

# Planning Life After High School for Students on the Autism Spectrum

## A Guide for Tennessee Families



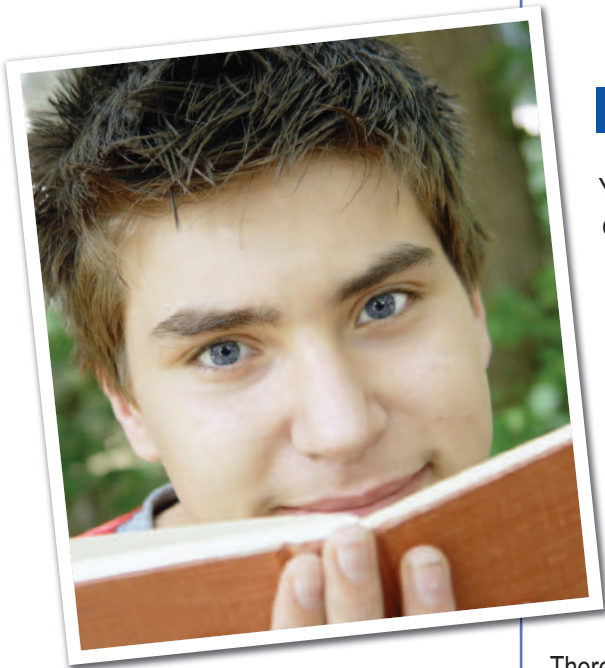
## Introduction

You and your family have already travelled a journey from a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) through health services, early intervention, and special education. You have navigated your way through many specialized services. You have learned to be your child's number one advocate. Wherever your student may be on the spectrum, you have seen progress and you have contributed to that progress. Take time to celebrate all that you've accomplished together.

The next step is for your student and you to begin preparing for your student's transition into adulthood. Young people on the autism spectrum have challenges similar to those that other youth face, as well as individual challenges related to ASD.

There is a lot to consider: further education or training, work, housing, transportation, recreation, friendships, finances, and support services.

This guide is intended to help your family start early to plan for the future. The guide includes answers to questions that youth and family members ask, plus resources for additional information.



## **How do services for adults with ASD differ from those for children?**

Based on the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), once students on the autism spectrum are determined to be eligible, they are *entitled* to receive special education services through the year when the student turns 22. After students complete secondary education, they are no longer entitled to services. Instead they must meet varying *eligibility* requirements for adult services. An adult may meet eligibility criteria for services in one agency but not in another. Many agencies and programs have waiting lists. Even eligible adults may have long waits before receiving services. Youths and families must advocate for and request adult services. They will not be provided automatically.

## **Is my student's IEP important in planning for what comes after high school? When should that planning begin?**

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is crucial. It determines reasonable learning goals, and it establishes what services the school district will provide to your student. IEP goals and services should help prepare your student for adulthood.

The IDEA Law (2004) requires schools to plan for a student's transition to adulthood by age 16, or earlier if the IEP Team thinks it is appropriate. Tennessee rules require that transition planning *begin no later than age 14*. Families need to advocate for transition planning and services in IEP meetings.

## **Should your student with ASD be part of transition planning?**

IDEA states that when an IEP team meets to discuss what a student wants to do after high school and what transition services are needed to prepare for those goals, the student must be invited to take part. If the student does not attend, the student's interests must be considered.

Strengths and needs of students on the autism spectrum vary greatly. Strategies and tools are available so that students of various abilities can take part in transition planning (see Resources). Students give input so that plans fit their interests, strengths, and needs. This creates a more student-centered plan. It also prepares students to advocate for themselves after leaving high school.

Self-determination is a central principle for transition planning. Self-determination involves knowing one's own strengths and challenges, as well as having the knowledge and skills needed for adult living. Such knowledge comes over time. Most students, including those with ASD, need family members, teachers, and other caring adults to guide them as they begin to plan their adult lives.

## **What are transition services?**

IDEA defines transition services as “a *coordinated* set of activities for a child with a disability that is

- designed to be within a *results-oriented* process;

- focused on improving *academic and functional achievement* to facilitate 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,
  - community participation;
- is based on the individual child's *needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests*;
- and includes instruction, related services, community experiences, development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, the acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation." (Italics added for emphasis.)

