

If you have any questions
or
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Adapted from worksheets produced by the Institute for Community Inclusion at Children's Hospital, Boston, as part of the Massachusetts Institute for Youth with Disabilities, a project of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, supported in part by project #H01MC00006 from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (Title V, Social Security Act), Health Resources and Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services.

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR TRANSITION

From Adolescence to Adulthood



A Simple Booklet for Teens in Transition



Reach high, for the stars lie hidden in your soul.
Dream deep, for every dream precedes the goal.

Pamela Vaull Starr

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HEALTHCARE AND TRANSITION

Be your own health care advocate

- Learn about your condition or disability.
- Know the warning signs that mean you need emergency help.
- Know whom to call in case of an emergency. Carry that information with you.
- Learn how to make your own appointments.
- Write down any questions you have before you go to the doctor's office.
- Meet privately with your doctor/nurses and others.
- Speak up and ask your doctor or nurse questions. If you don't understand an answer, ask a question.
- Talk to your doctor about difficult topics such as relationships, drugs, and birth control.
- Tell your doctor if you are feeling down. Your doctor can suggest people to talk to.
- Ask your doctor to explain all tests and their results.
- Ask for copies of medical test or reports.
- Carry your insurance card and other health care information that you have in your CHUMS booklet and folder.

Take Charge of your health care information

- Be sure to understand the medications that you are taking and why you are taking them.
- Know how to call your pharmacy and how to fill your prescriptions.
- Make sure you know your insurance and how to get a referral.
- Keep a list of addresses and telephone numbers of all your doctors and nurses.
- Keep a notebook of your doctor reports, medications, operations, and results of medical tests.
- Ask your doctor for a short written summary of your health condition.
- Know how to order and take care of any special equipment you use.

Plan for transfer to an adult doctor

- Talk to your doctor about how and when you should start seeing an adult doctor.
- Discuss with your doctor resources that might be helpful to you.
- Meet and talk with the new adult care doctor before you switch.



EDUCATION AND TRANSITION

Get to know your rights

- Get to know your rights. You are your best advocate.
- At age 14, the law says that you have a right to participate in school team meetings.
- Attend school team meetings. Consider starting the meetings by telling people about your goals and dreams for the future.
- Ask about accommodations within the classroom even if you are not in special education.
- Be aware that if you leave high school, without graduating, before the age of 22, you will stop receiving special education services.
- Know that when you reach age 18, you have the right to approve your own IEP/504 program if you are still in school.
- Start talking to agencies that might help you, as you get older.

Start thinking about whether you want or need more schooling after high school

- Think about the kind of job you would like to have as an adult.
- Talk with your family, guidance counselor, or social worker about your goals for the future and the kind of preparation that you will need to achieve these goals.
- Even if you do not want a degree, you can learn a lot by attending classes at a community college.
- Find out about different educational programs after high school and learn how to get involved.
- Arrange to visit different schools to make sure they meet your needs and physical challenges.
- Notify the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) by the fall of the year you plan to graduate.

Put paperwork together that will help you reach your goals.

- Keep your own notes and records from school team meetings that you attend.
- Save examples of your schoolwork and other items that show the kind of work you have been doing, your interests and strengths. Include examples of your life in your community, clubs/organizations.
- Make a list of disability organizations and other places that can help you in planning and paying for any education in the future.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSITION



You CAN work!

- Think about your future. What do you want to be when you grow up?
- Identify what you are good at doing and what you like to do.
- Learn about the responsibilities involved in having a job.
- Think about how your special health care need or disability might affect the kind of job you can do.
- Make sure to have accommodations to assist and make it possible for you to work.

Be your own advocate...Speak up for yourself!

- Attend all of the team meetings related to planning for your future and your IEP.
- Ask a friend, parent, or relative to come to planning meetings with you to help take notes, listen to what is said, or contribute ideas.
- Make sure your teachers and guidance counselors know what your interests are for your future.
- Ask questions and speak up! Let people know what you want to do and what you need.

