



AFC'S GUIDE TO

# Transition Services

HELPING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES  
MOVE FROM SCHOOL TO ADULTHOOD

October 2013



Advocates for Children of New York  
Protecting every child's right to learn

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This guide does not constitute legal advice. It attempts to summarize existing policies or laws without stating the opinion of AFC. If you have a legal problem, please contact an attorney or advocate.

## WHAT IS SPECIAL EDUCATION?

Special education is “specially designed instruction” that meets “the unique needs of a child with a disability.” The definition includes instruction in the classroom, at home, in hospitals and in institutions. The federal law governing special education is called the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**. In addition, both New York State and New York City have laws and policies that grant important rights to students with disabilities.

Special education is commonly thought of as separate classes or schools for children with disabilities; however, special education is not a place, but a range of services intended to meet each child’s individual needs. Depending on the needs of the child, these services may be provided in a general education setting, in separate settings, or in a combination of the two.



# WHAT IS AN IEP?

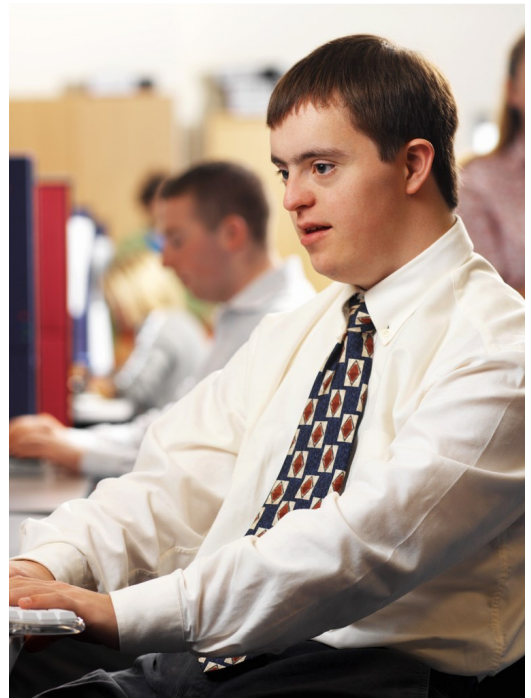
An **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** is a very important legal document. It outlines a student's needs and includes all of the services that he or she is entitled to receive as a student with a disability. The IEP should describe your child's strengths, as well as the ways in which your child's disability affects his or her ability to learn in school.

As a parent, you are an essential part of the IEP team and should be an equal participant in the decision-making process. Other required IEP team members include a special education teacher, a general education teacher (if your child may participate in a general education setting), a district representative, and someone who can interpret the results of any evaluations. Depending on the type of review, additional people may also be required to attend.

## An IEP must include:

- A description of the student's "present levels of educational performance," including a description of how your child's disability affects her progress in the general curriculum
- Measurable annual goals
- The special education and related services needed for your child to meet her goals and progress in the general curriculum, as well as to participate in extracurricular and other activities
- Testing accommodations, promotion criteria, and whether your child will participate in standardized tests.

By the time a student reaches the age of 15, her IEP also must include **transition services**. This guide is designed to help families learn more about the transition process and how transition services can benefit their child.



## WHAT IS THE TRANSITION PROCESS?

The transition process is designed to help students with disabilities move smoothly from school to adult life. Transitioning to adulthood is difficult regardless of a youth's abilities, so transition planning is key to ensuring success in adulthood for young people with disabilities. Adult services are very different from the services provided to students. There is no right to a job, day program or residence once your child leaves school, so **early planning is essential!**

Since students age out of the public school system at the end of the school year in which they turn 21, understanding the transition process is very important. Without a complete transition plan, your child could leave school without realistic goals for their future or without the skills needed to pursue further education, a job, needed community services, or independent living.

In New York state, the law says that transition planning must begin by the age of 15, and may start earlier when appropriate. Transition planning is part of the IEP process and should be reviewed and updated each year. The IEP team (see page 4), which includes the student and his or her parents, develops the transition plan. The student must be invited to any IEP meeting where postsecondary goals and transition services will be considered. Because the transition process focuses on the student's interests and abilities, students are a critical part of the process.

The New York State IEP addresses transition planning in two separate sections: **Measurable Postsecondary Goals** and **Coordinated Set of Transition Activities**. These two sections very clearly follow the requirements of the federal IDEA. Other parts of the state IEP that address the transition process include the "Annual Goals" and "Participation in Assessments" sections, all of which will be discussed below.



