

Transition Timeline for Students Working Toward a HS Diploma

Transition planning is an individualized and unique experience for each young person. Here are some steps to consider as a young person gets closer to adulthood.

Age 12 - 14

This stage sets the foundation for a young person to become an involved, independent, self-advocate. Allow the young person to make some of their own choices and encourage them to express their own preferences as early as possible. Help the young person learn about their disability and how to communicate any needs they might have in connection with it. What is listed in this stage should continue throughout high school:

- ☐ Review NYC Public Schools' [Parent Guide to Special Education](#) and [Family Guide to Transition Planning](#).
- ☐ Assist young person in developing an awareness of their disability and how it affects their learning and daily living.
- ☐ Practice self-advocacy skills.
- ☐ Participate in vocational assessment by age 14, which includes a student interview, parent/guardian questionnaire, teachers and related services provider questionnaire.
- ☐ Align the young person's interests and preferences to future career goals through consistent [career exploration and exposure](#) at home, school, and in the community.
- ☐ Make connections between school lessons and the adult world. For example, math assignments can be used to discuss money management or young people can explore how math data (statistics) is used in news stories.

Age 14 - 16

Encourage the young person to take a more active role on their planning team. Young people should prepare to take part in the planning and decision-making process for their education and employment. This will help educate them about their rights and responsibilities as young people and individuals with disabilities.

- ☐ When applying to high school, review the school's [special education services and programs](#).
- ☐ Starting at age 14, students must be [invited to IEP meetings](#) and are encouraged to actively participate in the discussion.
- ☐ Discuss and consider credential and/or [diploma options](#) during IEP meetings, including class credits, cumulative hours, and state exams needed to meet [graduation requirements](#).
- ☐ Start creating a list of support people, such as professionals, family, friends, and community members. There are also individuals who could provide support and advocate for a young person in IEP or service meetings.
- ☐ Obtain [working papers](#), if under the age of 18 years old, through school placement or district superintendent office.
- ☐ Learn about the differences in the laws regarding disability rights for young people with disabilities from high school to adulthood. Refer to INCLUDEnyc's [Disability Laws: High School v. Postsecondary tip sheet](#).
- ☐ Apply for work-based learning, summer internship and/or volunteer opportunities, such as Summer Youth Employment Program ([SYEP](#)) and Training Opportunities Program ([TOP](#)). Refer to INCLUDEnyc's [Employment Opportunities for Students](#) tip sheet.
- ☐ If applicable, get an updated assistive technology assessment prior to leaving high school.

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Age 16-18

At this stage, young people should be exposed to work-based learning opportunities that will allow them to explore and experience available opportunities in the working world. For example, the young person could shadow a family member or friend at work, volunteer in the community, or find an internship. Additionally, they should begin to make connections to adult service agencies such as the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities ([OPWDD](#)) or Adult Career and Continuing Education Services - Vocational Rehabilitation ([ACCES-VR](#)).

- ☐ Research appropriate postsecondary schools or employment/vocational programs.
- ☐ Participate in the final IEP meeting and obtain an exit summary, when applicable.
- ☐ For youth attending college, become familiar with parental rights regarding the young person's educational records, as outlined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ([FERPA](#)).
- ☐ Research accommodations for the workplace, vocational training programs, or colleges.
- ☐ Ensure final Mandated Three-Year Re-evaluation (formerly known as the tri-annual evaluation) is conducted (preferably within the last year of high school).
An up-to-date evaluation will be needed when requesting accommodations in the future.
- ☐ Connect with the accessibility and disability support services office when visiting college campuses or vocational programs.
- ☐ Explore and connect with services through [ACCES-VR](#), [OPWDD](#), and/or Office of Mental Health ([OMH](#)), if appropriate.
- ☐ Collect necessary financial and disability documents or applications/ accommodations after high school:
 - ☐ Most recently updated IEP
 - ☐ Medical documentation of disability
 - ☐ Disability evaluations
- ☐ Apply for government benefits, such as Supplemental Security Income ([SSI](#)), Social Security Disability Insurance ([SSDI](#)), Food Stamps ([SNAP](#)), and [Medicaid](#).
- ☐ If SSI benefits are already in place, prepare for the [SSI Age 18-Redetermination Process](#).
- ☐ Keep copies of all documentation you submit when applying for programs, benefits or services.
- ☐ Start building [financial literacy](#).

Age 18+

To further support a young person's independence, assist them in acquiring accommodations and creating a structure for independent living. This may include travel training, assistive technology, housing, or a job coach provided through supported employment.

- ☐ [Increase awareness of](#) and [independence using](#) public transportation systems.
- ☐ [Register to vote](#) at age 18.
- ☐ Complete an [assistive technology](#) assessment, if applicable ([ATHelp Link](#))
- ☐ Explore living options after graduation, e.g. living with parents, college campus, supported living, or independently.
- ☐ Explore adult health care options.
- ☐ Obtain official photo ID card, such as a [NYS driver's license](#), [non driver's ID](#) or an [IDNYC](#) card.