



Transition to Adulthood Guides



A collaborative project with the Tennessee Department of Education and their family partner Support & Training for Exceptional Parents (STEP, Inc.).

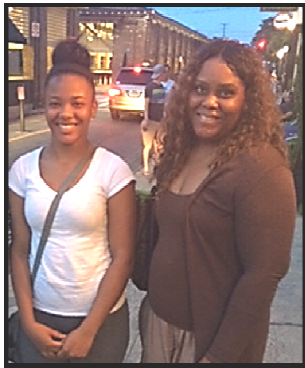
Transition Guide: Parents' Role



How Parents Can Support Their Young Adult During Transition

Parental Involvement in Transition

At some point in the transition process, there is a fear that grips a parent's heart when they think about their child heading out into the massive world beyond high school. Parents who have been involved all the way through the child's academic career, and been part of an intentional transition process, there is often a feeling of accomplishment knowing that they have prepared their child for this day.



What can parents do to support their young adult in this transition process?

- ◆ Have high expectations
- ◆ Be familiar with tools and resources available
- ◆ Find mentors, both for academics and skill-building
- ◆ Know your rights and the rights of your child
- ◆ Explore opportunities presented by the school, your church, and in the community
- ◆ Be familiar with success stories and learn what was behind their success
- ◆ Focus on your child's strengths and abilities
- ◆ Encourage socialization and social skill development
- ◆ Cultivate their talents in church, sports, after school
- ◆ Involve your student in IEP/504/transition planning
- ◆ Monitor courses taken and academic achievements reached
- ◆ Teach posture, body language, hygiene and grooming
- ◆ Define and model assertive vs. aggressive actions
- ◆ Arrange social and volunteer experiences, both formal and informal
- ◆ Ensure that transition planning is addressed on the IEP
- ◆ Role-play with your student for practice
- ◆ Be sure your goals for your student reflect the goals they have for themselves
- ◆ Identify barriers and be ready to offer potential solutions

Don't forget...

- ❖ Long-term goals
- ❖ Communication skills
- ❖ Literacy skills
- ❖ Interpersonal skills
- ❖ Decision-making skills
- ❖ Organizational skills
- ❖ Independent living skills
- ❖ Problem-solving skills
- ❖ Conflict resolution skills
- ❖ Life-long learning plans

Let your teen or young adult try. They may fail the first time, and maybe even the second time, but we all learn from our mistakes, and so will they!

Start Early Planning for Transition

Formal transition planning begins at age 14, but the foundation is laid in early intervention, elementary and middle school.

- ♦ Talk about disability early. Be sure your child understands their disability and its impact on their life.
- ♦ Start early by teaching household responsibilities in an atmosphere of teamwork.
- ♦ Encourage a start-finish policy. (You don't have to do this twice, but you must finish what you started.)
- ♦ Verify the student can apply their skills across multiple environments.
- ♦ Teach conflict resolution and negotiation skills. Start with siblings.
- ♦ Instill a desire to attempt new challenges.



*Set the standard of
high expectations.
Assume competence.*

Thoughts from other parents...

- ❖ As parents, we can't arrange for every eventuality that our child may face. That makes it imperative that we teach them skills for navigating new, unusual or uncomfortable experiences.
- ❖ Be part of your child's career exploration.
- ❖ Model the advocate that you want your child to be.
- ❖ Give your child a safe place to try. And fail. And try again.
- ❖ Build a team around your child and your family that will be a source of support long after the tassel has moved.
- ❖ Find other parents. Collaborate. Learn. Advocate together.

Skills Checklists for Parents

https://www.transitionta.org/system/files/toolkitsustainability/TTL_SustainTK_CovertToEnd.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=1217&force=

https://transitionta.org/system/files/toolkitassessment/AgeAppropriateTransitionAssessmentToolkit2016_COMPLETE_11_21_16.pdf

Transition Guide: Community



Everybody Knows My Name in My Community

Life is Full of Choices

You can be anyone you want to be. Start planning now to be part of your community. What means community to you? Is it friends? Family? Employment? Volunteering? Shopping? Living independently? Being a part of church, community organization, club or team? What does community mean to you? Set your sights on that goal, plan and prepare. Then enjoy your life...every day!



Sarah is all about jewelry and parties with friends. So what could be better than a jewelry party with friends?!

