

# Transition to Adulthood for Young Adults with Developmental Disabilities: A Timeline for Parents

**Transitions** occur in many areas of life as adolescents become young adults. These transitions might include movement from school to work or postsecondary education, the shift from pediatric to adult health care, and leaving the family home. For students with disabilities, preparation for transition should begin by age 14 and focus on academic instruction, community experiences, employment, daily living skills, and exploration of supports needed for success in adult life. This timeline identifies considerations in planning for transition by age, from 14 to the end of your child's educational entitlement at 21.

Age

14



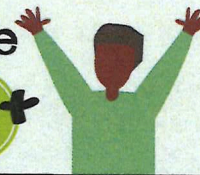
Age

16



Age

18



Age

21



- Your child's IEP must identify a course of study and activities that help to develop goals for adult life
- Encourage your child to participate in their IEP meetings
- Explore your child's interests and opportunities to learn more about working, volunteering, and education after high school
- Support your child in developing problem-solving, decision-making, independent living, and advocacy skills
- Help your child learn about their health and how to manage their health care
- Think about the types of support your child may need to make financial, medical, educational and other decisions
- Begin to help your child save for disability expenses by opening an ABLE Account

- Your child's IEP must include goals for education, employment, and independent living after high school, as well as the services needed to achieve them
- Work with your child and their school to find work and volunteer experiences based on interests
- Help your child explore how to get around in your community using public transportation or by learning to drive
- With your child, start identifying adult health care providers by asking your child's pediatrician for recommendations
- If you haven't already, help your child access sexual education and understand changes related to puberty
- Consider options for guardianship and alternatives to guardianship such as supported decision-making, if needed

- Young adults reach the legal age of majority, regardless of disability and whether they still live at home
- Young adults with developmental disabilities (DD) should apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and will automatically receive Medicaid if eligible
- Explore supports available in adulthood and how to apply (see reverse)
- Between ages 18 and 22, your child should begin receiving health care from an adult provider
- If you haven't already, help your child learn how to manage their medications, make appointments, and communicate with health care providers
- Discuss where your child would like to live in the future and the supports they'll need
- Encourage your child to register to vote

- Eligibility for special education services ends once the school year in which your child turns 21 is completed
- Support your child in accessing services through adult systems and providers that will help them reach their goals for continued learning, employment, and community involvement
- If your child no longer wants to live at home, explore housing options and residential supports

## Transition Planning

- Charting the Life Course: <https://www.lifecoursetools.com/>
- National Parent Center on Transition & Employment: <https://www.pacer.org/transition/>

## Employment

- Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE): <https://apse.org/>

## Financial Savings

- ABLE National Resource Center: <http://ablenrc.org>

## Health

- Got Transition: <https://www.gottransition.org/>

## Post-secondary Education

- Think College: <https://www.thinkcollege.net/>

## Supported Decision Making

- National Resource Center for Supported Decision Making: <http://www.supporteddecisionmaking.org/>