

TRANSITION PLANNING GUIDE

Life is full of transitions. It is an ongoing process that many times we take for granted. For major life transitions such as starting a new job, starting a family, or moving to a new home, we generally spend a lot of time planning ahead for the changes to come. For a child with special needs, the transition from school to adult life often takes especially careful planning to be successful. It is never too early to start thinking about this important time and to start preparing for the changes to come.

The information that follows was created to assist families and school staff with the transition process. Although transition planning does not formally begin until the child turns 14, it is never too early to start thinking about the skills the child needs to transition from school life to the adult world where employment, recreation, socialization, and independent living skills are critical to success.

The questions presented in this brochure are meant to be used as a springboard for parents and students to start thinking about and talking about the transition from school to adulthood. School staff are encouraged to share this brochure with all families as part of the IEP planning process. Sending this document home to parents several weeks prior to the IEP meeting will provide parents with the opportunity to really think about their answers to the questions that are posed. It is important to note that all questions do not need to be addressed at one time. This same document can be utilized and reviewed during the seven year transition planning period. It may be helpful for some students if you provide a picture inventory to assist with their responses.

The IEP meeting and/or the planning meeting provide the perfect opportunity to talk about the specific needs of the student and how the team can work together to help the student successfully achieve this transition into adulthood.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)

www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd

Somerset & Union 908-226-7800
 Hunterdon, Mercer, & Middlesex 609-588-2727
 Monmouth & Ocean 732-863-4500
 Morris, Sussex, & Warren 973-927-2600

Family Support Center of New Jersey

www.fscnj.org 800-372-6510

Regional Family Support Council

www.njddc.org/familysupport/familysupporthome.htm

800-216-1199

Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN)

www.spannj.org 800-654-SPAN

Autism New Jersey (formerly COSAC)

www.autismnj.org 800-4-AUTISM

The Arc of New Jersey

www.arcnj.org 732-246-2525

Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired (CBVI)

877-685-8878
www.state.nj.us/humanservices/cbvi

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)

lwd.dol.state.nj.us

New Brunswick (Middlesex) 732-937-6300
 Trenton (Central) 609-292-2940
 Elizabeth (Union) 908-965-3940
 Somerville (Somerset/Hunterdon) 908-704-3030
 Toms River (Ocean) 732-505-2310
 Neptune (Monmouth) 732-775-1799

Division of Disability Services 888-285-3036

www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dds

NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities

www.njddc.org 800-792-8858

New Jersey Transit

www.njtransit.com 800-772-2287
 For Access Link Information 800-955-2321

Medicare and Medicaid Services

www.cms.gov
 Division of Disability Services
 (for Medicaid information) 800-356-1561

Social Security

www.ssa.gov 800-772-1213

TRANSITION PLANNING QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS

Think about these areas of adult life: Work; where someone lives; recreation (what someone does for fun and relaxation); socializing (family, friends, community connections); and independent living

- What would you like your child to be doing in each of these areas a year after they have graduated from high school? 5 years? 10 years?
- What do you think your child would like to be doing in each of these areas? Think about what makes your child happy now. What does he/she enjoy doing? What are his/her strengths?
- Work with your child to pick one goal for each of these areas. What needs to be done (at school and at home) to help reach this goal?
- What are the barriers/fears for your child in the future? What skills need to be developed to address these barriers/fears?
- How much supervision does your child need? What can he/she do independently?
- What things are you currently doing for your child that you wish he/she could do for him/herself?
- What types of things interest and motivate your child?
- What do you need help with?

Being an informed consumer is important. Do you know about the range of services that might be available after your child graduates?

- Are you registered with DDD? DVR? What services are you registered for/waiting to receive?
- Do you have information about obtaining guardianship of your son/daughter once they turn 18?
- Are you aware of other resources (The Arc, Autism New Jersey,, The Family Support Center of NJ, etc.) that can provide support, information, and other services?
- Do you need help contacting these places? Have you identified a person who can assist you if needed?
- Have you identified someone who can be a knowledgeable resource person for you? Maybe this person is an experienced parent who has successfully navigated the system and/or a case manager, a relative, or a social worker.
- Are you aware of assistance provided through Medicaid and Social Security?
- Do you know about the different types of employment and living settings that might be available (sheltered workshops, supported employment, group homes, supervised living, etc.)? Do you know what is required to access these employment and living arrangements?
- Are you aware of transportation resources to access community sites?

TRANSITION PLANNING QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

- What types of activities do you enjoy doing in school? Why do you like these activities?

- What types of activity do you enjoy doing outside of school? Why do you like these activities?

- What types of activities do you not enjoy doing in school? Why don't you like these activities?

- What types of activities do you not enjoy doing outside of school? Why don't you like these activities?

- What interests and motivates you?

- Are there new things that you would like to learn about or try in school? What are they?

- Are there new things that you would like to learn about and try outside of school? What are they?

- What type of job/volunteer work do you see yourself doing when you leave school?

- Where do you see yourself living when you are an adult?