A home and family were Rachel's choice. Rachel works from home and cares for her husband and two boys.



PJ is going to college while doing a volunteer internship with a local disability organization.

Don't Graduate to Sit on the Couch. Get Out and Live!



Tired of your parent's menu?



Tired of eating fast food?



TAKE A COOKING CLASS

Love to take pictures?



Talk about your world using pictures



CREATE A BLOG USING PHOTOS

Love sports?



Like completion?



JOIN A TEAM OR TAKE LESSONS

Love children?



Not a certified teacher?



VOLUNTEER AT A LOCAL PRESCHOOL

Wanting more independence?



Don't drive and hate relying on others?



LEARN THE LOCAL TRANSIT SYSTEM

"The best way to predict the future is to create it."
- Abraham Lincoln

"Do something today that your future self will thank you for."
- Unknown

Check Out Local Options for Involvement

- ◆ Chamber of Commerce
- ◆ Civic clubs
- ◆ Teams
- ◆ Recreation centers
- ◆ Concerts
- ◆ Church participation
- ◆ Hobby clubs
- ◆ Disability organizations
- ◆ Sporting events
- ◆ Library or book stores
- ◆ Job corps
- ◆ Craft fairs, festivals
- ◆ Farms, agricultural centers and fairs
- ◆ YouTube training videos
- ◆ Sewing or quilting groups
- ◆ Restaurants
- ◆ Pet stores or vet offices
- ◆ Choir, band, orchestra
- ◆ Community college
- ◆ Museums and galleries
- ◆ Parks with hiking trails and camping
- ◆ Hunting and fishing
- ◆ Serve on boards or councils
- ◆ Drama troupes
- ◆ Community calendar of events
- ◆ **and that's just the beginning!**

Housing Options Within Your Community

- ❖ Complete independence
- ❖ Independence with oversight
- ❖ Roommates
- ❖ Duplexes
- ❖ Homes with "mother-in-law" quarters
- ❖ Living with an aide
- ❖ Living with family/friends/siblings
- ❖ Group homes
- ❖ Residential farms or communities

Look for Opportunities...

To live as independently as possible

To participate in activities

To develop relationships

To do things you love

To serve others

To learn more

To safely succeed at being part of your community



Make Your Life Meaningful

LEARN something

DO something

BE something

GIVE something

SAY something

SHARE something

GO somewhere

START something

TRY something



Family Support Services can include, but are not limited to: Respite care, day care services, home modifications, equipment, supplies, personal assistance, transportation, homemaker services, housing costs, health-related needs, nursing and counseling. <https://www.tn.gov/didd/consumers/family-support-program.html>

The TN Council on Developmental Disabilities initiative "**Supporting Families of Individuals with Disabilities**" puts together the best policies and strategies to support families in addressing the physical, social, emotional and material well-being of their entire family, including the member with a disability. <https://www.tn.gov/cdd/projects-and-initiatives/supporting-families.html>

Transition Guide: Self-Advocacy



Empowering Students to Request Assistance and Support

What Is Self-Advocacy?

Self-advocacy is the empowerment of students to recognize their abilities and to ask for assistance when needed without using their limitations as a crutch.

How to Communicate Your Needs

Share information in a way that works for you:

- ❖ Talk verbally in person or over the phone.
- ❖ Write in letter, email, or text.
- ❖ Use technology such as speech to text software or augmentative communication devices if that is easier for you.
- ❖ Use pictures and photos, or video yourself, sharing your concerns and needs.

However you choose to share your information there are several things to remember:

- ❖ You know yourself best. Believe that your opinions have value.
- ❖ You can use a tool called a personal profile. It will help you understand yourself better and express yourself to others.
- ❖ Be sure you know about your disability and how it effects your learning and performance, and your actions and reactions.
- ❖ Know the things you like about yourself.
- ❖ Share things someone should know about you.
- ❖ Let others know how to successfully support you.



