

Transition Plans

Getting Your Child Ready for Life After High School



Getting Started
14 ½

The IEP team must create your child's transition plan by age 14 ½. Before making the Transition Plan, the school should complete transition assessments (tests) with your child. You and your child should think about your child's strengths, likes, dislikes, future job options, and skills. The plan should include education, work and independent living goals for after high school. It should also list classes and services your child needs in high school to meet her goals for life after high school. Get started with our interactive Transition Planning Module at www.equipforequality.org/transitions.

The plan, goals, and tests should be looked at and updated every year to be sure they still match your child's goals, abilities, and interests.

The plan should have specific steps and resources for life after high school, such as work experiences or help applying to colleges.

Talk about **travel training** with the IEP team. Can your child take a bus or drive a car? How can the school help your child get these skills?

Think About the Future

Do you think your child will be ready graduate in 4 years? If not, talk with your child about possibly delaying graduation so she can get more services

Ask about connections with **Adult Service Providers**

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to
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The **Division of Rehabilitative Services (DRS)** (www.bit.ly/IL-DRS Voice: 877-581-3690 or TTY: 800-447-6404) has Transition programming for students and adult services that include:

- **Education and training** - Find programs, help with application and enrollment, and help pay for college or training programs.
- **Employment** - Find job options, help with applications and interviews, and provide on-the-job coaching for a set time.

The **Division of Developmental Disabilities (DD)** (www.bit.ly/IL-DD) gives:

- Help finding a job and job coaching.
- Home-based Support Services (HBSS) such as day program or money to pay for in-home help.
- Residential Services such as Community Integrated Living Arrangements (CILAs).

If your child has DD, contact your Independent Service Coordination agency (ISC) to conduct a Pre-Admission Screening with IDHS. This will put your child on **PUNS** (Prioritization for Urgency of Need for Services), a list of people with DD who may need services as an adult. Update your child's PUNS file each year.

Talk with an attorney about whether your family should create a Special Needs Trust.

Getting Ready for Graduation
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Be sure the plan still matches your child's goals, abilities, and interests. In one year, your child will have the right to make her own decisions. She may be getting ready to graduate. Now is the time to think about:

- Will your child be ready to make her own **education decisions**?
- Will your child be ready to **graduate**? If not, she can stay in special education until she turns 22.
- If she is ready to graduate, what help will she need after high school?

Talk about these things with the IEP team. If you disagree with the decision to graduate your child, you need to ask for mediation or due process within **10 business days** of the IEP meeting.

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Decision Making

At 18, your child has the right to make her own decisions about her education. Talk about letting her make her own decisions and/or supported decision making for educational, legal, financial, and/or medical decisions.

Graduation

Is your child on track to graduate? Is she ready to leave high school? Consider options for after graduation, including college, training programs, competitive and supportive employment, and day programs. If she is not ready, you can delay graduation so your child can receive **extra special education services**. Think about extra special education services such as:

- Dual Enrollment - Student continues to get special education services while taking classes at a community college or participating in another education or training program.
- Comprehensive Transition Programs (CTPs) - Offers students with intellectual disabilities continued instruction on academics, careers, and independent living skills to prepare for paid work.
- Transition Services in School - Continued services in neighborhood school, co-op, or private school program focused on preparing for future work, schooling, and/or independent living.

Post-Graduation Programming and Adult Services

After graduation, talk to DRS about adult services and update your child's information with PUNS. If your child is going to college, ask about the college's disability services. No matter what she chooses to do after graduation, look into adult services at the:

- Social Security Administration: www.ssa.gov or call 1-800-772-1213
- Centers for Independent Living: www.incil.org
- Illinois Division of Mental Health: www.bit.ly/idhs-mental-health
- Regional Transportation Authority (travel training): www.bit.ly/cta-pace-metra

Additional Resources:

Equip for Equality Fact Sheets:

- Transition Services: www.bit.ly/transition-plans
- Rights in Community Based Programs: www.bit.ly/rights-in-institutions
- Self Determination/Guardianship Defense: www.bit.ly/efe-guardianship
- Supplemental Security Income: www.bit.ly/efe-ssi
- SSA Ticket to Work Program: www.bit.ly/ticket-to-work

Equip for Equality Interactive Module:

- Transition Planning: www.equipforequality.org/transitions

The Arc of Illinois

- Illinois Life Span Program: www.illinoislifespan.org
- DDD v. DRS Comparison: www.bit.ly/ddd-v-drs
- PUNS, The Basics: www.bit.ly/puns-basics
- PUNS Pathway: www.bit.ly/puns-path

If you have any questions or need help getting transition services for your child, contact **Emily Wilson** at 312-895-7309 or emilyw@equipforequality.org.

You can also call our Special Education Helpline at 866-543-7046 or visit our website www.equipforequality.org.



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