



A Fact Sheet: TRANSITION TO LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL



What is Transition for young adults? The purpose of the transition planning process is to assist youth who are currently receiving special education services and their families in planning life goals after high school. The school system works with each student to develop a course of study and make a diploma choice. The transition plan is a tool used to prepare the student for independent living, employment and further education once he or she leaves high school.

What is a Transition Plan? A Transition Plan will be part of your child's IEP when he/she enters high school. It is the guide for you, your child, and the professionals working with him/her. The Transition Plan is a long range plan and a critical tool for developing future options for your child. This will prepare your child for employment and/or further education as well as independent living.

The Facts you should know:

- The transition planning process should include:
 - An assessment of your child's skills and interests related to education, employment, training and independent living skills.
 - Identification of agencies that may provide or pay for transition services. (The school system must request permission from the parent to invite other agencies to be part of the transition planning meeting.)
- The **Transition Plan** is part of the IEP and should be reviewed and revised at least once a year.
 - It must be in place for your child by age 16 or the student's entry into high school, whichever comes first.
 - The **Transition Plan** is required to contain goals for what your child will be doing after high school in the areas of employment, independent living skills and education/training.
 - Goals must be measurable and should be related to what your child wants to achieve after graduation.
- Students with disabilities are eligible to remain in public school until they turn 22 or receive a regular high school diploma, whichever comes first. School systems must have a written policy stating what happens when a student reaches the age of 22; each system decides whether to allow students to complete the semester, school year or exit upon their 22nd birthday.
- When your child turns 18 years old, all rights, including educational rights, transfer to him/her. You and your child will be told about the transfer of educational rights at the IEP meeting before age 18.
 - After your child turns 18, he/she will be the decision maker. You will still receive notice about any meetings, evaluations, placement changes, IEP changes or eligibility changes.
 - Your child must be invited to any IEP meeting where transition will be discussed. It is very important that he/she be a part of these meetings to be able to share his or her choices for the future as well as likes and dislikes and to better prepare him/her for becoming the decision-maker at age 18.
- When your child either graduates with a regular high school diploma or exits at age 22, a Summary of Performance (SOP) will be provided by the school.
 - This SOP includes current academic achievements and functional performance and recommendations for achieving life goals. This document is used to help pave the way to the next setting your child will be attending, such as work, college or a technical college.



Tips for Families:

- ✓ Begin planning for your child's transition to life after high school as early as possible. This includes making choices about and advocating for the types of classes your child will take so that he/she can get a regular high school diploma if possible. If you wait until your child is in middle school or high school to try to get "on track" for a regular diploma, it will be too late!!
- ✓ Help build your child's self-determination and self-advocacy skills. Help your child learn how to talk about his/her disability and to ask for any support or accommodations that he/she needs.
- ✓ Help your child develop social relationships and opportunities for recreation. These are important to help connect your child with the community where he/she lives and can provide a wider network of people who can support your child after high school.
- ✓ Have a clear plan to address your child's healthcare needs once he/she reaches adulthood.
- ✓ You and your child should bring suggestions to the transition planning meeting about what your goals are for life after high school. Your vision and your child's vision for the future should help drive the IEP goals for your child.
- ✓ Consider what your child wants to do with his or her life. What are his/her dreams and goals? Does he/she want to go to college or to get a job? Where does he/she want to live and with whom?
- ✓ Make sure your child is learning skills that he/she will need for jobs and for life after high school. These might include things like asking for help, accepting directions and feedback from others, and dealing with conflict. He/she also needs to know how to be on time, the importance of good hygiene, and dressing appropriately for different settings such as work and social events.
- ✓ If your child plans to go to college, is he or she taking the courses needed to meet the college entrance requirements?
- ✓ If your child will go on to college or technical school, he/she will need to learn about what supports may be available from that school. Ask who to contact for disability support services at the school your child will attend. Postsecondary programs are required to provide accommodations to students with disabilities, but they are not required to modify the course work. Your child will have to provide documentation of his/her disability and will have to request the accommodations that are needed.
- ✓ Start to become knowledgeable about the protections provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which will apply to your child after high school.

Where to go for more information:

Parent to Parent of Georgia

770 451-5484 or 800-229-2038

www.parenttoparentofga.org

Georgia Department of Education, Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports

404 656-3963 or 800-311-3627 and ask to be transferred to Special Education

http://www.gadoe.org/ci_exceptional.aspx

Georgia Department of Education Implementation Manual

http://www.gadoe.org/ci_exceptional.aspx?PageReq=CIEXCImpMan

(See chapter on evaluations and reevaluations.)

Additional resources: Contact the **Special Education Director** for your school system.

The **Georgia Transition Manual**

http://www.gadoe.org/ci_exceptional.aspx?PageReq=CIEXCTransition