low- and moderate-income families and individuals in the community. The program includes a First Time Homebuyer Workshop, Credit Improvement Classes, Reverse Mortgage Counseling and Mortgage Default and Foreclosure Counseling.

Employee Assistance Program offers businesses and industry a wide range of employee services in addition to the traditional Behavioral Health Services. The Employee Assistance Program provides benefits to employees above and beyond those a business might be able to supply.

Federation of Families of South Carolina
PO Box 1266, Columbia, SC 29202 Phone: (803) 772-5210; Web: www.fedfamsc.org
The Federation of Families of South Carolina is a Statewide Family Network organized to provide information, training and support for families of children who have been identified with or are at risk of developing an emotional or behavioral disorder. The Federation of Families also provides leadership in the area of children’s mental health through education, awareness, and advocacy.

Goodwill Industries
Goodwill Industries of Lower South Carolina, Inc.
2150 Eagle Drive, Building 100, North Charleston, SC 29406; Phone: (843) 556-0072
Web: www.palmettogoodwill.org
Goodwill Store #146 Glen McConnell, 3516 Shelby Ray Ct., Charleston, SC 29414
Phone: (843) 572-7022; Goodwill Store #233 James Island 915a Folly Rd, James Island, SC 29412, Phone: (843) 377-1482; Goodwill Store #245 Outlet 5461 Rivers Ave., North Charleston SC 29406, Phone: (843) 377-0892; Goodwill Store #235 Mt. Pleasant 120 Ben Sawyer Blvd., Mount Pleasant SC 29464, Phone: (843) 216-8088
Goodwill® services are designed to meet the diverse needs of youth, seniors, veterans and military families, immigrants, and people with disabilities, criminal backgrounds and other specialized needs. Goodwill helps these target populations in the following ways:
• **Immigrants** - Help you become part of the community through language and cultural awareness classes.
• **People with criminal backgrounds** - Help you reintegrate into society and become a contributing member in your local community.
• **People with disabilities** - Help you live independently, get a job, and advance your career by providing access to support services, specialized training and assistive technology.
• **Seniors** - Coordinate job readiness programs and supportive services to help you live independently, pursue your employment goals and gain economic security.
• **Veterans and Military Families** - Help you and your military spouse find employment, health services and skills for entering or reentering the workplace.
• **Youth** - Prepare you for a successful educational and financial future.

**Limestone College PALS Program**

Limestone College, 1115 College Dr., Gaffney, SC 29340-3799; Phone: (800) 795-7191; Web: www.limestone.edu

The Limestone College Program for Alternative Learning Styles (PALS) was developed to serve college age students with specific learning disabilities. Only students with documented learning disabilities and/or ADD/ADHD are eligible to receive program services. For program purposes, learning disabled refers to students with average to above average intelligence (above 90 IQ), who have a discrepancy between measured intelligence and achievement. While any student interested in applying to Limestone College is encouraged to do so, such students may not be eligible for services as defined by PALS. PALS is only offered during the regular academic year and only at the main campus of Limestone College, in Gaffney, SC.

**One-Stop-Centers**

Trident SC Works Center: 1930 Hanahan Road, Suite 200, North Charleston, SC 29406; Phone: (843) 574-1800; Toll-Free: (888) 226-1606; TTY: 711
Berkeley SC Works Center: 100 S. Highway 52, Moncks Corner, SC 29461; Phone: (843) 899-8722; Dorchester SC Works Center: 2885 West 5th North Street, Highway 78, Summerville, SC 29483; Phone: (843) 821-0695; Web: www.toscc.org

One-Stop Centers are designed to make accessing employment and training services easier for job seekers. One-Stop Centers are also required to help employers identify and recruit skilled workers. The One-Stop system is required to be a customer-focused and comprehensive system that increases the employment, retention, and earnings of participants. WIA names 17 categories of federally-funded programs that are to be mandated partners within the One-Stop system (GAO, 2003). (Governor Haley is making changes to ONE STOP) South Carolina's One Stop system is becoming SC Works, which will assess workers' skills right away and focus on linking them to open jobs through tailored training.

**Pro-Parents of SC**

652 Bush River Road, Suite 203, Columbia, SC 29210; Phone: (803) 772-5688, Toll Free: (800) 759-4776; Email: PROParents@proparents.org; Web: www.proparents.org

Parents Reaching Out to Parents of South Carolina, Inc., is a private, non-profit organization which provides information and training about education to families of
children with all types of disabilities. PRO-Parents believes parents can be the best advocates for their children. Experienced advisors assist parents to become more aware of their rights and responsibilities through telephone counseling, workshops and written material. PRO-Parents also serves professionals in education and related fields throughout South Carolina.

**Partners In Policymaking (PIP)** is a leadership training program for parents of children with developmental disabilities and adults with disabilities that teaches them ways to be effective advocates with Policymakers and to advocate for systems change. PIP is a project of the SC Partnership of Disability Organizations and is administered by PRO-Parents.

**Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Inc.**
3710 Landmark Drive, Suite 208, Columbia SC 29204; Phone: (866) 275-7273 (Toll free statewide-VOICE); (866) 232-4525 (Toll free statewide-TTY); (803) 782-0639 (Columbia area—VOICE/TTY); Email: info@pandasc.org (for general information);
Web: www.pandasc.org
Protection and Advocacy has attorneys and advocates who help people with disabilities. They do not charge for services and most people refer to the agency as P&A.

P&A Services include: **Information and Referral:** People who have disability related questions or problems can contact P&A by phone, email, mail, or visit any P&A office. P&A may answer questions and suggest ways to solve problems. P&A may also give written information or refer you to other places. **Case Representation:** P&A attorneys and advocates help clients with problems like abuse and neglect, employment, education, and services needed to stay out of an institution. Priorities that guide P&A work can be found on the P&A website: www.pandasc.org. **Systemic Advocacy:** P&A often helps fix problems that hurt many people with disabilities. **Training, Education and Outreach:** P&A trains individuals with disabilities and community groups about legal rights.

**Relay South Carolina (RSC)**
411 Huger Street, Columbia, SC 29201 Phone: (803) 403-9763
Relay South Carolina is a free service that provides full telephone accessibility to people who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind, and speech-disabled. This service allows text-telephone (TTY) users to communicate with standard telephone users through specially training relay operators.

**Social Security Administration (SSA)**
Security Administration, Office of Public Inquiries, Windsor Park Building, 6401 Security Blvd., Baltimore, MD 21235; Phone: (800) 772-1213 or (800) 325-0778 TTY
Web: www.socialsecurity.gov
The United States Social Security Administration is an independent agency of the United States federal government that administers Social Security, a social insurance program consisting of retirement, disability, and survivors' benefits. To qualify for these benefits, most American workers pay Social Security taxes on their earnings; future benefits are based on the employees' contributions. There are many programs that the SSA provides and can be accessed through contact information above.

**South Carolina Access Program**
1301 Gervais Street, Suite 200, Columbia, SC 29201; Phone: (803) 734-9900;
SC Access helps older adults, people with disabilities, and those who care for them access useful information about long term support and needed services. Through the sites “search-box” access is provided to useful websites, to read about important topics, and make informed choices.

South Carolina Assistive Technology Program (SCATP)
Assistive Technology Loan Program: Midlands Center, 8301 Farrow Road, Columbia SC 29203; Phone: (803) 935-5263; (800) 915-4522 toll free, (803) 935 5342 fax; Web: www.sc.edu/scatp/
SCATP offers a short-term device loan program that is available to anyone in the state. The program gives people a chance to try out different assistive technology options before making the decision to purchase, or in some cases, the decision not to purchase. SCATP loans devices, including communication devices, adapted computer hardware, environmental control devices, aids for daily living, sensory aids, switches and adapted toys for a two-week to one month period. They do not loan software, but you can make an appointment to see and try out software at the demonstration center. Loan requests are processed after receipt of a signed loan agreement. There is no charge for initial shipping. The borrower is responsible for return shipping and postal insurance. The borrower may pick up and return the device in person to avoid shipping cost.

South Carolina Association of the Deaf
437 Center Street, West Columbia, SC 29169; Phone: (803) 794-3175; Web: www.scadservices.org
South Carolina Association of the Deaf, Inc. (SCAD) is a statewide organization working with and for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in South Carolina. SCAD is the South Carolina affiliate of the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) and focuses on promoting equal treatment toward deaf and hard of hearing citizens in education, employment, legislation, healthcare, and other fields pertaining to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens of South Carolina.

South Carolina Autism Society (SCAS)
806 12th Street, West Columbia, SC 29169; Phone: (800) 438-4790; Web: www.scautism.org; Email:scas@scautism.org
The purpose of the South Carolina Autism Society is to enable all individuals with autism spectrum disorders to reach their maximum potential. SCAS services include: Information and Referral - Information for parents and professionals about autism and available services - Advocacy - Training for emergency responders (law enforcement, EMS, fire fighters, etc) on autism - Parent-School Partnership building - Service Coordination for individuals with autism spectrum disorders.

South Carolina Commission for the Blind
1430 Confederate Avenue, PO Box 2467, Columbia, SC 29202; Phone: (800) 922-2222
Email: publicinfo@sccb.sc.gov; Web: www.sccb.state.sc.us/
The Commission for the Blind is a state agency created to provide rehabilitation services, adjustment to blindness training, prevention of blindness, independent living services and
various other services to severely impaired citizens of South Carolina. There is no charge to consumers for services.

**South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN)**
3440 Harden St. Ext. Columbia, SC 29203; Mailing Address: PO Box 4706, Columbia, SC 29240, Phone: (803) 898-9600; V/TTY: (803) 898-9600; Toll Free: (888) 376-4636; Web:http://ddsn.sc.gov/

SCDDSN is the state agency that plans, develops, oversees and funds services for South Carolinians with severe, lifelong disabilities of intellectual disability, autism, traumatic brain injury and spinal cord injury and conditions related to each of these four disabilities. Their mission is to assist people with disabilities and their families in meeting needs, pursuing possibilities and achieving life goals, and to minimize the occurrence and reduce the severity of disabilities through prevention. To meet the needs of individuals with disabilities, DDSN uses County Disabilities and Special Needs Boards (DSN) to deliver services. For information and support, contact the DSN board that serves your county.

**South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS)**
2414 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201; Mailing Address: P. O, Box 8268, Columbia, SC, 29202; Phone: (803) 896-5555

The SC Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services is the agency charged with the provision of quality services to prevent or reduce the negative consequences of substance abuse and addiction. DAODAS partners with public, private, and social sector organizations to provide quality prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery support services for citizens of SC. Other services include providing education and training and a Website that provides treatment provider information and contact information for treatment providers.

**South Carolina Department of Education**
1429 Senate Street, Columbia, South Carolina, 29201; Phone: (803)734-8269; Website: www.ed.sc.gov

The Office of Exceptional Children ensures that all children with disabilities in the state have available a free appropriate public education (FAPE), protects the rights of these children and their parents, and provides leadership to school districts and state-operated programs in the provision of appropriate special educational services. The office of Adult Education strives to assist adult in the completion of a secondary education; become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency; and assist adults who are parents to obtain the educational skill necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children.

**South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce**
Trident One Stop Center: 1930 Hanahan Road, Suite 200, North Charleston, SC 29406; Phone: (843) 574-1800; Berkeley One Stop Career Center: 100 S. Highway 52, Moncks Corner, SC 29461; Phone: (843) 899-8722; Dorchester One Stop Career Center: 2885 5th North Street, Highway 78, Summerville, SC 29483; Phone: (843) 821-0695; Toll-Free: (888) 226-1660
The Trident One Stop Career System provides the highest quality workforce development services available to their customers. To accomplish this, they have created and integrated an accountable workforce development system so job seekers can find good jobs and employers can find qualified workers. Services are provided through funding from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), a division of the “Social Security Administration” and the shared costs of our partners. The One Stop Centers offer a variety of youth services that include educational assistance such as skill enhancement for employment, High School Diploma preparation, GED preparation, and college assistance program. Employment preparation services include work readiness training, job search assistance, resume preparation, and mock interviews. Occupational training programs are available in Pharmacy Tech, Manufacturing Technology, Commercial Driver License (CDL), Computer Skills, Welding, HVAC, National Retail Federation Customer Service, Medical Assistant, Certified Nursing Assistant, and Apprenticeships. One Stop Centers provide work experience and on-the-job training.

