



# Navigating Autism Services and Supports

Nicole  
Berning |  
DHS

**mn** MINNESOTA  
AUTISM RESOURCE PORTAL

# Topics for today

- Overview of services and supports across:
  - Healthcare
  - Education
  - Home and community based services
  - Transition and Employment Supports
- Online resources to help navigate
- Share person-centered planning tools
- Questions and contact info





Online resources

## The [MN Autism Resource Portal](#) is a complete resource guide!

- The portal was created with input from caregivers, advocates, educators, professionals, & others.

- [Contact us](#) 

- [Like us on Facebook](#) 

- [Event request form](#) 

- [Event calendar](#) 

- [Resource request form](#) 



# Pathway to Services and Supports for Autism provides summary of services and supports.

Also available in [Hmong](#), [Oromo](#), [Somali](#), [Russian](#), [Vietnamese](#), [Karen](#) and [Spanish](#)

## Pathway to Services and Supports for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

If you've noticed that a child you work with is exhibiting signs of autism or has been diagnosed with autism, there are a variety of services and benefits their family might be able to access. Below, you can see the types of support services different state agencies can connect you with. Support services should be person-centered; each child's needs will be different, and the services they use should be tailored to best fit their needs.

### Healthcare



A healthcare provider or clinic may help with:

- Developmental screening
- Well-child checkups
- Medical diagnosis, including:
  - Initial history, exam, and labs
  - Referral to psychology, developmental pediatrics, or other specialist for diagnostic assessment
- Care or referral for:
  - Nutrition or digestion
  - Seizures
  - Sleep problems
- Referrals for:
  - Occupational therapy (OT)
  - Physical therapy (PT)
  - Speech and language pathology (SLP)
- Medications



### Education



- Services could include, but are not limited to:
- Assistive technology
  - Child care services
  - Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) program
  - Educational/developmental interventions
  - Head Start program
  - Hearing and vision screenings
  - Home visits
  - IEP
  - OT, PT, and SLP
  - Preschool
  - Service coordination and community referrals
  - Special education

These services are free to all qualified students.

Visit [HelpMeGrowMN.org](https://www.helpmegrowmn.org), call 1-866-693-GROW (4769), or contact your local school district for an education evaluation

### Services and supports



- Case management
- Children's Therapeutic Services and Supports (CTSS)
- Early Intensive Developmental and Behavioral Intervention (EIDBI)
- Family Support Grant
- OT, PT, and SLP

Contact your local county or tribal human service agency to request financial assistance or a MnCHOICES assessment. This can give you access to waiver services. Services could include, but are not limited to:

- Consumer Support Grant (CSG)
- Personal Care Assistance (PCA)
- Consumer directed community supports (CDCS) services
- Referrals
- Waiver services:
  - Case management
  - Employment
  - Equipment and supplies
  - Transportation
  - Housing
  - Other supports



### Transition and long-term services & supports



- Behavioral health services
- Employment services
- Home care nursing
- Independent living
- Home health aide
- OT, PT, and SLP
- Postsecondary education
- Case management



Note: not all services are available in all areas. Contact your local service providers or other contacts mentioned on this page to determine service availability.

## Symptoms and Diagnosis of Autism

People who have autism spectrum disorder (ASD) may experience a range of characteristics and symptoms. Some people may have noticeable characteristics, others may not. Autism may be diagnosed as early as 18 to 24 months, but can be diagnosed at any age. The earlier treatment and intervention begins, the more effective the outcomes. Here are some of the signs and symptoms.



### Social interaction and communication

- Differences in interacting with other people and making or maintaining relationships
- Differences with back-and-forth conversation
- Differences using eye contact, gestures, facial expressions, and body language
- Differences reading social cues.

In very young children, the first symptoms of autism may include:

- Limited demonstration of emotions, eye contact, or gestures like waving or pointing
- No or inconsistent response to name
- Limited interest in sharing or playing with others
- Loss of speech
- Delayed speech and/or no social babbling.



### Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests or activities

- Differences in speech patterns (ex: saying the same things over and over in exactly the same way)
- Repeating behaviors like hand-flapping, rocking, jumping, or twirling
- Insistence on specific routines/strong resistance to minor changes
- Sensitivity to light, touch, and sound
- Strong interests in certain areas or objects
- Unusual interest in looking closely at objects, touching, smelling, or tasting objects.



### Educational determination vs. medical diagnosis

An educational determination of ASD allows for the special education and related services the child needs to be provided through their local school district.

A child with an educational determination of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) can access resources through the school, like an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). However, that does not mean they have received a medical diagnosis of ASD.

Contact a medical or mental health provider for a diagnostic assessment, or locate a provider on [Minnesotahelp.info](https://www.minnesotahelp.info)

A medical diagnosis of ASD:

- Determines a person's condition and helps the family decide what services and supports are needed
- Does not automatically mean that a child meets the educational criteria for a special education services
- Is needed to access more services or financial support through Medical Assistance (MA) or Social Security.

Learn more at [HelpMeGrowMN.org](https://www.helpmegrowmn.org)

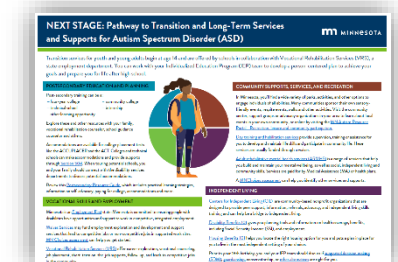
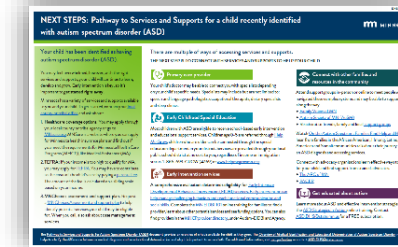
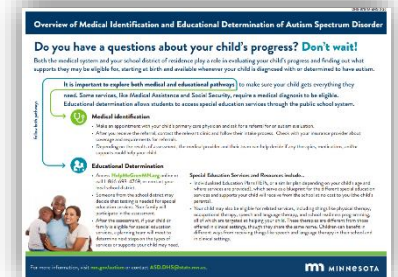
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# Resource requests

- Use the [Autism Spectrum Disorder resource request form](#) to request printed copies from the [Pathway series](#)
  - [First steps](#): provides a summary of key developmental milestones that babies and toddlers should be achieving. It also has tips, tools and guidance to help a child's development.
  - [Overview](#) of Medical Diagnosis and Educational Identification of ASD
  - [Next Steps](#): Overview of services and supports for a child recently identified with ASD
  - [Next Stage](#): outlines resources available to young adults and adults as they transition into independent living and the work world.

