

Exploring Options: A Conversation on Transition from High School to Adulthood

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Introduction

- This presentation will touch base with a variety of topics regarding the transition from school to adulthood.
 - We will begin with the planning that is completed during school
 - Next we will cover what planning and tasks should be completed at different ages
 - We will end with a brief overview of adult services in Maine

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IDEA, MUSER & Transition Planning

- ▶ **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act:** To ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a **free appropriate public education** emphasizes **special education** and **related services** designed to **meet their unique needs** and **prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living**. IDEA Regulations 300.1(a)
- ▶ **Transition Planning:** Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16 (“during the **9th grade school year**” MUSER:IX.3.A.(1) (h)), or **younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team**, and **updated annually**, thereafter, the IEP must include:

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The IEP must include:

1. **Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals** based upon **age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills;**
(IEP + TP + Post Secondary + Employment + Independent Living all must work together)
and
2. The **transition services** (including the courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals.

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Transition Planning and IEPs

Must be Student-focused.

Student must be invited to meeting.

Appropriate agencies must be invited to meeting.
(can be invited by school or parent)

Must have measurable post-secondary goals as well as present level of performance.

Must include activities, related services,
transition service needs and course of study.

Goals must be based on age-appropriate
transition assessment (AATA).

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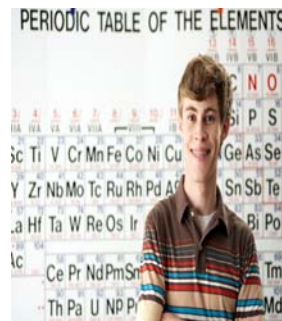
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Transition Planning is:

- Driven by student dreams and interests
- Must be reviewed at least annually
- A best guess?
- May change over time
- A process
- A team approach



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Why Plan?

- To help the student make choices and create dreams about where they want to live, work and learn after leaving high school.
- To help the student achieve their dreams through appropriate goals and transition services.
- Planning early helps to ensure that goals will be met



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Who should be involved?

- Student
- Family
- Friends
- School personnel
- Adult service providers
- Community agencies
- Others specific to student needs



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Building the Team

In addition to the already established school team, Children's Home and Community-based services can be accessed until age 21.

- What are some of these Services?
- How can they support the transition plan?

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Building the Team

Rehabilitative and Community Services
(RCS/Section 28)

- What is RCS?
Designed to build skills in areas of daily living & support a child's functioning in the home & community settings.
- How can RCS support the Transition Plan?

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Building the Team

Home & Community Treatment Services (HCT/Section 65)

- What is HCT?
Offers strategies to help the child & family manage behavioral or mental health symptoms in order to function better in home, school & the community.
- How can HCT support the Transition Plan?

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Find Support

- Natural Support
- Paid Support



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Natural Support

- Family members
- Neighbors
- Local clubs like the YMCA
- Church Groups
- Members
- Online resources

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Paid Support

- Ed Technicians
- Adult Services
- Case managers
- Day programs
- Supported Employment Services
- Job Coaches
- Group Living Situations

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From Current Maine IEP Form (8/1/2014)

8. POST-SECONDARY TRANSITION PLAN

This section must be completed for each IEP, during but not later than 9th grade or age 16, whichever comes first and updated annually. (MUSER IX.3(A)(1)(h)) ****or may be the end of 8th grade or earlier**

A. Projected date of graduation/program completion:

IDEA 300.102(a)(3)(i)-(iii) limitation to FAPE

NOTE: Graduation with a regular diploma will permanently end entitlement to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Maine's Unified Special Education Regulations. Therefore, after graduation this student will no longer be entitled to receive special education and related services. ****Be sure to state at what age you'd like your child to graduate to be sure they can stay in special education.**

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8 B. Transition assessments completed:

Formal: Standardized assessment tools

Informal: Family interviews

Observations

Student discussions

Information provided by friends, neighbors,
community members

Areas to Assess: Post Secondary Education/Training

Independent Living Needs

Employment Interests

QUESTIONS to ask to determine which AATA to use:

- What are the student's learning preferences and MI
- What interest does the student have that can build a career?
- What set of skills is needed for the student to be successful in the job choice?
- Who can provide information?

