

Transition Timeline

This timeline is a guide for parents of students with disabilities who are moving through the current school system. It is suggested that, no matter what age your child is currently, you should go through the checklist from the elementary age. Many of the suggested activities overlap and are processes that are ongoing such as, positive human relationships and good social skills at home and school. These traits need to develop as your child ages, but are not listed at each level of transition. Please be aware that learning what options are available for your child are important at every level. You are your child's best advocate.

Elementary School Age

Introduce the concept of work into everyday activities.

Students should become familiar with all types of careers.

Develop self-care and daily living skills and routines.

Focus on human relationships and develop good social skills at home and school.

Explore vocational opportunities at the upper grade levels that are available.

Make your child a productive part of the household, introduce chores and an allowance.

Explore self-advocacy information and community advocacy organizations that are available. You might need additional support at some point in time.

Ensure that accessibility issues or adaptive equipment (i.e. communication, wheelchairs) needs are being addressed.

Request information on Public Law 105-17, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and regulation updates. These are good resources.

Middle School Age

Begin career exploration, watch movies, read books, go to work with adults, etc.

Support the teacher's efforts to provide job training as part of the school program.

Find out the types of educational program options such as inclusion, vocational, combination, etc.

At home, parents can also help their children explore careers by performing chores around the house, volunteering in the community, and participating in community service projects.

14 Years Old

Parents should participate in a NEXT STEPS program to learn more about the transition process.

Attend a DuPage County Transition Planning Committee (TPC) meeting.

See that vocational training is built into your child's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Explore recreation and leisure interests.

Attend every IEP meeting and have your input known.

Find out how funding sources (e.g. Department of Human Services), Case Coordination Agencies (e.g. PACT, Inc.) and financial assistance programs (e.g. Social Security) can benefit you.

According to the law, efforts for transition planning should begin no later than when the child reaches 14 1/2 years old. Transition goals should be a part of the IEP.

Develop independent living skills.

15 Years Old

Ask school staff about the Department of Human Services-Division of Rehabilitation Services (DHS-DRS) and how that office is involved with transition.

Write transition goals into the IEP.

Discuss home services and assistive technology.

Ask that a staff member from DHS-DRS be invited to IEP meetings to address questions. Many will come even if you are not currently working with them.

Attend information nights that offer information about future planning such as residential, guardianship, employment, and recreational needs.

16 Years Old

Find and hold a part-time job at the school or in the community.

Update transition goals at the IEP meeting.

Complete the Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services (PUNS) by contacting Pact, Inc.

Discuss how long students will attend high school - 4 years or until the day before their 22nd birthday.

Ask for a referral to DHS-DRS.

Attend any informational meetings that offer information about future planning.

Begin learning about waitlists for adult services. Some waitlists can be very long.

17 Years Old

Learn about and enroll in vocational education classes.

Establish a graduation date.

Update transition goals in the IEP.

Invite adult service providers to IEP meetings.

Investigate guardianship procedures and determine what is in the best interest of your child.

18 Years Old

Apply for SSI (Supplemental Security Income) and Medicaid. Learn about work incentive programs through Social Security.

Complete an application at PACT Inc. for residential or case management assistance.

Apply for adult services. Take time to visit all providers to find the best match for your child. Seek clear information on how un-mandated adult services differ from mandated school services. Also, be informed about current waiting lists.

Complete the Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services (PUNS) by contacting Pact, Inc., if not done previously.

Update transition goals in IEP. Discuss services needed to best transition from high school to adult services.

Males register for selective service.

Attend a job fair.

Establish legal guardianship only if deemed necessary. This should be determined based on the best interest of your child. Consultation with a lawyer specializing in disabilities and guardianship is recommended.

Explore options for future planning or estate planning.

19-21 Years Old

Schedule vocational education classes.

Introduce budgeting and the real cost of living on your own.

Find suitable employment that offers the desired work hours and salary.

Ensure all necessary support services (e.g. respite, recreational, vocational) are participating in transition planning and ready to provide services immediately following graduation. Be in close contact with the providers.

Explore and obtain any additional funding for adult programs.

Ensure that transition planning covers all aspects of life.

Ensure that you have a plan for medical / health coverage beyond graduation.