\*All resources are available in English, Hmong, Somali, Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, Karen and Oromo





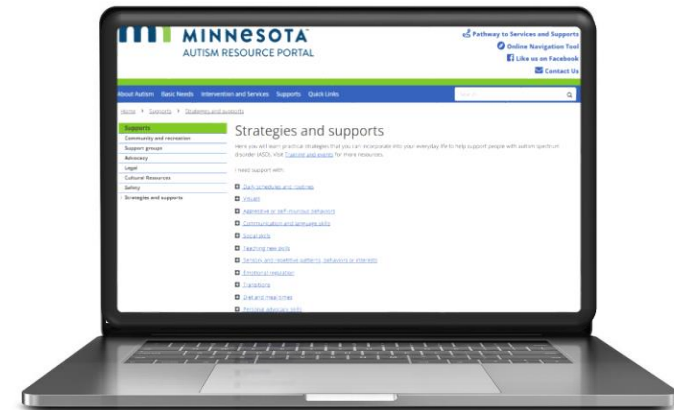
- [ASD Strategies in Action](#) and [Many Faces of Autism](#)
- Contact [ASD.DHS@state.mn.us](mailto:ASD.DHS@state.mn.us) for a **FREE** subscription
- For families, educators, providers and other professionals



# Strategies and supports

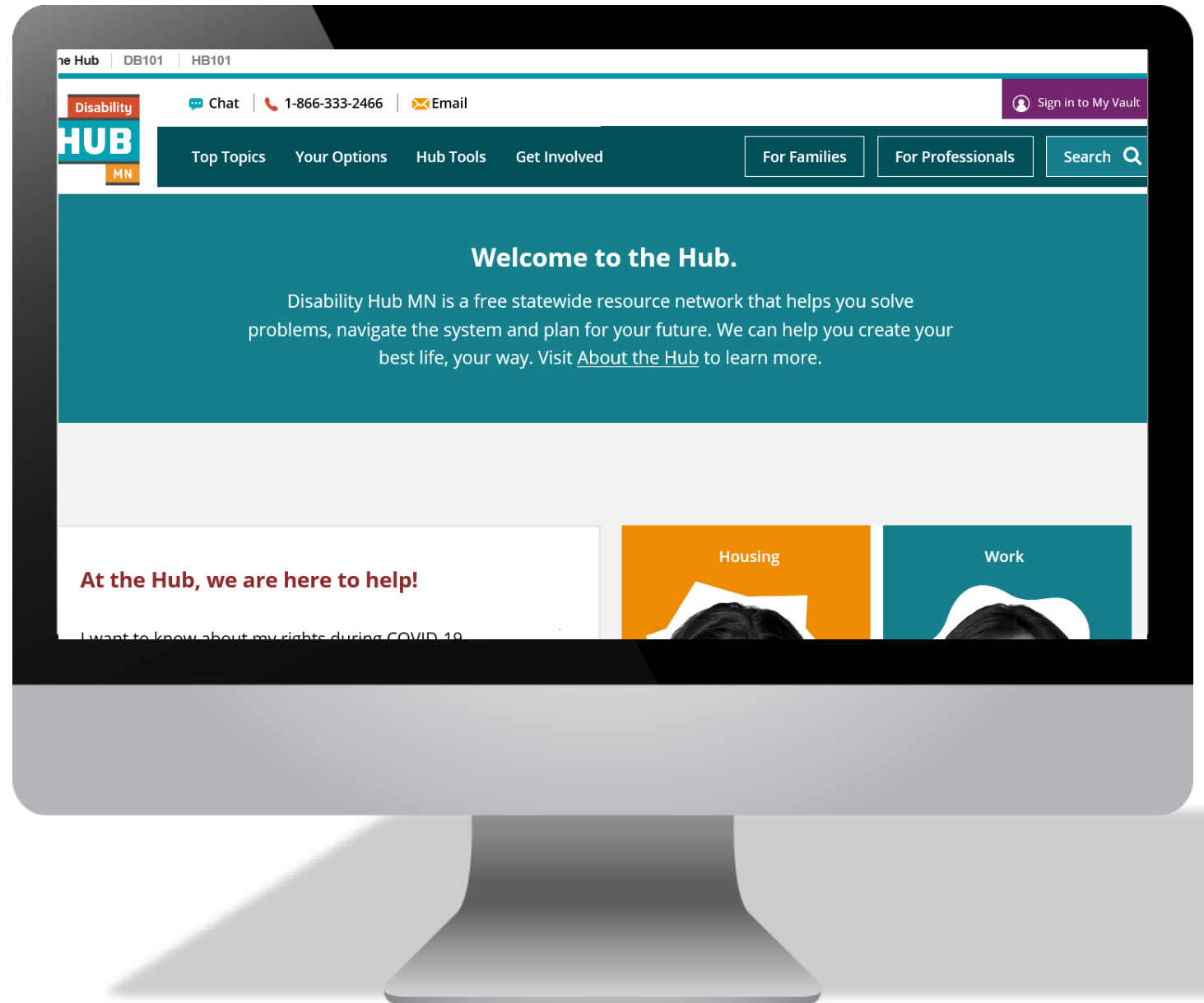
Here you will learn practical strategies that you can incorporate into your everyday work or life to help support people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Visit [Training and events](#) for more resources.

- I need support with:
  - [Daily schedules and routines](#)
  - [Visuals](#)
  - [Aggressive or self-injurious behaviors](#)
  - [Communication and language skills](#)
  - [Social skills](#)
  - [Teaching new skills](#)
  - [Sensory and repetitive patterns, behaviors or interests](#)
  - [Emotional regulation](#)
  - [Transitions](#)
  - [Diet and meal times](#)
  - [Personal advocacy skills](#)





- [Disability HUB MN](#)
- Housing
- Employment
- Lifecourse planning tools
- Please like, follow and share the [Hub's Facebook page](#)



**Medical &  
educational  
pathway to  
services**



# Different pathways



## • Educational determination:

- Access **special education services** through the public school system
- Evaluation done by **school professionals** such as, teachers, school nurse, school psychologist, speech and language pathologist, etc.
- Eligibility for special education services
- Informs the development of an **Individualized education plan (IEP)**
- Academic skills, social-emotional development



## • Medical diagnosis:

- Access **EIDBI services**, as well as home and community-based services (e.g., PCA, home care, etc.)
- Evaluation done by a **licensed medical or behavioral health professional**
- Eligibility for Medical assistance (MA) and Social Security Income (SSI)
- Informs an **Individualized treatment plan (ITP)**
- Communication, social skills, cognitive development, self-regulation and management of interfering behaviors

The [Overview of Medical Identification and Educational Determination of ASD](#) resource provides information about the similarities and differences between the medical and educational pathways. Also available in [Hmong](#), [Somali](#), [Karen](#), [Oromo](#), [Russian](#), [Vietnamese](#) and [Spanish](#).

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Overview of Medical Identification and Educational Determination of Autism Spectrum Disorder

Do you have a questions about your child's progress? Don't wait!