## WHAT ARE “POSTSECONDARY GOALS”?

**Postsecondary goals** are a student’s long-term aspirations for living, working and learning as an adult. They are based on the student’s hopes for the future as well as their individual needs. They should serve as the basis for mapping the student’s transition from school to post-school activities. These goals provide guidance to the student, the family, and the school district when planning for activities and services that prepare the youth for adulthood.

Postsecondary goals should be based on age-appropriate, formal and informal transition assessments. A thorough assessment of the individual student is required to develop appropriate planning goals. The IDEA states that goals must be developed in three essential areas:

**Education & Training** refers to programs like career and technical education, job training, continuing and adult education, or college. These goals should answer the question, “Where will my child acquire the skills to become what he or she wants to be?” Some examples are:

- Stacy will complete a training program as a Certified Nursing Assistant.
- Eddie will enroll in a four-year college.
- Juan will volunteer at various job sites to develop job skills and determine personal interests.

**Employment** refers to programs like supported employment or internships. These goals should answer the question, “How does your child want to earn a living?” Examples are:

- Barry will gain relevant job experience by working for at least one year in a retail store.
- Jasmine will explore career opportunities in the arts by interning at a local museum.

**Independent Living Skills** (when appropriate). These goals should answer the question, “Is my child capable of living independently as an adult?” Examples of goals that address independent living skills are:

- Matthew will learn to travel on his own.
- Kenny will live in a supportive housing program.
- Keisha will live in a group home with full support.

## Vocational Assessments

The IEP team can use a variety of assessment approaches and tools to develop a full picture of a student's abilities and interests. These may include vocational evaluations, achievement tests, assessments of postsecondary skills, interviews with the student and/or parent, and teacher observations. All of these assessments can help the IEP team plan goals for the student's transition to adulthood.

A vocational assessment is an evaluation that measures a student's interests and abilities in job-related areas. It incorporates information gathered from the student, parent, and teacher utilizing Vocational Assessment Interview forms and a review of school records to determine vocational skills, aptitudes, and interests.

## Annual Goals

Once the student's postsecondary goals are established, they should be broken down into measurable, annual goals on the student's IEP. New York State has identified ten areas that should be considered when planning transition activities and services that address annual goals:

1. education;
2. legal/advocacy;
3. personal independence/residential;
4. recreation/leisure;
5. financial/income;
6. medical/health;
7. employment;
8. transportation;
9. post-secondary/continuing education; and
10. other support needs.

Examples of annual goals might be, "Noah will increase his awareness of careers by identifying entry level criteria of at least three jobs of interest to him" or "Peter will learn to file alphabetically and numerically with 90% accuracy by practicing in an office setting."



## WHAT ARE “TRANSITION SERVICES,” AND WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

Transition services are **“a coordinated set of activities”** for a child with a disability that will prepare the student to move from school to post-school life. They are the services and activities that will help your child develop the skills needed to successfully reach their postsecondary goals, as outlined above. According to New York State law, starting at the age of 15, or younger if appropriate, the school district must provide transition services to students with disabilities. Transition services should allow your child to work step-by-step toward their long-term goals.

The IEP Team should identify the gaps between the skills the student has and those he or she needs to reach their goals, then select strategies to develop those necessary skills. Services are “coordinated” when there is a link between each of the activities and when the school, family, and any outside agencies are connected to ensure the smooth provision of services. The coordinated activities must be based on a student’s strengths, needs, preferences, and abilities. The New York State IEP divides transition services into six categories:

- Instruction
- Related Services
- Community Experiences
- Development of Employment and Other Post-school Adult Living Objectives
- Acquisition of Daily Living Skills (if applicable)
- Functional Vocational Assessment (if applicable)

The IEP Team must discuss and consider your child’s needs and abilities in each area. The team may decide that a student does not need transition services in one or more of these areas, and should not create activities in an area if the student does not need support in that particular domain. Examples of transition services in each of the categories are listed in the next section of this guidebook.

Transition services must be targeted to address your child’s disability. If your child has a learning disability, for example, the transition services recommended for your child may be different from the transition services recommended for a student with an emotional disturbance or a student with a hearing impairment.



