

***Transition Planning
From High School to Adult Life:
A Student Handbook***



**OREGON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF STUDENT LEARNING & PARTNERSHIPS**

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Transition Planning

From High School to Adult Life



This student booklet describes things you will want to think about as you transition from high school to adult life. It is especially important for you to be part of your Individualized Education Program (IEP) team as they help you plan your transition from school to life as an adult. This is your life, and the goals you set now for training, education, employment and independent living will have a lasting impact on how you live for the rest of your life.

Are you age 14 or older?

Although formal transition planning is not required until you are 16, it is now time to begin the serious business of thinking about your **Dreams**, exploring your **Options**, and expanding your **Abilities** as you prepare for your transition from school to adult life. It is very important for you, your family, and your teachers to work together to make sure that you get the help you need to make your dreams for the future come true. Have you developed a four-year plan that lists the high school classes you need to complete for graduation?

Important things to think about as you plan for your future...

Adults often ask "What do you want to do after you finish high school?" When teachers or parents talk about transition planning, they are talking about how to help you prepare for life after high school. Your IEP and what you do in school should include goals, activities and opportunities that help you begin to plan and prepare for the transition to the adult world. Ask your family and others whom you trust what they see for your future. What are your strengths? What do you want to do after high school? What do you see yourself doing 10 years from now?



Thinking About Yourself

Taking that step beyond “wishing upon a star....”

What are your needs and who can help you?

- While you are in school, what do you need to learn and do to reach your dreams?
- What courses of study do you need? Classes? Experiences? Activities?
- How can the school help you?
- Who else can help you? Agencies? Community?
- What do you want to do when you become an adult?

What do you want to do for a career?

- What do you want to be doing in 5 years? In 10 years? In 15 years?
- What are your interests?
- What are your options?
- Where do you want to work?
In the city? In the country? On a ship? In an office? Outside?
- Do you want to work with others? Or work by yourself?
- What can you do well?
- What do you need help with?
- Do you need special training for your career choice? Community College? Beautician school? 4 year College? Apprentice program?
- Do you want to go to college, trade school or other training?
- Do you want to join the military?

What do you want to do with your life?

- What are your dreams?
- What do you like to do?
Hobbies? Activities? Sports?
- Do you want to get married? Have children?
- Where do you want to live?
In the country? In the city? On the coast? In the desert?
- Will other State agencies be providing assistance to you after high school?
Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation? Social Security?

If you need help or can't decide, talk to others—sisters, brothers, friends, parents, your school counselor and teachers. If your school has a career center, be sure to visit and gather information.



Things you should know before living on your own

Living on your own can be an exciting idea, but are you ready for the responsibilities and do you have sufficient funds to live an independent life?

- How much money will you need to live on?
- How much money would you need to support a family?
- Do you know how much it costs to rent a place to live?
- What about the cost of food? Utilities? Transportation? Insurance? Recreation?
- How will you get to work or school? Bus? Car? Friend?
- How much will it cost to go to college or a training program?
- Do you need to learn how to drive?
- Do you have a driver's license? Or state identification card?
- If you get a car, how much will it cost and can you afford to make monthly car payments? What about the cost of gas? Maintenance? Insurance?
- Do you need to learn how to take the bus or other public transportation?
- Do you know your medical history and how to make an appointment with your doctor?
- How will your medical expenses be paid? Do you have medical insurance?
- Are you registered to vote?
- Do you know how to speak up for yourself and make good choices?
- Are there other agencies that can help provide support such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Social Security or adult service brokerages? Have you met with them to see if you are eligible?
- What about friendships and relationships? Remember that healthy relationships include mutual respect, tolerance, patience and positive interactions.

Getting ready to assume adult rights and responsibilities

Your IEP and your schoolwork should help you:

- Learn how to problem-solve and make decisions.
- Develop your communication skills so you can express yourself and your ideas.
- Practice setting your own goals and plan how to reach those goals.
- Learn to ask for what you need at school or work, for example- talking books, mobility training, more time when taking tests, sign language, a spell-checker or other devices. Become a self-advocate.
- Learn where to go for help.

- Learn about your rights and responsibilities.
- Find out about laws – I.D.E.A. (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), Section 504, A.D.A, (Americans with Disabilities Act). These laws can help you reach your goals, but you will need to learn your rights and responsibilities.

The Age of Majority

When you become 18 years old you have reached the "age of majority." So what does that mean? In the eyes of the law, you are now officially an adult. You can make decisions about your IEP and help write the IEP. Your school district will inform you of other special education rights you will have one year before you turn 18. There are other rights and responsibilities of being an adult such as paying taxes, voting, and, if you are male, signing up for the draft.

Participate with your IEP team in transition planning – teamwork can help make your dreams come true



Beginning at age 16, you must be involved in the IEP meeting to plan transition activities. Your IEP team must include **YOU**. If you are under age 18, your parents are members too. Other team members include a special education teacher, a general education teacher, and a representative from the district. Other people who are working with you may also be included; especially those from agencies that may provide services to you before and after you leave school.

