Transition Toolkit

Transition Readiness and Supporting Skills, Tips and Tools

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS CHICAGO
Division of Specialized Care for Children
DSCC Transition Toolkit

The transition to adulthood is a significant and exciting time in a person’s life. For youth with special healthcare needs and their families, this journey is no less rewarding, but it requires careful planning and resources to support the transition. The University of Illinois Chicago’s Division of Specialized Care for Children (DSCC) can help you prepare for what lies ahead.

We have developed a set of checklists and tip sheets for both youth and their families to use along their transition journey. These materials can help you learn and practice new skills. They can also help you gain greater confidence and independence as you navigate changes and choose the path that is right for you and your family. We’ve packaged them for easy reference.

Our Transition Toolkit is organized by planning areas such as health care, education and work. You can find these handouts and other helpful resources in the Transition Tools section of our website at https://dscc.uic.edu/browse-resources/transition-resources/.

Our Care Coordinators can also partner with your family to put together a transition plan. This plan can help you identify clear goals for adulthood and the steps, services and resources necessary to achieve them. If you would like more information, call us at (800) 322-3722 or email dscc@uic.edu.

We are eager to partner with you to make the journey to adulthood as successful as possible.

Sincerely,

Thomas F. Jerkovitz
Executive Director
## Table of Contents

### HEALTH CARE
- Transition Readiness Assessment for Youth
- Transition Readiness Assessment for Parent/Caregivers
- Self-Care Assessment for Parents/Caregivers of Young Adults with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities
- Self-Care Skills Assessment for Young Adults
- Health Care Transition
- Differences in Care
- Regular Checkups!
- Primary Care Providers Keep You Healthy and Take Care of You When You Get Sick
- “What’s Happening to Me?”
- Do You Understand Insurance?
- What is Your Health Condition?
- Taking Care of Your Special Healthcare Needs
- What To Do In a Medical Emergency
- Mental Health Resources
- Finding Adult Providers
- Make Each Doctor’s Appointment Work for You
- Managing Medications
- It’s Your Body - Know What You are Putting Into It

### GUARDIANSHIP
- Guardianship and Alternatives

### EDUCATION
- Skills Checklist
- Planning Your Education and Transition for Life After High School
- Planning and Going to College
- Planning for Accommodations at College
- How to Get Help Paying for College
### FINANCIAL
- Skills Checklist
- Point of Entry to Services in Illinois for Individuals With Developmental Disabilities
- Use SSI to Get Ready for Your Future!
- Managing Money, Budgeting and Setting Up Credit

### INDEPENDENCE
- Skills Checklist
- We Make Decisions Every Day, Big and Little
- Preparing for Adult Living
- Doing Chores Is All Part of Growing Up and Becoming Responsible
- Adolescence: A Time of Great Changes for Both Teens and Parents
- Home-Based Supports, Day Programs and Housing Options
- Things Just Aren’t the Same
- Home Fire Safety
- Staying Healthy
- So Many Demands, So Little Time

### SOCIAL
- Skills Checklist
- It’s Great to be Involved!
- Staying Safe While You Travel
- Friendships Improve Health

### WORK
- Skills Checklist
- What Are YOU Going to Be?
- Employment Activities: Learning Job Skills
- Is It Time to Get a Job?
- We All Have Strengths and Talents
HEALTH CARE
Please fill out this form to help us see what you already know about your health, how to use health care and the areas you want to learn more about. If you need help with this form, please ask your parent/caregiver, doctor or Division of Specialized Care for Children (DSCC) Care Coordinator.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferred name</th>
<th>Legal name</th>
<th>Date of birth</th>
<th>Today’s date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**TRANSITION IMPORTANCE & CONFIDENCE**  *Please circle the number that best describes how you feel now.*

The transfer to adult health care usually takes place between the ages of 18 and 22.

How important is it to you to move to a doctor who cares for adults before age 22?

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**MY MEDICINES**  *If you do not take any medicines, please skip this section.*

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**WHICH OF THE SKILLS LISTED ABOVE DO YOU MOST WANT TO WORK ON?**
How to Score the Transition Readiness Assessment for Youth (For Office Use Only)

The purpose of the transition readiness assessment is to begin a discussion with youth about health-related skills. Scoring is optional and can be used to follow individual progress on gaining these skills, not to predict successful transition outcomes.

This scoring sheet can be filled out to score a youth’s completed transition readiness assessment or it can be used as a scoring guide to refer to when marking the score on their completed assessment.

Each response can be converted to a score of 0 (No), 1 (I want to learn), or 2 (Yes). Because not all youth are taking medicines, numbers in “My Health & Health Care” and “My Medicines” should be calculated separately.

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My Health & Health Care Total Score: ___________ /42

My Medicines Total Score: ___________ /6
Please fill out this form to help us see what you already know about your child’s health and the areas you think they want to learn more about. After you complete the form, you can ask your child to share their own answers from the self-assessment and compare. Your answers may be different. Your child’s doctor will help you work on steps to increase your child’s healthcare skills.

### TRANSITION IMPORTANCE & CONFIDENCE

**Please circle the number that best describes how you feel now.**

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**How important is it to your child to move to a doctor who cares for adults before age 22?**

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### MY CHILD’S HEALTH & HEALTH CARE

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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child knows how to refill their medicines if and when they need to.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*My Child’s Health & Health Care Total Score: ______________________   /40*

*My Child’s Medicines Total Score: ______________________   /6*
Self-Care Assessment for Parents/Caregivers of Young Adults with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities

Caregivers of young adults (ages 18-25 years old) should complete this form to assess their young adult's ability to care for their own health. If a young adult's intellectual or developmental disabilities do not prevent him or her from independently filling out this form, they should complete the young adult version of this form instead.

Please fill out this form to help us see what your young adult already knows about their health and the areas that you think they/you need to learn more about. If you need help completing this form, please let us know.

Date: ___________  Young Adult's Name: ___________________________  Date of Birth: ___________

Caregiver Name: ___________________________  Are you the main full-time caregiver:  ☐ Yes  ☐ No

Decision-Making/Guardianship

☐ My young adult can make his/her own healthcare choices.

☐ My young adult needs some help with making healthcare choices. (Name: _______________ Consent: _______________)

☐ My young adult has a legal guardian. (Name: ___________________________)

☐ My young adult/I need a referral to community services for legal help with healthcare decisions and guardianship.

Personal Care

☐ My young adult can care for all his/her needs.

☐ My young adult can care for his/her own needs with help.

☐ My young adult is unable to care for himself/herself but can tell others his/her needs.

☐ My young adult requires help for all his/her needs.

TRANSITION AND SELF-CARE IMPORTANCE & CONFIDENCE  Please circle the number that best describes how you feel now.

How important is it for your young adult to take care of his/her own health care?

not 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 very

How confident do you feel about your young adult's ability to take care of his/her own health care?

not 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 very
### UNDERSTANDING YOUNG ADULT'S HEALTH

，请勾选最符合当前情况的选项。  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes, he/she knows this.</th>
<th>He/she needs to learn.</th>
<th>I need to learn.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My young adult knows his/her medical needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult can tell other people what his/her medical needs are.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult knows what to do if he/she has a medical emergency.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult knows the medicines he/she takes and what they are for.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult can take his/her medicine by himself/herself without a reminder.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult knows what medicines he/she should not take.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult knows what he/she is allergic to, including medicines.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult can name two to three people who can help him/her with his/her health goals.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult can explain to people how his/her beliefs affect his/her care choices.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child knows that when they turn 18, they have full privacy in their health care.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### USING HEALTH CARE

，请勾选最符合当前情况的选项。  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes, he/she knows this.</th>
<th>He/she needs to learn.</th>
<th>I need to learn.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My young adult knows or can find his/her doctor's phone number.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult makes his/her own doctor appointments.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before a visit, my young adult thinks about questions to ask.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult has a way to get to his/her doctor's office.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult knows he/she should show up 15 minutes before the visit to check in.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult knows where to get care when his/her doctor's office is closed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult has a folder at home with his/her medical information, including medical summary and emergency care plan.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult has a copy of his/her plan of care.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult knows how to fill out medical forms.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult knows how to ask for a form to be seen by another doctor/therapist.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult knows where his/her pharmacy is and what to do when he/she runs out of his/her medicines.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult knows where to get a blood test or x-rays if the doctor orders them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult carries health information with him/her every day (e.g. insurance card, allergies, medications, and emergency phone numbers).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My young adult has a plan so he/she can keep his/her health insurance after age 18 or older.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**We’re here to help.**

To learn more about the Division of Specialized Care for Children’s programs and services, check out our website at: [dscc.uic.edu](http://dscc.uic.edu)

The Six Core Elements of Health Care Transition™ are the copyright of Got Transition®. This version of the Six Core Elements has been modified and is used with permission.
Please fill out this form to help us see what you already know about your health, how to use health care and the areas you want to learn more about. If you need help with this form, please ask your parent/caregiver, doctor or Division of Specialized Care for Children (DSCC) Care Coordinator.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferred name</th>
<th>Legal name</th>
<th>Date of birth</th>
<th>Today’s date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### SELF-CARE IMPORTANCE & CONFIDENCE

**Please circle the number that best describes how you feel now.**

How important is it to you to manage your own health care?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>not</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>very</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

How confident do you feel about your ability to manage your own health care?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>not</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>very</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### MY HEALTH & HEALTH CARE

**Please check the answer that best applies now.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>I WANT TO LEARN</th>
<th>YES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can explain my health needs to others.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to ask questions when I do not understand what my doctor says.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know my allergies to medicines.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know my family medical history.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know when and how to get emergency care.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know where to get medical care when the doctor's office is closed.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I carry important health information with me every day (e.g., insurance card, emergency contact information).</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know I have full privacy in my health care at age 18.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know I have to sign a form if I want others at my visit and to allow them to see my medical records.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know at least one other person who will support me with my health needs.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to find my doctor’s phone number.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to make and cancel my own doctor appointments.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a way to get to my doctor’s office.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to get a summary of my medical information (e.g., online portal).</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to fill out medical forms.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to get a referral if I need it.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what health insurance I have.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what I need to do to keep my health insurance.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MY MEDICINES

*If you do not take any medicines, please skip this section.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>I WANT TO LEARN</th>
<th>YES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know my own medicines.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know when I need to take my medicines without someone telling me.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to refill my medicines if and when I need to.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### WHICH OF THE SKILLS LISTED ABOVE DO YOU MOST WANT TO WORK ON?
How to Score the Self-Care Skills Assessment for Young Adults (For Office Use Only)

The purpose of the self-care skills assessment is to begin a discussion with young adults about health-related skills. Scoring is optional and can be used to follow individual progress on gaining these skills, not to predict successful outcomes.

This scoring sheet can be filled out to score a young adult’s completed self-care skills assessment or it can be used as a scoring guide to refer to when marking the score on their completed assessment.

Each response can be converted to a score of 0 (No), 1 (I want to learn), or 2 (Yes). Because not all young adults are taking medicines, numbers in “My Health & Health Care” and “My Medicines” should be calculated separately.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MY HEALTH &amp; HEALTH CARE  Please check the answer that best applies now.</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>I WANT TO LEARN</th>
<th>YES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can explain my health needs to others.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to ask questions when I do not understand what my doctor says.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know my allergies to medicines.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know my family medical history.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know when and how to get emergency care.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know where to get medical care when the doctor’s office is closed.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I carry important health information with me every day (e.g., insurance card, emergency contact information).</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know I have full privacy in my health care at age 18.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know I have to sign a form if I want others at my visit and to allow them to see my medical records.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know at least one other person who will support me with my health needs.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to find my doctor’s phone number.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to make and cancel my own doctor appointments.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a way to get to my doctor’s office.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to get a summary of my medical information (e.g., online portal).</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to fill out medical forms.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to get a referral if I need it.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what health insurance I have.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what I need to do to keep my health insurance.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MY MEDICINES  If you do not take any medicines, please skip this section.</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>I WANT TO LEARN</th>
<th>YES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know my own medicines.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know when I need to take my medicines without someone telling me.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to refill my medicines if and when I need to.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My Health & Health Care Total Score: ___________________________/36

My Medicines Total Score: ___________________________/6
What is Health Care Transition?
Health care transition means moving from pediatric (child) to adult health care. A good transition takes planning. You may need to:
- Learn to take care of your own health
- Find new doctors
- Keep your health insurance coverage or find new insurance
- Get the services you need so you can lead the kind of life you want to have

What Can I Do?
- Use resources like the Transition Timeline to learn what steps you need to take
- Use your support network (friends, advocates, personal assistant, co-workers) to help you plan and find resources
- Work with your doctor to create a portable medical summary
- Complete the healthcare readiness checklist each year
- Set goals for skills you'd like to work on
- Practice skills at home and in real-life settings. Ask your doctor for skill sheets to help with:
  - Finding adult healthcare providers
  - Getting a prescription
  - Understanding health insurance
  - Managing medications
  - Responding to a medical emergency
  - Working with your doctor
  - Knowing about differences in care as you prepare to transition to adult care

Who Should Help with Health Care Transition Planning?
The following people can help you and your family plan for transition:
- Your doctors
- Your family and friends
- Social worker, nurse, care coordinator, therapist, case manager, and others involved with your care
- School Individualized Education Program (IEP) team

Resources:
University of Illinois Chicago's Division of Specialized Care for Children
https://dsccc.uic.edu/browse-resources/transition-resources/

Got Transition, the National Resource Center on Health Care Transition
https://www.gottransition.org/youth-and-young-adults/
When you become an adult, your experience at the doctor’s office and the hospital might be different from what you are used to. This fact sheet explains some of the changes you might notice.

