

GROWING UP

Together

Our world is made up of many different kinds of people.

Each one of us is special in our own way, but we are all very much alike. We all have friends and families, go to school, and have hobbies such as soccer, art, or music.

Children with autism may look like other kids, but if you met them you would find they are different in some ways. It may be hard for them to play, to make friends or to learn new things. Some may have trouble talking or understanding what people say. Some may talk too much about a favorite topic. But, just like you, children with autism are very special in many ways. They have families who love them very much, they go to school, and they have special interests.

This booklet is about people you may meet who have autism and how you can be their friend.

What Is Autism?

Autism affects the way a person's brain and body works. It is not a disease and is not contagious. You cannot catch autism from a classmate or friend. A person with autism may have a hard time communicating with other people, making friends, or following directions. However, with the help of teachers, classmates, families, and friends, children with autism often can find it easier to learn in spite of these challenges.



How Do Kids with Autism Act?

Children with autism may act in some unusual ways. Some may have difficulties with certain activities, but they may have strengths in other areas. For instance, a child with autism may be a math whiz, a great artist or unbeatable at computer games. Still, they may have trouble putting their thoughts into words or understanding what you say.

Some children with autism prefer that schedules stay the same or that people always sit in the same seats. They may have a difficult time when things change. Changes may be scary for them, so they may try telling others what to do or where to sit. You may think they are being "bossy" but it is really them trying to adjust to the changes. When schedules change and they do not know what is coming next, they can be very upset, sad or angry.

Some kids with autism may:

- Have trouble talking, make strange sounds, or not talk at all;
- Flap their hands, spin, or laugh a lot;
- Sit quietly and not look at others;
- Play or behave differently than other friends;
- Be very active or be very quiet and like to spend time alone;
- Have trouble looking directly at you; or
- Do or say the same things over and over again (like lining up toys or repeating a line from a movie).

Why Do Children with Autism Act This Way?

Some children with autism do not see, hear, or feel things the same way we do. For instance, the sound of the school bell or the noise of a parade may hurt their ears. Some may have trouble eating certain foods because of the way they taste. Others may be very sensitive to certain smells. Smells you like, such as cookies baking, may make them feel sick. On the other hand, things that bother most of us, like a bee sting, may not appear to be as painful to them.

It is hard for some children with autism to understand what we say or what our facial and body expressions mean. For example, if you are frowning or showing an angry expression on your face, your classmate with autism may not be able to understand that you are angry. However, this does not mean you should stop trying to talk to them.

Sometimes showing them a picture or an object helps them understand things better. For example, if you are talking about baseball, pointing to a baseball card or a bat may help your friend know what you mean. Just because someone with autism may not be able to use words, it does not mean he can't understand your words. Please talk to him as you do with your other friends.

Like all people, sometimes kids with autism can get frustrated and angry but they often cannot tell us why. Instead of words, they may use actions to express their feelings. When they are upset, confused, or bored, they may make noises or spin around. When they are excited or happy, they may flap their hands, jump up and down, or run in circles. Or they may do all these things at once to help them calm down.

Many children with autism get upset when their surroundings or schedules change because new or different things can be very difficult or scary for them. They may cry, hold their hands over



Just because someone with autism may not be able to use words, it does not mean he can't understand your words.

their ears, or run away. They are not choosing to misbehave. Children with autism may have a hard time controlling their behavior because they have difficulty understanding or dealing with the world around them.

What Causes Autism?

No one knows why some people have autism, and there may be many different causes. Scientists are still trying to find out just what those causes are and how to best help people with autism.

Where Do Kids with Autism Go To School?

Kids with autism can be in many different types of classrooms and schools. They may be a member of your class or may be in a classroom that was set up especially for them. Many children with autism also participate in after-school activities with classmates, friends, and neighbors.

You may see some special arrangements used to help a child with autism participate in your class. He or she may have a special “coach,” sit at a special desk or table, or use pictures or symbols to communicate with you and the teacher. Some kids may even have special computers that “talk” for them. Friendly classmates can be the best help of all to a child with autism.

How Can I Be a Friend To Someone with Autism?

When you become a friend to a person with autism, you both learn a lot from each other. Here are some ideas that can help you be a better friend to a kid with autism:

- Accept your friend’s differences.
- Know that some kids with autism are really smart, just in a different way.
- Protect your friend from things that bother him or her.
- Talk in small sentences with simple words and use simple gestures like pointing.
- Use pictures or write down what you want to say to help your friend understand.
- Join your friend in activities that interest him or her.
- Be patient – understand that your friend doesn’t mean to bother you or others.
- Wait - give him or her extra time to answer your question or complete an activity.
- Invite your friend to play with you and to join you in group activities. Teach your friend how to play by showing him or her what to do in an activity or game.
- Sit near your friend whenever you can, and help him or her do things if they want you to.
- Never be afraid to ask your teacher questions about your classmates with autism.
- Help other kids learn about autism.



**For more information about autism, written by or for kids,
look for these and other books in your local library:**

Amenta, C. (1992). *Russell is extra special: A book about autism for children*.
New York, NY: Magination Press.

Bishop, B. (2002). *My friend with autism*. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons, Inc.

Bleach, F. (2001). *Everybody is different: A book for young people who have brothers
or sisters with autism*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.

Edwards, A. (2001). *Taking autism to school*. Plainview, NY: JayJo Books, LLC.

Ely, L. & Dunbar, P. (2004.) *Looking after Louis*. Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Company.

Keating-Velasco, J. (2007). *A is for autism, F is for friend*. Shawnee Mission, KS:
Autism Asperger Publishing Company.

Lowell, J. & Tuchel, T. (2005). *My best friend Will*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.

Messner, A. W. (1995). *Captain Tommy*. Stratham, NH: Potential Unlimited Publishing.

Murrell, D. (2001). *Tobin learns to make friends*. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons, Inc.

Simmons, K. (1997). *Little rainman: Autism through the eyes of a child*.
Arlington, TX: Future Horizons, Inc.

Thompson, M. (1996). *Andy and his yellow frisbee*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.



4340 East West Highway, Suite 350, Bethesda, MD 20814
Phone 301.657.0881 or 1.800.3AUTISM Fax: 301.657.0869
info@autism-society.org Web: www.autism-society.org

The Growing Up Together information was developed by the Autism Society of America and revised by Brian Ketzner (Indiana Resource Center for Autism) and Kristie Lofland (Hamilton-Boone Madison Special Services Cooperative).

Additional funding was provided by the Indiana Department of Education, Center for Exceptional Learners, Office of Special Education.





GROWING UP

Together

TEENS WITH AUTISM

When you're a teenager you find your unique identity and figure out your relationship to the world and to others. When you meet someone who doesn't fit the mold of what's considered "normal," you might be tempted to avoid them, gossip with your friends about them or judge them without any valid or real reason.