For each service or activity, the IEP should specify which party is responsible for carrying out the activity. This can include the student, the parent, the school, or an outside agency or provider. Make sure that the school is responsible for at least some of the coordinated activities. Outside agencies can and should be invited to attend IEP meetings where you will be discussing transition services.

You should also be aware of the role of **transition linkage coordinators (TLCs)**. Some schools in the New York City public school system have a TLC, who plays an important role in the transition process. The TLC may serve as a liaison with outside agencies and help students with applications and other relevant transition activities. If your child's school does not have a transition linkage coordinator, these responsibilities will likely fall to his or her guidance counselor. For students in District 75 programs, if the program does not have a TLC located in the school, there are transition coordinators at the district level connected to each District 75 program. You should learn who your child's TLC or guidance counselor is and arrange to meet with that person to discuss the transition process.



## CATEGORIES OF TRANSITION SERVICES

Transition services aim to prepare your child for whatever he or she will go on to do after leaving the public school system. Every child is unique and will require individualized transition services. To prepare you for the transition planning process, the following are explanations of the categories of transition services appearing on your child's IEP. Along with each definition, we have included an example of an appropriate transition service.

### **Instruction:**

Educational instruction that will be provided to the student to build the skills necessary to reach post-secondary goals. Instruction could include general or special education courses to meet academic requirements, advanced placement courses, career and technical education or remedial services.

*Example:* For a student struggling in math...

“Darius will attend after-school tutoring 3 days a week to address math weaknesses. Darius will also complete 90% of math homework assignments.”

### **Related Services:**

These are the services needed for students to access integrated work, education and living environments. They may include occupational and physical therapy, speech therapy, rehabilitative counseling services, travel training, and other professional supports.

*Example:* For a student who has difficulty traveling on her own...

“Samantha will complete 50 hours of travel training between home and school and school and a community activity during the school year.”

### **Community Experiences:**

A variety of activities and experiences that are provided outside the school building. These might include community resources utilized as part of the student's school program, whether during school hours or after school hours, to achieve the stated outcome(s) of community integration (e.g., volunteering, residential tours, college tours, recreation and leisure activities).

*Example:* For a student interested in cooking...

“Tracy will volunteer at her church's soup kitchen for at least 50 hours during the school year.”

## **Development of Employment and Other Post-school Adult Living Objectives:**

This area focuses on the development of work-related behaviors, job seeking and keeping skills, career exploration and actual employment, such as career planning, job shadowing, job training, or supported employment.



Example: For a student who is interested in health care...

“Lisa will research ten post-secondary programs in the health care field and write one-page evaluations of each program.”

Example: For a student who is close to his family but wants to live independently after high school...

“Luis will research and visit at least three different housing options within 20 minutes of his family’s home.”

## **Acquisition of Daily Living Skills:**

Daily living skills are the skills involved in caring for oneself on a daily basis. These skills are an important component of independent living and include such activities as dressing, grooming, hygiene, self-care skills, household chores, shopping, and managing finances. How completely the student has mastered daily living skills may ultimately determine the type of living environment selected as most appropriate.

Example: For a student interested in developing a more independent daily routine...

“Dennis will read time schedules, recall his Social Security Number, and follow a weekly budget with 90% accuracy.”

Example: For a student who needs to develop basic daily living skills...

“Cassandra will practice basic daily living skills during school hours. This school year, she will attend school outings to practice the following skills: using money and getting change, ordering from a menu, and selecting groceries.”

## **Functional Vocational Assessment:**

An additional assessment process if the regular vocational assessment has not provided enough information to make a vocational program decision. Additional assessment activities, such as situational assessments, community-based assessments, assistive technology evaluations or aptitude tests, can be performed to get more information about the student’s needs, preferences, and interests.

## WHAT RIGHTS DO PARENTS AND STUDENTS HAVE DURING THE TRANSITION PROCESS?

Parents are an integral member of the IEP team; you should be invited to attend every IEP meeting for your child. You have the right to be an active participant during the meetings. In addition, you have the right to invite other people to the IEP meeting who know your child and can support you.

A specific transition plan for your child should be created or reviewed as part of the yearly IEP meetings when your child turns 15. Your child should also begin receiving transition services when they turn 15.

Students 14 or older must be invited to participate in IEP meetings where transition planning is or will be a part of the IEP. If the student does not attend, the team must ensure that the student's preferences and interests are considered.

In addition to the required members of the IEP team listed on page 4 of this guidebook, a representative from any agencies likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services must be invited to attend any IEP meetings where transition services will be discussed.

