

Checklist to Help Plan for Transition from High School

Every young person deserves to have a life worth living after high school. We encourage you to dream and plan what that might look like. Then create a path to help you realize those dreams. Sometimes there are steps to be taken that a parent or student may not think about unless someone tells them. This checklist will help you think about those steps and decide which ones you need to take.

Four to Five Years Before Finishing High School

- Identify your learning style and the supports needed to be a successful learner and worker
- Put together checklists, portfolios etc to help you share this information with others.
- Explore career options by looking at videos, visit job sites, and learning what skills/training is needed to do different jobs
- Explore the idea of going to college by learning about different options and admission criteria
- Think about where you would like to live and check out different kinds of living arrangements.
- Learn how to say "I have a disability," to tell people what it is and then tell them what works to help you learn and do well in school or on the job. Do you need more time to take tests? What helps?
- Learn to communicate your interests, preferences and strengths.
- Investigate different types of technology that can boost independence at work, home and school.
- Get out of the house and enjoy different kinds of recreation; find a hobby or craft; travel and broaden your experiences.
- Don't rely on your family to take you everywhere; explore other forms of transportation.
- Learn and practice personal health care and identify skills for independent living.
- Investigate money management and ways to handle money.

Two to Three Years Before Finishing High School

- Make a list of community support services and programs (Vocational Rehabilitation; Adult Service Providers, Independent Living Centers, Personal Assistant Services).
- Invite people from these agencies to your IEP meeting.
- Plan work experiences during school that match your career path and interests.

- Gather more information about how to enroll in specific colleges or learning programs and what accommodations you can use on entrance exams.
- Find an adult health care provider and become informed about sexuality and family planning
- Determine the need for financial support through working and benefit programs.
- Plan ahead for when you reach the age of 18 and decide if you will need a guardian. Learn how to contact lawyers to help with that job.
- Put together a resume or script that you can use with a potential employer or a cue card for filling out applications.
- Practice budgeting, shopping, cooking and housekeeping.
- Identify needed personal assistant services and if appropriate, learn to direct and manage these services.
- Apply for benefits one month before your 18th birthday.

One Year Before Leaving High School

- Identify what school or training program you plan to enter after high school and arrange for accommodations.
- Practice interviewing, asking for help in different situations, and getting to know new people in a safe way.
- Identify a community-based, paid job you want to have and take steps to apply for the job or work part time.
- Learn to get up to an alarm, arrive on time, follow through on chores and plan social activities.
- Register to vote and for selective service (If male).
- Collect items you will need to live more independently and plan how you will rent or create space to live an adult life.
- Plan how you will stay in touch with friends and family after high school and look at technology that will help you do that.
- Save money to help cover some of the costs of transition.