

# Building A Bridge

**A Resource Manual for  
High School Students**



# **BUILDING A BRIDGE**

**From  
School To Adult Life**

*A Handbook for Students and Family Members  
to Help with Preparation for Life  
After High School*

**Revised 2009**

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# Dedication

This manual is dedicated to

***Karen Palma-Halliday***

*Consultant, Transition Services,  
Connecticut State Department of Education,  
Bureau of Special Education (Retired 2005)*



***For her continuing commitment to ensuring quality education for  
high school students in Connecticut.***



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# Table of Contents

Letter to Students .....	1
Letter to Parents/Family Members.....	2
<b>Step 1: Getting to Know Yourself.....</b>	<b>3</b>
Personal Checklists:	
Skills .....	4
Personal Strengths .....	5
Likes and Dislikes .....	6
Take a Close Look at Social Skills: A Social Skills Checklist .....	7-9
Moving up the Ladder: Life Goals.....	10
<b>Step 2: Learn to Self-Advocate .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Student Rights and Responsibilities Bookmarks.....	12
<b>Step 3: Transition Assessment:</b>	
Create a Student Profile.....	13
Post-school Outcome Goal Statements.....	14
Summary of Performance.....	15
Additional Tools to Help Plan for the Future: Person-Centered Planning .....	16
<b>Step 4: Develop Your “Individualized” Program .....</b>	<b>17</b>
The IEP – Individualized Education Program .....	18
The PPT – The Planning and Placement Team.....	19
Assistive Technology, Accommodations, and Modifications .....	20
Assistive Technology Checklist for High School Students .....	21-23
Areas to Consider When Developing Annual Transition Goals and Objectives .....	24

(continued on next page)

# Table of Contents

## **(Step 4 continued)**

Thinking About Postsecondary Education/Training and Employment .....	25
Postsecondary Education/Training Employment Checklist .....	26-27
Are You Ready for College? .....	28-29
What Type of Support Is Available at College?.....	30
Questions to Ask a College Disability Services Office .....	31
<b>Sample Transition Goals and Objectives Bank:</b>	
Postsecondary Education or Training .....	32-33
My Transition Goal.....	34
Career Awareness/Employment .....	35-36
My Transition Goal.....	37
Organizational and Study Skills .....	38-39
My Transition Goal.....	40
Self-Advocacy.....	41-42
My Transition Goal.....	43
Community Participation and Transition Goals .....	44
Community Participation Checklist.....	45
Community Participation.....	46
My Transition Goal.....	47
Independent Living and Transition Goals .....	48
Independent Living Checklist.....	49
Independent/Daily Living Skills.....	50
My Transition Goal.....	51
<b>Step 5: Record Keeping.....</b>	<b>52</b>
How Can Family Members Help with Transition?.....	53-54
Answers to Typical Questions Regarding Guardianship for Persons with Disabilities.....	55-56
IDEA 2004 and Transition .....	57-60
Due Process Overview and Transition.....	61-69

# Table of Contents

Federal Disability Laws .....	70
Agencies for Adults with Disabilities .....	71-72
Glossary of Common Abbreviations.....	73
Regional Education Service Centers (RESCs) in Connecticut.....	74
State of Connecticut Transition Web Resources .....	75
Other Resources .....	76-78
References.....	79
Important Names and Numbers .....	80

# Letter to Students

Dear Student,

This handbook is written especially for you. We hope your high school years will be happy and successful. One of the keys to a positive education is to **plan now** for your future.

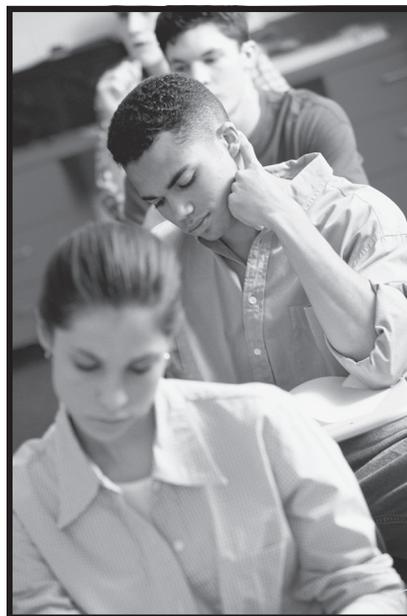
Are you going to work full-time after high school? Does your career path require that you go to college or obtain additional training? Where do you want to live in the future? This handbook will help you explore your options. Many students do not know what they want to do when they graduate from high school.

Your parent(s)/family members, teachers, and guidance counselor are available to work with you and help you set some goals. As you read this handbook, please stop and ask them questions whenever you do not understand something or need more information. Making choices and decisions is a process. It's OK to change your mind and develop new plans.

This is your life. **Get involved now.** Read on.

Sincerely,

Parent-Student Subcommittee,  
Connecticut Transition Task Force



# Letter to Parents/ Family Members



Dear Parents and Family Members,

One of our most important and precious roles is to raise our children to become responsible adults. We all have many questions about their future regarding **self-advocacy, employment, college, training, independent living, and community participation**. We want the transition from high school to young adult life to go well. **We need to plan early.**

The following pages contain information that will help you play a meaningful role in guiding your child for the future. Under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA 2004), transition planning is required as part of your child's IEP (Individualized Education Program). Transition planning begins no later than age 16 **or earlier**, if determined appropriate by the Planning and Placement Team (PPT). Be proactive to insure goals for self-advocacy, college, training, employment, and/or independent living are included in the IEP.

You are a key player in your child's transition planning. We urge you to actively participate in these PPT meetings during the high school years. You bring a wealth of information about your child's abilities at home that only you can share. It is very important that you communicate with teachers anything that you feel may be essential to your child's future.

Please read this handbook thoughtfully and encourage your teenager to do the same. With your commitment, guidance, and support, your child will be given the educational foundation and tools needed to confidently transition into the adult world. As a parent, promoting self-advocacy and empowering your child to speak up is critical for the road ahead.

Sincerely,

Parent Dissemination and Training Subcommittee,  
Connecticut Transition Task Force

## Step 1: Getting to Know Yourself

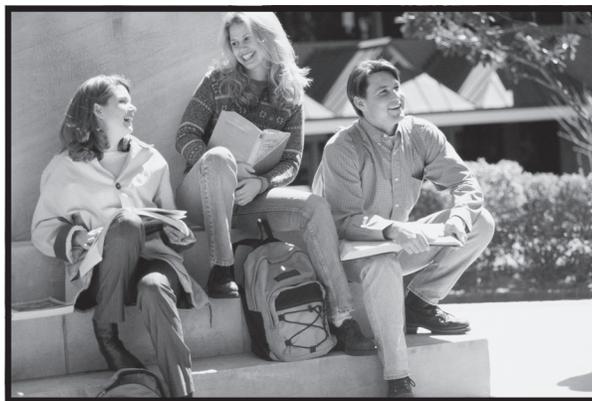
It is important for you to discuss your dreams and visions for the future with someone you trust. No one can predict what is or is not possible. Identify and explore many different job possibilities and independent activities. This time of transition is your golden opportunity to try a variety of experiences “on for size.”

You may discover some interests and strengths that you never knew you had. These transition experiences will empower you to make choices about planning your life after high school.

Take some time to complete the checklists on the following pages. These checklists will help you learn more about yourself.

***“There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work and learning from failure.”***

***Colin Powell  
65th United States Secretary of State  
2001-2005***



## A Personal Checklist: Skills

### Directions:

Put a one (1) next to all the things that you do well. Then put a circle around the three (3) things you do *best*.

I'm good at:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taking care of other people | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working with other people   | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organizing things           | <input type="checkbox"/> Math                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Making changes              | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Using a computer            | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Answering the phone         | <input type="checkbox"/> Art                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Woodworking                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> House painting              | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Operating machines or tools | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching friends     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fixing cars                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Babysitting          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiting on tables           | <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doing yard work             | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farming                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sewing or knitting   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hairdressing                | <input type="checkbox"/> Being a team captain |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning                    |   |

Use this space to list other things that you do well:


Adapted from "Speak Up for Yourself and Your Future," Department of Special Education, University of Vermont, 1993.

# A Personal Checklist: Personal Strengths

**Directions:**

Put a one (1) next to any sentence that describes you. Then, put a circle around the three (3) sentences that best describe you.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm reliable (people can count on me).     | <input type="checkbox"/> I have a lot of energy.               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm friendly.                              | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm a good listener.                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm polite.                                | <input type="checkbox"/> I like to have a good time.           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm good at many things.                   | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm honest.                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I try to follow instructions.              | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm hard-working.                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I like to do things with others.           | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm usually on time.                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I like to do things on my own.             | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm serious.                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I like to help other people.               | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm generous.                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I like to keep things neat and organized.  | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm proud of myself.                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm a good friend.                         | <input type="checkbox"/> I can keep a secret.                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have good common sense.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm a good student.                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I stick with things until they get done.   | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm musical.                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm good at fixing things.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm artistic.                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can work out my problems on my own.      | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm creative.                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm good with words.                       | <input type="checkbox"/> I ask others for help when I need it. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm good with my hands.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm good at one or two things.        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can help others work out their problems. |  |

Use this space to write down your other strengths:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Adapted from "Speak Up for Yourself and Your Future," Department of Special Education, University of Vermont, 1993.

## A Personal Checklist: Likes and Dislikes

**Directions:**

Put a one (1) next to any hobbies, interests, or activities that you like. Put a two (2) next to any activity you do not like. Then, put a circle around the three (3) things that you like to do the most.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playing sports<br><input type="checkbox"/> Camping<br><input type="checkbox"/> Hiking<br><input type="checkbox"/> Fishing<br><input type="checkbox"/> Hunting<br><input type="checkbox"/> Swimming<br><input type="checkbox"/> Bicycling<br><input type="checkbox"/> Horseback riding<br><input type="checkbox"/> Skiing<br><input type="checkbox"/> Keeping pets<br><input type="checkbox"/> Taking care of animals<br><input type="checkbox"/> Gardening or taking care of plants<br><input type="checkbox"/> Farming<br><input type="checkbox"/> Cooking<br><input type="checkbox"/> Woodworking<br><input type="checkbox"/> Beauty and hair care<br><input type="checkbox"/> Listening to music<br><input type="checkbox"/> Writing songs, stories, poems<br><input type="checkbox"/> Watching TV or movies<br><input type="checkbox"/> Playing an instrument<br><input type="checkbox"/> Being a leader of a group | <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing<br><input type="checkbox"/> Sketching<br><input type="checkbox"/> Painting<br><input type="checkbox"/> Taking care of people<br><input type="checkbox"/> Babysitting<br><input type="checkbox"/> Going to church/synagogue/temple<br><input type="checkbox"/> Belonging to a club<br><input type="checkbox"/> Collecting things<br><input type="checkbox"/> Visiting with friends<br><input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping<br><input type="checkbox"/> Eating<br><input type="checkbox"/> Using a computer<br><input type="checkbox"/> Playing computer games<br><input type="checkbox"/> Crocheting<br><input type="checkbox"/> Sewing<br><input type="checkbox"/> Knitting<br><input type="checkbox"/> Reading<br><input type="checkbox"/> Photography<br><input type="checkbox"/> Rollerblading<br><input type="checkbox"/> Motor cross<br><input type="checkbox"/> Working out/exercising |
|--|--|

Use this space to add other hobbies and interests that you can think of:


Adapted from "Speak Up for Yourself and Your Future," Department of Special Education, University of Vermont, 1993.

# Take a Close Look at Social Skills: A Social Skills Checklist

Feedback from employers indicates that the number one difficulty in the workplace for many people is the lack of appropriate social skills with fellow employees and supervisors.

**Please put an X next to all the areas in which you may need help:**

Do you know how to start a conversation with:

\_\_\_\_\_ People who come to your home?

\_\_\_\_\_ People you meet at a party?

\_\_\_\_\_ People at school/work?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you know how to act interested in the conversation of another person?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you hold your head up and look at the person when carrying on a conversation?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you make your needs known in an appropriate way?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you answer questions that are asked of you?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you wait your turn to speak?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you accept compliments from others?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you accept criticism from others?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you know what topics are appropriate for public conversation?

\_\_\_\_\_ Are you careful not to embarrass other people?

(continued on next page)

# A Social Skills Checklist

(continued)

Please put an **X** next to all the areas in which you may need help:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Do your parent(s)/friends/teachers say you talk too much?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you really listen to what other people are saying?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you know when it's better to keep quiet?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you get angry easily and say things that you are sorry for later?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you have trouble understanding jokes?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you often get into trouble in new places or in new situations?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you try to find out ahead of time what you need to know about new social situations?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you arrive to places on time?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are you always rushing to catch up?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you forget appointments?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you have trouble meeting school or work deadlines?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you brush your teeth daily?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you take a bath or shower daily?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you put on clean clothes daily?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are your clothes appropriate for the setting?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you use appropriate table manners?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Use your napkin?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Say please and thank you?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Talk with your mouth full?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you often blame other people when things don't go well in your life?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you know that taking care of your physical and mental health makes interactions with other people easier? (example: using a tissue when you have a runny nose or covering your mouth when you cough)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you know that the better you feel about yourself, the better you will present yourself to others?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you know that you can send and receive messages without using words?  
(This kind of language is called *non-verbal communication*.)