## What's involved in transition planning?

You and your student should begin describing your vision of the future and keep refining it. Questionnaires and other tools can help your family think through your vision (see Resources).

Transition planning includes four primary areas:

- **Employment:** What does your child want to do to earn a living? Will this be competitive employment, supported employment (e.g., support from a job coach), self-employment? How can your school prepare your student for these goals? Consider skills needed for a specific type of job and skills needed for all jobs (e.g., punctuality, getting along with co-workers). Given your student's strengths and needs, what are the desired hours/days, work environment, pay rate, uniform or dress codes, physical and mental demands, and supervisory needs? How will transportation to and from work be handled? Will your student's earnings affect eligibility for supplemental supports or state or federal benefits?
- **Postsecondary education or training:** What education options following high school are available for your student? What are the requirements for each option? Where will your student acquire the skills to do what he/she wants? How will your family pay for it? What agencies can assist your family? Are there assessments needed before you seek these options?
- **Independent living:** What types of supports does your student need in order to live as independently as possible in the future? Options might include having roommates, having assistants available, arranging group living, or living at home. What skills does your student need in order to live as independently as possible (e.g., household and community safety, personal hygiene, cooking, grocery shopping, laundry, financial responsibility, house cleaning, transportation)? Knowing needed supports and skills can then guide IEP transition planning.
- **Community participation:** How will your student be involved in the community? Will your student take part in recreation, faith activities, or other organizations? Can your student get around in the community independently? How will your student contribute to the community? What personal connections does your family already have in the community that will promote community inclusion?

## **What should we be doing while our student is still in middle school or high school?**

- Transition planning as part of the IEP process should begin early, but no later than at age 14. Involve your student in IEP meetings. Have high expectations for your student's future.
- Have good communication with your student's teacher(s) and seek their ideas in planning for your student's future.
- Do PATH planning. PATH (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope) is a team-facilitated approach to person-centered planning using graphics to express the goals and dreams of your youth. For PATH information, see The Arc of Tennessee in Resources.
- Attend all IEP team meetings. Invite an advocate, especially one trained and experienced in transition planning, to attend IEP team meetings. Invite a Vocational Rehabilitation counselor.
- Make sure your student works with guidance counselors and takes part in job-oriented activities that other students do.
- Find out about diploma types and their requirements. Discuss the diploma options with your student and the IEP team as early as possible to make sure that the academic path corresponds with the preferences of the student and family.
- Learn about admission requirements and funding available for college or vocational programs that your student is considering.
- Determine eligibility criteria for adult services while your student is still in school. If a service is appropriate for your student's future needs, begin the application process. Apply even if there are waiting lists. By doing so, you help show the need for more services and supports in Tennessee.
- Get your student's personal documents in order, (e.g., Social Security card, state I.D. or driver's license, most recent evaluation report, and IEP). In your family records, keep copies of psychological evaluations conducted prior to the student's 18th birthday for use in applying for adult services.
- Maintain good health, because it is a foundation for success at school and work. See Healthy & Ready to Work website in Resources.

## **What should we be doing to prepare as our student exits high school?**

You and your student should be involved with your special education team in developing a Summary of Performance. The Summary will be useful as your student pursues college options, vocational training, or employment. The IDEA law requires that "the public agency provide a summary of academic and functional performance, including recommendations to assist the student in meeting postsecondary education goals, for students whose eligibility terminates because of graduation with a regular high school diploma or because of exceeding the age eligibility for FAPE [Free and Appropriate Public Education] under State law."

A Summary of Performance should cover your student's measurable postsecondary goals, present level of performance in academic areas (e.g., reading, math, and written language), in cognitive areas (e.g., general ability and problem solving, attention and executive function, communication), and in functional areas (e.g., social skills and behavior, independent living, environmental access/mobility, self-determination and self-advocacy skills, career/vocational/transition goals). It should cover related essential accommodations and/or assistive technology. It should make recommendations to assist the student in meeting goals after high school. Finally, it should provide your student's perspective on the Summary of Performance.

