



# Where Do I Start TRANSITION RESOURCES

For Families of Teens and Young Adults with  
Disabilities or Special Health Care Needs

Parent to Parent of Colorado  
1-877-472-7201, [p2p-co.org](http://p2p-co.org)



This Resource Guide is designed to give families a general idea of the types of supports available to them while navigating a path from childhood into adulthood. We encourage you to have high expectations for your family! The format is separated into the following categories:

- General Planning
- Education
- Self Advocacy
- Employment
- Healthcare
- Recreation
- Social Awareness
- Community Living

GENERAL PLANNING

**Question:** What will your teen’s life look like as an adult? Will they pursue post-secondary education? Will they pursue employment?

**Tip:** Participate in a person-centered planning process [PATHs to PossAbilities](#), learn about Supported Decision Making [Arc of Colorado](#) at to get connected with your local chapter and begin to research the possibilities.

**Tip:** At age 14, check with your [Community Centered Board](#) to see if your teen is eligible for adult services.

- [Peak Parent Center](#) offers several webinars around Transition
- [The Thrive Center](#) and [Project Independence](#) workshops and resources in Spanish and English
- [CDE Transition Resources](#) schedule an “Office Hours” appointment for help navigating the resources
- [CDE’s Transition Toolkit](#) information & tools for forming a comprehensive & individualized transition process
- [Transition, Transition Services, Transition Planning](#) from Wrightslaw
- [Pacer’s National Parent Center on Transition and Employment](#)
- [Transition Coalition](#) offers a set of free online trainings

EDUCATION

**Question:** Where could your teen be going vocationally? Will s/he need education or training beyond high school?

**Tip:** Begin at age 14 with measurable IEP transition goals such as ‘work experience outside of school hours in at least two worksites.’ Educational programs can extend until a student’s 21st birthday.

- [Sequencing of Services](#) is a framework to guide you including family-school-agencies using core outcomes and [Graduation Guidelines](#) from the Colorado Department of Education
- [Colorado Options Handbook](#) offers a thorough look at post-secondary education options & services
- [Cooperative Services Handbook for Youth in Transition](#) helps plan the transition from school to employment
- [Concurrent enrollment programs](#) provide tuition free opportunities for youth to attend community college while still in high school
- [IN! Pathways to Higher Education](#) inclusive college opportunities in Colorado for students with intellectual disabilities
- [Think College](#) have resources for youth with intellectual/developmental disabilities who want to attend college
- [Legal Requirements for Transition Components of the IEP](#)
- What is the difference between IDEA and ADA? A chart diagramming the difference between the college and high school [setting](#) resource from University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

SELF-ADVOCACY

**Question:** Have you encouraged your adolescent to make decisions on his/her own and communicate preferences and feelings?

**Tip:** Encourage your child to become a strong self-advocate. Guide and support him/her to make choices, participate planning or IEP meetings, have conversations with doctors or be involved with family decisions.

- [Student Self-Advocacy Access Project](#) at CSU is a four-section handbook with modules on self-advocacy skills
- [REVEL](#) teaches people 14+ how to connect and explore community in Colorado
- [COEF Self-Advocacy](#) a multi-resource listing with numerous self-advocacy skills
- [Students and Young Adults](#) from PACER Center has information to help develop self-advocacy skills
- [Colorado Developmental Disabilities Council](#) Supported Decision Making information and training
- [Supported Decision Making](#) from the National Center for Supported Decision Making

**Question:** What work opportunities will your son/daughter have: competitive employment? supported employment? volunteer work?

**Tip:** Explore programs offered by your school district such as [P-TECH](#), [SWAP](#), or state programs such as [Long-Term Services and Supports Training](#). Also, ask friends and neighbors for leads on internships, jobs, or volunteer opportunities. Inquire if your school district has vocational programs while still attending high school.

- [Youth and Transition Services Programs](#) by Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; Access training and skills to gain employment and independence
- [Entrepreneurship for Youth with Disabilities](#) an article on entrepreneurship by LD Online
- [Employment Connections](#) has a wide range of resources for youth, parents and professionals
- [Adult and Community Agencies](#) Colorado Agencies that collaborate with Colorado Department of Education
- School to Work [Project Search](#) from Children's Hospital of Colorado, check application requirements and guidelines
- [COEF](#) meaningful and competitive employment for all people, explore [Customized Employment](#) as another option

**Question:** How will your adult child meet his or her need for health insurance and medical care?

**Tip:** Create a health care transition plan at age 14.

**Tip:** Consider a Medical Power of Attorney so that you have access to your child's records and communication with healthcare professionals and provides

- [HCP](#), a healthcare program for children and youth with special healthcare needs, can assist with transition planning
- [Becoming an Adult: Taking Responsibility for Your Medical Care](#), a video for parents and their young adult
- [Got Transition](#) includes web, video and print resources
- In a Crisis, reach out to [Colorado Crisis Services](#)
- [Mental Health and Inclusion Ministries](#) offers Faith Based supports
- [Mental Health and IDD](#) a good overview of conditions and strategies by Redwood Coast Regional Center

**Question:** What will leisure activities and a social life look like?

**Tip:** Have your son/daughter participate in activities away from you—You need time away from them and vice-versa!

- **Local community recreation centers**, search the web or call to find out about programs
- [Special Olympics Colorado](#), the [YMCA](#), [NSCD](#) (National Sports Center for the Disabled)
- **Disability Specific organizations** for activities and events
- [PASCO](#) resource page for organizations providing activities

**Question:** How certain are you that your adult child has a sense of judgement and inference about the people in their community?

**Tip:** Don't assume they have learned this in school. Once your adult child is out in the world, they will be exposed to things you could never dream of. Share relevant topics and strategies in an accessible way.

- [Gender Diversity](#) Disparities Among LGBTQ Persons with Disabilities; [Health & Gender Diversity](#) by Syd Staggs
- [Online Dating](#), the Council for Intellectual Disability provides some strategies for people interested in dating;
- Easter Seals has a series of stories told by adults with disabilities [Love, Dating, Relationships and Disability](#)
- Check out "[Love on the Spectrum](#)" on Netflix
- [Substance Use](#) is discussed on the Recovery Village website
- [Suicide Prevention](#) is addressed by the UNC School of Medicine
- Autism Resource for [Warning Signs of Suicide](#)

**Question:** Where will your young adult live and what supports will be needed? What happens when you are no longer around?

**Tip:** Seek out families who have adult children living independently with and without support. Ask questions, observe and then provide age appropriate independent opportunities beginning on a small scale.

**Tip:** Investigate available supports. Have a will in place. Consider a special needs trust. Plan for the future!

- [Home and Community Based Services](#) (See the Waiver Flowchart and Adult Waiver Charts)
- [In Home Support Services](#) information for services your youth can receive at home
- [Social Security Benefits Planner \(SSI\)](#) for a disabled child over 18
- [Supported Decision Making](#) and/or [Guardianship](#) look into prior to age 18
- [Housing Choice Voucher Program](#) (also known as Section 8)
- Colorado Statewide [Independent Living Council](#) promotes inclusion in the community
- "Becoming an Adult: Legal & Financial Planning" [video](#) (10:58) produced by Nemours
- [Future Planning](#)® by Arc US discover resources about your child's future
- Learn how to use [transportation](#) resources from the Autism Grown up Resource Center

The **WHERE DO I START?** series is available, in English and Spanish, at:

[p2p-co.org/where-do-i-start](http://p2p-co.org/where-do-i-start)

- #1 General Resources
- #2 Disability Specific Resources
- #3 The Three P's: P2P, PEAK, PEP
- #4 Transition for Youth and Young Adults



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