# A Social Skills Checklist

(continued)

You send **non-verbal** messages through such things as:

- Facial expressions that show anger, fear, sadness, or happiness;
- The way you stand or sit;
- Arm, hand, or finger gestures;
- The tone of your voice;
- The clothing you wear;
- Respecting personal space (not standing too close to other people); and
- Appropriate or inappropriate touch.

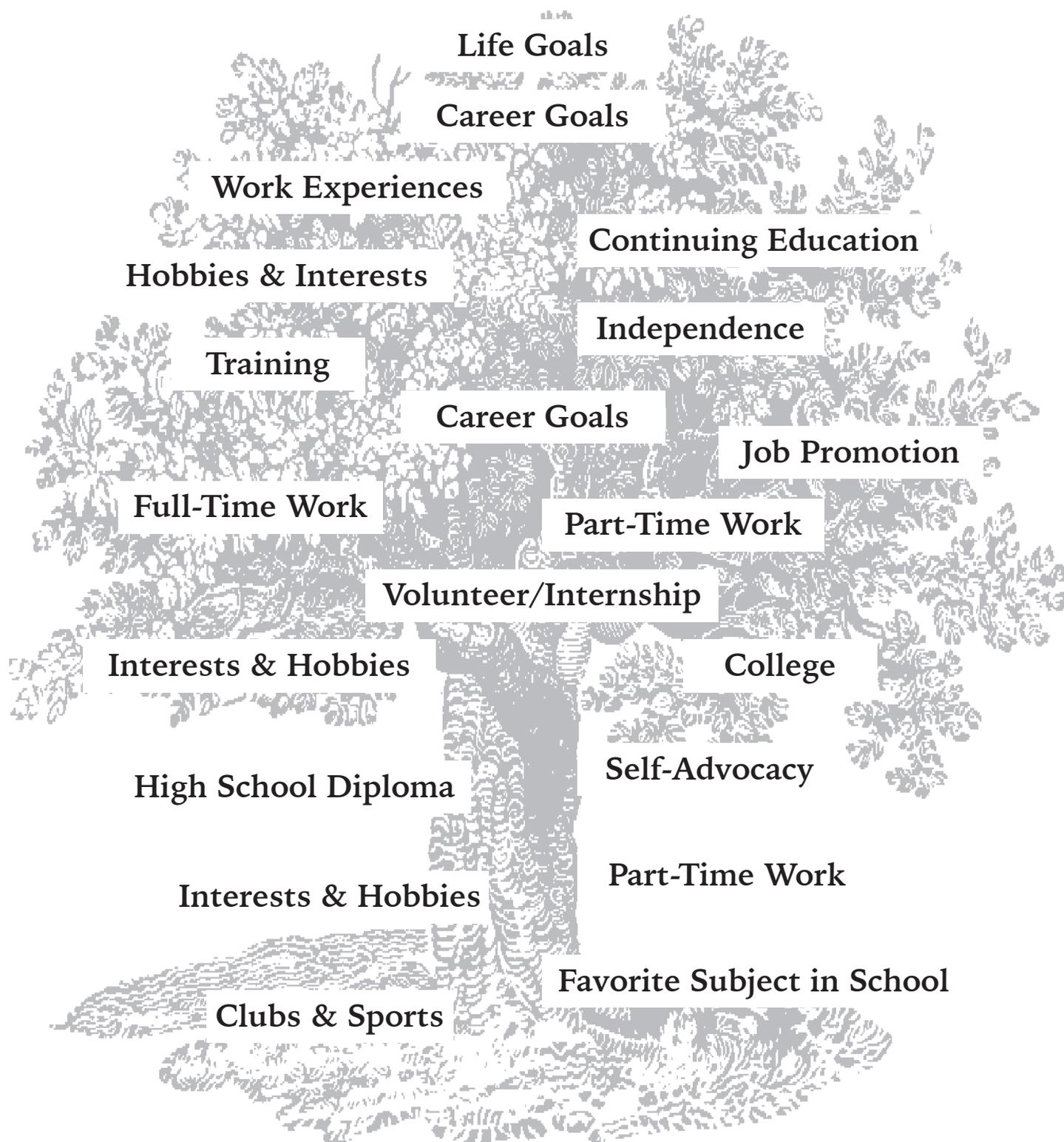
Have you decided that you need help with some of your social skills? If your answer is yes, include plans to add improving social skills to your transition goals.

Your family, friends, teachers, and other adults can help you understand social skills, but you have to be willing to practice using them.

You may not be successful in using your new skills the first few times; we all make mistakes. Try to learn from them.



# Moving Up The Ladder ~ Life Goals



## Step 2: Learn to Self-Advocate

Self-advocacy means speaking up for yourself. It requires knowledge of your personal strengths, needs, and rights as a citizen and involves acting in an assertive manner to make your needs known to others.

Transition planning involves thinking about your goals after high school and developing a long-range plan to get there. This includes having high school experiences that focus on developing the skills you will need to achieve your life goals. It also involves helping you identify and link with any post-school adult service programs or supports that you may need.

Whether your plans after high school involve work, training, and/or college, it is important that you understand your strengths and needs, know how they affect your performance, and be able to communicate this to others. Understanding your disability is the first step in the process. There are a number of things you can do to help increase your understanding of your disability:

- There are many school and community activities in which you can take part to further develop your self-advocacy skills. A guide, *An Educational Journey from Self Discovery to Advocacy*, was created for high school students with disabilities as an instructional tool for the development of self-advocacy skills and transition planning. This guide can be viewed and downloaded from the CT State Department of Education's Web site at: [www.sde.ct.gov/sde](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde).
- Develop your leadership skills by applying to the Connecticut Youth Leadership Project (YLP), which has been operating on the grounds of the University of Connecticut campus in Storrs, CT, since 1999. Information and an application for the Youth Leadership Forum, a weeklong leadership program, can be obtained by contacting SERC (the State Education Resource Center), CPAC (the CT Parent Advocacy Center), or the CT State Department of Education (CSDE), or by visiting the Connecticut Youth Leadership Project Web site at: [www.ctylp.org](http://www.ctylp.org).
- Register to vote. When you turn 18 years of age, you can further develop your self-advocacy skills by registering to vote. Contact your local Town Hall or City Hall to obtain the necessary voter registration forms.

# Bookmarks of Student Rights and Responsibilities

## Student Rights

**I have the right** to know what my disability is and how it affects my ability to learn, live independently, and be part of a life-long learning system.

**I have the right** to be provided information regarding testing, services, and my Individualized Education Program in a language format that I understand.

**I have the right** to be provided information in an accessible format that I can understand.

**I have the right** to have individuals who understand my disability serve on my PPT.

**I have the right** to accept or refuse services.

**I have the right** to take risks and make mistakes.

**I have the right** to disagree with my IEP and receive help in writing a complaint, or in requesting mediation or a due process hearing.

## Student Responsibilities

**It is my responsibility** to ask questions, request help, and seek self-advocacy training and peer support so that I can learn about my disability and advocate for my needs.

**It is my responsibility** to ask questions until I understand the presented information clearly. Self-advocacy takes practice and time.

**It is my responsibility** to attend all meetings and actively participate in planning for my future.

**It is my responsibility** to include people (e.g., friend, parent, grandparent, coach, teacher) whom I trust to help me plan for my future.

**It is my responsibility** to follow through and be cooperative with any process I request.

Adapted from materials developed by the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning

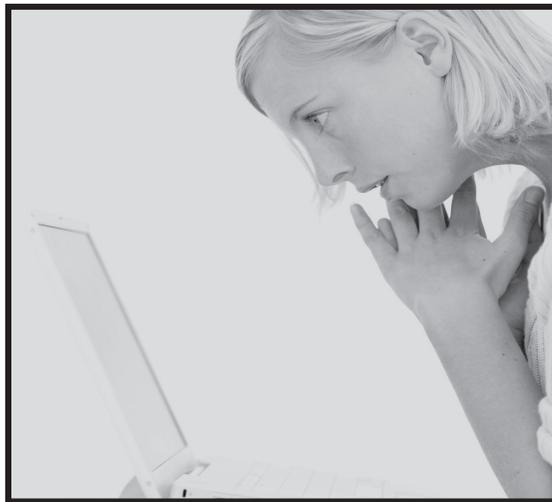
## Step 3: Transition Assessment: Create a Student Profile

What are your abilities, interests, and preferences? What do you want to do when you graduate from high school? These questions are answered by pulling together information obtained from teachers, professionals, parents/guardians, and you.

A transition assessment paints the big picture of who you really are and includes such information as academic and medical records, psychological testing, vocational reports, interviews, internships, situational assessments of experiences in the community, observation, interest inventories, and volunteer and paid employment. Transition assessment is a process that continues throughout your high school years and is essential in helping you make a career decision.

An effective transition assessment provides information that will help you make informed decisions about college, employment, training, vocational education, independent living, and/or community participation.

The benefits of transition assessment include self-awareness; career awareness and exploration; identification of post-school outcome goal statements, annual goals and objectives; and the development of a career profile or portfolio. Such a profile highlights your strengths and interests and contains both formal and informal assessment information. This profile accompanies you from grade to grade and when you graduate from high school.



For more information, see the *Transition Assessment Resource Manual* at <http://www.ctserc.org/transition/index.shtml>.

## Step 3: Transition Assessment: Post-school Outcome Goal Statements

Post-school Outcome Goal Statements are developed every year, based upon the results of transition assessment and the identification of your strengths, interests, needs, and preferences. At every annual Planning and Placement Team meeting (PPT)(see pages 17 – 19), these statements will guide the writing of your annual transition goals and objectives; course selections; participation in community, work, or volunteer experiences; and school sports, clubs, or other activities.

Post-school Outcome Goal Statements give direction to your high school years and help identify what you will be doing with your life as a young adult after graduation. Here are several examples of Post-school Outcome Goal Statements:

- Upon graduation, Juan will enroll in a 4-year college degree program of his choice.
- Susan will enroll in a 1-year training program in the field of cosmetology after graduation.
- Upon graduation, Robert will enter the military.
- After exiting high school, Joan will work competitively in the clerical field.
- Carol will independently attend a culinary training program after exiting high school so that she can obtain an entry-level position in the food service industry.

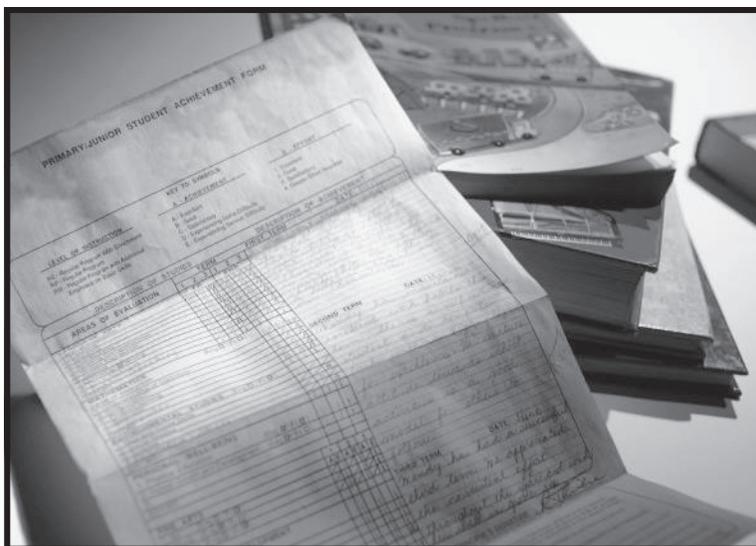
At every annual PPT meeting, a minimum of two Post-school Outcome Goal Statements must be written for every student: one to address the area of postsecondary education or training and one to address the area of employment, and, if appropriate, a third to address independent living skills.

## Step 3: Transition Assessment: Summary of Performance

Ask your teacher for your *Summary of Performance* (SOP) before you leave high school. This report (required under the 2004 reauthorization of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*) will help you provide needed information to potential college staff, employers, and other local and state agency representatives who may be working with you as a young adult.

The SOP must be completed during your final year of high school. Your input is important. Ask your teacher to include your contributions when this summary is being completed. It is also critical that your parents have input into the development of this document. This document may be necessary as you apply to a college, or for services through state agencies such as the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) or Department of Developmental Services (DDS), formerly known as the Department of Mental Retardation.

A copy of the SOP (form ED 635) can be found on the Department of Education's Web site at: [www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/ED635.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/ED635.pdf).



