A Guide Book for Transitioning Into Adulthood
This workbook tries to offer ways to explore and prepare for the transition to adult life. It is designed to help teens and young adults with special health care needs think about their future. Each person who may use this book has unique needs, strengths and preferences. Therefore we have designed the information and activities to allow each person to pick the parts that fit best. Use this as a guide. Each person may want to do different parts of the workbook at different times in life. The first step is to begin, to both dream and plan to make your future what you want it to be.

This original workbook was developed by the Center for Youth and Adults with Conditions of Childhood (CYACC) at Indiana University School of Medicine and funded in part by an Indiana Community Integrated Systems of Services Project through a grant to the Indiana State Department of Health from the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

Various pages and content have been adapted by the Family Support Network™ of WNC, a parent resource center of Mission Children’s Hospital, Asheville, NC, with permission from CYACC, to make this resource specific to youth and families in North Carolina. With the support and review of numerous family members and community agencies on the Transition Sub-committee members of the Innovative Approaches Initiative in Buncombe Co, a "Directory" of community services has been added to this Guide, in order assist families in locating appropriate services.

The first North Carolina edition of this guide book was developed in August 2014 and printed copies were provided by Buncombe Co Health and Human Services, Innovative Approaches project, through a grant from the Children and Youth Branch of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Please feel free to let us know how this has been helpful to you or if it needs corrections. Please send your comments to Kerri.eaker@hcahealthcare.com
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You can download additional copies from:
Creating My Timeline

This index is a guide for your transition planning. Each note below represents a content area in the workbook. Follow the book in a way that fits you best. Try not to leave out any areas that are important to you. Using a timeline is one way you might think about spreading out the work of growing up into little steps as you grow.
Me - Past, Present and Future

Who are you? Are you good at describing yourself? Try out this activity. Look at the three columns. Answer the questions by thinking about yourself a few years ago, now, and in the future. We all tend to change as we grow. Think about how the things you do now will help lead to what you want to do in the future. You may want to come back to the “Future” column later and add or change your ideas after you do some more of this guide. Part of planning about the future is letting yourself start with ideas and then adjust them as you grow.

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<tr>
<th>PAST (in grade school)</th>
<th>PRESENT (today)</th>
<th>FUTURE (as a young adult)</th>
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<td>Favorite things to do</td>
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<td>Future plans (school or work)</td>
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<td>How I stay healthy</td>
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<td>Who helps me with big decisions</td>
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<td>What I worry about</td>
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<td>What I am really good at doing</td>
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<td>What keeps me going</td>
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Adapted from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare’s Health Care Transition Guide for Youth Aged 12 to 15
**Transition** means changing from one thing to another, for example, moving from being a child to being an adult. This doesn’t happen overnight. You have to build skills and confidence to become a responsible and happy adult. It might be helpful to think about four big areas of your life:

### Health, School & Work, Home and Community

#### Transition Tips:

**8 Values for Transition:**

1. **Be proud of who you are.** Focus on yourself, not on your challenges. You are a valuable and unique person, not a diagnosis.

2. **Start planning early.** Picture the kind of adult you would like to become, ask your family and others around you to keep this picture in mind as they help you.

3. **Believe in your goals.** Remember that you have to stay with it, don’t give up just because it takes work, take small steps, keep track of your progress.

4. **Be Flexible.** Try new things, and change your goals as you go to fit you better.

5. **Work through challenges.** At times your challenges may feel like a roadblock. Look at the problem, then try to either change the problem or your approach so you can still move forward.

6. **Enjoy the little things in life.** Be thankful for fun with friends, your favorite place, a good song; these are the things that are really important in life.

7. **What can I DO?** Focus on your abilities, your strengths, then go DO things.

8. **Be in the moment.** Try not to worry about yesterday or tomorrow but do your best today. If you have trouble with sadness or worries, get help from others, your parents, doctors or counselors.

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**Learn about your health conditions.** You should know you best! Use good sources for information – ask your family and other resources to recommend books, support groups, and websites to get to know your condition. Work to become an expert (this may take time!).

**Build and keep healthy habits.** Good habits will keep you feeling better into your adult life - brush your teeth, eat healthy foods, keep clean, get enough sleep and exercise—try to learn to keep these habits without reminders from others.

**Follow your health plan.** If you have special treatments and medicines that your body needs, make sure you fit this into your life – make your health a priority so you can do all that you want to do.

**Don’t forget the simple things.** Some simple health problems are common in everyone, like colds and sore throats. Make sure to keep track of your symptoms and get help when you need it.

**Preventive Care.** Everyone needs to remember to keep track of the regular schedule for prevention—like get your yearly flu shot. Ask questions about what you will need so you can plan ahead. If you are a young woman, ask about when you need “well woman” exams, including pap smears. If you are a young man, you will need to learn to do a testicular self-exam.

**Sex, drugs, and other risky business!** You may be curious about your changing body and risks like substance use. You should learn as you grow, and ask your parents, counselors or doctors about these parts of adult life – learn about relationships and dating so that you have safe relationships as an adult. Learn about why substance use (alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs) is risky and how to keep safe. Learn to resist bad peer pressure.
Chores, responsibilities, privileges. You may not really like doing chores, but they are a part of growing up. They are a way to show you can handle responsibilities. They are the way you learn to take care of your future home. In life there are consequences to not following the rules or taking care of yourself. Do your chores as a teen so you don't have to have your parent remind you. Be responsible as an adult to get the privilege of being independent.

Money. Learning how to spend money so you have the things you need is important in adult life. You need to be able to budget and plan. Adults must work out the difference between needing something and wanting something. Practice saving and spending wisely with any money you get now.

Support your family. Your parents, siblings and family are important in your life, remember to help your loved ones while they also help you.

Consider future career goals. Start to think about possible future careers, imagine yourself at a job! Dream about the choices. Think about what you like and what you are good at. Picture yourself doing the job. Talk to your parents, teachers, and other valued adults about your goals. Think about ways to try out your ideas.

Vocational training/College. It can take time and a number of steps to get to a future career. Start thinking about what you will do after high school with plenty of time, at age 14 or earlier, so you can plan to get into the school and work that you want.

Get organized. Work on keeping your life in order - use a schedule, make yourself reminders, set alarms, and get help if you need it.

Interpersonal skills. People need each other. Adults have to know how to handle themselves with other people in different settings. Work at making a good adult impression, shake hands, make eye contact, and be respectful in conversations. Learn to keep yourself safe. Learn to work with others well.

Get out into your Community. Enjoy it. Meet people. Seek help from others, search for support and information. Be a part of your world.

Be an advocate. “Be a Squeaky Wheel” - Make your wishes and feelings known to others. When you feel like “the system” gets in your way, speak up, worker harder, and join with others in similar situations - you can help to bring about change.

Seek resources. Find activities and support that are a good fit and keep your life full.

Foster friendships. Be involved in clubs and groups, keep in touch with friends, and make new friends through your life.

Adapted from www.telability.org, Joshua Alexander MD, 2001, UNC Chapel Hill
Write a story or draw a picture of your plans for your adult life. Think about questions like:

- Where will I live? Who will I live with?
- What will I be doing? Who will be helping me?
- Will I have a job? Will I attend college?
For Your Information

Part of planning for your future is learning about yourself and the world around you. You will take better care of yourself if you become the expert on “you”. People First language is an important part of learning about the word “disability” and becoming an advocate in the disability community.

You will see that there are lots of definitions in this workbook. It is a good idea to get in the habit of asking questions and then finding the answers. We have tried to leave space for you to write things down to help you

**Accommodation**
An activity or device that is a special support helps you work around the limits of a disability.

**Advocate**
A person who speaks up or acts on behalf of a person or group to help or protect them. You can be an advocate for yourself and others.

**Family**
There are many different people in a family who can provide a circle of support around each person. Some young people live with their birth or adoptive or foster parents, others live with one parent or stepparents. Young people can live with their grandparents or other relatives (such as aunts or uncles) or family friends. If we use terms that do not fit your family, just substitute terms that do fit your family or closest circle of support.

**People First language**
People with disabilities are, first and foremost, people. The outdated language that can be used in the community to describe these individuals can serve to perpetuate negative, harmful stereotypes. People-First Language was developed as a way to acknowledge disabilities without using them to discount the many other characteristics and traits of that person. For example, someone that might have once been described as a blind man might now be described as a man with a visual impairment.

**Talking about Disabilities**

While People-First Language is a trend that encourages putting the person before the disability in both written and spoken language, not all those with a disability prefer this method. There are some Autistic self-advocates that choose to identify themselves by their diagnosis, feeling that one can’t be separated from the other, and therefore choosing not to use People-First Language. Instead, they may prefer to be called an Autistic person, an Autistic, an Aspie, or some other version. Be aware of individual preferences in the language of disability.

**Person with a physical disability**
A person who experiences challenges with the function of their body including some limit in the use of their arms, legs or body coordination (such as spina bifida or muscular dystrophy).

**Person with a chronic illness**
A person who experiences a long-term condition which needs ongoing medical treatments and care within the health care system (such as cystic fibrosis or sickle cell disease).

**Person with an intellectual disability**
A person who experiences challenges with the function of their brain or mind including some limit in learning, reasoning, remembering, communicating or interacting in their world (such as autism or Down syndrome).

**Universal design**
A term used to describe making buildings and places accessible to people with and without disabilities. Planners try to make places free of barriers for everyone.

**Person with a special health care need**
A person with a physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition who needs more than the typical health care services.
An “elevator speech” is the few sentences you use to tell someone what you want them to understand about your condition. Practice your speech to help you feel more comfortable explaining what you may say to others if you need to ask for their assistance in certain settings.

I am a person with:

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

This means that:

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

Reflect...

What questions do you have about your health and your body? Write down your questions so you can ask your parents, doctors, counselors, or teachers to help you better understand yourself. For example:
- How can I keep myself as healthy as possible?
- Should I change the way I am taking care of myself in some way?

Disability disclosure: Every person with a disability or health condition may be faced at times with the decision to share or not to share information about his or her condition. The decision to disclose or share your condition is yours. You should weigh between your wish for others to understand and support your special needs and your wish for privacy about something personal. Sharing your disability information may be important when it affects your ability in an essential activity, at school, in a job, in a public setting, in an emergency. To get help with an issue due to a disability, you don’t have to reveal all your personal info, but give just the info that explains the accommodation or special support you need.

Even if you choose not to disclose your information to others, you should still carry important medical information with you, like using a medic alert tag or wallet card.
Health

In this section...

- Learn to Be Healthy
- Check your Mental Health
- Be an Expert about You
- Self-Manage your Healthcare
- Plan for your Transition
- Find Adult Healthcare
- Know your Health Insurance Options
- Move to the Adult Model of Care

Stay Healthy!
Learn to Be Healthy

Healthy habits are a part of life. As you grow you need to take more and more control of your own health and habits. You need to know why these habits are important. Even if you need help with some of these activities, you can still work on being the director of your plan. The director knows the plan and makes sure that things follow the plan. Ask yourself about each of these healthy habits. Are you learning to do things for yourself? **Check the box in columns 1 to 4 that fits you best, then answer the question in box 5.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Healthy Habits</th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>What happens if I don’t do this?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eat a healthy and balanced diet</td>
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<td>Get enough fruits and vegetables</td>
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<td>Avoid junk food and sugary drinks (soda!)</td>
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<td>Get enough sleep every night</td>
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<td>Brush teeth twice daily</td>
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<td>Shower/take a bath regularly</td>
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<td>Wash my hands often</td>
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<td>Take care of other personal hygiene and toileting</td>
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<td>Get physical exercise regularly</td>
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<td>Wear a seatbelt in cars</td>
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<td>Wear a helmet &amp; gear for biking or sports</td>
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<td>Watch my stress level and use relaxation</td>
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<td>Go for my regular doctor check ups</td>
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**Habits take practice.** Ask your parents and teachers for ideas about new ways to practice and create better reminders for yourself.
For Your Information

We know that having a healthy weight for your age and height helps keep your body in shape and working well. Being overweight can lead to illnesses like diabetes and high blood pressure. Being underweight can make it harder for your body to do all the jobs it has to do. To keep your body at a healthy weight you should work on eating right, keeping active and checking with your doctor.

My Height is: _____________________
My Weight is: ____________________
My Body Mass Index (BMI) is: __________________

Your BMI is a number we use to help decide if you weight is in balance with your height and age.

My doctor says that my current weight is underweight, healthy or overweight. Circle one

I have an eating and exercise plan to keep a healthy weight. Yes or No

What questions do you have about your healthy weight plan?

