Transition Supports for Individuals with Autism
Family Voices Indiana

Do you have a child with special health care needs and/or a disability? Do you support or teach a child with exceptional needs?

DO YOU NEED HELP WITH:

Family Voices Indiana is staffed by trained family leaders who have children with special health care needs, and expertise in these programs.
Supporting your child

• Help your young adult with ASD to become autonomous

• Discuss with your child about his/her disability, strengths and weaknesses

• Help your child begin planning for life

• Listen and focus on your child's interests and goals

• Assist your child to become familiar with resources he/she can access

• Review the types and intensities of services and supports that are useful in high school and explain how they might be beneficial in college.
Legal Protections

HIGH SCHOOL

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Funding is mandated.

Education is a RIGHT.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records.

Student and parent advocates for student, and family input is actively sought.

COLLEGE

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

ADA is about access.

Remove barriers and guarantee reasonable accommodations.

FERPA transfers privacy rights to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level.

Parents do not have the right to review their child’s college records without the written permission of the student.
## Advocacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HIGH SCHOOL</th>
<th>COLLEGE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents are actively involved</td>
<td>Students are expected to advocate for themselves.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schools reach out to parents and their participation is required.</td>
<td>Parent involvement is not always actively sought, and may be discouraged at times.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents talk directly to their child’s teachers on a regular basis.</td>
<td>College faculty and staff do not typically communicate with parents directly.</td>
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Increasing Self Advocacy Skills

• Participating in IEP meetings
• Knowing your rights
• Building self-awareness
• Setting goals
• Planning to advocate
• Seeking services on campus
• Forming relationships with professors and instructors
• Developing support systems on campus
• Role playing
Supports

HIGH SCHOOL

The IEP Team, which includes the student and school district develops Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and must follow this legal document in the provision of educational services.

Core modifications of classes and materials are required, if needed

The School, with student and family input, is responsible for arranging for accommodations and modifications

COLLEGE

There are no IEPs in college.

The Disability Services Office will develop an accommodation plan based on documentation of disability that is provided by the student.

Modifications are not typically offered- only accommodations.

Student must request accommodations from the college Disability Services Office.
Middle School Transition Goals

Learn more about the wide variety of careers that exist.

Take part in vocational assessment activities in the community through “job sampling” at the actual places of employment.

Have the opportunity to learn, by practice and exposure, what his work preferences might be.

Identify training needs and effective strategies to address deficits.

Opportunities to develop basic competencies in independence, self-monitoring, travel training, and life outside the classroom.
High School Transition Goals

Develop effective disclosure strategies relative to abilities and needs.

Ensure appropriate accommodations for testing, incl ACT/SAT

Identify critical skill deficits that may impede the transition to post-21 life and provide individualized instruction to minimize the deficits.

Learn the basics of the interview process and practice being interviewed.

Learn more about school-to-work programs in the community, which offer opportunities for training and employment through job sampling, youth apprenticeships, vocational education, tech-prep, mentorships, independent study, and internships.
Ages 6-14

Support academic skills and identify academic strengths

Teach functional skills when developmentally appropriate in school and at home (Examples: sorting items, social skills, taking turns, cooking, doing laundry)

Support introduction of in class jobs at school

Foster curiosity and the development of unique interests

Learn to use assistive technology, if applicable

Encourage involvement in age appropriate recreational activities (Examples: swimming, bike riding, and martial arts)
Ages 14-15

Meet with case conference (or IEP team) to create transition goals (In Indiana, a team must be in place beginning at age 14)

Begin forming transition goals and discussing life after high school (Ask the student!)

Introduce self-advocacy skills

Determine if the student is working toward a diploma (if so, what kind) or certificate

Continue practicing functional social skills – work toward independence (Examples: grocery shopping, taking public transit, menu planning, budgeting money, hygiene)

Find opportunities for community involvement (Examples: volunteer positions, job shadowing, or extracurricular activities)

Attend transition fairs, if offered
Ages 15-17

Discuss Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) eligibility, applying for VR, and VR’s support role
Identify school programs or workplaces that are a good match for the student’s goals and abilities
Seek out volunteer and work experiences (get job permit, if needed)
If planning to attend college, request a reevaluation by a school psychologist
Apply for Social Security benefits in student’s name
Continue practicing social and functional skills during the school day and at home
Encourage independence and reduce prompting whenever possible
Promote financial literacy (Review credit cards, debt, taxes, etc.)
Family should begin discussing where the student wants to live after high school
Explore transportation options
Parents should decide whether they will apply for guardianship (health care rep, POA, etc)
Ages 18-21

Obtain State ID or Driver’s License
Register to vote
If male, register for selective service (must be registered before the age of 25)
Apply for Medicaid or ensure private insurance/ACA coverage
Submit application to VR (Application should be submitted during the student’s final year in school)
With VR, create plan based on interests and strengths
Prepare for interviews and complete applications for employment or colleges/training programs
Practice self-disclosure of disability for employment/school purposes
Teach responsibility and self-advocacy for health care (taking medications, talking with a doctor, making and keeping appointments)
Encourage independence when practicing social and functional skills
Financial Aid

Students should seek assistance from the Office of Disability Support Services and/or the Financial Aid office to determine any disability-related expenses that should be reported. Such as:

- Special equipment (related to the disability) and its maintenance.
- Cost of services for personal use or study, such as readers, interpreters, note takers, or personal care attendants.
- Transportation, if traditional means are not accessible.

