



Parents/Caregivers Transition to Adulthood

What is Transition?

Transition means changing from one thing to another, such as changing from a teen to an adult. Every teen must plan for transition. For youth with special health care needs, transition planning may take more time. Transition may be hard, and you may need help with some of the items below.

"I do need to plan ahead regarding my daughter's education after high school, vocational training and socialization. I need to know what my resources are. I need to learn about more organizations for the socialization outside of school." (DSCC Family Survey)

Your health care providers would like to partner with you to help your teen:

- Learn to do new things
- Determine supports needed when he/she becomes an adult
- Find opportunities and overcome challenges
- Learn to make healthy choices
- Get needed medical care from adult doctors
- Work through challenges
- Take on new adult roles and become as independent as possible
- Plan, connect, advocate and find information



"He could really use someone who cares enough to actually stay in personal contact with him in regards to helping him to move forward and become more independent."

(DSCC Family Survey)

Over

What Can You Do?

Use and make the most out of teachable moments to get you and your teen ready for the transition to adulthood.

Health Care

- Help your teen build skills to manage health care on his/her own
- Put together a portable medical summary
- Discuss a health care transition plan with your youth and doctors
- Explore adult insurance options
- Encourage your teen to ask questions of providers



- Promote healthy lifestyle choices to lower health risks
- Ask your teen's doctor to help with health care transition and finding adult health care providers

Living

- Give your teen more responsibilities for self-care (personal hygiene, taking care of medications)
- Help your teen build skills in advocacy, communication and decision-making
- Talk to other families and young adults with similar needs to help identify options
- Identify your teen's need for accommodations
- Teach your teen how to identify sources of support
- Be creative and modify tasks to allow your teen to help out at home. Chores can lead to skills needed to get a job

Education, Job or Training

- Recruit people to help you (IEP team, teachers, friends, doctors, nurses, co-workers and disability organizations)
- Encourage your teen to take part in IEP meetings/transition planning meetings
- Help your teen learn to advocate on his/her own
- Be aware that all special education services will end at age 22 or when your teen graduates with a diploma (whichever happens first)
- Have expectations that your teen can find a job after high school using his/her talents
- Have your teen volunteer to explore jobs and build skills

Recreation

- Create opportunities
- Encourage your youth to "try out" different things to see what he/she enjoys
- Make friendships a priority. Teens need other teens to talk to and share their life with
- Help your teen find recreation and ways to reduce stress (relaxation, exercise, leisure)



Materials supported through a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, D70MC12840. Developed by the UIC - Division of Specialized Care for Children and the Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics.