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Upcoming Events

Tuesday, October 19th - Texas Parent to Parent, Pathways to Adulthood Free Webinar
Wednesday, October 20th - NDEAM Virtual Celebration
Thursday, October 21st - Texas Parent to Parent, Pathways to Adulthood Free Webinar
Monday, November 1st - SSES Application Opens Using New Eligibility Criteria

LTISD Transition Specialist
Erika Musick-Griffin musicke@ltisdschools.org (512) 533-6153

October’s Transition Focus is on Career Planning & Job Exploration

Career Planning & Job Exploration is one way to find out about multiple career options. During the different phases of exploration, students take part in a variety of activities that can assist in figuring out their unique interests, skills, and talents. Students who have this knowledge are better prepared to identify next steps in post-secondary schooling or other means leading to a future career.

(adapted from Texas Workforce Solutions, Explore Career presentation, November 2020).

Did you know that the Texas Transition & Employment Guide has been updated?

Head over to the Texas Transition Network Website https://www.texastransition.org/ to download a copy in English or Spanish.
Career Exploration
(adapted from Texas Workforce Solutions, Explore Career presentation, November 2020)

Why is Career Exploration Important?
- Career exploration is an important tool in helping to find a desired career.
- The steps students take in career exploration can help guide in making positive, well informed education and career decisions.

How Do I Explore Different Careers?
Take a look at the resources below to help begin your Career Planning & Job Exploration!

Labor Market and Career Information Page https://lmci.state.tx.us/
- Texas Workforce Solutions provides data through the Labor Market and Career Information Page. This is a suite of easy to use labor market research tools that provides time series labor market data and inquiry capabilities for labor force, employment/unemployment estimates, industry and occupational projections, and occupational wage data.
- Check out the how to navigate videos at https://texaslmi.com/Help/Materials

Jobs Y'all https://jobsyall.com/
- Anything is possible – that’s what Jobs Y’all is all about. Jobs Y'all is where you can explore good-paying and meaningful careers in growing industries. Here, you'll discover rewarding and satisfying jobs right in your hometown or elsewhere in Texas. Find the career that matches your interests and goals. Your career starts here.

Texas Career Check https://texascareercheck.com/
- Texas Career Check provides information specific to Texas on various jobs, education requirements, expected duties, average pay and job growth.
- Within Texas Career Check, you can learn about occupational trends - what types of jobs are needed statewide or in your region
- Occupational Information - If you have ever wondered, “Is that a job?” - this is a great place to start!
- Military Occupations - If you are interested in serving in the military, this page provides a breakdown of what branches offer specific career paths.
- Comparing Occupations - Are you interested in two different jobs? Compare them with this awesome tool!
O*NET Online  https://www.onetonline.org
- The O*NET Program is the nation's primary source of occupational information. Valid data are essential to understanding the rapidly changing nature of work and how it impacts the workforce and U.S. economy. From this information, applications are developed to facilitate the development and maintenance of a skilled workforce.
- Central to the project is the O*NET database, containing hundreds of standardized and occupation-specific descriptors on almost 1,000 occupations covering the entire U.S. economy. The database, which is available to the public at no cost, is continually updated from input by a broad range of workers in each occupation.
- O*NET information is used by millions of individuals every year, including those taking advantage of O*NET Online, My Next Move, and other publicly and privately developed applications. The data have proven vital in helping people find the training and jobs they need, and employers the skilled workers necessary to be competitive in the marketplace.
- The Occupational Information Network (O*NET) is developed under the sponsorship of the U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration (USDOL/ETA) through a grant to the North Carolina Department of Commerce.

Roadtrip Nation  https://roadtripnation.com/
- Career exploration that starts with your interests.
- See how people like you found work that they love.
- Whether you're exploring new career paths or looking for inspiration, find the guidance you need from the stories of others.

Texas Reality Check  https://texasrealitycheck.com/
- Will you be able to afford the lifestyle you want?
- It's difficult to predict the future, but it's never too early to start planning for it. Texas Reality Check will show you how much your living expenses will cost, and the amount of money you will need to earn to pay for them.