**South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC)**

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control; Sims/Aycock Building, 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201; Phone: (803) 898-DHEC (3432); Web: www.scdhec.gov/index.htm

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) is the state agency charged with protecting public health, coastal resources, and the state's land, air and water quality as authorized under multiple state and federal laws. DHEC can provide help on health related needs such as: AIDS Drug Assistance Program, Breast & Cervical Cancer Screening (Best Chance Network), Dental (Oral) Health, Family Planning, Healthcare Professional’s Quick Reference, Home Health, Laboratory Testing Services, Newborn Hearing Screening (First Sound), Newborn Home Visits, Nutrition Services for Women, Infants & Children (WIC), Quit Smoking/Tobacco Use, STD/HIV Testing. They can help you obtain Vital Records such as: Birth Certificates, Death Certificates, Marriage Certificates, & Divorce Reports. Their website also provides resources on a variety of health and environmental issues.

**South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)**

P. O. Box 8206; Columbia, SC 29202-8206; Phone: (888) 549-0820; To report fraud: (888) 364-3224

The mission of the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is to purchase the most health for those in need at the least cost to taxpayers. DHHS is comprised of several bureaus whose functions are to manage and oversee Medicaid practices. This agency oversees Care Management and Medical Support Services that enhance direct care, Managed Care Organizations, Managed Care Beneficiary Enrollment, School-Based and Private Rehabilitative Therapy and Audiological Services, Dental, and Transportation Services.

**South Carolina Department of Mental Health**

2414 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29202; Phone: (803) 898-8581; TTY: (864) 297-5130; Web: www.state.sc.us/dmh/

Berkeley Community Mental Health Center, 403 Stoney Landing Road, Moncks Corner, SC 29461; Phone: (843) 761-8282, 1 (888) 202-1381, Fax: (843) 761-7308
The S.C. Department of Mental Health supports the mental health needs of adults, children, and their families affected by serious mental illnesses and significant emotional disorders.

**South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS)**
1535 Confederate Avenue Extension, Columbia, SC 29202-1520; Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1520, Columbia, SC 29202-1520; Phone: (800) 768-5700; Berkeley DSS: 2 Belt Drive, Moncks Corner, SC 29461; Phone: (843) 761-8044
Charleston DSS: 3366 Rivers Ave., N. Charleston, SC 29405; Phone: (843) 953-9400
Dorchester DSS: 216 Orangeburg Rd., Summerville, SC 29483; Phone: (843) 821-0444
Web: www.dss.sc.gov/

South Carolina Department of Social Services ensures the safety and health of children and adults who cannot protect themselves, and to assist those in need of food assistance and temporary financial assistance while transitioning into employment. Core programs and services include: ABC Child Care Program (Advocates of Better Care) - Adoption Services - Adult Protective Services - Child Care Services - Child Support Enforcement - Domestic Violence Services - Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) - Family Independence Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) - Independent Living Support - Foster Care, Foster Home, and Group Home Licensing - Out-of-Home Abuse and Neglect Investigations

**South Carolina Developmental Disabilities Council (Office of the Governor)**
1205 Pendleton Street, Suite 450, Columbia, SC 29201; Phone: (803) 734-0465;
Web: www.scddc.state.sc.us

The Council encourages change by advocating and planning for better supports and services so that people with developmental disabilities will live in real homes, work at real jobs, learn real skills, and form friendships. The DD Council advocates for the independence, promotes the productivity, and fosters the integration of people who have developmental disabilities.

**South Carolina Human Affairs Commission**
2611 Forest Drive, Suite 200, Columbia, South Carolina 29204; Phone: (803) 737-7800, (800) 521-0725, TDD: (803) 253-4125; Web: www.state.sc.us/schac; Email: information@schac.state.sc.us

South Carolina Human Affairs Commission eliminates and prevents unlawful discrimination in: employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age and disability; housing on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status and disability; and public accommodations on the basis of race, color, national origin and religion.

**South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department (SCVRD)**
1410 Boston Ave., West Columbia, SC 29170; Mailing Address: PO Box 15, West Columbia, SC 29170; Phone: (800) 896-6500; Berkeley/Dorchester VR: 2954 South Live Oak Drive, Moncks Corner, SC 29461; Phone: (843) 761-6036; Charleston VR: 4436 Dorchester Road, N. Charleston, SC 29405; Phone: (843) 740-1600
Vocational Rehabilitation serves people who want to work but are hindered by a physical or mental disability. More than 400 businesses and industries statewide work with SCVRD to prepare clients in our area offices and training centers learn work skills and behaviors while performing contract work for local businesses. When the clients are job-ready, employers look to VR for candidates who are trained in a wide variety of skills and have learned good work habits.

**Special Olympics**
Lucy Swaffield, CTRS, District 6 Program Director (Serving: Charleston, Berkeley and Dorchester Counties), Office/Fax: (843) 795-6226; Email: LucySwaffield@bellsouth.net

The mission of Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for persons eight years of age and older with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes, and the community.

**State Office of Victim Assistance (Office of the Governor) (SOVA)**
11205 Pendleton Street, Rm. 401; Columbia, SC 29201; Phone: (803) 734-1900; Victims Only Please (800) 220-5370; Web: www.sova.sc.gov

In the interest of justice to all victims of crime whose injuries, pain, suffering and loss warrant our intervention and support, the State Office of Victim Assistance will: 1) Ensure that all victims and victims’ service providers receive companionate, understanding and quality services from the SOVA staff. 2) Administer State Compensation Fund to provide for financial assistance to eligible victims of crime with expenses that were incurred as a direct result of their victimization. 3) Provide training to victims of crime and victims’ service providers regarding the laws and regulations concerning the Victims Compensation Fund. 4) Promote collaboration at all levels in order to restore justice to eligible crime victims who are in need of advocacy and financial assistance.

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**
3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, Virginia 22302; Phone: (703) 305-2286; E-mail: SNAPHQ-WEB@fns.usda.gov.

SNAP is the cornerstone of the Federal food assistance programs, and provides crucial support to needy households and to those making the transition from welfare to work. The U.S. Department of Agriculture administers SNAP at the Federal level through its Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). State agencies administer the program at State and local levels, including determination of eligibility and allotments, and distribution of benefits. Local SNAP offices can provide information about eligibility, and USDA operates a toll-free number (800-221-5689) for people to receive information about SNAP benefits. SNAP is the agency that provides food assistance (food stamps) through the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) system. Recipients apply for their benefits in the usual way, by filling out a form at their local food stamp office. Once eligibility and level of benefits have been determined, an account is established in the participant's name, and food stamp benefits are deposited electronically in the account each month. A plastic card, similar to a bank card, is issued and a personal identification number (PIN) is assigned or chosen by the recipient to give access to the account. Recipients are offered the opportunity to change the PIN.
number at any time, and are offered ongoing training if they have any problems accessing the system.

**Tri-County Link Rural Bus System**
305 Heatley Street, Moncks Corner, SC 29461; Phone: (843) 899-4096, Toll free: (800) 966-6631; Web: www.ridetricountylink.com/
TriCounty Link operates rural bus service throughout Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester Counties, South Carolina. All Tri-County Link vehicles are ADA compliant and are equipped with lifts and wheelchair positions.

**Trident Technical College**
Main Campus: 7000 Rivers Avenue, North Charleston, SC 29406: Mailing Address: PO Box 18067; Charleston, SC 29423-8067; Phone: (843) 574-6362 or (843) 574-6812 TTY; Students with Disabilities Counseling and Career Development Email: jimorgel@tridenttech.edu; Web: www.tridenttech.edu
Trident Technical College is a two-year multi campus college that serves as a catalyst for personal, community and economic development by empowering individuals through education and training while striving to be the leading force for educational opportunity in the communities we serve.

**Trident United Way**
6296 River Avenue, North Charleston, SC, 29406; Mailing Address: PO Box 63305, North Charleston, SC 29419; Phone: (843) 740-9000; Web: www.tuw.org
United Way improves lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities around the world to advance the common good. In 2008, United Way initiated a 10-year program designed to achieve the following goals by 2018: 1) Improve education, and cut the number of high school dropouts -1.2 million students, every year - in half. 2) Help people achieve financial stability, and get 1.9 million working families - half the number of lower-income families who are financially unstable - on the road to economic independence. 3) Promote healthy lives, and increase by one-third the number of youth and adults who are healthy and avoid risky behaviors.

**Trident Workforce Investment Area and Palmetto Youth Connections**
1930 Hanahan Road, North Charleston, SC, 29406; Phone: (843) 574-1897
Palmetto Youth Connections (PYC) is a Community Partnership focused on serving out-of-school youth ages 16-21 throughout South Carolina. Their focus is to develop community-wide partnerships and collaborations among state agencies, local municipalities, local workforce investment boards, community-based organizations, faith-based groups, School Districts, Adult Education programs and others that serve youth.
Serving Berkeley, Charleston, & Dorchester Counties at the North Charleston One Stop
What is offered:
- A chance to complete your high school education or upgrade your basic skills!
- The opportunity to train for a career!
- The assistance and support of a caring staff that will help you succeed!
- The ability to set goals that may change your life!
- Earn cash incentives for completing your High School Diploma or GED!
• Enter into paid Internships or On-the-Job training opportunities!
• Receive financial assistance for certificate or diploma courses with local colleges!
• Receive assistance from a certified Career Coach to get financial aid for college!

To register for the program you must:
• Be a young adult ages 16-21
• Attend program orientation
• Complete a registration application
• Provide eligibility documentation (PYC staff will assist you with this process once you attend orientation): Household Income; Drivers License; Birth Certificate; High School Transcript; High School Withdrawal Letter
• Experience barriers to employment such as an inability to find work due to educational status, no work experience, or no training or skills for the job

University of South Carolina LIFE Program
235C Wardlaw, College of Education, USC, 820 Main Street, Columbia, SC 29208; Phone: (803) 777-7664; Email: plotner@mailbox.sc.edu; Web: sa.sc.edu/sds/carolinalife
CarolinaLife Program at the University of South Carolina is a two-to-four year post-secondary program for students with intellectual or cognitive disabilities. The program offers students the opportunity to experience life through inclusive participation in academic, social, vocational and independent living activities. The program is based on the needs, interests, and preferences of our students.

Very Special Arts (VSA)
c/o South Carolina Arts Commission; 1800 Gervais Street, Columbia, SC 29201; Phone: (803) 734-0445; TTY: (803) 734-8983; Web: www.vsc.org/; VSA International Website: www.vsarts.org
VSA South Carolina is a statewide, nonprofit organization that has served the arts, disability, and education communities since 1986. VSA promotes quality accessible art experiences for people with disabilities throughout the state. VSA South Carolina also follows the mission of VSA International, which is to create a society where people with disabilities learn through, participate in, and enjoy the arts. VSA South Carolina is the proud recipient of the VSA Award for Excellence in Educational Programming, presented during the 2010 International VSA Festival.
Key Internet Resources for Transitioning Youth with Disabilities

Evidence-Based Practices in IEP Student Participation Strategies
This link provides descriptions of three strategies related to IEP development. Information on research related to the programs and how they are implemented.
http://www.nsttac.org/?FileName=student_focused_planning

NICHCY Transition to Adulthood
This website is designed to provide parents and students with a review of transition resources. Follow the Links this site provides.
http://www.nichcy.org/schoolage/transitionadult

The Basics of Student Involvement
Whose life is it anyway? This publication is a unique exploration of the emotions and relationships between three key transition partners: Becky, the youth; her mother, and her teacher. It includes talking points for group discussion about relationship building and best practice in adolescent transition. http://www.waisman.wisc.edu/hrtw/wlia.pdf

Division on Career Development and Transition, Council for Exceptional Children.
A fact sheet.

