




# Maryland Transition Resource Guide



GET TO WHERE  
**You Want to Go**




*A resource for families and youth with  
disabilities transitioning to adulthood.*

A yellow dot and a red dot are connected by a curved dotted line, located in the upper right quadrant of the page.

*Always remember **you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.***

- Harriet Tubman

A yellow dot and a red dot are connected by a curved dotted line, located in the middle left quadrant of the page.

***Stay focused and stay determined.** Don't look to anyone else to be your determination - have self-determination. It will take you very far.*

- Justice Smith





# Table of Contents

## Transition Partners



Parents and Guardians .....	7
Your School .....	8
Work .....	9
Community - DORS .....	10

## Essential Services



Introduction .....	12
Advocacy .....	13
Benefits .....	14
Money .....	15
Health and Wellness.....	16
Job Skills .....	17

## Resources Directory



Introduction .....	19
Assistive Technology / Accommodations .....	20
Community Living: Childcare, Food, Housing, Energy Assistance .....	21
Developmental Disabilities .....	23
Employment .....	25
Foster Care .....	26
Guardianship / Supported Decision-Making .....	27
Health .....	28
Mental Health .....	29
Social Security Benefits and Health Insurance .....	30
Transportation .....	31
Voting .....	33



# Introduction

Navigating the path to finish high school and become an adult is exciting. There are many possibilities, and changes too. This can also be scary and confusing. People at school and outside of school can support you through the process.

This guide provides tips and resources to help plan for adulthood and life after high school. Get ready to consider choices, explore options, and take action to prepare for your future.



Find more tips and  
resources at...


**[mdtransitions.org](https://mdtransitions.org)**



# Transition Partners

My Future



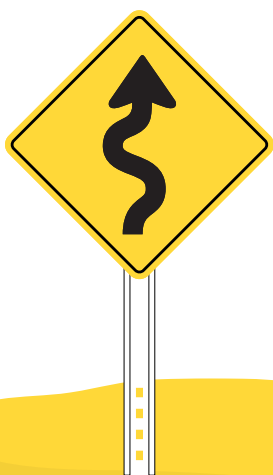


As a family member or as a teen with a disability, you are not alone. Resources are available in your school and community to help you plan for the future.

Here are some community resources you should get to know! These are your partners in helping you get to where you want to go.

- ***Set your goals high, and don't stop till you get there.***

- Bo Jackson





# Checking In with Your Teen Activity

Checking in with your teen from time-to-time can be helpful in keeping the lines of communication open. Instead of just connecting about day-to-day activities, use the question starters below to get an idea of what your teen is thinking about.

(If you are a teen looking at this activity, ask a member of your family to do this activity with you!)

Directions: Ask your teen to finish the following sentences.

**I feel** \_\_\_\_\_

**I wish** \_\_\_\_\_

**I think** \_\_\_\_\_

**I need** \_\_\_\_\_

**I hope** \_\_\_\_\_




**I want** \_\_\_\_\_

**I dream about** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## What can I do to help my child prepare for adulthood?

-  Help your teen explore how their talents and skills can help them get a job. Trying out jobs while still in high school is important!
-  Have high expectations for your child's future. Focus on your child's strengths and your child will get excited about what's possible.
-  Don't be afraid to let your child fail. This is difficult for all parents. But it's important for your teen to try new things – such as jobs, hobbies, friendships, transportation options, etc. Some of these things may not be a good fit for your teen, but that's okay. Each failure is also an opportunity to grow and learn.



# Parents & Guardians

Most of this guide speaks directly to teens. However, all of the information and resources are meant to be useful to the whole family.

As a parent or guardian of a youth with a disability, you have a big role in helping your child prepare for adulthood. At times it may seem hard to decide how to help your child in planning for the future.

This guide provides resources and ideas to support you and your teen.

## Next Steps for Parents / Guardians

- ✎ Consider other resources that can assist your child in meeting their future goals such as benefits counseling, career planning and employment counseling, money management training, and self-advocacy learning opportunities. This guide provides information on all of these!
- ✎ While your child is still in school, talk with these resources about next steps to consider when preparing your teen for adulthood.

Want to know more about action steps you or your teen can take to prepare for adulthood?

Visit the [mdtransitions.org](https://mdtransitions.org) website for more tips and helpful resources.



# 8 Things Teens Can Do Now to Prepare for Becoming an Adult

Know what services and supports you need while in school and whether or not you can access similar supports after you exit school. Know how to ask for them as well.

- ❑ **Graduate.** Staying in school (up to age 21) and graduating is very important to future success.
- ❑ **Continue learning.** No matter what you do after high school, have a plan to continue learning. That might be college, technical school, on-the-job training, classes, etc.
- ❑ **Know yourself.** Discover what makes you unique. What are your interests, passions, and abilities?
- ❑ **Get a job.** Try out or learn about different jobs. Get a part-time, weekend, after school, summer, volunteer, or other job. Contact the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) or your America's Job Center (AJC) for assistance.
- ❑ **Learn to be a great self-advocate!** Practice self-advocacy skills and develop self-determination by attending trainings.
- ❑ **Understand your disability.** How does your disability impact how you learn, work, or live in your community? What services and supports do you need? Will you have access to them after you exit school and know how to connect with them?
- ❑ **Know your rights and responsibilities.** Consider choices and decisions about where to live, medical decisions, making friends, how you spend your days, etc.
- ❑ **Get involved!** Join a club, sports team, volunteer, or other activity that gets you involved in your school and community. Practice being more independent and navigating the world.

## Your School Team



### Special Education Staff

Your special education case manager helps you create postsecondary goals and develop a plan to achieve them. This is the Transition Plan in your IEP. Share your goals and ideas for how you want to learn, work, and live after high school. Your special education case manager will include this information in your Transition Plan.



### School Counselor

Your school counselor is another person who can help you reach your goals. Your school counselor will partner with teachers, administrators, and community members to give you opportunities to succeed in school, college, job training, and employment. Your school counselor will help you develop your Course of Study and understand what you need to do to graduate from high school and achieve your postsecondary goals.

**Don't forget to include your teachers and family as part of your team to help you achieve your school and work goals.**



# Your School

Your school is a great resource to help you on your way to becoming an adult. People and resources are available to help you reach your education and work goals.

## Your Individualized Education Program (IEP)

If you are age 14 or older and have an IEP, your IEP also includes a Transition Plan. The Transition Plan will include postsecondary goals for education and training, employment, and if appropriate, independent living. The plan will focus on things you can do while still in school to prepare to meet your postsecondary goals.

**Vision.** Creating a vision for your 'good life' after you leave school is an important step that can help get you moving in the right direction. Charting the LifeCourse Tools can help you and your family create that vision and help you identify steps to help you get there - visit [lifecoursetools.com](http://lifecoursetools.com)

● ***Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.***

- Nelson Mandela



## Check out these resources:

- ✎ Transition Plan:
  - [marylandlearninglinks.org/communities/life-after-school/transition-101/laws-and-process](http://marylandlearninglinks.org/communities/life-after-school/transition-101/laws-and-process)
  - [marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Documents/Special-Ed/SecondaryTransition/MdSecondaryTransitionPlanningGuide.pdf](http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Documents/Special-Ed/SecondaryTransition/MdSecondaryTransitionPlanningGuide.pdf)
- ✎ Post-Secondary Education:
  - [mdod.maryland.gov/employment/Documents/Post-Secondary.pdf](http://mdod.maryland.gov/employment/Documents/Post-Secondary.pdf)
  - [mdod.maryland.gov/education/Pages/transitioningyouth.aspx](http://mdod.maryland.gov/education/Pages/transitioningyouth.aspx)

## Next Steps

- ✎ Ask your School Counselor what your school offers all students that will help you achieve your postsecondary goals.
- ✎ **Attend and participate in your IEP meeting.** Come prepared by downloading the IEP Fact Sheets at Parents' Place of MD's website, [ppmd.org](http://ppmd.org) and search for IEP.
- ✎ Ask your case manager, school counselor or Division of Rehabilitation counselor about career planning, job exploration, and work-based experiences.



## Wondering what DORS can help you with?

Here are some of the services DORS can provide:

### **Career Guidance and Counseling**

Find your job goal or career path.

### **Job Search and Placement Assistance**

Find a job you want.

### **Supported and Customized Employment Services**

Find a job with the supports to fit your strengths and help you keep your job.

### **Vocational and Post-Secondary Training and Education**

Training you need to get a job.

### **Transportation Planning and Supports**

Develop a plan to get to your workplace.

### **Other Community Services**

To help you prepare for, find, or keep a job.

## What to expect when working with DORS? Here are some things you can do to be successful:

### **Keep in Touch**

Contact your DORS Counselor at least once a month to help keep on track with your employment plan.

### **Speak Up**

Share your interests, skills, strengths, challenges, and concerns so your DORS Counselor can help you.

### **Do Your Part**

You and your DORS Counselor will talk about responsibilities – things you will do to help reach your employment goals. Follow through on the responsibilities you agree to.

### **Keep Your Appointments**

Can't make an appointment? That happens. Just be sure to contact DORS to let them know you can't make it.



# Vocational Rehabilitation

The Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services or DORS is all about employment. If you want to work, DORS wants to help you! Be sure to connect with DORS to receive Pre Employment Transition Services (Pre ETS) as early as your freshman year of high school and make certain to apply for additional DORS services in your last two years of high school.

## Who can receive DORS services?

DORS helps high school students, college students, and students in other approved programs prepare for work.

DORS also helps people with disabilities out of school find employment. If you want to work and have a disability that makes it difficult for you to find or keep a job, DORS may be able to help you.

## Cost of Services

There is no cost to students or families for student specific services under Pre ETS. There is also no cost to apply for additional DORS services or to find out if you are eligible.

## Questions to Ask DORS:

- ✎ How can you help me?
- ✎ What do I need to do?
- ✎ Who else can help me?
- ✎ What are the next steps?

## How to Connect with DORS:

- ✎ Attend your appointments!
- ✎ Update your phone number or address if it changes.
- ✎ Contact your local DORS office by visiting their website:

[dors.maryland.gov/resources/Pages/locations.aspx](https://dors.maryland.gov/resources/Pages/locations.aspx)

or calling the DORS Toll-Free Number:

888-554-0334



# Transition Partners

Here's how these community partners work with you to help you with becoming an adult:

## Teens

Work on completing the "8 Things Teens Can Do Now to Prepare for Becoming an Adult" in the School Section of this guide on Page 8.

## Your School

Ask about after high school options – college, technical school, on-the-job training, etc. Teachers and counselors can help you with your goals.

## Parents & Guardians

Your family can help you be more independent and explore your options. Look for family support groups to provide resources. One group is Parents' Place of Maryland [ppmd.org](http://ppmd.org)

## DORS

The Division of Rehabilitation Services is all about employment – they can help you prepare, find, and keep a job.

## Centers for Independent Living (CILs)

Contact your local CIL. They can help you with your benefits and connect you to community resources.

[msilc.org](http://msilc.org)

## Social Security

Get help with your benefits like SSI - Supplemental Security Income; SSDI - Social Security Disability Insurance; or health insurance like Medicaid.

## Community Resources

Check out the other resources in this booklet for more services and supports that may be available to you.



## Centers for Independent Living

Your local Center for Independent Living (CIL) is a good place to go to get information on all aspects of life related to aging or living with a disability, whether you are looking for yourself, are a concerned family member or friend, or a professional working with issues related to disabilities.

CILs are friendly, welcoming places. They provide information on a broad range of programs and services that can help you understand the various resources. They can also help you apply for programs and benefits. Services may include:

- ❑ Information and assistance with finding community resources, services, and supports.
- ❑ Help applying for or dealing with benefits.

## America's Job Centers

AJC's are another resource for youth to access summer employment, occupational skills training, and scholarships. Services are available during and even after you have exited high school. To find your local America's Job Centers visit:

[labor.maryland.gov/county](https://labor.maryland.gov/county)





# Essential Services





**What makes you happy?**  
**What are your strengths and talents?**

**What is the secret to success?**

Each person you talk to may have a different answer.

**Here's what we know.** The following services have helped many teens and families prepare for becoming an adult.

**These are things to practice and know about while you are a teenager.**



**Keep Exploring!**





# Advocacy Activity

## How Well Do You Know Yourself?

Rate yourself on the following questions:

Y = Yes | S = Sometimes | N = No

### Self-Awareness

- \_\_\_ Do you know what your skills and strengths are?
- \_\_\_ Can you easily explain your skills and strengths to other people?
- \_\_\_ Do you know how you learn best?
- \_\_\_ Do you share with others how you learn best?
- \_\_\_ Do you ask for help when you need it?
- \_\_\_ Do you set goals for yourself?

### Disclosure

- \_\_\_ Do you know about your disability?
- \_\_\_ Do you practice telling others about your disability?
- \_\_\_ Do you like the reaction you get when you tell someone about your disability?
- \_\_\_ Do you describe your disability differently depending on the setting or the people?
- \_\_\_ Are there times you choose not to talk about your disability?

### Accommodations

- \_\_\_ Do you participate in meetings about your education and work?
- \_\_\_ Do you know what "reasonable accommodation" means?
- \_\_\_ Do you know what accommodations you need to be successful at work or school?
- \_\_\_ Do you practice asking for the accommodations you need?

Yes  
Total  
= \_\_\_\_

Sometimes  
Total  
= \_\_\_\_

No  
Total  
= \_\_\_\_

### If you answered mostly YES...

**You should be very proud of yourself!** You have a very good sense of yourself and your disability. You are on the road to being a very self-determined individual! Of course there is always room for improvement. Reflect on the questions you answered with a NO. Create some short-term goals to help you continue to improve!

### If you answered mostly SOMETIMES...

**You already have good skills in your understanding of yourself and your disability.** There are also opportunities for you to learn more and improve in some areas. Once you know your strengths (the questions you answered with a YES), list the other areas that need work (the questions you answered with a NO). Decide which areas are most important to focus on right now. Create some short-term goals to work on your weaker spots.

### If you answered mostly NO...

**You are at the beginning stage of understanding yourself and your disability.** Take the next step and seek out others you trust and who know you well; ask them to help you sort out your areas of strengths. Share the results of the questionnaire with them and ask for help with creating short-term goals to better understand yourself.