_______________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________

Activity

You are what you eat. Your body is like a car engine. It needs the right fuel to run well. You need to eat the best fuel to have good energy and feel good. Do you know about eating right? You can learn a lot at www.choosemyplate.gov

Try this activity. Think about your last dinner. Write down what you ate on the list below. Look at the picture. Did your plate have groups of food in the correct amounts like the picture does?

Fruits ________________________________________
Vegetables ____________________________________
Grains _______________________________________  
Protein _______________________________________
Beverage _____________________________________

Adapted from www.ChooseMyPlate.gov
Check Your Mental Health

At times we all feel different emotions; like happiness, sadness, worry and anger. We might wish we could feel happy all the time, but we also have to learn how to deal with other emotions. Sometimes things happen in our lives that stress us and we have to learn how to deal with stress too. It is important to let a trusted adult know if you feel bad, like very sad or worried or angry or stressed. Sometimes it is hard to tell how you are feeling, but we can ask ourselves questions to try to figure it out. We can ask trusted adults to help us figure it out.

- Stress is a force or an event that pushes and pulls at your emotions. It can make you feel uncomfortable in some way, like sad, anxious, worried or angry.
- Everyone feels stress sometimes in life. Some people have more stress than others.
- Stress can be caused by issues that are hard for you, they can be past events or things that you are dealing with now.
- Stress can be caused by school (homework, sports, exams, grades) or social issues (pressure by friends, dating, not feeling accepted by others, bullying) or personal issues (problems with health, family, or money or a big change in your life).
- Stress can last a few minutes or longer.
- You can feel stress with your mind (emotions) and body (physical).
- Stress can cause emotional problems such as being grumpy or easily upset, feeling sad, feeling nervous or worried, feeling overwhelmed, having problems concentrating.
- Stress can cause physical problems such as headaches, stomach aches, weight loss or gain, skin rashes, trouble sleeping, feeling tired, changes in appetite.
- Everyone deals with stress differently.
- Everyone can work on habits to decrease their feelings of stress by using coping and relaxation skills.
- Some people try to use alcohol or other drugs to try to deal with their stress but this doesn’t work.

Adapted from the Adolescent Health Working Group
Stress Busters

• You can practice dealing with your stress and get better at relaxing.

• Identify the thing that is giving you stress.

• Tell someone about your stress (a trusted adult or friend).

• Think of ways you can avoid the stress if possible. Example: If you don’t like talking to someone who is often not nice to you, try to stay away from that person.

• Exercise – go for a walk, a run, ride a bike, swim, dance or do another sport or activity.

• Eat healthy – Try not to eat too much or too little. Stay away from junk food and too much caffeine and alcohol or drugs.

• Sleep well – go to bed around the same time every night, sleep 7 to 9 hours.

• Breathe deeply – find a quiet place to sit or lie down, close your eyes, think of the words “breathe” and “relax” and slowly take a deep breath through your nose until your lungs feel full. Then slowly breathe out through your mouth until your lungs feel empty. Repeat this slow and easy deep breathing until you feel relaxed. Some people recommend practicing “Three Deep Breaths” as an exercise.

• Imagine yourself relaxed – find a quiet place, close your eyes and think of a favorite memory or place where you like to feel safe and comfortable and relaxed. Think of the sounds, smells, things you see in this place. Dream about this relaxing place for 10 or even 15 minutes if you can, to let yourself feel refreshed and ready to get up. People call this “Guided Imagery.”

• “Relax your muscles” – Find a quiet place to sit or lie down, close your eyes, relax your whole body and pretend you are limp like a noodle. You can practice relaxing one part of your body at a time, your legs, your arms, your neck, until you are relaxed all over. Get up slowly when you are ready.

• “Express yourself” – write in a journal, draw a picture or create other art, write stories or poetry. Cook, laugh, or volunteer. Listen to music. Sing a song. Play a game. Do a puzzle. Cry if you need to. Talk to someone you trust about your feelings.

• Talk with a counselor if you need or want to.

Adapted from the Adolescent Health Working Group
My Relaxation Plan:

1. When do I feel upset? What causes me stress?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. People I can tell about the stress:

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

3. Ways I can try to avoid stress:

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

4. My exercise plan:

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

5. Healthy foods I can eat to help:

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

6. How do I make sure I get plenty of sleep?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

7. When will I try to use a relaxation exercise like breathe deeply, think about relaxation, or relax my muscles?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

8. What ways do I use to express myself? When do I do this?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

9. How I can get more help?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Making a Mental or Behavioral Health Appointment:

1. Check your insurance card for a phone number to call for mental health services.
2. Call and ask for help finding a provider who works with teens or young adults.
3. Call a provider to schedule a visit, check on hours of availability and location for ease of getting there.
4. Consider how you want your caregiver(s) involved. In North Carolina, young adults 18 and over must give permission for parents to be involved.
Try to fill in the blank words in each sentence to remind yourself about healthy habits.

1. It is important to ______ your hands with ______ and ______ after going to the bathroom.

2. I shower or take a bath ______________________. My favorite outfit is_________________ ____________, but I make sure to wear clean clothes each day.

3. For fun and exercise I typically do ___________________ for at least ______ minutes each time. I try to get ___________ minutes of exercise in a week.

4. To avoid cavities in my teeth, I always _________________________ twice a day.

5. Practicing exercises in relaxing like taking “Three Deep __________________” are an important part of dealing with stress.
Be an Expert about You

Up to this point in your life, your parents manage your health—they make sure you are healthy, and advocate for you with your doctors and providers. Now you are training to become the manager of your own health.

Some definitions we use may be new to you—here is some information to help you. There is space on the next page to add any words you still don't understand!

**Prevention**

is an activity like eating right or getting vaccines that keeps you healthy and feeling good and helps avoid illness.

**Medical Home**

The place where you feel at home getting your health care. You have a voice in your own care. You know how and when to get in touch with the team. The doctors and nurses and staff know you, keep in touch with you and help coordinate all the parts of your care. You all work together to make your health be at its best.

**Co-pay**

An amount of payment that the patient pays for a type of health service. For example your type of insurance may have you pay $3 for a prescription, $10 when you go to see your primary care provider or $50 when you go to the emergency room.

**Specialist**

A doctor who is an expert in treating one kind of health problem or problems with one part of the body. Examples are a pulmonologist who takes care of lung problems and a cardiologist who takes care of heart problems. There are both pediatric and adult specialists.

**Prescription drugs or medicines**

Medicine that needs a doctor’s order because you can’t buy it yourself over the counter at a pharmacy.

**Pediatrician**

A doctor who takes care of infants, children and teens.

**Family Physician or Med-Peds Doctor**

A doctor who takes care of both children and adults.

**Primary Care Provider (PCP)**

A doctor who takes care of patients as the first line for health issues or prevention, follows the patients over many years and knows all about their health needs. For example, if you have seen a general pediatrician since birth, he or she is your current PCP. Once you are an adult you will likely move to a doctor more comfortable with adult care.

**Catastrophic Plans**

have lower premiums and requires you to pay all of your medical costs up to a certain amount, usually several thousand dollars. Costs for essential health benefits over that are generally paid by the insurance company. Some of these plans cover a number of primary care visits and preventive benefits per year.

**Prescription drug coverage**

Health insurance plans usually have a list of medicines that they will pay for. When a medicine you need is not on the covered list, you will likely pay all of your medical costs up to a certain amount, usually several thousand dollars. Costs for essential health benefits over that are generally paid by the insurance company. Some of these plans cover a number of primary care visits and preventive benefits per year.

**Health Insurance**

A method to pay for health care services. Public insurance is provided through a government system like Medicaid and Medicare. Private insurance is provided through companies that often come through the patient or parents’ job or are bought individually by a person. Young adults may need to reapply or move to a new health insurance program as they transition to adult care.

**Health Condition**

is another way of saying disease or illness or something that affects the work of the mind or body.

**Health Care Transition**

The process of preparing and moving from a model of healthcare for children to a model for adults. You will likely change from your pediatric doctors (primary care provider and specialists) and your parents as your health managers and start to work with adult doctors yourself as the manager of your own health.

**Healthcare Definitions**

**Internist**

A doctor who takes care of adults.

**Deductible**

is the amount you pay for care before the insurance company starts to pay its share. Plans may pay for some preventive services and other care before you’ve met your deductible.

**Premiums**

are a fixed amount you pay to your insurance plan, usually every month. You pay this even if you don’t use medical care that month.

**Covered services**

Every insurance plan has a different list of services and procedures that are covered by the plan, which means the insurance plan will pay for them. It is important to know about what services can be paid by your insurance plan and what you may have to pay yourself.

**Health**

is having your mind and body feel good and at their best to do the job of living.

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Adapted from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare’s Health Care Transition Guide for Youth Aged 15 to 18
Add other words you don’t know here—look up the words and write their meanings next to them. If you need help, ask a parent, doctor, or teacher to help you!
Learning about myself and my medical conditions:

<table>
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<th>Diagnoses: (Names of diseases/conditions):</th>
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<th>Hospitalizations:</th>
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<th>Surgeries:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Assisting devices: (Examples: Wheelchairs, braces)</th>
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<th>Allergies:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Medications (name, amount, reason):</th>
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Reflect...

Even though you are young, your medical history has lots of information—everything from your birth, until now. When you transition to adult doctors, you will want to know and be able to describe your medical history. Use the page to the right to begin work on listing your medical history and medical conditions. Check with your parents and doctors to learn what you should know. Write the names of any physical or learning challenges, or chronic illnesses you have and when they started. When were you in the hospital? What surgeries have you had? What special equipment do you need? Allergies are things like medicines that cause your body to have a bad reaction. Write the names of your medicines and the reason you take them.
Self-Manage Your Healthcare – Responsibilities and Consequences

Managing your own health and treatment plan may be easy or not so easy. As you become an adult, you will become more and more responsible for these tasks. Learning to work with all the people in the health care system will probably take some practice. Knowing how and when to ask questions are especially important. Ask yourself about each of these self-management skills. Are you learning to do things for yourself? Do you know what the consequences would be if you didn't do these things, like could something bad happen to you? Check the box in columns 1 to 4 that fits you best, then try to answer the question in box 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Management</th>
<th>1 I do this on my own</th>
<th>2 I do this on my own with reminders</th>
<th>3 I need some help to do this</th>
<th>4 I always need help to do this</th>
<th>5 What happens if I don't do this?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Knowing my diagnosis/medical conditions</td>
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<td>Knowing my medications &amp; doses</td>
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<td>Remembering and taking my medications</td>
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<td>Making sure I follow up with lab tests and treatment plans</td>
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<td>Knowing when to call the doctor</td>
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<td>Making doctors’ appointments</td>
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<td>Calling for medication refills</td>
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<td>Signing my own release of information and consent forms</td>
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<td>Making my own medical decisions</td>
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<td>Taking paper and pen to my appointments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asking questions at my doctors’ appointments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seeing the doctor alone (for at least part of visit)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keeping medical alert info like a list of medications &amp; an emergency plan with me all the time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speaking my thoughts and questions clearly</td>
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Adapted from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare’s Health Care Transition Guide for Youth Aged 12 to 15
What can I do to work more on my self-management? What questions do you have about these skills? Ask your parents and doctors for info and ideas about new ways to practice for yourself.

Get more info: For more help and practice becoming a self-advocate for healthcare and other parts of your life, contact the following programs to see what opportunities they have.

Disability Partners
The Youth Program encourages youth with disabilities from ages 13 to 28 to come together as a community to achieve empowerment and self-assurance to not only benefit themselves but to become a mentor to other youth with disabilities. Youth with disabilities will learn how to take on leadership roles along with participating in advocacy and mentoring activities. Other activities will include community projects and fundraisers that could provide the opportunity for some youth to go to a national conference or attend the annual North Carolina Youth Leadership Forum at North Carolina State University. A youth group at Disability Partners is scheduled every second Friday of the month from 5:00-7:00 p.m., 108 New Leicester Hwy, Asheville. Contact Disability Partners at 828-298-1977 or disabilitypartners.org.

Mayor’s Committee for Persons with Disabilities
The mission of the Asheville Mayor’s Committee for citizens with Disabilities is to promote and advocate for equal and inclusive opportunities for people with disabilities in all aspects of society; and to recognize and cooperate with all people and organizations that contribute to his cause. Check with your local government to see if there is a current committee.

