

Transition to Adulthood: Education after High School (Postsecondary Education)

General Information

At age 14, you should start to think about where you will live when you are an adult or when your parents will no longer be taking care of you. You may feel a need for independence as you grow older. However, you may need extra time and help to make the transition from school to community life a success.

How can the IEP help?

If you have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), public schools are required by law to include and carry out a transition plan at age 14. This plan includes activities to help prepare you for life after high school. It is important that you take part in the IEP process.

If your goal is to continue your education after high school, IEP goals and activities should help you:

- Express yourself. This is called self advocacy.
- Understand your disability and explain your needs (accommodations).
- Understand and manage your own health.
- Improve reading, writing, math skills needed for education after high school.
- Learn and master skills you will need to live as independently as possible as an adult.
- Look at different education options.

What are the options?

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

Your rights and responsibilities in postsecondary education are very different than in high school. It is very important to learn and understand these differences. There will most likely be fewer supports provided. There will also be more responsibility put on the student.

Contact the office on campus that provides Academic/Disability Support well before you start school. They can help to arrange the accommodations you will need. Use them whenever you need help.

For more information:

- 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, you can use a computer in The Daniel M. Soref Family Resource Center on the first floor of Children's Hospital. Your local public library might have computers as well.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.