Our Back to School/September’s Transition Focus is on Getting Started and Creating a Timeline!

Welcome back to school and to the first LTISD Transition Newsletter of the 2021-2022 school year! Throughout the year, Transition News will be one way the Special Education Department and Transition Specialist will work to keep students and families abreast of all things transition. In addition to personalized transition plans developed in conjunction with your child’s Special Education Team, this newsletter will provide you with upcoming school and community events, links to agencies and resources, as well as highlight an important transition topic.

Check out the resources on Transition Timelines & resources shared in this month’s newsletter!
Preparing for adulthood can start long before high school - here is no need to wait for your child to approach 18 before researching, planning, and taking action on what the future can include. Students with disabilities, and their families, aren’t on their own in this process. Your child’s case manager, campus counselor, teachers and the transition specialist are here to help. There is no right or wrong time to begin transition planning.

We are here to meet you where you are and hope the resources below help open up the conversation at looking into the future.

**Navigate Life Texas - Transition to Adulthood**


Adapted from the Navigate Life Website, September 2021

When we live with and support children who have disabilities or special health care needs, we often hear the word "transition." We talk about transitioning between activities. We talk about transitioning between schools. And we talk about the process of transitioning from childhood to adulthood.

Even though the law says that your child becomes an adult on their 18th birthday, adulthood really doesn’t happen overnight for any child. From the moment your child takes that first breath, they are on the path toward adulthood and greater independence. We have the chance to help them prepare from day one.

We can help our children learn to take responsibility for themselves in so many ways. We can teach them to greet their doctors, ask questions, and describe their symptoms. We can encourage them to do tasks and chores around the house. We can help them find a neighborhood or volunteer job. We can teach them to talk to teachers about their needs.

But even with preparation, most of us have mixed feelings as we approach our child’s transition to adulthood. We might feel: excitement, concern, relief, fear, and maybe even a little bit of grief as we watch our children grow into young adults. As parents of children with disabilities or special health care needs, our fears and anxieties can be especially intense. We know our children will still need extra care and guidance. Our challenge is to find the balance between keeping them safe and giving them the freedom to be independent.

After all, children transitioning to adulthood and their parents face big changes:
- High school graduation and the possibility of a career for your child.
- A change in your child’s health care. Childhood (pediatric) doctors and specialists might not be able to treat your child after age 18, and their new adult doctors will expect them to be in charge of their own care.
- Health insurance plans will change. Some waiver and insurance programs end at age 18, while others begin after that age. The income requirements for helpful programs such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) (often called Social Security) change. They will now look at your child’s income rather than your family’s income.
- Lifestyle changes. Is living independently a good choice for your child and, if so, when would be a good time to make that change?
- The realization that someday, someone other than you might need to handle the details of your child’s care.
In this section, we’ve put together some pages with tips to help you and your child through the transition process. There are also pages in other sections of this website that touch on transition issues.

These include:
- **Medical Transition** talks about the move to an adult health care model.
- **Planning for Transition** gives tips and timelines for planning out your child’s transition.
- **Transitioning Out of Public Education** talks about working with your child’s school to get ready for transition.
- **Education After High School** talks about choices that your child might have for higher education in Texas.
- **Housing** talks about different rights and choices your child has for living outside your home.
- **Funding and Services** shows you changes in insurance and waiver programs, and offers ideas for finding programs that can help pay for your adult child’s needs.
- **Legal Options for Age 18 and Beyond** talks about ways to protect your child, like powers of attorney or guardianship and how to choose the right one for your family.
- **Careers** talks about ways your child might find a career and how to get training.
- **Personal Stories** brings transition to life with stories of families going through it.

**There Is Help**
The good news is that there are lots of other families facing the same questions and challenges. And, there are people who can help you:

- **Connect with other parents** who are going through the same thing so you have people to answer your questions or lend a caring ear.
- **Look for organizations in your community** that offer families help with transition.
- Find good tools in the Texas Parent to Parent Pathways to Adulthood program.

**Transition Action Groups (TAGs)**
Texas Parent to Parent has created Transition Action Groups (TAGs) as part of their Pathways to Adulthood program. These groups of parents and children get together often to help each other make transition easier.

TAGs can help families with many things, including:

- Making transition plans.
- Finding and setting up living arrangements.
- Sharing facts and tips about schools, benefits, and caregivers.
- Having a social outlet – for children and parents.
- Giving emotional support to each other.

If you are interested in finding or starting a TAG near you, Texas Parent to Parent can help. Visit their Pathways to Adulthood page to learn more.

**Waivers and Transition**
The biggest question of all is this: How can my child and family get ready for all of these changes?

Finding the answers might take a lot of time and planning. Many people say it’s never too early to start transition planning. For example, waivers that can help your child gain independence have long interest (waiting) lists, and it can take many years to get into these programs.