What does student involvement involve?
Jim Martin is an expert on student involvement in IEP and transition planning. Here’s an archived discussion of his that provides an overview of student involvement and self-directed IEPs, as well as detailed answers to teachers’ questions.

How to get the most important person to the table: The young person!
This brief summarizes research on the participation of young people in person-centered planning and gives specific recommendations to help facilitators in maximize student participation.
http://www.communityinclusion.org/article.php?article_id=30&type=topic&id=7

Youth hood
This Web site is a place for youth. It's a welcoming community for all youth and a place where all youth belong. Here youth can start thinking about what they want to do with the rest of their life. This Web site was built to help youth plan for their future. What will you do after high school? Will you work? Go to college? Live in a place of your own? By using this Web site, youth can plan for their future right now! http://www.youthhood.org/

The Person-Centered Planning Education Site
Person-centered planning is an individualized and empowering approach to educational, life, and career planning for people with disabilities. Through skill development and resource training, it places practitioners in a secondary role and enables people with
disabilities to direct and tailor their own plans. In this site, you will find an overview of the person-centered planning process, a catalog of self-study courses covering the basic process involved, a quiz section to help you focus on areas you may need to cover more thoroughly, a compendium of readings and activities for you to use on your own, and various links and downloadable resources for each course. This site is part of the Program on Employment and Disability (PED) at Cornell. [http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/edi/pcp/](http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/edi/pcp/)

**Youth Information, Training and Resource Centers**
Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families and Administration on Developmental Disabilities, these resource centers work to increase the ability of individuals with developmental disabilities to exercise greater choice and self-determination and engage in leadership activities in their communities. [http://www.addyic.org](http://www.addyic.org)

**Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessments (ACLSA)**
Here you will find free and easy to use tools to help young people prepare for adulthood. The life skills assessments provide instant feedback. Customized learning plans provide a clear outline of next steps, and the accompanying teaching resources are available for free or at a minimal cost. [http://www.caseylifeskills.org/](http://www.caseylifeskills.org/)

**Partners in Employment**
Partners in Employment is a six hour self-study course designed to help people with developmental disabilities find meaningful jobs and plan a career. Course participants create a resume or portfolio of their strengths, skills, and interests; learn how to network and identify potential employers; prepare for an interview; and understand the hiring process. There are NO registration fees. [http://www.partnersinpolicymaking.com/employment/index.html](http://www.partnersinpolicymaking.com/employment/index.html)

**Employment Resource for Youth and Adults with Limited to No Reading Skills**
This seven CD ROM resource is designed for youth in transition from school to work, adults with disabilities, and individuals with limited reading skills. Your Employment Selections (YES) is a reading-free, job preference and career exploration program that shows tasks related to 120 different jobs using motion video on CD-ROM. For more information go to [http://www.trisped.org](http://www.trisped.org) and select the "Transition/Job Selection" Tab

**Helping Young People Get a Headstart on Careers**
The website offers online resources that cater to ages 11-15, seeking information about careers in science, technology, engineering, and math. Funworks was created by the Gender, Diversity, and Technology Institute at Education Development Center. [http://www.thefunworks.org/](http://www.thefunworks.org/)

**National Career Readiness Certificate**
The National Career Readiness Certificate is a portable, evidence-based credential that measures essential workplace skills and is a reliable predictor of workplace success. [http://www.act.org/certificate/index.html](http://www.act.org/certificate/index.html)
National Youth Leadership Network
The National Youth Leadership Network (NYLN) is dedicated to advancing the next generation of disability leaders. The NYLN promotes leadership development, education, employment, independent living, and health and wellness among young leaders representing the diversity of race, ethnicity and disability in the United States. NYLN fosters the inclusion of young leaders with disabilities into all aspects of society at national, state and local levels and communicates about issues important to youth with disabilities and the policies and practices that affect their lives. http://www.nyln.org

The Self-Determination Technical Assistance Centers Project
This site provides resources and information for promoting self-determination practices for students with disabilities. Information for this site was gathered from four program sites identified as providing “exemplary practices” for promoting self-determination for students age 11 to 21 with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities. http://www.sdtac.uncc.edu/

Association of Youth Leadership Forums (AYLF)
The purpose of the Association of Youth Leadership Forums (AYLF) is to improve employment and independent living outcomes of youth with disabilities transitioning from high school by promoting the replication of the California Model: Youth Leadership Forum for Students with Disabilities (YLF). This site provides contact information of state contacts that hold summer forums providing leadership training through this model. http://www.aylf.net/

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) - U.S. Department of Justice
The American with Disabilities Act’s Home Page offers background information and access to resources related to ADA. http://www.ada.gov/

Employment Rights of People with Intellectual Disabilities
This question-and-answer document addresses the application of the ADA to persons with intellectual disabilities in the workplace. This publication is available at: http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/intellectual_disabilities.html

The Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)
The Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) provides national leadership on disability employment policy by developing and influencing the use of evidence-based disability employment policies and practices, building collaborative partnerships, and delivering authoritative and credible data on employment of people with disabilities. This website provides information for service providers, youth and families, state partners, and employers. http://www.dol.gov/odep/

Age-Appropriate Transition Assessment Guide
This link provides information on transition assessment ranging from how to conduct assessments to choosing appropriate assessments for students. http://www.nsttac.org/?FileName=tag
Assessing Students with Disabilities: Transition Planning for the IEP (Transition Coalition)
This site provides information and resources to persons wanting to do assessment for transition planning. Good assessment is the basis for meaningful planning for students, families, and schools as they consider transition needs and needed transition services in the IEP process. The site also provides a number of useful links to further resources in assessment, transitional services and programs, and self-determination.
http://old.transitioncoalition.org/assessing/

National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
This site provides information related to service-learning and individuals with disabilities. The bibliographies highlight online lesson plans, online articles, print resources, and videos and other media on service-learning and disabilities.
http://www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/bibs/cb_bibs/indiv_disab/

Work Support.Com
The purpose of the Virginia Commonwealth University RRTC on Workplace Supports and Job Retention is to study supports that help individuals with disabilities maintain employment and advance their careers. This site provides extensive information on effective practices for assisting individuals with disabilities gain and maintain employment. The resource section had multiple materials related to employment and job retention for individuals with disabilities.
http://www.worksupport.com/

Community Resource Mapping
This guide provides step-by-step instructions on understanding, planning, and engaging in coordinating community resources that support the transition of youth with disabilities to adult life. Designed for use at the federal, state, and local levels, it provides numerous practical tools and resources for initiating a resource mapping process.
http://www.ncset.org/publications/essentialtools/mapping/default.asp

Paving the Way to Work: A Guide to Career-Focused Mentoring
The creation of the Mentoring Guide is rooted in the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy's (ODEP) charge to find and promote the most effective research-based policies and practices to improve transition outcomes for youth with disabilities. Mentoring is recognized as one of the most important strategies for assisting youth in making a positive transition into adulthood. The Guide can be found at http://www.ncwd-youth.info/resources_&_Publications/mentoring.html

Shared Work
This site is designed to support and facilitate the shared work that occurs among individuals, organizations and agencies at the local, district, state, and national levels.
www.sharedwork.org

Interagency Transition Team Development and Facilitation
This guide, relevant to national, state, and local levels, offers instruction on (a) how to build an effective interagency transition team; (b) how to determine initial roles, responsibilities, and the team vision; (c) how to conduct interagency transition team
meetings; and (d) how to determine whether or not your interagency transition team is making progress and meeting its goals.

http://www.ncset.org/publications/essentialtools/teams/default.asp

The Bazelon Center's Fact Sheets
Fact sheets on 57 programs have been prepared by the center, run by over 20 different agencies in nine departments of the federal government. These federal programs address the wide range of needs of youth with serious mental health conditions who are transitioning into adulthood. http://www.bazelon.org/News-Publications/Publications/List/1/CategoryID/22/Level/a.aspx?SortField=ProductNumber,ProductNumber

Paving the Way to Work: A Guide to Career-Focused Mentoring
Mentoring is recognized as one of the most important strategies for assisting youth in making a positive transition into adulthood. This Guide is intended for individuals designing mentoring programs for youth, including youth with disabilities, in the transition phase to adulthood. http://www.ncwd-youth.info/resources&_Publications/mentoring.html

Bridges 4 Kids
This site is sponsored by a non-profit parent organization providing a comprehensive system of information and referral for parents and professionals working with children from birth through transition to adult life. Bridges4Kids also supports non-profits that share our mission with web design, data collection, telephone referral services and technical assistance. http://www.bridges4kids.org/

The PACER Center
The mission of PACER Center is to expand opportunities and enhance the quality of life of children and young adults with disabilities and their families, based on the concept of parents helping parents. Technical Assistance on Transition and the Rehabilitation Act (TATRA) and other Parent Information and Training projects help families learn how they can help youth with disabilities prepare for independent living, access adult service systems, and work effectively with professionals. http://www.pacer.org/


Technical Assistance Alliance for Parent Centers
The Technical Assistance Alliance for Parent Centers is an innovative project that supports a unified technical assistance system for the purpose of developing, assisting and coordinating Parent Training and Information Projects and Community Parent Resource Centers (such as the Family Resource Center’s Parent Training & Resource Center) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). It is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.
http://www.taalliance.org/
Special Education: Federal Actions Can Assist States in Improving Postsecondary Outcomes for Youth

The U.S. General Accounting Office report provides information on the proportion of IDEA students completing high school with a diploma or alternative credential and their post-secondary status. It also describes the transition problems being reported and state and local actions addressing them. [http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d03773high.pdf](http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d03773high.pdf)

The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth)

This collaborative, funded by ODEP, is composed of partners with expertise in disability, education, employment, and workforce development policy and practice. They are charged with assisting state and local workforce development systems integrate youth with disabilities into their service strategies. The site provides information on the basics of the workforce development system. Guideposts are also available that are research and evidence based frameworks that can be adapted by state and local policy and program operators as well as help guide youth and families in planning and preparing for the future. In addition, a database of results-based, high-quality programs and services is provided. [http://www.ncwd-youth.info/](http://www.ncwd-youth.info/)

IDEA Partnership - Collaborative Work on Secondary Transition

The IDEA Partnership is dedicated to improving outcomes for students and youth with disabilities through shared work and learning. Their Secondary Transition Collection web page provides information on transition to postsecondary and workforce development skills. The page contains reviews of programs and practices. [http://www.ideapartnership.org/topics-database/1485](http://www.ideapartnership.org/topics-database/1485)

US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights

This site provides helpful information for students with disabilities transitioning to post-secondary education. A list of resources is provided on information related to disability discrimination issues. [http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/disabilityresources.html](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/disabilityresources.html)

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity: Implications for Transition Personnel

This publication summarizes current research on transition issues and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) youth with disabilities. It also offers information on how transition personnel can effectively support these youth by building on their strengths and enhancing natural supports available within their families and communities. Also included are several practical tools and information on further resources. [http://www.ncset.org/publications/essentialtools/diversity/default.asp](http://www.ncset.org/publications/essentialtools/diversity/default.asp)

Transition Coalition

Providing online information, support, and professional development on topics related to the transition from school to adult life for youth with disabilities. [http://www.transitioncoalition.org/transition/](http://www.transitioncoalition.org/transition/)

Social Security Online – The Redbook

A summary guide to employment support for individuals with disabilities under the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) programs. [http://www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook/eng/main.htm](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook/eng/main.htm)
Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) Project Fact Sheet
The 102 Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) projects across the U.S. and the U.S. territories work with SSA beneficiaries with disabilities on job placement, benefits planning, and career development.
http://www.ssa.gov/work/wipafactsheet.html

CareerOneStop
CareerOneStop is a U.S. Department of Labor-sponsored Web site that offers career resources and workforce information to job seekers, students, businesses, and workforce professionals to foster talent development in a global economy.
http://www.careeronestop.org/

Breaking Ranks
These links provide information on two documents that describe direction for high school principals to make schools more student-centered: For and Executive Summary on Breaking Ranks: Changing an American Institution go to:
http://www.greaterexpectations.org/briefing_papers/BreakingRanks.html