# Additional Tools to Help Plan for the Future: Person-Centered Planning

As a person with a disability, you may need help in planning for your future. Making decisions about school, training, work, where to live, what to do with one's free time, and how to make and keep friends are easier with the support of family, friends, and professionals.

**A Circle of Support** is a group of people, including your family, friends, neighbors, and teachers, who act as a community of support for you. They help you to identify and accomplish your dreams and goals. A Circle is formed when you or members of your family ask for help. With the assistance of a facilitator, the Circle comes together to brainstorm and focus upon your dreams for the future. Short-term and long-range goals are developed to fulfill those dreams. The group consists **ONLY** of individuals selected by you. This process will provide additional information and help you plan for the future.

Everyone has **DREAMS!** MAPS (*McGill Action Planning System*) and PATH (*Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope*) are two additional person-centered planning models that can be used to chart your future beyond the high school years.

## **MAPS**

### *McGill Action Planning System Making Action Plans*

This tool helps identify your strengths, abilities, interests, and hopes and dreams. Eight key questions are raised that are critical to the planning process. With honesty, creativity, and a positive approach, MAPS (under the guidance of a trained facilitator and scribe) will provide an action plan that will help you achieve a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment in many life activities.

#### **Eight (8) Key Questions:**

- What is MAPS?
- What is the history of the student?
- What is the dream?
- What is the nightmare; what is the fear?
- Who is the student?
- What are the student's strengths, gifts, and talents?
- What does the student need to achieve the dream and avoid the nightmare?
- What is the Plan of Action?

## Step 4: Develop Your “Individualized” Program

Transition planning is important in the life of each high school student, especially for an individual who has a disability. Realistic goals can guide you through high school and into adult life. Transition planning is part of the federal special education law (IDEA 2004). Refer to information about this law on pages 57-60.

“Transition services means a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within a results-oriented process, which facilitates movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.” (34 CFR § 300.43 (a))

### **Transition planning helps identify your:**

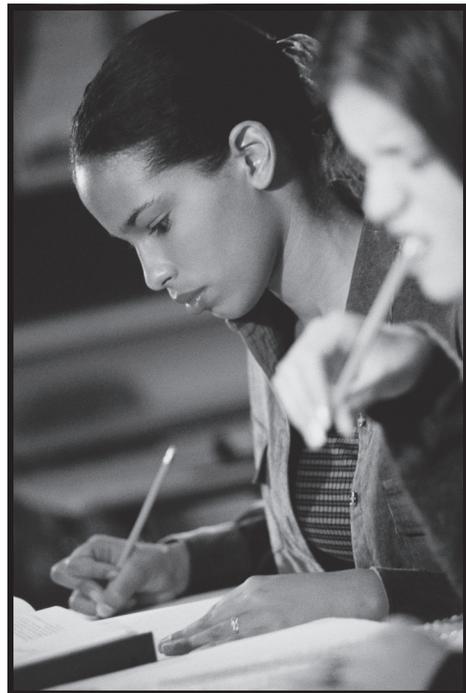
Strengths;  
Interests;  
Preferences; and  
Needs.

### **Transition planning helps create a map that identifies:**

High school experiences you need; and  
Post-school Outcome Goal Statements.

### **Goals identify:**

The skills you need to learn before you leave  
high school; and  
The help you need to reach your  
post-high school goals.



**Transition goals are developed as part of your IEP\* by the  
Planning and Placement Team (PPT).**

*\* Individualized Education Program*

# The IEP — Individualized Education Program

- The name of the plan developed by the PPT is called the *Individualized Education Program* (IEP).
- The plan defines the appropriate goals and the specific objectives, activities, and services that need to be addressed to meet these goals.
- Decisions are made using current testing, school work, assessments, observations, and input from school personnel, your parents, and you.
- By federal law, the IEP must be reviewed annually and appropriate adjustments made.
- Parents or school personnel may ask for additional PPT meetings to change or review the IEP. At age 18, you also have this right.
- Transition goals and objectives become part of the IEP.

## **Transition goals begin to be developed:**

- At the annual PPT meeting following your 15th birthday by Connecticut law.
- Under federal law, you must be invited to all IEP meetings that discuss transition planning. If you do not attend, the PPT must document how your interests and preferences were considered in determining transition needs.

## **Transition goals must be:**

- Measurable;
- Monitored for progress;
- Reviewed yearly or sooner;
- Reflective of educational benefit;
- Rewritten and changed, if needed;
- Relevant and realistic; and
- Coordinated with other IEP goals.

## **Transition goals must address:**

- What kinds of educational services will be required to meet the goals;
- Who is responsible for providing the services;
- Where the services will take place;
- How long the services will be provided; and
- What related services are necessary to meet the goals (e.g., Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech, transportation, counseling.)

## **All goals should explain:**

- How success will be determined; and
- What kinds of accommodations and/or modifications are needed, as appropriate.

# The PPT —

## The Planning and Placement Team

### **The role of the PPT includes:**

- Deciding if a student should be tested for eligibility for special education services;
- Reviewing evaluations and determine if eligibility for services has been met; and
- Developing a program for eligible students called the IEP, the *Individualized Education Program*. Transition goals are developed as part of the IEP.

### **PPT members include:**

- You. As the student, you are a valued member of the Team. You must be invited to the PPT meeting if the purpose is to discuss transition planning (which takes place at the IEP following your 15th birthday, or earlier if appropriate).
- Your parent(s);
- At least one of your general education teachers (if you are, or may be, participating in the general education environment);
- At least one of your special education teachers;
- A representative of the school district who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities and is knowledgeable about the general curriculum and about the availability of resources of the school district;
- A pupil services personnel member (for example, a school psychologist, school social worker, or guidance counselor);
- An individual who can interpret evaluation results (this person may be one of the previously listed Team members other than your parent);
- Other individuals, at the discretion of your parent(s) or the school, who have knowledge or special expertise regarding your strengths and needs, including related services personnel;
- Others of your choice, if you are 18 or older. At age 18, you have the right and responsibility to invite other individuals who may help you in meeting your transition goals and objectives (e.g., friends, employers, and/or advocates).

You, your parent(s), and the school district may agree in writing that the attendance of a particular member of the PPT is not necessary and excuse that member from attending the meeting if that member's academic or elective class or related service is not going to be modified or discussed at the meeting. Additionally, you and the school district may agree in writing to excuse a member of the PPT when that member's academic or elective class or related service will be discussed at the meeting and the member submits written input into the development of the IEP to your parent(s) and the Team prior to the meeting. You do not have to enter into such an agreement; if you don't agree to excuse the Team member, the member will be expected to attend the meeting.

# Assistive Technology, Accommodations, and Modifications

## What are they? Can they help you?

As a student with a disability, assistive technology, accommodations, and modifications must be discussed at your PPT meeting.

An **assistive technology device** is any piece of equipment or system that is used to help you increase, maintain, or improve your functional capabilities.

An **accommodation** is a change to the way in which classroom instruction or assessment is provided. The content of what you are expected to learn does not change, but how the teacher presents the information and how you demonstrate knowledge of the material may change.

A **modification** changes “what” you are expected to learn in a class. You may not be required to learn all the class content, or the information may be taught to you at a more appropriate grade level. In some instances, a modification will change class content to a higher grade level.

The purpose of accommodations and modifications is to help you make progress in the general education curriculum with non-disabled peers and to participate in extracurricular and other non-academic activities (e.g., sports, clubs, trips, and dances).

Often, assistive technology, accommodations, and/or modifications used during your school years will carry over into your adult life. It is important to learn what technology works best for you.

For more information, visit the Connecticut Tech Act Project at: [www.cttechact.com](http://www.cttechact.com). In addition, go to [www.wati.org](http://www.wati.org) and download *Hey! Can I Try That? A Student Handbook for Choosing and Using Assistive Technology*.

Please complete the checklist on the following page and share the results with your family and teachers.

# Assistive Technology Checklist for High School Students

Please read and check *Yes* or *No* for each item on this form. These questions are designed to help you, your family, and your teachers decide if (assistive) technology may help during transition planning.

**Please check *Yes* or *No*:**

## Writing

*Can you:*

Write legibly in a traditional manner? (e.g., paper/pencil)	Yes _____	No _____
Complete written forms?	Yes _____	No _____
Access the computer in a typical manner?	Yes _____	No _____
Use the keyboard or word processor to complete written tasks?	Yes _____	No _____
Use features of word processing software to complete written work?	Yes _____	No _____

## Communication

*Can you:*

Communicate wants/needs to unfamiliar individuals?	Yes _____	No _____
Request clarification and information?	Yes _____	No _____
Independently use the telephone?	Yes _____	No _____
Access and use electronic forms of communication (e.g., email, cell phone)?	Yes _____	No _____

## Reading

*Can you:*

Physically handle books and print materials to independently read?	Yes _____	No _____
Physically see and read typical text books?	Yes _____	No _____
Read and comprehend typical texts and materials (e.g., books)?	Yes _____	No _____
Access and read materials from the Internet?	Yes _____	No _____

Adapted from: Assistive Technology Team, Mississippi Bend AEA 2003, and Noll, Schwartz, Canfield (2001) CESA #11 Form

(1 of 3)

# Assistive Technology Checklist for High School Students

(continued)

**Please check Yes or No:**  
**Learning/Studying**

<i>Can you:</i>		
Understand and follow verbal instructions?	Yes _____	No _____
Independently follow a schedule?	Yes _____	No _____
Independently use study strategies (e.g., highlighting, outlining)?	Yes _____	No _____
Independently use organizational strategies for work materials and assignments (e.g., day planner, calendar, PDA)?	Yes _____	No _____

**Math**

<i>Can you:</i>		
Independently tell time?	Yes _____	No _____
Complete math calculations?	Yes _____	No _____
Use a typical calculator?	Yes _____	No _____
Appropriately use money skills?	Yes _____	No _____

**Recreation & Leisure**

<i>Can you:</i>		
Participate in recreational activities in a typical manner?	Yes _____	No _____
Choose leisure activities and manipulate the necessary materials for participation (e.g., cards, game pieces, art materials)?	Yes _____	No _____

**Activities of Daily Living**

<i>Can you:</i>		
Physically manage grooming and hygiene needs?	Yes _____	No _____
Independently prepare and eat meals?	Yes _____	No _____
Independently dress and do laundry?	Yes _____	No _____
Complete housekeeping activities?	Yes _____	No _____

Adapted from:  
Assistive Technology Team, Mississippi Bend AEA 2003, and  
Noll, Schwartz, Canfield (2001) CESA #11 Form

(2 of 3)

# Assistive Technology Checklist for High School Students (continued)

Please check *Yes* or *No*:

## Mobility

<i>Can you:</i>		
Independently navigate inside and outside customary environments?	Yes _____	No _____
Carry necessary materials between locations (e.g., backpack)?	Yes _____	No _____
Operate controls to activate public building access devices (e.g., power doors, elevator controls)?	Yes _____	No _____
Independently arrange transportation?	Yes _____	No _____
Independently access public transportation?	Yes _____	No _____
Drive a car?	Yes _____	No _____

## Positioning and Seating

<i>Can you:</i>		
Sit in a typical classroom chair/desk?	Yes _____	No _____
Independently change positions when necessary?	Yes _____	No _____
Tolerate being in a class/work setting for the required length of time?	Yes _____	No _____

## Additional Items

<i>Are you:</i>		
Able to see within normal limits?	Yes _____	No _____
Able to hear within normal limits?	Yes _____	No _____
In good physical health?	Yes _____	No _____
Able to sustain attention for an adequate period of time?	Yes _____	No _____

If you have checked “NO” in any of these areas, please talk to your teacher and discuss what technology may help you.

(3 of 3)

Adapted from:  
Assistive Technology Team, Mississippi Bend AEA 2003, and  
Noll, Schwartz, Canfield (2001) CESA #11 Form

# Areas to Consider When Developing Annual Transition Goals and Objectives

Requirements for graduation are one of the first things to discuss when developing plans for transition from school. You should receive a high school diploma if you have met the graduation requirements as agreed upon by the PPT and your local Board of Education. A meaningful IEP must be developed in order to make a successful transition from school to adult life.

## **By the time you leave school, you should have:**

- An awareness of your own strengths and needs and know what you like and dislike;
- An understanding of the needs that would have to be met to enable you to live as independently as possible;
- Self-advocacy skills that allow you to express preferences and make choices;
- An ability to display appropriate social skills for participating in a community;
- A basic knowledge of your rights under disability legislation, including civic responsibilities;
- A basic understanding of community resources; and
- An understanding of your disability.

## **Bearing in mind the statements listed above, there are three basic areas of your life that you must think about when developing transition goals:**

- Postsecondary education or training;
- Employment; and, if appropriate,
- Independent living/community participation.

The following pages look at each of these areas and provide additional information to help you and your parent(s) identify the services and supports that may be necessary for you to prepare for the transition from school to adult life.

