

A Transition Guide for Teens with Disabilities: Your Journey, Your Way



We are here to listen to your story and help you find answers and solutions.

ADRC of Brown County
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ADRC is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization

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Getting Started

The transition from school to the adult world is a significant milestone for any young adult. This transition takes on special importance for youth with disabilities. When high school ends, so does their entitlement to special education and related services. Young adults with disabilities and their families must pursue and coordinate needed services and supports for themselves. ADRC is here to help you navigate topics including:

- Discussion of rights and responsibilities when turning eighteen
- Decision making supports and guardianship
- Continuing education and/or employment
- Access to adult long-term care programs
- Information on applying & appeal for public benefits including healthcare and disability
- Healthcare changes

We give you the options so that you can make the decisions best for your journey.

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Our Mission

“Empower and enrich the lives of older adults, adults with disabilities and their caregivers.”

For more information:

Visit our website:

www.adrcofbrowncounty.org

211 Community Services database:

www.get211.org

Understanding the Transition Timeline

13-14 years old

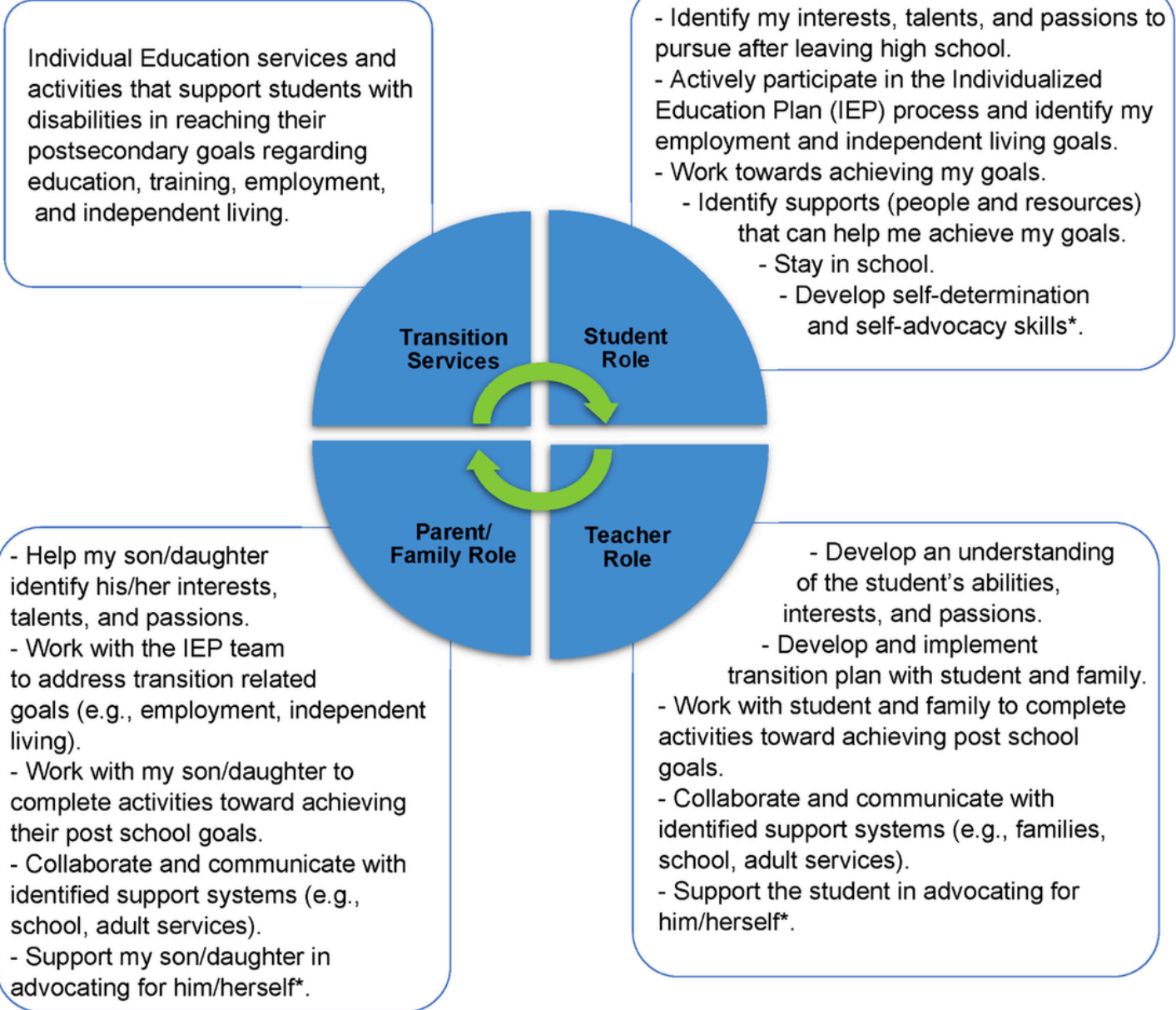
- **Develop Self-Advocacy Skills:** It's crucial for youth to learn how to communicate their needs, preferences, and rights. At this stage, they can start practicing how to advocate for accommodations at school or in social situations, helping them build confidence and independence in managing their environment.
- **Learn Independent Living Skills:** Youth can start learning basic life skills such as cooking, budgeting, managing personal care, and using public transportation. These skills help build independence and prepare them for life after school, especially if they will live on their own or require minimal support in the future.
- **Explore Career Interests and Vocational Training:** At 13-14, youth can begin exploring their career interests and engage in vocational programs or internships, if available. This might include job shadowing, learning about different professions, and gaining experience in areas they are interested in, all of which can help set goals for future employment.
- **Build Social Skills and Peer Relationships:** Developing positive social interactions and friendships is key. It's important for youth with disabilities to work on communication skills, managing conflicts, and participating in group activities, as this enhances their ability to interact with peers and form meaningful relationships.