## **When is my child legally an adult?**

A child is legally an adult upon reaching 18 years of age, regardless of disability and level of functioning. At age 18, parent(s) are no longer the legal guardian(s), unless they have already taken legal action by filing for Conservatorship. Because these are complex issues, families should get legal advice well before a child turns 18.

Conservatorship is a court-approved legal relationship between a competent adult (known as a "conservator" in Tennessee, and as a "guardian" in other states) and an adult with a disability or other adult who needs assistance in decision-making. It gives the conservator specific authority and duty to act on behalf of the individual in making decisions affecting the person's life. Each state has its own laws on conservatorship. In some situations, less intrusive alternatives, such as a joint bank account or power of attorney, can provide the protections that an individual needs. In making decisions about conservatorship, it is important to consider the individual's abilities and needs as well as the support network.

The website of The Arc of Tennessee offers *Conservatorship and Alternatives to Conservatorship: A Guide for Families*. The website of the Tennessee Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services provides a Conservatorship Information Form and information on the Conservatorship Association of Tennessee. See Resources.

## **How does having an ASD affect future planning?**

Because high school is familiar and structured, and supports are often provided, a student with ASD may function well. Yet that same student may have difficulty when moving to unfamiliar settings. Sensory issues, repetitive behaviors, or poor communication skills may be barriers in new settings such as attending vocational training or college, gaining or keeping employment, or making or keeping friends.

Providing experiences in potential post-school environments during the high school years can help prepare students with ASD. Examples include work (e.g., job training or part-time job), recreation (e.g., going to a gym), and independent living (e.g., residential camp). By exploring these different environments, students and families can identify potential challenges, needed supports, and areas of success.

## **Can my student with ASD attend college or a technical school?**

Since autism is a spectrum of disorders, some students on the spectrum may have the academic abilities, interests, and motivation to be successful in college. Early planning allows families to evaluate whether college enrollment is a realistic goal. If so, investigate college options, prepare to meet admission requirements, and develop financial plans.

As required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, colleges and universities make academic accommodations for students with ASD or other disabilities. Consult with the disability services office at schools you are considering. Some colleges and universities are developing programs to attract capable students with ASD. Explore choices via the Internet and national and state ASD advocacy organizations. See Resources section.

Adults with ASD who are well-prepared academically may nevertheless have a difficult time maintaining employment after college graduation because of difficulties in social relationships. Even if your student with ASD is able to attend college, it is still important to foster communication and social skills needed to obtain and retain a job.

## **What services are available to adults with ASD?**

Answers to this question are complex, because services include federal, state, and community programs. Eligibility requirements differ across states and across agencies within a state. Some persons with ASD may have difficulty qualifying for some services. For example, intellectual disability (ID) is an eligibility requirement for some programs, and individuals with ASD who do not have ID would not qualify.

Learn about your state and community services and eligibility requirements. Use autism-specific and disability information and referral services. Network with families of children and adults with ASD through your local chapter of the Autism Society of America. See Resources.

## **Who is eligible for SSI benefits?**

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) provides monthly payments to persons with disabilities who have limited income and resources. Almost everyone who receives SSI is eligible for health coverage under Medicaid.

SSI eligibility is a gateway to a variety of transition services for students with disabilities. Income eligibility differs according to the age of the student. If a student is younger than 18, his or her parents' income and resources are considered in determining financial need. Income requirements vary depending on the number of parents and children in the household. Once a student is 18 or older, parents' income no longer matters. If you applied for SSI benefits for your child before 18 and were denied because of family income, you should reapply when your child is 18. If you think your child is qualified for SSI, you should contact your local Social Security Office.

## **What are SSI work incentives?**

Through the use of SSI work incentives, a student can have paid employment, can increase income without loss of cash benefits or eligibility for other benefits such as Medicaid, can offset expenses that result from work, and can save for future education and training or to start a business. Incentives help students maintain necessary SSI benefits until they are self-sufficient.