Both the medical system and your school district of residence play a role in evaluating your child's progress and finding out what supports they may be eligible for, starting at birth and available whenever your child is diagnosed with or determined to have autism.

follow both pathways

It is important to explore both medical and educational pathways to make sure your child gets everything they need. Some services, like Medical Assistance and Social Security, require a medical diagnosis to be eligible. Educational determination allows students to access special education services through the public school system.

Medical identification

- Make an appointment with your child's primary care physician and ask for a referral for an autism evaluation.
- After you receive the referral, contact the relevant clinic and follow their intake process. Check with your insurance provider about coverage and requirements for referrals.
- Depending on the results of assessment, the medical provider and their team can help decide if any therapies, medications, and/or supports could help your child.

Educational Determination

- Access [HelpMeGrowMN.org](#) online or call 1-866-693-4769, or contact your local school district.
- Someone from the school district may decide that testing is needed for special education services. Your family will participate in the assessment.
- After the assessment, if your child or family is eligible for special education services, a planning team will meet to determine next steps on the types of services or supports your child may need.

Special Education Services and Resources include...

- Individualized Education Plans (IEPs, or a similar plan depending on your child's age and where services are provided), which serve as a blueprint for the different special education services and supports your child will receive from the school at no cost to you (the child's parents).
- Your child may also be eligible for related services, including things like physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, and school readiness programming, all of which are targeted at helping your child. These therapies are different from those offered in clinical settings, though they share the same name. Children can benefit in different ways from receiving things like speech and language therapy in their school and in clinical settings.



For more information, visit [mn.gov/autism](#) or contact [ASD.DHS@state.mn.us](#).

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ms and Diagnosis of Autism

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- Differences in interacting with other people and making or maintaining relationships
- Differences with back-and-forth conversation
- Differences using eye contact, gestures, facial expressions, and body language
- Differences reading social cues
- Limited meaningful or functional communication

In very young children, the first symptoms of autism may include:

- Limited demonstration of emotions, eye contact, or gestures like waving or pointing
- No or inconsistent response to name
- Limited interest in sharing or playing with others
- Loss of speech
- Delayed speech and/or no social babbling

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- Differences in speech patterns (ex: saying the same things over and over in exactly the same way)
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- Insistence on specific routines/strong resistance to minor changes
- Sensitivity to light, touch, and sound
- Strong interests in certain areas or objects
- Unusual interest in looking closely at objects, touching, smelling, or tasting objects

ation, visit [mn.gov/autism](#) or contact [ASD.DHS@state.mn.us](#).

651-431-4300 or 866-651-4300

Attention. If you need free help interpreting above number.

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ملاحظة: للحصول على رقم الهاتف المجاني، اتصل على

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గమనిక: ఈ పత్రానికి తెలియజేసిన సేవలకు అర్హతను నిర్ణయించేందుకు ముందుగా వైద్య పరీక్ష అవసరం. ఇది వైద్య పరీక్ష అయినా, పరీక్షించిన తర్వాత వైద్యుడి నుండి సలహాను సేయండి.

請注意: 如果您需要免費協助，請撥打上面的電話號碼。

Attention: Si vous avez besoin d'une aide gratuite pour interpréter ce document, veuillez appeler ou numériser le numéro ci-dessus.

Thaw ua twb zoo nyeeem. Yog hais tias koj xav tsoj ntawv ntawv no pub daw xav looj saum tuj no.

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알려드립니다. 이 문서에 대해 무료 제공되는 도움을 전화번호로 연락하십시오.

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Hubochina. Dokumentin kun tola akka siif feete, lakkoobsa gubbatti kenname bilbili.

Внимание: если вам нужна бесплатная помощь в устном переводе данного документа, пожалуйста, позвоните по указанному выше телефону.

Digniin. Haddii aad u baahantahay caawin tarjumoadda qoraalkaan, lambarka kore wac.

Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para este documento, llame al número indicado.

Chú ý. Nếu quý vị cần được giúp đỡ miễn phí, xin gọi số bên trên.

For accessible format of this publication or additional equal access to human services, write to [DHS.info@state.mn.us](#) or call 651-431-4300 or 866-651-4300 (toll free) or use your relay service.



# Healthcare services



Routine healthcare



Private therapies (OT, speech)



Care for nutrition, seizures, sleep and more



Medication management & consultation



# Increased rates of co-occurring medical and mental health conditions

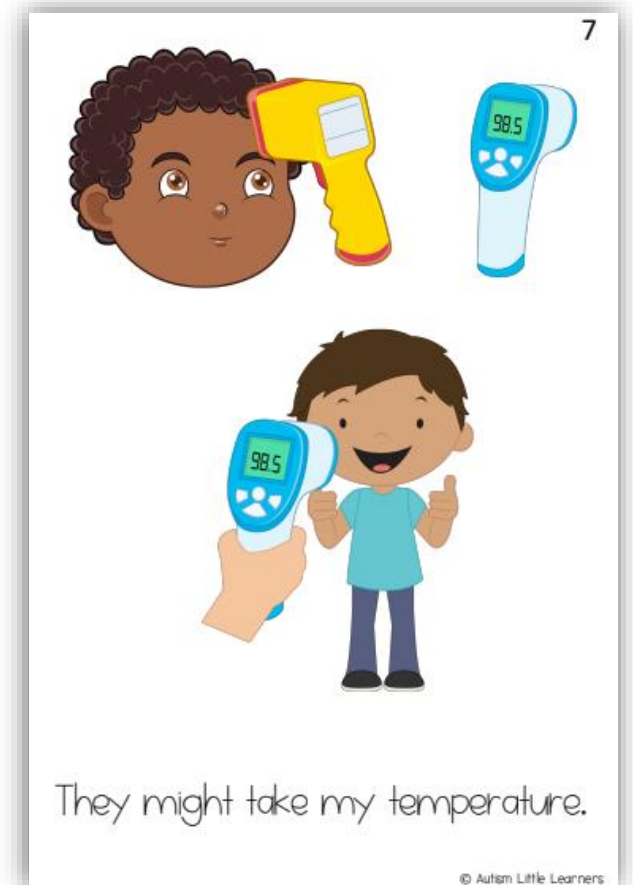
- Increased rates of co-occurring medical and mental health conditions
  - Obesity
  - Seizures
  - Sleep disorders
  - Depression
  - Anxiety



- [Co-occurring conditions / Minnesota Autism Portal \(mn.gov\)](https://mn.gov/autism-portal)

# Communication

- Prepare staff for the visit—ASD training [Training / Minnesota Autism Portal \(mn.gov\)](https://mn.gov/minnautism/Training/)
- Prepare the person for the visit
  - Social stories
  - Picture schedules
  - Self-advocacy skills
- Ask what is the best way to communicate with the person
  - Keep instructions short
  - Use visuals to communicate whenever possible
  - Allow for processing time



# Sensory sensitivity

- Offer accommodations (e.g., wait in a quiet area)
- Dim lights, minimize noises
- Limit number of different staff
- Allow child to utilize coping skills
- Have the therapist come with to the appointment





NAME: Anya

DATE: April 2022

## WHAT PEOPLE LIKE AND ADMIRE ABOUT ME:

I am fun and like people  
I am loving  
I like to help others  
I love cats and am gentle with them  
I know my letters, numbers and colors

## WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO ME:

My family including my grandparents who live with me  
My culture including speaking two languages  
My siblings, Jacob and Mari  
My special toys, including my stuffy's (stuffed animals)  
Being prepared for transitions, I like to know what is going to happen next.

