



Looking to the Future

Chapter 8

# Planning for Transitions

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This resource is primarily intended for:

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Health-related Professionals	✓
Counsellors	✓
Students	
Parents	
General Public	



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## Chapter 8



# Planning for Transitions

Transitions are any events that result in changes to relationships, routines, expectations or roles. Transitions occur throughout the life cycle, including during school years. Although they are a normal part of life, these changes can be difficult for students, especially students with special education needs. To minimize difficulties, planning for transition is an essential component of all IPPs from early childhood services (ECS) to senior high school. The goal of planning for transition is to enable students to prepare for and successfully make changes between different stages of their education and life, such as starting school, moving from grade to grade, changing schools, completing school or living independently, and/or entering the workforce. This planning is ongoing and begins at the start of each new school year and evolves throughout the year.

## Key Principles of Planning for Transition

Thoughtful planning for transition involves a number of key principles.

Effective planning for transition is:

- thoughtful and deliberate
- collaborative
- comprehensive in scope
- supported by ongoing education.

## Inclusion and community

The principle of inclusion encourages and facilitates the provision of natural, community-based supports for students with special needs. A commitment to inclusion ensures that transition programming, activities and strategies promote the acceptance and participation of individuals with special needs within the social and economic life of the community.

## Deliberate planning

In order for transitions to be successful, they must be carefully and deliberately planned. Deliberate planning means several things, including the following.

- Planning for transitions should start well in advance of the actual transition.
- Regardless of the specific transition being made, programming decisions need to be based on an understanding of individual students, including their strengths and areas of need, and the goals and dreams of the students and families.
- Similar to the development process for IPPs, planning for transition should be dynamic and ongoing since transition objectives may change.
- A written record of planning for transition, including transition goals and strategies, should be included as part of the student's IPP.

## Collaboration

Collaboration involves creating supportive relationships and taking a problem-solving approach to planning for transition. Successful transitions require input from a variety of people, including parents, students, special and regular education teachers, and community-based personnel, such as career counsellors or post-secondary school admissions officers. Drawing on the knowledge of various team members results in informed decision making, the acceptance of joint responsibility and a stronger circle of support for the student. The membership of the transition support team may change over time, depending on the student's needs, and staff and agency changes. It is important that the team be committed to follow up and meet at various stages of the student's transitions.

Shared responsibility among students, families, schools, communities and government is at the heart of collaborative planning for transition. Shared responsibility means that resources are combined to maximize the opportunities available to students before and after they leave school. It also ensures that those involved in planning for transition, programming and activities have shared goals, and overlapping and jointly-owned responsibilities.

For more information

Visit [www.child.gov.ab.ca/acyi/page.cfm?pg=index](http://www.child.gov.ab.ca/acyi/page.cfm?pg=index) to see the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative cross-ministry *Guidelines to Support the Successful Transitions of Children and Youth*.

As students move through school, they need to become increasingly involved in and responsible for planning their own transitions. Research has consistently shown that student involvement in the planning process helps students develop a better understanding of their own learning needs, and provides opportunities for them to develop much-needed self-advocacy and problem-solving skills.

## Comprehensive scope

Students with special education needs may face a variety of challenges as they make transitions into new settings, including academic, social, vocational and interpersonal difficulties. As a result, planning for transition should focus not only on the academic skills, but also on other knowledge and skills needed for success, including the ability to:

- monitor their own performance
- problem solve in new situations
- interact appropriately with peers and adults
- understand and explain their learning strengths, and the type of supports and accommodations that will help them in dealing with their special education needs.

Comprehensive planning for transition must also focus on continuity. Effective planning ensures that what happens at one stage in a process builds successfully on the previous stages and sets necessary groundwork for future stages. In particular, planning for transition should recognize that

### Appendices

every student has the potential for benefiting from some type of post-secondary education or training, and consider the range of skills and supports that students may need for post-secondary studies.

*See Appendix 8-A for a sample checklist for comprehensive planning for transition.*

### Ongoing education

Successful transitions require an awareness and understanding of the issues and challenges facing students with special education needs as they move through the different levels of schooling and prepare for post-secondary opportunities. Individuals and organizations that are involved in planning for transition must have the knowledge and understanding needed to effectively support the student's transitions.

Students also need ongoing educational opportunities to help them identify and explore their own strengths and interests, take personal responsibility for their learning, and develop skills such as communication and time-management skills. As well, students need opportunities to learn about and explore career options, and begin a career development planning process with activities such as compiling a personal career portfolio.