TransCen, Inc.
TransCen, Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving educational and employment outcomes for people with disabilities. Since 1986, the organization has been at the forefront of educational-systems change efforts—working with school districts, human service organizations, businesses, government agencies, parents, students, and advocacy groups. As a result, TransCen has developed a host of targeted training and technical assistance offerings, both independently and in concert with broad-scale initiatives and national consortiums. http://www.transcen.org/

Handbook for Implementing a Comprehensive Work-Based Learning Program According to the Fair Labor Standards Act
This manual provides information and examples that school personnel can use to operate effective work-based learning programs consistent with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). http://www.ncset.org/publications/essentialtools/flsa/default.asp

Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE)
The OVAE website has information, research, and resources to help prepare young people and adults for postsecondary education, successful careers, and productive lives.
http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/index.html

On-Campus Outreach….Supporting transition best practices in postsecondary settings for students with significant disabilities
This University of Maryland website provides articles, fact sheets, on-line training modules, contacts for programs in Maryland, and related websites on serving students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary settings who still receive special education services in public schools. http://www.education.umd.edu/oco/index.html

The College Navigator
This website offers a variety of enhanced and easy-to-use features to help students and parents learn about colleges and universities. The site offers information about nearly
7,000 postsecondary institutions in the United States.
http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/

**Virginia Commonwealth University RRTC on Workplace Supports and Job Retention**
This site provides extensive information on effective practices for assisting individuals with disabilities gain and maintain employment. The resource section had multiple materials related to employment and job retention for individuals with disabilities.
http://www.worksupport.com

**Heath Resource Center**
The HEATH Resource Center Clearinghouse has information for students with disabilities on educational disability support services, policies, procedures, adaptations, accessing college or university campuses, career-technical schools, and other postsecondary training entities. They also have information on financial assistance, scholarships, and materials that help students with disabilities transition into college, university, career-technical schools, or other postsecondary programs. http://www.heath.gwu.edu/

**U.S. Department of Labor, ODEP, Customized Employment**
ODEP established a Customized Employment initiative to build the capacity of workforce systems to serve all customers, including individuals with disabilities. The strategies developed through this initiative can assist all workforce customers who have complex needs and may require more individual assistance to achieve their employment goals. The Customized Employment initiative also focuses on incorporating universal strategies into all aspects of workforce services. This site provides information on developing and establishing customized employment strategies.
http://www.dol.gov/odep/categories/workforce/cust_emp.htm

**Disclosure Decisions Guide: To Get the Job**
This document is designed to help individuals with a disability choose whether to disclose (share) his or her disability with an employer. Primary factors to consider include whether accommodations will be needed on the job or whether a disability is visible or hidden. Other aspects related to the employer and the company may also influence your decision. Follow this disclosure decision guide to determine what will work best for you. The guide can be found at http://www.worksupport.com/research/viewContent.cfm/585

**The 411 on Disability Disclosure: A Workbook for Youth with Disabilities**
This publication, designed for youth and the adults who work with them, helps young people make informed decisions about whether or not to disclose their disability and understand how that decision may impact their education, employment, and social outcomes. http://www.ncwd-youth.info/resources_&_Publications/411.html

**The Abilities Fund**
The Abilities Fund calls itself the "first and only community developer targeted exclusively to advancing entrepreneurial opportunities for Americans with disabilities.” To learn more about The Abilities Fund, go to http://www.abilitiesfund.org/
The Center for Workers with Disabilities
The Center for Workers with Disabilities is a technical assistance center for states enhancing or developing employment supports programs for working persons with disabilities; most of the 30 plus states supported by the Center are supporting employment supports development with Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) funds established under the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 (P.L. 106-170). For more information go to http://www.aphsa.org/disabilities/

United We Ride (UWR)
UWR is a federal interagency initiative aimed at improving the availability, quality, and efficient delivery of transportation services for older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals with lower income.
http://www.unitedweride.gov/1_1390_ENG_HTML.htm

National Business & Disability Council (NBDC) Job Seekers Services
NBDC is a leading resource for employers seeking to integrate people with disabilities into the workplace and for companies seeking to reach them in the consumer marketplace. Students have access to (1) the NBDC National Résumé Database®, used by employers to recruit individuals with disabilities for positions in their organizations; (2) job posting pages of NBDC members, Fortune 1000 companies, and federal agencies committed to diversity in the workplace; (3) NBDC yellow pages listing local recruitment for people with disabilities; (4) career events; and (5) internship/targeted recruitment opportunities available to students and graduates with disabilities.

Disability Online (DOL and ETA)
The Web site of the disAbility Employment and Initiatives unit at the Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. This site includes grants for individuals with disabilities, success stories, informative articles, related government news, a career center, and more. http://www.doleta.gov/

Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT)
DCDT, a division of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), is a membership organization for persons and families interested in career and vocational issues for students with disabilities. This Web site includes a message board, a variety of publications and resources about career exploration and employment, including DCDT journals and briefs, conferences and news, and an array of additional member benefits for those who wish to join this network. http://www.dcdt.org/

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)
The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is a free consulting service from the Office of Disability Policy, U.S. Department of Labor that provides information about job accommodations, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the employability of people with disabilities. JAN represents the most comprehensive resource for job accommodations available. The site provides portals for specific audiences, and offers free publications on a wide range of accommodation ideas and resources, organized by both disability and setting. Listings include term definitions, specific strategies,
examples of how accommodations have been implemented and further resources.  
http://www.jan.wvu.edu/

O*NET
O*NET, the Occupational Information Network, is an easy-to-use database that contains comprehensive information on job requirements and worker competencies. O*NET offers a more dynamic framework for exploring the world of work, including O*NET Career Exploration and Assessment Tools, the O*NET Interest Profiler, and the O*NET Work Importance Locator. Find occupations, get snapshots and details, and use the fully functional and interactive O*NET online application. http://online.onetcenter.org/

National Technical Assistance Centers:

The IDEA Partnership Project (at NASDSE): see Transition Community of Practice: http://www.ideapartnership.org

The National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities (NDPC-SD)  
http://www.ndpc-sd.org/

The National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC):  
http://www.nsttac.org

The National Post-School Outcomes Center (NPSO):  http://www.psocenter.org


Other Transition Toolkits:

Colorado:  http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/TK.asp

Kentucky:  
http://www.education.ky.gov/kde/instructional+resources/secondary+and+virtual+learning/middle+school/transition+toolkit.htm

California:  http://www.tknlyouth.org/


Fairfax County Public Schools (Virginia):  
http://www.fcps.edu/dss/sei/careertransition/ToolKit_TRGdownloads.htm


Youth Involved with Juvenile Justice System:  http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/nd/resources/toolkits/transition_200808.asp

Children in Foster Care:

Youth with Mental Health Concerns:


Making the Move to Managing Your Own Personal Assistance Services (PAS): A Toolkit for Youth with Disabilities Transitioning to Adulthood
http://www.ncwd-youth.info/PAS-Toolkit

Please add your own Internet Resource finds:
Reference and Sources

Americans with Disabilities Act: http://www.ada.gov/

Bank Services: http://www.esl-lab.com/vocab/v-bank.html

Berkeley County School District: http://www.berkeley.k12.sc.us/

CAP - Client Assistance Program: http://www.oepp.sc.gov/cap/

Careers and Career Information - CareerOneStop: http://www.careeronestop.org/

Carolina Autism: http://www.casls.org

Charleston County School District: http://www.ccisdschools.com

Customized Employment: http://www.worksupport.com/

Berkeley County School District: http://www.berkeley.k12.sc.us/

DSS: South Carolina Department of Social Services: http://www.dss.sc.gov/

DisAbilities Resource Center: http://www.drcilc.org

Dorchester County School District 4: http://www.dorchester4.k12.sc.us/

Full Life Ahead - Self Determination: http://www.fulllifeahead.org/resources

Guideposts for Success: http://www.ncwd-youth.info/guideposts

Housing and Urban Development: http://www.hud.gov/

Idea Partnership: http://www.ideapartnership.org/

Cyber Smart: http://www.cybersmart.org


Low Country Red Cross: http://www.lowcountryredcross.org/

Worksupports.com-Employment Networks: http://www.employmentnetwork.org/


SC Works - Bringing Employers and Job Seekers Together:
http://www.workforcesouthcarolina.com/

South Carolina Assistive Technology Program (SCATP): http://www.sc.edu/scatp/

South Carolina Child Labor & Wages Regulations:

South Carolina Department of Education: http://www.ed.sc.gov/
South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services:  
http://www.dhhs.state.sc.us/

South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles:  http://www.drivers-licenses.org/DMV


South Carolina GED:  
http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/ac/Adult-Education/old/ace/ged/GEDApplication.html

South Carolina Protection and Advocacy:  http://www.pandasc.org

South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation:  http://www.scvrd.net/


Workplace Personal Assistance:  
http://www.pascenter.org/workplace_pas/MIG_11_06.pdf

The Office of Disability Employment Policy:  http://www.ncwd-youth.info/odep

The United States Social Security Administration:  http://www.ssa.gov/

Transitioning to Adulthood:  http://www.nichcy.org/schoolage/transitionadult/starters

Trident One Stop Career System:  http://www.toscc.org/

United States Department of Education:  http://www.ed.gov/

U.S. Department of Labor:  http://www.dol.gov/odep/

United States Military Enlistment Standards, Do You Qualify to Enlist in the United States Military?; By Rod Powers; About.com Guide:  
http://usmilitary.about.com/od/joiningthemilitary/a/enlstandards.htm


Welcome to NCWD/Youth | NCWD/Youth:  http://www.ncwd-youth.info/


Work Keys:  http://www.act.org/workkeys
Introduccion

El Centro de Recursos de la Familia Para Discapacidades y Necesidades Especiales se complace en presentar esta guía con recursos para asistir a estudiantes con discapacidades y a sus familias en planificar una exitosa transición después de la educación secundaria que incluye trabajos, carreras profesionales, empleo e independencia. Esperamos que usted pueda utilizar esta guía para medir los niveles de preparación y soporte necesarios para planear un futuro que sea apropiado, con medidas alcanzables y con goles que puedan ser desarrollados dentro del IEP.

La presentación de esta guía incluye:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Titulo</th>
<th>Numero de Paginas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Areas para considerar en la planeación de la transición</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCEPTOS BASICOS DE LA TRANSICION</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educacion</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La transición: Un proceso</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Concepto de Transición</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porque es importante el concepto de Transición</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transicion- Una Definicion</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porque enfocarse en la Transicion</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porque comenzar temprano</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuales estudiantes necesitan planeacion de transicion y cuando</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rol de los padres en la transicion</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empleo</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOBRE CADA COMPONENTE DEL IEP</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRANSICION A LA VIDA ADULTA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Para llamadas de ayuda: Saritta Vann – (843) 266-1318
Areas en el Plan de Transicion

EDUCACION
- Colegio o Universidad
- Colegio de la Comunidad
- Colegio Tecnico
- Entrenamiento Vocacional
- Entrenamiento en el trabajo
- GED
- Educacion para adultos

EMPLEO
- Trabajo por tiempo completo / medio tiempo (Trabajo Competitivo)
- Trabajo por tiempo completo/ medio tiempo (Trabajo con Ayuda)
- Trabajo por si solo/a
- Trabajo voluntario
- Trabajos con ayuda o supervisados
- Servicio Militar

DESARROLLO DE EMPLEO
- Posibilidades de trabajo
- Entendiendo las fortalezas personales
- Habitos de trabajo
- Conducta apropiada

VIDA INDEPENDIENT

PARTICIPACION EN LA COMUNIDAD
- Registracion para votar
- Obedecer las leyes
- Localizar y usar los establecimientos locales
- Voluntariado en la comunidad local

SERVICIOS MEDICOS Y DE SOPORTE
- Buscar servicios medicos y dentales
- Consejeria
- Manejar las medicinas en forma personal
- Servicios de cuidado personal
- Tecnologia asistiva

OPCIONES DE VIVIENDA
- Vivir solo/a
• Vivir con un companero de cuarto
• Vivir con la familia
• Vivir con algun miembro de la familia
• Apartamento
• Casa
• Casa o Apartamento con supervision
• Casa de Huespedes
• Casa de Grupo

TRANSPORTACION
• Licencia de conducer
• Caminar / Manejar bicicleta
• Bus/Taxi o tren
• Servicio Especializado
• Buscar rutas dentro de la comunidad
• Conocimiento de las reglas de transito

VIDA DIARIA
• Vestimenta apropiada
• Higiene personal
• Conducta Social
• Conducta social apropiada
• Respeto por otros
• Seguridad
• Confianza en si mismo/a
• Respeto por la autoridad
• Desarrollar amistades
• Casarse, Hijos, Crianza
• Soportar criticismo y elogios

PREGUNTAS FINANCIERAS Y/O LEGALES
• Ganancias
• Seguros
• Herencias
• Beneficios del seguro social
• SSI
• Custodia
• Cuentas bancarias
• Entendiendo el credito
• Pagar cuentas
• Defenderse a si mismo
• Identificacion estatal
• Firmar para servicios electives
Conceptos Básicos De La Transición

Educarción

Un Cuento de Transición: El Sueño

Mientras John comienza a cerrar la puerta de su departamento, voltea a ver por última vez. No está mal, piensa, aun quiero mejores muebles, y un equipo estereofónico excelente, pero cuando menos es todo mío, no hay ninguna hermanita que me de lata.