Asheville Committee Activities:
• Participation in the city’s Volunteer Handicapped Parking Enforcement Program.
• Awards presentation each fall to individuals and businesses for outstanding advocacy, awareness and contributions.
• Community education, training and resources, such as an accessibility checklist and a resource list for businesses.
• Inclusive job fairs, therapeutic recreation events, statewide meetings and celebrations of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Aktion Club | kiwanisofasheville.org
Kiwanis of Asheville is proud to be a club that provides programs, literature and opportunities to relate to individuals with disabilities from countries worldwide. Their mission is to provide adults living with a disability an opportunity to develop initiative, leadership skills and to serve their community.
Plan for Your Transition

Transition plan: ✓

- When will I need to change from a pediatric doctor to an adult doctor? Do I know the policy at my current doctors’ offices?
- When will I need to change my health insurance plan from my parents’ plan to my own plan? Do I know what my choices are?
- How do I find an adult doctor?
- How do I get my records and information sent to the new doctor?
- How do I work with the new doctor to have the best health and health care?

What answers do I need for these questions? Check off which questions you want to ask your parents and doctors. Write answers and take notes below:

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
Healthy Habits: Part Two

Some questions and topics feel very private. It is important to know that you can ask your doctor questions that feel very private and can be helped in a respectful way. **Confidential** is a word we use to describe conversations between you and your doctor that stay private and are not shared with others. You may choose to share these conversations if you want to.

*There are a few extreme situations where your doctor may tell you that you need to break the confidence, because you are at such a serious risk of hurting yourself, or if you are not able to consent for yourself and someone has hurt you.

---

**Sex, Drugs, and Risky Business:**

- Taking risks is part of growing up. For example, there is good risk-taking, like trying out a new skill of calling in your medicine to the pharmacy. You don’t know if you will get it right the first time but you try and learn from the experience.

- There is also bad risk-taking, where the chance of something bad happening is so big that you shouldn’t take the risk at all. Examples of bad risk-taking are driving a car too fast, texting while driving, skateboarding without a helmet, smoking cigarettes, trying alcohol or drugs, ignoring the rules about strangers, having unsafe sex, stealing, or joining a street gang.

- As you grow, you need to learn the facts about adult life and risks. You need to know who can give you good information about these topics. Your parents, teachers, counselors, and doctors all can have a part in helping you learn about growing up.
I want to learn more about the following:

- Risks of smoking cigarettes
- Risks of alcohol use
- Risks of illegal or street drugs
- How to be safe in cars
- How puberty makes your body change
- What sex is
- Risks of sexual activity
- How babies are made
- How pregnancy works
- How to consent (to say yes) or to say no to sex or private touch
- How to talk about health risks of sex and pregnancy with my doctor
- How to keep safe from sexual infections
- How to prevent pregnancy
- If my health or condition will affect my ability to have sex as I grow
- If my health or condition will affect my ability to have a child

For girls:
- When I need a female exam
- What a PAP smear is
- How to do a breast self exam

For boys:
- When I need a male exam
- How to do a self-testicular exam

Reflect...
Have I learned about puberty and teen risks? By reading? At home from my family? From teachers in school? Do I want to ask for help to learn more about these topics, such as an accommodated education program in my school?

Reflect...
Am I ready for a confidential talk with my doctor? Do I have specific questions, like “How will my health affect my teen life?” or “Why would I choose to drink or not drink?” Write down questions and take them with you to your visit.
Talking to Your Doctors

Talking to your doctors and other providers yourself is a change for many teens. It is time to practice answering all the questions about your health that you can, and asking the doctors and providers your own questions directly (instead of relying on your parent). Consider planning ahead for visits. Write down any questions or thoughts you have and then share them with your doctor at the next visit. Here is an easy-to-remember model to use when talking to your doctor, called GLADD.

**G - Give Information** As an adult, you are responsible to give your doctors the correct information. Be honest! If you have not taken your medications when you were supposed to, or have done some things that you were told not to do, tell your doctor.

**L - Listen and Learn** You are responsible to remember what your doctors tell you. It isn't easy to remember and understand everything that might happen during an office visit. Bring paper and a pen when you visit the doctor, and write down things you need to remember. Ask for copies of important papers, like your medication list. Bring someone you trust with you to help with questions and understanding.

**A - Ask** Ask questions you have about your health and keep asking until you understand. It's a good idea to write down and take your questions with you to help you remember ALL of them. Doctors want their patients to think about their health and ask questions. Ask your doctors how they want you to bring your questions. Do they have a system, like a special health email account? Does the nurse help with questions?

Practice how you might ask a question when you don’t understand something at the doctor’s office:
- Please tell me more about that.
- Could you explain that to me again?
- Could you write that down for me?
- Is there something you can give me to read?

**D - Decide** Play an active role in decisions about your health plan. Make sure you agree before you say yes. Do you agree with what needs to be done next and who is going to do it?

**D - The second D stands for Do** Do your part in following your health and treatment plan!!

Adapted from *The Institute for Child Health Policy, University of Florida*

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### Planning before a Doctor Visit:

Use this list of questions to plan for your next doctor’s visit. Be ready to talk with your doctor.

1. What is the reason for today’s visit?
2. Do you have other concerns you want to talk about?
3. Have you been ill or treated by someone else since your last visit?
4. Did you have questions about test results?
5. Do you need medicine refills?
6. Do you need new equipment or changes in your equipment?

---
Find Adult Healthcare

Before you start to look for a new doctor, think about what you want. Plan ahead. You may want to transfer when your health is doing well, rather than wait for when you are sick or in a crisis. Some young adults prefer not to change all their doctors at the same time. They change their primary care doctor or specialist first and then once they are comfortable change the others. Others decide they want to change all together at a new hospital or in a new city for college or a job.

Here are some questions to think about:

1. Where is the office located?
2. Is the office located close to your home or your college if you will live away from home?
3. Will you need help with transportation?
4. Is the office accessible?
5. Do you need other special assistance?
6. Does the office accept your type of health insurance?
7. Are the office hours convenient?
8. Do you want a primary care doctor who knows your family?
9. Do you want a primary care doctor that treats others with your type of special healthcare needs?
10. Do you need a specialist who is an expert in your special needs?
11. Does the doctor work with the hospital and other doctors that you want to use?
12. How do you contact the doctor after hours?
13. Are you ready to give the correct info to the new doctor about your healthcare needs and history, or connect with others who can help provide more information?

Ways to look for a new doctor – primary care and specialty:

- Ask your current doctors.
- Check out the doctor your parents or other family members visit.
- Call a family support group or adult disability agency and check around.
- Ask adults who have health needs similar to yours for ideas.
- Ask your health insurance company about participating and available providers.
- Ask a vocational rehabilitation or independent living center counselor.
- Find a university health center or a community health center.
- Contact the local medical society or chapter of the American Academy of Family Physicians or American College of Physicians.

You may want to make your first visit with an adult doctor before you have completely finished with your pediatric doctors. You want to still have the chance to change your mind about this new doctor.

- Ask if you can schedule a “get acquainted” visit with the new doctor. This will allow you to get to know the doctor and help you decide if the office is right for you. Keep in mind that a get acquainted visit may not be covered by your insurance. Remember that it will take time to develop a relationship of trust and understanding with a new doctor —your previous doctors have known you for a long time. You have to be willing to help the doctor get to know you and work together to keep you healthy.
- Are you comfortable with the new doctor? Is this the kind of person you think that you will be able to talk to? Does the office staff seem helpful? Are you ready to make your next appointment? How will you make sure that your pediatric doctor and new adult doctor know your decision?

Get More Info

Pediatricians, pediatric subspecialist and family practice physicians are starting to use forms called “transition plans” to help with planning and talking about the different steps to be taken towards transitioning your health care to adult care providers. Ask your doctor for these forms or download and take them with you to your next appointment.

FamilySupportNetworkWNC.org
Know Your Health Insurance Options

Most young adults need to consider their health care coverage and how it might be affected by their age, employment and income and other factors. Check out the ways that medical coverage might be affected:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As you turn 18 and have:</th>
<th>Here are your options:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **No Medical Coverage** | Consider working at a job with job-based insurance. Remember that some companies do allow you to purchase insurance while only working part-time hours. Consider insurance options through any college or university that you may be attending. Investigate whether your parents may still be able to add you to an existing insurance policy.  
Visit [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov), the website resulting from the Affordable Care Act, to investigate options that you may qualify for through the Marketplace. **The Affordable Care Act lets you:**  
• Stay on your parents plan through age 26  
• Protects you from being denied coverage for a preexisting condition (a condition you had before age 19)  
• Protects you from lifetime dollar limits on coverage by an insurance company.  
Look into options that, while not as broad as most health insurance plans, would allow for basic medical care (area health clinics or other programs serving low income individuals and families). Ask your pharmacy about drug and pharmacy discount plans. Check with local community centers and social service agencies for other options. |
| **Medicaid for Infants, Children & Families** | Be sure to review with your parents what type of Medicaid you are currently receiving.  
For Medicaid policies that end at age 19, ask to be considered for other possible options such as:  
• Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Medicaid  
• Health Coverage for Workers with Disabilities (Ticket to Work)  
• Medicaid Waiver, called Innovations Waiver in North Carolina  
Review the previous box for other possible options. |
| **Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Medicaid** | Contact the Social Security Administration to ensure that your case has been updated with the correct information. Your eligibility will be determined based on your new circumstances. Be sure to resport all changes to the Social Security Administration. |
| **Parents Paying for Private Insurance** | Know your policy! Most policies now allow children to stay on their parents' plan through age 26. Some plans allow you to stay on your parents' plan for as long as you are still dependents. Your parents will need to contact their insurance company or employer in order to provide verification of this. (See N.C. General Statutes 58-51-25) |

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Check out the NC Office and Health for resources on Emergency Preparedness.  
[www.ncdhhs.gov/dph/wch/aboutus/disability.htm](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dph/wch/aboutus/disability.htm)
Move to the Adult Model of Care

At age 18, in the state of North Carolina, young adults become responsible legally for their own health care decisions. You will be asked to sign your own consent to tests and procedures. The role of your parents legally changes. Here are some ways to think about the differences between pediatric and adult healthcare:

**Pediatric Healthcare Environment**

- Colorful, nurturing, kid-friendly and playful environment.
- Doctor will talk to your parents and you about your care.
- You’ve known your doctor and team since you were young and feel comfortable with them.
- Under the age of 18, parents give permission or consent.
- Parents advocate for you.

**Adult Healthcare Environment**

- Professional, respectful and adult environment.
- Doctor talks directly to you and asks you to make decisions about your own care.
- You have to get to know your new doctor, and it may take some time to feel as comfortable as you were with your pediatrician.
- Over the age of 18, you provide consent, and will need to tell your doctor if you want parents or a support person to be involved.
- You advocate for yourself and can ask whomever you want to help.

**Are You Ready?**

This is a complicated question—you should discuss your ability to be your own decision-maker in the future with your parents, teachers, and doctors. Learning to consent is complicated.

**Consent** means to be free and able to give permission for something after you have learned the facts and weighed the risks and benefits.

All youth with disabilities are not necessarily ready to be their own decision-makers at age 18. Some people need extra support. If you have some limits in your decision making due to your intellectual or communication issues, you should read more about decision-making in the Independent Living chapter of this guide.

Used with permission from the Center for Children with Special Needs, Seattle Children’s Hospital.
Is your transition complete? Are you the manager of your own care?

Graduating to Adult Health Care:

- I have an updated portable medical summary, and I bring it with me to medical appointments.
- My pediatric doctors have transferred my care to adult doctors.
- I have an adult primary care provider.
  - I plan to continue to work with this doctor.
  - Last appointment _________________________ Next appointment _________________________
- I have adult health insurance.
  - I know how to keep my insurance up to date.
  - I know how (or have someone assist me) to work with my health insurance.
  - I know what services are covered.
- I am currently getting support for all of my health care needs.
  - I know what my current needs are.
  - I consent for my own care (or have someone who helps me).
  - I have adult specialists and know when my next appointments are _________________________
  - I know how to get help if my health care needs change.
- I am able to follow my health treatment plan.
  - I take my medicines and treatments on time.
  - I keep healthy habits and avoid risky habits.
  - I manage my appointments.
  - I know how to tell my doctors when I disagree with them or can’t follow the plan.
- I have social supports who help me take good care of myself.
  - I have social supports who help me if I become ill.
  - I know how to find help from community resources.
Activity:

Matching Columns: Match each word or phrase on the left to its explanation on the right.

| Confidential | Ability to give your permission after you have learned the facts and weighed the risks and benefits. |
| Consent | Programs provide special services to help people with disabilities live in the community. |
| Health care transition | Conversation that is kept private and not shared with others. |
| Healthy habits | Process of being responsible for taking care of your own health care needs. |
| Medical Home | A report that sums up your personal health history and important health information. |
| Portable medical summary | Preparing and moving from a model of healthcare for children to a model for adults. |
| Private health insurance | Paying for health care through a government system like Medicaid and Medicare. |
| Public health insurance | Patterns of behavior that keep your mind and body at its best. |
| Relaxation exercises | An activity you can use to help release tension or stress. |
| Self-management | Paying for health care through companies that serve job-based groups or individuals. |
| Specialist | Place where you get patient-centered, coordinated, and continuous health care. |
School and Work

Plan for School and Work!