Working with the other members of the IEP team, you will develop goals for your life after high school called "post secondary goals". Those goals will be based on your ideas, interests and abilities. The goals will deal with training, education, and employment. They may also include goals that help you develop independent living skills. Each year after the age of 16 until you graduate or leave high school, the team will meet to review your progress towards the goals and make any needed changes to those goals. Maybe you've changed your plans about what school you want to attend after high school or you changed your mind about what type of job you want. The

transition goals and plans are flexible and based on what YOU want and need after you leave school.

You and your IEP team will develop a “course of study” that identifies the classes, experiences and activities you will need to work towards your goals. Each “course of study” listed in the IEP will relate directly to your post high school goals. The course of study will help identify:

- What you are expected to do.
- What classes you will take and how they relate to your goals.
- What service(s) the school is responsible for.

Example: Do you want to be a dental hygienist? Then you will need to take math and science classes. Do you want to be a mechanic? Then you will need auto shop and computer classes, maybe even welding. Do you want to join the Navy? Check with the local Navy recruiter and find out what classes you should take. Do you want to attend an Oregon university or college? Find out what they require for admission. There may be work experience opportunities for you to participate in while still in high school. Perhaps the team can help you schedule job-shadow experiences to see if you really would like a specific job. It all depends on what YOU want to do after you leave high school.

You and your IEP team will also consider the following questions as you develop your transition plan:

- What type of diploma or alternate document are you working towards?
- What other service providers are needed to help you reach your goals?
- What responsibilities do the other service providers have?
- What responsibilities do you have?
- Who will help you reach your goals?

When you receive the invitation to be a member of the IEP team, be sure to attend and be an active participant. If you can't attend the meeting, your teachers will contact you to make sure they know your preferences and interests, but you are the authority on what you want to achieve in life and how you want to live and work. Being an independent adult means that YOU take control of your life and not let others decide how you will live and what you will do for a career.



TIPS for communicating with others about your dreams

- If you do not understand what is being said, speak up and ask for help.
- Find friends who can support you - make sure the people attending the meeting know who you are or have information or expertise you need for your school program.
- Come to the meeting prepared. Know what you want to accomplish. Learn how to communicate your dreams clearly.
- This is your life and the work you do now will make a difference in your life forever.

*This is your life ... and it is your **right** and your **responsibility** to make it a successful life!*



Transition Planning Checklists

Preparing for Adult Life



Training and Learning

- Discover your personal learning style
- Explore career options and interests
- Take classes that support your career choice
- Become aware of post-secondary enrollment options
- If you are going into a post-secondary education program, learn your rights and find out who to contact for disability support
- Identify sources of financial support
- Visit post-secondary institutions
- Learn to use accommodations and learning strategies
- Understand your disability and its impact on learning

Jobs

- Participate in chores at home
- Visit possible employment sites
- Volunteer in your community
- Learn how to interview, write resumes, cover letters, and do a job search
- Get a part-time job in your area of interest
- Go on informational interviews with employers
- Learn your strengths and skills
- Check out your high school career center – do they have a list of part-time job openings? What other resources do they have for you?

Community Participation

- Practice banking, budgeting, and shopping skills
- Learn to schedule appointments
- Use public transportation and consider getting a driver's license
- Join local organizations
- Register to vote, learn how to vote

Home Living and Personal Skills

- Work on self-advocacy skills
- Develop personal care skills
- Learn about acceptable dating behavior
- Develop housekeeping and cooking skills
- Identify available transportation
- Learn about living options in your community
- Look for affordable housing
- Learn how to compare prices when shopping
- Learn how to open a bank account, write a check, use a credit card, use an ATM machine, and keep a monthly budget

Develop Resources

- Develop a list of people, phone numbers, and email addresses of people who can help you once you leave school. Keep this information in a safe place.
- Ask about adult support agencies. Do you qualify? Do you need support? Do you want to get involved?

Recreation and Leisure

- Explore new ways to use leisure time
- Join local clubs
- Spend times with friends and family
- Plan ahead so you can enjoy life to the fullest



ORGANIZATIONS THAT CAN HELP YOU

Federal Programs

www.DisabilityInfo.gov

This Web site provides information and resources from 22 federal agencies. Includes information on employment, benefits, housing, transportation, health care, education, civil rights and technology.

Social Security Administration

(800) 772-1213 or (800) 282-8096

To apply for SSI or SSDI: www.ssa.gov/disability or www.oregon.gov/DHS/spd/disben.shtml

Vocational Rehabilitation Division, DHS

www.oregon.gov/DHS/vr/services.shtml

1-877-277-0513

Developmental Disabilities Services: Seniors and Persons with Disabilities, DHS

www.oregon.gov/DHS/spwpd/offices.shtml

(503) 945-9774

Oregon Department of Community Colleges & Workforce Development

www.oregon.gov/CCWD

(503) 378-8648

Addictions & Mental Health Division, DHS

www.oregon.gov/DHS/mentalhealth/index.shtml

Oregon Employment Department

www.employment.oregon.gov

(800) 237-3710

Career & Technical Education, Oregon Dept. of Education

www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=151 &

www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=232

(503) 947-5697

Disability Rights Oregon (formerly Oregon Advocacy Center)

www.oradvocacy.org

(503)342-2081 or 1-800-452-1594

Self Advocates as Leaders

www.asksaal.org