

Transition to Adulthood: Housing and Independent Living

General Information:

If you are 14 or older, it is a good time to begin thinking about where you will live when you are an adult or when your parents can no longer take care of you. With or without a disability, you may feel a need for independence as you grow older. However, you may need extra time and support to learn and practice the skills needed to live away from home.

Using the IEP to plan and prepare for living independently:

If you have an IEP (Individualized Education Plan), public schools are required by law (starting at age 14) to write and carry out a transition plan. This plan includes a “coordinated set of activities” that help prepare you for life after high school. It is important that you take part in the IEP process. If part of your transition plan is to live away from home, IEP goals and activities should help you:

- Express yourself (self advocacy) and explain your needs (accommodations).
- Take care of your health.
- Develop skills you will need to live on your own as an adult (preparing meals, budgeting, laundry, hygiene and grooming).
- Find housing and independent living options in your community.

What are common living options?

If you have a disability, the options for living in the community can vary depending on where you live. Common living options in most counties include:

- **Supportive Living** means you can choose where you want to live (i.e. house, apartment, group home) and what supports you need from outside agencies.
- **Adult Family Homes** are similar to foster care.
- **Community-based residential facilities (CBRF's)** provide 24 hour supervision in 5-8 bed facilities.

NOTE: Some supports are covered by Adult Services (state funding), but rent and food costs are the responsibility of the individual.

For more information on housing and independent living:

- Contact your county's Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC): <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/lc/lcinfo/rccs.htm>.
- Independent Living Centers: <http://www.dhfs.stte.wi.us/disabilities/physical/ilcs.htm> or contact your county ADRC for the name of your local center.

- HUD: What is HUD's public housing program?:
<http://www.hud.gov/renting/phprog.cfm>.
- HUD: WI public housing contacts by county:
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/pha/contacts/states/wi.cfm>.
- HUD: WI public housing counseling:
www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hcc/hcs.cfm?weblistAction=search&searchstate=WI.
- HUD: Young adults with disabilities who receive SSI may be eligible for low-income housing assistance. This web site explains housing choice vouchers:
http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/hcv/about/fact_sheet.cfm.

If you do not have a computer or internet access, computer stations are available in The Daniel M. Soref Family Resource Center on the first floor of Children's Hospital or at your local public library.

This teaching sheet is meant to provide you with additional information about your care. Diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up should be provided by your health care professional.