## Planning for Transition and the IPP Process

Planning for transition can be incorporated into the IPP process in a number of ways. For example, planning for transition:

- serves as a focus for identifying student needs by exploring questions such as “What skills and behaviours will this student need in future environments?”
- can be incorporated into goals and objectives. For example, skills needed for successful transition from Kindergarten to Grade 1 might form the basis of a young student's long-term goals. Aspects of career exploration or work experience might be incorporated in goals for a middle school student and developing self-advocacy skills might be a goal for a student in senior high school
- should be reflected in the accommodations section by identifying supports students will need to be successful in future environments
- can be summarized in a separate section of the IPP, which identifies changes that are upcoming and the learning team's plans for helping the student successfully make these changes.

Successful transitions depend on:

- early and systematic planning
- consciously identifying hopes and dreams
- thoroughly exploring a variety of possibilities
- using appropriate strategies to help students move from one stage to the next.

## Early planning

Successful transitions require planning well in advance of the actual move. This ensures that planning is always future-oriented, that there is program continuity throughout a student's school years, and that necessary programming and supports are in place. For example, the transition from senior high school to post-secondary settings requires informal planning beginning early in a student's education, and formal planning starting in junior high school. This gives students and their families time to become familiar with available services and settings, and time to put the necessary plans into action so students will reach their goals.

Early planning also involves helping students to understand at a young age that changes and challenges are part of life. Learning to manage transitions at an early age creates behaviours that are flexible, adaptable and capable in a world that is rapidly changing. Students also need encouragement and support to achieve small but measurable successes. Celebrate students' abilities and build on strengths. Personal skills and attitudes do affect an individual's approach to lifelong learning and ability to deal with change—helping students become more self-confident and self-aware ensures that they will be better able to set realistic goals and develop the skills necessary to achieve those goals.

## Identifying hopes and dreams

It is important to identify students' strengths, abilities and talents, and incorporate them into programming decisions. Helping students to identify dreams and hopes for the future is equally important, especially in planning for the transition between senior high school and a more independent adult life.

Teachers and parents should talk to students about their thoughts on post-secondary training, entering the work force, options for living situations, and the kinds of recreational and leisure activities they would like for the future. Teachers also need to understand and respect the family's wishes and preferences for their child, and encourage them to articulate a family vision for the future.

## Exploring possibilities

Some individuals with special needs require specialized living and work settings as adults. Consider a variety of possibilities that may be available as students move from one stage to the next. When students are still in junior high school, the learning team can start investigating the community services available for adults with special needs, including vocational and residential options in the local area and other areas. For many students, the families will take the lead role in planning for transition. When the student is in senior high school, the family may start meeting with different adult service providers to explore options in more detail.



The learning team needs to be informed about the various possibilities by asking questions. For example, during planning for students' transitions from junior to senior high school, ask what kind of community-based work experience is available in the senior high school program. Evaluate how each option meets the skills, needs, interests and goals of the student.

### Bridging from one stage to the next

Transition may be a challenging time for students. Parents are the one constant factor as students move from one setting to another. Since they know their child best, parents will be aware of the areas where their child needs further support and reinforcement to cope with new challenges. This could include strengthening self-advocacy and decision-making skills, independent problem solving and positive feelings about their own abilities.

Successful transitions begin by providing students and their families with information prior to the actual changes. For example, parents should know about new programming prior to major changes. It can be helpful to provide parents and students with school handbooks at the beginning of the school year or upon entry to the school. These handbooks may contain homework policies, recommended study routines and timetables.

As students move from one learning environment to another, the learning team may have many questions. Here are some sample questions to consider.

- How will the student's progress be measured?
- Will the student follow the regular grade curriculum?
- How long will the student stay in this learning environment?
- What plans do we need to make for future placements?
- Will there be other students in the class with learning needs similar to this student's?
- How can we ensure that teachers are aware of this student's individual learning goals and dreams for the future?

Students in transition need to know that there are support systems in place for them if they face personal or academic difficulties. Reassure students that there will be teachers or employers ready to support them in this new segment of life. Encourage families to involve siblings, extended family members, friends or others who can contribute to the student's successful transitions.

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*See Appendix 8-B for a sample checklist for annual planning for transitional.*

## Transition to Elementary School

For students receiving special needs programming through ECS, the move to Kindergarten will likely be the first major transition. These students may be anxious about being in a larger setting and uncomfortable staying without their parents.