### Comfort and Familiarity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pediatric</th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Tips</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You have known your doctors for a long time.</td>
<td>You won’t know much about your new doctors and the staff.</td>
<td>Set up a “meet-the-doctor” visit with your new doctors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You feel comfortable during your visits.</td>
<td>You will need to explain more about yourself and your condition.</td>
<td>Be patient as your doctors get to know you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You know what to expect during the exam.</td>
<td>You might feel nervous about talking with the doctor.</td>
<td>Ask your pediatric doctor to send records or a portable medical summary to your new adult doctor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The exam might be different.</td>
<td>Tell the doctor and someone you trust how you feel.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Responsibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pediatric</th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Tips</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents often stay with you during your doctor visits.</td>
<td>You will decide if someone (friend, parent, caregiver) stays with you during your doctor visits.</td>
<td>Don’t be afraid to ask questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents help answer questions from the doctor for you.</td>
<td>You will explain things about your treatment and condition on your own.</td>
<td>Practice to be ready to take care of your own health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents help make decisions about your treatment.</td>
<td>You will decide about treatment.</td>
<td>Ask your doctor for help to build your skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents arrange follow-up and check on test results.</td>
<td>You will follow-up on tests and appointments on your own.</td>
<td>If you want, someone you trust can stay with you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You may need to consider guardianship or other alternatives if you will always need help with making decisions, knowing when a decision must be made and expressing your decisions.
Responsibility Cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pediatric</th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Tips</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Parents help you follow your treatment plan.</td>
<td>• You will take more responsibility for your medical care.</td>
<td>• Write down a list of questions and concerns you have before seeing your new doctor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Keep a list of your medicines, how much you take, and any allergies to medicines. You can take a picture of your medicine(s)’s label(s) and bring it with you to your visit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Keep your doctor’s phone number in your phone or somewhere you can easily find it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Keep a record of your medical history, allergies and vaccines to share with your new doctor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ask your doctor to explain information you do not understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ask your doctor if there is an online portal or an app you can use to look up your health information, contact information, or to make appointments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Youth thoughts on moving to adult care:

“The fact that I will have to go....and not being familiar with it. That’s probably where the nervousness comes from”.

Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pediatric</th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Tips</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• You might be seen by a team of doctors and other health providers at the same visit.</td>
<td>• You might have to see doctors and other providers at different locations and on different days.</td>
<td>• Find an adult primary care doctor who will help you coordinate care with specialists and other providers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Your pediatric specialists may provide both specialty and some primary care.</td>
<td>• Adult specialists often do not provide primary care, so you need to have a primary care doctor along with a specialist.</td>
<td>• Talk to a social worker about adult services you may need and be eligible for (such as personal assistant, home services, financial help, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Your doctors focus on your present and future possibilities.</td>
<td>• Your adult doctors might focus on what you can do in the present.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Services Cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pediatric</th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Tips</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Your parent is told about your growth and development, health information and medical care.</td>
<td>• Your health information will be kept private and can only be shared with your consent on maintenance of well being with aging.</td>
<td>• Ask your doctor to help you think about how work choices may affect your health and explore available accommodations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If you have a guardian, he/she will be told about your health information.</td>
<td>• Be sure to sign a consent to share your health information with whom you choose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ask your doctor where to go if you need to get care after office hours or on the weekend.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Insurance and Payment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pediatric</th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Tips</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Parents help you with your insurance benefits (referral process, co-pays, in-network providers).</td>
<td>• You will be more responsible for knowing and using your adult insurance benefits.</td>
<td>• Learn ways to maximize your benefits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parents pay for your medical care.</td>
<td>• You will need to pay for your own medical care.</td>
<td>• Learn about adult insurance options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You may have insurance coverage available only to dependents (parent’s policy) or children through age 18.</td>
<td>• You may need to find new insurance to cover you as an adult (employer benefits, Health Benefits for Workers with Disabilities, etc.).</td>
<td>• Find out when your current coverage will end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Keep your health insurance card with you always.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Be ready to pay for charges at the visit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Youth thoughts after moving to adult care:**

“She gave me this big talk about some of the new things, I’m going to encounter as an adult with a chronic condition. And she just opened my eyes to a lot of things”.
1. A yearly routine health visit (physical, well check) is important, even when you feel fine.
2. Early treatment may help keep health problems from becoming serious.
3. Checkups help identify your health needs and make sure you are receiving the care you need.
4. Your doctor will help you understand more about your physical growth, your social and sexual development, and the importance of being involved in your healthcare decisions.
5. Your doctor should talk with you about the benefits of following a healthy diet and safe weight control.
6. Your doctor should discuss the benefits of exercise and encourage you to exercise safely on a regular basis.
7. Your doctor will discuss reasons you should avoid using tobacco, alcohol and other abusive substances.
8. Your doctor should check you annually for high blood pressure. You may also have a screening to check your risk for heart disease as an adult.
9. Your doctor will ask about behaviors or emotions and, if needed, refer you to resources to help keep you healthy.
10. You might need to get a vaccine to prevent you from getting sick.
11. It is also important to see your dentist every six months for a dental checkup and to have your teeth cleaned.

We’re here to help.
To learn more about the Division of Specialized Care for Children’s programs and services, check out our website at: dscuic.edu
1. Like a car, your body needs regular checkups.

2. It is important that one health provider helps take care of all your basic health needs and not just a part of your body, like many specialists do.

3. Primary care providers (PCP) help you in many different ways:
   - They teach you how to keep yourself healthy.
   - They oversee all of your health care, including preventative care, and will help direct care and services.
   - They can treat you before health problems become serious.
   - They help you prevent illnesses and secondary disabilities.
   - They refer you to specialty care when you need it.

4. Staying healthy can make it easier to do the things you enjoy.

5. Talk to your PCP about:
   - What works best for you.
   - Ways to make the exam or treatment easier for you by sharing your special interests, activities and routines.
   - If you are more at risk for infections, you might want to ask to wait in a special area.

6. Ask your PCP for a written care plan to help guide your care and coordinate with others.

7. Ask your PCP to help write a portable medical summary to help you inform all your providers. Your medical summary can be helpful with transitioning your care to your adult PCP and specialists.

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Puberty is the time in your life when your body starts to change, and you become more grown-up:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Breasts develop</td>
<td>• Arms, legs, and hands grow fastest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hair grows on legs, under arms and in pubic area</td>
<td>• Hair grows on legs, face, under arms, and in pubic area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hips get wider and waist gets smaller</td>
<td>• Voice gets deeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Skin gets oily and sweat increases</td>
<td>• Become taller and shoulders broaden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Periods start</td>
<td>• Skin gets taller and shoulders increases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• May grow taller very fast</td>
<td>• Penis and testes grow larger</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The changes that you experience are happening because your hormone levels are changing.

Remember, everyone goes through puberty differently. Eventually we all catch up with our friends who may have developed sooner.

Your emotions will change, too. You may start to think and act differently as you take on more responsibilities and start to make your own decisions.

Resources:

• Everything You Wanted to Know about Puberty:" [kidshealth.org/en/teens/puberty.html](http://kidshealth.org/en/teens/puberty.html)
• “How to Talk with Your Kids About Puberty:" [www.nationwidechildrens.org/family-resources-education/700childrens/2015/06/how-to-talk-with-your-kids-about-puberty](http://www.nationwidechildrens.org/family-resources-education/700childrens/2015/06/how-to-talk-with-your-kids-about-puberty)

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Learn Your Insurance Benefits

- Find your in-network providers. You can contact your insurance company's member services (see the phone number on your insurance ID card) for a list of providers. You can check your insurance company's website and use the "Find a Doctor or Hospital" (pharmacies, urgent care and more) search feature.
- Use providers who are in your network to be sure your insurance benefits will cover as much of the cost as possible.
- Begin to learn what services your insurance covers. Know your plan's deductible(s) and co-payments. Your policy book, member services and insurance company website can help you gain information.
- Always carry your own copy of your current insurance card.
- Find out if you need a referral from your primary care physician before you go to a new doctor or specialist.
- Find out if your insurance company will pay for your equipment to be fixed and/or replaced if necessary.
- Read about the appeal process in your policy book and use it when you think services have been denied in error.
- Before turning 18 years old, check what age your current plan coverage will end and apply for adult health insurance before your coverage ends.

When Contacting Your Insurance Company, Be Ready to Provide:

- Your name and date of birth
- Identification number (on your insurance card or Social Security number/policyholder Social Security number)
- Relationship to the policyholder (self, child, parent, etc.), date of birth, address and phone number
- Date of service
- Reason you are calling
- If available, a reference number (on the Explanation of Benefits (EOB) or letter from insurance)

Keep Track of Insurance Information

- Keep track of phone calls with your insurance company. Write down the date, the number you called, who you talked to, what you talked about and what is going to happen next.
- Follow up to make sure issues/problems are resolved.
- Keep all insurance information where you can easily find it (folder, computer). Save EOB forms, eligibility and denial letters, and notices regarding a change in covered or excluded services, deductibles, co-payments or out-of-pocket expenses.

(Turn over for adult health insurance options)
Explore Adult Insurance Options

Before turning 18, check what age your current plan coverage will end and apply for adult health insurance before your coverage ends.

You can search to find which public, private and community programs meet your needs at: finder.healthcare.gov/ or www.healthcare.gov/

Employee Benefits - your own coverage: Set career goals for gainful employment with health insurance coverage offered through employment.

Employee Benefits - your parents' coverage: Most plans carry all young adults up to age 26. Adults who are dependent on their parents for lifetime care and supervision may be able to stay on their parents’ plan for longer. You can call the Illinois Department of Insurance at (877) 527-9431 to ask questions about healthcare coverage.

The Health Insurance Marketplace: Visit getcovered.illinois.gov/en to view plans to see if you can find the right plan for you.

Campus Health Plan: College students may qualify for their school’s insurance plan.

Private Plan: You may be able to buy an individual plan from a health insurance company.

Health Benefits for Workers with Disabilities: If you have a disability and are working, you may qualify for this program. Visit www.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalPrograms/hbwd/pages/default.aspx or call (800) 226-0768 or (866) 675-8440 (TTY).

Medicaid: Illinois residents with disabilities and low income and assets may be eligible for insurance through Medicaid. Visit www.illinois.gov/hfs/Pages/default.aspx or call (800) 843-6154. To apply, visit abe.illinois.gov.

Medicare: Individuals with certain disabilities who have received Social Security disability benefits for 24 months may be eligible for health insurance through Medicare. Call 1-800-MEDICARE ((800) 633-4227) or go to www.medicare.gov.

Life Insurance and Disability Insurance: Although it is not pleasant to think about, having a life insurance policy may help you continue to provide for your family once you are gone.

1. **Knowing your health condition/disability can help you in many ways:**
   - Makes it easier to talk with your doctor, family, friends, teachers and others.
   - You can better speak up for yourself to get your needs met.
   - As you get older, having a better understanding of your condition and what it takes to keep yourself healthy is important.
   - Becoming responsible for your own health care can help you become more independent.
   - Helps you stay healthy and makes it easier to do the things you enjoy.
   - You’ll know how your health condition/disability affects your daily activities so you can find the supports, devices or accommodations needed to help you do the things you want to do.

2. **You can learn more about your health by:**
   - Keeping a record of your medical history, including conditions, surgeries, treatments (dates, doctors, medical advice).
   - Filling out medical forms at the doctor's office.
   - Knowing your warning signs so that you get help as soon as it is needed.
   - Knowing the names of your medications and what they do for you. If you are not able to remember the names or what your medicines do, you should ask somebody to write this down for you. Always carry it in your wallet to share with providers when needed.
   - Asking your doctor, nurse or DSCC Care Coordinator to help you write a plan of care or a portable medical summary. This will make it easier to share information with others that care for you, including the new doctor(s) that will care for you when you are an adult.
   - Talking to others who have a similar disability/health condition.

3. **You may find helpful information about staying healthy and/or specific information about your condition/disability at:**
   - kidshealth.org/
   - ttaconline.org/disability-related-information

Go to the next page for more tips on learning more about your health condition.
1. Go to the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) [www.ihi.org/resources/Pages/Tools/Ask-Me-3-Good-Questions-for-Your-Good-Health.aspx](http://www.ihi.org/resources/Pages/Tools/Ask-Me-3-Good-Questions-for-Your-Good-Health.aspx) to learn more about the three questions you need to ask at each doctor's visit:

   - What is my main problem?
   - What do I need to do?
   - Why is it important for me to do this?

2. Know your diagnosis and treatment:

   **Diagnosis(es):**

   ____________________________

   ____________________________

   ____________________________

   **Treatment:**

   ____________________________

   ____________________________

   ____________________________

3. List the medical symptoms that are typical for your condition:

   ____________________________

   ____________________________

   ____________________________

4. Symptoms to watch for:

   ____________________________

   ____________________________

   ____________________________

   **Action Plan:**

   1. ____________________________

   2. ____________________________

   3. ____________________________
1. Start to learn about your disability or condition.

2. Ask your healthcare team to help you learn about your condition and connect you with other young people with disabilities. Your DSCC Care Coordinator can also help you.

Make sure you understand your medications, what their names are, what they do and when you take them.

3. Start taking more responsibility for your own self care (such as cleaning your equipment, doing your exercises, following your special diet and taking your medications without being reminded). Take pictures or notes of the steps involved and keep these in a notebook or mount on poster board to use as a guide.

4. Take an active role in your appointments by asking questions.

5. Ask your healthcare providers to explain to you why you are having a test and what the results of the test may mean.

6. Know about any allergies you have.

7. Learn the warning signs that mean you need emergency medical help and know what to do in an emergency.

8. Talk to your doctor about how smoking, street drugs and alcohol interact with your condition and the medications you are taking.

9. Talk to your doctor about difficult topics, such as the changes in your body, puberty and birth control. You may want to consider genetic counseling to learn how your condition might affect your family or you during some stages in life.

10. Learn how to have a prescription filled using your insurance.

11. Ask your healthcare team about adaptive equipment or assistive technology that may be available to help you perform treatments or activities of daily living more independently.

12. Talk to your doctor about the transition to adult health care, how and when you should move to adult providers and services, your options and what differences to expect in the adult services.

**We're here to help.**

To learn more about the Division of Specialized Care for Children's programs and services, check out our website at: [dscc.uic.edu](http://dscc.uic.edu)
What To Do In a Medical Emergency

Emergencies Can Happen at Any Time

- **Plan ahead** so if there is an emergency, you can **act fast** and **stay calm**.
- **Learn symptoms** that need **urgent medical help**, for example:
  - Sudden dizziness or fainting
  - Sudden increased weakness
  - Change in level of awareness/alertness (hard to wake up)
  - Seizure
  - Hard time breathing
  - Feeling like you will hurt yourself
  - Severe allergic reaction
  - Sudden change in eyesight
  - High fever
  - Severe vomiting or diarrhea
  - Coughing up blood
  - Loss of consciousness
  - Severe burns

(Turn over for more practice tips and resources)

Always Be Prepared for an Emergency

- Practice how you will tell others when you are having a medical emergency.
- Make sure you or somebody with you can explain **ALL** your health conditions and medicines.
- Be ready to **call 911** if you or someone else is badly hurt or in danger.
- Be sure to have an **In Case of Emergency (ICE)** name and number saved in your cell phone.
- Learn about symptoms that would need 911 and symptoms that could wait long enough to drive to the nearest emergency room.
- Talk with your doctor about wearing a medical alert bracelet, if needed. Ask your doctor or search the web to find a bracelet that fits your needs.
- Always carry identification, your insurance card, medication list, and your emergency care plan (if you have one).
- Know where the closest emergency room is to your home, job and other places you spend time.