## **Should transition planning include Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services?**

A VR representative should be invited to participate in your student's Individual Transition Plan IEP, in person or by phone. There is a VR counselor assigned to every high school in Tennessee. Parents and educators should help students come up with vocational objectives and help students write their own Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Gather assessments to document eligibility.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) provides a Transition School to Work Program that provides Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services to eligible high school students with disabilities who are interested in employment after leaving high school. The goal is a smooth, seamless transition from high school to after-high school employment.

VR-eligible students may receive guidance from a VR counselor, as well as other transition services that lead to employment. Examples include vocational assessment, assistive technology evaluation, postsecondary training, and/or job placement. Training might include on-the-job training, training at Tennessee community rehabilitation centers, or training in vocational or technical schools or in colleges or universities.

High school teachers, guidance counselors, family members, or students should request that a DRS counselor become involved early in the transition planning process but no later than 12 to 18 months prior to exiting school. For more information, contact the regional DRS Office in your area. See Resources.

## **Who is eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services?**

Individuals who are eligible (a) have a physical or intellectual disability that constitutes or results in a substantial barrier to employment, (b) can benefit from VR services to reach employment, (c) require VR services to prepare for, obtain, keep, or regain employment. Persons who are receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are presumed eligible for services if they intend to become employed. Services begin with the applicant and a VR counselor developing an individualized plan for employment. Tennessee has over 15 community rehabilitation centers that offer comprehensive vocational evaluation services, employee development services, job readiness training, and placement.

VR services are provided to prepare for employment persons with the most significant disabilities who presumably can benefit from VR services and obtain employment. For priority, medical or other professional documentation must show that the disability impacts two or more functional limitations: mobility, communication, work skills, work tolerance, self-care, self-direction, and interpersonal skills.

Due to limited resources, Tennessee operates under a legally mandated Order of Selection and currently can serve only individuals with the "most significant disabilities." The VR Counselor determines eligibility with the help of medical examinations, psychological examinations, vocational evaluations, and other diagnostic information secured by the agency to determine the nature and extent of the disability. Applicants who receive SSI (Supplemental Security Income) or SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance) benefits based on disability or blindness are presumed to be eligible if they intend to go to work, but further diagnostic assessments may be required to determine if they have "a most significant disability."

## **How can we help our child with ASD be successfully employed?**

Assign household chores that incorporate following directions, with visual supports, if needed. Build on your child's interests and provide incentives for completing work. Begin at a young age and continue into young adult years.

Educators can partner with families by providing ideas and helping with supports. For example, video and peer modeling can be used to teach activities of daily living such as grocery shopping and making change.

Planning and individualized supports should be provided to help students with ASD prepare for meaningful employment. During middle and high school, students with ASD should take part in volunteer jobs, summer employment, unpaid or paid internships, in-school work experiences, and job shadowing. Preparing for a new setting and providing supports will help accommodate a student's sensory, social, communication, or cognitive challenges.

A complete transition assessment can help students and families identify areas of interests and abilities. An assessment can aid in transition planning by establishing measurable postsecondary goals and by identifying the services needed to reach these goals.

Become well-informed about resources at the community and state level and learn how to network effectively among these resources.



# Tennessee Resources

## Autism Chapters

### ❑ Autism Tennessee

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

(615) 385-2077, (866) 508-4987, Email: [admin@autismtn.org](mailto:admin@autismtn.org)

### ❑ Autism Resources of the Mid-South (ARMS)

[www.tnautism.org/west](http://www.tnautism.org/west)

(901) 509-3027, Email: [autismresourcesmidsouth@gmail.com](mailto:autismresourcesmidsouth@gmail.com)

### ❑ Autism Society of East Tennessee

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

(865) 247- 5082, Email: [asaetc@gmail.com](mailto:asaetc@gmail.com)

## Work Planning and Preparation

### ❑ Benefits to Work

The Center for Independent Living of Middle Tennessee and the Tennessee Disability Coalition are partners in Benefits to Work. This program assists Social Security beneficiaries and recipients with disabilities who are exploring career development. Community Work Incentives coordinators are stationed across the state. Funded by the Social Security Administration, services include work incentive planning, education and assistance, outreach, and management of work incentives for people who are planning to pursue, maintain, or advance their employment.

