

Transition Guide: Parents' Role

How Parents Can Support Their Young Adult During Transition



Parental Involvement in Transition

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



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

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

Don't forget...

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

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

Start Early Planning for Transition

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

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



Set the standard of high expectations. Assume competence.

Thoughts from other parents...

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

Skills Checklists for Parents

- <https://waismanucedd.wiscweb.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/74/2017/05/HTSC.pdf>
- <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/sites/www/files/documents/SpEd/Transition/Transition%20Checklist.pdf>
- https://nesc.k12.sd.us/resources/Quickbook_of_Transition_Assessment.pdf