Medical expenses not covered by insurance that relate directly to the individual’s disability.
Vocational Rehabilitation

To be eligible for services, an individual must have an impairment that results in a substantial impediment to employment and he/she must require VR services for employment.

- Help with tuition expenses (FAFSA dependent)
- Room and board.
- Transportation/commuting expenses.
- Books and supplies.
- Individually prescribed aids and devices.
- Telecommunications, sensory, and other technological aids and devices.
- Other goods and services that help an individual with a disability become employed.

Locate your local VRS office: 1-800-545-7763
Affordable Care Act (Obamacare)

If a plan covers children, they can be added to or kept on a parent's health insurance policy until they turn 26 years old.

Children can join or remain on a parent's plan even if they are:

- Married
- Not living with their parents
- Attending school
- Not financially dependent on their parents
- Eligible to enroll in their employer’s plan

These rules apply to both job-based plans and individual plans bought inside or outside the Marketplace.
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

(SSI) is a federal program that provides financial assistance to people who are aged, blind, or disabled and who have little or no income and resources.

Assets/Resources under $2000; $721 income per month for individuals

The amount of SSI payment is dependent on the income and resources of the individual. Earnings from work-study or other employment may affect SSI benefits.

There is a student earned income exclusion:
A person who is under age 22 and regularly attending school can exclude earnings from income. For example, in a college or university, for at least 8 hours a week.

In January 2014, the amounts increased to $1,750 monthly up to a yearly maximum of $7,060.

Call 1-800-772-1213 to make a phone or in person appointment at a local Social Security office to apply.
Social Security Benefits (SSDI)

The Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) program allows workers and eligible dependents to receive monthly cash benefits because of a period of disability. A student who has been employed may file based on his or her own work record.

If the parents of a student with a disability have filed for Social Security or if a parent is deceased, the student may also qualify for dependents’ benefits based on the parent’s work record.

**Example:** A worker starts collecting Social Security retirement benefits at age 62. He has a 38-year old son who has had cerebral palsy since birth. The son will start collecting a disabled "child's" benefit on his father's Social Security record.

Call 1-800-772-1213 to make a phone or in person appointment at a local Social Security office to apply.
Medicaid and MED Works

To be eligible for Traditional Medicaid, you must:
meet income/asset guidelines (there are adjusted income limits for those on waivers)
be disabled
as of June 1, 2014, must be eligible for SSI if over age 18.

To be eligible for M.E.D. Works, you must:
be aged 16-64,
meet certain income and assets guidelines (higher income limits)
be disabled, and be working.

Apply at the DFR, online, or call 1-800-403-0864
Medicaid Waivers

Provides additional supports above and beyond Medicaid

Must meet institutional level of care (limited in 3/6 life areas) for Family Supports

There are priority slots for those exiting high school, ages 18-24

Apply via Bureau of Developmental Disabilities (BDDS): 1-800-545-7763

Must meet nursing home level of care for Aged/Disabled and TBI

Apply via Area Agency on Aging (AAA): 1-800-986-3505
Special Needs Trusts

A person can not have more than $2000 in assets for many of these government programs.

A Supplemental Needs Trust should state that it is intended to provide "supplemental and extra care" over and above that which the government provides.

Can be stand alone provision or part of parent’s will/estate planning.

Seek an elderlaw attorney or another attorney familiar with these trusts.

Financial planners can also be helpful.
The Home Stretch…….

Visit colleges together so that your son/daughter has good information to make a final choice.

Discuss with your son/daughter the nature of their disability and how it affects their school work. Practice how they refer to their disability and identify what supports they need.

If there is a specific program on the campus for students with intellectual disabilities, arrange to meet with the staff. Find out how participants in the program participate in general college life and academics.

Arrange transportation and living situation and any supports that will be needed.

Make sure your child has the phone numbers for relevant agencies in their cell phone.

Be prepared for the fact that you, the family member, need written consent from the student to obtain access to their records at the college level.
Resources


*Supporting Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorders through Postsecondary Transition* by Anna Merrill

*Transition Planning Handbook* available via IPAS (Indiana Protection and Advocacy)

- [http://www.thinkcollege.net/](http://www.thinkcollege.net/)
Questions?

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