If a person does not seem like your other classmates or fit your expectations of "normal" behavior, consider if they might have autism or another disability. There are a growing number of people who have been diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder, including Asperger's Syndrome. More than ever before, students with all types of disabilities are attending your school and are in your class.

With your acceptance and help, a student with autism can do well at school and fit in with classmates. With some understanding, a little assistance and inclusion in social activities, teens with autism may become great friends.

WHAT IS AUTISM?

Autism (also referred to as autism spectrum disorder or ASD) is a neurological disorder that affects the way a person's brain and body works. As it is a spectrum disorder, no two people will have the same symptoms and characteristics. In other words, just like other teenagers, not all people with ASD are the same. It is also important to know that autism is not a disease and is not contagious.

A person with ASD may have difficulty communicating with other people, making friends or following directions. Sometimes a person with ASD may have trouble understanding what is going on if they are overwhelmed by lights, noises, movements and smells. Certain things may make them upset, and they may not know how to calm down or tell you what's bothering them. Some people with ASD may not understand "common sense" things you take for granted. However, with help from teachers, classmates, families and friends, teens with ASD can find it easier to attend school in spite of these challenges.

WHAT CAUSES AUTISM?

No one knows exactly why some people have autism. There may be many different causes. Scientists are still trying to find out what those causes are and how to best help people with ASD. ASD can affect anyone, regardless of race, religion, economic status or where they live; however, it is more common in boys than in girls.



How are Teens with ASD Unique?

Many teens with ASD have similar dreams and goals as you and I. There may be only subtle differences in some individuals, while other people diagnosed with ASD might be very different from you. Some classmates may have difficulties with certain activities due to their disability, but may have strengths in other areas. For example, a teen with ASD may be a computer or science whiz, but may have difficulty in social situations or playing on a sports team. Some teens with ASD may:

- Misunderstand rules or get anxious when rules are not followed exactly.
- Follow certain routines, such as always sitting in the same place in the cafeteria or always taking the same route to class.
- Have an intense desire to pursue an interest and become very focused on a particular thing, such as a video game, mythology or sports facts.
- Have a hard time coping with everyday challenges, such as schedule changes.
- Not be able to make eye contact, or may stare or make eye contact that is too intense when talking to you.
- React strongly or become overwhelmed by things like noisy cafeterias and gymnasiums, fire alarms, crowded hallways or bright fluorescent lights.
- Not recognize or protect themselves from bullying or teasing at school, in public or on the Internet.
- Be very concrete, literal thinkers and may not understand sarcasm, slang or jokes.
- May stand too close when talking and may not be able to take the “hint” that the conversation is done.
- May make comments that seem rude without understanding their social impact (*for example, “you have bad breath”*).
- Appear to not care or be unaware of other people’s feelings.
- Want to make friends, but might not want to talk about things other than his/her special interests. You should realize they are trying to connect and might be at a loss for other topics to talk about.
- Not be able to interpret facial expressions, such as when the teacher gives a meaningful look to signal that it is time to be quiet.

Why Do Teens with ASD Act This Way?

Teens with ASD may act in some unusual ways; however, they are typically not choosing to misbehave or act peculiar. They may be having a hard time controlling their behavior because they have difficulty understanding expectations or dealing with the world around them. They also may not be aware of their behavior or that it is perceived as unusual.

HOW DO TEENS WITH ASD COMMUNICATE?

Teens with ASD may have a problem with receptive communication. This means that they may not always understand everything that is being said to them, may need some extra time to process what is being said or may become confused when someone says too much at once. To communicate more effectively with a person with ASD, make an effort to:

- Speak slowly and use simple words.
- Allow extra time for the person with ASD to process and develop an answer.
- Speak in direct and positive language that tells the person what to do (*“stand still” instead of “don’t move”*).
- Try not to use sarcasm, slang or implied meanings (*such as “get over it,” “let’s hang out,” “put a sock in it” or “take a chill pill”*).

Teens with ASD may also have expressive communication challenges, which means they are unable to “express” what they are thinking or feeling. Some may not talk at all, but may communicate using gestures and other behaviors. Others may use a communication board to spell out words or a small computer that speaks for them. Expressive communication is how someone “talks” to others and relays a message or thought. Although they may understand what is being said, they may have difficulty figuring out how to respond. Never assume just because someone doesn’t talk that they don’t understand or aren’t smart. A teen with ASD may:

- Not be able to speak and might use another form of communication, such as sign language or an electronic device.
- Use formal and very precise language, which makes them sound different than your other friends.
- Repeat a phrase he or she has heard from a movie, video or previous conversation, sometimes without knowing what it means. The phrase may have no relevance or may contain a response that seems inappropriate.
- Have difficulty staying on topic during a conversation.
- Have difficulty starting a conversation.
- Say something that sounds rude. It is probably not meant that way, but teens with ASD can be brutally honest.
- Forget to use greetings and closings, such as “hello” and “goodbye.”
- Have difficulty understanding when to begin and end conversations, and when it is their turn to talk.

HOW CAN I BE A FRIEND?

When you become a friend to a person with ASD, you can both learn a lot from each other. Here are some ideas to help you be a better friend:

- Accept your friend’s differences.
- Protect your friend from things that bother him or her (*for example, loud noises or fluorescent lighting*).
- Join your friend in activities that interest him or her.
- Speak in a manner that is age-appropriate. Don’t use “baby talk.”
- Be patient and understand that your friend doesn’t mean to bother you or others.



- Protect your friend when others try to bully or make him or her do something that is not appropriate.
- Give your friend extra time to answer your question or complete an activity.
- Invite your friend to join you in group activities, such as going to the movies, hanging out with other friends, or attending sporting or school events.
- Help other teens learn about and accept autism.

Some individuals may have extreme and problematic behaviors that include screaming, hitting themselves or others, or destroying property. Realize that these behaviors may be their only way of communicating pain, confusion or their desire for attention. When these behaviors occur, you should call on an adult to assist. You can help by helping others to understand why the behavior occurred and hopefully avoid the situation in the future.

Finally, realize that your friend with ASD may have information or skills that you can learn from as well. Some of these individuals have exceptional talents in math, music, art or other areas. If you take the time to be a friend with someone with ASD, you might find you can learn a lot and enjoy spending time together. These are wonderful people to get to know. Remember, a student with ASD is really just another teenager who wants to be respected as an individual, have friends and have fun.

RESOURCES

For more information about ASD, look for these and other books written by or for teens in your local library:

Bristow, C. (2008). *My strange and terrible malady*. Shawnee Mission, Kan.: Autism Asperger Publishing Co.

Burrows, E.L., & Wagner, S.J. (2004). *Understanding Asperger's syndrome: Fast facts—a guide for teachers and educators to address the needs of the student*. Arlington, Texas.: Future Horizons.

Haddon, M. (2004). *The curious incident of the dog in the night-time*. New York: Vintage Contemporaries.

Jackson, L. (2002). *Freaks, geeks and Asperger syndrome: A user guide to adolescence*. London & New York: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Keating-Velasco, J.L. (2007). *A is for autism, F is for friend: A kid's book on making friends with a child who has autism*. Shawnee Mission, Kan.: Autism Asperger Publishing Co.

Keating-Velasco, J.L. (2008). *In his shoes: A short journey through autism*. Shawnee Mission, Kan.: Autism Asperger Publishing Co.

Ledgin, N. (2002). *Asperger's and self-esteem: Insight and hope through famous role models*. Arlington, Texas: Future Horizons.

Shore, S.M., Rastelli, L.G., & Grandin, T. (2006). *Understanding autism for dummies*. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley Publishing, Inc.



The *Growing Up Together* information was developed by the Autism Society and revised by Brian Ketzner (Indiana Resource Center for Autism) and Kristie Lofland (Hamilton-Boone-

Madison Special Services Cooperative).

Additional funding was provided by the Indiana Department of Education, Center for Exceptional Learners Office of Special Education.



4340 East-West Highway, Suite 350
Bethesda, Maryland 20814

Phone: 301.657.0881 or

1.800.3AUTISM

Fax: 301.657.0869

Web: www.autism-society.org

Preparing FOR A LIFETIME

CONTRIBUTED BY:

Dr. Cathy Pratt
 Director
 Indiana Resource Center for Autism

This material was reproduced with support and permission from The Indiana Resource Center for Autism (IRCA). Visit www.iidc.indiana.edu/irca.

EACH YEAR, MULTITUDES OF STUDENTS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM (ASD) PREPARE FOR LIFE AFTER SCHOOL—FROM SEARCHING FOR A JOB AND A PLACE TO LIVE, TO ESTABLISHING LASTING RELATIONSHIPS.

For a person without a disability, this dramatic change from the secure world of school to the uncertainty of adulthood can be stressful and challenging. For a person on the autism spectrum, this shift can seem even more complex and demanding. Transition planning helps ease the move from school to adulthood for students with ASD. Faced with similar fears, and building on the experience of the special education system, the general education community has adopted the school-to-work movement. Unfortunately, despite years of mandated transition planning and a continued interest in preparing students with ASD for real life, many continue to experience high drop-out rates, high unemployment, low wages, few job choices, limited relationships and restricted living options.


AUTISM SOCIETY


Images used for illustration purposes only.
 Models may not have autism.





ACCORDING TO FEDERAL REGULATIONS, STUDENTS WHO ARE BENEFICIARIES OF INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEPS) MUST HAVE TRANSITION SERVICES OUTLINED BEGINNING AT THE AGE OF 14.



In addition, some leave school unprepared to handle simple daily routines such as paying bills, balancing a budget and maintaining an orderly living environment. This bleak outlook requires those involved in educating students with ASD to systematically and seriously pursue effective transition planning.

So what exactly is transition planning? According to federal regulations, students who are beneficiaries of individual education programs (IEP) must have transition services outlined beginning no later than the age of 16. According to Osborn and Wilcox (1992), transition planning serves several important functions, including:

- Introducing the family and the student to the adult service system
- Determining support required by the student to live, work and participate in the community as an adult
- Identifying adult service system gaps and inadequacies, enabling transition team members to advocate for more appropriate services
- Providing information to adult service providers about individual needs so that providers will not assume all people with disabilities have identical needs when planning services and implementing programs
- Providing information critical to determining appropriate IEP goals. Through the IEP, parents and educators can target skill development necessary for a smooth transition

In many states, individual transition plans (ITPs) are used as the mechanism to guide transition activities. Interestingly, the general education community has developed a parallel format, referred to as individual career plans, which focuses on helping students without disabilities move from school to work. In some states, school districts write both career plans and ITPs for students with disabilities. The career plan focuses solely on work, while the ITP document becomes the mechanism to address the following issues:

- Work/post-school options
- Income support/insurance
- Residential options
- Transportation needs

- Medical needs
- Community recreation and leisure options
- Maintenance of family/friend relationships
- Advocacy/guardianship
- Trusts/wills and long-term planning
- Graduation or school exit date

Quite simply, the ITP should address employment, home, friends, family, leisure and recreation opportunities, as well as long-term life planning. The desired outcome is that young adults with ASD will enjoy a good quality of life. However, defining quality of life is subject to individual interpretation.

To ensure the person's long-term goals are met, the most important participant in the planning process is the person with ASD. Everyone should have the opportunity to choose leisure activities, job opportunities, personal schedules, living arrangements and so on. Involving the person with ASD in his own transition planning is called self-determination. Self-determination refers to the obvious step of making your own life choices, setting personal goals and initiating a plan of action. As simple as this seems, determining your future requires certain skills, including the ability to:

- Communicate preferences
- Set achievable goals
- Make choices
- Manage time
- Identify and solve problems
- Learn how to access resources
- Self-advocate (Wehmeyer, 1993/94)

A method for assisting in designing a vision and plan of action with the person is referred to as person-centered planning. This process provides the person's support network with the opportunity to articulate a future vision with the person, and to clearly develop a plan of action for achieving this vision.

Once all involved have a common understanding of the person's desired path toward adulthood, it is time to begin the formal process of planning and programming for the shift to adulthood. The ITP



should focus on current and future goals, identify strategies for achieving identified goals, present a timeline for follow-up, identify responsible people or agencies for each objective, and clarify how various roles will be coordinated. Vocational goals and objectives also must be articulated in the IEP.

While the ITP document provides the format for careful planning and program development, there still is much to consider when preparing a person with ASD for adulthood. Below are a few considerations:

- When choosing a curriculum or course of study, encourage the student to make choices that both peak his interest and lead to a real job. Many times, areas of interest may not lead to feasible job options. In these cases, people are being prepared for a lifetime of dependency on social services or jobs that are not good matches.
- During the school years, skills can be taught within the context of the school curriculum, which will promote future success. Competencies such as being organized, being prepared, completing assigned tasks, following directions and interacting with others are important work skills.
- Involve the person in curriculum options that will teach other important life skills, such as cooking, repairing items and handling personal finances.
- Encourage students with ASD to become involved in extracurricular activities, school clubs and other social events to help build a network of support that can assist in accessing employment later.
- While still in school, support the person in pursuing apprenticeship programs, volunteer positions or other options that will allow the person to gain experience in a real work environment.
- Begin to build the person's resume. These can be prepared in various formats by using video, computer or portfolios that portray competencies.
- Gradually prepare the person for the nuances and social demands of the work place. Some behaviors are clearly

against the rules of most work environments. Other behaviors will serve to annoy co-workers and may result in termination. Teach behaviors appropriate to specific places of employment while in the natural setting.