In this section...

• Learn about Choices
• Plan for a Career
• Plan for College
• Get a Job
• Be a Life-Long Learner
Learn About Choices

As you work your way through high school, think about the future.

What do I plan to do with my life?

What kind of work and activities will I enjoy and do to keep busy?

Do I want to learn or train more? Do I want to stay in school?

How will I earn money?

Your next choice might be to get a job, get job training, go to college, join the military, or enroll in disability day programs. Some youth decide they need a break before they make their next step. But, in general, it is a good idea to plan ahead so you are ready.

Four basic ways to end high school education:

- With a diploma
- With a certificate of general educational development, called a GED
- With a certificate of graduation
- Dropping out with no diploma or certificate

Do you have a plan for finishing high school? Why is it right for you?
Our first piece of advice is that it is a good idea to work on getting a diploma, even if it takes some extra work or time. Youths who get diplomas are more likely to get a job and are more likely to earn higher pay. Those of you who don’t plan to get a diploma can still work towards getting a job, but you will need to make other plans to get yourself ready to work.

Students who did not get a diploma can consider taking a GED test, but this takes work too. Youth with disabilities may apply for special testing, called testing accommodations, which require special documents from an evaluation by a psychologist or doctor. You can study for the GED test by studying on your own, using workbooks and online practice questions, going to GED classes at testing centers or other settings, paying for an online prep course, watching the TV special GED channel, and getting private tutors. You can form your own study groups with others too.

Even dropping out of high school takes planning. Before making a big decision, you need to look at the pros and cons and your reasons for wanting to leave. Learn which jobs you might be able to get without finishing high school. Learn about GED program choices. You need to talk about your options with teachers and parents. Make sure you have the right info before you take your next step.

Some youth with a disability who have an Individualized Education Program (or IEP) are not ready for a diploma at the end of senior year. There are options to stay in the high school system for 12+ programs to get further training to be ready for adult life. You can stay in these programs up until the year you turn age 22 and then get a certificate of completion or a diploma, depending on the work you have completed.

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### Finish high school or equivalent

- High school diploma
  - Future Ready Common Core
  - Occupational Course of Study
- Graduation
- GED

### Learn extra skills

- Volunteer activities
- Trade school
- Vocational training
- Military (with a diploma)
- College or university
- Adult day programs

### Get a job

- Trades, like carpentry or plumbing
- Services, like a server or barber
- Sales, like in a department store or hobby shop
- Agriculture, like raising crops or animals
- Professional, like a teacher or scientist
Plan for a Career

Work lets you meet new people
Having work is a way to feel part of your community. It is a way to feel like you are doing something valuable and important. It is a way to make money. It is good for your self-esteem. People with disabilities make good workers. Bosses who work with people with disabilities can tell you that they get the job done and stay with their jobs.

Work gives you structure in your life and a source of income
Many people with disabilities would like to work but they have concerns. They worry about the effects their disability may have on getting a job. They worry about how money earned from a job will affect Social Security and medical benefits.

Work gives you a way to feel proud and self-sufficient
Some people with disabilities, such as some with difficult learning challenges, might not feel ready to be in any job settings after high school. Look at the different types of employment below to see what might be helpful for you.

Learn about benefit eligibility
There are special work incentives programs that can help people with disabilities learn how to have a job while balancing their need for other government services. Independent Living Centers and Vocational Rehabilitation Services can also help with benefit eligibility and work incentive planning.

Types of Employment

**Supported employment**
uses programs to help you succeed, like job coaches, specialized training, transportation, or assistive technology.

**Sheltered employment**
is usually a protected and supervised place where there is the stimulation and learning needed for work without the competition or stress in other work settings that some people might not be ready for.

**Competitive employment**
means being out in the public workforce on your own.

**Adult day services**
are an option to provide a variety of activities and supports for individuals who want to be active and continue to work on life skills for daily living, and social and work skills, too.
You need to decide what you enjoy, what you are able to do, and what jobs are available.

You can work on getting to know yourself, explore your interests, your strengths and your experiences. Have you volunteered to work in a setting that you like, like in an office or a store, or with animals or little children? Think if you would like working in any of the settings you already know about.

You can look around at what jobs are out there. Find out if your school or community will have a career fair. Look at want ads in newspapers and online, or look at ideas on sites like https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/majors-careers.

You can ask others to help you come up with ideas. My Future at www.myfuture.com is another website with info about colleges, careers and military service provided by the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Defense, Education and Labor.

You can try some volunteer or internship activities to get a taste for types of jobs that are interesting to you.

What subjects do you like in school?

What things do you enjoy doing outside of school?

What is important to you about a job?

These types of questions are found in a Career Inventory. Here are a few ways to take an inventory:

1. Talk with your guidance counselor at school. Your counselor can help you take an inventory and then go over the results with you.

2. Drive of Your Life is a fun online career exploration game that helps students learn more about themselves and careers. You answer questions about yourself and then go on a virtual drive to learn more about careers you choose at: www.driveofyourlife.org

3. Take the paper and pencil interest inventory downloaded from www.okcareertech.org/cac/Pages/resources_products/Career%20Path/CareerPath_interests.pdf

Then share your results with someone to talk over the next steps.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) serves to prevent discrimination and permit individuals with disabilities to participate fully in all aspects of society.
Let’s Talk About Different Careers
There are lots of different jobs in each field. Here is a list to get you thinking:

**Agriculture**
Agriculture is the business of farming and growing crops and raising animals.

**Architecture and Construction**
Architects and engineers design and build structures. Skilled workers, like carpenters or plumbers and other workers, are called tradesmen. They work on making new buildings or repairing existing buildings.

**Business and Marketing**
Workers in business and marketing do all the jobs that it takes to sell things to people. Banks and stores are all part of the business world.

**Health Science**
People can work in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or science in all the fields that help with the health of people and animals, like assisting people or working in labs.

**Arts, AV Technology & Communication**
Working in the arts and media includes all the jobs that go into making art, television, radio, newspapers, theater and movies, both behind the scenes and out in front of the camera, stage or microphone.

**Hospitality and Human Services**
These jobs can provide a service or do something for other people, like hotel desk clerks or waiters, or case managers or community center workers.

**Public Safety**
Helping to keep people safe includes all the work around departments like police, fire and ambulance services. Safety jobs can be found working for the government or private companies.

**Transportation**
Moving people and things around is called transportation. It includes all the work of running things like buses and taxis, railroads, ships, and airplanes.

**Education and Training**
All types of schools and training programs have teachers and other staff to make their programs work. They can work with people of all ages.

**Information Technology**
IT is the name for working with computer systems.

**Manufacturing**
All the jobs that make things are called manufacturing. It can include working with big machines or making things by hand.
Activity

What field sounds interesting to you? What kind of work can you imagine yourself doing?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Can you explain why this might be a good fit for you? How does it match your interests and abilities?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Hopefully your career inventory gave you some new ideas. Next you need to learn more about careers you find interesting. Try some of these activities:

1. Talk with your guidance counselor or a librarian at the public library. They can both help you to find more info about careers you think are interesting.

2. Talk with your parents or your friends’ parents about their careers. Ask them about why they like what they do.

3. If you know someone who has a career you are interested in, see if you can get permission to shadow for a day or part of a day at their work.

Write about or draw a picture about your ideas for your future career.
You may already have the necessary skills to start your career or you may find that you need to get some more schooling or training.

1. The career that matches your skills, interests, and personality the closest may be the one for you. Will you need accommodations for your career? Is it likely you will be able to get the accommodations you need? Do you need the help of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS)? You may be eligible for VRS if you have an impairment that interferes with your ability to work and you need and want their help to get into a job.

2. Choose your career goal. Once you’ve decided what job is the best fit, then you can begin to develop a plan. Do you have all the training you need? Do you have experience that makes you ready? Do you need to think about adjusting your goals for a better fitting idea? Do you need special equipment due to your disability?

3. If you need more training, learn about program and schools that offer the education you need. Are you eligible for the training? How do you have to apply? Is there a wait to get into the program?

5. Prepare your resume, and practice job interviewing. For more tips, check out page 38 of this workbook!

Skills and Training

Now that you’ve thought about some possible careers, let’s think about what skills and training you need.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services might include:
• Vocational counseling and guidance
• Training for a job, like on-the-job training or vocational schools or university classes
• Job placement assistance and follow-up support
• Short term medical treatment to help an impairment and achieve a vocational goal
• Rehabilitation technology assistive devices and services

You can fill out a VRS application to help decide if you are eligible. If you are a junior or senior in high school, it could be a good time to contact VRS. You can invite them to your annual transition planning meeting. Their website is ncdhhs.gov/dvrs and their phone number is (828) 670-3377 (Buncombe County Office).

Workforce North Carolina is a workforce development agency that helps workers and employers find the right people for the right jobs at thrivenc.com

What services do VRS provide?
Plan for College

If you find that you need more school after high school to meet your career goals, you need to prepare for the differences between high school and college or vocational training. Colleges offer academic programs where students earn credits toward formal degrees like associate and bachelor diplomas in areas of study like journalism or biology. Vocational trainings are technical or skills programs that provide learning usually in hands-on skills, like auto mechanics and nursing assistants. North Carolina Postsecondary Education Alliance at UNC-Chapel Hill can provide you with information about what special programs there are for students with intellectual challenges. They include models where students join in activities or classes with students without disabilities and/or learn in life skills classes with other students with disabilities. More options are being developed on college campuses across the state.

Colleges are required to have programs and physical access plans for people with disabilities. Check out different college programs and facilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Preparing | What courses should you take in high school to be ready?  
What tests do you need to take for your applications?  
Do you have info from recent learning evaluations that will help you explain your special needs and accommodation requests? |
| Choosing | How do you pick a college? Look at websites and college search books at the library. Visit college fairs and plan to schedule campus visits. (cfnc.org)  
Would living at home, near to home or far away be good for you?  
What special programs or services might you look for?  
Would online college programs be a good idea for you? |
| Applying | Look at college websites to learn about admission requirements.  
Start working early on applications. Ask others you trust to read your essays and give you their thoughts.  
Remember to check and stay within all the deadlines. |
| Paying | Find out about financial aid to help pay for your training. Do you need to send a financial aid application? (www.fafsa.ed.gov)  
Do you have any savings to pay for your education?  
Do you qualify for any programs like PASS account? (Plan to Achieve Self Sufficiency) (www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityresearch/wi/pass.htm) (passonline.org)  
Are there special scholarships that youth with disabilities can apply for (www.disaboom.com/scholarships)? |

Start ready! Once you are accepted into a program, learn all you can about how to be successful.
College is Different from High School!

*Students with disabilities must learn that requirements for accommodations for disabilities in high school are different from the requirements that apply in college.*

---

**The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

provides rights that require high schools to provide a **free appropriate public education (FAPE)** to each child with a disability.

**The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504**

requires colleges to provide **access to appropriate academic adjustments as necessary** to ensure that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

---

*Colleges are not required to lower or substantially modify essential requirements.* This means that a college will typically allow a request for adjustment only if the student can still meet what the college defines as the essential learning of the course or program. Colleges will allow some accommodations as long as you can still learn all of the material.

---

### High School...

High schools provide an organized way to learn each student’s needs and design individualized education plans for students with disabilities. **Modifications of classes and materials are required by law.**

**High schools perform special evaluations** to identify areas of need for students with disabilities.

**In high school, there is a specific structure to the schedule of classes and homework assignments** that everyone is expected to follow.

In high school, the rules of behavior and grades are written and have a minimum standard that you must follow.

---

### But College...

Colleges have longer processes for academic adjustments. **Modifications are not required.** Students must identify themselves and are responsible for knowing and following the procedures. Most schools have a special office to help support students with disabilities.

**Colleges do not perform these evaluations.** Typically specific documentation of a disability is required from the student’s doctor, and or psychologist.

**In college, there are irregular schedules for classes and assignments.** Teachers expect you to be responsible for attending class and getting your work in on time.

