



A community partner is a person from an organization outside of your high school that can help you plan for your life after graduation. It may be helpful to invite community partners to your IEP meetings because they can help you lay out your goals and the steps to take to meet those goals.

## BEFORE THE MEETING

Think about one or more community partners to invite. A community partner should connect with your goals for life after high school.

Examples:

Goal	Community Partner
Live in my own apartment	Housing Program Representative
Find a job	Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Representative
Schedule my own mental health appointments	Adult Mental Health Care Provider
Go to college	College Admissions Representative

Still not sure who to invite? For ideas, you can ask your transition coordinator, counselor, teacher, or family member. You can also get to know community partners by attending a transition fair at your school!

## DURING THE MEETING

- At the start of the meeting, the community partner(s) will introduce themselves to you and your IEP team. They may attend the meeting in-person or over the phone.
- During the part of the meeting about your goals, let your community partners know about your strengths, needs, and goals for after high school. Do you want to go to some type of college? Where do you hope to work? Or live? How independent would you like you be in your community one day?



### 3. Community partners will tell you how they can help you reach your goals.

 Some examples:

Housing Program Representative

This representative can tell you about housing options you are eligible for after high school and if assistance can be given to help you pay rent.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Representative

VR offices help people with disabilities get jobs. A VR representative can tell you about how VR can help you with your resume, job search, career skills, and more. VR can also help cover some of the tuition for college courses.

Adult Mental Health Care Provider

This provider can outline how they can support you as you begin to schedule your own therapy and medication management appointments.

College Admissions Representative

The representative can explain the application process, requirements for enrollment, and let you know if their college has a degree program aligned with your interests or suggest a different college that is a better fit for your goals. They can also explain about disability services at their college and how to get academic accommodations for your courses.

### 4. You, your community partners, and everyone else at the meeting will decide what steps will be taken and how to measure progress toward your goals. Your crew will also pick target dates to reach your goals.

## AFTER THE MEETING

1. Follow-up with any community partners that came to your IEP meeting. Thank them for attending.
2. If you're comfortable, tell them if and how their attendance made you feel, and how you thought they can help you reach your goals. This will let them know they are making a difference.
3. Over the next year, follow up with community partners about the steps they agreed to take with you and target dates. By talking with partners on a regular basis, you will get to know them better and build strong relationships for the future!

 You can ask your crew to help you complete these steps after the meeting if you would like.

## CONCLUSION

It is important to remember that this meeting is about you and your goals! Your crew are there to give you advice and guidance, but the choices are yours to make. It might take time to find the right community partner, but you can do this! Just take it one step at a time.

## RESOURCES

Costa A. *Getting Accommodations at College: Tools for School [English and Spanish versions]*.

Psychiatry Information in Brief 2012;8(16):1066. <https://doi.org/10.7191/pib.1066>. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.umassmed.edu/pib/vol8/iss16/1>

Huckabee, S., Golden, L., Ellison, M. L., & Biebel, K. (2017). "Partnering with Community Agencies in Transition Planning for Students with Emotional Behavioral Disturbance." Translating Evidence to Support Transitions. University of Massachusetts Medical School, Department of Psychiatry, Systems and Psychosocial Advances Research Center (SPARC), Transitions to Adulthood Center for Research: Worcester, MA

Transitions RTC. (2017, March). *Outside-The-Box College Accommodations Real Support for Real Students Tools for School II*. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.umassmed.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1110&context=pib>

Transitions RTC. (2016, March). Supplemental Security Income: What Happens to My SSI When I Turn 18? Retrieved from <https://escholarship.umassmed.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1058&context=pib>

Transitions RTC. (2015, April). *Teens on IEPs: Making My "Transition" Services Work for Me*. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.umassmed.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1067&context=pib>

Transitions RTC. (2012, April). *Vocational Rehabilitation (VR): A Young Adult's Guide*. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.umassmed.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1070&context=pib>

Transitions RTC. (2019, August). *TACR Shorts Accommodations*. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.umassmed.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1134&context=pib>

## SUGGESTED CITATION

Rao, M., Golden, L., & Ellison, M. L. (2020). *I've Got My Crew: Inviting Community Partners to your IEP Meeting*. Translating Evidence to Support Transitions. University of Massachusetts Medical School, Department of Psychiatry, Implementation Science and Practice Advances Research Center (iSPARC), Transitions to Adulthood Center for Research: Worcester, MA.

visit us at [umassmed.edu/TEST](http://umassmed.edu/TEST)

Funded by National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research  
(NIDILRR grant# 90DP0080).

NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this website do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, or HHS and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