## HOW TO BEST SUPPORT ME:

I need to be prepared for transitions so I know what activity I get to do next and when I have to be done with other activities (e.g., use a timer to let me know when the procedure or appointment will be over)

Visuals help me communicate my level of pain and can help me transition

I like social stories to help me understand what to expect. Fidgets help if I'm waiting a long time

Stuffed animals help me calm down and feel comforted. Loud noises scare me. Headphones help



# One-page profile

- Utilize a [one-page profile](#) template
- Help advocate for what is important **to them** and **for them**
- Identify **strengths and interests**
- Include **calming strategies and potential triggers**
- Share with **doctors, care coordinators, dentists, etc.**

- [Early childhood](#)
- [Youth and young adults](#)
- [Adults and seniors](#)
- [Specialty care](#)
- [Healthcare coordination and other supports](#)
- [Medical cannabis](#)
- [Vaccinations and immunizations](#)
- [Medical appointments](#)



#### WHAT PEOPLE LIKE AND ADMIRE ABOUT ME:

I'm fun and silly  
I have a great smile and try to make others smile  
I'm a great big brother and like to show my little brother my cars  
I love music and have great dance moves  
I can focus on one activity for a long time if I enjoy what I'm working on  
I love books and I have memorized a few words that I can read on my own  
I give great hugs



#### WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO ME:

My friends and family  
Going to visit my Grandparents  
Trips to the library to check out books  
Trips to the park and climbing on things  
My cars and iPad, playing gross motor games like soccer or tag  
My dog Max  
Being with friends, but also having time alone



#### HOW TO BEST SUPPORT ME:

I like to follow a visual schedule so I know what activity I get to do next. This also helps me get dressed and wash my hands.

I like to take breaks when there are too many people around, it calms me down  
I put on my headphones or put on music and dance when I need to move my body  
Sometimes I need to be reminded to slow down and say my words slowly so people can understand me  
I sometimes get stuck talking about what I like and need to be reminded to ask my friends questions  
I'm learning to imitate my peers so pairing me up with a buddy or pointing out what other kids are doing is helpful to keep me on track



# Advocating for resources

- Utilize a [one-page profile](#) template written from the perspective of the student
- Identify opportunities, set goals and make appropriate referrals based on their priorities and goals
- Share at IEP meetings

# Transition example



Ahmed 9<sup>th</sup> grade

## Strengths:

*I'm a great soccer player.  
I have strong reading skills  
and really like Harry Potter  
books.  
I like to learn new things.  
I enjoys playing video games  
and it helps me connect with  
friends.  
I'm an awesome big brother.*

## Areas I Need Help:

*Help me develop  
independent living skills  
(money management,  
laundry, cleaning, cooking,  
healthcare management,  
driving/public transport, etc.)*

## Vision Statement:

*After I graduate high school  
I want to study computer science at a local  
community college.*

*I want to live in my own apartment maybe with  
roommates who like to play video games.*

*I want to play soccer on a local recreation team to  
stay active and healthy.*

## Accomplishments:

- *I came in second in the school spelling bee last year.*
- *My team won a trophy last year in soccer.*

## What Works for Me:

*Watching videos or having pictures to show what I  
need to do.  
Being included, it is my life. Ask me what I want.*

## What Doesn't Work for Me?

*Being told what to do. I like to have choices.*

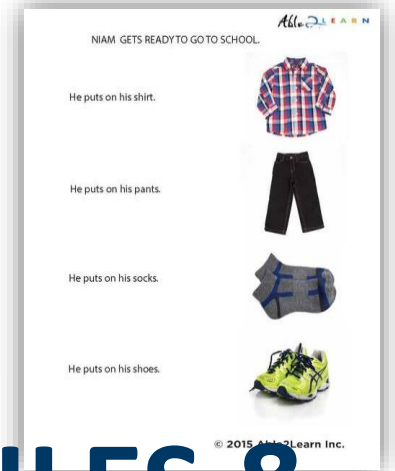
- Written from the perspective of the student
- Help student self-advocate for what is important **to them** and **for them**
- Identify opportunities, set goals around employment, post-secondary education, extracurricular activities, etc.
- Help plan for the future

# Teacher example

- Changing people can be just as challenging, if not more so than changing environments
- It is important to prepare the child to meet new people
- Thank you to Melissa Olsen, a teacher in District 196, for letting us share this great example of a ***Meet the Teacher*** letter



# Set up visual supports



## SCHEDULES & ROUTINES



## TIMERS & CALENDARS



## SOCIAL STORIES

- [Educational determination vs. medical diagnosis](#)
- [Early Childhood](#)
- [Youth and young adults](#)
- [Transition planning and post-secondary education](#)
- [Educational supports](#)
- [Education advocacy and legal supports](#)
- [Cultural education resources](#)
- [Collaboration resources](#)
- [Other resources](#)





# Advocacy and support groups

- Connect with [advocacy organizations](#) to learn effective ways to advocate for yourself or your child.
  - [The ARC of MN](#)
  - [Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights \(PACER\)](#)
- Attend [support groups](#), in-person or online, to meet other families who have navigated these complex systems and may be able to help support you along the way.
  - [Autism Society of MN \(AuSM\)](#)
  - [Family Voices of MN](#)



# Legal supports

- The [Minnesota Disability Law Center \(MDLC\)](#) addresses the unique legal needs of Minnesotans with disabilities.
- MDLC provides civil legal assistance to individuals with disabilities statewide on legal issues related to their disabilities.
- All individuals with disabilities are eligible to receive help, regardless of age or income level.
- You can [submit online inquiries](#) to MDLC for help and apply online. You may also [call the Minneapolis intake line at 612-334-5970](#).
- [Legal / Minnesota Autism Portal \(mn.gov\)](#)



**Home and  
community  
based early  
intervention  
services**



# Purpose of EIDBI



- Teaches **meaningful communication & social interaction** skills
- Addresses **interfering behaviors**
- Teaches **self-management** and **regulation** skills



- Builds **independence** with self-care and safety skills
- Increases participation in home, school & community life