As always when special education matters are at issue, a parent has the right to object to transition services or goals with which they do not agree. If a parent is not in agreement with a student's transition plan, she may request a new IEP meeting, mediation, or an impartial due process hearing. For more information about the impartial hearing process, see AFC's Guide to Impartial Hearings at [http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/get\\_help/guides\\_and\\_resources](http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/get_help/guides_and_resources).



## WHAT ARE THE DOE'S RESPONSIBILITIES DURING THE TRANSITION PROCESS?

In our experience, there are six DOE responsibilities to monitor during the transition process. Become familiar with these areas so you can be an active advocate for your child.

- ✓ **The DOE should develop a transition plan for any student older than 15.** New York State law requires that a transition plan be developed for your child at the first IEP meeting following his or her **15th birthday**, if not earlier.
- ✓ **The DOE should include the student and the parent in transition planning.** Your family's input is extremely important in transition planning. You are a required member of the IEP team, and the meeting should be held at a time and location convenient for you. Your child **must** be invited to attend any IEP meeting that will consider transition services. New York State law requires that "if the student does not attend, the [school] district shall take steps to ensure that the student's preferences and interests are considered."
- ✓ **The DOE should involve outside agencies in the transition process.** Outside agencies can be incredibly helpful to the school, parent, and student in the transition process. For this reason, New York State law requires that with parental consent, the school district invite representatives from any appropriate agencies to your child's IEP meeting. If such representatives are unable to attend, "the [school] district shall take steps to involve the agency in the planning of any transition services."
- ✓ **The DOE should develop appropriate and measurable post-secondary goals.** The law requires that your child's transition goals be measurable. There must be some way to evaluate your child's progress in achieving the post-secondary and annual goals listed on his or her IEP. Without benchmarks to measure student progress, it is nearly impossible to determine if the DOE's transition services are benefiting your child.
- ✓ **The DOE should incorporate the student's needs, strengths, preferences, and interests when developing post-secondary goals.** The law requires that your child's transition services are based on her individual needs, strengths, preferences, and interests. The IEP team must consider your child's personal situation before developing long-term adult outcomes for him or her.
- ✓ **The DOE should plan the student's course of study.** The law requires that transition services include the "courses of study" necessary for your child to achieve his postsecondary goals. The IEP should chart the courses a student needs to earn the credits and pass the tests necessary to achieve his diploma objective and pursue his goals for the future.

## WHAT ELSE SHOULD I CONSIDER?

### Decision-Making

In most states, the right to make special education decisions transfers from the parent to the student when the student turns 18 years old. In New York state, however, parents retain the right to make special education decisions for the children up till the age of 21.

For children with more severe disabilities, parents should think about **Guardianship** and **Estate Planning issues**. Generally, at age 18, a person can make his or her own decisions about medical care, housing, and other legal matters. However, for someone who is not able to make decisions about personal needs, property, and finance, a parent (or other individual) must become the legal guardian of the person in order to gain the right to make decisions on his or her behalf. Parents must petition a court to gain guardianship, and should begin the process well before a child turns 18 so that guardianship is in place when the young person turns 18.

A parent or guardian may also want to set up a **Special Needs trust** for their child in order to protect certain assets for them. This trust allows funds to be set aside for an individual with a disability without affecting their right to entitlements such as Medicaid. These trusts should be developed with the assistance of an attorney who is experienced in setting up such trusts.

### Diploma Objectives

There are five high school diplomas & credentials available to students in New York City:

- Regents Diploma
- Advanced Regents Diploma
- Local Diploma
- CDOS Credential
- SACC

This list does not include the High School Equivalency Diploma, often referred to as the GED.

By law, students with disabilities must be given the opportunity to earn a **Regents Diploma** whenever appropriate. To get a Regents Diploma, all students must earn at least 44 credits and pass Regents exams in English Language Arts, math, science, Global History and U.S. History with a 65 or above. Students can get an **Advanced Regents diploma** if they pass additional exams in math and science and additional credits and exams in a foreign language.

The **Local Diploma** is almost completely phased out for general education students. However, general education students who earn their required 44 credits, pass at least three of their Regents exams and earn a 62, 63 or 64 on one or two of their remaining exams can appeal the lower scores and can seek a Local diploma if they meet other classwork and attendance requirements.