[www.tndisability.org/coalition\\_programs/benefits\\_work](http://www.tndisability.org/coalition_programs/benefits_work)

(888) 839-5333, Email: [alice\\_o@tndisability.org](mailto:alice_o@tndisability.org),

### ❑ Next Step at Vanderbilt, Vanderbilt Kennedy Center and Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities

A 4-year, nonresidential certification program for students with intellectual disabilities. Provides individualized programs of study in the areas of education, social skills, and vocational training.

[peabody.vanderbilt.edu/nextsteps/](http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/nextsteps/)

(615) 322-3978, Email: [NextSteps@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:NextSteps@vanderbilt.edu)

### ❑ Project Opportunity, Vanderbilt University Medical Center

A career training and employment program. Trains students with disabilities, 18-22 years, in a classroom setting as well as “on the job,” to be competitive applicants for positions in the Vanderbilt Medical Center and the community. Currently open to students in Metro Nashville Public Schools and the Williamson County Schools systems.

[www.mc.vanderbilt.edu/root/vumc.php?site=projopp](http://www.mc.vanderbilt.edu/root/vumc.php?site=projopp)

(615) 343-7733

❑ **Tennessee Vocational Rehabilitation, Tennessee Department of Human Services**

Regional offices in Camden, Chattanooga, Columbia, Cookeville, Jackson, Johnson City, Knoxville, Memphis, and Nashville.

[www.tn.gov/humanservices/ds/vocational-rehabilitation.html](http://www.tn.gov/humanservices/ds/vocational-rehabilitation.html)

(833) 751-0597 (State Office)

❑ **Volunteer Tennessee–Access AmeriCorps**

An inclusion program for individuals with disabilities.

<https://www.tn.gov/volunteer-tennessee/vt-programs/vt-ameriCorps/vt-access-ameriCorps.html>

(615) 741-9237

## Referral and Information Services

❑ **Disability Law & Advocacy Center of Tennessee (DLAC)**

Provides free advocacy, legal, and information services, including information on legal aspects of transition from school to work and one's rights as a Vocational Rehabilitation client.

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

(800) 342-1660, Email: GetHelp@DLACTN.org

❑ **Tennessee Disability Pathfinder**

Provides referral and information for all types of disabilities, all ages. Has phone, web, and print resources in English and Spanish. Website includes database of services searchable by type of service and county, and a community events calendar. Website's Disabilities Resources Library–Education includes Transition–National and Tennessee Resources. See Pathfinder Flyers and Materials for Tennessee Autism Resource List 2010.

[TNPathfinder.org](http://TNPathfinder.org)

(1-800) 640-INFO [4636], (615) 322-8529

❑ **Vanderbilt Autism Resource Line**

Gateway to Vanderbilt Autism Treatment Network and Vanderbilt clinical and research programs and resources. Can provide information on transition resources and ASD health issues.

[vkc.vumc.org/vkc/triad/varl/](http://vkc.vumc.org/vkc/triad/varl/)

(877) 273-8862, (615) 322-7565

## Support

### ❑ **Centers for Independent Living (CILs)**

Independent, nonprofit organizations that provide information and referral, advocacy, independent living skills, and peer support. Tennessee CILs are in Memphis, Jackson, Paris, Nashville, Chattanooga, and Knoxville.

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

(615) 255-0283

### ❑ **Family Support Program, Tennessee Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services**

State-funded. Assists individuals with severe disabilities and their families to remain together in their homes and communities. Not a substitute for more comprehensive services provided under other programs, (e.g., Medicaid HCBS Waiver, TennCare, Medicare, private insurance). Provides support to families who have school-aged or younger children with severe disabilities, adults with severe disabilities who choose to live with their families, and adults with severe disabilities not supported by other residential programs supported by State or federal funds. Can be used to pay for services such as respite care, day care, home modifications, equipment, supplies, personal assistance, transportation, homemaker services, housing, health-related needs, nursing, and counseling. Administered by Local and District Councils. Regional offices are in Memphis, Jackson, Nashville, Chattanooga, Knoxville, Greeneville, Johnson City, and in Developmental Centers. Annual award is modest (\$4,000 maximum, \$1,500 average). May be waiting lists.