- Family/caregiver training and counseling**
- Child and family centered



# Eligibility for EIDBI Services

## Age

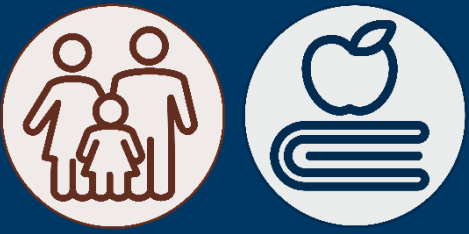
- Birth up to age 21
- Ages served may vary by provider

## Medical Necessity

- Determined through a comprehensive evaluation
- Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or a related condition

## Healthcare coverage

- Medical assistance (MA)
- MinnesotaCare
- MA-TEFRA
- Pre-paid health plans
- Private insurance



# Settings

- Clinic
- Office
- Center
- Home
- Community
- School
- Telehealth



# EIDBI Referral tool

- Step-by-step guide to access EIDBI services
- Find a provider
- Connect to case management services, advocates & other resources
- Troubleshoot common barriers
- Click on [online referral tool link](#)
- [Map](#) of providers



# EIDBI 101

- For families, lead agencies, educators and others interested in learning more about the Early Intensive Developmental and Behavioral Intervention (EIDBI) benefit, as well as other resources for people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and related conditions.
- [bit.ly/EIDBI-Providers](https://bit.ly/EIDBI-Providers)
- [bit.ly/EIDBI-Families](https://bit.ly/EIDBI-Families)
- [Directions to access on Trainlink](#)





# Preparing for the MnCHOICE assessment

- Think about:
  - Any challenges, barriers or concerns you have (e.g., participating in the community, elopement)
  - List out supports needed for day-to-day tasks and activities
  - If you want an advocate or family friend to attend the assessment
- Allow about 2 hours for the visit
- Have your child's one-page profile prepared
- [MnCHOICES Assessment Steps to Get Help](#)



# Waiver supports

- If you think your child could benefit from Home and Community Based ([HCBS](#)) [waiver supports](#) or long term services and supports, you can request a [MnCHOICES assessment](#) and support plan
- If they are already receiving HCBS waiver services, talk to the waiver case manager about specific services and eligibility
- Waiver services included, but are not limited to:
  - PCA
  - Employment supports
  - Medical equipment
  - Respite

# Waiver - Employment Supports

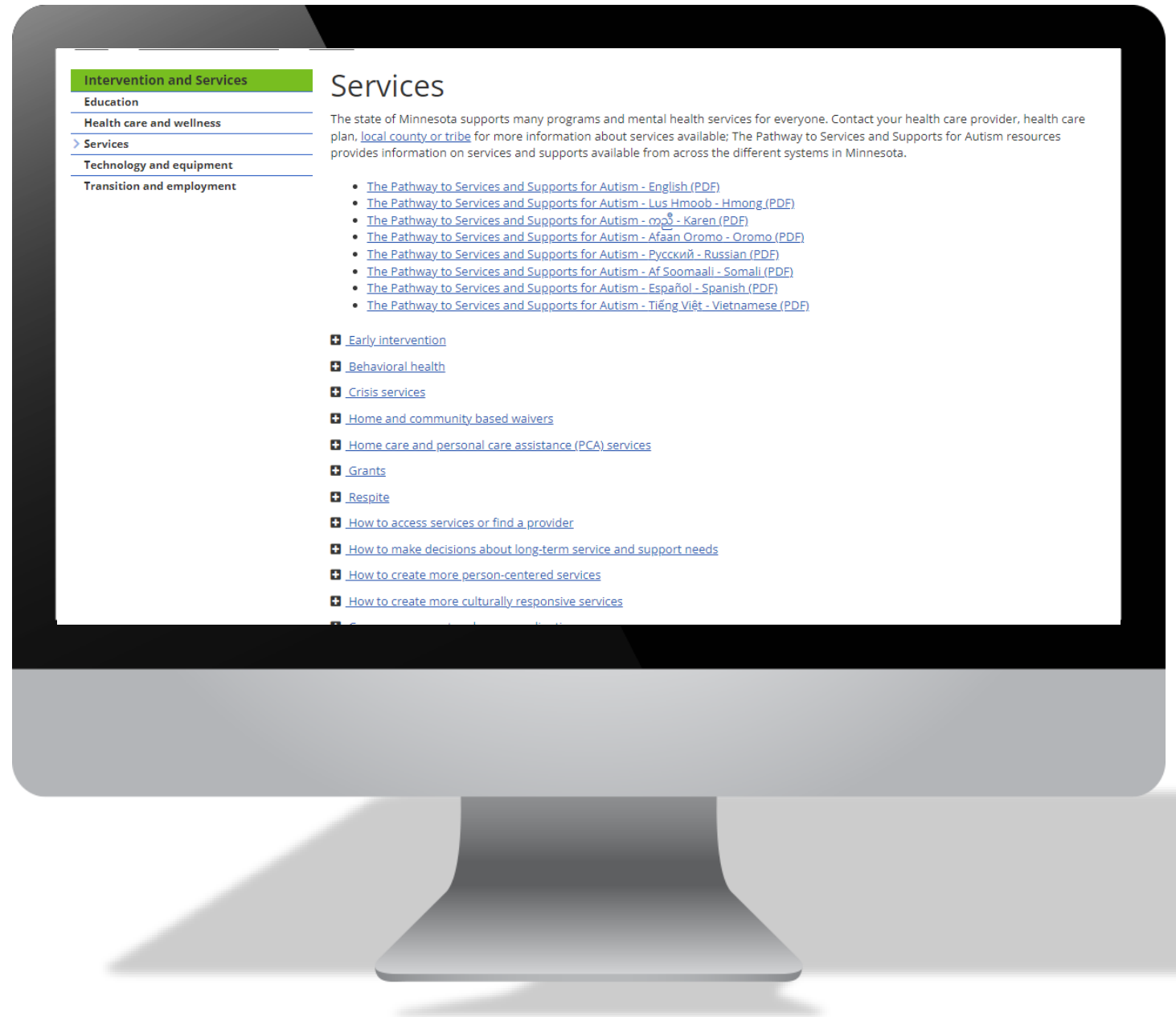
- [Waiver employment services](#) support people at all ages and stages
- **Exploration:** Explore the work world, learn about interests, decide if you would like to pursue employment
- **Development:** Plan out your path to employment, can assist with a job search in some circumstances
- **Support:** Ongoing supports to maintain employment
- Day training and habilitation(DT&H)/**day support services:** Day services can “wrap around” or work with employment.