Parents may also be anxious about the transition into elementary school and may have a variety of questions such as the following.

- What happens when my child arrives at school?
- What happens at lunch?
- Where is my child's classroom located? May I go to the classroom to help her or him get settled?
- Who supervises the playground and what kinds of activities do students do?
- What kinds of opportunities do students have to work together?
- What kind of special support is available for my child?

### Sample strategies

#### Sample strategies to support the transition to elementary school

- Be prepared to answer parents' questions such as those listed above.
- Identify the skills students will need in the next environment. Share this list of skills with parents and other members of the learning team, and plan ways to help the students learn these skills.

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*See Appendix 8-C for a sample list of preschool to Kindergarten transition skills.*

- Listen to students' concerns about transitions. Discuss upcoming transitions and highlight the positive aspects of new environments. Consider ways to reassure the student. For example, a parent might send a picture or special toy to ease the transition of going to a new school. The Kindergarten teacher may arrange to meet early in the new school year to support the child's adjustment to the classroom.
- Communicate with the receiving teachers about the student's strengths and areas of need. If the student already has an IPP, discuss its contents and the accommodations required in the upcoming year. If possible, schedule a meeting at the end of the school year and a follow-up progress meeting for early fall.

## Transition to Junior High School

The transition to junior high brings many changes such as multiple teachers, larger schools, new subject areas and an increased expectation of independence.

As a student with special education needs enters junior high, it is not uncommon for the student to have questions such as the following.

- What happens when I get to school?
- Do I use a locker?
- How many teachers will I have?
- How many classrooms will I use?
- Is there a school cafeteria? What does it cost to have lunch at school?
- What kinds of activities can I join?

Sample strategies

Sample strategies to support the transition to junior high

- Encourage students to identify their learning strengths and interests.
- Give students opportunities to monitor their own progress and share their perceptions with the learning team.
- Teach students strategies for time management, note taking, test preparation and test taking.
- Explore appropriate assistive technologies and create opportunities for students to develop keyboarding skills.
- Discuss adaptations and accommodations that have been successfully used in the past, keeping in mind the demands of a junior high classroom.
- Ensure that specific supports that need to be in place at the beginning of the year are included in the transition component of the IPP.
- Take advantage of an orientation day if the new school provides one. These sessions may include a tour of the school and an opportunity to meet teachers and receive information about rotations, clubs and other school-related activities.
- Host a team meeting with the receiving school in order to share information about students, including strengths, interests, dreams and areas of need.
- Ensure that students have a safe place to express their opinions, expectations, questions, choices and concerns about the transition.

Appendices

*See Appendix 8-D for a sample student questionnaire.*

## Transition to Senior High School

As students approach senior high school, they need to take increased responsibility for their learning. They also need to begin exploring options for the future, including career paths, and identifying resources and services they will need to reach their goals.

Students entering senior high school may have questions such as the following.

- Where is my homeroom, gym, library, administration office and other key points in the school?
- Is there a cafeteria in the school?

- What kinds of sports and clubs are at the school?
- Where do I go for help if I am having difficulty with a class?
- Do the senior high school teachers know about my learning needs and the adaptations I had at my old school?
- What will happen with my IPP?
- What courses do I need to graduate?

### Sample strategies

## Sample strategies to support the transition to senior high

- Create opportunities for the student to begin exploring career options.
- Educate students and their parents about multiple paths in senior high school and which ones lead to different post-secondary studies.
- Provide students with access to learning and study strategies.
- Ensure students have access to appropriate adaptations and assistive technologies where needed.
- Create opportunities for students to begin developing self-advocacy skills.

### Appendices

*See Appendix 8-E for a sample tool for recording information needed for transition.*

## Transition to Post-secondary Settings

Planning for Transition at the senior high school level is critical for students with special education needs. At this level, the IPP process must be a comprehensive and well-coordinated plan that goes beyond one year and beyond just preparing a student for graduation. Planning for transition needs to outline what the student will be taking and doing in school as well as how to prepare the student for life after senior high school. As a part of this type of planning the learning team needs to:

- identify and plan for the programs of study and educational experiences the student will be participating in from Grade 9 to the end of senior high school
- develop a plan for post-school adult life based upon the student's dreams and interests
- identify and begin to coordinate needed services, programs and supports before the student leaves the senior high school setting.