# Self-Advocacy

Self-advocacy means speaking up for yourself and others. It means knowing about your strengths and challenges, understanding your rights as a citizen, and being able to share your needs with others.

Self-Advocacy and Family Advocacy training can help you to discover your potential and better support yourself and others.

***“Do what you can, where you are, with what you have.”***

- Theodore Roosevelt



## **Key Takeaways:**

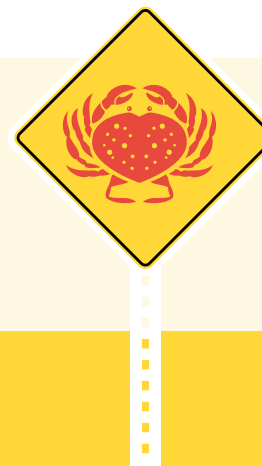
**Strong advocacy skills** aid in the creation of both short- and long-term goals.

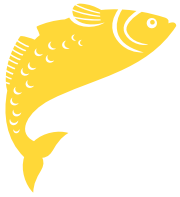
## **Have more questions?**

Reach out to your School Counselor, teacher, or local **DORS Counselor** to learn more about self-advocacy training.

Contact your area’s **Centers for Independent Living** [msilc.org](http://msilc.org)

Visit [selfadvocacyonline.org](http://selfadvocacyonline.org) for more information and resources.





# Work Reporting Tips

If you or someone in your household receive SSI (Supplemental Security Income) from Social Security, you should report your work.

This is VERY important to avoid overpayments or underpayments and other problems.

Here are some tips for staying on top of your work reporting.

## Step 1

Sign up for the wage reporting reminder by email or text by visiting:

[ssa.gov/benefits/ssi/wage-reporting.html](https://ssa.gov/benefits/ssi/wage-reporting.html)

## Step 2

Collect your paystubs and employer information before you call Social Security.

## Step 3

Contact your local Social Security office to report your employer information. Find your local office:

[secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp](https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp)

## You May Report By:

phone | mobile app | mail | fax

Choose the best option for you:

[ssa.gov/benefits/ssi/wage-reporting.html](https://ssa.gov/benefits/ssi/wage-reporting.html)

## You should report by the **6th day** of the following month to keep your records

**accurate.** If you miss the deadline, you should still report. It's better late than never!

## How to keep track of your records:

- ✎ Keep records of the dates you report.
- ✎ Keep letters from Social Security.
- ✎ Hold onto your paystubs for at least a year.
- ✎ Keep records of any communication you have with the Social Security office.

## Have Questions or Need Help?

Work incentives and countable income deductions may apply. Contact a Benefits Specialist at [innow.org/md-win/md-win](https://innow.org/md-win/md-win) and Social Security to find out more.



# Benefits

## Big Changes at Age 18

People who get SSI benefits go through a redetermination process when they turn 18. This is when Social Security determines whether your disability is severe enough to limit your ability to work at a specific level. Even though your condition may not change, Social Security might determine that you no longer have a disability.

## Contact a Benefit Specialist

If you have a disability and are approaching age 18, a Benefit Specialist can help you understand your current benefit situation and options for you.

Benefits like **SNAP, Housing, Medicaid, and others** may change when you are working. A Work Incentive Benefits Specialist can support you as life changes – you turn 18, graduate, get a job, or reach other life milestones.

## Key Takeaways:

- ✎ Benefits Specialists can help you review your financial and health insurance options.
- ✎ Benefits Specialists will help you navigate systems and reporting requirements.
- ✎ Benefits Specialists can describe and help you access work incentives.

## Have More Questions?

Reach out to your local **DORS Counselor** or **Maryland Work Incentive Network** to learn more about benefits counseling!

Find a Benefits Specialist:

[innow.org/md-win/md-win](https://innow.org/md-win/md-win)



# My Money Activity

Think about your money. Is money tight? Trouble making ends meet? Is debt making you feel stressed? Do you need help with creating a spending plan?

## My Money Goals

Write down a few goals you have about your money – saving, spending, reducing debt, planning for the future...

## Think About

 Things that really matter to you

 Future needs

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## Get Started

 Choose a goal

 Create an action plan

 Track your progress

 Take pride in your success

 Share your goal with someone

## My Action Plan

Think about how long it will take you to reach your goal. Make an action plan and stick to it. List any resources that might help you. For example, you might seek out information, tools and equipment, professional assistance, a loan, or find transportation.

**Step 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

Resources needed: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Date to complete: \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

Resources needed: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Date to complete: \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

Resources needed: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Date to complete: \_\_\_\_\_



# Money

We all need money. Learning when you are young how to plan, save, and spend will help you achieve your money goals.

Training on how to manage your money or understand your finances provides opportunities to develop skills and knowledge to plan for your financial well-being.