# MINNESOTA

## AUTISM RESOURCE PORTAL

- [Early intervention](#)
- [Behavioral health](#)
- [Crisis services](#)
- [Home and community based waivers](#)
- [Home care and personal care assistance \(PCA\) services](#)
- [Grants](#)
- [Respite](#)
- [How to access services or find a provider](#)
- [How to make decisions about long-term service and support needs](#)
- [How to create more person-centered services](#)
- [How to create more culturally responsive services](#)
- [Case management and care coordination](#)
- [Telehealth services](#)





- MinnesotaCare
- Medical Assistance (MA)
- MA-TEFRA
- Pre-paid health plans
- Visit [mnsure.org](https://mnsure.org)
- 1-855-366-7873
- [Paper application](#)



# Determine eligibility and healthcare coverage options

- If you have questions about eligibility, contact:
  - the [local county agency or tribe](#) where you or your child resides
  - call your [health plan's member services](#) or
  - contact the [Minnesota Health Care Programs Member Help Desk](#).
- Watch [on-demand webinars](#) for more information or view the [ARC guide](#)



Transition age youth and young adults

# Planning for the transition

- Planning for the transition is important regardless of the person's age at the time of transition.
- Planning early can help bridge the gap in services
- Develop a shared vision for the future



# Never too early to begin planning

- Teach self-care, safety, advocacy and problem solving skills, choices, independence, communication and social skills that generalize.
- Explore the person's unique interests
- Build on their strengths to help identify potential job opportunities for the future.



# Key ages for transitions

- **Age 7:** School age
- **Age 14:** Transition age
  - Explore [Disability Hub MN - Charting the LifeCourse for families](#)
- **Age 18:** Guardianship and supported decision making
  - Explore [Transition and Employment / Minnesota Autism Portal \(mn.gov\)](#)
- **Age 19:** No longer eligible for TEFRA but can apply on MNSURE for healthcare coverage
  - Explore [Health Care Coverage / Minnesota Autism Portal \(mn.gov\)](#)
- **Age 21:** No longer eligible for EIDBI or special education services
  - Explore [Services / Minnesota Autism Portal \(mn.gov\)](#)



Next Stage: Pathway to Transition and Long-Term Services and Supports for ASD outlines additional resources available to young adults & adults as they transition into independent living & the work world. Also available in Hmong, Somali, Karen, Oromo, Russian, Vietnamese & Spanish.

## NEXT STAGE: Pathway to Transition and Long-Term Services and Supports for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

MINNESOTA

Transition services for youth and young adults begin at age 14 and are offered by schools in collaboration with Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), a state employment department. You can work with your Individualized Education Program (IEP) team to develop a person-centered plan to achieve your goals and prepare you for life after high school.

### POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND PLANNING

Post-secondary training can be a:

- four-year college
- community college
- technical school
- internship
- other learning opportunity

Explore these and other resources with your family, vocational rehabilitation counselor, school guidance counselor and others.

Accommodations are available for college placement tests like the ACCUPLACER and the ACT. Colleges and technical schools can make accommodations and provide supports through [Section 504](#). When touring potential schools, you and your family should connect with the disability services departments to discuss potential accommodations.

Review this [Postsecondary Resource Guide](#), which includes practical learning strategies, information on self-advocacy, paying for college, accommodations and more.

### VOCATIONAL SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT

Minnesota is an [Employment First](#) state: Minnesota is committed to ensuring people with disabilities have opportunities and support to work in competitive, integrated employment.

[Waiver Services](#) may fund employment exploration and development and support services that lead to competitive jobs or non-competitive jobs in supported work sites. [MN Choices assessment](#) can help you get started.

[Vocational Rehabilitation Services \(VRS\)](#) offer career exploration, vocational counseling, job placement, short-term on-the-job supports, follow-up, and leads to competitive jobs in the community.

### COMMUNITY SUPPORTS, SERVICES, AND RECREATION

In Minnesota, you'll find a wide variety of parks, activities, and other options to engage individuals of all abilities. Many communities sponsor their own sensory-friendly events, respite events, walks and other activities. Visit the community center, support groups or advocacy organizations in your area to learn about local events in your own community, or online by visiting the [MN Autism Resource Portal—Recreation, leisure and community participation](#).

[Day training and habilitation services](#) provide supervision, training or assistance for you to develop and maintain life skills and participate in community life. These services are usually funded through a waiver.

[Adult rehabilitative mental health services \(ARMHS\)](#) is a range of services that help you build and maintain your mental wellbeing, as well as social, independent living and community skills. Services are paid for by Medical Assistance (MA) or health plans.

A [MN Choices assessment](#) can help you identify other services and supports.

### INDEPENDENT LIVING

[Centers for Independent Living \(CIL\)](#) are community-based nonprofit organizations that are designed to provide peer support, information, referrals, advocacy, and independent living skills training and can help be a bridge to independent living.

[Disability Benefits 101](#) gives you planning tools and information on health coverage, benefits, including Social Security Income (SSI), and employment.

[Housing Benefits 101](#) helps you locate the right housing option for you and puts a plan in place for you to live in the most independent setting of your choice.

Prior to your 18th birthday, you and your IEP team should discuss if [supported decision making \(SDM\)](#), [guardianship](#), conservatorship, or [other alternatives](#) are right for you.

Disability Hub MN is a free statewide resource network that helps you solve problems, navigate the system and plan for your future. Call the Disability Hub MN™ at 1-866-333-2466 or visit [DisabilityHubMN.org](#) to get connected to resources and services. For more information, visit [mn.gov/autism](#) or e-mail [ASD.DHS@state.mn.us](#)

JUNE 2020



## How do you get started planning for transition?

It's time to start preparing for transition. To ensure a successful transition, it is important to learn self-care skills, make choices, gain independence and demonstrate cooperation with peers. Explore your strengths and build on your strengths to identify potential job opportunities for the future.

### POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) PLANNING

Your IEP team will prepare a transition plan during your high school years. This plan is part of your IEP and should include everything you need in order to be successful after high school. This plan is especially important if you are a graduate, your IEP team will no longer be responsible for your transition plan. Your transition plan will make sure that you need to lead an independent life after high school. For additional information on education, visit [Disability Benefits 101](#) and the [MN Autism Resource Portal—Recreation, leisure and community participation](#).

### EMPLOYMENT PLAN

Pre-employment services may be available to you starting at age 14. Pre-employment services may include job exploration, counseling on post-secondary options, workplace readiness and self-advocacy. Contact the VRS counselor assigned to your school to get connected to these services. If you are found eligible for services and are determined to have support needs, you and your counselor will start working together to develop an Employment Plan, which is your road map to your employment goals. Explore the [Employment Resource Guide](#) to learn more.

The Employment Plan will list supports and services that you and your counselor agree will help you toward your goal of competitive integrated employment. Your counselor will be sure you know how to look for a job, write a resume, complete a job application, and be effective during job interviews. If you have waiver services, it is always good to include your case manager and others who support you in planning meetings.

Once you're on the job, your counselor will stay in touch to make sure things are going well. If there are issues, they'll help you find solutions. If there is a need for accommodations, they can help you talk with your employer.

It is important to remember that you can also reapply for services after your file is closed. If something changes on the job, VRS can temporarily reopen your file to help you work things out with the employer.