Who Can Help Me with Career Exploration?
- Your family
- Your Case Manager
- Your LTHS Counselor
- Your Teachers
- Your Texas Workforce Counselor
- The LTISD Transition Specialist

When Should I Start My Career Exploration?
- Now! There's no time like the present!
This year’s theme is “America’s Recovery: Powered by Inclusion”
Read the Presidential Proclamation.

The theme for NDEAM 2021, “America’s Recovery: Powered by Inclusion,” reflects the importance of ensuring that people with disabilities have full access to employment and community involvement during the national recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

NDEAM is held each October to commemorate the many and varied contributions of people with disabilities to America’s workplaces and economy. Browse our website for ideas and resources for employers, community organizations, state and local governments, advocacy groups and schools to participate in celebrating NDEAM through events and activities centered around the theme of “America’s Recovery: Powered by Inclusion.”

From the October Autism Speaks Newsletter, E-Speaks:

Each October during National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), we take time to recognize the many contributions of people with disabilities to America’s workplaces and economy.

NDEAM provides the opportunity to educate people across the nation about disability employment issues, promote the power and importance of inclusion, and help foster a workplace where all employees are recognized for their unique abilities every day of the year.

In this month’s issue of E-Speaks, you’ll read about five autistic people’s employment journeys, learn how two women are working to drive disability inclusion in the workforce, and find resources that will give you the tools to plan for your future, search for a job and navigate the workplace.
In our own words: Why NDEAM is an important step towards building a more inclusive workplace

Hank, Annie, William, Mallory and Andy all have a range of passions, skills and challenges that have led them down very different career paths. In this series of profiles, they share their thoughts on employment, the job search experience, the challenges and triumphs they’ve experienced as autistic employees, the importance of inclusion in the workplace and much more!

Workplace Inclusion Now is creating meaningful job opportunities for all

Need help finding a job that's right for you? Or are you an employer looking to recruit dedicated and talented employees who you may have never considered before? Workplace Inclusion Now (WIN) is Autism Speaks’ evidence-based employment system designed to build and support inclusive workplace culture through a virtual training program. Click here to learn how WIN can help support your employment needs.

Autism Speaks’ Employment Tool Kit can help you find and keep the right job

Finding a job is a challenge for everyone, but our Employment Tool Kit can help people with autism research, apply for positions and navigate the workplace so they can thrive at work. In this Tool Kit, you'll find job-related stories, tips and information ranging in topic from navigating the job search to understanding your employment rights and creating workplace accommodations. Although this guide is written by and for people with autism, it can also be helpful for family members, service providers, business leaders and others supporting people with autism.

Transition Roadmap to meaningful employment

To help prepare people with autism and their families for the transition to adulthood, Autism Speaks is pleased to present the Transition Roadmap to Meaningful Employment. This Roadmap is a great resource for autistic students planning for life after high school, young autistic adults looking for information about employment and even parents or caregivers of a person with autism.
NEWLY UPDATED!! Texas Transition and Employment Guide
Adapted from the TEA Website, October 2021

The Texas Transition and Employment Guide can help students with disabilities to plan for adult life. You can begin planning while you are in school. Use this guide to find out what to expect and where to find help. You will see the term “family” used to describe the person or people in your life who support you. Family might be your mom, your dad, or another family member. Family can also mean a foster parent or someone else who makes legal decisions for you.

The updated guide includes questions to ask yourself as you plan for adulthood. Check out each section for questions to ask yourself, as well as how to help build your self-determination skills!