Students with IEPs also have the opportunity to graduate from high school with a **Local Diploma**. In order to get a Local Diploma, these students must earn the required 44 credits, but can pass one or more Regents exams with a score of 55-64. In addition, students with disabilities who entered high school in September 2010 or earlier may earn a local diploma if they pass one or more **Regents Competency Tests (RCTs)**, instead of the Regents exams. Finally, special education students can earn a Local Diploma with a score of 45-54 on certain Regents exams if they score above a 65 on another exam.

Students with IEPs used to be able to earn something called an **IEP Diploma**. An IEP diploma is not really a high school diploma, but a certificate indicating that the student has met the goals on his IEP. IEP Diplomas are only appropriate for students with significant cognitive and developmental delays, and should not have been awarded just because a student had trouble passing his Regents exams. If a student received an IEP Diploma, he can return to school to try for a regular diploma until the end of the school year in which he turns 21.

Students with IEPs can now earn something called a **Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential**. The CDOS Credential is intended to indicate a student's readiness for entry-level jobs. It can be awarded either in addition to a Regents or Local diploma or to a student with a disability who is unable to earn a Regents or Local diploma. The CDOS Credential is not a diploma and cannot be used to apply to college, the military, or trade schools. If a student receives a CDOS Credential, she can always return to school until she receives a Regents or Local diploma or until she turns 21, whichever happens first.

Finally, students with severe disabilities can earn a **Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (SACC)**. A SACC is available to students with severe disabilities who take the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) and do not meet the requirements for a Regents or Local diploma. Students who receive the SACC will receive a certificate and an exit summary documenting their strengths, level of achievement and interests. A SACC is not a diploma and cannot be used to apply to college, the military, or trade schools.

## Advocacy Tips

- ✓ Be **involved** in every step of your child's life.
- ✓ Keep lines of **communication** open with the people who deal with your child. Provide positive as well as negative feedback. Even when you are angry about something that has happened, try to **speak calmly** when making your point.
- ✓ **Keep things in writing!** Keep a notebook for yourself of all communications with school personnel and outside clinicians. Follow up on conversations with written confirmation.
- ✓ Always work toward **solutions** when there is a problem. Insist that your child's educators create positive plans for change to correct any problem that exists.
- ✓ Send all important information by **certified mail, return receipt requested**. Keep copies of all documents for yourself.
- ✓ Keep a **transition folder** with all documents relevant to the transition process.
- ✓ Attend all **information sessions** on transition services held by your child's school or outside agencies.
- ✓ **Address all questions** about the transition process **to a school official** such as your child's guidance counselor or transition linkage coordinator.
- ✓ Familiarize yourself with **the relevant outside agencies** to know what services are available for your child.
- ✓ Ask about the **requirements and limitations of the different diploma options**.
- ✓ Set **realistic goals** for your child.
- ✓ Keep in mind that the **Annual Goals** portion of the IEP should correspond to the **postsecondary goals and transition services** listed.
- ✓ Know **your rights** and the **DOE's responsibilities** regarding the transition process.
- ✓ **Be persistent**. If someone says there is nothing that can be done for your child, get a second opinion.
- ✓ **Bring along a friend**, family member, clinician, or someone who knows your child outside of school to school meetings if you feel your perspective is not being heard by the DOE.





## Jerome: A Transition Success Story

Jerome is a 19-year-old male on the Autism spectrum who is very dependent on others. He is verbal, but has a limited vocabulary. Jerome can voice his wants and needs, but he can get aggressive at times when he cannot express his feelings. Jerome is successful in a supportive and structured environment where he receives positive reinforcement. Consistency is essential for Jerome. Jerome's mother is very uncomfortable with the fact that her son will soon graduate from school, because she is unsure of what his future holds.

Jerome's mother researched many programs and applied to **OPWDD** for Jerome. He was found eligible for services, and she was connected with the local **Developmental Disabilities Service Office (DDSO)**. The DDSO suggested that she look into day habilitation programs for her son. After visiting many programs, Jerome's mother found a program that she feels is most appropriate for her child. In this year-round program, Jerome will participate in structured daily living and recreational activities each day. He will also be brought into various community businesses on a regular basis to participate in a work-study program. Jerome's mother can now rest easier knowing that her son has a post-graduation placement.