Courtesy of inclusion-international.org

Check Out These Resources

- ♦ Leadership development, PATH **planning around an individual's desires and strengths** www.tnmicroboards.org
- ♦ **A Guide to Self Advocacy "Speak Up"** <https://qcdd.org/images/Reports/speaking-up-booklet-final.pdf>
- ♦ **Plan a Perfect Life** - budgeting and planning tool. <http://www.tnstep.org/pdf/A-Perfect-Life.xls>
- ♦ **Vocational Rehabilitation Service Locator** - help with job training, employment accommodations, resume development, and job seeking skills coaching. www.tennessee.gov/humanservices/topic/vocational-rehabilitation
- ♦ **Partners in Policy Making** - leadership training and skills development in the area of self-advocacy. <https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/cdd/training-and-news/leadership-training-and-development/partners-in-policy-making.html>
- ♦ **Self-Awareness Booklet** - <http://www.tnstep.org/uploads/files/Dude%20Transition%20Book%20-%20Final.pdf>

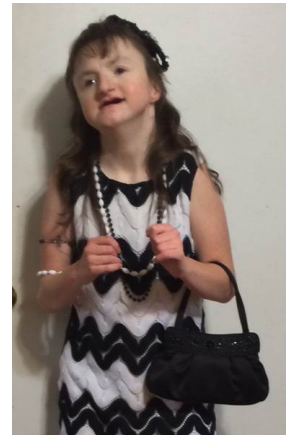
Rate Your Advocacy Skills

- ◆ Do you have a basic knowledge of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 laws and understand how they relate to you?
- ◆ Do you regularly utilize the natural supports in your life? Those supports that occur in your home, job, church, school, or community can be a valuable tool.
- ◆ How are your communication skills? Do you ask questions or make requests with respect and clarity?
- ◆ Do you keep clear and accurate records of requests you make and the responses of others?
- ◆ Do you know your education/transition plan well enough to remind teachers and staff what supports are available to you?

Steps to Self-Advocacy

Connect with other advocates through training opportunities and disability organizations to gain knowledge and practical skills.

1. Identify what is difficult for you
2. Develop a list of things that might help
3. Learn any laws or policies that support what you need
4. Invite people to work with you
5. Plan if/then responses to be prepared
6. Role-play with a friend or teacher to practice your skills
7. Carry out the plan
8. Schedule meetings and document your concerns
9. Evaluate your success and look for ways to improve the next time
10. Thank those who helped you



Tips for Students, Parents and Teachers

Students can learn self-advocacy skills, special education laws, Section 504, and other related topics that will prepare students to advocate for themselves. Here is one example: www.ou.edu/education/centers-and-partnerships/zarrow.html

Teachers and parents can use questions to prompt students through requests as they begin learning to advocate for themselves. "What would make school better?", "What would make that task easier?", "What can I do to support you as you make that important decision?".

Transition Guide: Self-Directed IEP



Take a Leadership Role and Guide Your Future

Supported Student Leadership

For years parents plan, discuss and attend Individual Education Program (IEP) meetings to map out goals and services for their child.

Suddenly, when the child turns 16, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that the student with the disability be invited to the meeting and asked to participate.

For parents, the IEP can be an overwhelming process. For a student with a disability, it can be an even more challenging process. To be ready to fully participate, it will require preparation and support.

The goal of the self-directed IEP is to provide the student with tools and support so they can take a leadership role in the IEP team.

Essential Elements of Transition from High School to Postsecondary Life

Student Leadership & Involvement

Transition Planning

Curriculum & Instruction

Inclusion, Access & Accountability

Family Involvement

Interagency & Community Services

Transition Assessments



Individual Interest Inventory Websites



Explore your interests and share them with your IEP team

www.onetonline.org/

www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip

<http://www.texascareercheck.com/>

<https://careerwise.minnstate.edu/careers/clusterSurvey>

www.careertech.org/student-interest-survey

<https://www.sbctc.edu/becoming-a-student/default.aspx>

Transition Planning Resources

Transition Assessment Toolkit contains over 30 tools to gather information to guide transition planning. www.edprodevelopment.com/resources/transitions-wbl/tools-5/

For more **Student Directed IEP resources** contact The Arc Tennessee 800/836-7077 or <http://www.thearcn.org/Education.php>.