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Practice Giving the Information Needed When Calling 911

What is the emergency: ________________________________

Your name: ________________________________________

Phone number: _____________________________________

Where you are: _____________________________________

Emergency contact and phone number: ____________________(parent, friend, roommate)

Who is with you: ____________________________________

Insurance information: _______________________________

• When calling 911, stay on the phone until the operator says you can hang up.

• It might be helpful to write down your name, address, phone number, emergency contact phone number, and insurance information to keep near your home phone, in your wallet, or taped to your cell phone.

Putting Your Plan Into Place

• Keep a digital and hard copy. Place the hard copy where it’s easy to find, like your refrigerator.

• Share with three to five emergency contacts who can serve as allies during an event. Include specifics about your treatments, health needs, behavioral considerations, medications, supplies and equipment.

• Have more than one way to access your emergency contacts/plan (technology could go down, and printed copies could be out of reach). Keep emergency contact information with you, such as in your wallet.

• Set a reminder to review your plan regularly (annually). Keep emergency contacts up-to-date.

Emergency Resources

The following resources might be helpful with planning for emergencies:

➤ Be Ready: Tips for Families of Children and Youth With Special Healthcare Needs - emscimprovement.center/domains/preparedness/asprcoe/eglpcdr/cyshcn/toolkit/beready/

➤ Making a Family Emergency Plan - www.ready.gov/plan


➤ Making a Disaster Kit - www.ready.gov/kit


➤ Disaster Safety for People with Disabilities - www.redcross.org/get-help/how-o-prepare-for-emergencies/inclusive-preparedness-resources.html

➤ One-Page Emergency Snapshot List - complexchild.org/articles/2017-articles/november/emergency-one-page/


➤ Portable Medical Summary - dscc.uic.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/96-Portable-Medical-Summary.pdf

**Depression Understood** An online support community for those suffering from depression and anxiety. The website contains information and links to different associations as well as a depression hotline within your community. It also contains a chat room and forum where you can express your feelings and concerns to those within the mental health community. [www.depression-understood.org/](http://www.depression-understood.org/).

**Illinois Department of Human Services-Division of Mental Health (DMH)** DMH provides services at all levels for adults and children throughout the state. [www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29735](http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29735).

**Fact Sheet:**

**Video:**
(adult/adolescent/postpartum/treatments)

“How to Parent a Depressed Child” - [www.youtube.com/watch?v=cMJbn1-apcU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cMJbn1-apcU)

**National Organizations:**

**National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)** NAMI is the nation’s largest grassroots mental health organization building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. NAMI works to educate, support, advocate, listen and lead to improve the lives of people with mental illness and their loved ones. Find your local NAMI at [www.nami.org/Find-Your-Local-NAMI](http://www.nami.org/Find-Your-Local-NAMI).

**National Crisis Resources** **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800) 273–TALK or (800) 273-8255**
If you or someone you care about feels overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression or anxiety, you can call the 24-hour National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. The Lifeline is a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, seven days a week. More information is at [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/).

Please note that starting in July 2022, the number 988 will be the new three-digit dialing code that will route callers to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. When people call, text, or chat 988, they will be connected to trained counselors that are part of the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Network.
Lifeline Crisis Chat www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/
Lifeline Chat is a service of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, connecting individuals with counselors for emotional support and other services via web chat. Lifeline Chat is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week across the United States.

Crisis Text Line Text “HOME” to 741741 or visit www.crisistextline.org/
The Crisis Text Line serves anyone in any type of crisis, 24 hours a day. A live, trained Crisis Counselor receives the text and responds with support and referrals.

Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities National Training Center www.mhddcenter.org/
The center works to improve mental health services and supports for people with developmental disabilities. By serving as a national clearinghouse, the center helps provide access to the most current evidence-based, trauma-informed, culturally responsive practices that address the mental health needs of individuals with developmental disabilities.

The Trevor Project Call (866) 488-7386 or Text “START” to 678678 www.thetrevorproject.org
Trained counselors are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to support youth who are in crisis, feeling suicidal, or in need of a safe and judgment free place to talk. The Trevor Project specializes in supporting the LGBTQI+ community.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline
Call (800) 662-HELP or (800) 622-4357 www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline
SAMHSA's National Helpline is a free, confidential, 24-hour, seven-days-a-week treatment referral and information service (in English and Spanish) for individuals and families facing mental and/or substance use disorders.

SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline Call or text (800) 985-5990 www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline
SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline is available 24 hours, seven days a week with crisis counseling and support for people experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters.

Finding a Behavioral Health Provider

The National Council for Mental Wellbeing www.thenationalcouncil.org/
Search for organizations that are committed to providing mental health services to anyone in the community who needs it regardless of their ability to pay.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration www.samhsa.gov/find-help
SAMHSA provides information on mental health services and treatment centers through an online service locator. You can search by your location, whether or not they provide services for youth, payment options (private insurance, cash, or something else), languages spoken, etc.
Finding Adult Providers

It is important to find your adult doctors early. You should begin seeing an adult doctor around ages 18 to 21. It’s a good idea to have your first appointments and send your records to your new doctors while still seeing your current doctors. This overlap will help in case there are questions about your condition or treatment.

**How to Find Adult Providers**

- Ask your current doctor for a referral
- Consider your parents' doctor
- Use the provider finder on your insurance company’s website
- Check with your local support groups
- Call large medical and specialty rehabilitation hospitals and ask for their referral line
- Ask your Division of Specialized Care for Children (DSCC) Care Coordinator or Hospital Case Manager for suggestions
- Ask friends for suggestions

**Questions to Ask**

It is important to find a doctor who makes you feel comfortable and can meet your needs. Before you choose your new doctor, call his/her office and ask to speak with a staff member who has time to answer your questions. You can also make an appointment to meet the doctor and staff in person.

**Ask the Office:**

- Does the doctor accept your insurance coverage? Is he/she taking new patients?
- Is the office accessible (easy to reach and easy to get around inside the building or clinic area)?
- What are the office hours? How can the doctor be reached after-hours?
- How will the doctor share information with your specialists?
- Will you have access to a patient health portal to schedule appointments and receive secure email messages, including test results and more, to manage your health care.
- Will the office be flexible to meet your health needs? (For example, will they allow a service dog, have flexible hours on weekends and evenings, schedule visits so you will not miss a meal or at quiet times if you are sensitive to noise)?
Finding Adult Providers

- What telehealth options are available?
- Will this doctor be your doctor at the hospital or will a hospitalist see you?
- Will you always see the doctor or will you see other advance practice providers (e.g., advance practice nurse, physician assistant)?
- If urgent care (not emergency care) is needed, where should you go and should you call your doctor first?

**Ask the doctor:**
- Will he/she discuss your health history and special needs with your pediatric doctor?
- Does the doctor see patients with health conditions similar to yours?
- At what hospital does the doctor schedule procedures?
- Does the doctor have any special interests or more advanced training?

**Ask yourself:**
- Does the doctor listen to your questions or is he/she constantly interrupting you?
- Can the doctor explain information so that you can understand it?
- Does he/she take enough time to answer your questions?
- Does the doctor treat you with respect?
1. Before your appointment, write down your questions and concerns. If it’s a long list, ask for a longer appointment.

2. Bring your list of health concerns to tell your doctor or nurse.

3. Begin making your own appointments:
   - Watch your parent make an appointment
   - Practice with your parent what you will say
   - Have a calendar ready and know what dates and times will work with your school schedule and other activities you are involved in
   - Talk to the staff to schedule your appointment

4. Keep track of your appointments (on a calendar, on your phone, in a notebook, appointment card in your wallet).

5. Try asking the following three questions at each appointment:
   - What is my main problem?
   - What do I need to do?
   - Why is it important for me to do this?

6. Help your health providers by knowing your own medical history and what your needs are.

7. If you see specialists, ask them to share reports with your primary care physician and other specialists.

8. Bring a list of your medicines.

9. Bring your insurance card.

10. Ask lots of questions. Make sure you understand what you need and why certain medication, therapy, or equipment is necessary.

11. Have parent(s) remain in the waiting room while you spend time with your healthcare provider on your own.

(Next page provides tips for making your own appointments)
How to Make an Appointment

- Be prepared. Get help and practice before doing this by yourself.
- Have your calendar ready to be sure you make the appointment where it fits best with your school schedule or work schedule.
- When you call, be sure to ask to be put in touch with Dr. __________________________ appointment desk.
- Know your date of birth.
- Know the name of your insurance provider.
- Know the reason you need the appointment.
- If you need assistance to get onto the exam table or need an interpreter, be sure to mention it when you call.

Sample Script:

“Hello, my name is ____________________________________________”
(Use your first and last name)

“I need an appointment to see ____________________________________________”

“Because __________________________________________________________”
(Example: “I need a checkup, I’m having headaches, I’m having ear pain.”)

“How soon can I get in? ____________________________________________”
(Write date and time here)

If the date and time is okay, say, “Thank you, that will be fine.” If not, say, “That won’t work for me, can you look for something else?”

“How long is the appointment? ____________________________________________”
(Write date and time here)

If you think you will need more time, say, “I think I will need more time.”

If you will need extra help or equipment, be sure to say so:

“I will need __________________________________________________________”
(Example: a lift to get onto the exam table)

Before you end the phone call, repeat the date and time of your appointment:

“Okay, I will be there on ________________________________________ at ____________________________”
(Date) (Time)

Follow-up steps:

Put the appointment on the calendar so you won’t forget it.
Prepare questions for your doctor. Bring a list of your medications.
Managing Medications
Take Medications as Directed

Things to Know About Your Medicine

• Make sure you know the exact name of the medicine(s) you take (brand and generic).
• Some medications have brand and generic forms. Ask your doctor if it is alright to substitute with generic form.
• Learn why you need to take each medicine (how it treats your condition).
• Take your medicine at the same time every day. Taking your medicine at a specific time might be better than bedtime if your bedtime changes. Work with your doctor to set a schedule that works for you.
• Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have questions about taking your medicine.
• Let your doctor know if you have trouble taking your medicines (hard to swallow, forget to take, upset stomach, other problems).
• Side effects can be bothersome and dangerous - make sure you know what to look for and when you should call the doctor.
• Don’t take too much or too little medication. Know how much to take, when you can take more, and which medicines can be taken together.
• Whenever you go to a doctor or to the hospital, always bring your medications or a list of your medications, including non-prescription (over-the-counter) medications.
• Keep track of when you need to refill your medicines and call the pharmacy for your refills before you run out.
• Keep your list of medicines with you.

Find a Way to Remember to Take Your Medicines

You may want to use medication reminders:

• Take at the same time you do another daily routine (with breakfast, brush your teeth, watch a daily TV show).
• Set up a text message or cell phone alarm.
• Use an alarm-vibrating pillbox, pill organizer, automatic pill dispenser, time watch, or alarm pocket watch. To find the right system for you:
  ✓ Ask your pharmacist.
  ✓ Check with your local medical supply stores.
  ✓ Search the web using search words such as pill alarms, automated medication dispenser, e-pill, or pill timer.

(Turn page over to begin your medication list)
(Please use pencil to complete this form.)

Name:  

- Ask your physician or pharmacist to help you complete this list.
- Read the label on each medicine for directions on how to take and for possible side effects/danger signs/interactions. For more information, see drug sheets.
- Whenever you see the doctor, including your primary care physician and any specialists, review and update this medication list.
- After hospitalizations, always review your medication list with your doctor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medicine</th>
<th>Dosage (How Many You Take)</th>
<th>Time (When You Take It)</th>
<th>Why You Take It</th>
<th>What Happens If You Skip It</th>
<th>Possible Side Effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
• You only get one body, so it is your job to take care of it the best that you can.

• Trying to say “NO” to things like tobacco, e-cigarettes, vapes, street drugs, and alcohol is often difficult, especially when you are a teen and under peer pressure to fit in.

• You need to decide what is right for you. Make sure you get ALL the facts before you jump to a decision.

• Medications, tobacco, street drugs, and alcohol are all chemicals that cause your body to react in different ways.

• There is evidence that e-cigarettes and vape pens contain harmful toxins of their own, such as formaldehyde (a known carcinogen), nitrosamines (linked to cancer) and lead (a neurotoxin).

• E-cigarettes and vape pens can be dangerous even when you’re not the one using them. The Surgeon General says secondhand e-cigarette vapor has heavy metals and tiny particles that can harm the lungs. The American Lung Association warns that children and youth should stay away from secondhand e-cigarette and vape pen aerosol.

• Ask your pharmacist about the medications you take and what substances might interfere with them and put you at risk for developing serious side effects.

• If you are unsure about trying something new, wait awhile and give yourself time to make the decision that is right for you. It may change your life.

Resources you may be interested in:

Vaping and e-cigarettes: drugfree.org/drugs/e-cigarettes-vaping/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIyoST4burQIVFQnnCh3cVAY1EAAYASAAEgIIJvDe_BwE

Tobacco and Use Prevention Resources: www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/substance-abuse/Pages/For-Kids-Teens-Tobacco-Education-Resources.aspx

Drugs and Alcohol Information for Teens: kidshealth.org/en/teens/drug-alcohol/

SAMHSA's National Helpline: (800) 662-HELP (4357) or TTY: (800) 487-4889. This helpline is a confidential, free, 24-hour, 365-day-a-year information service. Support is available in English and Spanish for individuals and family members facing mental and/or substance use disorders. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations.

We're here to help.

To learn more about the Division of Specialized Care for Children’s programs and services, check out our website at: dscc.uic.edu
GUARDIANSHIP
Who Will Make Decisions for Your Adult Child?

- At age 18, your child will gain the right to make their own decisions unless you take legal action. This includes the right to vote, marry, obtain a credit card, consent to medical treatments, make living arrangements, and sign contracts.

- Shifting rights to young adults who cannot make informed decisions or take responsibility for their choices carries many risks.

- You may need to take legal action to protect your child if he or she cannot:
  - Recognize when a decision needs to be made
  - Think about possible options
  - Understand the consequences of decisions
  - Express his or her needs

- Explore guardianship or another form of support to protect adults who cannot make decisions on their own.

  **Guardianship** - This means that one person will have the legal power to make decisions for another person, mostly used when a person is unable to make their own decisions.