In college, you are responsible for your own behavior, dress, and language. **You are expected to reach beyond a basic level to become an expert in your area of study.**
Get A Job

1. Search job recruitment and human resources sites, attend job fairs or ask the place where you would like to work if they are taking applications.

2. Write or update your resume that tells about your school and work history (See the resume worksheet).

3. You may be asked for a cover letter to explain why you want the job.

4. Complete the job application form. These often are found online.

5. Schedule and have a successful interview with the job recruiter (See the interview preparation checklist and questions).

6. It is a good idea to send a thank you note for the chance to interview.

7. Often there may be a waiting period while the employer interviews others and then tries to pick the best person for the job. Sometimes you might be asked to have a second interview.

8. You get a phone call and get offered the job. Usually you can then learn about how much you will be paid, what your work schedule and start date will be and if there are benefits included with the job. Your employer may now ask about accommodation needs or you may make a request (See the letter format).

9. If it is a good fit for you, you take the job and report to work. Learn your job. Make sure you understand what is expected of you, so you can do good work. Ask questions if you don’t understand.
Resume Worksheet

Make a copy of this blank worksheet before you fill it out. Fill in the worksheet thoroughly. Save it as a resource; update it each year. Put your completed worksheet with your records and keep it for future use.

RESUME

Name: Date updated:

I. Personal Information
   Address:
   City: State: Zip:
   Phone: E-mail:
   Temporary Address (if different):
   City: State: Zip:

II. Education
   High School:
   Location: (City/State) Dates: (Year started/ended)
   Undergraduate College:
   Location: (City/State) Degree:
   Dates: (Year started/ended) Major(s): Minor(s):
   Major GPA: Overall GPA:
   Other schools attended (except high school), training or certificates received, licenses obtained:

III. Experience Information
   (consider all experience- paid, unpaid, volunteer, etc. Make an entry for all previous experiences.)
   Position title:
   Organization name:
   Address:
   City: State:
   Dates employed (months & years only) From: To:
   Names of supervisor(s):
   Description: Combine the duties, qualities and accomplishments together and write a strong job description.
   Duties and responsibilities:
   What qualities were important and helped you be successful in this position:
   Specific accomplishments or contributions you made to this job:

IV. Talents and Skills
   Write here special talents, skills, training, languages (artistic, computer skills, special licenses, significant achievements), etc:

V. Activities
   1. Memberships (in clubs or community groups, volunteer & religious organizations. Include name of association, offices held and the dates you began and ended that activity.)
   2. Awards and Honors (academic include scholarships, athletic, social, civic):
   3. Professional activities (articles written, presentations, projects displayed):

Adapted from the Idaho Interagency Council on Secondary Transition's Moving on Binder
## Request for Accommodations
### Letter to Employer

Accommodations may include specialized equipment, facility modifications, adjustments to schedules or duties, or other solutions. The Job Accommodation Network (JAN), a service of the U.S. Office of Disability Employment Policy (http://askjan.org and 800-526-7234), gives free consultations on work accommodations. It is your responsibility as the person with a disability to request accommodations. You might do this by writing a letter like the type below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Letter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer’s name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer’s address</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dear (e.g. Supervisor, Manager, Human Resources, Personnel):

- Introduce yourself and your enthusiasm for the particular job
- Identify yourself as a person with a disability
- State that you are requesting accommodations under the ADA

Identify specific job tasks which are likely to cause you difficulty

Refer to attached medical documentation if appropriate*

Identify your accommodation ideas

Request your employer’s accommodation ideas

Ask that your employer respond to your request in a reasonable amount of time

Sincerely,
Your signature
Your printed name
Cc: Names of people who will get a copy of the letter

*You may want to attach medical documentation to your letter as proof that you are a person with a disability in need of accommodation.

Adapted from the Job Accommodation Network
Interview Checklist

If an employer is interested in your application, you may be asked for an interview. Some people feel stressed during interviews. It helps to prepare so you can make the best impression. Here is a checklist to use as you get ready:

**Preparation - 2-3 days before the interview**
- I have collected information about the business.
- I know the first and last name of the interviewer.
- I know why I want to work for the business.
- I have read through some common interview questions.
- I have prepared some answers to common interview questions. I might make some notes.
- I have prepared a list of questions that I would like to ask the interviewer.
- I have an up-to-date resume with complete references ready.
- I plan to bring my identification (driver’s license, Social Security card).
- I know exactly where the interview will be and how long it will take me to get there.
- I have decided what to wear to the interview.
- I have scheduled a full night’s sleep before the interview.

**The Day of the Interview - Remember**
- I have a copy of my resume, references, letters of recommendation, and my identification.
- I have a paper and pen to take notes.
- I have my pad of notes on the company, and my list of questions and notes.
- I have paid special attention to my personal hygiene and clothing.

**The Interview - Travel and Arrival**
- I leave early in case of traffic or unexpected problems. I arrive 5 to 10 minutes early.
- I am relaxed, friendly, and business-like with everyone I meet.
- I introduce myself to the receptionist and confirm my appointment.
- I turn off my cell phone ringer before the interview.

**The Interview**
- The **Beginning** - I greet the interviewer by name and shake his or her hand.
- I use positive body language, like I make eye contact, keep my hands in my lap, and sit up straight.
- I don’t fidget or chew gum.
- The **Middle** - I speak clearly.
- I listen and allow the employer to finish what he or she is saying without interruption.
- I stay on topic and ask questions if I don’t fully understand what I have been asked or told.
- I stay away from short answers like yes or no or I don’t know. I give an explanation about my education, training, experience, and skills that will make me good at the job.
- The **End** - I ask my questions that have not already been answered.
- I state my interest in the job.
- I thank the interviewer.
- I check on when I should hear from them or I should contact them.
- I shake hands and say goodbye.

**Follow-up**
- I write and send the interviewer(s) a thank you letter.
- I stay close to my phone the day they said they would call.
- If I am to call them back, I prepare my phone conversation and call on time.
- If I am offered the job, I give them a written answer (whether it is yes or no) within a week.

*Adapted from the Job Accommodation Network*
Ten Common Interview Questions

Think about your answer to these questions. Make some notes for yourself. You might feel more relaxed at the interview, if you practice saying the answers out loud.

1. What experience have you had?

2. Why did you apply for this position?

3. What do you plan to be doing five years from now?

4. Tell me something about yourself.

5. What is your greatest strength?

6. What is your greatest weakness?

7. Why should I hire you?

8. What amount of pay do you require?

9. What days and hours can you work?

10. What will your references or former employers say about you?

Adapted from the Idaho Interagency Council on Secondary Transition’s Moving on Binder
Be a Life-long Learner

Once you have made the step from high school to the next part of life, stick with it. Work on being a good student or worker. Be on time. Know your responsibilities and keep up on them every day. Be a team player. Help others and ask for help when you need it. Manage your time!

TIP: Try using a day planner to help remind you about appointments and activities you want to do. Write down meeting times, class times, when to take your medicine, doctor and dentist appointment times, and anything else you don’t want to forget!

| Date: ________________________________ |
| Day of the Week: ____________________ |
| 6:00 am                             |
| 7:00 am                             |
| 8:00 am                             |
| 9:00 am                             |
| 10:00 am                            |
| 11:00 am                            |
| NOON                                |
| 1:00 pm                             |
| 2:00 pm                             |
| 3:00 pm                             |
| 4:00 pm                             |
| 5:00 pm                             |
| 6:00 pm                             |
| 7:00 pm                             |
| 8:00 pm                             |
| 9:00 pm                             |
| 10:00 pm                            |

Notes:
You might also like to develop the habit of “checking in” with yourself once in a while. Part of being honest and flexible with yourself is to ask yourself questions and listen to your answers.

**Checking In:**

- How is it going?
- Do I enjoy what I am doing?
- Do I feel good about myself?
- Am I doing my personal best?
- Do I need to change something I am doing?
- Do I need to get different help to be more successful?

We all may need adjustments in our life from time to time. We don’t get everything right on the first try. Maybe in three or five years, you might decide that more education would be a good idea or a new job or a promotion to a different job would be the right next step for you. Or maybe you just want to learn to do something new for fun. Adult education programs and community centers are some ways to find new learning and fun. Talk to your family and friends to get their thoughts. Be a life-long learner!
Plan for Your Home!

In this section...

- Learn Life Skills
- Do Your Part
- Be Safe at Home
- Use Tools to Help
- Make Decisions to Get Support
- Build your Budget
- Plan for your Adult Home
What does Independent Living Mean?

*Independent living* means that you live your life the way you choose for yourself.
- It is a right and a responsibility to control your own life.
- It doesn’t mean that you must live alone. But you might, if you want to and are able.
- It doesn’t mean living without the help of anyone. One kind of independent living can be to live in your family’s home and really share in both the responsibilities and benefits of being part of your home.

As you grow, you build skills so you can do more every day activities **ON YOUR OWN**. You build on making more decisions for yourself. No one does this the same way. No one becomes independent at the same age. But we all can work on moving forward and learning new things now and keep learning even after we turn 18 and become adults.

*Interdependence:* This is also an important word. No one really lives their life totally alone; you sometimes need help, and sometimes others need your help, too! We all need each other. Part of independent living is working on building your support network and helping others too.
Learn Life Skills

### Independent Living Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life Skills:</th>
<th>1. I do this on my own</th>
<th>2. I do this on my own with reminders</th>
<th>3. I need some help to do this</th>
<th>4. I always need help to do this</th>
<th>5. What happens if I don’t do this?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wash and clean myself</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brush my teeth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dress myself</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move around in and out of my home</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do my laundry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepare my food</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do housekeeping chores</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use a calendar to organize my schedule and appointments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use the telephone, internet, or other means to communicate with others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Direct support persons on how to help me</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emergencies and Safety:</th>
<th>1. I do this on my own</th>
<th>2. I do this on my own with reminders</th>
<th>3. I need some help to do this</th>
<th>4. I always need help to do this</th>
<th>5. What happens if I don’t do this?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can get out of my home safely in an emergency</td>
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<tr>
<td>I carry ID and medical info when I leave my home</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have emergency, fire, tornado and disaster plans</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have a portable crisis kit ready with special supplies I need</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know how and when to dial “911”</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I keep my smoke detectors working I know how to call when I need help</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Financial:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I can shop for myself in a store or restaurant</th>
<th>I know how to pick between the things I need and things I want but don't need</th>
<th>I know where I get my money (like from SSI, paychecks, a trust, family)</th>
<th>I use a checking or savings account</th>
<th>I use an ATM card</th>
<th>I know how to budget</th>
<th>I know how to pay my bills on time</th>
<th>I know how I get help with money issues, like use my SSI representative payee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Housing:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am aware of choices where I could live</th>
<th>I have a plan for where I will live in the future</th>
<th>I know what kind of special help I may need in my home</th>
<th>I know how to get help with repairs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Decision Making Skills:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I practice making decisions on my own</th>
<th>I think about what will happen next if I make a choice</th>
<th>I know the rights and responsibilities I gain when I turn 18</th>
<th>I have a plan for taking charge of myself at 18 or getting help with my decisions</th>
<th>I have plans for a back-up person if I suddenly can't speak for myself</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Do Your Part

Activity

The **GIVE** and **TAKE** of Family Living:

In a healthy family, when you are little, your family **TAKES** care of you and you **GET** lots of benefits as a member of the family. As you grow, you start to **GIVE** back and **DO** things as a member of the family.

As part of your family, fill in the things that you **GIVE** or **DO**. Example: Clear the dishes from the dinner table.

________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

As part of your family, fill in the things that you **TAKE** or **GET**. Example: My parents pay for me to join a sports team.

________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

Responsibility-Privilege Balance

**Responsibility**: An earned duty that you must **DO** or **GIVE** as a member of your family.

Ava has a chart of her weekly chores (something she must **DO**).

Caroline loves clothes. Caroline spends time doing her laundry, folding and putting it away every week (**RESPONSIBILITY**).

Peter worked hard to get his driver’s license and practiced driving carefully. To borrow his parents’ car, they ask that he share his plans on where he is going and when he will return (**RESPONSIBILITY**).

**Privilege**: An earned right that you **GET** or **TAKE** because you are a responsible member of your family.

When she checks off all of her chores, Ava gets to go to a friend’s house (something she **GETS**).

Because she takes such good care of her clothes, Caroline earns from her parent a trip to go shopping for new clothes (**PRIVILEGE**).

By following both his house rules and the rules of the road, his parents allow Peter to borrow the car to go to the movies (**PRIVILEGE**).
Privileges and responsibilities are different in every family, and may change as you get older.

What are some new privileges and responsibilities you would like to have? Work on the following activity with your parents.