Preparing for a job

- Look for job opportunities. It's important to start thinking about work early.
- Ask your parents, guidance counselors, social worker, doctor or nurse about agencies that might help you plan for a job.
- Consider getting an after school or a weekend job to earn money and get experience.
- Talk to your doctor about how your disability may influence the type of job you choose.
- Learn about supported employment – work in a community setting with ongoing support by an agency that knows how to help people with disabilities find a job.
- Find out about having vocational assessment, which will help you understand your work preferences, strengths and abilities.
- Try a volunteer job in your community that matches your interest.
- Think about shadowing someone to learn about jobs.
- Look for an opportunity to have an adult with a disability who works in the area you are interested in as a mentor.
- Make a plan for transportation to your job.





RECREATION AND TRANSITION

Meet people...make friends

- Work at making friends; it is not easy for anyone.
- Join clubs or committees that you are interested in.
- Get to know what other kids are interested in.
- Figure out the people at school who can help you connect with other teens.
- Go to school functions such as school dances, plays, or sporting events.
- Spend time with friends with disabilities and special health care needs.
- Spend time with friends who do not have disabilities and special health care needs.

Enjoy recreation in your community

- Try out different activities to find out what you might enjoy.
- Call organizations such as the local YMCA to see if their activities are a good fit for you.
- Visit the place where the activity may be held so that you can plan accordingly.
- Identify your need for accommodations.
- Work with the recreation staff to adapt the right program for you.
- Discuss with your doctor any health-related issues you should consider when planning your activities.



Have fun at home

- Keep fun in your family and take time to enjoy yourself with your family.
- Think about activities you would like to do at home with a friend.
- Invite friends to your home.
- Ask your parents to let you bring a friend along when you go to places such as the movies.
- Include your friends in activities that you do at home.
- Consider participating in recreation or fitness activities with your family.



Know where to get information about recreational experiences

- Check out the school or local library for flyers on upcoming activities.
- Ask other adolescents about activities they enjoy and participate in.
- Look in the calendar section of the newspaper for events close to home.
- Join a group where you can meet other adolescents with special health care needs and disabilities.
- Consider the following as good places to find out about activities:



LIST OF STATEWIDE RESOURCES

Health Care Resources

- **NM Department of Health - Waiver Programs** (505) 476-8836
<https://nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/>
- **NM Medical Assistance Program** 1-888-997-2583
<http://www.hsd.state.nm.us/mad/cmedassisprograms.html>

Financial Resources

- **Social Security** 1-800-772-1213 General Information
<http://www.ssa.gov>
- **NM Income Support Division & Financial Assistance**
1-800-283-4465 <http://www.hsd.state.nm.us/isd>

Guardianship/Legal Resources

- **Consumer Protection Division** 1-844-255-9210
<https://www.nmag.gov/consumer-environmental-protection.aspx>
- **The Arc of New Mexico** (505) 883-4630
<http://arcnm.org>

www.nmguardianshipassoc.org

Employment Resources

- **DVR – School-to-Work Transition Program** (505) 383-2500
<http://www.dvr.state.nm.us/school-for-work.aspx>
- **DVR – Technology Assistance Program** 1-877-696-1470
<http://www.tap.gcd.state.nm.us/>

Housing Resources

- (505) 255-3643
<https://www.cabq.gov/family/income-eligible-services/housing-services-programs/housing-resources>

Education Resources

- **Central New Mexico Community College** (505) 224-3000
<http://www.cnm.edu>
- **Eastern New Mexico University** 1-800-367-3668 <http://enmu.edu/>
- **New Mexico Highlands University** (505) 247- 1044 <http://www.nmhu.edu>
- **New Mexico State University** (575) 646-0111 <http://www.nmsu.edu>
- **Northern New Mexico College** (505) 747-2100 <http://www.nnmc.edu>
- **University of New Mexico** (505) 277-0111 <http://www.unm.edu>
- **Western New Mexico University** (575) 538-6011 <http://www.wnmu.edu>

Other Special Needs Resources

- **Children's Medical Services** – 1-877-4692 <https://nmhealth.org/about/phd/fhb/cms/>
- **NM Commission for the Blind** – (505) 841-8844
- **NM Commission for the Deaf** - (505) 383-6530
- **Family Voices/Advocacy** – (505) 872-4774 <http://www.familyvoices.org/index.html>
- **Disabilities Information** – 1-800-552-8195 <http://cdd.unm.edu/infonet>