Planning for transition often involves investigating opportunities for post-secondary training. Over the last decade, the range of post-secondary options available to all students has greatly expanded. Colleges, universities, community agencies and private training companies are now more willing and able to offer appropriate training opportunities for adults with special needs.

A number of colleges and universities now have specialized services to support students with special needs. Some institutions' application forms

have a box to check or a line to complete that identifies a disability. The institution's disability services office then contacts the student to discuss what kind of support will be needed. If the application form does not have a place for self-disclosure, students (and if necessary, their parents) will need to contact the disability services office.

For most students, Canada Study Grants and Alberta Human Resources and Employment (AHRE) funding will cover disability-related supports that students need to complete their education. To ensure this funding, students will need documentation about their disability and the supports they received in senior high school. If they do not have sufficient documentation, they will have to be assessed so appropriate supports can be identified. These assessments are coordinated by the institution's disability services office and can take up to four months to complete.

The disability services office will use information from documentation and assessments to develop a service plan. This plan, also known as an education plan or accommodation plan, outlines the supports students are eligible for. Every student's plan is different and could include services such as the following:

- note taking
- alternate format texts (Braille, large print, audio)
- exam accommodations
- assistive technology
- interpreters
- captioning services
- tutoring.

Post-secondary institutions may also offer some or all of the following services for students with special needs:

- orientations for new students with disabilities
- student-run disability organizations (for more information, see the National Educational Association of Disabled Students Web site at [www.neads.ca](http://www.neads.ca))
- advocacy for students, if necessary (most disability services offices believe that students need to be equal partners in their education and will encourage students to be their own self-advocates)
- Inclusive Post Secondary Education (IPSE) programs that provide adults with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to participate in a modified post-secondary educational experience. In IPSE programs, students are included in regular college or university classes as auditing students and are supported to participate to their fullest potential. Their education goes beyond the classroom to encompass four main components:
  - relationship opportunities
  - life-enriching experiences
  - career development and education
  - scholarship and/or financial information about potential sources of funding.

For more information

IPSE programs are currently available at University of Alberta, Grant MacEwan College, University of Calgary, Lethbridge Community College and Red Deer College. Check the Web sites of these institutions for current programs offered.

- Transitional Vocational Programs that prepare individuals with mild developmental disabilities to obtain and maintain employment. The program is provided on a full-time basis up to a maximum of 52 weeks. The programs integrate theoretical and practical learning through:
  - classroom instruction which may include training in employability skills, transferable occupational skills (such as keyboarding and computer skills, use of tools and equipment, safety, etc.), job-search and retention skills, and independent living skills
  - work experience designed to give students experience consistent with their interests and abilities, and their long-range career goals. The preferred work experience is in a competitive work site rather than a sheltered work or school environment.

Transitional Vocational Programs are currently available at Keyano College, Lakeland College, Mount Royal College, Norquest College, Olds College, Red Deer College and the Fairview Campus of the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT). Check the Web sites of these institutions for current programs offered.

### Sample strategies

## Sample strategies to support the transition to post-secondary settings

- Help students explore opportunities for post-secondary studies and other community-based services.
- Encourage the student to take senior high school courses that will be academically challenging and create options for post-secondary training.
- Ensure students have the necessary documentation to receive appropriate support in post-secondary settings.
- Consider questions such as the following to explore and evaluate post-secondary opportunities.
  - How will this agency or program meet this student’s learning and vocational needs?
  - What is their philosophy and is it compatible with the student and his or her family’s values and goals?
  - What kind of success has this agency or program had?
  - What is their commitment to individualized programming?
  - What supports and accommodations do they provide?
  - What is their commitment to community-based programming?
  - What are the criteria for admission?
  - Is there a waiting list? If so, how long?
  - What are the qualifications and training of the service providers?
  - How are parents and family members involved in service delivery?
  - How long does the follow-up and support of the agency or program last?
  - What are the costs and fees of the program?

## Supporting Planning for Transition

There are a variety of ways for parents, teachers and other members of the learning team to support planning for transition.

Parents can support their children in the transition process by:

- attending transition meetings and ensuring that their child is an active participant in the process
- reviewing the transition plan and discussing questions or concerns
- asking questions and offering opinions during the meeting using appropriate tone of voice and turn taking, so students see what advocacy looks like
- teaching their child how to appropriately express disagreement with suggestions and resolve these types of differences effectively
- helping their child identify interests, challenges and future goals

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See Appendix 8-F for a sample tool for gathering and organizing information from parents.