15-17 years old

- **Explore Post-Secondary Education and Career Options:** At this stage, youth should start thinking about their future after high school. This includes researching potential careers, considering college or vocational training options, and seeking opportunities for internships or volunteer work to gain practical experience.
- **Develop Financial Literacy:** It's important for youth to learn the basics of managing money. This could include understanding budgeting, saving, and the concept of earning money (through part-time jobs, allowances, or entrepreneurship). Early financial literacy helps prepare for independence in adulthood.
- **Strengthen Self-Advocacy and Decision-Making Skills:** Youth should continue developing their self-advocacy skills, especially in areas like health, education, and future goals. They should learn how to make informed decisions, ask for help when needed, and manage responsibilities in their personal and academic life.
- **Increase Independence in Daily Living Skills:** As they approach adulthood, it's essential to develop greater independence in personal care, household chores, time management, and planning. Youth should also begin learning how to take care of their health, manage appointments, and balance school and extracurricular activities.

Transition Planning

Transition Planning Includes a Role for Everyone!



**Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy - To live life as you choose in accordance with your interests, needs, and abilities.*

What is Self-Determination?

Exercising the right to make choices and direct your own life. Promoting your choice making, decision making, and problem solving.

What is Self-Advocacy?

Knowing and standing up for your rights. Promoting your strengths, interests, weaknesses, and understanding your disability and the support you need.

Need help with Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy while in school?

- Contact The Wisconsin Statewide Parent-Educator Initiative (WSPEI) - (833)879-7734
- Contact WI FACETS - (877)374-0511

Transition Planning Timeline

Grade 8-9

- Continue to learn basic academics (reading, math, & writing).
- Develop self-determination and self advocacy skills.
- Discover and identify interests, passions, and abilities.
- Learn about your disability and its impact on your learning.
- Explore employment options (volunteering, job shadowing, and career exploration).
- Participate in the IEP process. The Post-Secondary Transition Plan (PTP) is a part of your IEP which focuses on transition - a student should have a PTP in place starting the school year they turn age 14. Learn more about your PTP and ask questions if you need more clarification
- Complete a 4, 5, or 6 year plan for high school.
- Consider college prep classes if appropriate.

Grade 9-10

- Continue to build on academic skills.
- Continue to develop self-advocacy skills (be able to describe your disability and your needs).
- Learn more about how your interests and goals relate to your disability and your job/career goals.
- Learn more about your disability and begin to express needed learning supports.
- Volunteer in your community and/or begin looking for a part time job.
- Become a more active participant in your IEP. The Post-Secondary Transition Plan (PTP) is a part of your IEP which focuses on transition - a student should have a PTP in place starting the school year they turn age 14. Learn more about your PTP and ask questions if you need more clarification
- Begin a career portfolio (resume, letters of reference, copies of job applications).
- Participate in a functional vocational evaluation at your school.

Transition Planning Continued

Questions to Consider

Students

- What do I do well?
- What do I like to do?
- What do I want to do after high school?
- What do I do for fun?
- What do I need help with and who can help me?

Students

- What are my dreams for my future?
- What accommodations for my disability do I need in school, at home, or on the job and can I describe them?
- Where do I want to live after high school?

Parents

- What are my son/daughter's strengths, weaknesses, and interests?
- Do I help develop self-advocacy and self-determination by providing opportunities to make decisions and choices at home?
- Do I help my son/daughter develop goals for education, employment, and independent living?