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8 C. In the case of a child not attending the meeting, document efforts made (prior to the IEP meeting) to obtain the child's preferences and interests:

Take a closer look

8 C:

- The students dreams and desires must either be represented by the student or a parent, case manager or other attending the IEP and speaking/ advocating for him/her
- The student's post secondary interests and goals must lead the conversation

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8. D. Measurable Post-Secondary Goals (MUSER IX.3(A)(1)(h)(i))

Measurable post-secondary goals must be based on current age-appropriate transition assessments.

- **Education/Training Goal:** After graduation , (child) will: **Where or how is the student going to continue to develop skills or continue learning after high school?** _____
- **Employment Goal:** After graduation , (child) will :
How will the student earn or have money to live after high school or spend their time after high school? _____
- **Independent Living Skills Goal: (when appropriate):** After graduation , (child) will : **Where is the student going to live after high school?** _____

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8 E. Planned Course of Study: (MUSER IX.3(A)(1)(h)(ii))

The class schedule must be multi-year (through exit), specific and individualized, and directly linked to the postsecondary goals. The planned course of study must address all post-school goals that are identified for the child.

Let's Practice ... Using Your Son or Daughter's Information

What coursework should you son or daughter participate in each year (* add more years if necessary) to work toward their postsecondary goal?

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Course				
Course				
Course				
Course				
Course				

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- **8. F. Transition Services and Activities: (MUSER IX.3(A)(1)(h)(ii))**
- Describe the activities provided by the adults in the school and in the community that will enable and promote the child's progress toward meeting annual and postsecondary goals.
- Include special education, general education, related services, services from other agencies, and services provided by families, as appropriate for the child's needs. Transition services must be specific and individualized.
- **Education/Instruction and Related Services:**
- **Career/Employment and other Post-Secondary Adult Living Objectives:**
- **Community Experiences:**

If appropriate, Daily Living Skills and/ or Functional Vocational Evaluation



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8 G. Agencies responsible to provide and/ or pay for services (MUSER 1X. 3.E.(1)(2))

What agency linkages, if any, have been made?

Written parental consent must be obtained prior to inviting to an IEP meeting any agency or organization that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services.

****take a closer look:** *Examples would be a Vocational Rehabilitation Transition Counselor, a representative from a vocational school or college, a DHHS case manager. Parents can invite agency and organization representatives, too, just let the school know.*

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9. Age of Majority

If the student will turn 17 during the course of this IEP period, child and parent(s) have been informed of the transfer of rights at the age of majority(18). IDEA 300.320 (C) Transfer of rights at age of majority.

____ Yes Date: ____ N/A

Take a closer look:

If guardianship is a consideration this is a good time to explore guardianship options

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Supports to Assist and Considerations

Vocational Rehabilitation
Social Security
Community Resources
Transportation
Housing
Doctors
Guardianship
College Disability Services
DHHS Case Management

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Tips to Remember

- Start planning early
- Keep talking to your child about their future
- Build on your child's strengths and interests
- Ask questions and explore options
- Attend IEP meetings well prepared
- Ask the IEP Team what your child needs to accomplish their goals
- Become familiar with laws and regulations
- Contact Service and Support Providers

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Age 16

Preparing for the Adult Eligibility Process:

- Gather the required assessments and evaluations.

- What Assessments & Evaluations are needed?
 - A Psychological or Neuropsychological Evaluation confirming an eligible diagnosis.
 - Adaptive Behavior assessment

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Age 16

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

- What is VR?
 - The primary focus of VR services is to support an individual with exploring, establishing, and maintaining employment.
- What is the referral process?
 - Typically referred with support of the school and/or other state agency provider.
 - This is a topic for the IEP team to discuss during the end of sophomore or beginning of junior year of high school.

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Age 16

- What can VR do?
 - Support youth to participate in exploration work shops
 - Career Planning
 - Career Exploration
 - Job Tours and Shadows
 - Job assessments
 - Coordinate with job developers and employers to help establish and maintain employment.

- If the youth may need some ongoing support on the job they will need to go through VR



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Age 17

OADS Eligibility:

Accessing adult services is not automatic. An individual must complete the eligibility determination process before accessing adult services.



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Age 17

What is the process?

1. Work with your Case Manager to complete the information needed for the referral in the system.
2. Obtain all necessary support documentation such as evaluations, assessments, IEP, etc.

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Age 17

What is the process?

3. Submit referral and support documents to OADS and request an intake meeting.
4. Complete the intake meeting:
 - At least 1 guardian must be present.
 - The individual needs to attend for at least a portion of the meeting.

