

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO TRANSITION PLANNING

What You Should Know: *Helping your student journey into adulthood*

The 3 main areas of transition planning:

Transition planning is the process of your student moving through high school, preparing for graduation, and life after graduation. The three areas of planning are education, employment, and independent living.

What are the most important ages for planning your student's journey into adulthood?

Age 14: Transition services can begin.

Age 16: Your student must have a statement of transition in their IEP and an appropriate transition plan that details how they will make progress on post-secondary transition goals. It is important that transition services are individualized for your student's wants and needs.

Transition services, such as postsecondary education and training, supported employment, independent living, and getting involved in the community, can all be part of the journey to adulthood. Students may need assistance in some or all of these areas. Strategies to achieve measurable postsecondary goals and who will be supporting your student (school staff, agencies, family members) should be stated in your student's IEP and reviewed each year.

Age 18: Known as the *age of majority*, your student legally becomes an adult. All decision-making authority is transferred from you to your adult student, (see "Transfer of Rights" section in the IEP for more details). Your student may write a letter to their school giving you, the parent(s), the right to continue managing their education matters.



What does an effective transition plan in an IEP (Individualized Education Program) look like?

The transition plan must first have a statement of your student's preferences, strengths, and interests. Their courses of study should be identified. Next, appropriate measurable secondary goals should be listed with strategies to achieve those goals. Annual goals in the IEP should be linked to your student's postsecondary goals.


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Resources



What if my student has greater support needs?

Not every student's transition plan will be focused on education, employment, and independent living. Your student's right to special education programs and services may extend to the school year in which they turn age 21. Until they complete their education, the transition plan in your student's IEP must be focused on their individualized preferences and their needs. Your student's case manager should refer you to specific agencies based on your student's anticipated needs. They will explain the school district responsibilities, as well as the student/parent responsibilities, in relation to each agency listed. You should feel free to ask your student's case manager questions about the agency programs and for information about other developmental supports and services available to your student as they prepare to complete their high school education.



Which agencies assist students in their support needs?

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) including Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre ETS), and Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), and Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI)—if applicable to your student's needs—are three of the most common agencies supporting students with disabilities.

What is person-centered planning?

Every transition plan should be individualized to focus on the student's needs and wants as they prepare for young adulthood. There is no plan that works for every student. Your student's plan should be unique to what they want and need for their future.



Next Steps

Disability Rights NJ provides individualized support to your student through our *TRAILblazer Transition Program* including our online questionnaire - *ASPYIR Transition Planning Tool*. This online questionnaire is a great place for your student to get started in their plan for the remainder of high school and beyond. The *ASPYIR* Tool helps your student begin working on their strengths, needs, and preferences related to life during and after high school. It serves as a guide for their education, employment, and independent living goals.

Contact our Intake and Self-Advocacy line at **800-922-7233** for more information on working with us. You can also email intakeunit@disabilityrightsny.org or complete the online intake form on our website at: disabilityrightsny.org/intake.