Parents

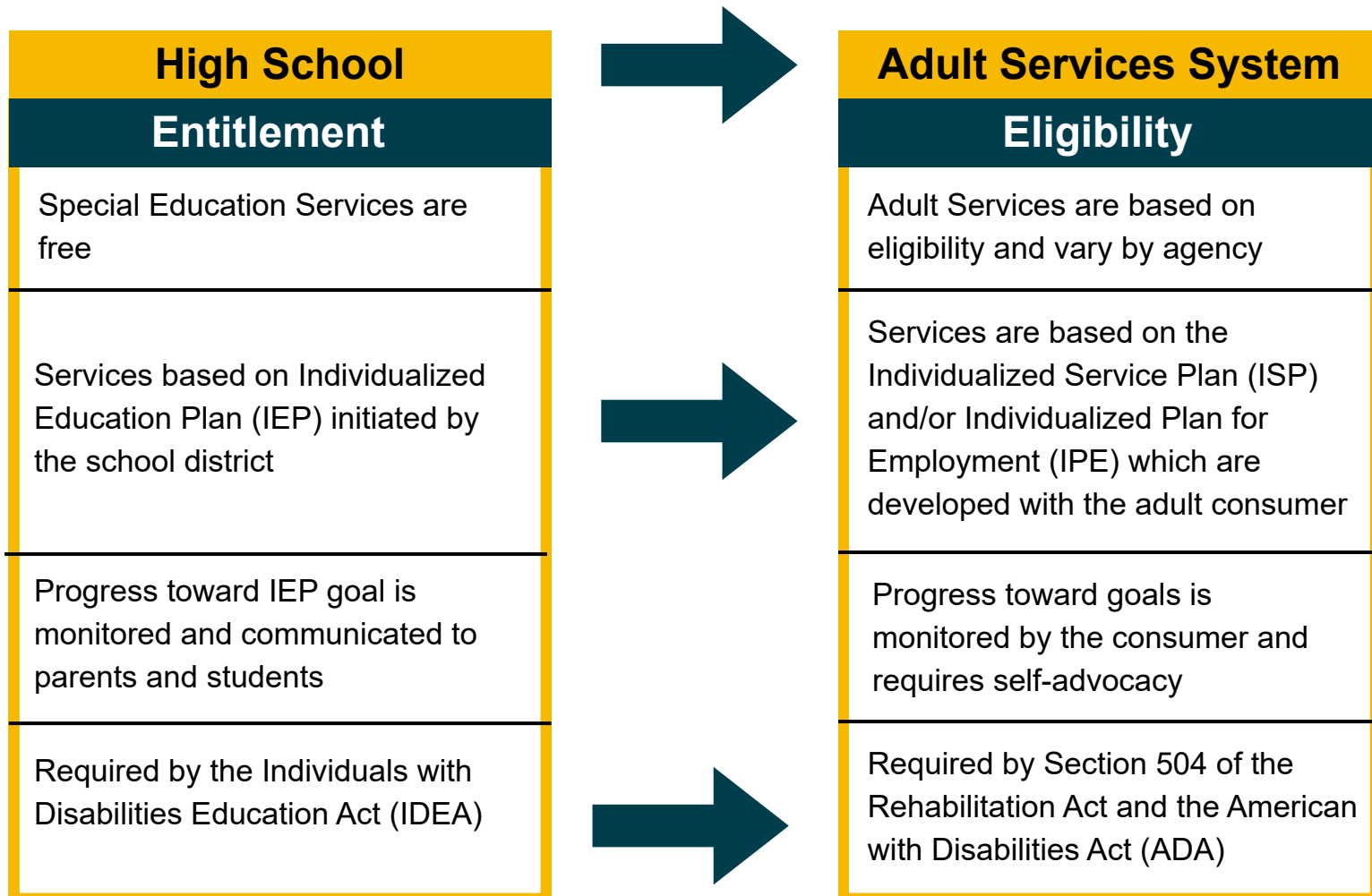
- What do I know about guardianship and adult rights and responsibilities?
- Where will my son/daughter live after high school?
- How will I support my son/daughter in finding and keeping a job?

Source: Wisconsin Department of Health Services' (DHS) Living my Dream booklet (P-00413, 01/2017)



Understanding Adult Service System

Now that I'm out of high school, how do services change?



What Does This Mean for me?

- I need to be determined eligible for supports and work with a team to develop an individual plan.
- I can find my own adult service providers and determine if their services are right for me.
- This means I have to understand adult rights and responsibilities.
- I need to use my self-advocacy and self-determination skills.

Resources for you

When deciding what to do first, reach out to the Children's Resource Center and Children's Long-Term Support. They can guide you in getting started on the right path. The following specialists are available to listen to your story and offer support.

Children's Resource Center Northeast WI

The Children's Resource Center-Northeast is dedicated to supporting families with children and youth with special health care needs and disabilities, along with the providers who serve them. As parents and professionals, we offer assistance in finding answers, accessing services, connecting to community resources, providing training, and offering ongoing support. We serve families and professionals in the following counties: Brown, Calumet, Door, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Marquette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano, Sheboygan, Waupaca, Waushara, and Winnebago.