Find the newly updated Texas Transition and Employment Guide online at:

Parents: If your child is identified with a developmental disability, put his or her name on an interest list until services are available, you can find more information about the interest list here https://hhs.texas.gov/about-hhs/records-statistics/interest-list-reduction. Please know that it may take years.
What is transition planning?
Schools help all students prepare for their future. If you have a disability and receive special education services, there is a process called transition planning included in your Individualized Education Program (IEP) by the time you reach age 14. This process can help you decide what you want for your future and figure out the steps you can take to meet your goals. Transition planning can help the important people in your life, such as your family and teachers, understand more about what you want for your life when you become an adult. You will have a chance to participate in this process every year until you graduate.
Career Planning support from the Texas Transition and Employment Guide (page 17)

My life, my voice: Self-determination in career planning

- Dream big! Don’t let disability limit your imagination.
- Participate in transition assessments for employment. Be honest about what you like and don’t like.
- Discover what you do well and learn how to describe your strengths.
- Learn ways to describe your disability and what kinds of support work best for you to succeed in a job.
- Talk with trusted teachers and family about sharing disability information in the workplace.
- Choose some classes that will help you learn about careers or learn skills for the job you want.

If you are struggling to think of work you want to do in adulthood:
- Make a list of all the things you enjoy doing,
- Find out which jobs include some of those activities, and
- Talk with someone you trust about why it’s hard for you to think about a career

Spotlight on supports: Meet the TVRC

Did you know there is a Transition Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (TVRC) assigned to your campus? That’s right! A qualified VR counselor is assigned to every public school in Texas. The TVRC is employed by TW-VRS, not by the school. Most TVRCs support many schools in multiple districts. Ask the TED for your district if you would like to schedule a meeting with the TVRC for your campus.

Your TVRC can:
- Attend ARD meetings and other meetings to plan for your transition to adulthood, such as Person-Centered Planning,
- Provide information about VR services and eligibility, including Pre-ETS,
- Refer students to other agencies that provide support for employment,
- Develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for eligible students,
- Connect students with summer work experience programs, workshops, seminars, and other employment transition services, and
- Provide additional services to support a successful transition to employment for students with disabilities.

See the next page for questions to ask your TVRC.
Career Planning support from the Texas Transition and Employment Guide (page 18)

Questions to ask your ARD committee

Where can I find information about planning for a career in my IEP?

Which graduation option is best for meeting my employment goal?

What classes are available on my campus that can help me prepare for a career? Are there any required prerequisite classes? Will I need any support in my classes?

What happens if I change my mind about the career I want?

Will I need support for my disability to be successful in my career?

What else can I do now to prepare for employment in adult life?

Are there agencies I should contact about employment services?

Who can I talk to if I have questions about planning for employment?

Questions to ask your TVRC

Am I eligible for Pre-ETS? What does “potentially eligible” mean for me?

What Pre-ETS would be helpful for me?

How is eligibility determined to receive VR services (now or as an adult)?

What is the application process to receive adult services through VR? When should I apply?

Will earning a paycheck affect any services I receive, such as SSI?

Who can I contact if I have more questions?
Governor Abbott and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) have created a Supplementary Special Education Services (SSES) program. The SSES program allows eligible families of children with disabilities to apply for a one-time $1,500 online grant to be used to obtain educational materials and resources and/or services such as additional speech therapy or other specific services. The goods and services offered can help families mitigate educational setbacks resulting from the disruptions to education prompted by COVID-19.

If approved for the program, you will have access to a ClassWallet-managed online portal and a digital spending account which you can use with providers that have been vetted and approved by TEA. The portal will provide information on available resources and services, allow you to make purchases, and provide you with full account and balance information. The SSES online account enables you to shop for educational products (learning supplies and or technology for your child) and services (therapies, tutoring, and other supports) in an online digital marketplace and used to supplement what otherwise happens in school to help students continue to make educational progress. These funds do not impact or change any services provided through your child’s school IEP. These are separate funds provided by the state through the marketplace to families.

If you believe that your student may qualify for the SSES program, then complete the following steps:

Step 1: Go to: SSES.tea.texas.gov Click on “Apply Today”. Check the applicable eligibility items and select “Apply Today”.

Step 2: Application will be reviewed and notice of eligibility or denial may take up to 30 business days.