## **PRIMARY AGENCIES THAT PROVIDE SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN NEW YORK CITY**

Your child has the right to stay in school until the end of the school year in which he turns 21. At the same time, he should be referred to appropriate outside agencies during his final two years of school. These agencies can arrange for additional training, education, or placement services upon your child's exit from the public school system. The DOE has a legal responsibility to involve outside agencies in the transition process, but it is important for parents to monitor this responsibility. The following are important agencies to know about for many transition-age students:

### **Adult Career and Continuing Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)**

ACCES-VR, formerly known as VESID, provides vocational rehabilitation services to prepare people with disabilities for various job settings. Individuals must apply and be found eligible for ACCES-VR services in order to receive services from the agency. Your child's TLC or other school personnel should help them apply to ACCES-VR.

ACCES-VR offers a variety of programs to help students prepare for employment settings, including job training, payment for post-secondary education, sheltered employment, supportive employment, and competitive employment. In addition, ACCES-VR can help your child develop independent living skills. For more information, visit: <http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr>.

### **Office of People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)**

OPWDD, formerly known as OMRDD, provides a variety of services for individuals with developmental disabilities, including intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome and autism spectrum disorders. Services may range from assistance with employment opportunities to funding attendance at day programs.

In order to receive services, you must complete an application for your child and submit required documentation of your child's disability, such as psycho-education evaluations and medical reports. OPWDD offers services to people of all ages, but if your child has not been receiving OPWDD services, an application should be completed at least two years before their exit from the public school system. For more information, visit: <http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/>.

## Office of Mental Health (OMH)

OMH provides various services, including mental health counseling, to individuals with mental health disabilities. OMH offers various resources for the transition process, such as information on educational and vocational sites, housing opportunities, employment, or life skills training sites. For more information, visit:

[http://www.omh.ny.gov/omhweb/consumer\\_affairs/transition\\_youth/resources/](http://www.omh.ny.gov/omhweb/consumer_affairs/transition_youth/resources/).

## Social Security Administration (SSA)

The SSA operates the federally funded program that provides benefits to people of any age who have a significant impairment because of a mental or physical disability. Adults also must be unable to do substantial work to qualify for some programs. Some programs that the SSA offers for people with disabilities include Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Plans to Achieve Self-Support (PASS), Medicaid, and Medicare. For more information, visit:

[www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov).

### TIP!

People with a qualifying disability, such as a cognitive or mobility impairment, are eligible for reduced fare Metrocards to use on public subways and busses in New York City. For more information, visit the MTA website at <http://www.mta.info/nyct/fare/rfindex.htm>.



## OTHER SUPPORTS AND RESOURCES

Transition planning can be daunting, but there are many resources available to support parents and young adults throughout the process. Some people or agencies that may help your family make it through the transition process include:

- Postsecondary education and training programs, such as representatives from colleges, universities or trade schools;
- Advocacy organizations, including disability-specific organizations like UCP or QSAC;
- Community based agencies;
- Employers from your community;
- Housing agency representatives;
- Residential service providers;
- The United Way; or
- Your local YMCA or YWCA.

Between the ages of 14-21, many students with significant disabilities are entitled to receive **Career and Technology Education (CTE)** through District 75. This community-based learning is offered at over 420 training locations throughout the five boroughs. The training sites work closely with vocational rehabilitation and adult services agencies to ensure that students continue to get the services they need when transitioning into a supported or competitive employment setting. For more information, visit: <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/District75/Departments/Transition/CTEImprovementAct/>.

It can be helpful to visit your borough's **Family Support Fair** to find resources and make connections for your child. While there, you can investigate other services and programs for your family, such as benefits, family support services, or service coordination. These supports can help get your child out into the community apart from the regular school day. Contact your local Developmental Disabilities Council for more information.

**Client Assistance Program (CAP)** is a statewide network of skilled advocates that help New Yorkers with disabilities get the training, equipment and services they need to be employed. They advise individuals with disabilities about their rights and responsibilities as clients or applicants for vocational rehabilitation services and can help mediate disputes between clients and rehabilitation services agencies or facilities. For more information, visit <http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/do/cap.htm> or call (212) 674-2300.

**Independent Living Centers** are stationed throughout the NYC area. Each center offers different types of programs to help adults with disabilities become self-sufficient. Assistance is provided to find jobs, housing and benefits. For more information, visit the ACCES-VR website.