  **Alternatives to Guardianship** - For some individuals with disabilities, less restrictive options to legal guardianship may provide the protections needed. Examples include supported decision making, joint bank account to help with spending, durable power of attorney for health care, living will or advance medical directive.

  **Estate Planning** - This means looking ahead and deciding who will care for your youth, where they will live, and the financial needs they will have. Estate planning includes writing wills and setting up special needs trusts.
Next Steps

☑ Start exploring guardianship or alternatives around your child's 17th birthday. The guardianship process takes time. Be ready to file the paperwork on your child's 18th birthday.

☑ Read the Illinois Guardianship and Advocacy Commission’s “Guide to Adult Guardianship in Illinois” at www2.illinois.gov/sites/gac/OSG/Pages/Guide-to-adult-guardianship-in-Illinois.aspx and “Guardianship Fact Sheet” at www2.illinois.gov/sites/gac/OSG/Pages/Guardianship-Fact-sheet.aspx. You can also call (866) 274-8023 and request to have copies mailed to you.

☑ Contact your DSCC Care Coordinator for available regional or local resources offering help with guardianship and special needs trusts.

☑ Contact an attorney with experience in setting up special needs trusts or guardianship for young people with disabilities.
   - Check the Illinois Attorney General website to find free legal help: illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/about/probono.html
   - Check with the Special Needs Alliance to find special needs planning attorneys at: www.specialneedsalliance.org/

☑ You can file forms and petitions for guardianship through each county’s Circuit Court Clerk. Visit www.state.il.us/court/default.asp to find your Circuit Court Clerk’s contact information. Guardianship forms are often available on the Circuit Court’s website under the Probate Division.

☑ Illinois Legal Aid provides legal self-help centers across the state. Visit www.illinoislegalaid.org/get-legal-help/lshec-directory to find a legal self-help center in your community. You can visit a self-help center to use a computer for free, search online for answers to your legal questions, find and prepare court forms, and get other help depending on your location.

☑ Supported decision-making includes the individual with a disability in getting help, thinking about options, making choices and letting others know what decisions they made. Learn about supported decision-making and Illinois' Supported Decision-Making Act (Public Act 102-0614), which took effect Feb. 27, 2022, at www2.illinois.gov/sites/gac/Pages/Supported%20Decision%20Making.aspx.

☑ Talk to your child's doctor about guardianship. You will need the doctor to fill out a medical report within three months prior to filing for guardianship. Remember to schedule the annual check-up with this in mind.
Skills Checklist - Education

These activities will help youth gain the skills and abilities needed to reach their highest level of independence and ability. Some of these activities may not apply to everyone.

I plan on: □ getting a job  □ tech school or job training  □ going to college  □ other ________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION - Skills and Abilities</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Need More Info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are you in an education program (special education, gifted program, college, etc.)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you happy with your school program (class work, grade level, life skills)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have worries about your school attendance?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you need reminders to start your homework?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you finish your homework without someone helping you?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you go to your Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 meetings at school?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you take an active part in your school IEP, 504, transition meetings?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you take part in any activities at school (clubs, sports, attend school games)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you taking classes to help with becoming more independent (health class, accounting, money management, home economics)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you in work experience classes (for example, STEP) through your high school?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you plan ways to meet your health needs with school staff?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel understood when you express yourself to friends, neighbors and grown-ups (teacher, boss, principal)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you need assistive technology at school (communication device, adaptive equipment, keyboard)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you ask and get the accommodations and supports you need (at school, work, community, home)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know what to do if your needs are not being met at school?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know your rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you engage in activities outside of school to learn more about something you enjoy (swimming, sewing, art class, scrapbooking, dancing and others)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you use a computer to browse the web, type papers or letters, email or use other software?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have plans for after high school (e.g., college, trade school, job, etc.)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know which classes to take to learn more about your planned career or job?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you exploring colleges and funding for college?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Think about the skills you want to work on. Make notes of your needs and concerns. You can then talk about your next steps with the people who are helping you prepare for your future.

**Notes to Myself:** For each “Need More Info” item you checked, list questions you have or what you would like to know more about.

________________________________________________________

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**Next Steps – Goals:** List what you need to work on to help you learn how to take care of yourself in the future. You can ask the people who are helping you plan for your future to work on this with you.

________________________________________________________

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________________________________________________________

I want more information about:  ☐ College disability support services  ☐ Educational rights
As a high school student, you play a big role in making sure you get the special education services you need. These tips can help you value this role and feel more confident by knowing your rights. By the time you are 14 1/2 years old:

- Your special education services team should invite you to your Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings to discuss your goals for life after high school.
- You can request an IEP/transition planning meeting any time you are concerned about your plan.
- You should include health goals in your IEP.

You and your parents are part of your IEP team. Remember, YOU are the most important team member and should always go to your IEP meetings.

Your job is to speak up about your interests, strengths and skills and what you want to do to get ready for:

- Your future job
- Going to college or trade school
- Your desired living goals as an adult

**Special education laws** for transition services support your goals for work, further education and independent living. Knowing your rights will help you get ready for life after high school.

- Your school should help with your therapy and healthcare needs during the school day.
- If you have any problems, ask for an IEP meeting to voice your concerns. Remember to keep written records of all you do (meetings, chats, etc.).
- If you still disagree with your school, either ask for mediation in writing or find an advocate to help you. To find an advocate, call Equip for Equality in Illinois at 1-800-537-2632.
- Invite others to your IEP meeting, such as your Division of Specialized Care for Children (DSCC) Care Coordinator, your Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor, your Independent Service Coordinator (ISC) from the Division of Developmental Disabilities and others.
- If your IEP Team decides a transition program at a local college or in the community will best meet your needs, be sure these services are written in your IEP.
- If you have a 504 Plan, you may not have the same right to school-based transition plans that students with IEPs have. You'll need to check with your school to see what's offered. If your district doesn't offer transition planning, VR services may be able to help you with work, education related to career goals and independent living.

You may find the Transition Planning Checklist on the next page helpful.
Transition Planning Checklist

- **Confirm the date you will graduate.** Illinois law states that you are eligible for special education until the day before your 22nd birthday.

- Find out if you will receive a high school diploma or a certificate of attendance.

- Find out if you will be able to take part in the graduation ceremony.

- **If you are planning on going to college:**
  - Take your ACT or SAT in your junior year of high school.
  - Decide which college or university you want to attend.
  - Find out about financial aid to help with your tuition and other expenses.
  - Talk with a disability counselor on the college campus.
  - Plan with your doctors, school nurse, IEP team and DSCC Care Coordinator about meeting your health needs while at college.

- **If you are planning to go to work:**
  - Find out if job coaching is available. Get in touch with adult services before you graduate or “age out” to plan for services after graduation. This way you may avoid being put on a long waiting list for adult services.
  - Go to your local Department of Human Services/Division of Rehabilitation Services/ Division of Developmental Disabilities/Division of Mental Health office to learn about vocational services and apply. Find your local office at [www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12](http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12).
  - Decide on a career.
  - Find opportunities to job shadow (watching someone already doing the type of job you want to do).
  - Learn about post-high school training programs at local vocational schools, community colleges, business schools and other training schools.
  - Plan for any health accommodations you may need in the workplace. For more information, visit the Job Accommodation Network online at [askjan.org](http://askjan.org).

- **If you are going to move out on your own, start planning:**
  - Where you are going to live and how will you pay for it.
  - What furniture and housewares you will need.
  - Contact the local **Center for Independent Living** for help with planning and building skills for living on your own. Visit their website at [www.incil.org/locate/](http://www.incil.org/locate/) or call toll-free at (800) **587-1227**.
  - Plan for what you will need and practice skills to care for your own health.

- Discuss your transportation needs. If you will need help, request and fill out applications for public transportation services.

- Request information about social/recreational opportunities for young adults with disabilities in your community. Ask for contact information.

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**We’re here to help.**

To learn more about the Division of Specialized Care for Children’s programs and services, check out our website at: [dssc.uic.edu](http://dssc.uic.edu)
1. **Start planning early** while you are still in high school (beginning your freshman year). Make sure you take the high school classes that will help you get into college.

2. **Set goals** to help you get ready for college.

3. **Get to know your strengths, interests and learning style.** The Going to College website, [going-to-college.org](http://going-to-college.org/), may help you do this.

4. **Think about who your support system will be** when you are away from home.

5. If you are 18 or older, your parents will no longer have access to your grades, course selection and so on after you register for college. It will be up to you to keep track of these things.

6. As a college student, you will need to ask for accommodations and provide documentation. This responsibility shifts to you, and you will need to communicate your needs.

7. **Choosing a college will take time.** Attend college fairs, explore on the internet, talk to friends, family and others to learn more about colleges. Schedule a campus visit with the colleges you’re interested in. The Think College website provides information for persons with intellectual disabilities. The information is for transition-aged students as well as adults attending or planning for college. It provides resources and tools for students, families and professionals. Go to [thinkcollege.net](http://thinkcollege.net).

8. To be successful at college, you may want to **access assistance through the campus’ Office of Disability Services.** Start by asking the school about services for students with disabilities. You can call on the phone, visit the campus or even review their website to learn about services.

9. **If you use assistive devices**, such as a wheelchair or a hearing aid, you will need to check on repair services available near the campus. This way you will be prepared if something goes wrong while you are away at college.

10. **Planning for nearby medical care is important.** If you have special healthcare needs, you should plan where you will go for health services, medications and supplies. You can ask your current physician to help identify health resources closer to campus. Your insurance provider can help find in-network health services, including equipment providers for maintenance or repairs, pharmacies and medical facilities for lab work and other services. Your DSCC care coordination team can help you plan for medical emergencies and connect you to health resources.
11. Become aware of the laws that protect students with disabilities at colleges, universities and community colleges.
   • The Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities webpage has information about admissions, accommodations, academic adjustments, documentation and discrimination under Section 504 Rehabilitation Act at www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html.

12. Talk to your family, friends and guidance counselor at school about your plans.

### Helpful Higher Education Resources

**College Navigator** is an online tool to help students and parents get information on post-secondary institutions throughout the United States - [nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/](nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/)


The **University of Washington's DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking and Technology) Center** promotes the use of computer and networking technologies to increase independence, productivity and participation in education and employment - [www.washington.edu/doit/](www.washington.edu/doit/)

**Education Quest** is a website to help with college planning. They have developed a free guide, “College Planning for Student with Disabilities,” that you may order or view their shorter version online. Finding a college that meets your needs will require research, campus visits and asking the right questions - [www.educationquest.org/11th-12th-grade-students/information-for-students-with-disabilities/](www.educationquest.org/11th-12th-grade-students/information-for-students-with-disabilities/)

**Going to College** is a website with information about living college life with a disability. It is designed for high school students and provides video clips, activities and resources that can help you get a head start in planning for college - [going-to-college.org](going-to-college.org)

**Heath Resource Center** from George Washington University's website is an online clearinghouse on postsecondary education for individuals with disabilities. This website has information for students with disabilities on educational disability support services, policies, procedures, adaptations, accessing college or university campuses, career-technical schools and other postsecondary training entities - [www.heath.gwu.edu/](www.heath.gwu.edu/)

**Mapping Your Future** is a free resource for career, college, financial aid and money management information. Its goal is to help individuals achieve life-long success by empowering students, families and schools with free, web-based information and services - [mappingyourfuture.org/](mappingyourfuture.org/)

**The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition** website is a tremendous resource for individuals planning to go to college. There are videos and inventory surveys to help you explore your strengths and interests, accept your disability and advocate for yourself. Information is presented on what campus life is like and planning for going to college - [transitionta.org/](transitionta.org/)

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Planning for Accommodations at College

1. Start early when planning for college because it will take time.
2. Decide what type of school you want to attend: a vocational school, career school, postsecondary transition school, community college or university.
3. Contact the school and ask about services for students with disabilities. You can call on the phone, visit the campus, or even review their website to learn about services.
4. Common questions to consider asking the Campus Office of Disabilities:
   - What are the name, phone number, and hours of operation for the Office of Disabilities?
   - How far in advance should I contact the Office of Disabilities?
   - What is the process to access the Office of Disabilities' services and is there a deadline?
   - What documentation must I provide to show I am a student with a disability to get reasonable accommodations?
   - Who decides if I qualify for academic accommodations?
   - What types of accommodations are considered reasonable?
   - Is tutoring available and is there a cost?
   - Is there a support group on campus for students with disabilities?
   - Do professors have regular office hours?
   - Is there any other information I should know?

Typical Types of Accommodations

Accommodations vary. You should check with your individual institution to learn what is available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instruction</th>
<th>Testing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive aids</td>
<td>Assistive technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive furniture (desk)</td>
<td>Computer-read test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistive technology</td>
<td>Contrasts in ink and paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enlarged text</td>
<td>Enlarged text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra time on assignments</td>
<td>Essay test vs. multiple choice test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader (talking tapes or person reading)</td>
<td>Extended time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selective seating</td>
<td>Misspellings not graded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign language interpreter</td>
<td>Printed copy of oral instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone to take notes</td>
<td>Someone to read the test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tape record information</td>
<td>Scribe (someone to write down answers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutor</td>
<td>Tape-recorded lectures, tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typist</td>
<td>Quiet environment, no distractions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We're here to help.

To learn more about the Division of Specialized Care for Children's programs and services, check out our website at: dscc.uic.edu
1. Contact the colleges or universities (by phone or their website) where you are interested in enrolling and ask about:
   - The cost of attendance, including the breakdown of tuition and fees, room and board, travel, books and supplies, and personal and miscellaneous expenses.
   - The types of financial assistance available.
   - The steps and timeframes for submitting applications for assistance.
   - The criteria institutions use to award financial aid.
   - The interest rates on various student loans, the total amount you must repay, the length of time to repay, when to start repaying, and what cancellations (deferments) apply.
   - Other conditions that affect financial assistance.

2. **Mapping Your Future** is a free resource for career, college, financial aid, and money management information. Their goal is to help individuals achieve lifelong success by empowering students, families, and schools with free, web-based information and services at [mappingyourfuture.org/](http://mappingyourfuture.org/).

3. **Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** at [studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa](http://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa).

4. **Explore more funding sources** to help pay for college.