The focus is on practical information that will improve your quality of life by covering topics like credit repair, how to create a spending plan, and planning for major purchases.

Learn to create and achieve your money goals to live the life you want.

## Key Takeaways:

**Learning**



**Power**



**Independence**

## Have More Questions?

Reach out to your local **DORS Counselor** or **MD CASH** at [cashmd.org](http://cashmd.org) to learn more about **Financial Literacy** trainings near you. You may also want to learn more about **Maryland ABLE** and how it helps you save!

[marylandable.org](http://marylandable.org)





# Health and Wellness Activity

How do you keep yourself healthy and feeling well? Sometimes it helps to set some goals or just pay attention to how you feel. Take stock of how you think you are doing in the following areas and write down any goals you have to feel better or improve your health. Talk about your results with someone you trust.



## Your Body

- Exercise regularly: mostly  not really
- Eat healthy: mostly  not really
- Maintain a healthy weight: mostly  not really
- Get enough sleep (8 to 9 hours): mostly  not really
- Brush and floss my teeth: mostly  not really
- Wear sunscreen: mostly  not really
- Keep my music volume low: mostly  not really
- Track my screen time: mostly  not really

## My Goals

Anything you would like to improve in this area?

---



## Your Mind / Emotions

- Manage my stress: mostly  not really
- Do my best in school: mostly  not really
- Balance work, school, and social life: mostly  not really
- Get along with others: mostly  not really
- Build friendships: mostly  not really
- Active in my community: mostly  not really
- Pay attention to my feelings: mostly  not really
- Ask for help if needed: mostly  not really

## My Goals

Anything you would like to improve in this area?

---



## Your Behavior

- Avoid substance use or abuse: mostly  not really
- Drive safely: mostly  not really
- Manage my emotions: mostly  not really
- Practice safe sex: mostly  not really
- Be safe online: mostly  not really

## My Goals

Anything you would like to improve in this area?

---



# Health and Wellness

Your life is busy and having a disability can add a layer of complexity to it! Sometimes, it feels like it takes all your energy to make it through the day. It's important to stop once in a while and think about your health and well-being.

## These factors can affect your overall health:

- ✎ Food
- ✎ Exercise and Physical Activity
- ✎ Sleep
- ✎ Stress

## Here are some questions to ask yourself:

- ✎ Are there changes you can make in your diet that could give you more energy?
- ✎ How well are you sleeping? What can you do to improve your sleep routine?
- ✎ Physical activity, mindfulness, deep breathing, and yoga can also reduce stress. Are you adding ways to reduce stress in your daily activities?

## Key Takeaways:

Our habits can affect our physical and mental health. Making some changes could give you more energy and help you to be healthier and happier.

These factors impact both our physical and mental health. Evaluating current habits can help us to make changes which will lead to a healthier future.

## Questions to Ask Your Doctor

- ✎ What steps can I take to stay healthy?
- ✎ Am I at risk for any illnesses or diseases?
- ✎ I'm worried about a specific part of my life. What should I do?
- ✎ I can't talk to my parents or teachers about my problems. Who can I talk to?

## More Questions?

[mdtransitions.org/health](https://mdtransitions.org/health)







# Job Skills Activity

There are many **types of communication**.

When it comes to communication, what people see is often more memorable than what they read or hear. **This is often referred to as body language.**

Body language includes facial expressions, eye behavior, gestures, posture, and more. Body language can express your emotions, feelings, and attitudes.

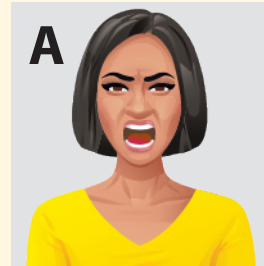
People in different cultures may understand some global non-verbal expressions, while other expressions may be culture specific.

## Conclusion:

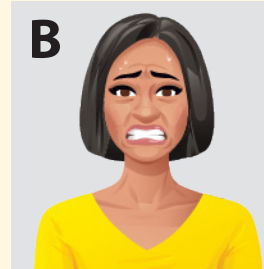
Actions speak louder than words. Consider what your facial expressions, posture, gestures, eye contact, and tone of voice may be communicating to those around you. Does your body language match the words you use?

## Directions:

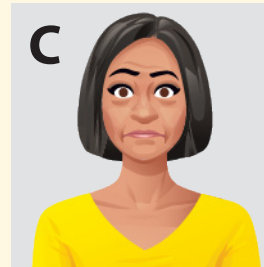
Match the character with the emotion their body language and/or facial expression is conveying.



**Happy**



**Sad**



**Angry**



**Worried**

**Answers:** A = Angry    B = Worried  
C = Happy    D = Sad



# Job Skills

Job skills can help you get along with others at home, at school, and at work. You can use these skills every day when talking to someone, working with someone, making decisions, and more. These skills are sometimes called 'soft skills.'