What **RESPONSIBILITIES** can you show your parents you have learned **to earn more PRIVILEGES**?

Write or draw a new **responsibility** you want:

Write or draw a new **privilege** you want:
Parents “Letting Go” - Working out parent and teen roles as you grow up

When you were younger, did you ever have a pet to take care of?

How does it feel to love a pet? How do you give it love? Do you give it treats?

How do you watch over it? How do you help it?

Do you worry about it? How would you feel if it was hurt?

How does your pet show you that you are loved?

This might be a little like how your parents feel about you. They love you, watch over you, don’t want you to get hurt, worry about you, help you and want to make sure you are taken care of.

Sometimes you and your parents might not agree on something you want to do.

If you have a dog that wants to eat chocolate and you know that is bad for the dog, you don’t let him eat chocolate. Your dog doesn’t understand that chocolate is bad for dogs, so it might get mad at you, but you don’t change your mind that the chocolate is still not safe for your dog.

When you and your parents disagree, you should stop and think about whether they are trying to keep you safe and whether you might be trying to do something that isn’t safe for you. Other times, your parents might just need to work through the idea of you doing something new. They might need to get used to giving you more responsibility in small steps.

Parents and kids should try to have patience with each other to work it all out. Have a conversation with your parents about growing up. Talk about how you all feel. While you think about your future and the independence you want, also think about your parents. Remember to show your love and thank them too.
Helping around the house is an important way to share responsibilities in your family. It is also an important way to learn about taking care of your own home for the future.

What chores do I do right now and how often do I do them? _________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

How do I remember to do chores? Do I need a reminder? What kind of reminder is helpful for me? __________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

CHORE CHART: Chores are a way to prepare for independent living. Chores can also be a contract between you and your parents, a way you show responsibility and then earn privileges. As you grow, you need to learn to keep track of your chores yourself. Using a chart is one way to help you remember. Keep this in a place where you and your parents can see it. Make copies of a new chart each week. Fill in the blanks to list your own chores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tues</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thurs</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Morning Chores:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make bed</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tidy up bedroom</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Afternoon/Evening Chores:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dirty clothes in hamper</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Weekly Chores:</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean Bedroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I sign this contract as a promise to do my part in our house. I sign this contract to commit to helping my child grow into an adult.

My signature: _____________________________ My parent’s signature: _____________________________
Be Safe at Home

An important part of living independently is keeping yourself safe. It means knowing what to do in an emergency like a fire, tornado, power outage, or medical emergency. The following is a list of important contacts that you should know to prepare for emergencies. Keep a copy on your fridge or bulletin board, or somewhere you can see it, and take one with you when you are away from home.

My Name: __________________________________________ Date of Birth: _______________________
My Address: ______________________________________________________________________________
Phone Number: ________________________________ Secondary Phone Number: ___________________
Email Address: _____________________________________________________________________________

*In Case of Emergency Contact:*
Relationship to Me: ______________________________________
Home and Work Phone: _____________________________________
Cell Phone: ______________________________________________
Address: __________________________________________________

*Support Network Contact 1:*
Relationship to Me: ______________________________________
Home/Work Phone: ________________________________________
Cell Phone: ______________________________________________
Address: __________________________________________________

*Support Network Contact 2:*
Relationship to Me: ______________________________________
Home/Work Phone: ________________________________________
Cell Phone: ______________________________________________
Address: __________________________________________________

It is a good idea to store your emergency contact and other contacts in your phone under I.C.E. (in case of emergency). This way, if something happens to you, someone will know who to call.

When would I call 911?

Call 911 if:
- There is a FIRE
- There is POISONING
- Someone is BREAKING INTO YOUR HOUSE
- You need an AMBULANCE, if there is a SERIOUS INJURY OR ILLNESS

Fire Department Number: 911 or ________________
Police Department Number: 911 or ________________
Ambulance: 911 or ________________
Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222 or ________________
Use Tools to Help

**Adaptive Supports: Do things INDEPENDENTLY and SAFELY**

As you grow, you will want to do more things on your own, but also need to be safe. Adaptive Supports are an item or piece of equipment that helps a person with a disability do daily tasks better. These supports can help you be more independent!

---

Hi! My name is Mandy and I want to learn how to shower on my own, without my mom’s help. But I need to be sure I can get in and out of the tub and shower safely. I got a shower chair, floor grip, and grab rail so that I won’t slip and fall and can now shower on my own.

---

Hi! My name is John and I am not able to speak out loud but I still want to be able to communicate. I use cards and choice boards with pictures to tell others my needs and wants.

---

My name is Stacie and I need help flipping the lights on and off when I enter or leave a room. Rather than having someone do this for me, my specially trained service dog Kira switches the lights! She also helps me open and close doors, and she helps me feel safe, among other things.

---

*“John” image courtesy of freedigitalphotos.net*

Stacie and Kira drawn by Stacie Thornburgh
Adaptive Supports Checklist

There are lots of adaptive supports that can help different people with different abilities and needs. It is important to learn about these things that can help you! Here are some examples:

**Communicating with Others**
- Voice to text software
- Word prediction software
- Communication board or book with objects, pictures, or words
- Voice output device used on laptop or palmtop computer
- Email, text messaging, or instant messaging
- Phone amplifier
- iPad or tablet applications

**In the Community**
- Adaptive sporting equipment (like a lighted or beeping ball)
- Modified arts and crafts tools
- Recorded material (books on tape, taped lectures)
- Computer or cell phone organizers and calendars
- Manual wheelchair including sports chair
- Adapted vehicle for driving
- Custom-fitted wheelchair or insert

**Around the Home**
- Color coded items for easier locating and identifying
- Adaptive eating utensils
- Adaptive drinking devices
- Adaptive dressing equipment (like button hook, elastic shoe laces, Velcro instead of buttons)
- Adaptive devices for the bathroom (adapted tooth brushes, raised toilet seat, shower chair, paperless toilet)
- Adaptive equipment for cooking
- Light switch extension
- Controls for electrical appliances (like radio, fan, blender, etc.)
- Money calculator
- Talking watches or clocks
- Non-slip materials to hold things in place or prevent slipping
- Grab bars and rails
- Remote controls for TV, DVD, CD player, etc.

*Is there something you want to do by yourself, but need someone else to do it? Make a list of things you want to do independently, and talk about it with your parents, doctor, counselor, or teacher to find out what adaptive supports might be right for you:*

__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________

Adapted from Reed, P. Walser, P. (2000), adapted from Lynch & Reed (1997), Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative
Make Decisions to Get Support

As you get older and become more independent, you make more of your own decisions. Everything from BIG decisions (Where will I live? Where will I work?) to LITTLE everyday decisions (what will I wear? What will I eat for dinner?) It is okay to ask people for advice before making decisions, but you also have to practice your own decision-making skills.

How good are you at each of the following?
• Understanding what you need and want
• Understanding what might happen next after you make a choice
• Setting good goals for the future
• Following through on plans you make
• Solving problems
• Telling others your needs and wants

There are lots of ways to work on your decision-making skills. You might want to work on these skills as part of your school learning plan, or work on it with your parents, counselor, doctor or other support persons in your life.

Types of Decision-Making Support

Before you turn 18, it is important to talk about what kind of legal help you may need to make decisions as an adult. There are special types of supports for persons with disabilities. You need to figure out how you will ask for and get help making decisions. Everyone needs to practice these skills. If you are close to eighteen and still need lots of help with decisions, you may want to learn about ways to protect your safety. You may need to ask for a special evaluation or determination to better understand your ability.

For an eighteen year old who needs a lot of support making decisions, parents do not automatically have legal rights to make decisions, unless special legal steps are made. The most protective kind of legal decision support is called guardianship.

Guardianship: A decision made in a court of law that states there will be a person (called a guardian) appointed to make decisions and give guidance for a person with limitations (called the ward) who cannot do this for themselves.

When is guardianship needed?

All adults with disabilities do not need a guardian. Guardianship is an option for a person who is truly not able to make good, reasonable, and safe decisions. Some persons with disabilities would be unsafe and get into dangerous situations if a trusted adult did not step up to help them as their guardian. Some other persons with disabilities are just not yet ready to make decisions for themselves and need this help until they become ready. The lawyer's bar association in your county is a good way to find low-cost or free legal help if guardianship is right for you.

For example, what if you cannot understand all the responsibilities of signing an apartment lease? What if you don't read or understand the rules of the lease? What if you don't know how to figure out if the apartment is close enough to where you need to be? What if you don't know if there is enough space for your special equipment? What if you don't know how to figure out if you have enough money to pay the rent? What if you don't even know how to ask all these questions?
If you do not need all the protection of a legal guardian but would still like help with decisions that are hard for you, there are other kinds of support you may want to learn about:

**A Family Member or Friend**
can help answer big questions with you, as long as you remember to ask them.

**A Trusted Support Person**
can share a checking account or own property together with you and then make the money decisions with you or for you.

**A Advocate**
is a person who agrees to help or find information for you. Independent Living Centers are one place to find disability advocates.

**A Case Manager**
can help look at your needs and action plans, and coordinate services for you.

**A Trustee**
is an appointed person who watches over a trust (money) and agrees to use the money according to a legal document.

**A Representative Payee**
is a person you give permission to receive your social security checks, use the money to pay for your needs, and save any leftover money to pay for things that you might need later.

**A Health Care Representative**
is a person who you pick to make decisions for you in the case of an emergency. An example of an emergency is if you suddenly can’t speak for yourself because you were in a car accident and someone needs to answer doctors’ questions about your needs.

**A Types of Decision-Making Support**

**Power of Attorney for Health Care**
is for a person who you may decide to give the right to make health care decisions for you.

**Durable Power of Attorney**
is for a person who you may decide to give the right to make specific decisions such as managing finances for you.
### Who is the Boss? Who Makes the Rules?

Being independent as an adult still means you must listen to authorities or bosses. We all have to follow the laws of our town and state. Judges and police officers make sure people follow the laws. If you are still in school, your teacher is the boss in the classroom. You will have a boss at work. Even as an adult, you should still respect the rules you make with those who live in your home.

As you gain independence, you will need to respect the rules enforced by your bosses. Who will be your “bosses” as you get older?

---

#### Activity

**What does “becoming an adult” really mean?**

- **What does “becoming an adult” really mean?**
  - **When do you become an adult in North Carolina?** On your 18th birthday.
  - **What is the legal drinking age in North Carolina?** Age 21.
  - **What is the legal driving age in North Carolina?** You may drive at 16½, if you had a learner’s permit for 180 days. At 18, you don’t need another adult to sign a financial responsibility agreement.
  - **What PRIVILEGES may you have when you turn 18?**
    - To vote.
    - To make contracts, like one for a cell phone.
    - To sue someone on your own behalf.
    - To get medical treatment without a parent’s consent.
    - To live independently from your parents.
  - **What RESPONSIBILITIES do you have when you become an adult?**
    - If you break the law, you will be charged as an adult.
    - You need a source of money. Your parents are not required to give you money. You must report your income to the Internal Revenue Service.
    - You can be sued if you don’t follow a contract you signed.
    - You may serve on a jury if you are called.
    - Males must register for the selective service military draft.
Build Your Budget

Another important part of becoming an adult is managing your own money. You must learn to only spend as much money as you have. You need to think ahead about what you are going to buy. You need to do the math. There are many expenses that we do not know about when our parents take care of us. As an adult, we need to pay for those things (such as insurance, bills, and medications) with our own income!

**NEEDS** are the very basic things that people must have to live day to day. **WANTS** are the things that make life more interesting and fun. You could live without them if you had to.

You **NEED** food to eat, but you **WANT** to eat out with friends.

You **NEED** a place to live, but you **WANT** a TV in your room.

---

**Activity**

Give another example of a thing you **NEED**

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

and a thing you **WANT**

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________
The THINK-PLAN-DO method is a good way to work on making decision about your budget.

Think:
- What do I want?______________________________________________________________
- Why do I want it?____________________________________________________________
- Do I want or need this?______________________________________________________

Plan:
- How much does it cost?_______________________________________________________
- How soon do I want it? 1 week 1 month 1 year Other time:________________________
- How much money do I need?___________________________________________________
- How much will I save each week?______________________________________________
- How will I find this extra money to save? For example, I will spend less on something I now buy.________________
- How long will it take to save for what I want?__________________________________

Do: Start saving money to buy your special thing. You may need to not buy other things so that you can meet your savings goal.

Making a Budget

Where does your income or money come from? There are many sources.

- **Allowance:** This is money you get from your parents under the rules of your family.

- **Paycheck:** You might have a regular job, babysit, mow the lawn for your neighbors, or work a few hours a week at the local library to earn a paycheck.

