

# PARENTAL CHECKLIST FOR TRANSITION PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

## The Postsecondary Transition Planning Process

Beginning no later than age 14, detailed planning for your child's future after high school begins. While there are a number of people to assist with this planning process, your involvement as a parent/guardian is key to a smooth transition for your child. This checklist may be useful to ensure that you are prepared and offers suggested steps that can be taken and resources that can be utilized throughout the process. Specific transition activities initiated and the appropriate time for them to occur should be based on the individual needs of each student. This checklist is meant to be individualized. Not all of the items listed may pertain to your child. While this is a general guideline and includes steps the school personnel should follow in designing the transition plan for each student, it is important to note that parent/guardians may have primary responsibility for some of the items included in this checklist.

### EVERY YEAR

- Meet with your agency supports and school IEP team members.
- Discuss your child's abilities and interests with all teachers, agency and service providers, therapists, etc., and how these can be utilized to reach academic, social, employment, and life goals.
- Ask about accommodations and technology available to help your child meet school, work, and other life goals Use the Individualized Education Program (IEP) to create the right goals to help your child get ready for life after high school, specifically in the areas of Postsecondary Education, Employment, and Independent Living Skills Build on the goals and achievements started the year before.

### ANY AGE (3-21 YEARS OLD)

- Request that the school complete a full ETR at the next three-year evaluation (not a records review). Be sure the ETR includes updated information and data, as well as cognitive scores and adaptive behavior scores. Gather various documents and have accessible including:
  - Child's birth certificate
  - Child's social security card
  - Medical documentation of child's disability Apply to the County Board of Developmental Disabilities

- Apply for Social Security Benefits and Medicaid.
- Establish estate planning (Special Needs Trust).
- Establish a STABLE account.
- Continually assess social skills, self-determination, and self-advocacy skills, both formally (at school) and informally (at home and in social settings) to determine areas of strength and need.
- Obtain a State ID and consider enrolling in LEADS under the Ohio Communication Disability Law Connect with other parents in Geauga, Lake and Cuyahoga County programs, through the Educational Service Center of Western Reserve and the Ohio Parent Mentor Program, and through groups in your home district.

### **12-14 YEARS OLD (PRIOR TO AGE 14)**

- Request that the school complete a full ETR at the next three-year evaluation (not a records review). Be sure the ETR includes updated information and data, as well as cognitive scores and adaptive behavior scores. Gather various documents and have accessible including:
  - Child's birth certificate
  - Child's social security card
  - Medical documentation of child's disability
- Transition planning begins, and the transition part of the IEP should begin to be developed (Section 5 of the IEP).
- Ensure a multidisciplinary team is established for educational and societal organizations. Parents/guardians are important members of the team.
- Identify student's: preferences, interests, needs/challenges, strengths, and postsecondary goals.
- Allow for the student to voice interests so that support and activities for them can be set up.
- Consider sexual development and need for education.

### **4-15 YEARS OLD**

#### **GENERAL ITEMS - SERVICES - HEALTH**

- Discuss the transitioning of medical care.
- Start exploring options for adult medical care, i.e., Primary Care Physician, mental health services, etc.
- Explore other behavioral health needs (counseling, behavior support, etc).
- Evaluate your child's ability to manage personal health care.
- Consider sexual development and need for education, medical attention, and possible contraception.

- For females: gynecological visit.
- If needed, create an Individual Health Plan with your child's doctor and school nurse.
- At this age, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) process begins and can include coordination with the state.
- VR agency: Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD). This can begin as early as age 14.
- Depending on vocational need, and would preferably begin no later than 2 years prior to exiting high school.
- Connect with other parents in Geauga, Lake and Cuyahoga County programs, through the Educational.
- Service Center of Western Reserve and the Ohio Parent Mentor Program, and through groups in your home district.
- Continue to explore and complete tasks from previous years as needed.

## **EDUCATION - TRAINING - POST SCHOOL OPTIONS**

- Meet with your school's transition coordinator/IEP team to develop an academic plan in conjunction with the IEP to achieve those goals.
- Start to talk about/determine at what age your child might graduate (students can stay in school until the age of 22 per the decision of the IEP team).
- Explore options within your home school district: career centers, work study, college credit classes, specialized programs, etc.
- Talk with your school and/or agency supporters about your child's interests and what they might want to study after high school.
- Study websites to learn about training, technical schools, college programs, and classes where your child can explore an interest or hobby.
- Explore activities and courses your child might be eligible for or would benefit from participating in.
- Based on your child's disability, discuss accommodations and/or assistive technology that might help your child learn in transition activities.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

- Provide career awareness and exploration at school and in community.
- Learn about programs at the local career center. If your child is interested, request a visit.
- Explore any options your child may participate in including community-based work experiences, job shadowing, and/or volunteer experiences.
- Start keeping a job placement file with a list of the names, email addresses, and phone numbers of people who can be references for your child in regards to job training opportunities. Also, start keeping a list with a description of acquired skills, work history and community experiences.