# Thinking about Postsecondary Education/Training and Employment

**Postsecondary goals written into your IEP regarding postsecondary education/employment might include goals such as:**

- Continue my education and go to college in preparation for a specific career path area;
- Become involved in a postsecondary training program to develop skills needed for a competitive job in a field that matches my interests and abilities;
- Develop vocational and academic skills required to enter an “on-the-job training” or “apprenticeship” program;
- Develop skills to seek and maintain employment;
- Develop work skills and behaviors needed to work in a semi-supervised employment situation; and
- Develop the necessary work skills for a long-term supported work environment.

**After long-range postsecondary goals have been determined, ask the following questions to assess your needs and identify the activities that will be necessary to include in the transition planning in order to achieve these long-range goals:**

- Do you have the skills necessary to obtain competitive employment?
- Will you need some support to obtain or maintain employment?
- Are you aware of the possible options regarding work?
- Have your interests and abilities been assessed (*vocational assessment*) and discussed?
- Have you had any paid work or volunteer experiences?
- Are you taking appropriate career-related (*either vocational or college-bound*) courses?
- Do you have social skills that are appropriate for the job and living in the community?

# Postsecondary Education/Training Employment Checklist

**Please check all the areas in which you may need help.**

## **Postsecondary Education or Training**

You need to ask about opportunities for education or training before exiting high school:

- Community College (2-year school)
- Vocational Education Business/Technical School
- Adult/Continuing Education
- College or University (4-year school)
- Apprenticeship
- On-the-job training
- Military

## **Employment**

These activities can help you determine your likes and interests and make a good match with your skills and abilities:

- Vocational assessment (identifies current strengths)
- Student/parent interview
- Student self-assessment
- Formal assessment
- Situational assessment

## **School and Work-Based Training and Preparation**

These skills can help you obtain and keep a job:

- Hygiene
- Appropriate dress
- Time management
- Money management: banking, budgeting
- Making change
- Safety rules
- Interpersonal communication skills with supervisor and co-workers
- Resume writing
- Interview skills
- Application completion
- Job search skills

(continued)

**Please check all the areas in which you may need help.**

### **Work Experiences**

These activities can help you learn more about different jobs, what you enjoy doing, and how to find and maintain a job:

- In-school job
- Job shadowing
- Volunteer work
- Work study
- Summer job
- Mentoring

### **Career Guidance Services**

These activities can help identify a good match between a job/career and your talents and abilities. School Transition Coordinators, Guidance Counselors, Career Counselors, and State Career Centers can provide these services:

- Counselor services
- Access to computerized career information

### **Employment Support Services**

These services are available to help you learn to do a job successfully:

- Work crew/job enclave
- Support on the job (co-worker/job coach)
- Supported employment

### **Career-Related Courses**

Your plans may require certain courses in school to help you reach your goals:

- Vocational/Technical
- College-bound
- Computer literacy

### **Adult Service Agencies**

You may be eligible for help from one of these agencies:

- Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS)
- Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB)
- Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired (CDHI)
- Department of Developmental Services (DDS)
- Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)
- Local agencies

Use pages 32-37 to help you write your transition goals, objectives, and activities in the area of Postsecondary Education/Training and Employment.

# Are You Ready for College?

As a student with a disability, it is important to know that you will need all the competencies anyone attending college needs *plus* whatever special skills or strategies are necessary for you to cope with your particular disability. Your high school is required to provide transition services; college is not. It is best to acquire the skills that you will need in college while you are still in high school rather than waiting until you arrive on a college campus. Arriving at college feeling confident in yourself and ready to meet the challenges can make the difference between success and failure.

It may be useful to complete the following self-assessment to help you decide if college is the best choice for you at this time. If you cannot answer some of these questions, discuss them with your parents, teachers, counselors, and others who will give you honest answers.

## 1) How good is my academic background?

- Am I enrolled in college prep classes that will prepare me for college-level course work?
- Do I have the same assignments and am I mastering the same body of knowledge and skills as other students?
- Have I planned to take all of the prerequisite courses that I will need to get into college?

## 2) Are my standardized test scores adequate?

- What is the range of scores required by the colleges that I am interested in?
- Have I been able to score within that range with or without accommodations?

## 3) What are my individual strengths and weaknesses?

- Do I have difficulty decoding, comprehending, or completing reading assignments within a reasonable time?
- Do I have difficulty with math?
- Am I good with mathematical/quantitative reasoning?
- Do I need to use a calculator for basic math?
- How good is my written expression?
- Is my handwriting legible?
- Have I mastered grammatical, spelling, editing, and re-writing skills?
- Can I research and organize material for lengthy compositions and term papers?

# Are You Ready for College?

(continued)

**4) On what kinds of tests do I perform well?**

- Am I prepared for challenging multiple-choice or short-answer questions that require me to understand and apply the material taught?
- Do I perform well on written essays?

**5) Are my study skills and learning strategies adequate?**

- Do I have good listening skills?
- Do I take good notes?
- Do I know how to determine what information is important and how to study for exams?
- Am I organized enough to juggle a class schedule, complete short-term and long-term assignments, and stay current with the course syllabus?
- Can I sustain attention in challenging classes?

**6) Am I disciplined enough to manage my time and meet academic deadlines?**

- Do I deal well with unstructured environments?
- Can I handle the choices and freedoms that I will face in a college environment?

**7) Am I determined to succeed in school?**

- Am I willing to work harder than other students on occasion to accomplish the same goals?
- If I receive a poor grade on a test or a paper, am I willing to contact a teacher and accept constructive criticism in order to improve my performance?

**8) Do I have a positive attitude and am I flexible?**

- Are my confidence and self-esteem reasonably healthy?
- Am I able to withstand difficulties and pressure?
- What effect does stress have on my academic achievement?

**9) Do I have good problem-solving and decision-making skills?**

- Can I access community and college resources for assistance if needed?
- Do I know how to monitor my progress in academic settings?

**Think about your answers.  
Are they the answers of someone who is ready for college?**

# What Type of Support Is Available at College?

What makes the transition process especially confusing is that every college differs in terms of how much support is offered to students with disabilities. Although special education services do not generally exist at the college level, some colleges do in fact offer comprehensive support programs to students with disabilities.

Most colleges and universities will have information about services for students with disabilities listed on their Web site. You may also find guidelines for the type of disability documentation that is required to obtain accommodations as well as descriptions of the types of services that are available to all students on a particular campus (e.g., writing or math labs, Freshman Year Experiences, summer orientation camps, peer tutoring services, personal or career counseling, study skills instruction).

Most campuses offer a tour. At that time, you may request to talk with someone in the college Disability Services Office as well as with students on campus who have a similar disability. Matching a college to fit your learning style is an important first step to success.



# Questions to Ask a College Disability Services Office

1. What information must be provided to document a disability and to whom should it be given? How recent should the documentation be?
2. How accessible is the campus to students with physical disabilities?
  - A. Availability of transportation across campus?
  - B. Accessibility of buildings?
3. Where is the Disability Services Office on campus and does it have evening hours?
4. How is the Disability Services Office staffed?
5. Is the staff trained in specialized areas of disabilities?
6. How many staff are full-time? How many are part-time?
7. Are there extra costs associated with the disability support programs?
8. Is there an orientation program or a summer preparation course especially designed for students with disabilities?
9. Who supervises testing accommodations?
10. What is the retention rate for all first-year students and how does this compare with the rate for students with disabilities?
11. What special services are provided to students with disabilities?
12. Are supports available in the areas of study skills, writing, organizational skills, or time management? Are the programs staffed by individuals trained to work with students with disabilities?
13. Is course-specific tutoring available? Is this different than the services provided by the Disability Services Office staff?
14. Are counseling services available in personal, academic, or vocational areas?
15. What (assistive) technology is available?
16. Do you anticipate that the services you are describing to me now will be available next year?
17. What is the school's history of providing disability services? Have any lawsuits or Office for Civil Rights complaints been filed against the school in the past five years? If yes, how were these resolved?
18. What is the climate on campus for students with disabilities?

# Sample Transition Goals and Objectives Bank

## Postsecondary Education or Training

**Goal:** Student will acquire the skills to successfully transition to a two-year or four-year college/university or vocational training program.

### **Objectives:**

- \_\_\_ Student will enroll in classes that will prepare him/her for the challenges of postsecondary education.
- \_\_\_ Student will meet with guidance counselor/general education teacher and/or special education teacher to discuss academic requirements for pursuing vocational training and/or a college degree.
- \_\_\_ Student will demonstrate skill in developing a positive school profile and resume that will be used in the college/training application process.
- \_\_\_ Student will participate in at least one extracurricular activity in order to develop non-academic aspects of learning.
- \_\_\_ Student will describe his/her disability in terms of learning strengths and needs.
- \_\_\_ Student will attend postsecondary options fairs, events, and group sessions provided by the school.
- \_\_\_ Student will participate in the traditional standardized tests necessary for acceptance to postsecondary institutions (e.g: PSATs, SATs, ACCUPLACER).
- \_\_\_ Student will complete the paperwork necessary to take the standardized tests with accommodations.
- \_\_\_ Student will schedule a visit with the Disability Services Coordinator at a minimum of two colleges/universities to determine the levels and types of services available.
- \_\_\_ Student will describe the accommodations available to him/her in postsecondary settings.
- \_\_\_ Student will be able to explain the differences in protections under the special education law (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- \_\_\_ Student will request that all evaluation data required to obtain accommodations at the postsecondary level be completed as close to high school graduation as possible but at least within the student's last three years.

# Sample Transition Goals and Objectives Bank

## Postsecondary Education or Training

(continued)

### Objectives:

Student will receive direct skills training in becoming a positive self-advocate:

- Learn whom to ask and when to ask for assistance.
- Practice describing what is needed in order to become a successful student.
- Develop and practice negotiation skills to help get what is wanted/needed.
- Develop strategies for seeking assistance.
- Discuss disability needs in the context of seeking accommodations.

Student will practice needed postsecondary education strategies:

- Time management
- Test preparation
- Study partner/study group
- Note-taking techniques
- Special study locations
- Stress reduction techniques
- Text anxiety reduction activities

- Student will develop the skills to organize school work with efficiency.
- Student will develop strategies to enhance study skills.
- Student will identify what testing, evaluation data, and documentation are required in order to receive accommodations at the postsecondary level.
- Student will develop a resume and postsecondary list of options before the final year of high school.
- Student will write a personal essay in the fall of his/her final year of high school.
- Student will investigate availability of financial aid and complete paperwork.
- Student will research resources within and outside the college to find appropriate support:
  - Determine eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services through the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS).
  - Research private tutoring, if necessary.
  - Research personal care assistance services, if necessary.

Adapted from the Simsbury High School Transition Goals and Objective Bank (2000),  
Adaptation CT Transition Task Force (2008)



# Sample Transition Goals and Objectives Bank

## Career Awareness/Employment

**Goal:** Student will complete a series of activities in order to prepare for the transition to competitive or supported employment.

### Objectives:

Student will complete a series of formal and/or informal vocational assessment activities:

- Career Interest Inventory
- Learning Style Inventory
- Student Interview
- Parent Interview
- Values/Maturity Inventory
- Achievement Tests
- Psychological Tests

- Student will define interests and abilities for potential career and job opportunities.
- Student will develop a career portfolio to compile all vocational-related materials.
- Student will complete a minimum of two job reports on occupations of interest.
- Student will participate in \_\_\_ career trips to area businesses.
- Student will participate in \_\_\_ school-based opportunities to hear guest speakers from career fields of their choice.
- Student will identify primary and secondary career goals comparing the qualifications necessary for success in such occupations with his/her own abilities.
- Student will increase knowledge of general labor laws regarding the employment of minors (e.g., work permits, hours of work, minimum wage, jobs permitted for minors).

# Sample Transition Goals and Objectives Bank

## Career Awareness/Employment

(continued)

### Objectives:

- \_\_\_ Student will demonstrate skills necessary to effectively locate, apply, interview for, and maintain employment.
- \_\_\_ Student will identify attitudes and behaviors necessary for job success.
- \_\_\_ Student will apply decision-making strategies to job-related issues.
- \_\_\_ Student will develop a personal resume.
- \_\_\_ Student will define transition goals related to competitive or supported employment, postsecondary education or training, and independent living/community participation.
- \_\_\_ Student will refine transition goals related to employment, postsecondary education or training, and independent living/community participation.
- \_\_\_ Student will meet with adult services representative to initiate referral process.
- \_\_\_ Student will meet with adult services representative at least twice per school year to prepare for transition.
- \_\_\_ Student will discuss job-related concerns and transition planning issues in vocational counseling sessions.
- \_\_\_ Student will complete \_\_\_ job-shadowing experiences related to expressed interests.
- \_\_\_ Student will conduct \_\_\_ informational interviews related to expressed interests.
- \_\_\_ Student will successfully complete \_\_\_ school-supervised work experiences.
- \_\_\_ Student will demonstrate positive work habits and attitudes in school-based vocational settings.
- \_\_\_ Student will participate in \_\_\_ community-based internships in a career field of interest.
- \_\_\_ Student will demonstrate positive work habits and attitudes in community-based vocational training sites.
- \_\_\_ Student will complete \_\_\_ community-based job training experiences.
- \_\_\_ Student will self-evaluate work behavior in community-based vocational settings.