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Age 17

What is the process?

5. The intake coordinator will process all the information gathered from the referral and the intake meeting and an eligibility determination will be made.
6. An Eligibility letter will be sent, along with a list of options for adult Case Management Services.

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Truth or Myth?

You can apply to get on waitlists for adult services upon entering high school.

MYTH

- You must be determined eligible
- You must be at least 18

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Truth or Myth?

If you have been accessing children's services through DHHS, you are automatically found eligible for OADS (adult services).

MYTH

- You must complete the eligibility process regardless.

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Truth or Myth?

After completing the referral and intake meeting with OADS, it could take up to 90 days for a determination to be made.

TRUTH

- Although it rarely takes 90 days for OADS to make their decision, they have up to 90 days to do so.

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Guardianship & Alternatives

What is Guardianship?

- Guardianship is a legal process that places the rights of an individual in the hands of another.
- Guardianship of your child is NOT automatic at 18. Without petitioning for guardianship, an individual will become their own guardian at that time.

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Guardianship & Alternatives

TRUTH or MYTH

If an individual has a Developmental Disability, Intellectual Disability, or Autism, they need to have a guardian.

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Guardianship & Alternatives

MYTH

Just because an individual has a disability, does not necessarily equate to the need for a guardian.

- Many individuals with DD, ID, and ASD remain their own guardians by accessing supports and other alternatives.

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Guardianship & Alternatives

Alternatives to Guardianship

- Joint checking accounts
 - Allows a parent to be aware of financial situations and can access the account as needed to help manage if necessary.
 - Allows an individual the opportunity to demonstrate his/her abilities and work towards their own account

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Guardianship & Alternatives

Alternatives to Guardianship

- Representative Payee
 - This option would be for managing social security benefits.
 - This can be an agency or another individual supporting.

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Guardianship & Alternatives

Alternatives to Guardianship

- Statement of Consent
 - This option could allow the individual to write a signed "Statement of Consent" which allows specific people to remain involved in his/her treatment.
 - This statement would allow others (such as parents) to take part in service meetings, speak with providers, etc. Decisions would remain the individual's.

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Guardianship & Alternatives

Alternatives to Guardianship

- Power of Attorney
 - A legal document that gives authority to act for another person in specified situations.

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Guardianship & Alternatives

A Range of Guardianship Options



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Guardianship & Alternatives

Areas to Consider

1. **Medical:**
 - Allows the guardian to make informed consent decisions in the medical arena.
2. **Habilitation or Habilitative:**
 - Refers to training programs and services.
3. **Educational:**
 - Refers to decisions made in a school program or education setting.

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Guardianship & Alternatives

Areas to Consider

4. **Residential:**
 - This limit pertains to the physical environment where a person lives. This allows the guardian to make decisions about the person's living arrangements such as where and with whom he lives with.
5. **Financial:**
 - Pertains to the financial decisions a person might have to make.

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Guardianship & Alternatives

Full VS. Limited

- If all 5 areas require a guardian to protect an individual's health, safety, and well-being, **FULL** (or general) guardianship is needed.
- If some, but not all areas require guardianship to protect an individual's health, safety, and well-being, only **LIMITED** guardianship is needed.

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Guardianship & Alternatives

Guardianship Process...

- Pick-up guardianship packet from probate court
- Complete packet; including physician's form
 - Wait to sign until at probate with clerk.
- Return packet to probate
 - All those petitioning to be guardian need to be present.
 - Fees are based upon location of proposed guardian's home
- Meet with court visitor
 - This takes place prior to a hearing
- Complete hearing at probate court

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Guardianship & Alternatives



TRUTH or MYTH

Guardianship decisions are final.

MYTH

Guardianship can be changed, limited, increased, or challenged based on specific situations or needs.