## **15-16 YEARS OLD**

### **GENERAL ITEMS - SERVICES - HEALTH**

- Obtain state ID for your child from the Department of Motor Vehicle's Deputy Registrar Office.
- Sign release of information enabling school to contact the County Board of Developmental Disabilities on behalf of your child.
- Be sure that your child has been referred to the County Board of Developmental Disabilities Intake department to determine eligibility. The Ohio Eligibility Determination Instrument (OEDI) is completed at age 16 to allow county board services to continue. This is the responsibility of the parent to complete this task. The school can also refer a student but the parent ultimately has to make sure the intake process is completed.
- If/when Ohio Eligibility Determination Instrument (OEDI) is scheduled to be administered, invite school staff and others that may provide valuable input.
- At this age, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) process begins and can include coordination with the state.
- VR agency: Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD). This can begin as early as age 14, depending on vocational need, and would preferably begin no later than 2 years prior to exiting high school.
- If County Board of Developmental Disabilities determines the student is eligible for continued services, invite your County Board of Developmental Disabilities Service and Support Administrator (SSA) to attend an IEP meeting. If the school invites the CBDD, the family must give permission for the SSA to attend.
- If applicable, invite adult services providers to be included in the IEP team. The County Board of Developmental Disabilities and Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) should participate in all transition and IEP meetings for your child.
- Share your post-school goals with IEP team and assist in developing transition goals related to education, training, and independent living.
  - Continue to explore and complete tasks from previous years as needed.

### **EDUCATION - TRAINING - POST SCHOOL OPTIONS**

- Visit technical schools or certificate programs your child may be interested in.
- If your child shows interest in a vocational program for after high school, discuss what accommodations are offered and how they would relate to your child's needs.
- If your child might choose college, discuss needed tests and talk to the school's guidance counselor to talk about colleges and your child's plan for applying.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

- Whenever possible, provide training in communication, self-care, mobility, independent living, and recreation skills in the context of job training activities.
- Practice filling out job applications and answering questions an employer might ask with your child. This can be done at home and at school.
- Ask your school if a Career Assessment is recommended or should be completed on your child.
- Ask your school and/or agency supporters for help with on-the-job training, job exploration, and/or part-time employment in the areas of your child's interest. Your school can help provide references for this experience during school and during the summer.
- Explore summer job/volunteer opportunities.

## **COMMUNITY - INDEPENDENT LIVING**

- Join an activity at your school, community, or place of worship.
- Talk with your school and agency supporters about the possibility of funding through Medicaid waivers.
- Keep a list of child's medical conditions and physicians. Be able to describe health needs/medicines.
- Find out about adult agencies that can help you prepare for independent living.
- Keep copies of your medical, education, and government papers to have ready when you need them.
- Teach child to learn the differences between wants and needs, and how to manage their income.
- Explore special needs driving programs (i.e., Heights Driving School, University Hospitals (Geauga), etc).

## **16-17 YEARS OLD**

### **GENERAL ITEMS - SERVICES - HEALTH**

- Confirm child's eligibility for adult services from your County Board of Developmental Disabilities.
- If your child qualifies for County Board of Developmental Disabilities services, they will assign a Service and Support Administrator (SSA) to your child.
- Identify the student's intended adult outcomes for employment, continued education/training, and independent living.
- Develop a more detailed transition plan as part of the student's IEP.
- Contact the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) to explore available employment services and supports, including summer youth opportunities.

- Evaluate the necessity of guardianship and/or power attorney (paperwork can be filed close to age of 18).
- Contact a financial planner to discuss future planning related to assets, special needs trusts, estate planning, etc.
- Identify responsibilities and privileges that your child has or should have at this age.
- If you haven't done so, obtain Driver's License or state ID for your child from the Department of Motor Vehicles.
- Review child's transition plan in Section 5 on the IEP/current programming - revise as needed with team.
- Learn more about services that are available to the individual such as postsecondary education, employment, transportation, and adult living options available in your community.
- If appropriate, apply for an RTA Discounted Fare Pass, Travel Training, or Paratransit.
- Ensure documents are available: Social Security card, birth certificate, personal State ID/Driver's License, documentation of diagnosis, and insurance cards.
- Connect with other parents through the Geauga, Lake and Cuyahoga Counties, the Educational Service.
- Center of the Western Reserve, the Ohio Parent Mentor Program, or similar groups in your home district.
- Continue to explore and complete tasks from previous years as needed.