Employers like to hire people with good job skills. The 'Skills to Pay the Bills' training can help you learn communication, positive attitudes, being a team player, networking, problem solving, critical thinking and being professional.



## Key Takeaways:

Employers value soft skills. You can learn these important job skills at home, school and through work experiences. Talk to your school transition team to find ways you can practice these skills.

We all can improve our skills set. The best way to do this is through practice!

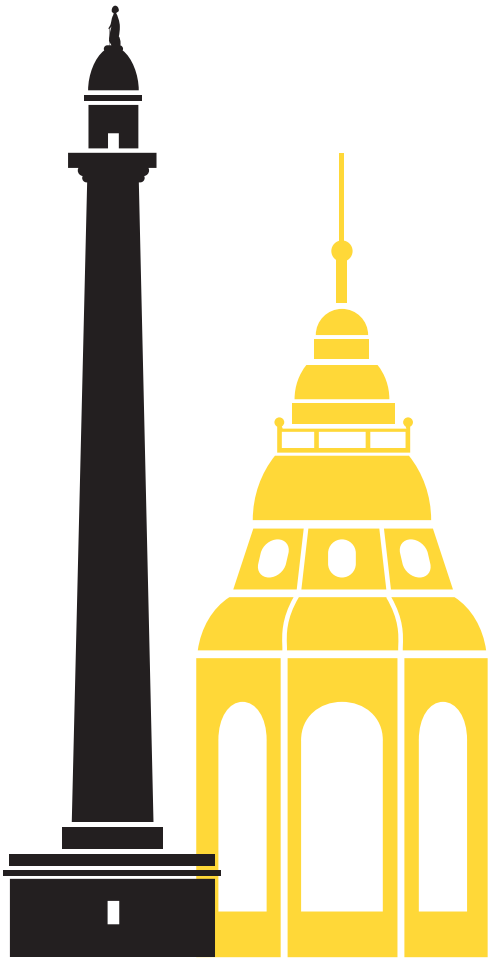
## Have More Questions?

Reach out to your School Counselor or teacher, contact your local **DORS Counselor**, or visit the Office of Disability Employment Policy website:

[dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills](https://dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills)



# Resources Directory



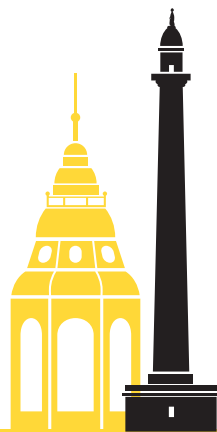


One of the most difficult roads you will travel in life is the road from childhood to adulthood. It can be hard to know what comes next when planning for life after high school.

Going through this transition is something everyone must do, but is different for each person.

These resources may help you along this journey. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

For more information on resources in your area, connect with [mdtransitions.org](https://mdtransitions.org)





# Assistive Technology / Accommodations

After high school most people continue their education or get a job. If you received accommodations or used assistive technology in high school, you may need similar assistance at work or college.

You will have to ask for accommodations and may need to provide recent documentation of your disability (an IEP will not be enough). Don't assume assistance will automatically be provided or that what you get is going to be the same as what you received while in school.

## **Attending a College or Training Program?**

Ask your advisor if the campus has a disability resource center or provides any disability services.

## **Starting a New Job?**

Connect with the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) if you have questions about workplace accommodations, disclosure, or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

[askjan.org](http://askjan.org) | 800-526-7234 (Voice) | 877-781-9403 (TTY)

Visit the Maryland Technology Assistance Program (MDTAP) website for assistive technology assistance:

[mdod.maryland.gov/mdtap/pages/mdtap-home.aspx](http://mdod.maryland.gov/mdtap/pages/mdtap-home.aspx)

## **More Local Resources**

Visit **211.org** or dial **2-1-1** for more local resources. 2-1-1 is a free and confidential service that helps people across the U.S. find local resources they need. Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



# Community Living

Living independently can be a challenge. Contact information for programs that assist with community living are listed below.

## **Childcare**

If you need help with childcare, the Maryland State Department of Education can assist. Visit:

[earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers/child-care-scholarship-program](https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers/child-care-scholarship-program)

## **Foster Care Youth**

Contact the Maryland Department of Human Services about independent living services:

[dhs.maryland.gov/foster-care/youth-resources/independent-living](https://dhs.maryland.gov/foster-care/youth-resources/independent-living)

## **Food**

Eating healthy is important! If you are having trouble finding good quality food, consider visiting a local food bank. Find one near you by visiting:

[dhs.maryland.gov/bureau-special-grants/tefap/finding-nearest-tefap-provider-maryland](https://dhs.maryland.gov/bureau-special-grants/tefap/finding-nearest-tefap-provider-maryland)



# Community Living (continued)

## Housing

Many programs can assist with housing costs. You can seek help with rent, mortgage payments, and utility assistance.