Contact Children's Resource Center at:

(920)969-5325 | CRCnortheast@childrenswi.org

Open Monday-Friday 8am-5pm

Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS)

The Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) Program helps children with disabilities and their families through supports and services that help children grow and live their best lives. CLTS is a home and community-based service waiver. CLTS uses a Medicaid waiver for children with Physical Disabilities, Developmental Disabilities, or Mental Health disorders to fund services.

The living in your care must:

- Be younger than age 22.
- Live at home, in foster care, or in another approved setting.
- Meet with a coordinator to complete the screening tool to determine eligibility
- Be able to get safe, required care at home or in the community.

Contact Children's Long Term Support at:

111 N Jefferson St Green Bay, WI 54301

(920)448-7884 | <https://www.browncountywi.gov/services/childrens-long-term-support/>

Open Monday-Thursday 7:30am-5pm, Friday 7:30am-11:30am

Decision-Making Support Options

The chart below highlights a range of options for children with disabilities as they transition into young adulthood. These options can help support them in living full, meaningful lives that reflect their individual preferences and values. As you begin your journey into adulthood, it's important to consider these possibilities. Making some—or all—of these decisions may require support, and exploring available resources is a key part of preparing for the future.

NOTE: Formal transition planning starts at age 14; this would be a good time to start conversations about decision-making supports.

Voluntary Banking Restrictions (Release Forms)	Supported Decision-Making Agreement	Representative Payee	Power of Attorney (medical or financial)	Limited or Full Guardianship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual voluntarily signs a release form authorizing a specific person access to certain information or records. Other voluntary supports include: direct deposit, joint bank accounts, dual signature checking accounts, and automatic bill payments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual makes all their own decisions. They identify a supporter(s) to assist them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Security Administration appoints an individual/organization to receive SSI/SSDI benefits on behalf of an individual who cannot manage their own. Individuals can also voluntarily appoint a payee, either an individual/organization, to manage their finances on their behalf. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal legal arrangements that permit others to act on the individual's behalf. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transfers some or all decision-making authority from the individual to a court-appointed guardian. Once guardianship is granted by the courts, it is difficult and costly to modify or reverse; any changes must be made through a formal court process.

Less Restrictive



More Restrictive

Continuing Your Education

If you decide to explore training and post-secondary education options after graduation, it will be important for you to identify your strengths and interests so you can choose which type of program you will pursue.

Questions and special considerations when you begin to explore training and post-secondary education options:

Why do you want to get more education?



Know what your career goals are. Begin planning as early as 9th grade.

What assistance and accommodation do you think you will need?



Learn the expectations for students who need access to student support services.

Are you able to talk about your disability and what help you will need?



Understand your disability and how to be a self-advocate. Understand your unique academic needs associated with your disability and what type of academic support is offered by the college.

How will you pay for your education?



Understand the application process, fees, and what the entrance requirements are for a student with a documented disability.



Continuing Your Education Continued

What are my training and post-secondary education options?

Technical/ 2-year college

- Smaller class size
- Hands on education
- Get into field of study sooner
- Less expensive
- Credits often transfer to a 4-year college

Apprenticeships

Instruction in a skilled trade

4-year college

- Investment in a Broader Education
- Opportunity for a Deeper Academic Experience
- Focus on Building Critical Thinking Skills

Degree & Certifications

Generally offered at community & technical colleges

Education Resources

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) - www.dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/

- Assistance for students in achieving post-school employment.

Disability Service Offices -

- Provides on-campus support at post-secondary schools for students with disabilities. Contact the school/program of your choice to learn more.

Social Security - (800)772-1213

- Offers incentives to pursue post-secondary educational options.

Joining the Workforce

When considering starting a new job, it may be confusing and overwhelming. There are a lot of things to consider and options to weigh.

What can I do if I want to work?

- Participate in work experience through your high school
- Volunteer
- Job Shadow
- Know what you can do with & without assistance
- Complete a Career Inventory

- Learn about employment supports available through adult service providers
- Learn what skills are necessary for specific careers
- Apply to Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) for assistance 4 semesters prior to completing high school

- Develop & demonstrate self-advocacy skills: be able to explain your disability, strengths, & how you learn new things
- Know the impact of your healthcare needs
- Contact the ADRC for information about long-term care services including employment support

Employment Options

Competitive Employment

- Working in an integrated setting with coworkers on a job you compete for in your local community
- Job obtained with or without the assistance of an adult service provider
- You are paid at least minimum wage and may receive benefits

Supported or Customized Employment

- Working in a job found in your local community with the assistance of an adult service provider
- Jobs are based on your interests and abilities and are sometimes negotiated with employers by the adult service provider
- Jobs are designed to meet the specific needs of the employee and employer
- You are paid wages and may receive benefits
- Support on the job from a job coach or co-worker that may or may not be paid