- encouraging their child's independence at home and across settings
- keeping track of questions, concerns, expectations, suggestions and/or comments about the transition process
- thinking about services and special materials or resources their child is going to need throughout his or her school career and then as an adult, and sharing this information with team members.

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See Appendix 8-G for parents' tips about talking to their teen about transitions.

Principals, teachers and specialists can support the transition process by:

- ensuring students and parents have the information they need to prepare for changes and to choose post-secondary options
- encouraging and facilitating input and support from community service providers.

### For more information

Visit [www.alis.gov.ab.ca/learning/pset/planning.asp](http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/learning/pset/planning.asp) for information for parents and students on planning for post-secondary studies.

One or more service providers may be involved in the planning for transition process, including counsellors, career coaches and work experience coordinators. These individuals may assist in planning for transition by:

- attending planning for transition meetings and providing information to the learning team
- providing information to schools regarding available services and how to access them
- identifying service gaps and assisting in locating resources to address the needs.





## Appendices



These tools are available in PDF format at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/special\\_needs/resource.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/special_needs/resource.asp) and on the CD-ROM packaged with the print version of this resource.

## Planning for Transitions

The purpose of these sample tools is to enrich the IPP process. These tools should be used selectively and can be adapted to best meet the needs of individual students. Many of these tools will be used informally as part of the IPP development process and not as products for the student's permanent school record.

- 8-A Sample Checklist for Comprehensive Planning for Transition
- 8-B Sample Checklist for Annual Planning for Transition
- 8-C Sample Skills for Successful Transitions from Preschool to Kindergarten
- 8-D Sample Student Questionnaire for Planning for Transition in Junior and Senior High School
- 8-E Sample Senior High Planning for Transition Inventory
- 8-F Sample Parent Questionnaire for Planning for Transition in Junior and Senior High School
- 8-G Sample Parent Tips for Encouraging Teens to Think about Transition



## Sample Checklist for Comprehensive Planning for Transition

### Beginning of Junior High

- Identify learning preferences and the necessary adaptations to be a successful learner.
- Begin to look at career interests and skills, complete interest and career inventories, and identify additional education or training requirements.
- Select/review high school courses.
- Participate in job-shadowing activities.
- Explore options for post-secondary education and admission criteria.
- Identify interests and options for future living arrangements, including support.
- Learn to effectively communicate your interests, preferences and needs.
- Be able to explain special education need(s) and the accommodations needed.
- Learn and practise informed decision-making skills.
- Investigate assistive technology tools that can increase community involvement and employment opportunities.
- Broaden your experiences with community activities and expand your friendships.
- Pursue and use local transportation options outside of family.
- Investigate money management and identify necessary skills.
- Acquire Social Insurance Number and the ability to communicate personal information.
- Identify and begin learning skills necessary for independent living.

### Beginning of Senior High

- Identify community support services and programs.
- Invite adult service providers and other people who support you to the IPP transition meeting.
- Gather more information on post-secondary programs and the support services offered, and make arrangements for accommodations to take any entrance tests.
- Determine the need for financial support.
- Enroll in driver training, if appropriate.
- Learn and practise appropriate interpersonal communication and social skills for different settings (employment, school, recreation with peers, etc.).
- Begin a résumé and update it as needed.
- Practise independent living skills (e.g., budgeting).
- Identify needed personal assistant services and, if appropriate, learn to direct and manage these services.
- Know your special education need(s) and keep documentation.

### Last Year of Senior High

- Identify the post-secondary school or program and make arrangements for accommodations.
- Practise effective communication by developing interview skills, asking for help and identifying necessary accommodations at post-secondary work environments.
- Participate in community activities.
- Consider supported employment placements.
- Take responsibility for arriving on time to part-time job, appointments and social activities.
- Assume responsibility for health care needs.
- If 18, register to vote.



Appendix 8-B

## Sample Checklist for Annual Planning for Transition

Name \_\_\_\_\_ School year \_\_\_\_\_

### September to December

- Initiate discussion with parents and students about Individualized Program Plan (IPP) and planning for transition.
- Develop an IPP for the student. The transition plan should be built into the IPP.
- Ensure the programming decisions are based on the understanding of the student's strengths, areas of need and goals as well as those of the student's family.
- Ensure students are aware of their learning strengths and the types of supports and accommodations available to them in dealing with their learning difficulties.
- Review the IPP and transition plans at the time of the first report card.
  - Successful transitions require planning well in advance of the actual move.
  - Planning should be future orientated to ensure program continuity and that the student knows what's coming up.
  - Make sure that planning for transition is an active part of the school program.