Basic information including articles, guides, and online trainings designed for specific audiences. www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/transition-starters/

Take Charge of Your IEP Meeting

- ◆ Schedule the day/time of the meeting
- ◆ Determine the meeting agenda
- ◆ Plan what you will ask/tell your team
- ◆ Draft goals for yourself
- ◆ Ask questions about things you don't understand
- ◆ Respectfully advocate for changes to your IEP
- ◆ Respect and use input from other IEP team members



Summary of Performance Don't Leave High School Without It

Tell Your IEP Team

- ❖ Your preferences
- ❖ Your vision for the future
- ❖ What you can do
- ❖ What you need
- ❖ What you have already achieved

This is about YOU...not what your family, teachers or others want for you!

Every student with an IEP, upon exiting high school, regardless of receipt of a regular diploma, certificate of completion, or otherwise "aging out" of services under IDEA, must receive a document called the Summary of Performance. This will provide an overview of their academic achievement and functional performance. It should also include recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting their postsecondary goals.

While this information is pulled from the IEP and other related evaluations, assessments, and observations, this is a separate document which the student will carry with them into postsecondary life and services. This can be a valuable tool when applying for services as well as working with Disability Services Departments at college. Review it during your final IEP meetings to ensure that it accurately reflects your strengths and necessary supports.

Specific Support for Self-Directed IEPs

STUDENTS—Your input is invaluable. Learn to make decisions. Speak up. Take responsibility for your own outcomes. The leadership skills you learn will help you be successful in postsecondary training, employment and other adult decisions.

PARENTS—Begin early to discuss your child's interests long before they reach age 16. Be sure they are learning to effectively voice their opinion. Be prepared to allow your young adult to explore their own interests and preferences which may be different than yours.

TEACHERS—Provide training to students on self-directed IEPs as part of the transition planning process. www.TransitionCoalition.org

Thanks to the Arc of Tennessee for some of the material in this guide. Please visit www.thearctn.org

Transition Guide: Dropout Prevention



Engaging Students in Planning for the Future

Why Do Students Drop Out?

Couldn't keep up with schoolwork. Getting poor grades. Got a job. Thought they couldn't complete the requirements. Pregnancy. Suspensions or expulsion for behavior. Family responsibilities. There are many reasons why a student may drop out of school before graduation. However, there are just as many strategies to support students in making the choice to remain in school. Let's explore the options. Everyone has a role to play.



Student Strategies that Encourage Graduation

- ◆ Show up. Be punctual and prepared for class.
- ◆ Be an active learner. Engage with your teacher, classmates, and the curriculum.
- ◆ Make the most of the instruction and opportunities given.
- ◆ Know and voice your weaknesses and struggles. Ask for help.
- ◆ Know and utilize your strengths and abilities. Offer to help others when you can.
- ◆ Be involved in the planning process. Attend and participate in your Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 meetings.
- ◆ Share your dreams with those who can help you achieve them.
- ◆ Build relationships with those who will support you in achieving your dream. Choose your friends carefully.
- ◆ Avoid illegal and destructive activities such as alcohol, drugs, violence and damaging relationships.
- ◆ Find a mentor who is already a little further in the journey than you are.
- ◆ Don't give up! Remember you ARE worth the effort.

Before You Drop Out...

Before you drop out of school, have you considered other ways to get your education and complete your diploma requirements besides the traditional school environment? There are many options available. Consider the following alternative school options before you decide that education isn't for you.

- ❖ Alternate classrooms
- ❖ Specialized educational programs
- ❖ Separate schools
- ❖ Private schools
- ❖ Homeschool options
- ❖ Virtual school options
- ❖ Magnet school
- ❖ Job training/technical schools
- ❖ Residential schools
- ❖ Summer schools/summer enrichment
- ❖ Credit remediation
- ❖ Charter schools
- ❖ Evening classes
- ❖ GED programs
- ❖ Tutoring
- ❖ Community education and training programs
- ❖ Community service programs
- ❖ College-based alternative schools
- ❖ Consider alternative diploma options



Considerations for Educators

Do you have high expectations for EVERY student?

Have you considered all of the alternative options available?

Do you know what motivates this student?

Have you asked the questions "What would make this work for you?"

Does the student feel supported?

Have you supported and educated the parents?

"What's amazing is, if young people understood how doing well in school makes the rest of their life so much more interesting, they would be more motivated. It's so far away in time that they can't appreciate what it means for their whole life."