- Teach the person appropriate hygiene and dress for specific work settings.
- Instruct about social interchanges around appropriate topics that can assist with office small talk and during job-related discussions.
- Initial preparation of the job site can avoid unnecessary difficulties and promote long-term success. Present information in a manner that is respectful of the person and his co-workers.
- Although co-workers will serve as the most efficient and effective method of long-term support, a job coach or other support personnel may need to be available to problem-solve and assist the person in adjusting to the job. It may be helpful to identify a mentor to whom the person can readily turn for assistance and advice.
- When examining job options, consider safe and efficient means of transportation. If public transportation is preferred, supply the person with routes, schedules and other relevant information. If not, creative options such as hiring drivers, arranging taxi service or sharing travel expenses with co-workers in exchange for transportation can be pursued. The availability of transportation is critical to independence.

People with ASD make important contributions to society, but only when they are prepared and supported. As family members and professionals, our job is to guide people with ASD in determining a future that is both meaningful and of interest to them. With careful planning, people can leave school prepared to handle a lifetime of struggles and successes.

Autism source™

#1 in Autism Information

LOOKING FOR AUTISM RESOURCES? VISIT WWW.AUTISMSOURCE.ORG

AUTISM SOCIETY

4340 East-West Highway, Suite 350
Bethesda, Maryland 20814
Phone: 301.657.0881 or
1.800.3AUTISM
Fax: 301.657.0869
Web: www.autism-society.org

REFERENCES:

- Baker, J. (2006). *Preparing for life: The complete guide for transitioning to adulthood for those with autism/Asperger's syndrome*. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons, Inc.
- Dubin, N. (2006). *Asperger syndrome and employment: A personal guide to succeeding at work*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. (DVD). (Available at www.jkp.com/catalogue/book.php/isbn/9781843108498).
- Grandin, T., Duffy, K., & Attwood, T. (2004). *Developing talents: Careers for individuals with Asperger syndrome and high-functioning autism*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.
- Grandin, T., & Barron, S. (2005). *The unwritten rules of social relationships*. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons, Inc.
- Hawkins, G. (2004). *How to find work that works for people with Asperger syndrome*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Howlin, P. (1997). *Autism: Preparing for adulthood*. Oxford, UK: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- Howlin, P. (2000). Outcome in adult life for more able individuals with autism or Asperger syndrome. *Autism*, 4, 63-83.
- Howlin, P. (2004). *Autism and Asperger syndrome: Preparing for adulthood* (2nd ed.). Oxford, UK: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- Marquette, J. (2002). *Independence bound: A mother and her autistic son's journey to adulthood*. Prospect, KY: Harmony House Publishers.
- Marquette, J., & Miller, S. (November/December 2004). Remarkably able: Transition to independent assisted living. *Autism Asperger's Digest*.
- Osborn, K., & Wilcox, B. (1992). *School to community transition: A planning and procedures handbook for parents and teachers in LaPorte County*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, Institute for the Study of Developmental Disabilities.
- Stuart-Hamilton, I. (2005) *An Asperger dictionary of everyday expressions*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Wehmeyer, N. (Winter 1993/94). Self-determination as an educational outcome. *IMPACT*, 6(4): 6-7.
- Zaks, Z. (2006). *Life and love: Positive strategies for autistic adults*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.



If you appreciated the information contained in this publication, please consider offering support through a donation that will continue the availability of this information to others in need. Help us continue the work so vital to the autism community by making a tax-deductible donation at www.autism-society.org/donate_home.

What is Age of Majority?

The age of majority is the moment when minors cease to be considered children and assume legal control over their persons, actions, and decisions, thus terminating the control and legal responsibilities of their parents or guardian over them. Most countries set the age of majority at 18. The word majority refers to having greater years and being of full age as opposed to minority, the state of being a minor. The law in a given jurisdiction may not actually use the term "age of majority." The term typically refers to a collection of laws bestowing the status of adulthood. The age of majority does not necessarily correspond to the mental or physical maturity of an individual.



For many parents in the autism community, one of the most worrisome, anxiety-inducing topics is what will happen to their child when they reach the age of majority at age 18, as well as when they 'age out' of the school system, typically around age 21.

About this Guide

The purpose of this guide is to help alleviate some of the stressors involved in preparing your child for a successful transition into adulthood. The guide provides education, tips and resources centered on three critical parts of the process. These parts include:

PART I: Transition Planning

PART II: Guardianship and Legal Matters

PART III: Employment Options & Residential Programs



Though a successful transition plan should begin when a child is 14-16 years old, it is never too late to begin preparing for a future that will allow your child to reach their full potential in adulthood, and to live as independently as possible.

Part I: Transition Planning Through an IEP

The first step, and arguably the most important in preparing for a smooth transition into adulthood is creating and implementing appropriate, effective goals into the transition plans and services in your child's IEP. Why does transition planning matter so much? While your child is still in school, he/she can receive skills training to help become as independent as possible, while pursuing goals that reflect his or her own interests. Effective transition planning will help ensure that when your child leaves high school, he/she will already have set up, and become ready for any post-secondary, employment, residential, and community ambitions. Remember that as a parent/guardian, you have a legal right to have equal participation in developing your child's IEP.

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16 MUST include appropriate, measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and independent living skills where appropriate, and services (including courses of study) needed to assist the student in reaching those goals.

Transition services can begin earlier than age 16 when appropriate. No matter the age of the student, whenever transition planning is discussed, the student must be invited to participate in the IEP meetings, and student



preference in goals must be considered (even if they are not able to be present). Beginning in early adolescence, parents and teachers can begin emphasizing the importance of work, assign chores, provide opportunities to visit places of possible future employment, and the importance of personal hygiene.

This means that regardless of students' skills and abilities, developmentally appropriate goals must be set for them once they leave high school, and that skills required to achieve those goals, whether they be life skills, social skills, or vocational skills, should be focused on for the remainder of school. For many students, this means taking them out into the community to develop real-life skill sets, such as safely crossing streets or accessing public transportation; however, it also can include courses of study needed for vocational goals, and employment participation opportunities. The transition plan should evolve and change with your child's needs and goals throughout the last few years of schooling.

TIP

Transition planning should consider, based on each individual's specific needs, goals and preferences, where the student will live, what the student will do, what skills the student can learn, and what assistance will be needed to be as independent as possible.

Assessments

Assessments are used to determine each student's strengths and weaknesses, and to define what further skills and education are needed to reach the goals. When the time comes for either graduation or aging out of the school system, the student should be prepared to enter the living, community, employment, or post-secondary education plan reflected in his/her goals.

Self-advocacy

Many researchers urge that self-advocacy to the best of ability should be a major focus, as it is a necessary skill in living a happy and comfortable life, and in participating in the community in any capacity. Teaching self-advocacy skills can begin with simple decisions, and advance to weighing pros and cons, and different solutions to problems. Another area that is highly focused on in successful transition plans is every day, community-oriented skills such as emotional regulation, manners, taking turns, safety, and personal hygiene, broken down as basically as an individual needs them to be. In order to do so, and in addition to transition assessments, it is highly encouraged that students are brought into the community regularly, in real-life settings to determine areas of strength and weakness, and to help anticipate and plan for challenges that may arise.