   Go to the next page for ideas and scholarship information.
## Financial Resources for Postsecondary Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholarship</th>
<th>Website and Contact Information</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal Student Aid</td>
<td><a href="http://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa">studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa</a></td>
<td>Financial help for students enrolled in eligible programs at participating schools. Includes tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, and transportation. Most federal aid is need-based. The three most common types of aid are grants, loans, and work-study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FinAid</td>
<td><a href="http://finaid.org/">finaid.org/</a></td>
<td>A free scholarship search, including one for financial aid for students with disabilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Scholarships</td>
<td><a href="http://www.collegescholarships.com">www.collegescholarships.com</a></td>
<td>Provides a large database of available scholarships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois College to Career</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ilcollege2career.com/#/">www.ilcollege2career.com/#/</a></td>
<td>A tool to review a wide range of information on Illinois two-year and four-year institutions that includes career outcomes of graduates and student debt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Funding for Students With Disabilities</td>
<td><a href="http://www.washington.edu/doit/college-funding-students-disabilities">www.washington.edu/doit/college-funding-students-disabilities</a></td>
<td>Provides a lot of great information on different types of financial assistance for higher education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=51120">www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=51120</a>  You can also call: (877) 761-9780 (Voice) (866) 264-2149 (TTY) (312) 957-4881 (VP)</td>
<td>DHS’s Division of Rehabilitation Services is the state’s lead agency serving individuals with disabilities. DRS works in partnership with people with disabilities and their families to help them make informed choices to achieve full community participation through employment, education, and independent living opportunities. Are you an individual with a disability who’s interested in furthering your education beyond high school? If so, then DRS may be able to help defray the costs of your education and help you achieve a successful career.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**We’re here to help.**

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These activities will help youth gain the skills and abilities needed to reach their highest level of independence and ability. Some of these activities may not apply to everyone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINANCIAL SKILLS AND ABILITIES</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>I WANT TO LEARN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you know the value of money (coins and bills)?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you receive an allowance?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you able to count change?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you pay for items at the store?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you pay or arrange payments for your medications?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a bank account?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you need a joint bank account and someone to help you oversee your money?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know how to write a check and/or use a debit card?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you able to balance a checkbook?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know how to gain credit (apply for a credit card, line of credit, loan, etc.)?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know what a budget is?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know your strengths and interests?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know people or agencies that can help you find a job?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know what taxes are?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you manage your money and budget household expenses (housing, food, heat, phone, insurance, etc.)?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know how your living expenses will be paid when you become an adult?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know about special programs to help pay for job training or college?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you get financial help with school or work?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you plan to work to support yourself?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you able to fill out an application?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know about government programs for income support, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you applied for government income support (SSI) if needed?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a representative payee, guardian of the estate or power of attorney if needed?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a Special Needs Trust set up to protect your finances and program benefits if needed?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have a will?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know the civil rights of persons with disabilities?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Tips for Using This Skills List**

Think about the skills you want to work on. Make notes of your needs and concerns. You can then talk about the next steps to take with the people who are helping you prepare for your future.

**Notes to Myself:** For each “Need More Info” item you checked, list questions you have or what you would like to know more about.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

**Next Steps – Goals:** List what you need to work on to help you learn how to take care of yourself in the future. You can ask the people who are helping you plan for your future to work on this with you.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

I want more information about:  
☐ Insurance  ☐ Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) Benefits for Persons With a Disability  
☐ SSI  
☐ Other  

---

**We’re here to help.**

To learn more about the Division of Specialized Care for Children’s programs and services, check out our website at: [dscc.uic.edu](http://dscc.uic.edu)
PUNS is the point of entry to services in Illinois for individuals with developmental disabilities.

The Illinois Department of Human Services’ Division of Developmental Disabilities uses the PUNS database to identify who needs services and what services they need.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) website has a guide for understanding PUNS at [www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=47620](http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=47620).

The state uses PUNS to select individuals for services based on the urgency of their needs as government funding becomes available.

Services available to individuals on the PUNS list include:

- In-home supports for independent living
- Respite care to provide temporary relief to caregivers
- Entry into day services, sheltered workshops or supported employment
- Training programs to teach life and work skills
- Job coaches to help with training and success in the workplace
- Emergency or long-term placement in residential living facilities
- Adaptive equipment to promote independence
- Other supports to improve quality of life

You can learn more about the state’s Developmental Disabilities Services at [www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=81789](http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=81789).

Children, teens and adults with developmental disabilities who need or want services or supports can enroll in PUNS.

To fill out the PUNS form, contact your local Independent Service Coordination Agency (ISC) and ask for an appointment to register for PUNS.

- To find your local ISC Agency, call DHS at 1-888-DD-PLANS.
- You can also find your local ISC and more details about how to sign up for PUNS services at [www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=85196](http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=85196).
During your appointment with your local ISC agency, you will meet with a pre-admission screener. He/she will ask questions about you and/or your family's needs. The screener sorts needs into two categories:

- **Seeking Services** – These services are needed within the year. This first level of prioritization looks at the age of the caregiver and whether the situation is an emergency or critical (but not a crisis).
- **Planning** – Services may be needed or desired in the future. The next level of prioritization is individuals who have aged out of special education within the last five years along with the individual's amount of time on the PUNS list.

PUNS selections are based on a person's length of time in the Seeking Services category since turning 18. Note: if you are not in the Seeking Services category and are currently in need of supports, you must request that your ISC Agency move you to the Seeking Services category. Learn more about the PUNS selection process and needs categories at [www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=41131](http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=41131).

You should update your PUNS information yearly or any time you needs change.

**Crisis:** Children and adults on the PUNS list who are experiencing a crisis (such as homelessness, abuse or neglect) can call their Independent Service Coordinator to request consideration of a crisis application for waiver funding.

---

**For more information**

If you want more information about PUNS or Developmental Disabilities Waiver services, The Arc of Illinois has several programs to help:

- **Illinois Life Span Program** - [www.illinoislifespan.org/](http://www.illinoislifespan.org/) - (800) 588-7002
- **The Arc Spanish Helpline** - Linea de Información en Español - (815) 464-1832, ext. 1025
Supplemental Security Income (SSI) helps to pay for your food, clothing and housing needs. It also helps you keep your medical benefits.

1. **Applying for SSI** involves many steps. If you are interested, you can get more information by calling (800) 772-1213.

2. **Apply or reapply for SSI when you become an adult** (around age 18).
   - You can use the Adult Disability Starter Kit at [www.ssa.gov/disability/disability_starter_kits_adult_eng.htm](http://www.ssa.gov/disability/disability_starter_kits_adult_eng.htm). It includes a fact sheet on “What You Should Know Before You Apply For Social Security Disability Benefits,” a checklist, a worksheet and a link to an online application.

3. **Your eligibility is checked on a regular basis** based on your income and resources.

4. **SSI can help you get one step closer to working:**
   - It can help you get money every month for your food, clothing and housing needs.
   - Less than half of the money you earn from work is counted against your SSI check.
   - When you work, you can keep your Healthcare and Family Services’ healthcare coverage.
   - Using a **Plan for Achieving Self Support (PASS)** will let you set aside money to help you achieve a work goal and become independent.
   - You can deduct your work-related costs from your earnings.

5. **Work incentives** are a great way to join the workforce. You will likely make more money than you receive on SSI.

6. **You can learn more** at the SSI Work Site at [www.socialsecurity.gov/work/index.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work/index.html) or by calling (800) 772-1213.
7. If you already get SSI and want to learn more about work incentives, call your **Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Program**.

If you live in the below counties, contact: **Illinois Assistive Technology Program (IATP) - (800) 852-5110.**

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<tr>
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<td>McHenry</td>
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<td>Richland</td>
<td>Saline</td>
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<td>St. Clair</td>
<td>Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vermilion</td>
<td>Wabash</td>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Will</td>
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<td>Williamson</td>
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If you live in the below counties, contact: **Disability Works Iowa - (800) 779-2502.**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>Boone</td>
<td>Brown</td>
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<td>Caroll</td>
<td>Cass</td>
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<tr>
<td>DeKalb</td>
<td>Fulton</td>
<td>Hancock</td>
<td>Henderson</td>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>JoDaviess</td>
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<tr>
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<td>LaSalle</td>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>Marshall</td>
<td>Mason</td>
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<td>Menard</td>
<td>Mercer</td>
<td>Morgan</td>
<td>Ogle</td>
<td>Peoria</td>
<td>Putnam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rock Island</td>
<td>Schuyler</td>
<td>Scott</td>
<td>Stark</td>
<td>Stephenson</td>
<td>Tazewell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warren</td>
<td>Whiteside</td>
<td>Winnebago</td>
<td>Woodford</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

If you live in **Cook County**, contact: **Volunteers of America - (312) 896-3220.**

8. **If you have already applied for benefits in the past and were denied, don’t give up!**
   In fact, most people are initially denied when they apply on their own. You can still reapply or appeal the denial with the help of a qualified Social Security disability advocate or attorney. You can contact Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security, Equip for Equality, Inc., at **(800) 537-2632** (Voice) or **(800) 610-2779** (TTY).

9. SSI provides minimum basic financial help to persons with disabilities (regardless of age) with very limited income and resources. Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) supports individuals who are disabled and have a qualifying work history, either through their own employment or a family member (spouse/parent). Learn more about SSI verses SSDI at [www.ncoa.org/article/ssi-vs-ssdi-what-are-these-benefits-how-they-differ](http://www.ncoa.org/article/ssi-vs-ssdi-what-are-these-benefits-how-they-differ).
Managing Money, Budgeting and Setting Up Credit

As you transition to adulthood, you can begin to manage (or co-manage) your own money.

1. **Start a checking account** (or a joint account). Regular deposits show responsibility. Learn how to track your spending and deposits and compare them with your bank's records. Balancing your account is among the best money management habits you can keep. You may find this online tool helpful: [mappingyourfuture.org/money/checkbook.cfm](http://mappingyourfuture.org/money/checkbook.cfm).

2. You should establish good credit to help you receive financial assistance, such as a car loan or a credit card, in the future. (Here are helpful tips to improve your credit score: [www.creditloan.com/credit-scores/how-finance-works/](http://www.creditloan.com/credit-scores/how-finance-works/).

   No credit history can lead to the same set of problems as a bad credit history. These steps can help you achieve a good credit history:
   
   - **Establish a Joint Account.** Your parents can add you to their account. The credit history is reflected on both your account and your parents'.
   - **Start a Savings Account.** Regular deposits with limited withdrawals can create a line of credit.
   - Check with your local bank or department store if they report the credits to the credit bureau. **Consider applying for a small loan at the bank or a credit card from the local department store.** You will need a co-signer if you are younger than 18. It is better to find a loan with terms you can meet without undue financial strain.

3. **Creating a budget** is a good way to manage your money. It helps you track your spending and make sure you're using your money how you want. (You may find this tool helpful: [mappingyourfuture.org/money/budgetcalculator.cfm](http://mappingyourfuture.org/money/budgetcalculator.cfm).)

   There are three steps to make a budget:
   
   - Identify how you're spending money now.
   - Gage your current spending and set long-term financial goals.
   - Track your spending.
4. You can get help with applying for benefits and making a budget at your local **Center for Independent Living**. To find a center, go to [www.incil.org/locate/](http://www.incil.org/locate/). You can also call toll-free at (800) 587-1227.

5. **Explore your career options early and while in high school.** Finding gainful employment is an important part of adult life. Unemployment can lead to poverty, lower health status and dependency on government programs.

6. **When you begin earning your own income, you will need to file income taxes.** Your Center for Independent Living may know of a free resource in your community to help you complete and file taxes.
INDEPENDENCE
### Skills Checklist - Adult Living Arrangements/Self-Reliant

These activities will help youth gain the skills to become more self-reliant and ready for their desired adult living arrangements. Some of these activities may not apply to everyone.

**I plan on living:**  
- [ ] with my parents  
- [ ] on my own  
- [ ] group home  
- [ ] other __________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDEPENDENCE - Skills and Abilities</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Need More Info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you do your share of family chores (clean up after yourself, set the table, etc.)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you learning to do things around the house (laundry, fixing meals, etc.)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you keep home and/or room clean or clean up after meals?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you use nearby stores and services (know what to buy, where to find things, and how to pay for groceries)?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you help plan or fix meals or food?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you spent nights away from your family (camp, sleepover with friends, school trips)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you happy with how you are able to get around (home to school or work)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you call and use community services (accessible transportation) and advocacy services (legal services) when you need them?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have a plan for your adult living arrangements?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know how to go places on your own (bus, follow directions or maps)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have a state identification (ID) card or driver’s license?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you manage your own money (make change, use debit or checks, balance checkbook, follow a budget)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you explored housing that can meet your health and safety needs?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know your rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know your fair housing rights under the Fair Housing Act?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have a plan for accommodations, such as housekeeping help or a personal assistant, if needed?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know how to locate disability support and counseling services?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you need help making major decisions with living or health care?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have a legal guardian or power of attorney, if needed?</td>
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Continue Checklist on Next Page
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUTRITION - Skills and Abilities</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Need More Info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you eat a variety of foods (or take tube feedings well)?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you able to feed yourself (or do tube feedings) once your food is set on the table?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can you fix a meal without help?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know about the need for good nutrition?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you happy with your weight?</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Need More Info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you brush and floss your own teeth?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you dress yourself?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you bathe yourself?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you brush/fix your own hair?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have regular sleep times and feel rested?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know how much sleep you need each day?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you put yourself to bed?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you wake up on your own (with the alarm clock)?</td>
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<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Need More Info</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can you tell when you need to go to the bathroom?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you go to the bathroom on your own?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you handle your clothing, wipe yourself and flush the toilet?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you need a personal assistant to help you with activities of daily living?</td>
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<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Need More Info</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can you get out of the bed, tub or shower on your own?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you exercise on a regular basis (walk, lift weights, stretching exercises, swim, etc.)?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Tips for Using the Skills List

Think about the skills you want to work on. Make notes of your needs and concerns. You can then talk about the next steps with the people who are helping you prepare for your future.

Notes to Myself: For each “Need More Info” item you checked, list questions you have or what you would like to know more about.

Next Steps – Goals: List what you need to work on to help you learn how to take care of yourself in the future. You can ask the people who are helping you plan for your future to work on this with you.

I want more information about:  □ Adult living arrangements  □ Transportation

□ Other ____________________________

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To learn more about the Division of Specialized Care for Children’s programs and services, check out our website at: dscu.uchicago.edu
1. **Learning to make good decisions is a skill that can help you** grow up and be more independent and responsible as an adult.

2. **Parents play a critical role** in supporting children as they learn to make decisions on their own. Decision-making is an incredibly important skill. Parents should help their children develop their own decision-making abilities so they can achieve greater independence. Allowing your teen to identify a problem, figure out solutions, and come to a conclusion will give them confidence and problem-solving skills. These skills will serve them well for the rest of their lives.

3. **Build your decision-making skills.** This process takes time, patience and practice.