Adapted from the Simsbury High School Transition Goals and Objective Bank (2000),  
Adaptation CT Transition Task Force (2008)



# Sample Transition Goals and Objectives Bank

## Organizational and Study Skills

**Goal:** Student will demonstrate organizational and study skills in order to participate successfully in academic classes.

### **Objectives:**

- \_\_\_ Student will self-monitor homework by maintaining an assignment note pad that lists all assignments and due dates.
- \_\_\_ Student will monitor long-term assignments by breaking down assignments, setting up blocks of time for completion of each part, and recording and monitoring progress.
- \_\_\_ Student will show preparation for learning by reporting to class on time with the necessary materials.
- \_\_\_ Student will complete assigned tasks by following oral and written directions.
- \_\_\_ Student will complete assigned tasks by beginning within a reasonable amount of time and finishing within a specified time frame.
- \_\_\_ Student will work toward effective task completion by remaining on task, ignoring distractions, and working independently for a specified period of time.
- \_\_\_ Student will assess correctness of assignments and tests by reviewing for errors and making necessary revisions.
- \_\_\_ Student will demonstrate understanding of concepts presented in class by applying study skills (e.g., note taking, outlining, summarizing).
- \_\_\_ Student will gain understanding of class content by identifying key words, taking notes, and using compensatory devices as needed.
- \_\_\_ Student will actively prepare for tests and quizzes by applying strategies (e.g., mnemonics, visualization, graphic organizers, outlining, attending extra help sessions).
- \_\_\_ Student will demonstrate organizational skills by keeping class work and notebooks orderly.
- \_\_\_ Student will demonstrate self-advocacy skills by planning with classroom teachers for academic and behavioral needs.
- \_\_\_ Student will accept the consequences of being unprepared for class by discussing such consequences with the teacher and planning to avoid such problems in the future.
- \_\_\_ Student will improve test-taking skills by acquiring and applying strategies.

# Sample Transition Goals and Objectives Bank

## Organizational and Study Skills

(continued)

### Objectives:

- \_\_\_ Student will prepare for active participation in classes by previewing and later reviewing topics of study.
- \_\_\_ Student will independently seek assistance in classes by working with a classmate and checking thoroughness of notes and clarity of assignments.
- \_\_\_ Student will increase retention of material read by applying strategies for approaching the reading of content materials (e.g., scanning, skimming, note-taking, outlining, summarizing).
- \_\_\_ Student will accept academic responsibility by utilizing study periods and working with staff to meet study skills objectives.
- \_\_\_ Student will self-monitor assignment completion by prioritizing tasks and breaking down assignments into workable units.
- \_\_\_ Student will complete research projects by setting a timeline for completion, locating primary and secondary sources, taking notes from these sources, citing sources, organizing by sub-topic, and presenting an oral or written report.
- \_\_\_ Student will access the reading component of classes through the use of recorded materials as needed.
- \_\_\_ Student will employ compensatory strategies in setting goals in content classes, such as: creating a strategy to record assignments; developing a strategy to improve grades; monitoring time spent on specific subjects; and following through on the use of particular strategies.
- \_\_\_ Student will improve memory strategies by acquiring and applying a variety of memory techniques.
- \_\_\_ Student will improve note-taking skills by acquiring and applying strategies for written and oral sources.
- \_\_\_ Student will independently arrange conferences/extra-help sessions with teachers.
- \_\_\_ Student will complete assignments on time and according to designated criteria by recording assignments, budgeting time appropriately, being prepared with all necessary materials, and seeking help when necessary.
- \_\_\_ Student will earn a passing grade in academic courses by participating in in-class discussions/activities, utilizing various study skills, and actively preparing for tests/quizzes.
- \_\_\_ Student will accept academic responsibility by attending classes on a regular basis, participating in class discussions and activities, and completing assignments according to established timelines.

Adapted from the Simsbury High School Transition Goals and Objective Bank (2000),  
Adaptation CT Transition Task Force (2008)



# Sample Transition Goals and Objectives Bank

## Self-Advocacy

How does self-advocacy play a part in postsecondary education or training, employment, and independent living/community participation?

Self-advocacy skills play a very important part in all areas of your life. The skills you develop during the school years will carry over into your adult life. Developing appropriate skills must start at a very young age. Here are some sample areas that will help you to assess and identify your level of self-advocacy skills.

**Goal:** Student will demonstrate self-advocacy skills in order to communicate learning style and academic, vocational, and personal life care needs.

### **Objectives:**

- \_\_\_ Student will complete a learning style inventory and be able to describe his/her learning style.
- \_\_\_ Student will communicate to others the strengths and weaknesses of his/her learning style.
- \_\_\_ Student will review the accommodations/modifications page of his/her IEP.
- \_\_\_ Student will communicate with teachers to seek help, clarify instructions or requirements of academic tasks, and make them aware of accommodations.
- \_\_\_ Student will learn skills to begin to facilitate his/her PPT meeting.
- \_\_\_ Student will identify impact of behaviors on self and others and how it affects learning.
- \_\_\_ Student will assess accuracy of assignments and tests by reviewing for errors and making necessary revisions.
- \_\_\_ Student will accept the consequences of being unprepared for class by discussing such consequences and developing a strategy to avoid such problems in the future.
- \_\_\_ Student will demonstrate the skill of obtaining information from teachers regarding tests, quizzes, projects, etc.

# Sample Transition Goals and Objectives Bank

## Self-Advocacy

(continued)

### Objectives:

- \_\_\_ Student will develop and carry out a plan for making up work missed due to absences.
- \_\_\_ Student will accept responsibility for utilizing study period/resource services to meet classroom objectives.
- \_\_\_ Student will discuss specific behaviors (positive and negative) and their effect on academic classes and/or social networks.
- \_\_\_ Student will seek guidance/direction when facing new or difficult situations.
- \_\_\_ Student will appropriately confront topics/issues that are uncomfortable to discuss, with teacher/paraprofessional support.
- \_\_\_ Student will plan and implement alternative solutions for school problems with adult guidance as they occur.
- \_\_\_ Student will face academic and social situations positively and appropriately and discuss feelings regarding these situations.
- \_\_\_ Student will accept praise and/or criticism from peers or adults and utilize such feedback to change social and behavioral outcomes.
- \_\_\_ Student will learn the skills necessary to say “No” when he/she feels uncomfortable in a particular situation.
- \_\_\_ Student will become aware of his/her disability.
- \_\_\_ Student will be aware of his/her emotions/feelings and discuss them.
- \_\_\_ Student will learn coping skills when in a stressful situation.
- \_\_\_ Student will learn about rights and responsibilities under state and federal disability legislation (e.g., IDEA, Section 504, ADA).
- \_\_\_ Student and the PPT will develop self-advocacy skills, goals, and objectives if appropriate.
- \_\_\_ Student will communicate his/her likes and dislikes.

Adapted from the Simsbury High School Transition Goals and Objective Bank (2000),  
Adaptation CT Transition Task Force (2008)



# Sample Transition Goals and Objectives Bank

## Community Participation\* and Transition Goals

**Transition goals written into your IEP regarding community participation might include statements such as:**

- Develop the necessary skills to live within the community and access available resources;
- Develop the ability to utilize recreational/leisure resources in the community independently or with support services; and/or
- Develop the necessary skills to be a good citizen.

**(Note: These goals may be included under Independent Living Skills.)**

**After a Community Participation goal has been determined, ask the following questions to assess your needs and identify the activities that will be necessary to include in the transition planning in order to achieve this long-range goal:**

- How do you spend your leisure time? Alone? With family? With friends?
- What sports, games, or hobbies do you enjoy?
- Is there anything you wish you could learn to do?
- Do you make friends easily?
- Do you need help in letting people know about your needs?
- Do you find it hard to ask for help?
- Can you use a telephone?
- Have you explored public or private transportation options?
- Can you read a map, bus, or train schedule?
- Are there any school or community activities in which you would like to get involved?

**\*Community participation is now included under Independent Living on the IEP.**

# Sample Transition Goals and Objectives Bank

## Community Participation Checklist

**Please check all the areas in which you may need help.**

### **Leisure/Recreation**

Find out about opportunities for fun in your community.

- Sports and Social Clubs
- Community Programs/Events
- Specialized Recreation
- Special Interest Clubs
- Synagogue/Temple/Church Groups

### **Civic Responsibilities**

Find out what you can do to improve the quality of life in your community.

- Political Groups
- Advocacy Groups
- Civic/Neighborhood Groups
- Volunteer Opportunities

# Sample Transition Goals and Objectives Bank

## Community Participation

**Goal:** Student will acquire the necessary skills to access the community with independence (and/or specified levels of support).

### Objectives:

- \_\_\_ Student will participate in \_\_\_\_\_ extracurricular activities/clubs in the school and community.
- \_\_\_ Student will participate in \_\_\_\_\_ sports program(s) in the school/ community.
- \_\_\_ Student will work with a peer mentor or other mentors to support him/her in recreational and leisure activities in the school/community.
- \_\_\_ Student will read and follow directions, maps, signs, and transportation schedules.
- \_\_\_ Student will receive additional tutorial support in order to pass the written driver's license examination.
- \_\_\_ Student will learn the skills to access public transportation.
- \_\_\_ Student will participate in community-based training to learn skills related to:
  - \_\_\_ shopping;
  - \_\_\_ going to a restaurant;
  - \_\_\_ establishing checking and savings accounts and completing transactions at a bank;
  - \_\_\_ using an ATM; and
  - \_\_\_ utilizing the post office.
- \_\_\_ Student will demonstrate an understanding of proper manners/behaviors in a variety of social/community situations.
- \_\_\_ Student will register to vote (if age 18) and learn the skills necessary to use the voting booth and/or complete an absentee ballot form.
- \_\_\_ Student will learn the skills to access appropriate medical care (e.g., calling doctors to make appointments, keeping track of medications or vitamins).
- \_\_\_ Student will identify leisure activities for enjoyment in his/her free time.
- \_\_\_ Student will identify appropriate community resources that could support him/her after high school.
- \_\_\_ Student will make application for federal/financial assistance, if appropriate, to Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or Medicaid (Title XIX), with assistance from staff and family.

Adapted from the Simsbury High School Transition Goals and Objective Bank (2000),  
Adaptation CT Transition Task Force (2008)



# Sample Transition Goals and Objectives Bank

## Independent Living and Transition Goals

**Transition goals written into your IEP regarding independent living might include statements such as:**

- Develop the skills necessary to make independent decisions;
- Develop the ability to take care of your personal needs without help from others;
- Manage your personal needs utilizing appropriate supports;
- Develop the skills necessary to live in a supervised apartment or a group setting; and
- Register for lifelong transportation services.

**After Transition goals have been determined, ask the following questions to assess your needs and identify the activities that will be necessary to include in the transition planning in order to achieve these goals:**

- Do you have opportunities to make choices and decisions at school and at home?
- Can you recognize and accept the consequences of your choices/decisions?
- Have you and your family received information about residential/living alternatives?
- Have you had an opportunity to visit various locations in your community?
- Do you have the skills to be self-sufficient in your home? If not, what skills do you need to learn?
- Will you need help making decisions in your home in order to be self-sufficient?
- Do you have daily living skills, such as cooking, shopping, and cleaning?
- Do you require an assistant to help you with personal needs?
- Do you have a special transportation need? How will this need be met after high school?
- If respite care will be an issue, has the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) or another adult service provider/resource been contacted?
- Do you need assistance in handling money?
- Have you been given information about financial assistance that may be available to you, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicaid (Title XIX), or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)?

# Independent Living Checklist

Please check all the areas in which you may need help.

## Life Skills

These are some of the skills you will need to learn so that you can live on your own:

- Cooking
- Cleaning
- Shopping
- Personal hygiene

## Transportation

Knowing how to find and use suitable transportation can help you be more independent. Categories of transportation include:

- Independent – walk or ride with others, drive your own car
- Public – bus, train, taxi
- Specialized – private vehicle, wheelchair-accessible vans/para transit

## Self-Advocacy

This information can help you become confident:

- Knowing your rights and responsibilities
- Understanding your disability
- Knowing the resources/help available

## Medical and Support Services

These services can enable you to live successfully on your own:

- Access to a physician, medical specialist, or dentist
- Counseling
- Personal care services
- Adaptive equipment

## Financial Management

Learning to take care of your money and your bills is an essential part of being an adult.

- Managing a bank account/checking account
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Public assistance services
- Insurance: medical/health insurance/benefits, car, life

# Sample Transition Goals and Objectives Bank

## Independent/Daily Living Skills

**Goal:** Student will acquire the necessary daily living skills to allow for independent functioning in a variety of environments (home, school, work, and community).