TIP

It is highly encouraged that students are brought into the community regularly, in real-life settings to determine areas of strength and weakness, and to help anticipate and plan for challenges that may arise.



Transition Planning Checklist

Here is a checklist of areas to consider including in IEP transition plans and services based on the student's transition goals (remember that these should be focused on student interest and preference whenever possible).

Many advocates strongly believe that students should be taken into the community as much as possible to obtain skills needed in these areas for life after high school:

- ✓ Touring post-secondary educational facilities
- ✓ Job shadowing
- ✓ Visiting places of potential employment or further education
- ✓ Visiting community service opportunities
- ✓ Social skills, such as waiting in lines, taking turns, etc.
- ✓ Safety skills, such as identifying strangers, first responders, community resources, private property, internet safety, and knowing what to do when lost
- ✓ Life skills such as food and personal care, money skills, transportation, etc.

Exiting Special Education

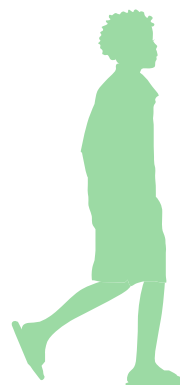
For some students with autism, receiving a High School Diploma may be completely appropriate. For others who are not able to pass required courses and exams, a GED (General Education Development) or High School Diploma may not be feasible. In this case, a Local Diploma or Certificate of Completion may be awarded. It is important to note that accepting a Local Diploma or Certificate of Completion will terminate school services. For some students, remaining in school until they “age-out” of the system at 21 or 22 years old may be the best option, especially if further skills are needed to reach transition goals. Each state has its own graduation requirements, and options should be discussed between the team, parents, and student to determine the best option.

Summary of Performance

Schools must now provide a “Summary of Performance” to students whose special education eligibility is terminating due to graduation or exceeding the age for services in their state. This summary should provide specific, meaningful, understandable information to the student, their family, and any agency which may provide services to the student upon transition. This document should satisfy the disability documentation required under other federal laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Post-secondary Education

If your child is entering any type of post-secondary education program, the Individual with Disabilities Education



Act (IDEA) is no longer applicable; therefore, services and IEP’s are not mandated when needed. The number of four year colleges and universities providing disability support services is increasing; however, the specifications vary by school. If your child is not pursuing a four-year college, there are several other options including vocational, trade, or technical schools, cooperative educational programs, and others. While IDEA no longer applies, Section 504 plans must be recognized and applied by any school that accepts federal funding.

PART II: Guardianship and Legal Matters

Regardless of your child’s abilities, once they reach the age of majority (18 or 19 in most states), the state assumes he/she is capable of decision making, and all legal rights are transferred to him/her. If you believe your child is incapable of these responsibilities, you will need to file a petition for guardianship. Though some may choose to use a lawyer, it is not required to petition for guardianship, and you can obtain paperwork at your local probate court. It is important to recognize that the process varies by state, so be sure when you research the process of guardianship, that you are going through your state’s official website for information.



When your child reaches the age of majority, he/she may register to vote, and if your child is a male, regardless of the disability, he must register at 18 for the draft. Also, if an adult does not acquire a driver’s license, a state identification card should be issued.

Guardianship

When determining whether one needs a court-appointed guardian, all areas of decision-making and personal welfare must be considered. For example, will the individual be able to seek appropriate medical care and follow medical advice? Will he/she be able to make sound financial decisions and understand contracts and other legal documents before signing? Will he/she be able to understand laws and safety regulations? Will he/she be able to provide his/her own personal care such as proper food, shelter, clothing, etc? If not, it is likely he/she will greatly benefit from having a guardian. A guardian is not a caretaker, but a person in charge of managing decisions in areas granted in the guardianship.

You should also consider whether your son or daughter could be assisted by any means short of guardianship. For example, sometimes a person who needs help to make medical decisions can appoint a health care agent to act on his or her behalf. A person who receives government benefits such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) can have a representative payee manage them.

Health Insurance

Currently (2017), until healthcare laws are changed, if your policy offers dependent coverage, insurers must cover dependents on a parent/guardian's plan up to age 26, and cannot restrict this coverage. You can also see if your child is eligible for Medicaid by going to healthcare.gov. For families whose earnings are too much to qualify for Medicaid, each state offers CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Coverage), which provides low-cost coverage for children and teens. You can visit insurekidsnow.gov to determine eligibility.



**To determine Medicaid eligibility, visit healthcare.gov.
For CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Coverage) eligibility, visit insurekidsnow.gov.**



Key Terms for Planning For Legal Decisions

Guardianship: the position of being legally responsible for the care of someone who is unable to manage their own personal and health-related affairs. There are two types of guardianship -- general, in which the guardian takes complete decision-making authority for an individual who is incapacitated or unable, and limited, which is when a guardian only has authority to make decisions in specific, pre-determined areas.

Power of Attorney: A power of attorney is a document one can use to appoint someone to make decisions on their behalf. The person designated is called an "attorney-in-fact." The appointment can be effective immediately or can become effective only if the appointer is unable to make decisions on their own. This would be used if your son or daughter is independent enough to appoint you, and has the ability to make personal welfare decisions on their own.

Health Care Proxy: When an individual has legally appointed another person, or agent, to make health-care related decisions on their behalf, due to their own incapability of making and/or executing healthcare decisions stipulated by the legal document.

Special Needs Trust

The most important thing to know about a special needs trust is that it is the only way to protect an individual with disabilities from losing government assistance such as SSI, Medicaid, subsidized housing, and vocational rehabilitation in the event they gain a settlement, an inheritance, or other financial assets or assistance from family. Also, a special needs trusts address specific needs of the person with disabilities, where other trusts do not. Unlike a will, when assets are acquired through a special needs trust, the beneficiary does not have control over the management of the funds. Because trustee maintains control, government program administrators ignore the trust assets when considering eligibility. Also, in the event a person is sued, the special needs trust cannot be touched, as it is not subject to judgment unlike wills and other trusts. There are many “do-it-yourself” guides, and as long as required language is included, a lawyer is not required to set up a special needs trust; however, especially in the event of a settlement, state laws may be complicated, and a lawyer would be beneficial.

PART III: Employment Options & Residential Programs

Finding the right fit for an individual with autism is key. Employment is a large factor in living a meaningful, and happy life, making it important to explore all options for individuals who aren’t able to hold a job with typical workplace demands. Many times, special interests and talents play a role in finding an employment opportunity that is a good match.

Skills, physical demands, and social demands that are required for a job should be heavily considered, which is why it is so important to work on experience and preparation during the transition period in an IEP. Most people think of full or part time jobs with market wages and responsibilities when they think of employment. In fact, there are many supported and customized employment opportunities for individuals with special needs.



Employment Resources

Every state has a Vocational Rehabilitation agency that can help develop an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE).

Each state also has a federally-funded, self-governed Council on Developmental Disabilities that can help with employment and other services.

Day Habilitation Programs

If an individual is not ready or able to be employed, there are other options available. Day habilitation programs provide structured activities and supports that allow individuals to participate in community activities. The programs typically focus on independent living skills and integration into the community. Day treatment programs, which take place in a facility instead of out in the community may also be beneficial for those needing therapeutic treatment.



Housing and Residential Supports

As with all transition factors, finding the best residential/housing opportunity for an individual with autism is completely dependent upon his/her unique needs and preferences. Some of the many things you may want to consider are:

- ✔ Location and access to public transportation, both for family to visit, and for the individual to be able to access the community
- ✔ How the residential program handles behavioral or medical emergencies, and what type of training the staff receives
- ✔ Interview some families with loved ones placed in the program you are considering.

Residential models and programs vary greatly, so it's important to know all of the options in your area. You can contact your state's Developmental Disability Council for more information on local options and resources.

For those who are suited best by, and able to purchase or rent their own apartment or house, there are federal programs designed to help affordability.

Low Income Housing Tax Credit



HUD Housing Choice Vouchers is the federal government's major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Since housing assistance is provided on behalf of the family or individual, participants are able to find their own housing, including single-family homes, townhouses and apartments.

The participant is free to choose any housing that meets the requirements of the program and is not limited to units located in subsidized housing projects.

Visit hud.gov for a complete list of programs, eligibility, and application information.

Preparing to Experience COLLEGE LIVING

CONTRIBUTED BY:
Mark Claypool

GOING AWAY TO COLLEGE IS A SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT IN THE LIFE OF ANY YOUNG ADULT. BUT THIS MILESTONE IS OFTEN CONSIDERED OUT OF REACH FOR STUDENTS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM. IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE.

High school students on the spectrum are accustomed to the natural supports they receive from their family, their school and their community. Relatives, friends and community members often offer accommodations and support without even realizing it. In addition, federal law such as IDEIA (Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act) mandates a free and appropriate public education for every child with a disability, and every student with an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) receives individual support services. But these supports disappear when students with ASD enter college and encounter new academic and daily living challenges.

 **AUTISM SOCIETY**





A COMPREHENSIVE NETWORK THAT INCLUDES ACADEMIC AND LIFE SKILLS COACHING WILL HELP STUDENTS EXPERIENCE COLLEGE LIVING, BROADEN THEIR SOCIAL SKILLS AND ACHIEVE ACADEMIC SUCCESS.



Paying bills, doing laundry, studying – even getting out of bed for class in the morning – can be especially challenging for students with ASD. However, they can thrive in community and four-year colleges if they have the right support. A comprehensive network that includes academic and life skills coaching will help students experience college living, broaden their social skills and achieve academic success. More importantly, students with a strong network develop the skills to accept responsibility so they can transition to independent adulthood. This is a critical goal for both the students and their parents.

Parents and students should have frank discussions with high school and college personnel to determine the level of support the student will require in college. Typically, members of a strong support system may include a resident advisor, a mentor, a tutor, a staff psychologist, an academic liaison and others who are on-site and available when needed.

In general, a strong network helps students: LEARN TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY

The daily lives of many young people with ASD are typically organized by their parents. But once they leave home, students with ASD can be overwhelmed by the choices that they must make every day. College students need to master the skills required to make good choices and plan their day themselves. A college campus offers some easy decisions, such as access to places students gather to eat, study or socialize. Options also exist off-campus. For example, some students may live in an apartment where they have a resident advisor. Students learn to handle tasks of everyday living such as grocery shopping, preparing meals, doing laundry, paying bills and maintaining their apartments. While the students are ultimately responsible for managing these tasks, many parents and students find comfort knowing that support and guidance are always nearby. Some prospective college students and their parents consider attendance at a community college first as this can be an easier transition and provide an opportunity to assess skills and comfort level with living away from home. Always remember, each case, and every individual, is different. Parents know their child better than

anyone and young adults know what they want and what they are comfortable with; have open and honest discussions to find the option that works best for you.

DEVELOP NECESSARY ACADEMIC SKILLS

Students with ASD will often benefit from extra help with academics. Daily one-on-one tutoring sessions and supervised study halls can ensure academic progress. Fellow students often provide natural support by serving as tutors for their peers, but it is recommended that students on the spectrum have access to tutors who are experienced professional educators with a command of the subject at hand.

In addition, attendance at regular, structured study halls helps ensure students are spending their time learning. Ongoing review sessions help make sure students remain on task, capture good notes, understand the assignments and are prepared for the next class. This academic support frequently enhances students' success.

DEVELOP SOCIAL SKILLS

Social interaction and social skills development are no less important than academic pursuit. Parents often worry whether their child will have friends at school. They want to know their child is participating in supervised group outings and typical college student activities such as going to the movies or going bowling. Under the direction of a mentor, these kinds of structured experiences help students gain confidence in social settings. A dedicated social skills development program offers activities that are educational, empowering and enjoyable.

Developing strong social skills – and the ability to use them – also means the student has regular interaction with resident advisors, tutors, mentors and friends. This interaction can help keep students on track with their studies as well as reassure parents that their child has the support he or she needs to develop independence in a nurturing, attentive and safe environment.

With the right support in the right environment, students with ASD can be successful in college, meet new people, expand their experiences and be better prepared for the opportunities adulthood has to offer.

TIPS

- ✓ Throughout high school, families should have frequent conversations about future plans, What kinds of careers are of interest? What steps are necessary to reach goals for the future? What options are realistic for your family; for example, which schools can the family afford; what types of scholarships or other forms of support are available, etc.? What preparations are needed to meet requirements and successfully pursue the goals that are set?
- ✓ Parents and the student should begin researching post-secondary options by the time the student is a junior in high school.
- ✓ Contact schools and programs that interest you well in advance. Gather material so you can learn more about the school and their approach. Ask questions related to your individual needs to see if that college might be a good fit.
- ✓ Learn about education options by reading articles in the media and by networking at support group meetings, conferences and on web sites and message boards.
- ✓ Visit the schools and programs you're considering. Many programs hold open houses where students and their parents can tour the campus and meet staff and other students.
- ✓ Learn about the disability services offered on campus. Resources are often available for students with special needs, but the student generally must take the initiative to access these supports.
- ✓ Learn about your options for financial aid. Sallie Mae, the nation's largest provider of federal student loans, offers grants and loans depending on the program selected.



Autism source™

#1 in Autism Information

LOOKING FOR AUTISM RESOURCES? VISIT WWW.AUTISMSOURCE.ORG

AUTISM SOCIETY

4340 East-West Highway, Suite 350
Bethesda, Maryland 20814
Phone: 301.657.0881 or
1.800.3AUTISM
Fax: 301.657.0869
Web: www.autism-society.org

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mark Claypool is founder, president and chief executive officer of Educational Services of America, a provider of K-12 and post-secondary alternative and special education programs for students who are at risk of dropping out of school and for students with learning disabilities. Mark believes that all children can advance academically, behaviorally and socially if they are given the right tools in the right environment. As a social worker and education administrator, Mark was frustrated by decreasing resources for children with learning differences, so he founded Educational Services of America in 1999. Today, ESA serves more than 8,000 students who have autism, Asperger's Syndrome or other learning/behavioral disabilities at more than 120 schools and programs nationwide and is listed among Inc. magazine's "500 Fastest Growing Private Companies in America."