4. **Study which decisions get you more of what you want** (more fun, independence, time with friends, control over your daily life, etc.). Also note **which decisions lead to what you do not want** (arguments with parents, conflicts with peers, social drama, loss of privileges, adults telling you what to do, etc.). This process will help you learn to make good decisions.

5. **Learn from mistakes.** Choices always have consequences, some good and some bad. Mistakes play a very important role in life. Any mistake is an opportunity to learn how to handle a situation better the next time. It is not an opportunity for an adult to criticize. Parents should stay involved in this process and help model proper actions.

6. **Work through the decision-making steps and make more of your own decisions.** You can use the SODAS model below to help remember some of these steps:

   - **S** = Situation
   - **O** = Options
   - **D** = Disadvantages
   - **A** = Advantages
   - **S** = Solution
7. Keep a decision journal to write down and review all the decisions made during the day. A journal can help you see how well you handled decisions and learn how to do better, if needed.

8. For more information on building good decision-making skills, check out:

- American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU): “When Do I Want Support?” tool can help identify your support needs, [www.aclu.org/other/when-do-i-want-support](http://www.aclu.org/other/when-do-i-want-support). The information in this form can help you fill out a Supported Decision-Making Agreement, if needed. Another resource is the ACLU’s “Know Your Rights” page at [www.aclu.org/know-your-rights](http://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights).
- The Arc’s Center for Future Planning at [futureplanning.thearc.org/](http://futureplanning.thearc.org/) provides information and tools to help people with intellectual and developmental disabilities make decisions. Handouts include:
- Illinois’ Supported Decision-Making Act ensures people with disabilities can get the help they need to make decisions for their own lives. The Illinois Guardianship and Advocacy Commission has many resources to explain the Supported Decision-Making Act. Use the search term “supported decision-making” at [www.illinois.gov/search-results.html?q=supported+decision+making&contentType=everything](http://www.illinois.gov/search-results.html?q=supported+decision+making&contentType=everything).

### Steps to Decision-Making and Problem Solving

1. What problem do you need to solve? (Or state the problem.)

2. Why is this a problem?

3. What are my desired results? (What do I want to see happen?)
4. List three possible solutions. (What can I do to get my desired results?) As you look at these, ask yourself:
   a.) How will I feel afterward?
   b.) How will others I value feel about me after this decision?
   c.) Would I suggest the same solution to a friend?

1. 

2. 

3. 

Look at your first solution. List what may happen if you go with number 1.

Look at your second solution. List what may happen if you go with number 2.

Look at your third solution. List what may happen if you go with number 3.

Which one works best for solving the problem? Pick from numbers 1, 2 or 3.

5. Is this the best time to make this decision?

6. What resources do I need to carry out my choice?

7. Try out your chosen idea and test it. Did it solve the problem?
Preparing for Adult Living

Everyone Has Limitations

It’s important to make the most of your abilities and acknowledge your limitations. This understanding will help you know where you can improve and where you need accommodations. Becoming self-determined involves figuring out when and how to get the help you need.

You have the power to improve your quality of life. Steps you can take include:

- Learn ways to take care of your needs and know when to ask for help.
- Start setting your own goals and build decision-making skills.
- Know your personal care needs (such as bathing, teeth brushing, grooming, shaving, toileting) and how you will take care of them.
- Learn what you need help with and set up ways to get that help. For example, you may need an attendant to help you in the mornings and evenings with your personal care. More details on available home services is at [www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29738](http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29738).
- Carry your own identification card.
  Examples: school picture ID, Illinois Person with a Disability ID Card, library card.
- Learn how to work appliances such as the microwave, stove, dishwasher, coffee maker, toaster, and washer and dryer.
- Start doing your own laundry.
- Do housekeeping activities, such as dusting, vacuuming/sweeping, mopping, cleaning the sink, toilet, bathtub/shower.
- Start shopping for food items you need to make a meal. Make a list of food items to take with you to the grocery store. Find the items you need in the store and pay the cashier.
- Learn to manage your own money.
- Find out how much things cost, such as utilities, rent, insurance, food, clothing, transportation, etc.

• Ask your friends and family to help you learn the skills to be able to do things on your own.

• Learn about adaptive equipment that can make your everyday life easier. Ask your healthcare providers and educators for more information. The Illinois Assistive Technology Program (IATP) supports people with disabilities with assistive technology for daily living, device loans, a demonstration center, a loan program for funding and much more at [www.iltech.org/](http://www.iltech.org/). You can also call toll-free at (800) 852-5110 (voice) or dial 711 for Illinois Relay Services.

• Practice cooking some basic meals for yourself. See a few helpful tips below.

---

**Are You Ready to Make Your Own Meals?**

You can learn to make your own meals with these easy steps:

- ✓ Watch someone making snacks.
- ✓ Make your own snacks.
- ✓ Make a cold sandwich.
- ✓ Push buttons for microwave use.
- ✓ Learn to use the oven/stove safely.
- ✓ Use the oven/microwave with help.
- ✓ Work the oven/microwave on your own.
- ✓ Warm-up leftovers or frozen dinners.
- ✓ Sort foods by food groups.
- ✓ Help with fixing a meal.
- ✓ Learn to use a timer.
- ✓ Follow recipe directions.
- ✓ Pick out foods for a meal.
- ✓ Learn to stir or use a mixer.
- ✓ Clean the area where food was or is going to be prepared.
- ✓ Find all ingredients.
- ✓ Put ingredients away after use.
- ✓ Open and close containers. Use adaptive can openers or lid closers, if needed.
- ✓ Choose the right size pot or pan to use.
It's important for you to help around the house.

As you get older and learn new tasks, think about ways you can use these new skills to help at home:

- Baking can be a great way to practice math.
- Folding laundry can be great experience for working in a clothing store.
- Looking through digital coupons and using grocery store apps are good ways to work on organization and money management.
- Vacuuming helps to build muscles and hand-eye coordination.
- Cooking is a great way to learn the importance of healthy eating.
- Doing laundry to keep your clothes clean and tidy is a great way to make a good first impression for a job interview.

Be creative to find ways to modify tasks to do as much as you can on your own.

Your family will count on you to help with chores. As everyone chips in, there may be more time for family fun.

Being responsible for chores at home can lead to being responsible for tasks at a job and greater independence as an adult.

You may also find the following websites helpful with deciding on chores:

- “Twelve Skills and Five Household Chores that Build Vocational Skills” - leader.pubs.asha.org/do/10.1044/12-skills-and-5-household-chores-that-can-serve-as-preparation-for-future-vocation/full

You may want to ask your parent/caregiver to help support you with learning a new task. If they want to learn more about ways to help, go to:

- “Over 50 Ideas of Chores for Teens” is a brief article on giving directions and what these activities can accomplish (goals, life skills, etc.) - verywellfamily.com/over-50-ideas-of-chores-for-teens-2609291
As you grow older, you learn new tasks that help bring you closer to independence as an adult. You may or may not already be able to do some or all these activities. This checklist simply gives you ideas to help build your independence skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kitchen - Keep Kitchen Clean</th>
<th>Bedroom - Keep Bedroom Neat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set the table for meals</td>
<td>Pick up belongings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take the dishes to the sink</td>
<td>Make bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wipe down the table after use</td>
<td>Dust furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wash the dishes in the sink/load the dishwasher</td>
<td>Vacuum carpet/sweep floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry the dishes/put them away</td>
<td>Put dirty clothes in the hamper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take out the garbage</td>
<td>Know when to change sheets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweep the floor</td>
<td>Put clean sheets on the bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know when to mop the floor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Laundry - Keep Clothing Clean and Neat</th>
<th>Bathroom - Keep Germs from Spreading</th>
<th>Yard Work - Keep the Yard Looking Nice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gather dirty clothes/bed sheets</td>
<td>Identify cleaning products</td>
<td>Learn to use lawn equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sort whites from colors</td>
<td>Choose appropriate cleaning products</td>
<td>Mow grass, trim bushes, rake leaves, pick up sticks, weed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Load washer/dryer</td>
<td>Clean the sink, toilet, bathtub/shower</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn how to use detergent/softener</td>
<td>Sweep/vacuum and mop the floors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose setting for washer/dryer with help and then without help</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check lint trap - empty if needed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fold clothes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put clothes away with help and then without help</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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As you transition from childhood to adulthood, you will undergo many physical, emotional, and behavioral changes. You may be worried or confused by these changes.

You are an individual with a unique personality, special interests, likes, and dislikes.

You’ll develop at your own speed. The tasks and skills you master tell what stage you are in. Teens of the same age are often at different developmental stages.

Teen development can be divided into two stages: young teens (12 to 14 years) and teenagers (15 to 17 years). Each stage has a series of tasks to face. You may find the ACT (Assets Coming Together) for Youth Center site helpful at actforyouth.net/adolescence/. Some teen development tasks are:

• Moving toward independence.
  – It is common to struggle with your sense of identity. You may feel awkward or strange about yourself and your body. Your interests and clothing style are often influenced by your peer group.
  – As you move toward higher education or into the job market, it is important for you to learn how to advocate (speak up) for yourself.

• Meeting basic needs.
  You may have questions about how to make a living, how to manage time and how to plan meaningful activities. Young people have a strong need for:
    – Community.
    – Having a sense of meaning in life.
    – Physical and emotional security, i.e., having a basic structure in relationships and living.
• **Coping with stress.**

The emotional and social changes you experience can make it hard to cope with challenges at school and at work. Coping with stress is linked to other skills, such as problem-solving and self-confidence.

- Ways to lower stress include relaxation techniques, managing ‘self-talk’, focusing, using support systems, and active decision-making and planning.
- Friends provide emotional support, but this is a time when friendship patterns are changing.
- It helps to talk about your feelings. You may choose to talk with your doctors, teachers, members of the clergy, or other adults who know you well. If needed, you can also find a specialist such as a counselor.

• **Information and information access.**

You will need up-to-date information on careers, education programs and job trends. You will also need to develop skills to assess the importance of the information.

As you get older, you will still need your parents for emotional, material and informational support. At the same time, your parents should allow you enough room to develop your own sense of identity.

A teenager’s quest for independence is normal and should not be seen by the parent as rejection or a loss of control.

Parents can expect their teen to test rules and limits. Keep open lines of communication clear and negotiable. Limits or boundaries may help lessen major conflicts.

Parents are usually the first to recognize a problem with emotions or behavior.

Parents can help with these changes by helping their teen find a sense of purpose and understanding of how they are meeting their current and future needs. School counselors, peer counselors and mentors can help clarify these issues. This type of help can build resilience and make it easier at school and work.
Explore your options. This will help you and your family/guardian choose programs and services that best suit your needs. It will also help meet your transition goals and allow you to live as independently as possible in the community of your choice.

You should plan early. Getting into adult service programs may take months. Accessing adult services will be much different than getting services through your school. The process will take time, many phone calls and much follow-up and appeals. Try not to get discouraged. Don't give up!

You will need to plan how to pay for your future services, trainings, supports and your living arrangements. Adult service options and funding sources are much different than child-focused services and funding. Some differences are:

- Government-funded programs for adults are very limited.
- You must meet the program’s eligibility guidelines to get services.
- There are waiting lists, applications, disability determinations and other processes required.

In-Home Support Options. You may want to apply for one of nine Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver programs to get services to help you live more independently in your family’s home or on your own. For more information about the HCBS Waiver programs, refer to the “Get Financial Help” section on the next page.

Some in-home supports provided are:

- Homemaker
- Help with nursing or personal care
- Respite care
- A personal case manager
- Non-medical transportation

- Emergency home response
- Environmental accessibility adaptations
- Specialized medical equipment and supplies
- Home-delivered meals

Day Programs include activities to foster skill-building, appropriate behavior, greater independence and personal choice. They may include daily living skills instruction, community outings, vocational training, employment opportunities and recreation.
Residential Living for People with Disabilities. We understand that many families plan to care for their children with a disability long-term. We also recognize that living situations and unexpected events may happen. Having a plan in advance may help ensure your adult child’s needs will be met in your absence. You may need to consider the following options.

These options include a range of settings that help individuals with disabilities live with their own families or in their own homes with supportive services from community-based supported living service providers.

- **Independent living** - You live on your own.
- **Semi-independent living** - You need minimal levels of help to live and work in the community. Some hire a personal assistant or have roommates who share responsibilities. Family members may take turns to help out.
- **Community-Integrated Living Arrangements (CILA) or group homes** - Residential options for those needing caretaker support or 24-hour care that is provided in a variety of settings. Most are home-like settings located in communities where individuals have:
  - Support staff available as needed
  - Supervision and help with the activities of daily living
  - Access to local stores, libraries and restaurants
- **Nursing Home or Intermediate Care Facilities for the Developmentally Disabled (ICF/DD)** - Healthcare facilities for people who need ongoing developmental services and intermittent skilled nursing care.
- **State institutions** - For individuals with the most severe disabilities who need intensive services.

Get Financial Help for Needed Supports

**Home and Community-Based Services Waiver Programs**

- **Persons with Developmental Disabilities — Home and Community-Based Services Waiver** - Register for the Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services (PUNS) through the Department of Human Services (IDHS) Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). Call your area’s Independent Service Coordination (ISC) agency at **1-888-DDPLANS**, (888) 337-5267 or (866) 376-8446 (TTY). You can also check at [www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=32253](http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=32253) or the IDHS Developmental Disabilities website at [www.dd.illinois.gov](http://www.dd.illinois.gov).

- **Persons with Disabilities — Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) Home Services Program** - This waiver serves individuals with severe physical disabilities. A fact sheet on the Home and Community-Based Services Waiver/Home Services Program is available at [www2.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalClients/HCBS/Pages/default.aspx](http://www2.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalClients/HCBS/Pages/default.aspx). For more information, contact the Division of Rehabilitation Services at **(800) 843-6154**, (800) 447-6404 (TTY) or [www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29738](http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29738).
Persons with Brain Injuries — Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) Home Services Program - A fact sheet on the Home and Community-Based Services Waiver/Home Services Program is available at [www.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalClients/HCBS/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalClients/HCBS/Pages/default.aspx). For more information, contact the Division of Rehabilitation Services at (800) 843-6154, (800) 447-6404 (TTY) or [www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29738](http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29738).

Find Supported Living Arrangements:

- Find and ask about unique group arrangements funded by the residents' families. Such families pool their resources to provide supportive living arrangements in single-family homes for their family members with disabilities who need help with daily living skills.

- Contact your area's Center for Independent Living (CIL) for a wide array of independent living services. For more information, visit [www.incil.org/](http://www.incil.org/) or call (800) 587-1227.