### January to March

- Plan ongoing formal and informal discussions with parents and students throughout the school year to ensure the student's emotional, social and academic needs are being met.
- Ensure assessments are completed as required by each student.
- Discuss transition plans for each student with a program consultant or school administrator prior to spring break.
- Communicate placement options available for the student to his or her parents.
- Where possible, contact the receiving school prior to year end and share pertinent information.
- Gain as much information as possible about the new program and share it with parents and students.

### March to June

- Ensure documentation is in place prior to the move. This may include the following:
  - registration form
  - current and preceding IPPs
  - current assessment results
  - medical information
  - classroom assessment results
  - listing of supports in place to accommodate the student's learning, e.g., counselling, teacher assistant, speech therapy, mentorship support.
- Encourage parents to visit the program in advance by making an appointment with the new site.
- Have students write about what they like, where their strengths lie and where they experience difficulty to share with the new teacher.

Adapted with permission from Edmonton Catholic Schools, "Transition Plan" (Edmonton, Alberta, 2003).



## Sample Skills for Successful Transitions from Preschool to Kindergarten

### Social Behaviours and Classroom Conduct

- Understands role as part of group
- Respects others and their property
- Interacts and defends self without aggression
- Plays cooperatively; shares toys and materials
- Expresses emotions and affection appropriately
- Takes turns; participates appropriately in games
- Is willing to try something new
- Follows class rules and routines
- Lines up and waits appropriately
- Imitates peer actions
- Sits appropriately
- Plays independently

### Communication Behaviours

- Follows two- to three-part directions
- Initiates and maintains peer interactions
- Modifies behaviour when given verbal feedback
- Asks peers or teachers for information or assistance
- Recalls and follows directions for tasks previously described
- Follows group instructions
- Relates ideas and experiences
- Answers questions
- Communicates own needs and wants

### Task-related Behaviours

- Finds materials needed for tasks
- Does not disrupt peers during activities
- Complies quickly with teacher instructions
- Generalizes skills across tasks and situations
- Follows task directions in small or large group
- Replaces materials and cleans up work space
- Monitors own behaviour; knows when a task is done
- Begins and completes work at appropriate time without extra teacher attention
- Makes choices
- Stays in own space
- Follows routine in transition
- Uses a variety of materials
- Seeks attention appropriately
- Attends to teacher in a large group

### Self-help Behaviours

- Recognizes when a problem exists
- Locates and cares for personal belongings
- Avoids dangers and responds to warning words
- Takes outer clothing off and puts it on in a reasonable amount of time
- Tries strategies to solve problems
- Feeds self independently
- Cares for own toileting needs



Appendix 8-D

## Sample Student Questionnaire for Planning for Transition in Junior and Senior High School

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. What classes do you enjoy the most? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What classes do you least enjoy? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Do you ask for help when needed? Who usually helps you?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Describe your special education needs.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What kind of job would you like to have when you finish high school?



## Sample Senior High Planning for Transition Inventory

### Current School Program

Examine the student's current school program in light of the student's vision for the future. Course selections, resource support, classroom accommodations, content modifications and other relevant issues need to be considered.

- Is the student identifying academic areas of interest related to his or her goals for the future?
- Is the student enrolled in courses that will give him or her the opportunities to move toward his or her goals?
- Does the student require additional support to succeed academically?
- Is the student moving toward independence?
- Is the student developing specific academic skills to realize his or her goals?
- Is the student aware of the necessary learning strategies for success?
- Is the student developing knowledge of the use of technology appropriate for his or her special education needs?
- Is the student in need of a reduced course load in order to be successful?
- Is there a need for the student to have knowledge of distance or online courses and/or summer schools that are available?

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This appendix adapted with permission from New Brunswick Department of Education, *Resource for the Transition of Students with Exceptionalities from School to Work or Post Secondary Education and Adult Life* (Fredericton, NB: New Brunswick Department of Education, 2001), pp. 20–24, 27–29.



## Sample Senior High Planning for Transition Inventory (continued) page 2/6

### Post-secondary

Consider the skills and areas related to applying to a post-secondary institution, including course selection, requesting transcripts, working with guidance counsellors, preparing information required by student services departments at post-secondary institutions and choosing appropriate campuses.