Step 3: If eligible, you will be notified and a link to the SSES marketplace will be emailed to you from info@ClassWallet. Please check your spam/junk folder if you have not received this email.

Step 4: You can then login and shop for educational services for your child. You must login and sign the parental affidavit within 30-days and begin spending money within 6-months of receiving an account.

Some examples of things you can purchase through the SSES Marketplace:

- Tutoring for all subjects or other educational related services (OT, PT, BCBA, SLP, etc.)
- Textbooks, curriculum, instructional materials, educational hardware/software or technology

SSES Resources:

- Webinar for Parents - How to Apply: ENGLISH | SPANISH
- SSES Overview: ENGLISH | SPANISH
- What is SSES? ENGLISH | SPANISH
- How to use ClassWallet - Step by Step Instructions: ENGLISH | SPANISH

If you have additional questions or need help:

SSES Contact ssesinfo@tea.texas.gov or call SPEDTex at 1-855-773-3839

Local Contact: Amanda Molina-Garza, Special Services Coordinator, molinagarzaa@ltisdschools.org or 512-533-6460
Program Overview:
Supplemental Special Education Services (SSES)

Your student may be eligible for a $1,500 grant!

Supplemental Special Education Services (SSES) is:
SSES gives a $1,500 one-time online grant to parents of eligible students served by special education who are enrolled in a Texas public school. Families can use this money to purchase educational goods and services for their student.

SSES Eligibility Criteria:
This new eligibility criteria will begin on November 1st, 2021.
To be eligible for the SSES grant, students must currently be:
» enrolled in a Texas public school,
» enrolled in PreK - 12th grade, and
» a student with a disability served through Special Education.

What your family can purchase:
With SSES accounts, families are able to purchase educational goods and services from the SSES marketplace.

Educational goods such as:

- Books
- Laptop
- Tablet

Services such as:

- Tutoring
- Therapy

This is a first come, first serve grant. There are a limited number of accounts available, if you believe your student is eligible, we encourage you to apply today!

For more information and to apply, visit: SSES.tea.texas.gov
Parent to Parent - Transition Timeline & Planning Tools

For more information, go to txp2p.org, or attend a FREE Pathways to Adulthood Webinar

Adapted from the Texas Parent to Parent Website, September 2021

Transition Timeline, starting at age 6
Transition Inventory, a tool to assess where families are in planning for their youth’s adulthood

Pathways to Adulthood Training
Part 1: Getting Started On Transition / School And Career Exploration
  ● Tuesday, October 19th, 2021, 6:00pm-7:30pm
  ● Click here to register

Part 2: All About Long Term Services And Supports / Legal Planning For Age 18 And Beyond
  ● Thursday, October 21st, 2021, 6:00pm-7:30pm
  ● Click here to register

Weekly Parent Support Group
Zoom Support Group Calls (in English)
  ● Wednesdays at 11:00 am
  ● Hosted by Patty Geisinger
  ● Click here to register

Zoom Support Group Calls (in Spanish)
  ● Wednesdays at 1:00 pm
  ● Hosted by Rosalba Calleros
  ● Click here to register

Pathways to Adulthood
Presented by Texas Parent to Parent

Need help getting started on planning for your youth's adulthood? Need new ideas and information about transition?
Tune in for our 2 Part Pathways workshop!
**Upcoming Events:**

**Transitions - Tips for Launching your Special Needs Teen into Adulthood**

DATE/TIME: Tues., Oct. 19, 2021, at 12:00 noon

As special needs children transition to the teen and young adult years, their needs change significantly. You can prepare your child (and yourself) for a successful transition to independence. This webinar will help you understand the key steps you can take to make the transition as smooth as possible.

Join us as Special Needs Financial Planner Allison Schaberg explains how to successfully plan for your future.

