

## **Transition to Adulthood: Postsecondary Education**

### **General Information**

If you are 14 or older, it is a good time to begin thinking and talking about goals for how you will spend your day after leaving high school. If you have a disability, the options for life after high school are not that different from others your age. However, you may need extra time and help to make the transition from school to community life a success.

### **Using the IEP to plan and prepare for postsecondary education**

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 actively take part in the IEP process. If your goal is to continue your education after high school (postsecondary education), IEP goals and activities should help you:

- Express yourself (self advocacy), understand your disability, and explain your needs (accommodations).
- Understand and manage your own health.
- Improve academic skills (reading, writing, math) needed for postsecondary education.
- Learn and master skills that people need to live as independently as possible as an adult.
- Look at different postsecondary education options.

### **What are the options for postsecondary education?**

- 2-year or 4-year colleges with accommodations.
- Technical colleges with support.
- Specialized college programs for students with cognitive disabilities

It is important to remember your rights and responsibilities in postsecondary education are very different than in high school – so learning and understanding these differences is critical. Generally fewer supports are provided and more responsibility is placed on the student.

It will be very helpful to contact the office on campus that provides Academic/Disability Support well before you start school to arrange needed accommodations. Use them whenever you need help.

**For more information on postsecondary education:**

- Wisconsin Dept. of Public Instruction's publication *Opening Doors to Postsecondary Education and Training* can be downloaded at <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/sped/pdf/tranopndrs.pdf>
- US Department of Education-Office of Civil Rights summary of rights and responsibilities for student with disabilities who attend postsecondary institutions can be found at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>
- Specialized colleges for youth with intellectual disabilities can be found at <http://www.thinkcollege.net>

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 of Wisconsin 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.