- Will the student require documentation identifying the modifications made to his or her current program to be forwarded to post-secondary institutions?
- Will the student require documentation identifying the accommodations given to support him or her in the current program to be forwarded to post-secondary institutions?
- Will the student require assistance in researching post-secondary institutions to ascertain commitment to making accommodations for his or her particular disability?
- Does the student have a good match between high school courses and career aspirations or training prerequisites?
- Is the student developing the skills necessary to enable him or her to approach the faculty or student services department of a post-secondary institution and articulate the nature of his or her special education needs and the accommodations or services required to address his or her needs?
- Is the student developing time management, organization, study skills or note taking?
- Is the student aware of restrictions that may apply to scholarship or student loan applications (minimum course load)?
- Is the student exploring his or her technological needs and services for post-secondary studies and/or the Canada Study Grants for Students with Disabilities?
- Is there a need for current (within 2–3 years) assessment or related documentation for access to post-secondary services?
- Is the student developing a résumé and references for his or her personal career portfolio?
- Is the student exploring post-secondary/career information sessions and documenting this in a personal career portfolio?
- Does the student need to arrange a campus visitation?



## Sample Senior High Planning for Transition Inventory (continued) page 3/6

### Co-/extracurricular Activities

Identify activities in which the student is currently involved at school or activities which may assist in developing skills for the future.

- Is the student currently involved in any clubs, groups or associations within the school?
- Is the student evaluating his or her likes or dislikes with regard to the school activities in which he or she is involved?
- Are there other activities at school that the student would like to be involved in?
- Does the student have or is he or she developing a circle of friends at school?
- Is there anything required to assist the student in becoming aware of and more involved in activities at school?

### Employment

- Is the student developing a personal career portfolio?
- Has the student identified or is the student taking part in activities that address career- and job-awareness exploration experiences?
- Is the student involved in volunteer, part-time or summer employment?
- Is the student developing a résumé, and recording the names and addresses of potential references?
- Is the student involved in work-experience opportunities at school?
- Are the student and his or her parents exploring the supports that would be required in the workplace?
- Is the student being mentored, or does he or she have assistance in volunteering in job and/or career interest areas?





Appendix 8-E

Sample Senior High Planning for Transition Inventory  
(continued) page 4/6

## Personal Management

Consider the personal management skills required for adult life, such as social skills awareness, peer relationships, living arrangements, banking skills, budgeting, voting, etc. In most cases, the student's family will have the major responsibility for this area.

Evaluate those activities that are performed on a regular basis.

- Is the student acquiring the knowledge and skills for planning and preparing a nutritious meal?
- Is the student acquiring the knowledge and skills to manage proper care of his or her clothing?
- Is the student acquiring the knowledge and skills to manage his or her financial affairs?
- Is the student acquiring the knowledge and skills to maintain a residence room, an apartment or home independently?
- Is the student developing an awareness of, and an ability to make arrangements for, accommodations related to his or her disability?
- Is the student acquiring knowledge of and developing skills for personal grooming?
- Is the student acquiring knowledge of and developing skills regarding social relationships?
- Does the student and/or parent need assistance in locating community resources regarding appropriate housing?
- Is the student or parent investigating the technical equipment the student will need for independent living?



## Sample Senior High Planning for Transition Inventory (continued) page 5/6

### Community Resources

Community clubs, groups or teams can be a source of social support for a student in the future. In general, the student's family will have the major responsibility for this area.

- Are the student and/or the parents developing an involvement with, or awareness of, the various local community service clubs, self-help groups or social groups that may be of assistance in helping to support the student in the future?
- Are the student and/or the parents developing an involvement with, or awareness of, self-help and advocacy groups available in the community or provincially/nationally?
- Do the student and/or the parents need further guidance and assistance in contacting community resources for support?

### Funding/Support

A transition plan needs to consider what skills related to researching funding sources, investigating scholarships, bursaries, loans, awards, Canada Study Grants, Training and Employment Support Services or Youth Futures funding, among others, are needed by students and/or their parents.

- Are the student and/or the parents developing skills regarding budget formation and management, and the predicting and tracking of expenses related to loans or support payments?
- Are the student and/or the parents developing a familiarity with municipal, provincial and federal services and youth programs?
- Are the student and/or the parents developing a familiarity with application procedures for scholarships or bursaries?
- Are the student and/or the parents developing a familiarity with application procedures for student loans, employment insurance, disability pension or other support funds?
- Are the student and/or the parents developing an awareness of possible tax deductions related to the student's special needs?
- Are the student and/or the parents developing an awareness of the financial considerations available through various public and private agencies (e.g., bus pass for public transportation)?