### **Objectives:**

- \_\_\_ Student will maintain a well-groomed appearance and proper hygiene.
- \_\_\_ Student will perform appropriate first aid for cuts, burns, and insect bites.
- \_\_\_ Student will identify personal medical management needs (e.g., prescriptions, over-the counter medication, directions, and safety of use).
- \_\_\_ Student will verbalize information about the need for regular exercise and proper diet to maintain a healthy body.
- \_\_\_ Student will identify steps necessary to ensure a safe environment, such as obtaining appropriate assistance during emergencies, dealing with strangers, having appropriate identification, and knowing when and how to use it.
- \_\_\_ Student will maintain a bedroom by making a bed correctly, and hanging up and placing clothing neatly in closets/drawers.
- \_\_\_ Student will maintain a clean bathroom – based upon specific teacher criteria.
- \_\_\_ Student will maintain a clean kitchen – based upon specific teacher criteria.
- \_\_\_ Student will maintain a clean living room – based upon specific teacher criteria.
- \_\_\_ Student will apply and expand knowledge of meal preparation skills, cleanup, food storage, and safety in the kitchen – based upon specific teacher criteria.
- \_\_\_ Student will demonstrate appropriate use of household appliances – based upon specific teacher criteria.
- \_\_\_ Student will demonstrate appropriate skills in laundering – based upon specific teacher criteria (e.g. washing, drying, ironing, dry cleaning).
- \_\_\_ Student will perform necessary organizational techniques, such as using a calendar, scheduling, and record keeping.
- \_\_\_ Student will demonstrate time management skills as they relate to home, work, and the community.
- \_\_\_ Student will, through role playing, demonstrate appropriate telephone/cell phone etiquette, 911 emergency calls, 411 operator assistance, and personal safety.
- \_\_\_ Student will apply and expand knowledge of written correspondence, including telephone messages, letters, lists, email, text messages, etc. – based upon specific teacher criteria.
- \_\_\_ Student will, based on a dollar amount, choose and purchase a meal in a restaurant or cafeteria.
- \_\_\_ Student will demonstrate proper etiquette, procedures, and social conversation when in a community – based upon specific teacher criteria.
- \_\_\_ Student will, based on a given dollar amount, locate and purchase appropriate items in a store for meal preparation, clothing purchases, and household and personal needs – based on specific teacher criteria.



## Step 5: Record Keeping

**Records are very important when planning your transition from school to life as a young adult. Keep track of what you, your parents, and the school have agreed to, have actually completed, and still have left to do.**

Depending upon your future goals, each college, training facility, and local, state and/or federal agency will require a variety of information from you. Having your records within reach for a quick response will make the transition more accurate, timely, and, hopefully, less stressful.

**Request the following copies to keep in your own file:**

- All high school transcripts;
- Evaluations, tests, counselors/therapists' reports, and special education records;
- Accommodations that have and have not worked;
- Types of assistive technology software programs that have been helpful;
- On-the-job training reports and work experiences; and
- Letters of recommendation from employers or any agencies where you have done volunteer work.

**When researching colleges, places of employment, and local, state, and/or federal agencies:**

- Create a file folder for each agency, school, or employer contacted;
- Have the contact person's name, address, and phone number on the outside of the folder for easy reference or maintain a special contact list;
- Keep accurate, dated notes of each conversation with agency personnel;
- Keep copies of all letters you write to an agency and all letters received from the agencies;
- Keep brochures, handouts, guidelines, and copies of any applications by agency name and indicate the date you obtained this material; and
- Maintain a dated "to do" list of responses, follow-ups, and agency deadlines, and check it often.

**Always save these files and keep them up-to-date. Goals may change after leaving school, but the information in the files will be important throughout your life.**

# How Can Family Members Help with Transition?



**There are many ways that family members can help make their child's transition as smooth as possible. The following are some guidelines:**

- Set realistic goals. Include your son or daughter in setting goals for the future and make sure that the school program prepares him/her to meet those goals. All students need to gain as many independent learning, work, and living skills as possible.
- Encourage gradual independence. Parents or other family members are not always going to be around. Begin now to encourage independent travel, self-care activities, money management, and decision-making. A person with a disability may always need support, but each task or activity that he or she can do alone is a great gain and one less thing that someone else may have to be paid to do for him or her one day.
- Encourage self-advocacy. Students need to gain confidence and speak out appropriately for what they need and want.
- Gather information about issues such as guardianship, power of attorney, sex education, sexual responsibility, and driving. Decisions about these matters will have to be made based upon the person's level of independence and competency, the family's values, and the resources available to help with each issue.
- Familiarize yourself with the adult service system. Have you contacted agencies outside the school system that may be able to assist with long-range goals? Agencies such as the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS), Department of Developmental Services (DDS), Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB), or the Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired (CDHI) may be appropriate. Refer to pages 71-72 for contact information.

# How Can Family Members Help with Transition?

(continued)

## **Apply for future benefits/services early and be persistent:**

- Build self-esteem. Set high expectations for your son or daughter. Teach him or her skills that you would teach any child who is getting ready to go out into the world: how to do laundry, make a simple meal, and sew on a button. Because you have confidence, he or she will have confidence, too.
- Encourage social integration. Everyone wants and needs friends. Young people with disabilities cannot afford to be isolated from persons their age without disabilities. Encourage participation in clubs and sports in and outside of school.
- Provide real experiences. Persons with disabilities need experience in work situations. This should be addressed by the PPT and incorporated into the IEP. Parents/guardians should also look for ways to assist their child in obtaining work or volunteer experiences outside of school.
- Encourage good grooming, good work habits, and appropriate social skills. Since a person with a disability usually has to overcome a certain amount of prejudice, it makes sense for him or her to take particular care to make a good impression by being appropriately dressed, well-groomed, punctual, reliable, and hard-working.
- Foster an acceptance of criticism. Most teenagers are sensitive to even the most mild criticism. Young people have to learn to cope with the standards of the workplace and with unfair criticism. Practicing acceptable responses to criticism needs to begin early.
- Provide opportunities to manage money. Teenagers should be paid for the work they do and taught the necessary skills to manage their own money. Gradually, they should be encouraged to do their own shopping using their own money, and those who are able should begin to do some budgeting, saving, or long-term planning.
- Transition means “letting go” for families. The issues surrounding transition are complex and loaded with emotional significance. However, the more information that you have, the easier it is for you to make wise decisions.

### Adapted from:

PEAK Parent Center, Inc. (October, 1992). “Parents, let’s unite for kids.” In D. Ahern – Presbie (Ed.), *A Curriculum Guide for the Development of Self-determination and Advocacy Skills* (pp. 9-10). Storrs, CT: The A.J. Pappanikou Center on Special Education and Rehabilitation: A University Affiliated Program.

# Answers to Typical Questions Regarding Guardianship for Persons with Disabilities

## **What is Guardianship?**

Guardianship is a legally sanctioned method for appointing a substitute decision-maker to act in the best interest of a person who is unable to make decisions for him/herself. The person who needs a guardian is often called a “ward” or “respondent.” In this relationship, the guardian has the right and the duty to make certain decisions affecting the life of the individual. When a Probate Court places some of the individual’s legal rights in the hands of a guardian, it is taking those rights away from the individual and limiting his/her powers of self-determination. Appointing a guardian is, therefore, a matter that must be taken very seriously. Within certain limits stipulated in state statutes, the specific duties of the guardian are decided on an individual basis by the Probate Court after a hearing.

## **What is Conservatorship?**

Conservatorship is an alternate way of providing substitute decision-making. Any person deemed incapable by a Probate Court of making his/her own decisions may be assigned a conservator. There are two forms of conservatorship:

- Conservator of the person who can consent to medical treatment, placement, and appropriate services for the welfare of the individual; and
- Conservator of the estate who handles the individual’s finances, which is especially relevant if considerable assets are included.

## **What is the difference between Guardianship and Conservatorship?**

Unlike the laws for conservatorship, special guardianship laws are set up to meet the needs of adults with disabilities. (These are separate from the guardianship laws for minors). A conservator has broad powers, whereas the guardian’s duties can be tailored specifically to the needs of the individual with disabilities, allowing him/her to maintain as much control over his/her own life as possible. It is possible for one individual to have both a guardian and a conservator of his/her estate.

# Answers to Typical Questions Regarding Guardianship for Persons with Disabilities

(continued)

## **Transfer of Rights:**

At least one year before a student reaches the age of 18, the student's IEP must indicate that the student has been informed of his or her rights (page 6 of the IEP).

## **Three Types of Guardianship:**

1. A full or plenary legal guardian;
2. A limited legal guardian; and
3. A temporary legal guardian not to exceed 60 days (e.g., consent for a specific medical or dental treatment).

## **Five Areas Considered for Full or Limited Guardianship:**

1. Residence outside the natural family home;
2. Specifically designed educational, vocational, or behavioral programs;
3. The release of clinical records and photographs;
4. Routine, elective, and emergency medical and dental care; and
5. Any other specific limited services necessary to develop or regain to the maximum extent possible the ward's capacity to meet essential requirements.

The application for guardianship must be filed in the Probate Court in the district in which the individual resides. There is a filing fee and a state marshal fee.

A court hearing is set within 45 days of filing the application. The respondent will be notified of the time and place of the hearing at least seven days in advance. Appropriate records will be requested and provided prior to the hearing.

For more information about guardianship and conservatorship, call your local Probate Court or the larger Probate Court district. All phone numbers are in the blue pages of the telephone directory and online at [www.jud.state.ct.us/probate](http://www.jud.state.ct.us/probate).

# IDEA 2004 and Transition

The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* guarantees the right of individuals, age 3-21, with specific disabilities to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) from their public school district through an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that includes transition services.

Congress passed IDEA (Public Law 101-476) in 1990 with an amendment that required transition services for students who were eligible for special education services as they prepared to complete school and move into adult life. In June 1997, IDEA was amended to include additional provisions for transition. Connecticut adopted the IDEA standard for providing transition services in 2003.

The last reauthorization of the statute, IDEA 2004 (Public Law 108-446), specifies that transition goals and objectives be developed no later than the first IEP that is in effect when the student turns 16—or earlier, if appropriate—and that the goals and objectives be updated annually thereafter. During this critical period, the law intended that schools begin to discuss long-term transition goals, the appropriate “courses” of study, related services, and transition services in which a student must participate at the high school in order to be prepared to meet these goals.

It is critical that students who are eligible for special education services and their families take the time to plan for life after high school. The public school system plays an important role in assisting the student to gain the skills required to reach the goals of his/her plan. The transition services requirements mandated in IDEA 2004 specify the responsibility schools have in this planning process.

## **Definition of Transition Services:**

Transition services means a **coordinated set of activities** for a child with a disability that is “designed to be within a **results-oriented process**, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability **to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities**, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.” (34 CFR § 300.43 (a))

## IDEA 2004 and Transition (continued)

The **coordinated set of activities** must:

- 1) Be based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's strengths, preferences, and interests; and
- 2) Include:
  - Instruction;
  - Related services;
  - Community experiences;
  - The development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives; and
  - If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.
- 3) Provide transition services for children with disabilities. This may be **special education**, if provided as specially designed instruction, or a **related service**, if required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education. (34 CFR § 300.43)

**IDEA 2004** requires that appropriate measurable postsecondary goals and objectives be based on age-appropriate assessments related to **postsecondary education** or **training, employment**, and, where appropriate, **independent living skills**.

### *The Planning and Placement Team - Transition Services Participants:*

The student and the family participate in the planning process. In Connecticut, this means that the student must be invited to the PPT meeting. If a student does not attend the PPT meeting, the Team must take other steps to ensure that the student's preferences and interests are considered. (34 CFR § 300.321(b)(2))

**If appropriate**, with the written consent of the parent(s) or a child who has reached the age of 18, the PPT must invite a representative of any participating agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services (34 CFR § 300.321 (b)(3)). This might include, but is not limited to: the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS), the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) (formerly DMR), the Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB), the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), or other community rehabilitation service providers.

# IDEA 2004 and Transition

## (continued)

### *Development of the IEP for Transition Services:*

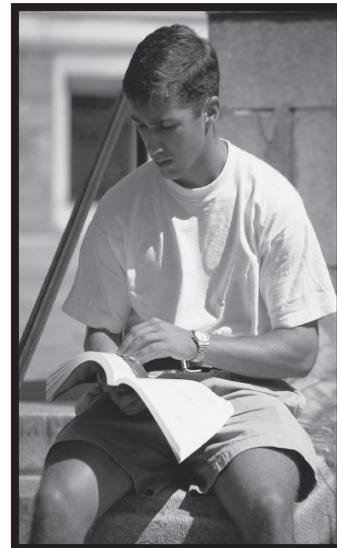
As a protection, the federal law states that if a participating agency, other than the local public school district, fails to provide the transition services described in the IEP, the school shall reconvene the PPT to identify alternative strategies to meet the transition objectives for the student. Most transition services in Connecticut are provided by the student's school district rather than an adult service provider.