One of ESA's service divisions is College Living Experience (CLE), which provides academic, social and daily living skills assistance to students with special needs as they attend community colleges, vocational schools or universities and transition to independent adulthood.



If you appreciated the information contained in this publication, please consider offering support through a donation that will continue the availability of this information to others in need. Help us continue the work so vital to the autism community by making a tax-deductible donation at www.autism-society.org/donate_home.

RESOURCES:

To learn more about College Living Experience, visit www.cleinc.net or www.esa-education.com or call College Living Experience at 800-486-5058.

Baker, J. (2005). *Preparing for Life: The Complete Guide for Transitioning to Adulthood for Those with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome*. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.

Breakey, C. (2006). *The Autism Spectrum and Further Education: A Guide to Good Practice*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Grandin, T., and Barron, S. (2005). *The Unwritten Rules of Social Relationships: Decoding Social Mysteries Through the Unique Perspectives of Autism*. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.

Grandin, T., Duffy, K., and Attwood, T. (2004). *Developing Talents: Careers for Individuals with Asperger Syndrome and High-Functioning Autism*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.

Harpur, J., Lawlor, M., and Fitzgerald, M. (2005). *Succeeding in College with Asperger's Syndrome: A Student Guide*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Lawson, W. (2003). *Build Your Own Life: A Self-Help Guide for Individuals with Asperger Syndrome*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Palmer, A. (2006). *Realizing the College Dream with Autism or Asperger Syndrome: A Parent's Guide to Student Success*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

California's Employment First Policy

Signed into law on October 9, 2013 by Governor Edmund G. Brown
The Lanterman Act, Section 4869(a)(1)



“It is the policy of the state that opportunities for integrated, competitive employment shall be given the highest priority for working age individuals with developmental disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities.”

What Does This Mean?

It is now the state's highest priority to make integrated competitive employment a real choice for people with developmental disabilities. Integrated competitive employment is a job at a workplace among individuals with and without disabilities. It will be a full or part-time position at or above minimum wage. Self-employment is another option.

Getting Help

Students need to ask the school to prepare them for getting a job in their community making at least minimum wage. Students can ask for integrated work experiences. These goals should be in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Individualized Transition Plan (ITP). People can ask their regional center service coordinator to put integrated employment supports in the Individual Program Plan (IPP). The service coordinator can assist people to request employment supports from the Department of Rehabilitation. After leaving school, the regional center can purchase services which will help people obtain and maintain integrated competitive employment.

Getting Work

It can be a lot of work to get a job. It is a good idea to find out: What am I good at? What do I like to do? What kind of workplace will I do well in? Higher education and vocational training can be used to prepare for a job you want. Volunteer work or job exploration is a good way to see if you like a particular job. With the right help, you can get a job and get paid well.

MORE INFORMATION on the Employment First Policy can be found on the website of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities at www.scdd.ca.gov/ef. This site also has information on how well California is doing making employment a real option for people with developmental disabilities. In depth information on the affect of employment on public benefits, such as SSI and Medi-Cal, can be found at www.ca.db101.org.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON YOUR OWN OPTIONS, contact your school, regional center or the Department of Rehabilitation and ask what they can do to support you or your family member to work, earn, and contribute.



"Having this job makes me successful because I have learned a lot of things. This job makes me happy because even though I'm the person that I am, they accept me here for who I am, and they give me support."

~ Seleste
Lawrence Berkeley
National Laboratory



"Being in school will help me get a better job. I like the teachers too. They're very nice. They help me with what I need"

~ Jasmine
East LA College

What the Employment First Policy Means to *Families*

- With the right supports, children with developmental disabilities can get an integrated full or part time job that pays at least minimum wage.
- With proper planning, public benefits such as SSI and Medi-Cal can be protected (see www.ca.db101.org).
- People with all types of disabilities can make money, contribute, be involved citizens, meet people, and make friends through their work.
- Families can talk about work and career around the dinner table, give their children responsibilities at home to develop a work ethic, help their children explore their interests, and encourage schools to prepare students for work or for higher education.

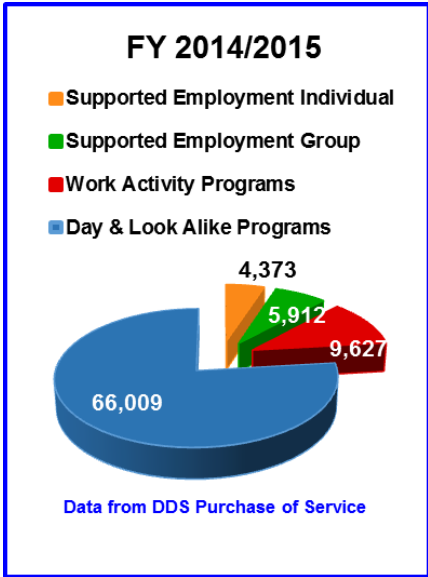
What the Employment First Policy Means to *Regional Centers*

The first option to consider in the IPP is integrated competitive employment. Regional centers must inform people that integrated work at regular pay is a real option and discuss available services and supports to help people become employed. Regional centers and providers have services to support people with developmental disabilities who want to work. To see great examples of people having the supports they need to succeed, go to www.scdd.ca.gov/ef.

What Employment First Policy Means to *Schools*

- Prepare students for transition to work no later than 14-16 years of age.
- The IEP and ITP should include work experiences.
- People with developmental disabilities require an education that prepares them for integrated competitive employment, or prepares them for post-secondary education. There are great examples (see www.scdd.ca.gov/ef) of students with developmental disabilities having work experiences, transitioning to post-secondary education and integrated competitive employment.