Mientras va en autobús a su trabajo John revisa su horario. Bien. No hay trabajo el sábado. El cargo de trabajo en el taller automotriz se incrementa mucho los sábados y simplemente no puedo seguirles el ritmo a todos los clientes que quieren nuevas baterías y llantas. Estoy contento porque mi asesor me ayudó a hablar con el jefe acerca de trabajar únicamente durante la semana.

La madre de John recuerda el miedo que tenía cuando John alcanzó la preparatoria. Afortunadamente, planearon. John pudo entrar al curso de mecánica automotriz y sus maestros estuvieron dispuestos a cambiar algunos requisitos para que John pudiera aprender las habilidades que necesitaba para su carrera como técnico en mecánica automotriz. Fue mucho trabajo el aprender acerca de las agencias adultas, el permitir que John tomaría riesgos o el verlo como alguien con fortalezas y capacidades en vez de discapacidades.

Cuando John se cambió a su propio departamento, su madre estaba muy preocupada de que no funcionaría. Seguía pensando, “¿Qué tal si se accidenta, se le olvida apagar la estufa o llega tarde al trabajo?” Pero la experiencia fue importante para John. Su madre aún se preocupa y aún verifica que esté bien un poco más de lo que se debe, pero sus padres están aprendiendo a distanciarse de él.

El padre de John disfruta mucho el tiempo que pasan juntos trabajando en el presupuesto de John, en tareas del hogar, o simplemente sin hacer nada. John siempre necesitará apoyo, pero ha llegado mucho más lejos de lo que se esperaba.

La Transición: Un Proceso

La Transición es el movimiento exitoso de las escuelas a la vida adulta productiva. Un proceso de transición eficaz está basado en las necesidades individuales y consiste en actividades coordinadas en los siguientes dominios:

- Una Educación es el proceso de obtener y desarrollar conocimiento y habilidades, específicamente mediante experiencias formales. La participación educativa se refiere a la habilidad de tener acceso e involucrarse en los programas apropiados y/o cursos, para el aprendizaje por toda la vida.
- Una Carrera es el desarrollo de una persona en cualquier oficio, profesión u ocupación. La participación en la carrera se refiere a la habilidad de lograr un nivel satisfactorio de trabajo apropiado y valioso que proveerá ingresos y/o satisfacción personal.
• La Vida Independiente/Comunitaria son los lugares donde la gente vive, trabaja e interacciona. La participación en la comunidad se refiere a la habilidad de tener acceso a recursos, incluyendo a las personas, sitios, servicios, y actividades, y contribuir al máximo grado posible.

• La Comunicación y habilidades de interacción son el proceso de dar y recibir información utilizada eficazmente en situaciones apropiadas.

• La Interacción Social es la habilidad de relacionarse con otros competentemente, intercambiar información y realizar tareas.

• Las actividades de Recreo y el Tiempo Libre son las maneras en que la gente usa su tiempo libre. La participación recreativa y de tiempo libre se refiere a la habilidad de tener acceso y participar en actividades relacionadas a los deportes, los pasatiempos, los intereses especiales y/o las actividades de relajamiento.

Casos de Estudio

Fred tiene un interés en buscar una educación postsecundaria cuando se gradúe de la preparatoria. Necesitará determinar los requerimientos para las universidades que está considerando y los cursos completos que se requieren. Fred debe inscribirse en el curso de preparación universitaria de su preparatoria así como en los programas que proporcionan apoyo en las áreas de habilidades de estudio, manejo del tiempo, habilidades de organización y habilidades de auto-propugnación.

Sarah tiene un interés en buscar empleo de tiempo completo competitivo o entrenamiento de habilidades técnicas cuando se gradué de la preparatoria. Debe investigar las opciones de programas en la escuela técnica-vocacional regional y determinar los prerrequisitos necesarios. Si esto no es factible, Sarah debe abordar cómo iniciará la exploración de una carrera, entrenamiento de trabajo y experiencia laboral basada en la comunidad como parte de su programa de preparatoria.

El Concepto de Transición

El concepto de transición es sencillo y generalmente tiene tres componentes principales:

1. **Entrenar** a cada estudiante, junto con su familia, a que piensen acerca de sus metas para la vida después de la preparatoria y a que desarrollen un plan de largo plazo para lograr esto.

2. **Diseñar** una experiencia de preparatoria para asegurar que el estudiante obtenga las habilidades y competencias necesarias para lograr sus metas postsecundarias.

3. **Identificar y enlazar** a los estudiantes y familia con cualquier servicio post-escolare, apoyo o programa que sea necesario, antes de que el estudiante salga del sistema escolar.

El programa de preparatoria del estudiante lo debe preparar completamente para lograr sus metas post-escolares. El Plan Individualizado de Educación (Individualized Education Program, o IEP) es el documento legal que refleja el compromiso que ha hecho la agencia educacional para proporcionar una educación pública gratuita y apropiada diseñada para cumplir con las necesidades únicas del estudiante con una discapacidad. Éste debe reflejar los servicios y apoyos necesarios para ayudar a que el estudiante obtenga las habilidades, experiencias y conexiones para que las metas post-escolares del estudiante se hagan realidad.

¿Porqué es Importante el Concepto De Transición?
Madeline Will, el antiguo Subsecretario de la Oficina de Educación Especial y Servicios de Rehabilitación (Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, o OSERS), indicó la necesidad de una transición:

"Hemos hecho mucho por los estudiantes con discapacidades. De hecho, hemos creado un problema imperioso. Hemos ayudado a los estudiantes con discapacidades para que se conviertan en adultos jóvenes, auto-suficientes, mejor educados e independientes, con expectativas de vida más altas, pero sin tener a donde ir".

Mediante la planeación de transición se diseña un sistema organizado para proveer instrucción e identificar recursos. Después de la graduación los estudiantes estarán preparados para vivir lo más independientemente posible en la comunidad y como ciudadanos productivos con los apoyos necesarios.

**Transición – Una Definición**

Bajo el Acta de Rehabilitación y el Acta para la Educación de los Individuos con Discapacidades (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, o IDEA), Los " Servicios de Transición" son definidos como un conjunto coordinado de actividades para un estudiante, diseñados dentro de un proceso orientado hacia un resultado, que promueva el movimiento de la escuela a las actividades post-escolares incluyendo:

- educación post-secundaria
- entrenamiento vocacional
- empleo integrado (incluyendo empleo apoyado)
- educación continua y adulta
- servicios para adultos
- participación comunitaria
- vida independiente

El conjunto coordinado de actividades se basará en las necesidades individuales del estudiante, tomando en cuenta las preferencias e intereses del estudiante e incluirá:

- experiencias comunitarias
- el desarrollo de empleo
- el desarrollo de otras actividades de la vida adulta postescolar
- cuando sea apropiado, la adquisición de habilidades de vida cotidiana
- cuando sea apropiado, evaluación vocacional funcional

**Caso de Estudio**

Evan es un estudiante de segundo año de preparatoria de 15 años de edad quien está recibiendo servicios de educación especial en su preparatoria local debido a su Trastorno de Déficit de Atención y la necesidad de modificaciones educativas que resultan. Sus padres recientemente asistieron a una sesión de entrenamiento acerca de la planeación de transición, en donde escucharon una presentación acerca de la División de servicios de Rehabilitación Vocacional. Los padres de Evan pidieron que el consejero local del DVR fuera invitado a su reunión anual del IEP. El consejero del DVR pudo asistir a esta reunión de planeación inicial. Actualmente, Evan es un estudiante de tiempo completo y su enfoque principal es académico.
Puesto que Evan aun no llega al punto en el cual su enfoque cambie de académico a vocacional, y aun no está disponible para los servicios de empleo debido a que lleva una carga de cursos completa, no será formalmente referido al DVR. Por ahora, el rol principal del asesor del DVR es asistir al equipo de transición para que desarrollen metas y objetivos que apoyen una transición exitosa al trabajo y la comunidad. El consejero de DVR y el coordinador de transición compartirán información acerca del DVR y otros recursos comunitarios con Evan y sus padres. En anticipación de la referencia a la DVR, que probablemente ocurrirá al final del tercer año de preparatoria de Evan, Evan y sus padres contactarán al asesor del DVR anualmente, para mantenerlo informado acerca de las actividades vocacionales de Evan y su participación.

¿Porqué Enfocarse en la Transición?

Uno de los propósitos principales de la Ley Pública 105-17, el Acta para la Educación de los Individuos con Discapacidades (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, o IDEA) es “asegurar que todos los niños con discapacidades tengan a su disposición una educación pública gratuita y apropiada que enfatiza la educación especial y servicios relacionados diseñados para cumplir con sus necesidades únicas y prepararlos para el empleo y la vida independiente” (34 CFR 300. 1)(a).

El enfoque de IDEA ha cambiado de uno que solamente proveía a los niños y jóvenes con discapacidades el acceso a la educación a uno que también busca mejorar los resultados para todos los niños con discapacidades. IDEA y sus enmiendas de 1997 fortalecen el rol de los padres y estudiantes en la planeación educacional del estudiante y el proceso de toma de decisiones. IDEA enfoca el programa educacional del estudiante hacia la participación y el progreso dentro del currículo general.

El corazón de IDEA 97 es el Plan Individualizado de Educación (Individualized Education Program, o IEP). Las grandes ideas en la planeación de transición del IEP son que el equipo:

- Estimula al estudiante y a los padres para que piensen acerca de las futuras metas del estudiante.
- Identifica las necesidades del estudiante, sus intereses y preferencias.
- Sabe como se desempeñó el estudiante hoy.
- Identifica lo que estudiante aprenderá y hará tanto este año como los que le quedan en la escuela para lograr sus sueños y metas para el futuro.
- Identifica los apoyos y servicios que necesita el estudiante para ser exitoso.
- Asegura que el estudiante aprende al máximo grado apropiado dentro del ambiente y currículo general.

Las escuelas, familias, y comunidades deben trabajar juntos para ofrecer experiencias educativas eficaces para que los estudiantes con discapacidades:

- logren una participación y desarrollo apropiados en el currículo general;
- obtengan mejores resultados académicos;
- estén preparados para la educación post-secundaria, el empleo y la vida independiente.
En términos prácticos, el verdadero reto no es solamente asegurar que todos los estudiantes logren estándares académicos altos, sino que también obtengan las habilidades que necesitan para lograr sus metas post-secundarias (incluyendo la educación postsecundaria, entrenamiento o empleo) y asumir las responsabilidades adultas dentro de sus comunidades. Además, el reto es mantener a todos los estudiantes en la escuela e involucrados en experiencias educativas valiosas para que estén preparados para la educación post-secundaria, el empleo y la vida independiente.

¿Porqué Comenzar Temprano?