—Bill Gates

16 Things Parents Can Do to Encourage Graduation

1. Expect your child will graduate
2. Ensure individualized instruction when necessary
3. Be sure your child is attending school every day
4. Build relationships with teachers
5. Teach skills, not just academics, and tie your child's IEP goals to their long-term plans
6. Focus on literacy from kindergarten
7. Encourage your student verbally
8. Problem-solve with your child when they encounter a barrier
9. Limit TV, phone and technology time when it is not academically challenging
10. Problem-solve with your child when they encounter a barrier
11. Have designated homework/study time from early childhood
12. Seek help for yourself and your child at first signs of struggle
13. Be involved! Know your child's influencers - Who are their friends?
14. Know what motivates your child and build that into the transition plan
15. Know which diploma track your child is pursuing
16. Know the role of educational conservatorship or guardianship if your child is not able to make educational decisions

Dropout Prevention Resources

www.dropoutprevention.org

www.nea.org/home/DropoutPrevention.html

www.schargel.com/2007/12/17/15-effective-strategies-for-dropout-prevention/

https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/PracticeGuide/dp_pg_090308.pdf



Transition Guide: Further Education



College and Post High School Educational Opportunities for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Can I Go to College Without a Diploma?



The answer is "YES"! The last few years have brought some wonderful new programs to college campuses near you. These programs are specifically for students with developmental and intellectual disabilities for whom a general education diploma wasn't possible. But that doesn't mean college is impossible. Check out these programs that are geared for students with certificates of completion.

Different Paths to Further Education

- ◆ Tennessee Rehabilitation Center at Smyrna
<http://tn.gov/humanservices/topic/trc-smyrna>
- ◆ Adult college classes
- ◆ Adult education classes
- ◆ 2-year college associate degree programs
- ◆ Programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- ◆ Apprenticeships

Specially Designed Postsecondary Programs

Postsecondary education programs for students with developmental and intellectual disabilities in Tennessee are two-year courses of study which empower students to achieve gainful employment in the community.

They are comprehensive transition programs for unique learners and highly motivated young adults whose disability is characterized by significant limitations in both intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior. Most students typically received special education services while in high school, graduating with either a regular diploma or a special diploma.

These programs enable young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to make a successful transition from high school to adult life by providing them with career counseling and developing their academic, vocational, and decision-making skills. Some programs offer campus housing, while others do not. Upon successful completion of the program a vocational certificate is awarded.



Resources for College Life Some students may be eligible for support from Vocational Rehabilitation to support their college endeavors. Look under the Disability Services heading for eligibility and service information:

www.tennessee.gov/humanservices#.

A summary of the best colleges for students with disabilities including services available on campus: www.bestcolleges.com/resources/disabled-students/

Photo credit: <https://thehopescholarship.files.wordpress.com/>



Tennessee Promise offers two years of tuition-free community or technical college to Tennessee high school graduates. Tennessee Promise is a last-dollar scholarship, meaning it will cover college costs not met from Pell, HOPE, or TSAA. As part of the program, students are provided with a mentor who will support them during the college application process.

More information: www.tnpromise.gov

Postsecondary Programs in Tennessee

- ❖ **David Lipscomb University - IDEAL Program**
www.lipscomb.edu/education/ideal-program
- ❖ **Union University - EDGE Program**
www.uu.edu/programs/education/edge/
- ❖ **University of Tennessee, Knoxville - FUTURE Program**
<http://futureut.utk.edu/>
- ❖ **University of Memphis - Tiger Life**
<https://www.memphis.edu/tigerlife/>
- ❖ **Vanderbilt - Next Steps Program**
<http://vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu/vkc/nextsteps/>



Photo credit Wright.edu

Looking for a Chance to Live On-Campus Away from Home?

Check out these postsecondary education programs around the country. More new programs are being developed every year.

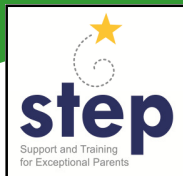
Shepherd's College in Wisconsin 3-year postsecondary program
www.shepherdscollege.edu/

University of Iowa REACH Program www.education.uiowa.edu/services/reach/home

Georgia Institute of Technology Inclusive Postsecondary Academy at Georgia Tech
www.ipa.gatech.edu/

For a complete list of **240 programs around the country** for students with intellectual disabilities, www.thinkcollege.net/databases/programs-database

Transition Guide: College



So Now You're a Freshman: Self Advocacy on a College Campus

What's the Same? What's Different?