## **EDUCATION - TRAINING - POST SCHOOL OPTIONS**

- Refine and reevaluate postsecondary goals and start identifying an appropriate future track.
  - If the goal is a vocation and/or job training, decide on the vocational/placement track and visit schools and programs to confirm placement
  - If the goal is a trade or higher education, have your child signed up for standardized tests and discuss any testing accommodations your child might need with your child's IEP team. Ask about recommendations on how to prepare your child for the tests.
- With the guidance of the school counselor, apply for admission to desired colleges/schools and appropriate programs, and set up visits to campuses.



## **EMPLOYMENT**

- Help your child research 5 to 10 jobs that interest your child and discuss what accommodations they may need.
- Ask adult agencies to come to your child's IEP meetings at school to assist with job placement, training, and accommodations.
- Ask your school and agency supporters for help in arranging community-based, on-the-job training, and employment in your child's areas of interest. They can help you with this for work during school, nights and weekends, and during the summer.

## **COMMUNITY - INDEPENDENT LIVING**

- Assess capacity for independent living. Talk with your child's school and agency supporters about options for housing.
- Learn about community and volunteer activities your child can get involved in.
- Have your child practice budgeting money and develop savings goals.

## **17-18+ YEARS OLD**

### **GENERAL ITEMS - SERVICES - HEALTH**

- At age 18, the transfer of rights occurs where the student assumes the educational rights the parents had in regards to their IEP.
- If appropriate, complete Guardianship/Power of Attorney paperwork.
- Set new priorities for future goal-setting.
- Apply for Social Security Benefits (the Social Security Administration considers ONLY the individual's income and assets at the age of 18).
- Apply for Supplemental Security Income-Social Security (SSI).
- Apply for Medicaid Assistance (health insurance).
- Males should register for the draft, no matter the level of functioning.
- Register to vote.
- Review healthcare insurance coverage and continuation of benefits past age 18.
- Gather documentation verifying disability/necessary accommodations to provide to adult service providers.
- Transition to adult medical providers.
- Determine if other adult service agencies may be appropriate: Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities.
- (OOD), Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board, etc.
- Continue to explore and complete tasks from previous years as needed.

## **EDUCATION - TRAINING - POST-SCHOOL OPTIONS**

- Clarify the expected graduation date and degree requirements and implications.
- High School Diploma – This diploma is awarded to students who have passed required courses and exams in a number of subjects. The diploma is generally accepted for admission everywhere: two and four-year colleges as well as military and trade schools. If your child has not acquired the skills identified in his/her postsecondary transition plan, or needs more time to fulfill other academic and/or IEP goals, consideration may be given to deferring graduation beyond when he/she would typically graduate. If the IEP team (including the parents and student) makes the decision to defer graduation, your child will not receive their diploma at that time.
  - However, your child can go through a "social graduation" where they walk the stage with their peer classmates. The actual diploma will later be awarded when exiting school services (prior to age 22).
- General Education Development (GED) Diplomas – This diploma is awarded to students who have passed the GED exam. The GED is generally accepted by military, trade schools, and some junior/community colleges (which sometimes require additional qualifications).

## **EMPLOYMENT**

- Ask adult agencies to come to your child's IEP meetings at school to assist with job placement, training, and accommodations.
- Ask your school and agency supporters for help in arranging community-based, on-the-job training, and employment in your child's areas of interest. They can help you with this for work during school, nights and weekends, and during the summer.
- Make sure you have the assistive technology your child needs before they exit high school for their job training or placement.

## **COMMUNITY - INDEPENDENT LIVING**

- Assess capacity for independent living and options.
- Evaluate financial literacy and goals.
- Prepare individual for coming of age goals and expectations.
- Teach your child about their legal rights.
- Connect with peer groups.
- Review travel safety skills and public transportation options and determine what mode of transportation is most appropriate:
  - Public Transportation (RTA, Geauga County Transit, Laketran).
  - Specialized transportation (Lyft, Uber, etc.).
  - Medicaid transportation for medical appointments.
- Have your child practice getting around your community by taking public transportation or arranging transportation.



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For this and other Postsecondary Planning Tools and Resources, please see: [here](#).