PARTNER: Partners Resource Network - Region 5

ZOOM WEBINAR ID: 896 9362 4416

REGISTER HERE: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_J6PCsD-tQ_WQc9Uv9V1edg](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_J6PCsD-tQ_WQc9Uv9V1edg)

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**What is a Letter of Intent? Why do I need one?**

DATE/TIME: Wed., Oct. 20, 2021, at 12:00 noon

No one else knows your child as well as you do. But what can you do to maintain your level of care after you're gone? A Letter of Intent is the answer! Join us as Special Needs Specialist Allison Schaberg explains the importance of a Letter of Intent.

PARTNER: Regional Coordinator - Region 13

ZOOM WEBINAR ID: 854 6622 9191

REGISTER HERE: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_55-W4BZ4Spuiba-22BxxQw](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_55-W4BZ4Spuiba-22BxxQw)

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**Government Benefits 101 - Addressing the Ongoing Care and Planning Concerns for an Individual with Special Needs**

DATE/TIME: Tues., Oct. 26, 2021, at 12:00 noon

DESCRIPTION: Do you need help understanding and navigating the social security administration? Come hear from Allison Schaberg, a Special Needs Financial Planner and National Social Security Advisor, as she helps you think through the complexities of Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

PARTNER: Student HireAbility Navigator - Workforce Solutions of Central Texas System

ZOOM WEBINAR ID: 968 7235 0386

REGISTER HERE: [https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_qL9FuUA5Rfs8BVoSktg9HQ](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_qL9FuUA5Rfs8BVoSktg9HQ)

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**Preparing for the College Application Journey for the ADHD Family**

DATE/TIME: Tues., Oct. 26, 2021, at 6:30 pm

DESCRIPTION: If you are the parent of a high schooler with ADD or ADHD, selecting a college is mystifying. You may wonder if you should begin with your local community college or if the goal of a traditional academic community is a possibility?

Join us to hear from Independent Educational Consultant Jodi Glou who will demystify our thoughts about college applications for the family with a child with learning challenges.

As the founder and owner of Custom College Consulting, Jodi Glou specializes in working with students who have learning challenges as they seek to find their best fit in post-secondary education.

PARTNER: This event is in partnership with Fort Bend ADDA Parent Support Group.

ZOOM WEBINAR ID: 830 9451 1937

REGISTER HERE: [https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_L29kr_3LR1WKRT7buNpowQ](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_L29kr_3LR1WKRT7buNpowQ)

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**Special Needs Planning - Medicaid Waivers, SSI Eligibility, and Preserving Benefits**

DATE/TIME: Wed., Oct. 27, 2021, at 12:00 noon

DESCRIPTION: There are many decisions to be made as you prepare for the future of your special needs family member. Living with a disability is often associated with significant costs. That’s why families should understand Medicaid Waivers (specifically the Texas IDD Service System), SSI eligibility, and the importance of preserving benefits. Join us as Allison Schaberg, Special Needs Financial Planner, explains how to successfully plan for your future.

PARTNER: Student HireAbility Navigator w/Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas

ZOOM WEBINAR ID: 858 7646 7291

REGISTER HERE: [https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_h8iDrNdWQ_OYhlf_ZP0Z5w](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_h8iDrNdWQ_OYhlf_ZP0Z5w)
Helpful Transition Resource Website:

Federal Programs for People with Disabilities
https://hhs.texas.gov/services/disability

Eligible people with disabilities may qualify for federal and state programs that pay benefits, pay health care costs or provide food. If you are not already signed up for one of these programs, visit the sites below to find out if you might be eligible or to apply for benefits.

What is CLASS?
https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/long-term-care-providers/community-living-assistance-support-services-class

CLASS provides home- and community-based services to people with related conditions as a cost-effective alternative to placement in an intermediate care facility for individuals with an intellectual disability or a related condition. A related condition is a disability, other than an intellectual disability, that originated before age 22 and that affects a person's ability to function in daily life.

Interested in receiving CLASS services?
Those interested in receiving CLASS are placed on an interest list by calling 877-438-5658 and asking for the CLASS Waiver Program. The person will be contacted when funding becomes available. An offer of the CLASS Program depends on individual need and one’s date of placement on the interest list. Current contact information is required for each person on the CLASS interest list, and HHSC must be notified of any changes to address or telephone number.