- **Scholarships:** If you are in school, you may receive a scholarship to help pay for your expenses while going to school.

- **Social Security Check (SSI):** This is money you receive from the government if you are eligible with a disability. It is meant to pay for living expenses.

- **Trust:** Your family might set up a special account of money for you to use in a specific way.

- **Waiver:** North Carolina has special community based programs called Medicaid waivers. If you are eligible, the waiver programs will provide resources, based on your needs, for services and supports (like supervision, therapies, transportation, but not room and board) to help you live successfully in a community based setting. Getting a waiver can take a long time, so it is important that you sign up for it early.

Get More Info

Making a budget is the most important step in controlling your money. You need to know and watch your **Income** (the money that you get) and your **Expenses** (the money you spend).

By writing down your income and expenses each month, you can see how much money you expect to have for the month and plan for how much you can spend.

Practice your money skills with the financial and life skills game at: http://showmethefuture.org
What are your expenses? How do you pay for where you live and the utilities? What transportation do you use? What do you need to eat? Do you buy any insurance? Do you have medical costs that you pay? What money do you use for entertainment? Do you have enough income to pay your expenses? Are you spending more or less in any category? Do you have any income leftover that you can deposit in your savings?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Monthly Budget</th>
<th>Actual Budget</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INCOME</td>
<td>Plan your Income</td>
<td>Your Actual Income</td>
<td>Subtract the Difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wages/Income, SSI, Paycheck, Allowance, Birthday Money, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest Income</td>
<td>From Savings Account</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INCOME SUBTOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPENSES:</td>
<td>Plan your Expenses</td>
<td>Your Actual Expenses</td>
<td>Subtract the Difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savings Account Deposit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent/Mortgage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities - Water/Trash</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas/Electric</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Loans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Card Bills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cable/TV/Internet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone/Cell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Payment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Insurance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home repairs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dining Out</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Items</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Bills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescriptions/Supplies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentist/Eye Doctor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Insurance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Insurance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Club</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grooming</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas/Birthday Gifts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPENSES SUBTOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income minus Expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Moneyandstuff.info
Plan for Your Adult Home

Jason is about to graduate from college, and wants to figure out where he is going to live. He has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair, so he needs to make sure he can get around in his new place. He needs help with some daily self-care tasks. His parents offered to let him move back in with them, promising they would turn his room and the guest bedroom into a small apartment so he can have privacy. Before deciding to move back, he wants to explore his other options:

- **Living at Home:** Jason can be dependent or independent and live in his parents’ home! He would rather be more independent and therefore wants to have his own space and pay rent to his parents as well as buy the clothes, food, and supplies that he needs. This can be a great option for Jason, especially because he needs help with certain self-care tasks.

- **Alternative Family Living (AFL)** is a residential service, which provides family style supervision and monitoring of daily activities. Individuals live with family (not their own) who provide supportive services and promotes “family-style” supervision and monitoring daily activities that meet the physical, emotional and developmental needs of those served.

- **Group Homes:** If Jason has high medical needs he could live with other people with disabilities who have similar medical needs in a group home. A company runs the home and provides support staff (called Direct Service Providers) who help with medications, making meals, etc. all 24 hours of the day.

- **Own Home:** Jason might rent an apartment with one or more friends, and arrange to get help from his family or hire in-home support staff. In the future, he might want to work on saving for buying a home instead of renting. This form of living is more expensive, but Jason would have access to natural supports from family, friends, and local community resources.

- **Medicaid Waiver** programs fund services (not room and board) in a variety of settings:
  - **Shared House or Apartment:** Jason might rent an apartment with one or more friends, and arrange to get help from his family or hire personal care attendants provided by waiver funded providers. He would have a case manager to help coordinate his services and supports.
  - **Adult Foster Care:** Jason could ask to live with another family who share their home and help take care of him, and usually receive some pay. He would need to obey the rules of the new family’s home.
  - **Assisted Living Facility:** Jason would have his own apartment, but could eat meals and socialize with neighbors in a common area. Types of support staff and services are shared by all the residents.
  - **Nursing Home:** Jason would need to have medical conditions that needed daily nursing care. In nursing homes, residents usually have their own room and receive help from staff with health needs and activities of daily living.

Wherever Jason decides to live, he must make sure he has the right support to live independently and safely. To help find resources (to find adaptive equipment, to find an apartment, etc.), Jason visits his local Independent Living Center.

**Independent Living Centers** help people with disabilities find resources in their community. They stick up for people with disabilities and help them live as independently as possible. The North Carolina Independent Living Centers’ website is a good resource to find an independent living center near you: NCSILC.org/centers
As an adult, you might need someone to help you do things, just like Jason needs help doing the laundry. You may get help from your family members or friends, the people who LOVE you. You also can pay someone to help you do things, and helping you is their JOB.

Exploring the Options:

Jason visits his local independent living center and they help him create a list of reasons to help him make a decision by thinking about the pros and cons. See his example below. Think about your choices of where you might live as an adult.

*Use the following table to make a list of reasons for and against each choice. These are also called Pros and Cons.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where I want to Live</th>
<th>Pros - For this choice</th>
<th>Cons - Against this choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jason's example</td>
<td>Cheap rent</td>
<td>Probably less privacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live with family</td>
<td>He likes to be close to family</td>
<td>It is 30 minutes travel to work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>His family is good at helping him</td>
<td>Parents might be tempted to tell him what to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The house is accessible</td>
<td>Not lots of space for friends to come over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice # 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice # 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Direct Support Professional (DSP) is someone you pay to help with everyday activities in the home and out of the home. A Direct Support Staff is someone hired by a company to serve you by helping with your life tasks.

Companies who hire DSP usually take responsibility for much of the training but it is still important for you to help that person help you. On the next page are steps to help you with this process. It is a big responsibility, so don’t be afraid to ask someone for help!
8 Steps to follow when hiring a Direct Support Assistant (DSP):

**STEP 1  TASKS:** Identify the kind of help you need. You may get input from a family member or other people who support you.
- For what tasks do you need the DSP’s help?
- How much time does it take to do each of these things?

**STEP 2  PAY:** How will you pay the DSP? If someone else is paying (like your waiver), make sure you know the rules.
- Who will pay?
- How much will you pay?

**STEP 3  JOB DESCRIPTION AND QUALIFICATIONS:** Write a description of what you expect the DSP to do. Be specific when you describe the tasks. A daily schedule can lists tasks, when they need to be done and why. Make a list of the training and job experience that you expect the DSP to have. Remember, sometimes training a DSP yourself is better than expecting them to know it all already.
- What training do you want your DSP to have? (CPR? First Aid?)
- What qualities are you looking for in a DSP? (Friendly? Respectful? Skilled?)

**STEP 4  FINDING A DSP:** Check out your local Independent Living Center or use an employment agency. You could also place an ad in the newspaper.

**STEP 5  INTERVIEW:** Prepare a list of questions before the interview. Tell them the assistance that you expect. Show an example of the daily schedule. You must be comfortable with the DSP because some of the tasks may be very personal.

**STEP 6  TRAINING:** After you have hired a DSP, it is important that you train them. Clearly say what you expect to be done and how you are feeling. Let the DSP know if there is personal information that is confidential.

**STEP 7  AS AN EMPLOYER:** Show the DSP mutual respect. You and the DSP have the right to different feelings, opinions, or points of view. Work on good communication. If there is a problem, handle it right away, in a professional way. Clearly explain the problem and tell the DSP what you expect to happen. Also tell the DSP when they are doing something well or have improved. If you have made a sincere effort to resolve issues, and clearly communicated to the DSP, but the problem still continues, you may need to ask them to leave and hire someone new.

**STEP 8  BACKUP SUPPORT:** Have a backup person to help you in case the DSP cannot make it, suddenly quits, or it becomes necessary to fire them.
## Activity

### Matching Column

*Practice using these new vocab terms by matching them with the definitions.*

*Try to think about how each definition fits in your life.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities of daily living</th>
<th>• Age you become an adult in North Carolina law</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive supports</td>
<td>• An earned duty or task that you do as a member of a group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority or Boss</td>
<td>• Money that you get each pay period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>• Person asked to make health decisions for you in the case of an emergency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decisions</td>
<td>• A way to balance the money that you receive against the money you need to spend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighteen</td>
<td>• Tasks you do in self-care each day like eating, dressing, bathing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>• Person who gets your SSI check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guardian</td>
<td>• Money that you spend each pay period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care representative</td>
<td>• Person you hire to perform tasks in caring for you that you can not do yourself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>• A right you receive because you earned it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent living</td>
<td>• Person appointed to make decisions for another who is unable to safely make those decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Living Center</td>
<td>• You live your life the way you choose for yourself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Support Professional (DSP)</td>
<td>• Person or persons who are assigned to be in charge and oversee the rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privilege</td>
<td>• Choices you make after reasoning through the pros and cons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative payee</td>
<td>• Devices or aids that help you overcome a limitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>• Organization that provides peer support to persons with disabilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this section...

- Find Things to Do
- Keep Safe Relationships
- Plan How to Get Around
- Be a Citizen
- Be a Disabilities Advocate
Find Things to Do

What is so important about being active in your community?
Have you heard the expression “No man is an island”? This means that you can’t do everything for yourself alone. Human beings need each other. We are **interdependent**. Sharing ourselves and receiving back from others are basic needs. We each need a community. Communities can share beliefs, resources, interests, preferences, and risks.

Think of some ways that participating in a community may be good for you:

*Examples: Prevent loneliness or boredom. Learn something that you really like.*

Think of some ways that your participation may be good for your community:

*Examples: Helping others, you have something to offer that someone else needs.*

Here are some examples of community activities to help you think:

**Sports:**
Sports offer ways to hang out with friends and get physical activity at the same time. There are team sports and individual sporting activities. There are adaptive sports available, like Special Olympics or adaptive soccer, for individuals with disabilities. There are one-time events like a community walk sponsored by different organizations. You don’t have to actually play to have fun with sports; maybe you can cheer on your favorite team.

**Arts:**
Performances of music or dance or acting can be a great source of entertainment. Viewing art at a museum or an art show are another way to enjoy the arts. Learning to express yourself with art is another relaxing or de-stressing activity. Community centers, dance schools, and art centers are all places where you might find interesting things to do.
Helping other people can be very rewarding. Self-advocacy groups are a way for you to meet and work with others who may have the same or a different disability. Independent Living Centers are specially designed to help with peer support for persons with disabilities. Advocates are individuals who speak up for someone else. You might decide, for example, to go to your local congressman’s office to talk about an issue that is important to you and help lots of other people in the process. Or you might become a peer to someone in your school who sometimes needs your help.

• DisabilityPartners.org
• Aktion Club: Kiwanisofasheville.org

Recreation:
Parks are a great place to do a lot of things, like go on a hike, have a picnic, go fishing, take a canoe ride, play games, and just enjoy being outdoors. Some parks offer classes like yoga or cooking classes as part of their programming. Find your local parks and recreation department to learn about what they offer.

Volunteering:
There are so many ways to help others in your community. You could play checkers with a person who lives in a nursing home, help shelve books at the library, visit a child in the hospital, or volunteer with a not-for-profit organization that could use your help. Think about what you like to do, or what type of work you may be interested in and then look for someplace to volunteer so that you can get a little experience.

Clubs and Organizations:
Scouting and 4H club for both girls and boys are a great youth activities. As you get older you may find more adult community organizations, like Kiwanis or Lions Club, who are involved in serving their communities.

Hobbies:
Make a list of things you like to do or are interested in, like photography, art classes, reading, watching movies, playing video or other games, collecting something special, cooking, or building things. Start asking people around you if they like to do those things, too. They may have suggestions of where you could find a group interested in these activities. Think about your local public library as a great source of free resources and information. The internet is another source of information and social media groups. Facebook groups and twitter are ways to connect with others even from your own home.

Faith and Religion:
Faith communities can be an important part of many peoples’ lives. Some church communities provide special services for persons with special needs.

Asheville Parks and Recreation
Asheville Parks and Recreation and Cultural Arts - Therapeutic Recreation Department has a variety of additional programs.

trprogram@ashevilleNC.gov

Camps:
Summer Camps can be a great source of activity for youth and adults with disabilities. There are day programs as well as overnight programs to explore. For possible camp options, visit

FamilySupportNetworkWNC.org

Advocacy:
Helping other people can be very rewarding. Self-advocacy groups are a way for you to meet and work with others who may have the same or a different disability. Independent Living Centers are specially designed to help with peer support for persons with disabilities. Advocates are individuals who speak up for someone else. You might decide, for example, to go to your local congressman’s office to talk about an issue that is important to you and help lots of other people in the process. Or you might become a peer to someone in your school who sometimes needs your help.