(34 CFR § 300.324(c)(1))

### *Transfer of Parental Rights at Age of Majority:*

The educational rights of the parent(s) transfer to the student when the student reaches the age of majority, which in Connecticut is age 18. Both parent(s) and the student must be informed of this transfer at least one year prior to a student's 18th birthday. Arrangements may be made if the student is not capable of making independent decisions. (34 CFR § 300.520)

A student's eligibility for special education services ends when the student graduates from high school with a **regular education diploma**\* or at the end of the school year in which the student reaches age 21, whichever happens first.



\*NOTE: A **regular education diploma** does not include alternate degrees, such as a general educational development (GED) credential. (Analysis of Comments and Changes section of Subpart B, 34 CFR § 300.102(a)(3)(iv))

# IDEA 2004 and Transition (continued)

## *Additional Requirements for Evaluations and Re-evaluations*

### **Evaluations Before Change in Eligibility**

The PPT must evaluate a student with a disability before determining that the student is no longer a student with a disability. The exception is before the termination of a child's eligibility for special education services due to graduation from secondary school with a regular diploma or due to exceeding the age eligibility for a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) under law.

Before a student graduates from high school with a regular diploma or completes the school year in which he/she turns 21, the school district must provide the student with a summary of his or her academic achievement and functional performance. This **Summary of Performance (SOP)** must also include recommendations about how to assist the student in meeting his or her post-school goals. The SOP must be completed during the final year of the student's high school education, and the date that it will be provided to the student must be recorded on page 6 of the IEP during the student's final PPT meeting. The SOP form can be viewed on the CT Department of Education Web site at [www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/ED635.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/ED635.pdf). (34 CFR § 300.305(e))

Additional information about transition requirements is available from the CT State Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education, at (860) 713-6923.

The above citations are from the 2006 Final Regulations of IDEA 2004 governing the *Assistance to States for Education of Children with Disabilities Program* (34 CFR § 300.305(e)). These regulations are needed to implement changes made to IDEA, as amended by IDEA 2004. A complete copy of the IDEA statute and regulations may be found at: <http://idea.ed.gov>.

# Due Process Overview and Transition

## **Special Education Complaint Resolution Process:**

If a parent, family member, student who is 18 or older, or other interested party or parties feel that the local school district has violated a requirement of federal or state law concerning special education, that person(s) may file a written complaint with the CT State Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education. The complaint procedures are available to resolve disagreements over any matter concerning the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student or the provision of a free and appropriate public education to such student. A complaint must be filed within one year of the time it is believed that the school district failed to follow the law. In addition, a complaint alleging that an education agency has failed to implement a special education due process decision will be reviewed and resolved through this complaint process.

The Bureau of Special Education will review and address each submitted complaint. A written report of findings, conclusions, corrective action, and recommendations, if appropriate, will be mailed within sixty (60) calendar days of receipt of the request, unless an extension is granted for extenuating circumstances.

You can file a complaint by writing to:	The complaint should state the following:
Connecticut State Department of Education Bureau of Special Education P.O. Box 2219, Room 359 Hartford, CT 06145-2219 FAX: (860) 713-7153	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The name of the school district not carrying out IDEA or state laws that protect children with disabilities; and</li><li>• The facts on which the complaint is based.</li></ul>

A copy of the *Special Education Complaint Form* can be found on page 62 and in the Appendix of *The Parent's Guide to Special Education in Connecticut* on the Department's Web site: [www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/Parents\\_Guide\\_SE.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/Parents_Guide_SE.pdf).

## **Due Process Procedures:**

If parents disagree with the transition goals and objectives or services that have been proposed in the IEP for their son or daughter, they have the right to a due process proceeding under special education law. A student who is 18 years of age or older has the right to initiate due process on his/her own behalf. Due process procedures may be initiated by a parent/guardian, student who is 18 or older, or the school district when agreement cannot be reached with respect to any matter relating to the proposal or refusal to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or education placement of the student, or the provision of a free and appropriate public education. Due process procedures include: mediation, advisory opinion, hearings, and expedited hearings.

**Connecticut State Department of Education - Bureau of Special Education  
Special Education Complaint Form**

This is a recommended form for the filing of special education complaints. You do not have to use this form to file a complaint, although it will help you to include the required information. (Questions may be directed to Bureau staff at 860-713-6921 or 860-713-6938.) Please complete this form and forward to the parents or school district (as appropriate) and send a copy to:

**State Department of Education  
Bureau of Special Education  
P.O. Box 2219 – Room 359  
Hartford, CT 06145-2219**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Person/Agency filing the Complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
(street)

\_\_\_\_\_ (town) \_\_\_\_\_ (state) \_\_\_\_\_ (zip)

Parent's Name (if different): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
(last) (first) (m.i.)

Education Agency (school district) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School the Child Attends \_\_\_\_\_ Disability Category \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(street)

\_\_\_\_\_ (town) \_\_\_\_\_ (state) \_\_\_\_\_ (zip)

Be specific as to why you believe that a requirement of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act has been violated. Include a description of the relevant facts, the nature of the child's problem, and a proposed resolution of the problem to the extent known and available at this time. Please forward a copy of this complaint to the education agency. If necessary, you may attach additional sheets as well as documentation of your complaint allegations.

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Signature of Complainant \_\_\_\_\_

# Due Process Overview and Transition

## (continued)

### **Mediation:**

Mediation is a voluntary process for resolving disagreements in which a trained mediator appointed by the Connecticut State Department of Education meets with the parent(s)/guardian or student and school personnel to try to work out a solution that is acceptable to both parties. The parent(s)/guardian or student and the school district must agree to enter into mediation before it can occur. The mediation session will be held in a place and at a time that is convenient for both the parent(s)/guardian or student and the school staff.

The parent(s)/guardian or student and the school district may request mediation by sending a *Request for Mediation Form* to the school district's Special Education or Pupil Personnel Services Director with a copy to the Due Process Unit, Bureau of Special Education, P.O. Box 2219, Hartford, CT 06145-2219. A copy of this form can be found on page 65 and in the Appendix of *The Parent's Guide to Special Education in Connecticut* on the CT State Department of Education Web site: [www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/Parents\\_Guide\\_SE.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/Parents_Guide_SE.pdf). A mediation will be held on the date agreed to by the parties and the State Department of Education. If the disagreement is not resolved, the parties may seek an advisory opinion or may proceed to an impartial hearing.

### **Advisory Opinion:**

An advisory opinion is a non-binding opinion issued by a hearing officer after consideration of a brief presentation of information by both the parent(s)/guardian or student and the school district. Based upon this non-binding opinion, either party may decide not to bring the matter to a full due process hearing and, instead, settle the dispute. An advisory opinion requires that both parties (the parent(s)/guardian or student and the school district) agree to participate. Both parties have 45 minutes to present their case, using one or two witnesses and introducing reliable and essential documents, to a hearing officer who will then issue a brief, oral, non-binding opinion. Participants may assess their respective positions and decide to settle the case or engage in other forms of resolution such as mediation or a full due process hearing with a different hearing officer presiding over the case. The advisory opinion is available when a hearing is requested. An example of a request is on page 66.

# Due Process Overview and Transition

(continued)

## *Due Process Hearing:*

A due process hearing is a legal process in which an impartial hearing officer appointed by the Due Process Unit of the Bureau of Special Education, CT State Department of Education, issues a written *Final Decision and Order*. Both sides will have the opportunity to present evidence through documents, witness testimony, and cross-examination. A decision will be rendered and mailed within forty-five (45) calendar days of the initial request for due process, provided the parties to the hearing do not request postponements or extensions of dates scheduled by the hearing officer. A copy of a request form is available on page 67.

**CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
BUREAU OF SPECIAL EDUCATION  
DUE PROCESS UNIT  
P.O. Box 2219 - Room 359  
Hartford, CT 06145-2219  
Fax: (860) 713-7153**

**Request For Mediation**

We request a mediation concerning \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of student) (Date of birth)

\_\_\_\_\_ who is currently within the jurisdiction of  
(Address of residence of student)

the \_\_\_\_\_ and attends \_\_\_\_\_  
(School district) (Name of the school the student attends)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature Date District Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Telephone # Fax # District Telephone # Fax #

The date of the IEP meeting at which the parties failed to reach agreement: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of the nature of the issues in dispute, including related facts:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Proposed resolution of the issues to the extent known and available at this time:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please provide three mutually agreeable dates for the mediation, which will be held within 30 days of this request. From these dates, one will be selected for the convening of the mediation.

\_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Please forward to the above address and, as appropriate, the parents or the school district.\*\***

## Request for Advisory Opinion

We request an advisory opinion. We understand both parties must agree to an advisory opinion and we are not required to pursue an advisory opinion prior to a hearing.

<b>Parent Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>School District Representative</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Two mutually agreeable dates for the advisory opinion:</b>			
		_____	_____

**From these dates, one will be selected for the advisory opinion.**

Please forward to the Connecticut State Department of Education, and/or your school district and parents, as appropriate.

**CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
BUREAU OF SPECIAL EDUCATION  
DUE PROCESS UNIT  
P.O. Box 2219 - Room 359  
Hartford, CT 06145-2219  
Fax: (860) 713-7153**

**Request for Impartial Special Education Hearing**

I request an impartial hearing concerning \_\_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of student) (date of birth)

\_\_\_\_\_ who is currently within the jurisdiction of  
(address of residence of student)

the \_\_\_\_\_ and attends \_\_\_\_\_  
(school district) (name of the school the student attends)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Fax

The date of the IEP meeting at which the parties failed to reach agreement: \_\_\_\_\_

**Description of the nature of the issues in dispute, including related facts:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Proposed resolution of the issues (to the extent known and available at this time):**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Please forward to the above address and, as appropriate, the parents or the school district.*

# Due Process Overview and Transition

## (continued)

Once a request for a hearing is made by the parent(s)/guardian or student, several things will occur, some at the same time. The school district must offer to meet with the parent(s)/guardian or student and relevant members of the PPT who have specific knowledge of the facts identified in the due process complaint within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving notice of the request for a hearing. This is referred to as a *resolution meeting*. This resolution meeting gives both the parent(s)/guardian or student and school staff a chance to discuss the due process complaint and resolve the problem. Either both sides must have an attorney present or neither side may have an attorney present. If the dispute is not resolved within thirty (30) days of receiving the complaint, the due process hearing 45-day timeline to issue a hearing decision begins after the 30 days ends.

Copies of the forms that may be used to request a hearing or an advisory opinion are on pages 66-67 and in the Appendix of the *Parent's Guide to Special Education in Connecticut* on the Department's Web site: [http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/Parents\\_Guide\\_SE.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/Parents_Guide_SE.pdf).

A parent(s)/guardian or student has the right to:

- ⇒ Be accompanied and advised by counsel and by individuals with special knowledge or training with respect to the issues of a student with a disability;
- ⇒ Be informed by the school system of any free or low-cost legal and other relevant services available in the area when the parent requests the information, or the first time in a school year the parent(s)/guardian or student or the school district requests a hearing;
- ⇒ Have the student who is the subject of the hearing be present;
- ⇒ Open the hearing to the public, subject to the discretion of the hearing officer; and
- ⇒ Have the hearing scheduled at a time and place that is reasonably convenient to the parent(s)/guardian or student.

# Due Process Overview and Transition (continued)

The decision from the hearing is final and legally binding. The parent(s)/guardian or student or school district may disagree with the decision and appeal the decision to either the State Superior Court or Federal District Court.

An expedited hearing is a hearing that is held quickly so that a situation can be addressed without undue delay. In an expedited hearing, the hearing must occur within twenty (20) school days of the date the hearing is requested, and the hearing officer must make his or her decision within ten (10) school days of the close of the hearing. The parties involved in the hearing must exchange information to be presented as evidence at least two (2) business days prior to an expedited hearing. An expedited hearing will be arranged when the child's current placement is likely to result in injury to the child or others and the district wants to move the child to an Interim Alternative Education Setting (IAES); the district does not want to remove the child from the IAES; the child has been improperly removed for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or more than ten (10) days in a school year; or the parent(s)/guardian do not agree with the district's placement of the child in an IAES or disagree with the manifest determination.

□ □ □

\*A detailed explanation can be found in:

**A Parent's Guide to Special Education in Connecticut,**  
which is available on [www.sde.ct.gov](http://www.sde.ct.gov) and from:

**State Education Resource Center (SERC)**  
25 Industrial Park Road  
Middletown, CT 06457-1520  
(860) 632-1485  
[www.ctserc.org](http://www.ctserc.org)

**CT Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC)**  
338 Main Street  
Niantic, CT 06357  
1-800-445-2722  
[www.cpacinc.org](http://www.cpacinc.org)

**CT Parent Information and Resource Center (CT PIRC)**  
1-800-842-8678  
[www.ctpirc.org](http://www.ctpirc.org)

# Federal Disability Laws

## *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:*

Broader than any disability law that came before it, Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by agencies, institutions (schools, colleges, universities), and contractors who receive any funding from the federal government, including the Executive Branch and the U.S. Postal Service. Section 504 obligates state and local governments to ensure that persons with disabilities have equal access to any programs, services, or activities receiving federal financial assistance. The *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, and subsequent reauthorizations, also funds state vocational rehabilitation agencies and Centers for Independent Living. Covered entities also are required to ensure that their employment practices do not discriminate on the basis of disability.