No one has to tell the college freshman that there are big changes coming. It could be changes in location, living conditions, responsibility, or something else, but, no doubt about it, being a freshman brings some major life changes. So what is the same about college advocacy? What is different? Let's take a quick look at the similarities and differences in working with an IEP team versus working with a college disability services office.

| | High School | College Freshman |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Parental Involvement | Parents were part of the team | Student is responsible for sharing needs and requesting assistance |
| Service Coordination | Parents, Guidance Counselor or other school staff | Student through the Disability Services Office on campus |
| Pertinent Laws | Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) | Section 504 Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) |
| Documentation | Individual Education Program (IEP) | Limited documentation and records by the Disability Services Office |

Do You Know?

- ♦ **Do you know** your diagnosis?
- ♦ **Do you know** how your disability or diagnosis effects your ability to learn, process or perform?
- ♦ **Do you know** how your diagnosis affects your actions and reactions in a given situation?
- ♦ **Can you express what you know** clearly to the Disability Services Office at your college? Can you tell them what you need in the way of supports on a college campus?

Learn about your diagnosis and supports needed during high school and then practice advocating for yourself.



Need More Assistance at College?

**University of Tennessee, Chattanooga -
MoSAIC Program**

www.utc.edu/disability-resource-center/mosaic/

**Austin Peay State University -
Full Spectrum Learning**

www.apsu.edu/full-spectrum-learning

Get Involved on Campus

Don't be a wallflower

5 ways to get involved on a college campus

- ❖ Join a club
- ❖ Get involved in student council
- ❖ Join an intramural sports team
- ❖ Participate in on-campus activities and events
- ❖ Study with other students in common areas like the cafeteria or dorm lounge



Don't wait to fail before you ask for help. Set yourself up for success by advocating from your first day on campus.

Study Habits for College Students

- ◆ Before each class, review the syllabus to familiarize yourself with the lesson
- ◆ Study for at least one hour before every class
- ◆ Make a timeline to complete large assignments/projects to avoid last minute work
- ◆ Balance your social life with your study time
- ◆ Find a note taking method that works for you
- ◆ Utilize note cards and highlighters
- ◆ Minimize distractions when studying
- ◆ Take advantage of the opportunity to ask your professor questions during their office hours
- ◆ Take a 5-10 minute break every hour when studying

Another Option: Online Colleges

Accredited Online Colleges lets you search through countless accredited schools, based on a variety of criteria, to **find the accredited college that best meets your needs.**

www.accreditedonlinecolleges.org/

Read these 2 articles: www.accreditedonlinecolleges.org/resources/accredited-online-colleges-and-disability-education/ and www.accreditedschoolsonline.org/resources/best-accredited-colleges-schools-for-students-with-disabilities/

This site helps connect and integrate **college students with disabilities as a virtual community** with a voice on important issues. It is dedicated to uniting people interested in rights and issues affecting people with disabilities, with particular emphasis on college students and access to higher education and employment issues. www.weconnectnow.wordpress.com/

Transition Guide: Job Seeking



ALL EYES ON ME: How to Build a Great Resume and Have an Awesome Interview

Begin Building Your Resume in High School



Building your resume is more than just listing the diploma you earned. Most students have at least one job, volunteer or paid, before they graduate from high school. Don't underestimate the value of that job or the skills you learned. Include any skills developed from your hobbies as well. Begin developing your resume while you are still in high school and just update as you graduate.

- ❖ Include activities, even sports, where you worked as part of a team.
- ❖ Caring for siblings, mowing the yard, doing chores, and other skills you learned at home can carry over to the workplace.
- ❖ Awards or recognitions show the contributions that you have made. Use words of recommendation from former employers, coaches, teachers, or volunteer coordinators.
- ❖ Look at resume samples on the internet as you prepare your resume.
- ❖ Remember, include computer hardware, software, and other technology that you use proficiently.
- ❖ Be sure to proofread your resume for any grammatical or spelling errors before you submit it to a prospective employer.

Many employers now request and/or require that applications be filled out online.

- ◆ If you struggle with spelling, have a friend proofread for grammatical and spelling errors. Do not use abbreviations.
- ◆ If reading is difficult, enlist a friend to read the questions aloud to you.
- ◆ Practice and perfect your typing skills.
- ◆ Become competent in using drop down boxes and summarizing information to fit into limited space.



