

# Transition to Adulthood:

Where Am I Going and How Do I Get There?

# A STUDENT'S GUIDE TO TRANSITION PLANNING

## What is transition?

Transition is the journey from high school life to adult life, whether you choose further education, employment, independent living, or other goals for your future.

Transition planning is the work done by students, school personnel, parents, and legal guardians to make the process successful. The transition timeline takes place between ages 14 to 22. During these years, you complete high school and may begin post-secondary education or employment. It is also the time during which you begin to make decisions on where you want to live and with whom you want to live. Education, employment, and independent living are the main areas of focus for high schoolers preparing for transition.

## What does transition mean for your life?

Transition helps you set up your life with meaningful goals. It allows you to have a plan of action to make it easier to succeed as an adult. Your transition plan may change over time based on your wants and needs.

## What should your transition plan look like in your IEP (Individualized Education Program)?

Your transition plan should begin with a statement of transition that identifies how you will prepare to graduate high school and any future plans you have for young adulthood. All parts of your transition plan will focus on your strengths, needs, and preferences – what you like to do and what interests YOU.

Your annual goals will be determined every year and need to be measurable. Your annual goals should be related to your education, employment, and independent living goals. Each year, you and your IEP team will review your progress towards meeting these goals, and the supports you benefit from, and may make changes to the plan. Your goals, the supports needed to help you achieve your goals, should be documented in your IEP.



Get started here

## Self-Advocacy and Transition

Self-advocacy is the ability to express your wants and needs in whatever ways you are able. Self-advocacy is extremely important when going through high school and planning for life after high school. It is a big part of transition planning. You can build your self-confidence and increase your independence. Self-advocacy gives you the opportunity to have a better understanding of what you need and increases your ability to think for yourself.

## How do we help with transition planning?

Disability Rights NJ provides individualized support to you through our *TRAILblazer Transition Program* including our online questionnaire - *ASPYIR Transition Planning Tool* - which helps you create a plan all about transition through high school and into young adulthood. The tool has three main areas of focus: **education, employment, and independent living.**

Transition planning does not look the same for everyone, but identifying strengths, needs, and preferences in these sections helps many students prepare for what is to come.

In addition, we discuss how to best address your needs through available resources.



## 5 Reasons Self-advocacy is Important to Transition:

1. Building confidence in yourself
2. Increasing independence
3. Understanding what you need
4. Increasing the ability to think for yourself
5. Taking control of your own life as much as possible



## Next Steps

Disability Rights NJ's *ASPYIR Transition Planning Tool* is a great place to start your plan for the remainder of high school and beyond. Our online questionnaire helps you begin working on your strengths, needs, and preferences related to life during and after high school. It serves as a guide for your 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](mailto:intakeunit@disabilityrightsny.org) or complete the online intake form on our website at: [disabilityrightsny.org/intake](https://disabilityrightsny.org/intake).