If you have already graduated from high school, applications start with a visit to your local vocational rehabilitation office. You and the counselor will discuss your support needs and plan for the future. In most cases, you'll be able to schedule an appointment with a counselor at one of the CareerForce Centers located throughout the state. Find a Vocational Rehabilitation Services Office near you.

### ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT PLAN

A person-centered assessment and plan is developed and used by counties, tribal nations and organizations to help people with disabilities make decisions about long-term services and supports. A MnCHOICES assessment can be helpful. Call your local county, tribal or care organization for more information. Schedule a MnCHOICES assessment. Your assessment and person-centered planning tools are available in the [MN Autism Resource Portal—Transition and Postsecondary Education](#).

Disability Hub MN is a free statewide resource network that helps you solve problems, navigate the system and plan for your future. Call the Disability Hub MN™ at 1-866-333-2466 or visit [DisabilityHubMN.org](#) to get connected to resources and services. For more information, visit [mn.gov/autism](#) or e-mail [ASD.DHS@state.mn.us](#)

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- ❑ **Individualized education plan (IEP) and Individualized treatment plan (ITP)**
- ❑ A [MnCHOICES assessment](#) can identify needs and determine eligibility for services.
- ❑ **Employment plan:** Pre-employment services may be available starting at age 14 and may include, job exploration, post-secondary options, workplace readiness and self-advocacy



# Education options

Post-secondary education can be a:

- Four-year college
- Technical school
- Other learning opportunity
- Community college
- Internship
- Accommodations are available for college placement tests
- Colleges and technical schools can make accommodations and provide supports through [Section 504](#).
- When touring schools, connect with the **disability services departments** to discuss accommodations.

# Resources to support transition planning

- [Disability Benefits 101](#) gives people planning tools and information on health coverage, benefits, including Social Security Income (SSI), and employment.
- [Housing Benefits 101](#) helps locate the right housing option for people and puts a plan in place for them to live in the most independent setting of their choice.
- [My Vault](#) is a secure, personal account you can use to explore planning paths and activities, store and share files, and find the links you've saved to your favorite articles and tools.



**Disability Benefits 101**  
Minnesota

**Housing Benefits 101**  
Your home. Your choice.





# Employment

- **Where will the individual work? How can special interests lead to a job?**
  - Full-time or part-time
  - Self-employment or small business
  - In a work setting or work from home
- Reflect the interests, strengths, preferences and skills of the individual
- Regardless of the job, important skills to have include:
  - Problem-solving
  - Team work
  - Communication skills
  - Picking up on social cues
  - Following directions
  - Flexibility with changes



# Skills that increase rate of employment

- Conversation skills
- Work experience while in high school
- Education
- Disclosure of diagnosis
- Advocating for accommodations





# Vocational rehabilitation services (VRS)

- **Youth and young adults:**
  - Contact a [VRS staff assigned to your school](#)
- **VRS Student Career Services:**
  - [Video](#)
  - [Flyer](#)
  - [Website](#)
- **Adults:**
  - Contact [the VRS office nearest you](#)
  - See all [Workforce Center Locations](#) (no diagnosis needed)



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*It's your state of success*



# Waiver – Transition supports

- If you think the person could benefit from Home and Community Based ([HCBS](#)) [waiver supports](#) or long term services and supports, you can request a [MnCHOICES assessment](#) and support plan
- If they are already receiving HCBS waiver services, talk to the waiver case manager about specific services and eligibility
- Minnesota is an [Employment First](#) state: Minnesota is committed to ensuring people with disabilities have opportunities and support to work in competitive, integrated employment
- Resources on [transition to adulthood for families](#) and information on [work options for individuals](#) at Disability Hub MN website.



# Independent living

- **Where will the individual live? What skills will they need to be successful there?**
- [Centers for Independent Living \(CIL\)](#) are community-based nonprofit organizations that are designed to provide peer support, information, referrals, advocacy, and independent living skills training and can help be a bridge to independent living.
- Examples of skills needed in home/ residential settings:
  - Self-care skills such as bathing, shaving and showering
  - Domestic skills such as laundry, cooking, yard work, paying bills, shopping
  - Interpersonal skills such as sharing a living environment and dividing up chores
  - Maintaining hygiene and health
  - Advocacy skills

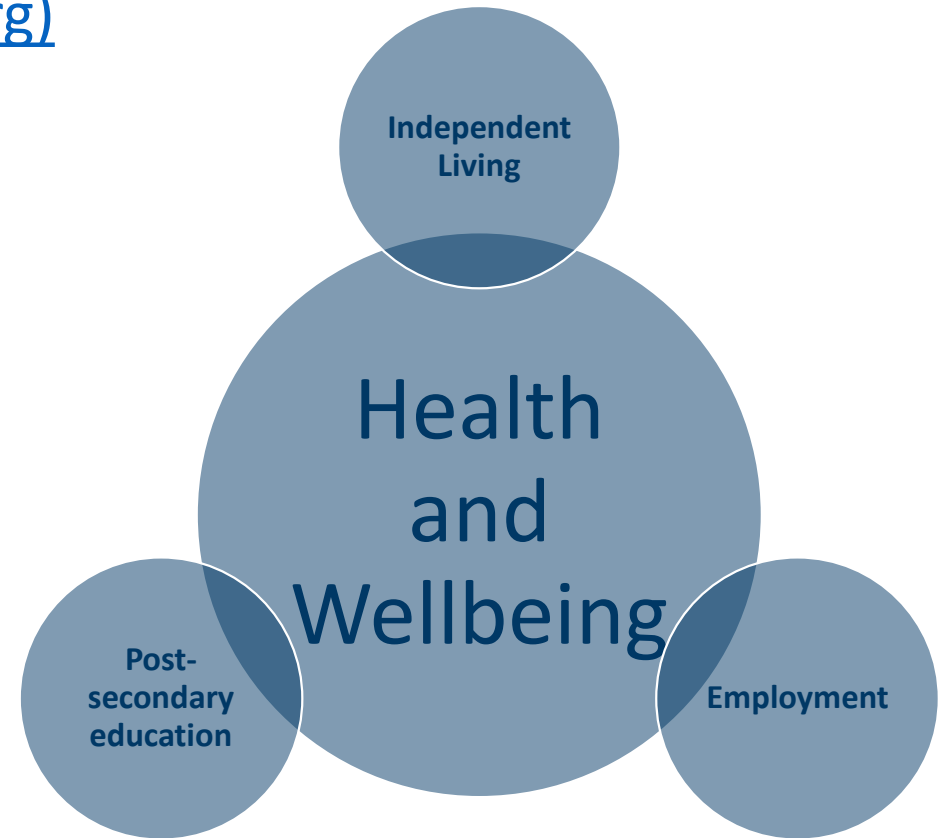


# Assistive technology

- [Technology for HOME \(T4H\)](#) offers a team approach to person centered assistive technology (AT) consultation and technical assistance, to help individuals with disabilities live more independently.
- The AT consultant will provide possible solutions and communicate with the lead agency to develop a plan.
- [Technology and Equipment / Minnesota Autism Portal \(mn.gov\)](#)