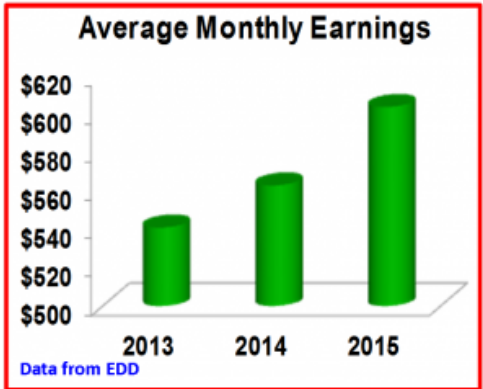
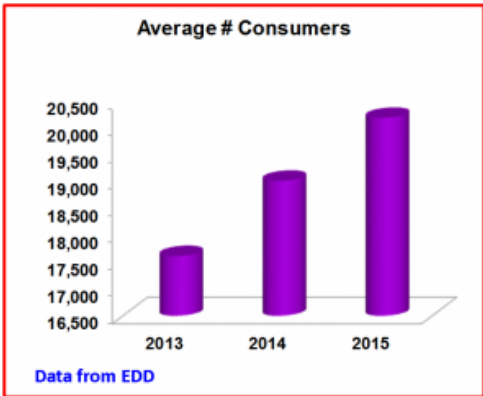
Employment Fact Sheet



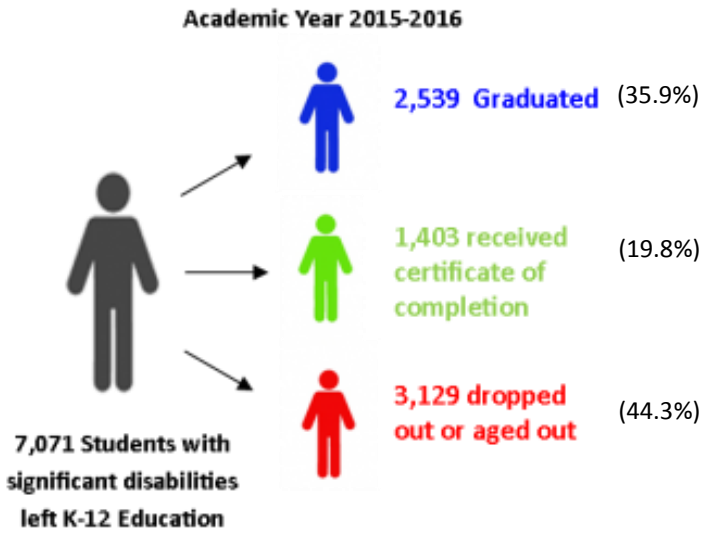
California Employment Rate



Employment First Policy passed in 2013



California School Data



What is Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)?

The term CIE means working for pay (at least minimum wage) in the community alongside people without disabilities. Work can be full-time (up to 40 hours per week) or part-time. You should get the same level of benefits as other employees where you work. Benefits could include things like paid vacation and sick time, health insurance, and retirement saving plans. You should also have chances to advance to other positions, just like other employees. Having your own business counts as working for pay.

What is the CIE Blueprint?

The CIE Blueprint is a five-year plan, developed by the **California Department of Education (CDE)**, the **Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)**, and the **Department of Developmental Services (DDS)**, to assist people with ID/DD get ready for and get a job earning at least minimum wage working in the community with people without disabilities. Person-centered planning is important throughout the Blueprint and respects the racial, ethnic, cultural background, and language of each person. Person-centered planning is building a plan based on the person's abilities, interests, and dreams.

What does each department do?

The **CDE** oversees all of California's public schools. The schools are responsible for identifying and assessing students with suspected disabilities and, if found eligible, developing and implementing an Individual Education Plan (IEP) to enable them to receive free and appropriate public education until the age of 22. As the student gets older, transition services should be a priority. Transition planning starts between 14-16 years of age.

The **DOR** provides vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to people with disabilities to help them get a job. The DOR works with other agencies, including schools, colleges, community rehabilitation programs, regional centers, and other resources to provide these services. The DOR also provides students with disabilities services to prepare them for having a job. These are called pre-employment transition services.

The **DDS** provides services and supports to people with ID/DD. These services are provided through regional centers and include pre-employment services (services that prepare someone for getting a job) and support services to assist an employee on the job.

[http://www.chhs.ca.gov/Pages/Competitive-Integrated-Employment-\(CIE\).aspx](http://www.chhs.ca.gov/Pages/Competitive-Integrated-Employment-(CIE).aspx)

VENTURA COUNTY TRANSITION PROJECT- OVERVIEW

2016 - 2017

"Working Together to Support People With Disabilities as They Transition From School to Adult Living"

GOALS:

Interagency
Coordination

Improving Individual
Student Planning

Increased Awareness
and Training
for Staff
and Families

PUBLICATIONS: (all available on our website at www.vcselpa.org)

- ❖ Adult Services Resource Directory (*bilingual*) and Agency Information Sheets
- ❖ Transition Portfolio Guide
- ❖ Going to College...or Thinking About It?
- ❖ Training & Education for Adults with Moderate/Severe Disabilities (TEAMS) Resource Guide
- ❖ Transition Resources for Diploma Bound Students with Autism
- ❖ Student/Parent Transition checklists (*bilingual*)
- ❖ Checklist for Teachers (*by region*)
- ❖ Transition information on website www.vcselpa.org

INTERAGENCY TRANSITION COORDINATING COUNCIL (ITCC - "ITSY")

- The Arc of Ventura County
- State Council of Developmental Disabilities (formerly Area Board 9)
- Children's Medical Services – CCS
- Conejo Valley Unified School District
- Department of Rehabilitation
- IABA-SCIP/STEP
- Las Virgenes Unified School District
- Moorpark Unified School District
- Ojai Unified School District
- Oxnard Union High School District
- PathPoint
- Rainbow Connection Family Resource Center
- Simi Valley Unified School District
- Social Vocational Services
- Tri-Counties Regional Center
- Ventura College
- Ventura County Behavioral Health-Transitions Services
- Ventura County SELPA Community Advisory Committee (CAC)
- Villa Esperanza
- Workability I Program

WORKING SUBCOMMITTEES

TRANSITION OF PEOPLE SERVED BY REGIONAL CENTER (TPSRC)

- Brown Bag Series
 - April 6 Employment Collaborative Network
- Pati Washington, Chair
-Joanna Della Gatta
-Laurie Jordan

TRANSITION FAIRS

- October 15, 2016, Pacifica High School
 - March 11, 2017, VCOE, Conference Center
- Joanna Della Gatta
-Denice Welter -Stefanie Rodriguez
-Cyndi Page -Stacia Helmer
-Sandy Causey -Carri Gault
-Erin Edwards

TRANSITION NETWORKING FOR TEACHERS (TNT)

- TNT dates: October 21, 2016 (Taking it to the Teachers Mini Fair) February 10, 2017; -April 21, 2017
- Joanna Della Gatta, Chair
-Cristina Magallanes
- Denise Pannell -Denice Welter
- Stacia Helmer -Eva McMillin
- Shana Shea D'Alton

ITCC STEERING COMMITTEE

Joanna Della Gatta, *Ventura County SELPA*; Denice Welter, CVUSD; Kim Whitaker, PathPoint; Pati Washington, TCRC; Coreen Herzog VC SELPA

ITCC MEETING DATES/LOCATION:

September 8, 2016
February 23, 2017

December 1, 2016
April 6, 2017

VENTURA COUNTY SELPA- SANTA PAULA ROOM

5100 ADOLFO ROAD, CAMARILLO 93012

3:00 – 5:00 PM (EXCEPT APRIL 6, 2-3:30PM)

All meetings are open to the public - parents are welcome!