Es importante comenzar el proceso de planeación de transición temprano para dejar tiempo para planear y obtener acceso a los servicios de apoyo que se necesiten en el futuro. El Congreso y el Departamento de Educación de los Estados Unidos reconocen que la planeación de transición temprana es importante porque:

• La transición fuera de la educación especial y sus programas es complicada.
• Para los estudiantes con discapacidades severas y necesidades complejas tomará tiempo establecer los servicios y apoyos post-escolares.
• Algunos estudiantes probablemente usarán los servicios de muchas agencias y se necesitará tiempo para averiguar quién puede hacer qué y quién pagará por cuáles servicios.

La planeación temprana y a largo plazo es crítica para que el estudiante reciba muchos de los programas y servicios postescolares, sean estos servicios de apoyo en la universidad o servicios residenciales de un proveedor adulto. Los estudiantes y familias frecuentemente se enfrentan con mucho papeleo para cumplir con los requerimientos de elegibilidad y algunos servicios para adultos tienen largas listas de espera.

¿CUÁLES ESTUDIANTES NECESITAN PLANEACIÓN DE TRANSICIÓN Y CUÁNDO?

Un proceso diseñado para planear para la vida después de la graduación, mediante la identificación de sueños, metas, necesidades instructivas y apoyos es benéfico para todos los estudiantes sin importar el grado o tipo de discapacidad. IDEA requiere que la planeación de transición se incluya en el IEP para cada estudiante que recibe servicios de educación especial, comenzando no más tarde de la edad de 13 años, o más temprano cuando lo sea apropiado.

Un Proceso de Planeación de Transición Eficaz:
• Proporciona conocimiento a los estudiantes, familias, educadores, y proveedores de servicios comunitarios y adultos acerca de lo que hace cada sistema y persona.
• Facilita la comunicación entre las escuelas, familias, y proveedores de servicios comunitarios y adultos acerca de los estudiantes que necesitan servicios.
• Desarrolla un proceso de planeación que identifica para los estudiantes un camino claro a seguir de la escuela a la vida adulta.
• Cambia el enfoque del currículo escolar para incluir temas académicos aplicados, desarrollo de la carrera y habilidades de vida cotidiana.
• Utiliza la información de las evaluaciones a través de las agencias, reduciendo la duplicación y afinando el proceso de determinación de elegibilidad.
• Establece un sistema consistente de referencias para que los estudiantes puedan obtener con más facilidad acceso a los apoyos de las agencias.
• Coordina los servicios entre la escuela y otras agencias eficazmente, ayudando a una transición exitosa.
• Utiliza exitosamente los recursos disponibles a través de las agencias.
• Crea oportunidades para formar redes y conocimiento con las agencias.
• Proporciona un sistema de apoyo para los profesionales, familias y estudiantes.

Preguntas Relacionadas a la Transición

La transición no es nada mágico. Es responder a las preguntas correctas las cuales son individualizadas para cada estudiante. Los resultados identificados para los estudiantes que dejan el sistema escolar y entran la vida adulta guían el proceso. Las siguientes preguntas guían la planeación de transición y deben ser contestadas para cada estudiante antes de su graduación.
 • ¿A dónde va el estudiante desde el punto de vista vocacional (empleo competitivo o apoyado, trabajo de voluntario)?
 • ¿Necesitará el estudiante educación post-secundaria o entrenamiento?
 • ¿Dónde vivirá el estudiante y qué apoyo necesitará?
 • ¿Cuáles serán las necesidades de transporte del estudiante?
 • ¿Cómo mantendrá su vida social el estudiante?
 • ¿En qué tipo de actividades de tiempo libre participará el estudiante?
 • ¿Cómo cumplirá el estudiante su necesidad de cuidado médico, incluyendo un seguro médico?
 • ¿Cuáles agencias comunitarias pueden ayudar y cómo se obtendrá acceso?

¿Cómo Nos Organizamos Para la planeación de transición?

El plan de transición, como parte del IEP, proporciona un marco para identificar, planear y llevar a cabo actividades que ayudarán al estudiante a que haga una transición exitosa a la vida adulta. Incluye los resultados a largo plazo post-escolares que identifica el estudiante, una declaración del plan de estudios proyectado (a la edad de 14 años), y los servicios de transición específicos que el estudiante necesitará (a la edad de 16 años), incluyendo servicios de agencias. Los planes deben incluir:
 • ¿Cuáles agencias estarán involucradas?
 • ¿Cuáles servicios proporcionará cada agencia?
 • ¿Cómo se coordinarán los servicios?

¿Cómo se Planea?

La planeación de transición involucra a un equipo de gente proveniente de distintas partes de la vida escolar y comunitaria del estudiante. Las necesidades específicas del estudiante
en cuanto a servicios post-secundarios deben determinar quién está invitado a la reunión de planeación de transición del IEP. Es importante que los estudiantes sean ligados al currículo educativo general así como a las varias agencias y organizaciones adultas, tales como las agencias de salud mental, rehabilitación vocacional, colegios comunitarios, vivienda, y las agencias de empleo y entrenamiento. Si los representantes de las agencias no asisten a la reunión, es requerido que la escuela “tome otras medidas para conseguir esta participación” al planear los servicios de transición del estudiante, tales como una reunión separada, llamadas telefónicas, o correspondencia escrita.

Las metas de transición no se pueden lograr en un año. La planeación, los servicios y actividades de transición se deben abordar como un proceso de varios años. Los adultos jóvenes ellos mismos, junto con sus padres, tienen un rol importante en el proceso de transición. Aunque la ley requiere que se involucre al estudiante en su propia planeación de transición, el motivo más importante por involucrar al estudiante es para facilitar el desarrollo de sus habilidades de auto-determinación. Estas son esenciales para que el estudiante desarrolle la habilidad de administrar su propia vida.

Los Elementos Esenciales Para Una Transición Eficaz de la Escuela a la Vida Adulta

Una base firme proporcionada por un programa escolar apropiado
- El desarrollo de la carrera comienza al nivel elemental con las maestras y personal de todos los niveles involucrados en el desarrollo del programa.
- Un currículo que incluye habilidades académicas y funcionales, secuenciado a través de los grados escolares, asegura un movimiento fluido y lógico de un nivel a otro.
- Las oportunidades vocacionales incluyen muchas opciones de experiencia y entrenamiento laboral basadas en la disponibilidad en cada comunidad y los intereses del estudiante.
- El entrenamiento en marcos reales basados en la comunidad incluye instrucción en habilidades de trabajo e interpersonales.
- Los estudiantes tienen oportunidades de participar con colegas discapacitados y no-discapacitados.
- Los padres son proporcionados con información acerca de las agencias comunitarias y estimulados a que trabajen con sus hijos en las habilidades de vida y trabajo, preparándolos para el empleo y la vida independiente.
- Los administradores y supervisores de los programas proveen apoyo para la instrucción basada en la comunidad, coordinación de servicios con las agencias comunitarias, y experiencias laborales apropiadas y entrenamiento de trabajo.

Un plan escrito y formal de transición
- Se desarrolla un plan de transición para cada estudiante individual como parte del proceso del IEP, incluye metas anuales y objetivos de corto plazo que se enfocan en las habilidades requeridas para que el estudiante cumpla con los resultados post-escolares.
- El plan incluye instrucción en las habilidades de vida, carrera, y sociales.
• El plan es continuo, comenzado no más tarde de la edad de 14 años y actualizado anualmente.
• Los proveedores de servicios adultos están involucrados mucho antes de que se gradúe el estudiante. El plan estimula los esfuerzos coordinados de todas las agencias apropiadas.
• El plan especifica quien es responsable por cada aspecto del proceso, incluyendo las referencias a las agencias apropiadas, experiencia laboral, entrenamiento en el trabajo y seguimiento.

**Participación de los padres en el proceso de transición**

• Los padres conocen las agencias de la comunidad y las responsabilidades de cada una.
• Los padres participan en el desarrollo del plan de transición que identifica el empleo, educación post-secundaria y entrenamiento, vida independiente, social y recreativa, y opciones de transporte un mínimo de 3-5 años antes de que su hijo salga del sistema escolar.
• Los padres ven que la escuela y las agencias adultas están coordinando servicios, y cuando es apropiado, se asigna un administrador de caso antes de que el niño salga del sistema escolar.
• Los padres apoyan activamente los esfuerzos del maestro para proporcionar instrucción académica y entrenamiento de trabajo en la escuela y en una variedad de sitios basados en la comunidad.
• Los padres trabajan con su niño en casa para promover habilidades de empleo y sociales. Ellos permiten que el o ella sea tan independiente como es posible y proporcionan oportunidades para explorar y disfrutar la comunidad.

**Roles Y Responsabilidades**

IDEA '97 puede requerir se piensa de manera diferente acerca del rol de los participantes en el proceso de reunión del IEP. Es requerido que las siguientes personas selectas sean parte del desarrollo del IEP. Los roles sugeridos también están listados.

**Estudiante:**
• Participar activamente en todas las discusiones y decisiones.
• Comunicar sus preferencias e intereses (por ejemplo, lo que quiere hacer después de acabar la escuela).
• Comunicar sus fortalezas; áreas en donde necesita ayuda; cómo le está yendo en las clases y experiencias comunitarias; cuáles modificaciones y apoyos necesita para que tenga éxito en la escuela y la comunidad.
• Tomar parte en el desarrollo de su IEP; algunos estudiantes podrán dirigir sus propias reuniones de IEP. Esta participación probablemente requiera entrenamiento y práctica.

**Padres (y si así se desea, la familia):**
• Apoyar al estudiante.
• Reforzar el valor de un programa de educación individualizado y apropiado.
• Proporcionar información acerca de las fortalezas e intereses del estudiante y las áreas donde requiere asistencia.
• Proporcionar información acerca de las habilidades de vida independiente del estudiante y la ayuda que podría necesitar para lograr las metas post-escolares deseadas.
• Estar activamente involucrados como socios iguales en todos los aspectos de la planeación del IEP, la discusión y la toma de decisiones.

Cuando menos uno de los maestros de educación especial del estudiante (o, si es apropiado, los proveedores de servicios relacionados):

• Proporcionar información acerca de las fortalezas del estudiante, sus logros anteriores y sus avances en el IEP actual.
• Proporcionar estrategias para enseñarle eficazmente al estudiante, incluyendo las modificaciones apropiadas para que el estudiante pueda obtener acceso al currículo general exitosamente.
• Sugerir cursos de estudio y experiencias educativas que son relacionadas a las preferencias e intereses del estudiante y que proveen una base y habilidades para ayudar al estudiante a que logre las metas post-escolares que desea.
• Identificar los servicios relacionados necesarios.
• Proporcionar información apropiada a las necesidades de servicios de transición y agencias post-escolares, servicios y/o apoyos e incorporar estos al IEP (la declaración de necesidades de transición y la declaración de servicios de transición necesarios).
• Ligar a los estudiantes y padres a los servicios, agencias o apoyos post-escolares apropiados antes de que el estudiante deje la preparatoria.
• Coordinar a todas las personas, agencias, servicios y programas en la planeación de transición.

Representante del Distrito o BOCS:

• Apoyar al personal de educación especial y general.
• Asignar los recursos necesarios para asegurar que se implementa el IEP.

Cuando menos uno de los maestros de educación regular del estudiante:

• Ayudar a planear los cursos de estudio y el currículo general que ayudará a que el estudiante logre las metas postescolares que desea.
• Ayudar a identificar y proporcionar las modificaciones y apoyos necesarios para ayudar al estudiante con su participación en el marco educativo general y en las evaluaciones estatales y del distrito.
• Ayudar a identificar y proporcionar las estrategias de comportamiento positivo que son necesarias y las intervenciones que ayudan al estudiante en el marco educativo regular.

Otro personal apropiado de las agencias (si la escuela o los padres determinan que tiene conocimiento o experiencia en especial):

• Proporcionar información acerca de los servicios y los criterios de elegibilidad para los servicios y apoyos comunitarios o adultos (por ejemplo, servicios de apoyo
universitarios y asistencia financiera, servicios de rehabilitación vocacional, servicios familiares, incentivos de trabajo del Seguro Social).