- [Health Care Transition Skills Checklist \(peatc.org\)](https://peatc.org/health-care-transition-skills-checklist)
- [PEATC Life Skills Checklist](https://peatc.org/life-skills-checklist)
- [Readiness Assessment](https://peatc.org/readiness-assessment)
- [Sample Goals for IEP](https://peatc.org/sample-goals-for-iep)
- [Let's Talk About Sex: Students with Disabilities and their Sexual Health \(peatc.org\)](https://peatc.org/lets-talk-about-sex-students-with-disabilities)





# Community supports, services and recreation

- It is important for socialization, health and wellness to engage in extracurricular activities
- Find social skills groups, recreation opportunities and support groups: [Community and Recreation / Minnesota Autism Portal \(mn.gov\)](https://mn.gov/minnesotaautismportal/)
- Important skills to practice:
  - Learn ways to relax or handle stress
  - Navigate the community (e.g., transportation, etc.)
    - Accommodate sensory needs
    - Find information when needed
  - Maintaining health (e.g., exercise)
  - Advocate for supports
  - Identify leisure activities—informal

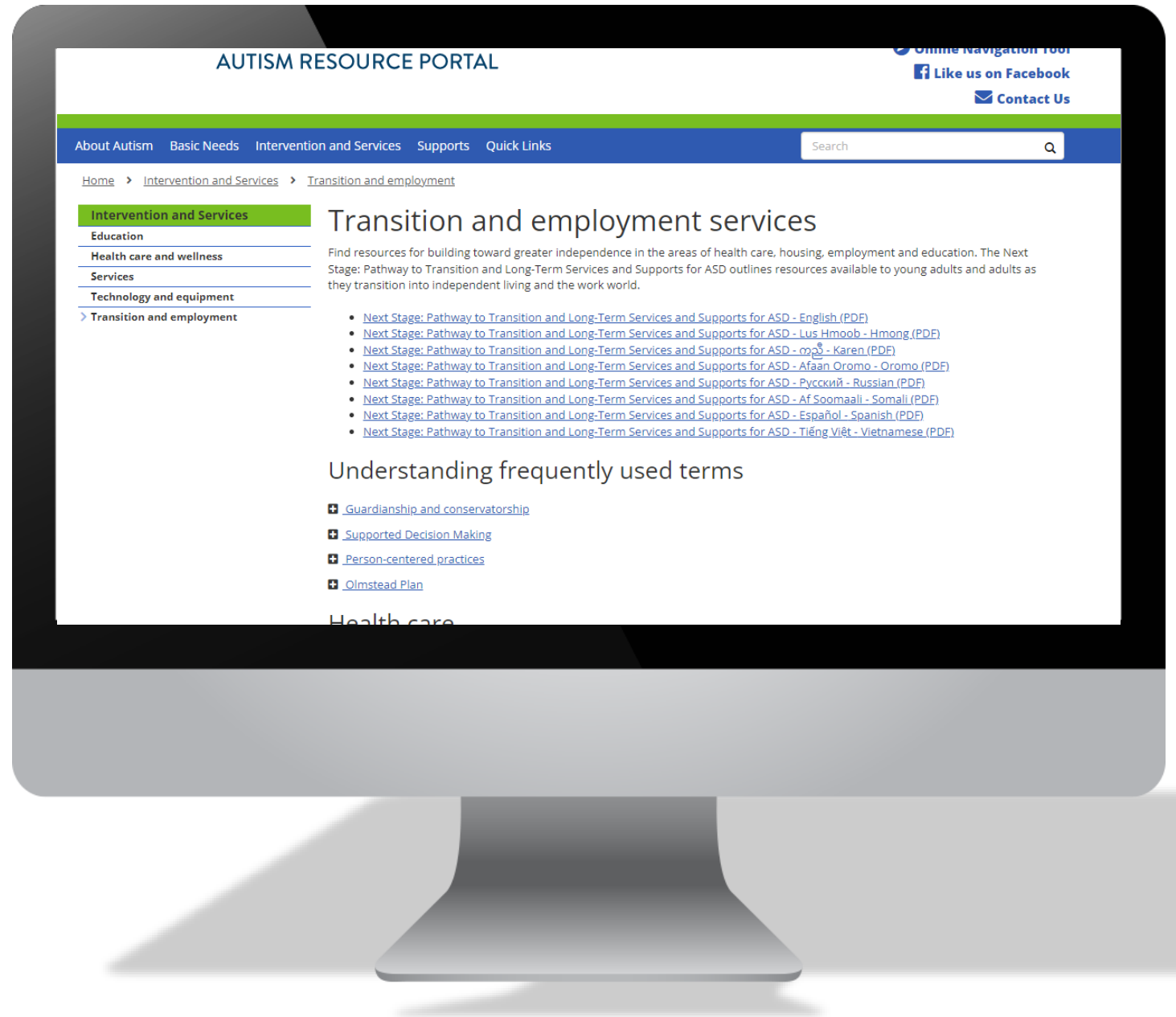




# Legal considerations

- [Supported Decision Making](#): a way for people with disabilities to get support in making decisions without full guardianship.
- [Guardianship](#) is when a **guardian** is appointed by the court to make **personal decisions** for the person they are a guardian for. May include decisions on where to live, medical services, education and more.
- [Conservatorship](#) A **conservator** is a person appointed by the court to take care of someone's **finances** when they cannot make these types of decisions because of injury, illness or disability.
- [Transition and Employment / Minnesota Autism Portal \(mn.gov\)](#)

- Housing
- Healthcare
- Housing
- Employment
- Education
- [Transition and Employment / Minnesota Autism Portal \(mn.gov\)](https://mn.gov/transition-and-employment/)



# Key takeaways

- Services are **not** one size fits all
- There are resources and supports available to help navigate the system
- Utilize person-centered tools and strategies to collaborate and identify the right supports
- [MN Autism Resource Portal—Person centered planning tools](#)



# Upcoming events

- **Summer Engagement Opportunities**

- Tuesday, May 3, 2022, 3-4 p.m. Register [here](#)



- **Community Engagement: Get to Know EIDBI Providers**

- Wednesday, May 11, 2022, 9-11 a.m. Register [here](#)



- **Community Conversations:** Topic: Support Groups and other community resources

- Tuesday, May 24, 2022, 12-1 p.m. Register [here](#)



- **Summer Lunch and Learn: Topic: Autism and Aging**

- Wednesday, June 8, 2022, 12-1 pm Register [here](#)





# Thank you!

[Nicole.Berning@state.mn.us](mailto:Nicole.Berning@state.mn.us)

651-402-2394

[mn.gov/autism](http://mn.gov/autism)

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