## *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):*

This landmark 1990 civil rights law is built upon the foundation laid by *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*. *The Americans with Disabilities Act* uses the Section 504 definition of disability as its model and then goes further. While Section 504 applies only to entities receiving federal financial assistance, the ADA covers all state and local governments, including those that receive no federal financial assistance. The ADA also applies to private businesses that meet the ADA's definition of "public accommodation" (e.g., restaurants, hotels, movie theaters, doctors' offices), commercial facilities (such as office buildings, factories, and warehouses), and many private employers.

The ADA protects persons with disabilities in the areas of employment, public accommodations, state and local government services, telecommunications, and transportation. While the ADA has five separate titles, Title I deals with employment and covers all private and public employers with 15 or more workers. The ADA protects any person with a disability who, with or without "reasonable accommodations," can perform the "essential functions" of a job. Title II is the section specifically applicable to "public entities" (state and local governments) and the programs, services, and activities they deliver.

Title III applies to public accommodations, including commercial facilities and places of private education. It covers examinations and courses related to licensing and obtaining credentials for educational, professional, or trade purposes.

# Agencies for Adults with Disabilities

The following is a list of agencies that provide services to adults, and, in some cases, to children with disabilities as well. Each agency has eligibility criteria for its services. It is worth making a call if you think you may qualify for some of the services.

## **Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS):**

*The Connecticut Department of Social Services* administers a range of services and programs through bureaus and agencies with local offices throughout the state. The central office of DSS is located 25 Sigourney Street, Hartford, CT 06106. The toll-free telephone number is 1-800-842-1508. [www.ct.gov/dss/site/default.asp](http://www.ct.gov/dss/site/default.asp)

## **The following is a list of some of the DSS agencies/programs you may find helpful:**

*The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS)* provides services to assist persons with physical and/or mental disabilities to obtain and maintain employment. BRS can provide individualized services to eligible persons that may include vocational assessment, guidance and training, career education and on-the-job training, supported employment services, and rehabilitation technology services. The central office of BRS is located at 25 Sigourney Street, 11<sup>th</sup> floor, Hartford, CT 06106. The toll-free telephone number is 1-800-537-2549, or call (860) 424-4844. Ask for the telephone number of your local BRS office. <http://www.brs.state.ct.us>

*Independent Living Centers (ILCs)* assist persons with physical and/or mental disabilities to live independently in their communities. This program is administered by BRS, and services are provided through five Independent Living Centers. These services may include assistance in obtaining modifications to a home or vehicle, adaptive equipment, personal care assistance, advocacy, peer counseling, and independent living skills training. The Connecticut Association of Centers for Independent Living: <http://www.cacil.net>

*Adult Services* can provide services to income-eligible people with physical or mental disabilities, ages 18-64, who need supportive home care or social work services to live independently in the community. In addition to counseling and advocacy, paid services, such as housekeeping, home-delivered meals, and emergency response services, may be available. Call the central office of DSS at 1-800-842-1508 to find your local office.

*Personal Care Assistance* provides annual grants that are made available to help people with severe disabilities to become and/or remain employed. These grants enable clients to employ personal care assistants to help them with daily activities. Social work services also are provided. For additional information, contact the central office of DSS.

*Medicaid* provides health insurance for persons who meet eligibility criteria. To get additional information, contact the central office of DSS, or call your local DSS office.

# Agencies For Adults with Disabilities

## (continued)

### **Other State Agencies:**

***Department of Developmental Services (DDS)*** provides and funds a wide array of services for people with developmental disabilities. To find the office nearest you, look in the blue pages of the phone book under “State of Connecticut, Department of Developmental Services,” or contact the central office located at 450 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106, or call (860) 418-6000. (DDS was formerly the Department of Mental Retardation.) [\*\*www.ct.gov/dds\*\*](http://www.ct.gov/dds)

***Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)*** provides and funds an array of services for people with mental illness or addiction. To find the office nearest you, look in the blue pages of the phone book under “State of Connecticut, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services,” or contact the central office at 410 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106, (860) 418-7000. [\*\*www.ct.gov/dmhas\*\*](http://www.ct.gov/dmhas)

***Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB)*** provides and coordinates services to assist people who are legally blind to obtain and retain employment. A myriad of services, including vocational training, adaptive technology, mobility instruction, independent living skills training, supported employment, and on-the-job training services, are offered to eligible consumers. The main office is located at 184 Windsor Avenue, Windsor, CT 06095. More information is available by calling (860) 602-4000 or toll-free at (800) 842-4510. [\*\*www.ct.gov/besb\*\*](http://www.ct.gov/besb)

***Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (P&A)*** advocates for the civil rights of people with disabilities and provides assistance and information to people who have trouble finding services or are not satisfied with the services they receive. They are located at 60B Weston Street, Hartford, CT 06120, or call (860) 297-4300, (860) 566-2102 (V/TDD), or toll-free at (800) 842-7303. [\*\*www.ct.gov/opapd\*\*](http://www.ct.gov/opapd)

### **Federally Funded Programs:**

#### ***Social Security Administration***

For more information about SSI, SSDI, Work Incentives, or Medicare, contact the Social Security Administration toll-free at (800) 772-1213 or (800) 325-0778 (V/TDD). [\*\*www.ssa.gov\*\*](http://www.ssa.gov)

# Glossary of Common Abbreviations

- ADA** – Americans with Disabilities Act
- BESB** – Board of Education and Services for the Blind \*
- BRS** – Bureau of Rehabilitation Services \*
- CDHI** – Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired \*
- CPAC** – Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center
- CT PIRC** – Connecticut Parent Information and Resource Center
- DCF** – Department of Children and Families \*
- DDS** – Department of Developmental Services \* (formerly known as DMR)
- DMHAS** – Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services \*
- DMR** – Department of Mental Retardation \* (changed to DDS effective Oct. 1, 2007)
- DOC** – Department of Corrections \*
- DOL** – Department of Labor \*
- DPH** – Department of Public Health \*
- DSS** – Department of Social Services \*
- IDEA** – Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- IEP** – Individualized Education Program
- ILCs** – Independent Living Centers
- MAPS** – McGill Action Planning System
- P & A** – Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities \*
- PATH** – Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope
- PPT** – Planning and Placement Team
- PSOGS** – Post-school Outcome Goal Statements
- RESCs** – Regional Education Service Centers (see next page)
- SDE** – State Department of Education \*
- SERC** – State Education Resource Center
- SSA** – Social Security Administration
- SSDI** – Social Security Disability Income
- SSI** – Supplemental Security Income

\* Connecticut State Agency

# Regional Education Service Centers (RESCs) in Connecticut

Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES)  
350 State Street  
North Haven, CT 06493  
(203) 498-6885  
[www.aces.k12.ct.us](http://www.aces.k12.ct.us)

Capitol Region Education Council (CREC)  
111 Charter Oak Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106  
(860) 247-2732  
[www.crec.org](http://www.crec.org)

Cooperative Educational Services (CES)  
40 Lindeman Drive  
Trumbull, CT 06611  
(203) 365-8800  
[www.ces.k12.ct.us](http://www.ces.k12.ct.us)

EASTCONN  
376 Hartford Turnpike  
Hampton, CT 06247  
(860) 455-0707  
[www.eastconn.org](http://www.eastconn.org)

Education Connection  
P.O. Box 909  
355 Goshen Road  
Litchfield, CT 06759  
(860) 567-0863  
[www.educationconnection.org](http://www.educationconnection.org)

LEARN  
44 Hatchetts Hill Road  
Old Lyme, CT 06371  
(860) 434-4800  
[www.learn.k12.ct.us](http://www.learn.k12.ct.us)

# State of Connecticut Transition Web Resources

Community Colleges, Universities

[www.commnet.edu](http://www.commnet.edu) (community colleges)

[www.ctstateu.edu](http://www.ctstateu.edu) (universities)

[www.allaboutcollege.com](http://www.allaboutcollege.com)

Office of Protection and Advocacy (P&A)

[www.ct.gov/opapd](http://www.ct.gov/opapd)

State of CT: Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB)

[www.ct.gov/besb](http://www.ct.gov/besb)

State of CT: Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS)

[www.brs.state.ct.us](http://www.brs.state.ct.us)

State of CT: Department of Developmental Services (DDS)

[www.ct.gov/dds](http://www.ct.gov/dds)

State of CT: Department of Education (CSDE)

[www.ct.gov/sde](http://www.ct.gov/sde)

State of CT: Department of Labor (DOL)

[www.ctjobandcareer.org](http://www.ctjobandcareer.org)

State of CT: Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)

[www.ct.gov/dmhas](http://www.ct.gov/dmhas)

State of CT: Department of Social Services (DSS): Services to Adults with Disabilities

[www.ct.gov/dss](http://www.ct.gov/dss)

## Other Resources

Assistive and Instructional Technology Resources  
[www.closingthegap.com](http://www.closingthegap.com) and [www.abledata.com](http://www.abledata.com)

The Beach Center on Families and Disability  
[www.beachcenter.org](http://www.beachcenter.org)

Building A Bridge, A Resource Manual for High School Students  
(Available through SERC's Transition Initiative)  
[www.ctserc.org](http://www.ctserc.org)

Career Corner TV Virtual Job Shadow  
[www.virtualjobshadow.com](http://www.virtualjobshadow.com)

Connect-ability. See the ability. See how we can work together.  
[www.connect-ability.com](http://www.connect-ability.com)

CT Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC)  
[www.cpacinc.org](http://www.cpacinc.org)

CT Parent Information and Resource Center (CT PIRC)  
[www.ctpirc.org](http://www.ctpirc.org)

CT Youth Leadership Forum, run by the CT Youth Leadership Project  
[www.ctylp.org](http://www.ctylp.org)

Disability Resources, Inc. Monthly Guide to Disabilities: A Basic Resource Guide  
and Information Clearinghouse  
[www.disabilityresources.org](http://www.disabilityresources.org)

The Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT),  
a Division of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)  
[www.dcdt.org](http://www.dcdt.org)

Federal Resources for Educational Excellence  
[www.free.ed.gov](http://www.free.ed.gov)

Heath Resource Center  
[www.heath.gwu.edu](http://www.heath.gwu.edu)

## Other Resources

IMPACT

[www.ici.umn.edu/products/newsletters.html](http://www.ici.umn.edu/products/newsletters.html)

The Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI)

[www.communityinclusion.org](http://www.communityinclusion.org)

iTransition, Transition to Postsecondary Training for Deaf and Hard of Hearing

[www.pepnet.org/itransition.asp](http://www.pepnet.org/itransition.asp)

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

[www.jan.wvu.edu](http://www.jan.wvu.edu)

Kids as Self Advocates (KASA)

[www.fvkasa.org](http://www.fvkasa.org)

LD Online

[www.ldonline.org/ld\\_indepth/transition/transition.html](http://www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/transition/transition.html)

The National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET)

[www.ncset.org](http://www.ncset.org)

National Collaboration on Workforce and Disability Youth

[ncwd-youth.info](http://ncwd-youth.info)

National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY)

[www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org)

National Organization on Disability (NOD)

[www.nod.org](http://www.nod.org)

The National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC)

[www.nsttac.org](http://www.nsttac.org)

New England Adaptive Technology Marketplace (NEAT)

[www.neatmarketplace.org](http://www.neatmarketplace.org)

## Other Resources

Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights (PACER)  
[www.pacer.org](http://www.pacer.org)

Pathways to the World of Work for Young Adults  
[www.ct.gov/dol](http://www.ct.gov/dol)

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Workplace Support, Virginia  
Commonwealth University  
[www.worksupport.com](http://www.worksupport.com)

State Education Resource Center (SERC)  
[www.ctserc.org](http://www.ctserc.org)

TransCen, Inc.  
[www.transcen.org](http://www.transcen.org)

Transition Coalition: A Center for Transition and Secondary School Reform for Youth  
with Disabilities  
[www.transitioncoalition.org](http://www.transitioncoalition.org)

Transition Training Manual and Resource Directory  
[www.ctserc.org/rfi/Transition%20Manual.pdf](http://www.ctserc.org/rfi/Transition%20Manual.pdf)

Yellow Pages for Kids with Disabilities  
[www.yellowpagesforkids.com](http://www.yellowpagesforkids.com)

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**These resources are available through the SERC Library. For more information, go to [www.ctserc.org/library](http://www.ctserc.org/library).**



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