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MaineCare

- Once the child turns 18 they can apply for MaineCare on their own and can be considered separate from the family.
- MaineCare is required for any adult services, case management or access to the other programs

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Social Security

- Social Security
 - If a child is receiving benefits they must reapply to determine eligibility

- You can work and still receive benefits
 - Maine Medical Center runs a program that provides benefits counseling
 - As part of the program they will meet with the individual and discuss how much they can make and what the impact will be on their benefits

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Post High School Education/Training

- Who Can Help
 - Guidance
 - VR
 - Disability counselors at Colleges



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Post High School Education/Training

Securing Accommodations in College

- Accommodations in an IEP or 504 will not automatically transfer to college.
- The “Disability Services“ Department at the college will need to have documentation of the disability and how it affects you in the educational environment.
 - Diagnostic evaluations
 - IEP or 504 discussing accommodations

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Post High School Education/Training

Securing Accommodations in College

The purpose of accommodations will be designed to support your access to the college and its courses, but will not necessarily lower expectations or waive course requirements.



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Post High School Education/Training

Examples of some college accommodations may include, but are not limited to the following:

- ✓ Priority registration
- ✓ Exam modifications (i.e., extended time on tests, readers, scribes, proctors)
- ✓ Testing in a room with limited distractions
- ✓ Interpreters
- ✓ Textbooks in an alternate format (i.e. – Large print, audio, etc.)

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Independent Living Opportunities

- Maine Housing
- Section 8
- Creative solutions, finding a housemate



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Adult Services

- The primary programs that young adults with autism access for adult services is Section 29 and Section 21
- However there are a number of other programs that can be accessed depending on the need
 - Section 19- Services for Elderly and for Adults with Disabilities
 - Section 20- Adults with Other Related Conditions
 - Section 17- Community Support Services

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Section 29

- Section 29 is the smaller of the wavier programs. It is designed to help the adult remain in their home
 - Section 29 services include
 - Community support
 - Work Support
 - Assisted Tech
 - Home Support
 - Career Planning



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Section 29


- Section 29 is a first come first serve program.
 - It is important to sign up right away at age 18

- Currently the funding for services is taking about 6 months from the date of application.
 - This is subject to change, had been up to 2 years.

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Section 29

- Section 29 has some limitations
- 
- The amount of money is capped and only a certain amount of service can be provided
 - At this time full time Community support is 21.5 hours a week
 - Home support full time is 18 hours a week
 - Services can be mixed and matched

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Section 21

- Section 21 is a comprehensive waiver program
 - It provides all the same services as 29 however it is a more extensive program

- The primary difference is that it provides residential services

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Section 21

- Section 21 is a needs based program
 - Has an extensive waitlist
 - The waitlist has three priorities
 - Priority 1- Adults at significant health and safety needs
 - Priority 2- Adults who are in danger of having health and safety needs
 - Priority 3- Adults who have a need for the services but do not have a health and safety need at the present time
 - Currently awarding funding to Priority 1 and some Priority 2

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Section 21

- Change in priority
 - The priority level will not change priority level unless a change occurs in the adults Health and Safety needs

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Services Available during 18 to 21

- Young adults during the ages of 18 and 21 can choose adult services or children's services
- Following is a brief Q & A on what Section 29 services can be used while still in High School

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Section 29 and High School

Question

If my child is still in school and is offered section 29, when do we have to decide whether or not to accept section 29?

Answer

After you receive a written offer of waiver services you have 60 days to respond. If you accept the waiver you have 6 months to start using services. If you do not respond to the offer or do not begin using services within 6 months, your child's name is removed from the waitlist. You may reapply at any time for waiver services by talking to your case manager.

(Maine Developmental Disabilities Council, 2016)

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Section 29 and High School

Question

How do we decide whether or not to take the Section 29 waiver if my child is still in school?

Answer

Talk to your case manager about the pros and cons of this decision. Be certain you understand the services you can receive under Section 29. If you consider not accepting Section 29 right away, find out if there is a waitlist for Section 29 or if one is anticipated in the near future.

(Maine Developmental Disabilities Council, 2016)

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Section 29 and High School

Question

Which Section 29 services can my child use while in high school?

Answer

While enrolled in high school, your child can access Home Supports, Career Planning, and Assistive Technology services. Your child cannot access Community Support, Work Support, or Employment Specialist services while still enrolled in school.

(Maine Developmental Disabilities Council, 2016)

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Section 29 and High School

Question

Can my child receive services under Section 29 and still use Section 28 or Section 65 services?

Answer

Your child can no longer access Section 28 or Section 65 services once he/she accepts Section 29. To understand which waiver best meets the needs of your child, talk to your case manager. Your case manager can help you compare the support you currently receive under children's services with the support you can receive under adult services.

(Maine Developmental Disabilities Council, 2016)

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Questions?

What would you like to know more about?

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