Rachel used her personal knowledge of living with a disability, combined with her organizational skills, interpersonal skills, and experience working as a hotel desk clerk to apply for a position with a local disability services organization.

Tips from George...



- ◆ Role-playing through potential interview questions with a trusted teacher, parent, friend, guidance counselor, or transition planner will help you prepare to do your very best and make a great first impression.
- ◆ Be careful what you have posted on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter because employers may check your profile.

Are You Ready for Your Interview?

Dress appropriately for the position

Be sure you are well-groomed and neat

Be punctual

Greet co-workers, bosses, and customers

Shake hands and make eye contact

Maintain appropriate voice volume

Respect boundaries—personal property and space

Treat everyone you meet with honor and respect

Exhibit self-control

***"Whenever you
are asked if
you can do a
job, tell 'em,
'Certainly,
I can.'
—and get busy
and find out
how to do it."***

***Theodore
Roosevelt***

Resources for Writing a Resume

Resume templates and step-by-step instructions

www.resumehelp.com/resume/resumewizard.aspx#choose-design

Tips for writing a resume while in High School

<https://www.thebalance.com/high-school-resume-examples-and-writing-tips-2063554>

Job Interview Tips and Questions

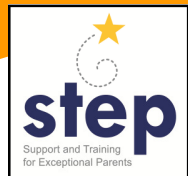
Job interview tips for high school students

<https://www.thebalance.com/job-interview-tips-for-high-school-students-2062238>

Possible interview questions

www.everydayinterviewtips.com/15-possible-questions-for-high-school-student-job-interviews/

Transition Guide: Employment



Take This Job and Keep It! Making a Good First Impression in the Workplace

Soft Skills vs. Hard Skills

Your first few days on the job may determine how long you keep your job. Make a good first impression!

Employers are usually ready to teach you the hard skills - those functional skills specifically related to your job, however, they expect that you will come prepared with soft skills ready to work. Your personal skills can often make the difference between hiring or keeping you and another employee.



- ❖ Think about your first appearance. Are you dressed for success? Good hygiene is crucial.
- ❖ Make good use of your time. Do not make personal phone calls or texts during your time on the clock. Stay on task and finish on time.
- ❖ Communicate well with your boss and your peers. Negotiate respectfully when there is a conflict. Ask for help when you need it, but know who is your job coach or mentor.
- ❖ Work as a team! Collaborate with others and compete against yourself. Set high expectations and each day attempt to do better than you did the day before. Be willing to take instruction and direction. Accept criticism humbly and strive to grow with new ideas. Know how and when to apologize to maintain your relationships.
- ❖ Sharpen your critical thinking skills. Solve problems logically and clearly.
- ❖ Be friendly, courteous and respectful. Respect others and their property and space.
- ❖ Manage your responses. Handle anger or frustration by exhibiting self-control.
- ❖ Feel personally responsible for your job. Take initiative and persevere even though your first few days or weeks may seem overwhelming. Growth occurs one day at a time.

"He Does a Great Job, BUT..."

- ◆ You don't want your employer to say "but". You want to hear "He does a great job, BECAUSE..." Go to your first job prepared.
- ◆ Most soft skills are not taught as part of high school curriculum. Make sure your transition plan includes role playing, social skills training and practicing other soft skills.
- ◆ Volunteering is a great way to practice in a work environment before you get a paid job.

Rate Your Soft Skills

How well do you communicate verbally? In writing?

How well do you negotiate when there is a conflict?

Can you listen to others' side of the story and rethink your position?

Are you a team player? Do you work well with others or do you want all of the attention for yourself? Does it always have to be your way?

How are your critical thinking skills? Are you a problem solver?

Can you think through a situation and arrive at a conclusion?

How well do you manage your time?

Can you pace your assignments to get them finished on time?

Can your employer count on you to be there, be prepared, and do your best?

Ask them to be honest with you about...

*Get a view from
a trusted friend
or teacher.*

- ♦ What is your best attribute that would make you employable?
- ♦ What is something they noticed that you need to work on?