For more information please contact CLASSPolicy@HHSC.state.tx.us

Helpful Transition Resource Website:

Austin Travis County Integral Care (formerly known as MHMR)
https://integralcare.org

Integral Care supports adults and children living with mental illness, substance use disorder and intellectual and developmental disabilities in Travis County. As the Local Mental Health and Intellectual and Developmental Disability Authority, Integral Care strengthens our community by supporting our most important asset, our people, to achieve well-being. Integral Care provides individuals with high quality mental health care, collaborates with community partners to strengthen programs and systems, and works to raise awareness of mental health issues in our community.

Integral Care works with children and adults living with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities to make sure they have the tools they need to thrive. We create opportunities for people to form healthy relationships, live in the community and lead meaningful lives. Services are available regardless of ability to pay and can be provided in many languages.


CALL US TO LEARN HOW WE CAN HELP YOU

To learn more about our programs and services for adults and children with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, call us at 512-472-HELP (4357). Press 1 for English, then 3. We’re here Monday through Friday, from 8am to 5pm. Integral Care can also connect you to trusted community resources.

Helpful Transition Resource Website:

https://www.arcaustin.org/

The Arc of the Capital Area is one of the oldest continuously–operating non-profits in Austin. Since 1949 we have empowered adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We serve over 1,000 individuals each year across 17 counties. Intellectual and developmental disabilities or I/DD is an umbrella term that includes more than 100 different diagnoses, including Down syndrome, cerebral palsy and Autism.

Intake & Referral Services

The Arc of the Capital Area offers a centralized telephone intake process for all of our services and programs. Please contact us at 512.476.7044, ext. 233, and an Intake Specialist will return your call within three (3) business days. Normal working hours are 8:30 a.m.—5 p.m., Monday through Friday. The first step is a brief screening to determine eligibility for services and, if so, which services would best meet the callers’ needs. The Intake Specialist will refer callers to other disability organizations and resources in the community, if appropriate.
Helpful Transition Resource Website:

**ARCIL (A Resource Center for Independent Living)**
http://arcilinc.org/

ARCIL is a consumer-driven, community-based, not-for-profit corporation dedicated to the empowerment of persons with disabilities to achieve maximum independence and equal community access. Services are developed, directed and delivered primarily by persons with disabilities. ARCIL contributes to the development and improvement of attitudes, resources, methodologies, and opportunities for community integration.

Historically, ARCIL has developed programs that provide services in information & referral, peer counseling, independent living skills training and advocacy. Other ARCIL services are in the areas of transition services from school to adult life, transportation training, employment assistance, community education through ADA technical assistance and disability awareness training.

Helpful Transition Resource Website:

**Autism Society of Greater Austin**
https://www.texasautismsociety.org/
The Autism Society, the nation’s leading grassroots autism organization, exists to improve the lives of all affected by autism. We do this by increasing public awareness about the day-to-day issues faced by people on the spectrum, advocating for appropriate services for individuals across the lifespan, and providing the latest information regarding treatment, education, research and advocacy.

The Autism Society of Texas changes lives by connecting families and individuals to community resources and support throughout Texas. Offerings include advocacy, education events, Information & Referrals, support meetings; on-line networking opportunities; Sensory Friendly films; and fun family activities. We rely on donations to support our work and keep services free for families and autistic adults.

Helpful Transition Resource Website:

**Down Syndrome Association of Central Texas**
http://dsact.org/
Our Mission is to provide education, support, and resources to individuals with Down syndrome, their families, professionals, and the community while building public awareness and acceptance of the abilities of individuals with Down syndrome. Our Vision is a world in which all members, including those with Down syndrome, are accepted, valued for their uniqueness, respected for their abilities and contributions, and assured the opportunity and choice to create their own path to fulfillment and success.