If you haven’t already signed up, go to our Waivers page to find out more. It’s never too late to start transition planning. Whether your child is 4, 14, or 24 years old, you can start from where you are to make their adult life better.
Texas Transition and Employment Guide

Adapted from the TEA Website, September 2021

The Texas Transition and Employment Guide provides information on statewide services and programs that assist students with disabilities in the transition to life outside of the public school system. The guide is divided into sections on Self Advocacy, Transition Services, Employment and Supported Employment, Social Security Programs, Community and Long Term Services and Supports, Postsecondary Educational Programs and Services, Information Sharing, and Guardianship and Alternatives. Each section has phone numbers, emails, and websites to help you find what you need. At the end of each section and at the end of the guide, you will find a timeline of steps that you and your parents can take as you make the transition from student to adult.

From the Guide: TRANSITION IN TEXAS TIMELINE

Transition prepares students to move from high school to adulthood. Transition in Texas begins before a student’s 14th birthday, or earlier if the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee decides it would be right for you. As you get close to beginning high school, you will need to talk about what you want to do after graduation. Your transition services will be based on your needs, preferences, and interests. The ARD committee (which includes you and your parents) writes the transition plan as part of your Individualized Education Program (IEP).

The Transition in Texas Timeline is a tool to help you and your parents work with the other members of the ARD committee to write your transition plan. Use this timeline to decide if these issues should be discussed at the ARD committee transition meetings.

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.
Texas 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](#)

The TxP2P Pathways to Adulthood program assists families to plan a good life for their sons and daughters with disabilities after graduation from public school, and provides support, information and tools for carrying out this plan. For more information and to register, visit the TxP2P website at: txp2p.org

**Upcoming Events:**

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

- **DATE/TIME:** Tues., Sept. 21, 2021, at 12:00 noon
- **DESCRIPTION:** 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:** Workforce Solutions of Central Texas System
- **WEBINAR ID:** 977 0484 2364
- **REGISTER HERE:** [https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8eDfq3JXSmulCyy-e1UrRA](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8eDfq3JXSmulCyy-e1UrRA)

**Should I open an ABLE account?**

- **DATE/TIME:** Wed., Sept. 22, 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 individuals and families should consider contributing to an ABLE account which offers tax-advantaged savings that can fund disability expenses. Join us as Special Needs Advisor Allison Schaberg explains how to successfully plan for your financial future.
- **PARTNER:** Partners Resource Network - Region 13
- **WEBINAR ID:** 881 5669 1518
- **REGISTER HERE:** [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_NuNOj2ykTFWP4CB-MpU3wQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_NuNOj2ykTFWP4CB-MpU3wQ)

**Calm and Confidence in the Chaos: Self-Care Strategies for Parents of Children with ADHD**

- **DATE/TIME:** Tues., Sept. 28, 2021, at 6:30 pm
- **DESCRIPTION:** Are you exhausted from constantly cleaning up after your child, reminding them to do their homework, and redirecting their attention to complete their chores? Do you question your parenting skills or worry that you're going to say the wrong thing to your child? Are you at your wits’ end? You’re not alone. Join us on September 28th at 6:30 pm where we will learn and practice tools to help you feel calm and confident amid the chaos of parenting a child with ADHD.
- **PARTNER:** This event is in partnership with Fort Bend ADDA Parent Support Group.
- **SPEAKER:** Jessica Hernandez LMFT, LPC with Missouri City Family Counseling
- **WEBINAR ID:** 885 1035 5475
- **REGISTER HERE:** [https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_3TWz3nvAQB-12-r-YrSBwg](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_3TWz3nvAQB-12-r-YrSBwg)
Upcoming Event:
“Understanding Community First Choice” - Partners Resource Network in collaboration with The Arc of Gulf Coast will present a free webinar on Thursday September 23 at 10:00AM

Is your child on the Medicaid Waiver waiting list? Are you waiting 10-15 years for help but need help now? Community First Choice is a program that can assist you and your Medicaid eligible child/young adult with little to no wait time. Come learn more about this program!

Registration link: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_o4H4zaKESPaHBkuy60GFdg
Free Parent Training Opportunity - Texas A&M's Coach 2 Communicate:

The Center on Disability and Development at Texas A&M University would like to offer training at no cost to Texas parents and caregivers of children up to age 22 with core features of autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Parents and caregivers will learn how to improve their child's communication skills. This service is provided by a grant project entitled Coach to Communicate (C2C), sponsored by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

The training includes a 1-hour self-paced webinar that teaches behavioral strategies to increase communication use in children with ASD. Once complete, parents can choose to be paired with a coach for a more intensive 12-week training specific to their child’s communication needs (again, at no cost to parents). Coaching is offered in English and Spanish.

Save the Date - Night to Shine

Be sure to mark your calendar with the following important dates:

- **Monday, Nov 1, 2021:** Registration opens for guests, pals, and event volunteers
- **Saturday, Jan 8, 2022:** Dress to Shine for female guests to choose a complimentary dress
- **Sunday, Jan 30, 2022:** Required training for all event volunteers and pals
- **Friday, Feb 11, 2022:** Night to Shine 2022
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.
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.