



TRANSITION TIMELINE

It is never too early to start planning for the transition from childhood to adulthood, both from the students' and the parents' perspective. Below are some tips about what schools should be doing, and what families and children can do to help develop the necessary skills even before students reach high school.

TO PREPARE FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Help your child develop self-help skills, such as cooking, cleaning, self-care, and basic money management.
- Help your child explore potential career interests.
- Encourage your child to participate in community activities.
- Begin to plan for your child's financial future.

TO PREPARE FOR HIGH SCHOOL

- During the school year your child turns 12, he/she should receive an age appropriate Level I Vocational Assessment from their school, and annually after that.
- Help your child develop an awareness of their disability and how it affects his/her learning and daily living.
- Help your child develop self-advocacy skills.
- Familiarize yourself with the high school application process:
 - Research the admissions requirements of each high school you are interested in attending.
 - Figure out the pros and cons of each high school.
 - Research the different types of diplomas or certifications they offer.
- Continue to explore your child's career and job interests.
- Encourage your child to participate in volunteer and summer work opportunities.

TO PREPARE FOR LIFE BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

- During the school year your child turns 15, include your child in their Individualized Educational Program (IEP) meetings.
- In 9th grade, select your child's appropriate diploma option, and make sure the curriculum will allow them to graduate.
- Make sure your child receives their Student Exit Summary the year he or she graduates.
- Encourage your child to volunteer or to obtain a part-time, paid, or summer job.

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HIGH SCHOOL (continued)

- Explore your child's post-secondary educational options such as college, vocational school, job training, or adult day programs:

If your child is applying to college/vocational school:

- Familiarize yourself with each school's admissions requirements.
- Make sure you have all necessary documentation to obtain the accommodations your child needs.
- Talk with each school's disabilities office to determine what additional support they provide.
- Understand your child's rights as outlined in [Section 504](#) of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Familiarize yourself with your parental rights and your child's educational records, as outlined in the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) (FERPA).

If your child is applying for adult services:

- Understand your child's eligibility requirements and application procedures.
- Make sure all of your child's evaluations and records are up to date, and obtain required services evaluations to ensure a seamless transition.
- Explore your child's living options after graduation: Will they live at home, at school, in a supported living facility, or independently?
- Explore your child's adult health care options.
- Apply for government benefits, such as Supplemental Security Income ([SSI](#)), Social Security Disability Insurance ([SSDI](#)), Food Stamps ([SNAP](#)), and [Medicaid](#).
- Ensure that all legal documents (wills, trusts, etc.) are up to date.
- Be sure your child has access to the assistive technology they need.
- Explore social opportunities available to your child after graduation in order to promote independence and inclusion.
- Familiarize yourself with agencies that work with adults with disabilities such as [ACCES-VR](#) and [OPWDD](#).