- In-Home Support Options. You may want to apply for one of nine Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver programs to get services to help you live more independently in your family’s home or on your own. For more information about the HCBS Waiver programs, visit [www.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalClients/HCBS/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalClients/HCBS/Pages/default.aspx).

Other Resources

- The Illinois Assistive Technology Program - Promotes available assistive technology services, such as the ATLOAN Program that provides loans for daily living, education, employment, community living, sports and leisure, and health-related needs. Call (800) 852-5110 or visit [iltech.org/how-we-help/get-help-funding-at/](http://iltech.org/how-we-help/get-help-funding-at/).

- Supported Living Facilities — Illinois Supported Living Program - Offers housing with support services to persons with physical disabilities (22 and older), depending on the population served by the facility. This is a Department of Healthcare and Family Services waiver program that allows for supported living services that include personal care, homemaking, laundry, medication supervision, social activities, recreation and 24-hour staff. The resident is responsible for paying the cost of room and board at the facility. For more information, see the fact sheet at [www.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalClients/HCBS/Pages/slf.aspx](http://www.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalClients/HCBS/Pages/slf.aspx) or call (217) 782-0545.

- Habitat for Humanity may be able to help you identify accessible and affordable housing. Go to [www.habitat.org/getinv/apply.aspx](http://www.habitat.org/getinv/apply.aspx) to find Habitat services in your local area. You can use the Habitat online search tool or call them at (800) 422-4828.

- Statewide Independent Living Council of Illinois - Supports independent living services across Illinois. For more information, call (217) 744-7777 (V/TTY) or go to [silcofillinois.org/](http://silcofillinois.org/).
Things Just Aren’t the Same

Transition Skills, Tips & Tools
Adolescence: Changing Roles

- Adolescence is a time of change for the whole family. These changes can be a challenge for everyone.
- Healthy mental, emotional and behavioral (MEB) development is very important for a productive adulthood.
- Many things change during adolescence, both physically and emotionally:
  - Bodies change and hormones run rampant
  - Values and attitudes vary from day to day
  - Independence and freedom become very important
  - Relationships with family and friends change
- Family roles change and outside influences play a bigger role in a teen’s life. Even though friends play a big role, family is still important.
- One of the biggest changes and challenges in adolescence is more risk-taking. Taking risks is an important part of growing up. Trying new things gives teens a chance to have experiences that will help their transition to adult life.
- Encouraging healthy risks and noting negative risks (like substance use or driving dangerously) help build skills needed to assess and cope with risk. It is important to provide learning opportunities that include healthy risks such as:
  - Starting a new sport or art project
  - Taking challenging classes
  - Getting involved with the community
- Some teens may have more moodiness, impulsive behavior, anxiety about growing up and sexual feelings. These experiences can cause:
  - Depression, which is not normal
  - Temper flare-ups and more disagreements with adults
  - Wanting to stay a child or grow up faster
  - Increased thoughts about peers and sex
- Teens may need encouragement and support as they develop new ways to cope during this time of change.

Learn more at: https://opa.hhs.gov/adolescent-health?tag/resources/multimedia/index.html

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Home Fire Safety

Transition Skills, Tips & Tools

Fire Safety

- Each floor in your home should have a smoke and carbon monoxide detector AND a fire extinguisher.

- Every member of your family should know how to get out (know the exits, windows, doors) of every room in your home at any time of day.

- Your family should talk about your Family Emergency Plan at least every six months:
  - Discuss how each member will get out of the home (day and night from every room).
  - Plan a meeting spot (such as by the mailbox, on the front sidewalk, at the end of the driveway) where everyone can meet after getting out of your home.

- Replace batteries in your smoke alarms every six months.

- These resources may help you plan for emergencies:

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Find an exercise activity you like to do. Examples are:

- Soccer
- Baseball/softball
- Gardening
- Going to the gym
- Swimming
- Dancing
- Fishing
- Hiking, walking
- Biking
- Track

Teens of all ages and abilities can improve their quality of life through regular, moderate physical activity.


- You should do one hour (60 minutes) or more of physical activity every day.
- Most of the one hour or more a day should be either moderate-intensity or vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity.
- As part of your daily physical activity, you should do vigorous-intensity activities at least three days per week. You also should do muscle-strengthening and bone-strengthening activities at least three days per week.
- Work with your doctor to identify the types and amounts of physical activity appropriate for you if you have special healthcare needs/disabilities. When possible, you should meet the three points above or as much activity as your condition allows. You should avoid being inactive.

More Resources on Next Page
The National Center on Physical Activity and Disability has resources, exercise videos, adapted exercises, fact sheets, leisure activity suggestions and much more. Check out their website at www.nchpad.org/index.php, call toll-free at (800) 900-8086 or email email@nchpad.org.

It is very important to keep active.

Please talk to your doctor before starting any new activity program that could be strenuous.

Check to see if your health insurance covers a fitness membership at a local gym or other fitness activities.
So Many Demands, So Little Time

1. **Stress is your body’s way of reacting to life’s pressures.**

2. **Many places and things can make you feel stressed:**
   - Your health
   - Family and friends
   - Home
   - Work

3. **Some stress is normal. However, if stress makes you feel sad and irritable, WATCH OUT!**

4. **Learn to recognize the signs of stress:**
   - Physical - headache, pounding heart, trembling
   - Behavioral - anxious, changes in eating habits, sleeping problems

5. **Figure out what things make you feel stressed. You can then begin making changes in your day, relationships, work, etc., to work through your stress and feel better.**

6. **Managing your stress is important. Some ways to do this include:**
   - Deep breathing
   - Meditation
   - Exercise
   - Take a walk
   - Listening to music
   - Talk to a friend

7. **Reduce the stress in your life by scheduling daily periods of relaxation and exercise, eating right and getting enough rest.**

8. **It is OK to talk to a professional counselor.**

**You may find these stress management resources helpful:**

- The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Illinois Extension's Stress Management Resources: [https://extension.illinois.edu/global/stress-management-resources](https://extension.illinois.edu/global/stress-management-resources)

- TeenHealth Matters’ Stress Management Resources: [https://teenhealthmatters.org/stress-management/](https://teenhealthmatters.org/stress-management/)

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These activities will help youth gain the skills and abilities needed to reach their highest level of independence and ability. Some of these activities may not apply to everyone.

### COMMUNICATION - Skills and Abilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Need More Info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can you explain your needs to others and ask for help when needed?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are persons close to you, like family, friends, and teachers, able to understand your needs?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are other people outside of home and school able to understand what you want?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know the Human Rights Act says you cannot be denied or refused the use of any public place (restaurants, theaters, museums, libraries, parks, zoos, etc.)?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know how to stand up for your rights (file a complaint)?</td>
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</table>

### SOCIAL - Skills and Abilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Need More Info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you have fun every day (reading, playing, singing, etc.)?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you join in family activities (playing games, reading together, going to sports events, etc.)?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you spend time away from home (shopping, overnights with friends or relatives, etc.)?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you spend time with others about your same age?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have close friends?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have friends who don't have disabilities?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have someone to talk to when you are sad, upset or things aren't going well?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you belong to clubs, groups, church, etc.?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you a leader in your community (team captain, event leader, head of a committee)?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you help out or work without pay away from your home?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TRAVEL - Skills and Abilities</strong></td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Need More Info</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know how to cross the street safely?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you follow directions to get someplace?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you read a map?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you wear your seat belt in the car?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a state ID card or driver's license?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know how to use public transportation (busses, trains, taxis, etc.)?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can you move about in your community easily?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know the laws about access to public places in the Americans with Disabilities Act?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have or plan to get a driver's license?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know how to use public transportation?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>PET CARE - Skills and Abilities</strong></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Need More Info</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you feed and care for a pet?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you clean your pet and clean up after your pet?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>SAFETY - Skills and Abilities</strong></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Need More Info</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you know how to call 911 and provide information in case of an emergency?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know how to practice “stranger danger”?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know how to keep from getting pregnant, HIV/AIDS, or other diseases spread by sex?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>RECREATION - Skills and Abilities</strong></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Need More Info</th>
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<tr>
<td>Are you a sports fan (watch and talk about sports)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you play sports?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you get exercise at least several times a week so that you stay fit?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you a leader in any sports or other groups or activities (team captain, classroom monitor)?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Think about the skills you want to work on. Make notes of your needs and concerns. You can then talk about the next steps with the people who are helping you prepare for your future.

Notes to Myself: For each “Need More Info” item you checked, list questions you have or what you would like to know more about.

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Next Steps – Goals: List what you need to work on to help you learn how to take care of yourself in the future. You can ask the people who are helping you plan for your future to work on this with you.

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I want more information about:  ☐ Recreation Programs  ☐ Community Activities  ☐ Safety Programs

We’re here to help.
To learn more about the Division of Specialized Care for Children’s programs and services, check out our website at: dscc.uic.edu
1. Belonging is a very strong feeling that a person experiences when they are valued by others.

2. Being involved in group or structured activities is a great way for teens to:
   - Enhance self-awareness and a deeper sense of self. These skills help you see and understand who you are relative to the world around you. Self-awareness is the first step toward defining your goals.
   - Explore personal interests.
   - Develop social skills.
   - Have access to resources and activities.

3. Being with peers is also important for:
   - Learning how to get along with each other and how to problem solve.
   - Having more diversity in relationships.
   - Enjoying more opportunities to learn, grow and make informed choices.

4. Community participation can help you be successful by:
   - Fostering opportunities and excitement to contribute and be part of the community.
   - Providing resources to do and achieve things that are important to you.
   - Inspiring you to share your gifts and talents with the community.

5. Participation can challenge your abilities and help you achieve your goals.

6. Take these steps to get involved:
   - Identify your gifts, talents and dreams.
   - Identify barriers and think of solutions.
   - Create a plan.

7. Look for funding and scholarships to support your activities. The Division of Specialized Care for Children (DSCC) may be able to fund camps, classes and conferences for you to attend. Discuss possible options with your DSCC care coordination team.


8. Turn this page over for suggestions on how to find leisure and community participation activities.
It's Great Being Involved!

Ways to find opportunities for leisure and community participation:

- **Special Recreation Association Network of Illinois**: Call your nearest cooperative to find out more about special recreation services in your community - [specialrecreation.org/find-my-services.html](http://specialrecreation.org/find-my-services.html)

- **Camps**: DSCC's annual list of summer camps that provide a variety of options for all ages, including day and overnight programs (updated every spring) - [dssc.uic.edu/events/categories/camp/](http://dssc.uic.edu/events/categories/camp/)

- **YMCA**: After-school programs, specialty camps for campers with special needs, opportunities to explore new interests and passions, swimming lessons, sports and play opportunities and more - [www.ymca.org/find-your-y](http://www.ymca.org/find-your-y)

- **Special Olympics Illinois**: Allowing people with intellectual disabilities to realize their full potential in sports and in life. Programs enhance physical fitness, motor skills, self-confidence, social skills and encourage family and community support - [www.soill.org/](http://www.soill.org/)

- **DO-IT**: Students with disabilities can connect with mentors to learn about opportunities in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) - [www.washington.edu/doit](http://www.washington.edu/doit)

- **Lions of Illinois Foundation**: Serving people with vision and hearing needs - [lionsofillinoisfoundation.org/](http://lionsofillinoisfoundation.org/)

- **Neighborhood Parents Network**: Connecting Chicago parents, parent workshops and support groups - [www.nppnparents.org/](http://www.nppnparents.org/)

- **Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living (CILs)**: Peer support (social activities and meetings for a wide variety of disability categories) - [www.incil.org/](http://www.incil.org/)

- **Boys and Girls Clubs of America**: Programs designed to empower youth to excel in school, become good citizens and lead a healthy, productive life - [www.bgca.org/get-involved/find-a-club](http://www.bgca.org/get-involved/find-a-club)

- **4-H**: A youth development program - [4-h.org/find/](http://4-h.org/find/)

- **Supporting Illinois Brothers and Sisters**: Provides support to siblings of people with disabilities by connecting them with information, networking opportunities and resources in order to enhance the quality of life for their entire family - [www.sibsnetwork.org/](http://www.sibsnetwork.org/)

- **Illinois Department of Natural Resources**: Kids’ events, gardening tips, activity books, education materials, earth day in the parks and more - [www.dnr.illinois.gov/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/Pages/default.aspx)

- **Best Buddies Illinois**: Offers one-to-one friendship, socialization opportunities, integrated employment and leadership development programs for individuals with and without disabilities - [www.bestbuddies.org/illinois/](http://www.bestbuddies.org/illinois/)


- **School Activities**: After-school activities can offer some of the best learning experiences. Discover what your school offers and get involved with activities. You can develop new skills, increase self-esteem, improve social skills, have a change of pace and diversity, plus, it will look good on your resume or college application.

- **Faith-Based Youth Programs**: Can empower, protect and support well-being. Take a look at what is offered in your community.

- **Girl Scouts**: Fun activities, friendships, life skills, community experiences and more - [www.girlscouts.org/en/our-program/our-program.html](http://www.girlscouts.org/en/our-program/our-program.html)

- **Boy Scouts**: Scouting fun, hands-on-learning and achievement - [www.scouting.org/](http://www.scouting.org/)

- **Local Library**: Check with your library about inclusive programs for children with disabilities - [publiclibraries.com/state/illinois/](http://publiclibraries.com/state/illinois/)

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We're here to help.

To learn more about the Division of Specialized Care for Children's programs and services, check out our website at: [dssc.uic.edu](http://dssc.uic.edu)
Staying Safe While You Travel

1. **The best protection you have in a vehicle is your seat belt.** Don’t go anywhere without buckling up.

2. **If you travel in a wheelchair, remember to fasten all tie-downs.** They’ll help keep your wheelchair in place.

3. **While driving, always keep eyes on the road and off the phone. No texting while driving.** It is UNSAFE and could cause an accident!

4. When you are old enough for “Behind the Wheel” training, ask for help to see if adaptive devices/an adaptive vehicle are appropriate for you. Those who can help include your school Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, school counselor, occupational therapist or Division of Specialized Care for Children care coordination team.

5. There are specialized “Behind the Wheel Evaluation Services” available to help you decide what you need.

6. Funding is available for vehicle adaptations. Possible resources include:

   - **The Shirley Ryan Abilitylab’s LIFE Center** has information on drivers rehab programs at [www.sralab.org/lifecenter/resources/listing-drivers-rehabilitation-programs-chicago-area-and-beyond](http://www.sralab.org/lifecenter/resources/listing-drivers-rehabilitation-programs-chicago-area-and-beyond)

   - **The Department of Human Services (DHS) Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)** may help with the cost and installation of vehicle modifications for those in a vocational program. If you need a vehicle to access vocational rehabilitation services or to accomplish your employment goals, DRS may also fund a driver’s evaluation and training under these same conditions. Visit [www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12](http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12) to find an office in your area or call (800) 843-6154.