Appendix 8-E

## Sample Senior High Planning for Transition Inventory (continued) page 6/6

### Interagency Linkages/Services

Explore the service resources available either in the local area or at a post-secondary institution.

- Are the student and/or the parents investigating or initiating contact with the coordinator of services for the disabled or the student services department at the post-secondary institution that the student is interested in attending?
- Is the student in need of career counselling or other services?
- Are the student and/or the parents identifying the agencies that may provide assistance in reaching the student's personal goals as an adult?

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Sample Parent Questionnaire for Planning for Transition in Junior and Senior High School

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

This questionnaire can be used as a guide to think about the areas you believe to be important for your son or daughter. Your insights are important to the planning for transition process. Please bring your ideas to the IPP meeting scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_.

1. List the jobs your son or daughter has had, including volunteer experiences.

2. What do you see your son or daughter doing after high school?

### Daily Living Skills

1. In which of the following areas does your son or daughter show confidence in?

- handling money
- budgeting
- managing time
- using a calendar
- scheduling appointments
- meal planning
- food preparation
- medication use
- telephone skills

2. In what type of living arrangement do you believe your son or daughter will be successful?

- Independent
- With family
- Supported



Appendix 8-F

Sample Parent Questionnaire for Planning for Transition in Junior and Senior High School (continued) page 2/2

Leisure/Recreation

1. What types of leisure activities does your son or daughter participate in:

- |  |                                      |  |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hobbies         | <input type="checkbox"/> Team sports | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual sports |
| _____                                    | _____                                | _____                                      |
| _____                                    | _____                                | _____                                      |
| _____                                    | _____                                | _____                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Performing arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Clubs       |  |
| _____                                    | _____                                |  |
| _____                                    | _____                                |  |
| _____                                    | _____                                |  |

Community Involvement

1. Check the following consumer services your daughter or son can use independently:

- |   |                                      |                                  |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grocery store      | <input type="checkbox"/> Bank        | <input type="checkbox"/> Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restaurant         | <input type="checkbox"/> Post office | <input type="checkbox"/> Stores  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beauty/Barber shop |                                      |                                  |

2. Does your son or daughter have a:

- Social Insurance Number
- Driver's licence
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. What type of transportation can your daughter or son use?

- Personal car
- Family car
- Public transportation
- Bicycle



## Sample Parent Tips for Encouraging Teens to Think about Transition

Teens need to think about the things that they would like to do in the future; teens with special needs are no different. The following are some ideas for parents that will assist them in helping their child think about and plan for the future.

- Begin thinking about your teen’s future in a holistic way that includes much more than just a work placement.
- Help your teen to think about adult life, that is, interests, what matters, with whom friendships or other relationships might be, or how time would be spent.
- Think of planning for the future as a process. Focus on accomplishing small steps towards a goal. Remember that once a decision is made, it doesn’t mean that it can’t be changed if things don’t work out or if your child changes his or her mind.
- Look at the “messages” about your teen’s future that your child is receiving from all sources. Consider and develop the positive messages that you want understood.
- Watch your teen to see what he or she loves to do and encourage your teen to develop this as a natural strength. Emphasize these strengths when you begin to consider employment options.
- Encourage yourself to think beyond what you think is realistic for your teen’s future life, so you won’t leave out any options. You may be surprised.
- Treat barriers as challenges that may cause you to try something new.
- Be very conscious of the skills your teen is demonstrating, for example, self-awareness skills, life skills, job skills. Help develop these skills even more. They can be a great source of support in future life.
- Allow your child the opportunity to make mistakes. We all learn from our mistakes and become better people because of them. In learning to deal with mistakes in a positive way, your teen will be learning a very important skill necessary for his or her future ability to be independent.
- Be a good role model and talk with your teen about the activities you are engaged in, and find interesting and fun.
- Encourage your teen to volunteer and gain work experience.
- Listen to what your teen is telling you about his or her dreams for the future.
- Teens with special needs are like other teens in that they need your help and guidance to think about the possibilities for the future and to develop as much as possible towards independence.

For more information, see *Lasting Gifts: Parents, Teens and the Career Journey* (Alberta Human Resources and Employment, 1995).

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