Find out about different housing programs by visiting:

[mdod.maryland.gov/housing/Pages/Housing-Home.aspx](https://mdod.maryland.gov/housing/Pages/Housing-Home.aspx)

## Home Energy Assistance

Another place to turn for help is the Maryland Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP). The Home Energy Assistance Program helps with heating costs, electric costs, and energy crisis situations.

Find out more information or apply for OHEP services by calling 1-800-322-6347 or going to

[dhs.maryland.gov/office-of-home-energy-programs](https://dhs.maryland.gov/office-of-home-energy-programs)

## Centers for Independent Living

If you need help finding a personal care attendant, accessible forms of recreation, or the support from someone with the same disability as you, contact your county's Center for Independent Living: [msilc.org](https://msilc.org)





# Developmental Disabilities

DDA (Developmental Disabilities Administration) offers services that help youth and their families navigate a path toward a “good life” as adults. The Governor’s Transitioning Youth Initiative (GTYI) earmarks funds in the DDA budget for eligible students who apply when leaving school.

**Note: A sole diagnosis of a developmental disability does not mean a person is automatically eligible.**

To be eligible for the GTYI, a person must be found fully eligible at 21 years old and have a severe chronic disability that:

- Is attributable to a physical or mental impairment other than a sole diagnosis of mental illness
- Results in the need to have services which are individually planned and coordinated
- Results in a need for services that are likely to continue indefinitely
- Results occurred before the age of 22
- Results in the inability to live independently





# Developmental Disabilities (continued)

## **Applying for Services**

You can apply for DDA services at any time and at any age. You must be DDA-eligible to receive any DDA services. If you are only interested in applying for GTYI services, contact your DDA regional office when you turn 14 or any time prior to exiting school at age 21.

If you need assistance completing the application or to begin the process of submitting one, contact the office in your region. Contact information is available by calling 844-253-8694 or at:

[dda.health.maryland.gov/Pages/Regional%20Offices.aspx](https://dda.health.maryland.gov/Pages/Regional%20Offices.aspx)

For a printable TY fact sheet go to:

[dda.health.maryland.gov/Pages/TY.aspx](https://dda.health.maryland.gov/Pages/TY.aspx)

## **It is really important you apply prior to exiting school at 21.**

All DDA waiver applications must be completed by June 30 of the eligibility year to be considered for funding. If the date of transition is after the 21st birthday, the person will be eligible for one year after the date of exiting or graduating from high school. Applications submitted later will be placed on a waiting list.





# Employment

Finding a job takes effort, especially when you are young and it's one of your first jobs.

## **DORS**

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) helps people with disabilities find employment. DORS can help you to create an employment plan and connect you to community resources to get a job.

Find your local Maryland DORS office:

[dors.maryland.gov/resources/Pages/locations.aspx](https://dors.maryland.gov/resources/Pages/locations.aspx)

or by calling the DORS Toll-Free Number: 888-554-0334

## **Your Local Job Center**

Job Centers help anyone looking for a job. Find your local Job Center to get more help searching for a job, updating your resume, and other work assistance:

[dllr.state.md.us/county](https://dllr.state.md.us/county) or

[dllr.state.md.us/employment/onestops.pdf](https://dllr.state.md.us/employment/onestops.pdf)



# Foster Care

Youth in foster care who are 13 to 21 may be eligible for Independent Living services. Independent Living can help with things like getting important documents, budgeting, securing housing, applying for jobs, and applying and preparing for college or technical school, and more.

Find out more:

[mdconnectmylife.org](https://mdconnectmylife.org)

If you have a Case Worker or Independent Living Coordinator, ask them about what supports are available to you.





# Guardianship and Supported Decision-Making

When you turn age 18 you are able to vote, sign contracts, join the military, and have a bank account on your own. Having some support with making big decisions may be a choice you want to consider.

## **Futures and Estates Planning Guide**

Provides information and resources for families of children and adults with developmental disabilities.

[disabilityrightsmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Planning-Now-Guide-2018-4.pdf](https://disabilityrightsmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Planning-Now-Guide-2018-4.pdf)

## **Guardianship Handbook**

This handbook discusses the law of adult guardianship in Maryland. The handbook lists many alternatives to a formal guardianship.

[disabilityrightsmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Guardianship-Handbook-2011.pdf](https://disabilityrightsmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Guardianship-Handbook-2011.pdf)

## **Supported Decision-Making**

National Resource Center for Supported Decision-Making has resources, publications, and a state-by-state guide to information on Supported Decision-Making.

[supporteddecisionmaking.org](https://supporteddecisionmaking.org)



# Health

## **Finding a Primary Care Provider**

If you have a lot of medical needs, learning about taking care of your health is important.