• Ayudar a explicar las diferencias entre el derecho a programas escolares y la elegibilidad para servicios adultos.
• Ayudar a identificar servicios comunitarios o adultos que podrían ayudar al estudiante a lograr sus metas postsecundarias.
• Ayudar al estudiante y su familia en el proceso de solicitar apoyos y servicios en las universidades, instituciones de entrenamiento, o servicios adultos, según sea apropiado.
• Avisar a las familias y la escuela si potencialmente existe una lista de espera para los servicios.
• Según sea apropiado, proporcionar servicios al estudiante antes de que salga del sistema escolar.

Rol de los Padres en la Transición

Los padres y tutores pueden influir mucho en la transición exitosa de su hijo o hija. Los padres y familiares tienen varios roles importantes en el proceso de transición.

1. Proveedores de Información Única
Los padres saben muchas cosas acerca de las características, intereses, y capacidades de sus hijos. Saben lo que motiva, enoja, o llama y mantiene la atención de sus hijos.

2. Modelos
Los niños reciben de sus padres mensajes acerca del valor del trabajo afuera y dentro del hogar. Cuando los padres comunican el mensaje “Existe un mundo trabajo y tú serás parte de él” elevan la autoestima de su niño y alientan su interés en el trabajo.

3. Monitores de Casos
Los proveedores de servicios y maestros están muy ocupados y entran y salen de la vida de un estudiante en varios puntos de su vida. Los padres deben tener conocimiento del plan de transición de su niño en su totalidad para que éste sea más capaz de asegurar que información importante, fechas límites, y oportunidades no pasen sin aprovecharse.

4. Tomadores de Riesgos
El distanciarse permite que los niños y adultos jóvenes utilicen el transporte público, gasten su propio dinero, llamen a sus amigos por teléfono, se integren a las Ligas Pequeñas, vayan al juego de fútbol solos, etc. Los padres saben que es necesario distanciarse para que crezcan y maduren sus hijos, pero es difícil hacerlo. El distanciarse es más fácil si los padres están involucrados desde temprano cuando comienzan a entender” ¿Distanciarse a donde?” y “¿Están establecidos los apoyos apropiados?”

5. Planeadores de Finanzas
Los adultos jóvenes con discapacidades y sus padres enfrentan decisiones difíciles conforme intentan encontrar un balance entre las recompensas del trabajo y la necesidad de seguridad económica inmediata y a largo plazo. Los especialistas están trabajando para cambiar las leyes relacionadas con los programas federales de
asistencia financiera y se están haciendo disponibles más beneficios para las personas que participan en programas de trabajo apoyados.

6. Propugnadores de los Programas de Educación para la Carrera
La Educación para la Carrera es el proceso que prepara al estudiante para participar en el mundo del trabajo, la vida familiar y comunitaria. Los padres que reconocen la necesidad de un programa de educación para la carrera funcional y basado en la comunidad pueden convertirse en las persona claves que lo hacen realidad para sus hijos y el sistema escolar.

Actividades de Transición Apropiadas Para la Edad
Las actividades de transición específicamente iniciadas y el momento apropiado para que ocurran deben ser basadas en las necesidades individuales de cada estudiante. Este calendario provee un lineamiento general que puede seguir el personal escolar al diseñar el plan de transición de cada estudiante; sin embargo, recuerde que los padres podrían tener la principal responsabilidad por algunas actividades.

Edad del Estudiante: 14
Asignar un Monitor/Coordinador para el plan de transición y juntar al equipo de transición.
Dar información y material de transición al estudiante y a sus padres o tutor.
Aclarar el proceso de transición del IEP para el estudiante y sus padres o tutor.
Repasar el expediente cumulativo del estudiante.
Completar un Inventario del Hogar.
Obtener copias de:
- Actas de Nacimiento (opcional)
- La tarjeta de Seguro Social del estudiante
- Una identificación oficial del estado de South Carolina (de la oficina de licencias de conducir)
- Formulario de Auditoria de Crédito y Habilidades Académicas
- Historia del IEP

Iniciar un archivo de cartas de recomendación.
Realizar la reunión de transición inicial, integrada al proceso del IEP, la cual debe continuarse y actualizarla anualmente.
- Identificar resultados post-secundarios.
- Desarrollar un plan académico en conjunto con el IEP para lograr esas metas.

Orientar hacia las instalaciones y servicios de la preparatoria.
Proporcionar entrenamiento de auto-propugnación.
El estudiante debe comenzar a obtener acceso al transporte público – explorar las opciones de transporte.
- Solicitar un pase/tarjeta de descuento para los servicios de transporte local si existen.
- Proveer entrenamiento de lectura de horarios/mapas de transporte.

Comenzar el proceso de evaluación relacionado con la transición.
• Identificar estilos de aprendizaje
• Identificar apoyo vocacional necesario
• Identificar intereses/habilidades vocacionales

Proveer conocimiento de carreras, experiencias de exploración y entrenamiento de trabajo en una variedad de sitios escolares y comunitarios.
• Completar solicitudes de trabajo de muestra.
• Completar exploración de áreas de interés vocacional.
• Iniciar seguimiento de trabajo.
• Explorar oportunidades de trabajo de verano.

Iniciar solicitudes a las agencias de servicios adultos que tienen listas de espera muy largas.

Proveer entrenamiento en comunicación, auto-ayuda, movilidad, vida independiente, y habilidades de recreación dentro del contexto de actividades de entrenamiento para el trabajo cuando sea posible Preparar un archivo de colocación de trabajo con referencias, descripciones de las habilidades adquiridas, historia de trabajo e información de evaluación

Edad del Estudiante: 16-18 – Algunas actividades pueden continuar para los estudiantes que recibirán servicios escolares después de la edad de 18

Establecer enlaces/repasar el estatus de los programas de servicios para adultos.
• Educación y entrenamiento (post-secundarios).
• Programas de discapacidad del Seguro Social (incluyen Medicare y Medicaid).
• Servicios residenciales.
• Vocacionales.
• De recreación.
• Médicos.

Completar el proceso de elegibilidad en los requisitos de las solicitudes para los servicios necesarios.

Realizar evaluaciones formales e informales relacionadas con la transición, actualizar el Inventario del Hogar.

Repasar el material de información de transición con el estudiante y sus padres o tutor.

Repasar la fecha de graduación o para completar el programa.

Aclarar el proceso de transición del IEP de preparatoria para el estudiante y sus padres o tutor.

Actualizar/completar evaluación(es) vocacional(es).

Continuar entrenamiento de auto-propugnación.

Investigar la necesidad de una licencia de conducir.

Proveer entrenamiento de trabajo en sitios comunitarios y/o mediante los Programas de Educación Vocacional.
Actualizar curriculum vitae/archivo de colocación de trabajo con referencias, descripción de habilidades adquiridas, historia de trabajo e información acerca de la evaluación de transición.

Establecer empleo comunitario de tiempo parcial mientras el estudiante aún está en la escuela.

Desarrollar curriculum vitae.

Establecer prestaciones de salud/médicas necesarias.

Inscribirse para el servicio militar, si se aplica.

Inscribirse para votar.

Considerar la inclusión de un guardián.

Desarrollar un plan de apoyo financiero de largo plazo.

Actualizar el plan de transición para la transición de la escuela a la vida adulta en cooperación con los proveedores de servicios adultos y para determinar y proveer apoyo para:

- Dirección vocacional.
- Establecimiento de vivienda.
- Necesidades de transporte.
- Necesidades sociales/de recreación/de tiempo libre.
- Apoyo médico/de salud.

Tomar PSAT, PACT, ACT, SAT, ASVAB, ASSET según sea apropiado.

Investigar servicios de apoyo para los estudiantes con discapacidades en varios programas post-secundarios.

Visitar universidades/escuelas vocacionales.

Continuar desarrollo del archive de la carrera:

- Cartas de recomendación
- Actualizar curriculum vitae y referencias
- Actualizar carta de presentación
- Información académica y reporte de calificaciones

**Lista de Transición**

La siguiente es una lista de actividades de transición que los estudiantes, padres, y el personal escolar podrán desear considerar cuando están preparando los planes de transición con el equipo del IEP. Las habilidades e intereses del estudiante determinarán cuáles elementos de la lista son relevantes. Use esta lista para determinar si estos asuntos de transición deben abordarse en las reuniones de transición del IEP. La lista también puede ayudar a identificar quien debe ser parte del equipo IEP de transición. En la reunión de transición del IEP se debe determinar quién tiene la responsabilidad de llevar a cabo las actividades de transición específicas.

**Cuatro a Cinco Años Antes de Dejar la Escuela**

- Para los estudiantes que requieren participación comunitaria y apoyos residenciales como adulto, solicitar a la Mesa Directiva del Centro Comunitario.
• Identificar los estilos de aprendizaje del estudiante y las modificaciones necesarias para que sea una persona que trabaja y aprende exitosamente.
• Identificar intereses de carrera y habilidades, completar inventario de intereses y carrera, e identificar requerimientos adicionales de educación y entrenamiento
• Explorar opciones para la educación post-secundaria y entrenamiento incluyendo los criterios de admisión
• Identificar intereses y opciones para establecer una vivienda en el futuro, incluyendo apoyos
• Es capaz de explicar sus discapacidades y las modificaciones que necesita
• Proveer entrenamiento de auto-propugnación para que los estudiantes aprendan a comunicar eficazmente sus intereses, preferencias y necesidades
• Aprender y practicar el cuidado de salud personal y la administración de higiene incluyendo la conducta sexual apropiada
• Aprender y practicar la habilidad de hacer decisiones informadas
• Investigar las herramientas de tecnología de ayuda que puedan incrementar la participación en la comunidad y las oportunidades de empleo
• Ampliar las experiencias estudiantiles con actividades comunitarias y expandir amistades.
• Buscar y utilizar opciones de transporte local no provistas por la familia
• Adquirir una tarjeta de identificación y la capacidad de comunicar información personal
• Identificar e iniciar las habilidades de aprendizaje necesarias para vivir independientemente incluyendo la administración del dinero.

Dos o Tres Años Antes de Salir de la Escuela
• Identificar los servicios de apoyo y programas comunitarios (Centros de Rehabilitación Vocacional, Centros de Vida Independiente, Mesas Directivas Centradas en la Comunidad, etc.)
• Coordinar con los proveedores de servicios adultos y asegurar que se hayan hecho las referencias apropiadas.
• Emparejar los intereses de carrera y habilidades con cursos académicos y experiencias laborales comunitarias.
• Recaudar más información acerca de los programas postsecundarios y los servicios de apoyo ofrecidos; y hacer arreglos para las modificaciones para tomar los exámenes de admisión de universidad.
• Identificar proveedores de salud e informarse acerca de la sexualidad y los asuntos de planeación familiar.
• Determinar la necesidad de apoyo financiero (Ingreso de Seguridad Suplemental, programas de suplemento financiero estatales, Medicare).
• Aprender y practicar habilidades interpersonales, comunicativas y sociales para marcos distintos (empleo, escuela, recreación, con colegas, etc.)
• Explorar el estatus legal de la toma de decisiones antes de la mayoría de edad y considerar la inclusión de un tutor.
• Comenzar un curriculum vitae y actualizarlo cuando sea necesario.
• Practicar habilidades de vida independiente, como el hacer un presupuesto, ir de compras, cocinar y limpiar la casa.
• Identificar los servicios de asistencia personal necesarios, y si es apropiado, aprender a dirigir y administrar esos servicios.

Un Año Antes de Salir de la Escuela

• Solicitar programas de apoyo financiero. (Ingreso de Seguridad Suplemental, Servicios de Vida Independiente, Rehabilitación Vocacional, y Servicios de Ayudante Personal).
• Identificar la escuela post-secundaria a la que asistirá el estudiante y arreglar modificaciones.
• Practicar la comunicación eficaz al desarrollar las habilidades de entrevistar, pedir ayuda, e identificar las modificaciones necesarias en los ambientes post-secundarios y laborales.
• Especificar el trabajo deseado y obtener empleo pagado con apoyos según se necesiten.
• Hacerse responsable por llegar puntualmente al trabajo, a las citas y actividades sociales incluyendo las necesidades de transporte.
• Asumir responsabilidad por necesidades de salud (el hacer citas, llenar y tomar recetas médicas, etc.).
• Registrarse para votar y para el servicio selecto (si es hombre).