Supports to Gainful Employment

Benefits to Work promotes self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities by helping to lessen some of the obstacles faced when going to work including concern about losing healthcare coverage and others benefits. BTW assists individuals with understanding the Social Security employment supports such as Ticket to Work. www.tndisability.org/benefits-work

Tennessee Department of Developmental Disabilities (DIDD) offers support services for persons with developmental and intellectual disabilities, including employment supports. <https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/didd.html>

Tennessee Works encourages employment reform by engaging stakeholders in identifying barriers and working toward change. www.tennesseeworks.org/

Transition Guide: Decision Making



Getting Help Making Choices

What Is Supported Decision Making?

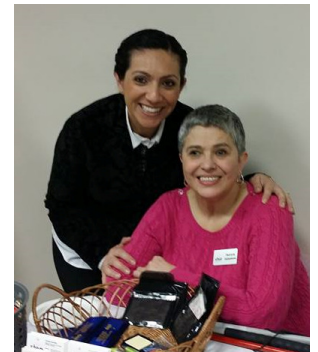
Supported decision making (SDM) is a tool that allows people with disabilities to retain their decision-making capacity by choosing supporters to help them make choices. A person using SDM selects trusted advisors, such as friends, family members, or professionals, to serve as supporters. The supporters agree to help the person with a disability understand, consider, and communicate decisions, giving the person with a disability the tools to make their own informed decisions.

How does Supported Decision Making Work?

Supported Decision Making will look different for different people.

It means finding tools and supports to help a person with a disability understand, make, and communicate their own choices. Some examples might include:

- ❖ Finding materials written in a way the person can understand
- ❖ Finding materials in a different format — like videos or recordings
- ❖ Allowing extra time to talk about and think about their choices
- ❖ Creating lists of the good and bad parts of the options
- ❖ Bringing a supporter to appointments or meetings to help with:
 - ❖ Taking notes
 - ❖ Asking questions
 - ❖ Discussing options
 - ❖ Encouraging self-determination



Check Out These Resources

Websites:

- ♦ **National Resource Center** for Supported Decision Making: www.supporteddecisionmaking.org
- ♦ **Autistic Self Advocacy Network:** autisticadvocacy.org/tag/supported-decision-making
- ♦ Parent Guide to **Getting Ready for the Age of Majority:** <http://www.parentcenterhub.org/age-of-majority-parentguide/>

Videos:

- ♦ Supported Decision Making — **Call to Action** Video: youtu.be/vqF3NiTeWg
- ♦ Supported Decision Making — **Gabby's Story** Video: youtu.be/duyJJkZ2mIQ

Publication:

- ♦ Supported Decision Making — **Creating a Continuum of Choice** - Options in TN: bit.ly/2oerpzA

How is Supported Decision Making Different?

- ♦ Supported Decision Making is an extension of self-determination, meaning an individual directs the plan for their life.
- ♦ Supported Decision Making does not require a court process.
- ♦ Supported Decision Making is not a contract. It is an authorization or agreement that can be tailored for an individual's needs and changed along the way.
- ♦ Supported Decision Making is a flexible option that can be handled by the person with a disability and their family or friends.
- ♦ Supported Decision Making is an option that falls between no help and giving up the right to make decisions to a conservator or a guardian or through a Power of Attorney.
- ♦ Some other options — like Conservatorship and Powers of Attorney — are complex and may require hiring an attorney or even going to court to have them written and to make them legally binding.
- ♦ Some other options for people who need help making decisions gives the authority (power) from the person with a disability to a different person who will be the substitute decision maker.
- ♦ Conservatorship is very difficult to reverse once it is in place. It is also expensive for the family and the state.

Steps Toward Supported Decision Making

There are forms and templates available for Supported Decision Making Agreements.

In Tennessee, SDM and a form may soon become part of the TN Code through SB0264.

1. **Choose** — The person with a disability decides who will be involved in supporting them. The supporters must also agree to be involved.
2. **Discuss** — The person and the supporters talk about how the person will be supported. This can include finances, healthcare, education, employment, housing, and other areas of their life.
3. **Plan** — The person and the supporters create a document that outlines how the person will be supported. This is called the Supported Decision Making Agreement.
4. **Sign** — The person and the supporters sign the Supported Decision Making agreement. The agreement can be revised later, if necessary. Everyone who signs it gets a copy of the agreement.