• DisabilityPartners.org
• Aktion Club: Kiwanisofasheville.org
Think of activities that could be fun, or a way to help others or be around people you like, or to learn something new. You might want to check with your local library, independent living center, chamber of commerce, United Way or 211 directory for ideas about what is available. You can search on the internet, too.

Activity

Put checkmarks next to as many areas as you can that interest you or might be fun to try and then name the specific activities you want to try.

- Sports:______________________________________________________________
- Arts:________________________________________________________________
- Recreation:___________________________________________________________
- Hobbies:_____________________________________________________________
- Clubs:_______________________________________________________________
- Volunteering:_________________________________________________________
- Advocacy:____________________________________________________________
- Faith:________________________________________________________________
- Camps:______________________________________________________________

Here are some skills to help you get out into the community. Please check things you may need, and then find someone who can help you plan and learn:

- If I need special access to a building, I practice asking about whether or not the place is accessible.
- If I use special communication methods, I know ways to make myself understood when people don’t understand me.
- If I need a special way to travel to places, I know various ways to get the help I need (driving, calling a friend or coworker to ask for a ride, walking safely in my community, taking the bus).
- Other things I need to plan before I go: ________________________________

Draw or write about all the places where you go now in your community. If there are other places where you would like to go but you haven’t yet, draw or write about them and put a circle around each one of them.
Keep Safe Relationships

There are different levels of relationships. We each have groups of different people in our lives. We have five levels of closeness: trusted, close family and friends, others who we know (other friends and family), others who we have talked to before (contacts), and others who we do not know (strangers). Someone in your class might be one of your best friends (trusted), while another person in your class you may barely know (a contact). The way you act around your family is different from the way you act around your classmates and is different from the way you act around strangers. When you are older and develop mature dating or married relationships, you may add another level of intimacy with someone you call a partner. It is important to be safe in all of your relationships.

Who are in your groups? Put their names on the lines inside each category.

It is really important to think about who the people are in your trusted family and friends group. These are the people who help us the most in our lives. Let’s think about how a new person earns your trust. When you begin to make a new friend, you get to know each other and they become a member of your contact group. It takes some time and building of the relationship for someone to earn a spot in your trusted group.
**Keeping in touch with friends**

Once you finish school, you may need to work at keeping in touch with old friends. You might not get to see friends every day like you did in school. You may need to make plans and make dates to keep in contact and meet.

**Making new friends**

Making new friends takes time. You meet people, see if you have common interests, try some activities together, begin to share more about yourself, develop trusting and caring feelings, and help each other when one of you needs help. Community activities are a common ways that adults meet new people.

**What is Bullying?**

_It is a purposeful action aimed to make another person feel bad or hurt them._

Bullying can include name-calling, making faces or offensive gesturing, teasing, making threats, spreading rumors, hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, or purposefully leaving someone out.

- **Cyberbullying** is using the internet, cell phones, or other technology to send images or texts intended to hurt or embarrass another person. Examples may be:
  - Posting a threat or slur about someone on a website
  - Posting an embarrassing video or picture on YouTube or Facebook
  - Spreading a rumor via text message or online
  - Pretending to be someone else online to trick or tease
  - Persons with disabilities should beware of someone who is over-controlling, or pretending to be a friend to actually tease or hurt, or is using a person’s condition as the reason to tease or harm them.

**WHAT TO DO To Stop Bullying**

- Remember that everyone deserves respect. No one deserves to be bullied.
- Learn to stand up for yourself, walk away, or say stop.
- Tell an adult you trust about what’s going on.
- Tell a trusted adult if you see someone else being bullied.
- Don’t be a bully yourself.
- Report bullying events to the website, like using Facebook and YouTube safety centers.
- Don’t delete any bullying emails, texts, or messages. They can serve as evidence.
- Keep a record of events.
- Websites with useful information include: www.Stopbullying.gov and www.ncpc.org

**WHAT TO DO to be safe using media:**

- Keep your passwords private.
- Don’t agree to meet someone in person who you only know from online.
- Think about what you write or say before you post it.
- Don’t forward any mean messages that spread rumors about you or someone else.
- Be smart when using your cell phone – all the tips for computers apply to the phone too.
- Be careful about who you give your phone number to.
- More information about internet safety can be learned at www.ConnectSafely.org
### Personal Safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>议题</th>
<th>1. I do this on my own</th>
<th>2. I do this on my own with reminders</th>
<th>3. I need some help to do this</th>
<th>4. I always need help to do this</th>
<th>5. What happens if I don’t do this?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Know what people I trust (a neighbor, friend, parents) who can help me if I need it</td>
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<td>Use a buddy system, go places together, know each other’s plans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keep my personal info private on the phone and internet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Talk to a trusted person when something doesn’t feel right</td>
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<td>Know how and when to call for help</td>
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<td>Respect other people’s space, privacy and things</td>
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<td>Set boundaries with other people, keep an arm’s distance away</td>
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<td>Say “No, thank you” or “Stop right now” when I want someone to leave me alone</td>
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<td>Know what is a safe time to talk to a stranger (like a new cashier at a store)</td>
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<td>Act aware of those around me especially in public</td>
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<tr>
<td>Know how to have safe friendships</td>
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<td>Know how to be safe when dating</td>
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<td>Know that no one should hit me, call me names, take away things I need, or ignore my rights</td>
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<td>Know what types of touch are safe or unsafe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Say “no” when I do not want to be touched or kissed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Know what bullying is and how not to bully or hurt anyone</td>
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### Activity

Look at your answers to the checklist. **What personal safety topics do you now want to learn more about?** Ask a trusted family member, a close friend, your doctor, and your teacher for ways to learn more.

________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________
Plan How to Get Around

To be part of your community, you will need a way to get from place to place. There are different kinds of transportation: public, hired, personal car, bicycle, wheelchair, walking. Your choices for transportation really depend on where you live. If you live in or near a big city, you might have public transportation. If you live close to the places when you will go, you may be able to walk.

You also need to know how to get where you want to go with both the address and possibly directions. You may use a GPS (geographic positioning system) on a smartphone or use a directory like maps.google.com.

Taxi services can be regular or wheelchair accessible. When scheduling a ride, you must ask specifically for the type of transportation you need. Renting a car may be another option. There are specialty wheelchair accessible van rental services.

Driving Evaluations for persons with disabilities, Driver Rehabilitation and Vehicle Accommodations are types of special services.

NC Division of Motor Vehicles - A disability placard or license plate can be used by drivers or riders with disabilities. The application form can be obtained from the DMV offices or online at: ncdot.gov. State requirements include one of the following:
- Have a temporary or permanent physical disability that requires the use of a wheelchair, a walker, braces, or crutches;
- Have temporarily or permanently loss of the use of one or both legs;
- Have restricted mobility, either temporarily or permanently, due to a pulmonary or cardiovascular disability, arthritic condition, or orthopedic or neurological impairment;
- Be permanently blind or visually impaired.

Learner’s Permit requires passing a written test. Driver manuals are available at the ncdot.gov.

Driver Education Programs might need you to give them specific information to decide what accommodations you may need and if they can be met by their school or program.

Transportation in North Carolina:
Remember that arranging for special services requires planning ahead of time through applications or interviews. The North Carolina Public Transportation Association has links to public transportation across the state at nctransit.org. You may use the connected websites to learn about bus routes and schedules. Fixed route systems in bigger cities in North Carolina have special services called paratransit systems for curb to curb rides or other special arrangements for person with disabilities.

Driving with Adaptations:
When you have a disability, learning to drive a car may require special evaluations, training and equipment. Though it may not be possible to accommodate every type of disability, there are many types of adaptations to make driving possible and safe. Continuous and controlled attention to the road is essential for safe driving. If you “space out” at times even when you are trying to concentrate, you are probably not ready to drive. People with a seizure disorder may not drive until they are well-controlled with medicine and free of seizures for a specified period of time.

When driving seems like a responsibility you are ready to try, there are several steps you can take to find accommodations fit for your needs.

The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration has information on vehicle modifications at nhtsa.gov/cars/rules/adaptive/brochure/brochure.html. Local rehabilitative centers and vocational rehabilitation services can help with preparing for driving with special adaptations.

Personal Vehicles
There are many options for driving a personal vehicle. You may have your own car, perhaps your parents and friends will drive you around. When you ask someone for the favor of a ride, remember to consider paying for gas or other expenses.

Special disability license plates or placard are available through the DMV.
**Activity**

**Going Somewhere?**

Try to use this planning guide when you are arranging your own transportation.

1. Where are you going: ________________________________________________________
2. When do you need to be there (date and time): _________________________________
3. What is the address: _________________________________________________________
4. Do you have a phone contact number: _________________________________________
5. How will you get there? Bus Taxi/Van Driven by another Drive or walk yourself
   a. Do you need to check on bus routes or schedules? YES NO Not necessary
6. How much will it cost (fee, gas, tolls): ________________________________________
7. Have you scheduled your travel? YES NO Not necessary
   a. Who do you call to schedule: _______________________________________________
8. Do you need directions? YES NO
   a. How will you get them? From contact person Use GPS Use website
9. How long will it take to get there: _____________________________________________
10. What time do you need to be ready to go: _____________________________________
11. Have you checked on any accessibility issues? YES NO Not needed
12. What special arrangements should you make: ___________________________________
Be a Citizen

People with disabilities should cast their votes in public elections. They have the right to help choose the leaders who will help them reach for their dreams and goals within their communities. North Carolina law requires that voting systems be accessible for people with disabilities. At age 18, you may register to vote at ncsbe.gov or by completing a paper application and mailing or bringing it to your county’s voter registration office.

Another adult civic responsibility is to serve on jury duty if you are called to do so. Once you have registered to vote, you may receive a letter calling you to jury duty. If you need to ask about special accommodations, there is usually a phone number in the mailing to call.

Be a Disabilities Advocate

You have something very unique. You have the ability to speak as the voice of someone with special needs or a disability. You have the right to speak up for yourself and for others. This is called being an advocate.

One way you might work to help your community and others with disabilities is to work with specific organizations. There are disability advocates organizations and diagnosis-based organizations who work in your community. You might learn about fund-raising events where you can help as a volunteer. You might attend meetings to learn about issues. Read about the Association of Self-Advocates of North Carolina at asa-nc.org.

Another way to speak up is by talking to someone in authority, like lobbying your representatives in town, city, state and national government. You might go to a school board meeting or a town council. You might schedule an appointment with a public office staff person or write a letter or email.

You can use social media to talk about a problem or a cause you believe is important. How about having a twitter party and talking to your friends about an injustice or problem that you think should be addressed.

Disability Rights North Carolina is the state’s federally mandated protection and advocacy system that aims to protect the rights of children and adults with disabilities in North Carolina.

In addition, the NC Council on Developmental Disabilities exists to ensure that people with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of and have access to culturally competent services and supports which promote inclusive communities.

Be Aware!

How do you learn about what is happening in your community, North Carolina, the country and the world? One way that we are citizens is to keep up to date on the news. Reading the newspaper or internet news sites, watching TV, or listening to radio are all ways to keep up on the news. Local communities also have meetings often called town halls which are a way to hear about what’s happening or even speak up and give your opinion.
**Activity**

*Do you know how to speak up if you have an issue that is important to you in your community?*

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>First you need to know about your rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Then you need to identify who you can talk to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Next you need to create a convincing argument for your problem and solution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Now you are ready to go out and state your case.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What problem do you want to address:**

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

**Who could you talk to:**

______________________________________________________________________________________________

**How do you present your information:**

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

**Will you go to a scheduled meeting?** When and where:

______________________________________________________________________________________________

**Will you make an appointment to talk to someone?** When and where:

______________________________________________________________________________________________

**NOW GO, SPEAK UP!**
Transition

Growing up prepares you to become a young adult. During this time you should:
• Dream about the future and create goals for yourself.
• Build skills and learn to advocate for yourself in all parts of your life.
• Learn about and work with the people and resources who can support you in your goals.

Get more information: All of this might seem like a big job, but if you work on it step-by-step you will be ready. This guide has a chapter for each of the areas. There are some simple ideas and reminders to help you. Practice the transition tips in the different areas of your life. Some of the tips in this workbook fit better for teens and young adults with different challenges. We have tried to provide a mix of information to help you, whether you have physical challenges, or learning challenges, or the challenges of living with chronic illness. Pick the info and activities that fit you best.