**New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI)** is the Protection and Advocacy office for the New York City area. They can assist people with disabilities with a variety of legal issues involving disability rights including problems with housing, employment, and building access. They also can provide information to parents petitioning for guardianship of their adult child. For more information, visit <http://www.nylpi.org/> or call (212) 244-4664.

## Helpful Websites

### Career Zone

<https://careerzone.ny.gov/views/careerzone/index.jsf>

Career Zone is an online tool to help you explore your career path by choosing careers related to a student's strengths, skills and talents. The website is divided into six clusters: arts and humanities; business and information systems; engineering and technology; health services; natural and agricultural sciences; and human and public services.

### National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities

<http://nichcy.org/wp-content/uploads/docs/ts10.pdf>

Guide to "Transition Planning: A Team Effort" is a national guide to developing effective transition plans. The guide offers creative ways to think about transition planning and includes a long list of additional resources at the end.

### The ARISE Coalition

[http://arisecoalition.org/transition\\_planning.php](http://arisecoalition.org/transition_planning.php)

The ARISE Coalition's website links to information for families of students with disabilities in New York City and features a dedicated page outlining the rights of students and families in transition planning and providing a list of free resources for students looking for academic support, and assistance in job training and placement as they transition to life after high school.

### New York City Department of Education's District 75 Transition Office

<http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/District75/Departments/Transition/default.htm>

## Helpful Documents for Beginning the Transition Process

- "Transition Services: A Planning and Implementation Guide," created by ACCESS-VR, is available at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/transition/guide.htm>.
- Sample Transition Goals and Objectives are available at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/transition/guideapx.htm#l>.
- The Transition Planning Timeline, which appears on the following page of this guidebook, is also available at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/transition/guide.htm#trans>.

## TRANSITION PLANNING TIMELINE

The following is a series of events that may need to be considered during a student's transition process. All items will not be applicable to all students; the list is provided as a planning tool for parents and students of varied abilities.

Action	Suggested Age Range
Administer initial vocational assessment	12
Discuss the following curriculum areas at IEP meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Social</li> <li>• Language/communication</li> <li>• Occupational</li> <li>• Self-help skills</li> <li>• Self advocacy skills</li> </ul>	12-15
Develop and implement strategies to increase responsibilities and independence at home.	12-15
Complete periodic vocational evaluations.	12-21
Introduce & discuss Transition Services	14
Notify parents that transition services will be incorporated into the IEP beginning at age 15	14
Assure that copies of work-related documents are available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Birth certificate</li> <li>• Social Security card</li> <li>• Obtain working papers (if appropriate)</li> </ul>	14-16
Obtain parental consent so that the appropriate adult agency representative can be involved	14-16
Develop transition component of IEP and annually thereafter	15+
Discuss adult transition with CSE	15-21

<b>Action</b>	<b>Suggested Age Range</b>
Consider summer employment/ volunteer experience	<b>15-20</b>
Explore community leisure activities	<b>15-21</b>
Consider the need for residential opportunities, including completing applications, as appropriate.	<b>15-21</b>
Obtain personal ID card	<b>16-18</b>
Obtain driver's training & license	<b>16-18</b>
Develop Transportation/Mobility Strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent Travel Skills Training</li> <li>• Public or Paratransit Transportation</li> <li>• Needs for Travel Attendant</li> </ul>	<b>16-21</b>
Investigate SSDI/SSI/Medicaid programs	<b>16-18</b>
Consider guardianship or emancipation	<b>16-18</b>
Develop & update employment plans	<b>16-21</b>
Involve ACCES-VR, as appropriate, within 2 years of school exit	<b>16-21</b>
Research possible adult living situations	<b>16-18</b>
Investigate post-school opportunities (further educational vocational training, college, military, etc.)	<b>16-18</b>
Seek legal guardianship	<b>18</b>
Apply for post-school college & other training programs	<b>17-21</b>
Male students register for the draft. (No exceptions)	<b>18</b>
Register to vote	<b>18</b>
Review health insurance coverage: inform insurance company of son/ daughter's disability & investigate rider of continued eligibility	<b>18</b>



## **Our Mission**

AFC promotes access to the best education New York can provide for all students, especially students of color and students from low-income backgrounds. We use uniquely integrated strategies to advance systemic reform, empower families and communities, and advocate for the educational rights of individual students.

### **Still have more questions?**

#### **Please Call**

#### **The Jill Chaifetz Education Helpline**

Monday through Thursday

10AM to 4PM

866-427-6033 (toll free)

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