

Transition guidelines: preparing for life after high school

Two to three years before leaving school

HEALTH CARE

- Know the side effects of your medications and what you should do if they occur. A side effect is an unintended reaction that your body may have to a medication.
- Learn how to get your medications filled without help from your parents.
- Learn how to order and take care of any special equipment or medical supplies you use.
- Schedule your own doctors' appointments and keep track of them on your calendar.
- Learn how to get to your doctor's office by yourself.
- Meet privately with your doctor, nurses and other healthcare professionals. Write down any questions you have ahead of time. Talk with your providers about any difficult topics that concern you.
- Talk to your current doctors about how and when you should start seeing a doctor who sees adults.
- Talk with other young adults with similar health care needs or disabilities to learn about their experiences with transition to adult health care.
- Learn if you are eligible to hire a personal care worker and know how to hire one if you are. If you have only had a family member assist with your personal care, it may take some time to feel comfortable using a trained professional caregiver.

ADULT SERVICES

- Request a current evaluation/therapy report from your high school.
- Gather information about special needs trust funds you may have prior to turning 18. A child or adult who uses Medicaid or Medicare can become ineligible for coverage if his or her assets and income are above \$2000. Trust funds allow a method to keep Medicaid eligibility if you receive an inheritance.
- Gather information about Guardianship. Guardianship gives a parent or other adult the legal right to be responsible for your needs after you turn 18. This process can be started six months before you turn 18.
- If appropriate, begin to gather medical, academic and psychological documentation that will be needed for Social Security application; eligibility begins at age 18, you must apply six months before you turn 18.
- Continue to develop independent living skills
- Continue to develop self advocacy skills

EMPLOYMENT

Vocational exploration is an ongoing process that must begin early!

- Call the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) at (800) 442-3477 or (888) 877-5939 (TTY) to request an application and apply for DVR four semesters before graduating from high school. Your DVR representative can be invited to be a part of your Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team.
- Complete a work experience.
- Participate in career exploration or preparation classes offered by your high school.
- Attend transition fairs to learn about resources and make connections with community agencies.
- Ask your high school to help you research jobs that are of interest to you. This information is also available by visiting the Bureau of Labor Statistics Web site at www.bls.gov.

- Learn about your career interests by taking tests or surveys offered by your high school or on the Internet.

EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

- Tell your teachers what you need and want to learn about.
- Obtain a free copy of *Opening Doors to Postsecondary Education and Training* by visiting <http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/pdf/tranopndrs.pdf>
- Gather information about your education options after high school.
- Take classes related to your career goals.
- Tour college campuses.
- Attend college fairs.
- Establish a career goal.
- Ask the school or college you plan to attend about the paperwork that disabled students need to complete before starting school.
- Take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or American College Test (ACT) with accommodations (if needed) if you plan to attend a 4-year school
- Participate in paid or volunteer work experience
- Tell your high school IEP or Special Education teacher if you plan to attend college.
- Contact the State DVR office for an application (four semesters before graduating). If your employment goals require post-secondary education or assistive technology, you may be eligible for financial assistance