Ask your doctor if they can continue to see you when you are an adult or who they would recommend you talk to about providing care as you move into adulthood? You should also be looking for specialty providers if needed.

Also visit:

[phpa.health.maryland.gov/genetics/Pages/  
Health\\_Care\\_Transition.aspx](http://phpa.health.maryland.gov/genetics/Pages/Health_Care_Transition.aspx)

## **Health Care Coverage**

Health insurance may change when you become an adult. Some programs may end for young adults at age 19 and they are no longer considered part of the family unit. This may change the income eligibility for the family.

To find out about health insurance options go to:

[marylandhealthconnection.gov](http://marylandhealthconnection.gov)



# Mental Health

It's important to pay attention to both your physical health and mental health. Help is available when you face challenging times or need strategies to navigate the world around you.

Mental Health services can be delivered in many places, including hospitals, clinics, homes, and other community locations. These services are more than medication and therapy. Mental Health services can also provide help with employment, housing, peer support, relationships, identity, depression, stress, addiction, suicide, and more. To find more information about available services, contact your local Core Service Agency:

[marylandbehavioralhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/DirectoryMABHAMay2019.pdf](https://marylandbehavioralhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/DirectoryMABHAMay2019.pdf)

or visit:

Mental Health Association of Maryland: [mhamd.org](https://mhamd.org)

On Our Own of Maryland: [onourownmd.org](https://onourownmd.org)

National Alliance of Maryland: [namimd.org](https://namimd.org)

## More Local Resources

Visit **211.org** or dial **2-1-1** for more local resources. 2-1-1 is a free and confidential service that helps people across the U.S. find local resources they need. Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.





# Social Security Benefits & Health Insurance



## Big Changes at Age 18

At age 18, people receiving SSI benefits go through the redetermination process. This is when Social Security determines whether your disability is severe enough to limit your ability to work at a specific level. Even though your condition may not change, Social Security might determine that you no longer have a disability.

## Working and Benefits

If you are considering work or have questions about your current benefits, connect with a Work Incentive Benefits Specialist. They can help you better understand your benefits and help you make informed choices to reach your goals.

## Have More Questions? Talk to:

-  Your DORS Counselor about Benefits Counseling
-  A Benefits Specialist

Find a Benefits Specialist:

[innow.org/md-win/md-win](http://innow.org/md-win/md-win)

-  To check your Social Security status visit: [ssa.gov](http://ssa.gov)



# Transportation

Before you look for a job, you should think about how you will get there. Talk about all the different ways to get to work with your planning team.

- ✎ Find a job you can walk or bike to.
- ✎ Learn how to take the bus.
- ✎ Take a taxi. Some companies charge less for people with disabilities.
- ✎ Ride share with family, friends, or neighbors.
- ✎ Learn to drive.
- ✎ Consider moving closer to work.

Ask your school, CIL, or DORS Counselor about services to help you learn to walk, bike, bus, or drive safely to work.

For more information on public transportation, visit:

[mdod.maryland.gov/transport/Pages/Mobility-and-Paratransit.aspx](https://mdod.maryland.gov/transport/Pages/Mobility-and-Paratransit.aspx)





## Transportation (continued)

### **Maryland Centers for Independent Living**

After you start a job, think about ridesharing with people at work or asking your boss to change your schedule to make getting to work easier. Contact your local Centers for Independent Living for help: [msilc.org](https://msilc.org)

### **Contact a Work Incentive Benefits Specialist**

Talk to a benefit specialist to find out if you can use Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE) to cover your transportation costs for work.

Find a benefit specialist: [innow.org/md-win/md-win](https://innow.org/md-win/md-win)



# Voting

## At Age 18, You Can Vote!

Find out when the next election is, learn about what the issues are, who is running, and where you vote. Your voice matters! Be sure it is heard during the next election.

Contact your local elections office if you need accommodations. Then vote!

## Have More Questions?

[usa.gov/register-to-vote](https://usa.gov/register-to-vote)



## My Notes

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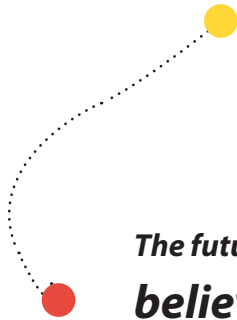
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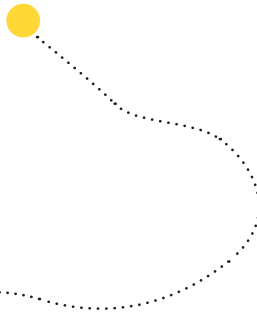
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*The future belongs to those who  
**believe in the beauty of  
their dreams.***

- Eleanor Roosevelt





## GET TO WHERE **You Want to Go**

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**Find more tips and resources at...**  
**[mdtransitions.org](http://mdtransitions.org) and [mdod.maryland.gov](http://mdod.maryland.gov)**