[www.tn.gov/dids/family\\_support/index.html](http://www.tn.gov/dids/family_support/index.html)

(800) 535-9725, (615) 532-6530

### ❑ **Medicaid Waiver, Tennessee Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services**

Some individuals on the autism spectrum also have a diagnosis of intellectual disability (ID). The Medicaid Waiver allows the State to use Medicaid funds for community-based services for individuals with ID. Medicaid services include: Support Coordination; Supported Living; Residential Habilitation; Family-Based Living; Community Participation; Supported Employment; Day Habilitation; Respite; Personal Assistance; Transportation; Behavior Support; Family Education; Specialized Equipment, Supplies, Assistive Technology; Environmental Accessibility Adaptations; Personal Emergency Response Systems; Nursing; Physical Therapy; Occupational Therapy; Speech, Hearing, and Language Services; Dental Services (some); Nutrition Services. To be eligible, a person must live in Tennessee, not have more income than the amount allowed to get Medicaid, need the same care that a person would need if living in an institution, and be able to get the services and support that will keep the person safe in the community. Division's website offers a *Family Guide for Medicaid Waiver, Individualizing Residential Support Resource Manual, Family Handbook, Self-Determination Waiver Program, and Statewide Family Training Schedule*. The Medicaid Waiver has a long waiting list, but application should still be made so that the need is known.

[www.tn.gov/dids/consumer\\_services/index.html](http://www.tn.gov/dids/consumer_services/index.html)

(615) 741-6674, (615) 253-4632

## Transition Planning

### ❑ **Center on Disability and Employment, University of Tennessee at Knoxville and Boling Center for Developmental Disabilities at Memphis**

Advances universal access for people with disabilities in employment, education, and life.

[www.cde.tennessee.edu](http://www.cde.tennessee.edu)

(865) 974-9400, Email: [cde@tennessee.edu](mailto:cde@tennessee.edu)

### ❑ **Secondary Transition Project, The Arc of Tennessee**

Helps families and students with intellectual and other developmental disabilities understand the secondary transition process, see the possibilities for adult life, and learn about resources.

Products include brochures, Handbook (50 pages), Checklists, Transition Resources, and *Conservatorship and Alternatives to Conservatorship: A Guide for Families*. Also information about PATH (Planning Alternative Futures with Hope).

[www.thearctn.org/Transitions/php](http://www.thearctn.org/Transitions/php)

### ❑ **Support and Training for Exceptional Parents (STEP)**

STEP resources include *Plan a Perfect Life* manual, slideshows on transition topics, and a fact sheet on Tennessee graduation requirements, as well as a workshop on Transition to Adulthood and an annual Transition Institute.

[tnstep.info](http://tnstep.info)

(800) 280-7837, Email: [gethelp@tnstep.info](mailto:gethelp@tnstep.info)

### ❑ **Tennessee Department of Education, Division of Special Education**

Website provides documents and presentations for educators and families, including: Writing the Transition IEP, Parent Involvement Transition to Employment, Age-Appropriate Transition Assessment, Age of Majority: Preparing Your Child to Make Good Choices, Writing Measurable Postsecondary Education Goals, Checklists for Students Transitioning to Postsecondary Education Institutes of Higher Education, Student Guide to Transition Services, Parent Guide to Transition Services, Rehabilitation Services for Students with Disabilities. A detailed resource is: *Tennessee State Transition Manual* [Tennessee Connections Transition Manual], [tennessee.gov/education/speced/doc/71907transmanpdf.pdf](http://tennessee.gov/education/speced/doc/71907transmanpdf.pdf). Manual (120 pages) covers the IEP Process, Teaching Self-Determination Skills, Role of Parents in Transition Planning, Preparation for IEP/ Transition Planning Meeting, Transition Assessment, Community-Based Instruction, and Adult Services. Addresses planning for students with disabilities; it is not autism-specific.

[http://tennessee.gov/education/speced/secondary\\_trans.shtml](http://tennessee.gov/education/speced/secondary_trans.shtml)

# Autism-Specific Resources Developed by Other States

## ❑ **Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI)**

Resources include a guide, *Transition to Adulthood: Guidelines for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders* (136 pages).

