FACT SHEET

Transition to Adult Life (Secondary Transition)

Office of Intellectual Disability

Transition from high school to adult life (secondary transition) is an exciting time in a young person's life. It can also be a confusing and stressful time. This Fact Sheet can be a guide in beginning to plan. Find information and resources by visiting transition workshops and fairs and at these websites:

- *PaTTAN, www.pattan.net/*
- *ASERT, #ASDNext, www.paautism.org/transitionagecommunication*
- *PA Secondary Transition Guide, http://secondarytransition.org/*
- *PA Family Network Lifecourse Tools, www.visionforequality.org/pa-family-network/*
- *United Way 21 & Able, https://uwswpa.org/21-and-able/*

At what age does planning for secondary transition begin?

In Pennsylvania, school districts are required to begin completing the transition planning section of a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) at the age of 14. This is the time students and families should start thinking about and planning for life after high school. Services may be offered, by the school district outside of the traditional classroom setting, while youth are still enrolled, usually until the age of 21.

What's included in secondary transition planning?

Start by meeting with the student's transition planning team. The most important members can be the student and their family. The student should be included as much as possible. The Supports Coordinator (SC) plays a vital role in planning and documenting all information and needs in the student's Individual Support Plan (ISP). Supports coordination can continue throughout a person's life, contributing to continuity of services and help with identifying support needs that will be important to the person as they plan for and enjoy an Everyday Life. Others essential in the process are the school district's IEP team, Representatives from any other agency or service system involved in the student's life should also participate. Keeping all members of the team informed and involved is the best way to successfully plan for the transition to adult life. There is no "one-size-fits-all" model; each students plan should include activities that best meet their needs.

What are some other things to think about and add to team conversations?

- **Identification documents:** birth certificate, social security card and a state ID.
- **Medical Assistance:** consider eligibility for Medical Assistance, (also called Medicaid or MA).
- **EPSDT (Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment):** this MA program ends at 21.
- **Health insurance:** If the student is currently covered on their parent's insurance plan and/or Medical Assistance, will anything change as they transition from high school?
- **Medical and/or support needs:** should be part of the conversation with the planning team and documented in the ISP.
- **Social Security:** consider eligibility for Social Security benefits.
- **OVR (Office of Vocational Rehabilitation):** services may be available that include the Early Reach program and PETS (Pre-employment and Training Services)
- **Transportation:** What type of transportation will the graduate need? Has the student participated in travel training? Will they be a user of public transportation? Do they need a paratransit (ACCESS) evaluation? Learn about some options at www.myaccessride.com/resources/
- **School documents:** keep copies of the most recent assessments that reflect any given diagnosis.
- **Opportunities through other service systems** such as Behavioral Health. This may include drop in centers and clubhouses.
- **Social, recreation and lifelong learning options:** refer to the same named document on the Office of intellectual Disability webpage at www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/About/Offices/Intellectual-Disability.aspx

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What are some options for a meaningful daytime activity after I finish high school?
There are many types of opportunities that a graduate can explore. Discuss your desired outcomes with your SC. Your SC can help you learn more about options, including:

Post Secondary Education
Several programs in the area offer the opportunity to earn certifications or to increase a graduate's academic and vocational skills. This may include a college experience.

- Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) includes Continuing Education for Special Needs Adults and Vocational Education Training for People Who Need Learning Support
- Hiram G. Andrews Center and the Commonwealth Technical Institute
- College options for people with intellectual disability (Think College, https://thinkcollege.net/)

Competitive Integrated Employment is the first best option to consider for all individuals once they have completed their education. This type of employment is defined as earning at least minimum wage, while working in a fully integrated setting in the community. Many individuals utilize on-going supports to maintain this level of employment. Find examples under "Relevent services" below.

Volunteer Opportunities can be helpful in continuing to acquire vocational skills, while gaining a sense of accomplishment and contribution in the community. These experiences may be with or without formal supports.

What are some relevant services through the intellectual disability/autism (ID/A) service system?
Supported Employment may include career exploration, job development, application, interviewing, and on-the-job training. Sometimes referred to as Job Coaching. Direct Support Professionals (provider staff, DSPs) support an individual in obtaining and maintaining competitive, integrated employment.

Advanced Supported Employment is a job creation model that involves working with individuals to discover personal strengths and interests, while working with employers to customize an employment opportunity. Typically used when traditional Job Development has been attempted without success. Self-employment could be an outcome of this model. May also be referenced as Discovery/Customized Employment.

Small Group Employment was previously known as Transitional Work. These small groups work in the community with DSP support. Typically earning at least minimum wage, this employment option is usually in a non-integrated setting. Work examples include janitorial and grounds maintenance.

Community Participation Supports (CPS) encourages community participation and involvement. Based on individualized needs and desired outcomes, this highly personalized service, can provide vocational, social and life skills development. This service category has replaced Pre-Vocational and Adult Training Facilities (ATF), also referred to as Day Program or Sheltered Workshops. The Social, recreation and lifelong learning document on the Office of intellectual Disability webpage will be helpful. Find it here www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/About/Offices/Intellectual-Disability.aspx

Habilitation Supports is provided in the home or community and can be offered as an individual or group-centered support. It typically focuses on working toward social and /or life skills goals.

Companion Supports may be appropriate for individuals who require support for their health and safety at home and in some community settings.

Education Support Service may consist of payment for adult education including community college, university or other college-level courses, classes, tutoring to receive a GED, and participation in apprenticeships not funded by another system.

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Office of Intellectual Disability
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For more information regarding OID, including additional Fact Sheets visit
www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Programs-Services/Disabilities/Intellectual-Disability.aspx