   - **The Illinois Assistive Technology Program** at [iltech.org/how-we-help/get-help-funding-at/](http://iltech.org/how-we-help/get-help-funding-at/) offers the IATP ATLOAN$ program. People with disabilities and their families can apply for cash to buy services, adaptive equipment, and home modifications. To see if you qualify or to apply, visit their website. For questions, contact Wanda at (217) 522-7985 or wparbs@iltech.org.

   - **The MDA Engage: Adaptive Driving** webinar is available for on-demand viewing. It focuses on understanding adaptive driving options and the processes involved. The webinar discusses vehicle modifications along with how to find resources and support for financing an adaptive vehicle: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZ3DE8RgAzc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZ3DE8RgAzc).
7. **Check your gas before you leave on a trip.** Running out of gas is no fun. It can leave you stranded in an unsafe place.

8. **Do not drink or use drugs and drive.** Do not get into a car when the driver has been drinking alcohol or is under the influence of drugs.

9. **Always drive with a licensed driver.** If the driver has a permit, then someone else in the car must have a license.

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**What You Need to Know to Get Around On Your Own in the Community**

- Recognize types of transportation.
- Understand that it is unsafe to accept rides with strangers.
- Use public transportation with assistance.
- Use public transportation independently.
- Learn how to call for a ride if using special transportation.
- Learn public bus schedules.
- Learn to safely enter and exit transportation.
- Know when and where to get on and off public transportation.
- Learn to ask for the cost of fare if you do not know.
- Identify the correct amount of money for the fare.
- Pay fare for the ride.
- Learn to use the wheelchair lift.
- Learn to ask for help with safety belts/harnesses.

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To learn more about transportation training classes, call the Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living toll-free at (800) 587-1227 or visit [www.incil.org/about-us/](http://www.incil.org/about-us/).
• Having friends is a way to help you learn to respect yourself and others.

• Having friends gives you someone to share your ideas, feelings and experiences with.

• It is important to know that friendships don’t always mean that everyone is getting along. Sometimes friends are happy and agree on almost everything. Other times, they disagree and might be upset with each other.

• Your thoughts and feelings about yourself and others will change as you get to know one another. You will learn more about yourself by exploring what you like and don’t like in others.

• It is nice to have friends from many different backgrounds and groups. This helps you learn about different people and develop relationships with people of different abilities.

• It may be tough at times to develop your identity. Being noticed and respected by others are important to us. It’s also very important to be true to yourself and your own values.

• Joining clubs, groups and teams at school is a good way to make friends who share your interests and likes.

• Participating in inclusive community and school programs can help you learn a variety of skills.

• Keeping friends is often not easy. Remember that friends need space and time by themselves.

• The best ways to make new friends and keep your old ones are to be a good listener, get along well with others and be a friendly person.

• Special recreation programs and health condition-specific summer camps are places where youth with special needs can meet and make new friends.

• Before going on a date, you should talk about tips for safe dating with parents, friends, counselors and other experts.
More helpful resources on friendships include:


- **The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities** has many resources, including webinars, a video library collection and FAQs on intellectual disability at [www.aaidd.org/intellectual-disability/faqs-on-intellectual-disability](https://www.aaidd.org/intellectual-disability/faqs-on-intellectual-disability).
Skills Checklist - Work

These activities will help youth gain the skills and abilities needed to reach their highest level of independence and ability. Some of these activities may not apply to everyone.

I plan to:  ☐ get a job    ☐ go to tech school or job training    ☐ go to college

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMPLOYMENT - Skills and Abilities</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Need More Info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you know how to use time properly, keep your workspace neat, respect other people's property and care for tools and supplies?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>When you are asked to do two or more things, can you do this on your own? (For example, “Get the envelope and put it in the mailbox.”)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have chores or tasks that you must do at home?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do your chores or tasks match your abilities?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you use a computer to browse the web, type papers or letters, send email or other tasks?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can you speak up to make your needs known (at school, work, community or home)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you do volunteer work?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you talk about what job or career you would like to do when you are older?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know what clothes to wear based on where you are going (work, play, etc.)?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know how to stay safe when away from home (such as finding the right streets, getting on or off the bus at the right place, using a phone)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you tell your friends and grown-ups (teacher, boss, principal) what you think?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know your strengths and interests?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know people or agencies that can help you find a job?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you written a job resume?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can you fill out a job application?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you apply for a job or work or vocational services?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know how to get along with others at school and work?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have a plan for work or job training or college?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you visited job sites or done job shadowing?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know what accommodations you can get at work to help you do your job?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have a part-time or a full-time job for pay?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know your workplace rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Think about the skills you want to work on. Make notes of your needs and concerns. You can then talk about the next steps with the people who are helping you prepare for your future.

**Notes to Myself:** For each “Need More Info” item you checked, list questions you have or what you would like to know more about.

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It is never too early to think of what kind of job you want to do after you finish school. You can then start to explore your interest in this area of work.

Programs to help you with work skills and finding a job include:

- **Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)** toll-free at (800) 843-6154 or (800) 447-6404 (TTY). DRS can help guide you in many ways as you prepare for work or college through:
  - Career planning and counseling
  - Job training (job coaches)
  - Funding for college when it leads to employment
  - On-site support, including transportation
  - Funding for a personal assistant

- **STEP** is a program that your school district might have that can be helpful for youth with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This program can help you learn job skills and get job training in your hometown.

- **Fast Track** can help with career inventory, introduction to resumes, writing cover letters, and interviewing skills.

### Vocational Training Resources

- Vocational and career training programs may be available through your high school. Ask your IEP team or school counselor.


- Illinois WorkNet Centers, [www.illinoisworknet.com](http://www.illinoisworknet.com), may be able to help you with:
  - Writing resumes, learning to interview, job search and disability resources

- Ask your school counselor, healthcare provider, DRS high school liaison, your Division of Specialized Care for Children (DSCC) care coordination team, friends and others for help finding and accessing vocational opportunities in your community.

On the other side of the page is a list of important steps to think about before leaving high school.
Before Leaving High School
Important Steps in Planning for the Transition to Work

• **Find out what your learning style is and what helps you learn best.** Do you learn best by seeing, hearing or doing it hands-on?

• Know your strengths and weaknesses. You can use these helpful worksheets at [www.lifecoursetools.com/lifecourse-library/foundational-tools/person-centered/](http://www.lifecoursetools.com/lifecourse-library/foundational-tools/person-centered/).

• **Explore your career interests and skills.** You can visit the Illinois Career Information System at [ilcis.intocareers.org/materials/portal/home.html](http://ilcis.intocareers.org/materials/portal/home.html).

• **Take classes to learn more about your areas of interest and that match your career interests.** This could include vocational classes and training.

• Attend your transition IEP meetings and be ready to answer these questions:
  
  - Would you like to go to college or tech school?
  - What would you like to study?
  - If you don’t want to go to college, what do you plan to do after high school?
  - Where do you want to work? Do you have the skills needed to work there?
  - Where will you live after high school?
  - What do you like to do for fun when you are not in school?

• Be able to explain your disability or health condition and know what supports you may need to live and work in a place of your choice. You may find helpful information at the Job Accommodation Network at [askjan.org/](http://askjan.org/) or (800) 526-7234.

• Check out assistive technology tools that could help you do things at work or in the community.
  
  - Infinitec is the assistive technology program of UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago, [https://ucpseguin.org/what-we-do/technology_services/infinitec_coalition.html](https://ucpseguin.org/what-we-do/technology_services/infinitec_coalition.html).
  - Illinois Assistive Technology Program (IATP) provides free information and assistance on assistive technology and other related disability topics, [iltech.org/](http://iltech.org/).

• Develop interview skills. Check out PACER’s National Parent Center on Transition and Employment’s video on 10 Job Interview Tips For (and By) Young People with Disabilities at [www.pacer.org/transition/video/player.asp?video=267](http://www.pacer.org/transition/video/player.asp?video=267).
What are your current skills?

To help you learn more about what skills you currently have and which ones you might need to build to be ready to go to work, check the Skills Matcher at www.careeronestop.org/toolkit/Skills/skills-matcher.aspx.

Here are skills that will help you do well in the workplace.

- Show the meaning of “yes” or “no.”
- Listen to instructions.
- Get and put items away when asked.
- Sweep, mop, vacuum or dust.
- Fold paper.
- Look for an opportunity to job shadow (watch somebody do their job to learn more about that type of work).
- Arrive at work on time.
- Repeat tasks after modeling.
- Follow instructions needing an action and an object.
- Use basic tools in the workplace.
- Use the telephone.
- Make copies.
- Print, write or dictate messages.
- Deliver a simple message.
- Use assistive technology in the workplace.
- Allow a personal attendant to help in the workplace.
- Tell supervisor if you will be late.
- Tell supervisor when absent due to illness or appointment.
- Obey time limits for breaks and lunch.

Some skills you may need for interacting well with your boss and co-workers are on the back of this page.
Skills for Getting Along with Co-Workers

- Know how to greet others, such as shaking hands and saying hello.
- Use good eye contact when talking to or listening to others.
- Know how to introduce yourself, such as stating your first and last name.
- Respect personal body space of others.
- Use an assistive device to talk to others.
- Smile and talk to others during breaks.
- Say what you need to be able to do your job.
- Ask and answer questions.
- Get along with others.
- Show likes/dislikes in the workplace.
- Keep your emotions under control.

Resources to Help:


Workplace Readiness Training - [www.wintac.org/topic-areas/pre-employment-transition-services/overview/workplace-readiness-training](http://www.wintac.org/topic-areas/pre-employment-transition-services/overview/workplace-readiness-training)

Transition Tips: Preparing for the Workforce - [centerontransition.org/publications/download.cfm?id=102](http://centerontransition.org/publications/download.cfm?id=102)
Is It Time to Get a Job?

There are many ways to get work experience and find a job you love.

- **Work is a great way to learn basic skills**, such as:
  - Getting along with others
  - Understanding the value of money
  - Managing time
  - Handling new responsibilities
  - Developing self-confidence

- **Working can give you**:
  - A sense of accomplishment
  - Self-worth
  - Independence
  - A way to share your strengths and gifts
  - New friendships

- **You may already have job experience**. Do you:
  - Babysit younger kids?
  - Help your family around the house?
  - Do yard work for your neighbors?
  - Care for a pet?
  - Volunteer to help your teachers?

- **Volunteer work is a good way to get experience** when you are not sure what you want to do or how much time you will have to do it.

- Having a job when you are young will help you find and keep a job when you are older.
• If you would rather not work during the school year, consider working only during the summer.

• Wouldn’t it be nice to **have work benefits and make more money** than what comes from Social Security every month? With Supplemental Security Income (SSI) work incentives, you can go to work and not lose your medical/Medicaid card or your SSI.

• **Ways to gain work experience:**
  - Volunteer for community work or school projects.
  - Work around the house or for neighbors or friends.
  - Spend time watching (job shadowing) someone already doing the type of job you want to do.
  - Work a part-time job for experience and start a good work record.
  - Work a job within the community during the school year as part of the school-work program.

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**Here are resources to help you build work experience and prepare for job success:**

- Illinois Worknet Center - [www.illinoisworknet.com/](http://www.illinoisworknet.com/)
- Department of Human Services Disability and Rehabilitation Services - [www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29727](http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29727)
- Illinois Center for Transition and Work - [ictw.illinois.edu/](http://ictw.illinois.edu/)
- Illinois Career Information Center - [ilcis.intocareers.org/materials/portal/home.html](http://ilcis.intocareers.org/materials/portal/home.html)
- Job Accommodation Network - [askjan.org/](http://askjan.org/) - (800) 526-7234
- Illinois Employment & Training Center - [ides.illinois.gov/](http://ides.illinois.gov/) - (877) 342-7533
- Seven Fast Facts on Work-Based Learning Experiences - [ictw.illinois.edu/docs/librariesprovider25/fact-sheets/woia/wbles.pdf?sfvrsn=c28fa619_14](http://ictw.illinois.edu/docs/librariesprovider25/fact-sheets/woia/wbles.pdf?sfvrsn=c28fa619_14)
We All Have Strengths and Talents

Transition Skills, Tips & Tools
Finding Your Strengths and Talents

• We all have something that we are good at. Sometimes it is so obvious that we don't realize it.

• Find your personal strengths and abilities. These are things you are good at or others admire about you.

• Think about your strengths and what you are good at. They might include:
  – Making people feel happy
  – Writing letters, poems, stories
  – Finding constellations
  – Throwing darts
  – Reading stories to children
  – Talking on the telephone
  – Using computers
  – Forecasting the weather
  – Having a good sense of direction

• Identify two or three strengths related to your disability:
  – Determination - to keep working on your goals and giving your best effort.
  – Problem-solving - to get around daily challenges and think creatively to find solutions.
  – Communication - to express to others what you need when you can't do it yourself.
  – Interpersonal skills - to build relationships with others, such as when you need them to help you.

• Ask your friends and family to help you learn what you are good at.

• Learn new talents. Get together with your friends and share your talents.
• Try new things to learn more about all your abilities and interests. For example, cook something new, learn about a famous person, plant a garden, learn to play a musical instrument, paint a picture, write a poem, join a club, or learn to sew.

• Showing your talents and knowing they are valued by people important to you can help you define your identity around what you do best.

• **Talents, strengths and areas of interest can be stepping stones to a career or job.**

### Vocational Training Resources

- **Charting the LifeCourse:** These tools may help you plan for your best life - [www.lifecoursetools.com/lifecourse-library/foundational-tools/person-centered/](http://www.lifecoursetools.com/lifecourse-library/foundational-tools/person-centered/). You can use the Integrated Support Star to help identify your and your family’s strengths or solve a specific need.

- **Strengths and Interests Assessments:**
  - **Assessment: Find Your Strengths! — Multiple Intelligences for Adults Literacy and Education:** [www.literacynet.org/mi/assessment/findyourstrengths.html](http://www.literacynet.org/mi/assessment/findyourstrengths.html)
  - **Worksheet for Identifying Interests, Values, and Strengths — Cornell University, Career Services:** [archive.ilr.cornell.edu/download/7341](http://archive.ilr.cornell.edu/download/7341) or [archive.ilr.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/understanding-yourself-worksheet.pdf](http://archive.ilr.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/understanding-yourself-worksheet.pdf)
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