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

(866) 866-2254

## National Resources

## ❑ **Beach Center on Disability—Affiliate of the Life Span Institute and Department of Special Education, University of Kansas**

Their catalog includes resources on self-determination and customized employment, person-centered planning and friendships, positive behavior support, employment.

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

(785) 864-7600

## ❑ **Healthy & Ready to Work National Resource Center**

Provides information and connections to health and transition expertise nationwide to help young people with special health care needs stay healthy.

[hrtw.org](http://hrtw.org)

## ❑ **Heath Resource Center of George Washington University**

Online clearinghouse on postsecondary education for individuals with disabilities.

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

Email: AskHeath@gwu.edu

## ❑ **Going to College**

Resource for teens with disabilities.

[www.going-to-college.org](http://www.going-to-college.org)

## ❑ **Going To Work: A Guide to Social Security Benefits and Employment for Young People with Disabilities (2010 Edition)**

Booklet by the Institute for Community Inclusion. Provides basic information about Social Security disability and health benefit programs, discusses what happens to Social Security disability and health benefits when a young person goes to work, and explains how to maximize a young person's options when he or she goes to work.

[www.communityinclusion.org/article.php?article\\_id=211](http://www.communityinclusion.org/article.php?article_id=211)

❑ **Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, Indiana University**

Their E-Store resources include a guide to transition planning and various autism-specific resources, including items related to employment.

[www.iidc.indiana.edu](http://www.iidc.indiana.edu)

(812) 855-6508, Email: [iidc@indiana.edu](mailto:iidc@indiana.edu)

❑ **IRIS Center for Training Enhancements, Vanderbilt University and Claremont Graduate University**

Provides free online interactive resources that translate research about the education of students with disabilities into practice. Materials cover various evidence-based topics, including behavior, RTI (Response to Intervention), learning strategies, progress monitoring, and transition.

[iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/resources.html](http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/resources.html)

(800) 831-6134 (IRIS Central), Email: [iris@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:iris@vanderbilt.edu)

❑ **National Center on Secondary Education and Transition, Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota**

Coordinates national resources, offers technical assistance, and disseminates information on secondary education and transition for youth with disabilities.

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

(662) 624-2097, Email: [ncset@umn.edu](mailto:ncset@umn.edu)

❑ **National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability**

Provides briefs, background papers, guides, manuals, and other materials to address issues for youth with and without disabilities, youth service professionals, workforce development professionals, policymakers, and others.

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

(877) 871-0744

❑ **National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY)**

NICHCY resources include a Transition Summary—*Transition Planning: A Team Effort* (TS10, January 1999, Resources Updated 2002; 24 pages); and a Fact Sheet: *Transition-Age Special Education Students and SSI: What Parents Should Know*.

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

(800) 695-0285, Email: [nichcy@aed.org](mailto:nichcy@aed.org)

❑ **Pacer Center**

Has several transition projects, multiple links to websites with transition resources, and publications on transition.

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

(800) 537-2237

❑ **Think College, Institute for Community Inclusion, University of Massachusetts at Boston**

Conducts research and provides training and technical assistance for professionals, families, and students related to postsecondary education for individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities. Provides a searchable database of postsecondary education options.

[www.thinkcollege.net](http://www.thinkcollege.net)

## Books

- ❑ Baker, J. (2005). *Preparing for life: Complete guide to transitioning to adulthood for those with autism and Asperger's syndrome*. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons, Inc.
- ❑ Bruey, C. T., & Urban, M. B. (2009). *The autism transition guide: Planning the journey from school to adult life*. Port Chester, NY: National Professional Resources, Inc.  
For families and professionals, provides ideas and strategies applicable to a broad range of individuals on the autism spectrum.
- ❑ Grigal, M. & Hart, D. (2010). *Think College: Postsecondary options for students with intellectual disabilities*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- ❑ Hughes, C., & Carter, E. W. (2000). *Transition handbook: Strategies high school teachers use that work!* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.  
Compilation of more than 500 research-based, teacher-tested, transition support strategies that have been proven to work for teachers, employment specialists, families, and students.
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