Checklist adapted from the national Transition Network Checklist.

Empleo

Leyes Federales Laborales Para Los Trabajadores Jóvenes – Resumen

14 y 15 años de edad:
Pueden trabajar hasta:
• Tres horas durante días escolares, de lunes a viernes.
• Ocho horas los sábados y los domingos sin exceder 18 horas durante una semana escolar.
• Pueden trabajar hasta ocho horas al día en días no escolares, sin exceder 40 horas por semana durante semanas no escolares.
• No pueden trabajar durante horas de escuela.
• No pueden trabajar antes de las 7 a.m. o después de las 7 p.m., excepto desde el primero de junio hasta el Día del Trabajo cuando las horas de trabajo pueden extenderse hasta las 9 p.m.
• No pueden trabajar en procesos de fabricación, minería, construcción, operación de almacenes, ni ningún trabajo que utilice maquinaria eléctrica. Se aplican restricciones a trabajos de cocinero y a trabajos de transporte, tales como los servicios de mensajeros.
• No pueden trabajar en las ocupaciones peligrosas enlistadas a continuación para los jóvenes de 16 y 7 años.

16 y 17 años de edad:
• Pueden trabajar hasta:
• Pueden trabajar en muchas ocupaciones, excepto aquellas que han sido declaradas peligrosas por el Departamento del Trabajo de los Estados Unidos:
  • Fabricación y almacenamiento de explosivos
  • Manejo de vehículos motorizados o ser ayudante externo, excepto bajo ciertas condiciones
  • Minería de carbón con ciertas restricciones
  • Tala de árboles y aserraderos
  • Maquinaria eléctrica para trabajar madera, incluyendo sierras
  • Exposición a substancias radioactivas y a radiaciones ionizantes
  • Maquinaria eléctrica para formar, perforar y cortar metal
  • Aparatos eléctricos para levantar objetos
  • Rastros, empacadoras de carne, procesamiento y manejo de carne
  • Máquinas eléctricas para panaderías
  • Máquinas eléctricas para productos de papel
  • Fabricación de ladrillos, mosaicos y productos horneados
  • Sierras circulares y tijeras de guillotina
  • Operaciones de demolición y de destrucción de barcos
  • Operaciones de techos
  • Operaciones de excavación

El Departamento de SC de Trabajo, Licencias y Regulación:
http://www.llronline.com/labor/wages
(803) 896-7756

Carolina del Sur el pago de los salarios y las leyes de trabajo infantil son administrados por el salario y la sección de Trabajo Infantil en el Departamento de SC de Trabajo, Licencias y Regulación.

El Departamento de SC de Trabajo, Licencias y Regulación se complace en presentar varias publicaciones en formato de documento portátil (PDF).
Transición a la Vida Adulta

La vida está llena de transiciones, y una de las más notables ocurre cuando los estudiantes se preparan para salir de la escuela secundaria y entrar al mundo como adultos jóvenes. Cuando el estudiante tiene una discapacidad, la planificación para el futuro es especialmente importante. De hecho, la ley IDEA lo requiere.

Transición, en Breve

Los servicios de transición tienen como fin la preparación de los adolescentes con discapacidades para la vida después de salir de la escuela secundaria.

La planificación de transición comienza durante los años secundarios (o más temprano). IDEA requiere que la planificación de transición empiece por lo menos para cuando el estudiante alcanza los 16 años de edad.

La planificación puede comenzar más temprano (de los 16 años de edad) si el Equipo del IEP determina que sería apropiado hacerlo así.

La planificación de transición se lleva a cabo como parte del desarrollo del IEP (plan educativo individualizado) del estudiante.

El Equipo del IEP (que incluye el estudiante y sus padres) desarrolla el plan de transición.

El adolescente debe ser invitado a cualquier reunión del Equipo del IEP en la cual se considerarán metas postsecundarias para el y los servicios de transición que necesitará para alcanzar esas metas.

Como parte del desarrollo del plan de transición, el Equipo del IEP considera tales áreas como la educación postsecundaria o vocacional, el empleo, la vivienda independiente, y la participación comunitaria.

Los servicios de transición deben ser una colección de actividades coordinadas y orientadas a producir resultados.

Los servicios de transición se deben basar en las necesidades del estudiante y tienen que tomar en cuenta sus preferencias e intereses.

Transición: Recursos Básicos en Español

Cómo ayudar a los niños a enfocarse en la vida luego de la escuela secundaria.
Aprenda cómo ayudar a su hijo con una discapacidad de aprendizaje o atención a prepararse para la universidad, el trabajo, o la vida independiente.

Dos guías para los padres.
Aunque ambas guías fueron desarrolladas para los padres de un distrito escolar particular, la información que ofrecen es útil como introducción al proceso.
La guía breve

La guía más detallada

**Algunos consejos en el tema de transición.**
El enlace lo llevará a la publicación *Consejos a Padres para Planeamiento de Transición.*

**Ir a la universidad no ocurre mágicamente.**
Esta publicacion es para estudiantes en los grados 8 -10 para alertarles que hay que prepararse para ir a la universidad. Sugiere cuatro pasos que pueden tomar de ahora en adelante. http://www.edpubs.org/pubimages/EN_0744B.pdf

**Para su adolescente.**
*Empezando por mí mismo: Guía de planificación personalizada de la búsqueda de empleo* habla directamente al estudiante en transición.
http://www.communityinclusion.org/word/to14espagnol.doc

**Sobre el comportamiento del adolescente, según su cerebro, y su solución de problemas y toma de decisiones.**
De la “American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP).”
http://www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts_for_families/informacion_para_la_familia/el_cerebro_del_adolescente_comportamiento_solucin_de_problemas_y_toma_de_decisiones_no_9

**La crianza y los adolescentes con AD/HD: Consejos de un médico.**
¿Su hijo adolescente tiene un trastorno por déficit de atención con hiperactividad? Aprenda a mantener las líneas de comunicación abiertas al mismo tiempo que fomenta su independencia.
http://www.greatschools.net/espanol/la-crianza-y-los-adolescentes-con-tdah-consejos-de-un-medico.gs?content=1034

**Autodefensa.**
Si su adolescente tiene una discapacidad de aprendizaje, ser consciente de sí mismo y de sus derechos son la clave para el éxito futuro.

**Hacia la independencia.**
¿Cómo ayudar a los adolescentes a prepararse para vivir por su cuenta? Un experto describe las técnicas que su adolescente con discapacidad de aprendizaje o de atención debe desarrollar para funcionar como un adulto independiente–y cómo usted puede ayudarlo.
http://www.greatschools.net/espanol/hacia-la-independencia-como-ayudar-a-los-adolescentes-a-prepararse-para-vivir-por-su-cuenta.gs?content=1058
Sobre Sus Derechos Bajo la Ley Federal

Sobre la ley ADA.
El podcast “La Verdad sobre la Ley de Discapacidad” entrega cada dos semanas lo más último de la información sobre los derechos de las personas con discapacidad. Puede suscribirse en forma gratuita y recibir los programas por entrega automática, o escuchar el programa y leer las transcripciones desde este sitio web.
http://espanol.disabilitylawlowdown.com/

Preguntas frecuentes sobre derechos en materia de vivienda de las personas con discapacidades.
Un informe del Gobierno Federal.
http://espanol.hud.gov/offices/fheo/disabilities/

Preparación para la educación postsecundaria para los estudiantes con discapacidades: Conozca sus derechos y responsabilidades.
Un folleto del Departamento de Educación de los Estados Unidos.
http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition-sp.html

Sistemas de Apoyo

El seguro social es importante para los hispanos.
Esta hoja de datos es provista por la Administración del Seguro Social para mostrar cómo los hispanos se benefician del programa del Seguro Social y cómo ciertas características demográficas de hispanos se comparan con la población entera.
http://www.ssa.gov/pressoffice/factsheets/hispanics_sp-alt.html

Sobre beneficios del Seguro Social por causa de discapacidad.
La Administración del Seguro Social de los EE.UU. ofrece una gran cantidad de información en español, incluyendo informes sobre beneficios por causa de discapacidad y tales programas de SSA como el Programa del Boleto a Trabajar.
http://www.socialsecurity.gov/espanol/10929.html

Conseguiendo servicios de rehabilitación.
Los dos recursos abajo proporcionan información sobre los servicios de rehabilitación para estudiantes de secundaria en Nueva York, pero serán útiles para los demás también. Preguntas y respuestas para los padres.
Preguntas y respuestas para los estudiantes.


Para Explorar la Educación Postsecundaria

¿Pensando en ir a la universidad?
¿Es la universidad la mejor opción para un adolescente con discapacidad de aprendizaje o de atención? Un experto ofrece pautas para tomar una decisión informada para la educación después de la escuela secundaria.
¿Necesita dinero para los estudios superiores?
Este folleto expone las opciones que existen para obtener y llenar la solicitud para ayuda financiera y obtener ayuda gratis vía Internet, por teléfono o en persona.
http://www.edpubs.org/pubimages/EN_0800H.pdf

Cómo costear los estudios postsecundarios.
Esta guía de programas federales de ayuda estudiantil es del Departamento de Educación de los EE.UU.

Ayuda estudiantil en la Web.
Este sitio del Departamento de Educación de EE.UU. sirve como fuente de información gratuita sobre cómo costear y prepararse para la educación postsecundaria.
http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/spanish/index.jsp

Para Explorar el Mundo del Empleo

Proyecto Visión.
Proyecto Visión está participando con agencias gubernamentales y organizaciones privadas que funcionan en el campo laboral, educacional y tecnológico para aumentar la extensión hacia latinos con discapacidades. Además de su sitio Web, ofrece una línea telefónica de asistencia técnica, en el 866.EMPLEO.1 (1.866.367.5361).
http://www.proyectovision.net/spanish/resources/disability.html

Cómo comenzar bien: La transición al trabajo para un joven con discapacidad de aprendizaje.
El experto Paul J. Gerber, Ph.D., recomienda que los padres comiencen temprano a ayudar a los niños con discapacidades de aprendizaje y a prepararse para tener éxito en el trabajo.
http://www.greatschools.net/espanol/la-crianza-y-los-adolescentes-con-tdah-consejos-de-un-medico.gs?content=1034

Guía para el éxito.
La Alianza Nacional para la Fuerza Laboral con Discapacidades (NCWD/YOUTH por sus siglas en inglés) ha identificando cinco guías/estándares para el éxito basados en lo que todos los jóvenes necesitan para la transición a la edad adulta de forma exitosa.

Acomodaciones razonables bajo la ADA.
La Ley de Americanos con Discapacidades (ADA) requiere que los empleadores suministren acomodaciones razonables a un individuo calificado que tenga una discapacidad física o mental conocida. Entre las acomodaciones razonables más viables se incluyen la reestructuración del trabajo, reasignación a un puesto de trabajo vacante, modificación el horario de trabajo a turnos de medio tiempo, proveer tecnología asistiva o aparatos auxiliares, o suministrar intérpretes calificados.
Más sobre las acomodaciones en el empleo.
JAN ofrece información y asistencia técnica a los empleadores y al público sobre cómo hacer acomodaciones en el empleo para personas con discapacidades. El enlace siguiente lo llevará a su lista de informes, que incluye hojas enfocadas en condiciones como autismo, diabetes, trastornos cognitivos, y muchos más. También puede llamar a JAN en español al número gratuita: 1.800.526.7234 (Voz/TTY).
http://askjan.org/espanol/

Cómo lograr las “condiciones ideales” de trabajo para los jóvenes con LD.
Paul Gerber, Ph.D., describe el proceso de encontrar una buena relación entre las propias virtudes, las tareas del trabajo y el ambiente de trabajo.