

A Comprehensive Approach to Transition



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Introduction

Members of the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) have produced this paper because they want to help people to work together to support the self-determined transition of youth to adulthood and community life. Self-determination means that people have a say in the important decisions of their own lives. Transition means moving from one place or stage of life to another.

As youth leave school, they face several transitions. These include moving from school to work or more training or education after high school; moving from a family home to community living; and moving from child-oriented health care to adult care.

Youth should be able to expect the support they need from family, community, professionals, and agencies to direct their own transitions.

Many things stand in the way of everyone working together to support all the parts of a successful transition to adulthood.

There are four important ideas to think about:

1. Self-determination, or a student having a say in the important decisions of his/her own life, is at the heart of transition planning.
2. Everyone should understand the culture of the youth and his/her family when making and carrying out a transition plan.
3. Everyone involved with the youth needs to work together.
4. Transition Planning should include all the perspectives and organizations that will affect the transitioning student.



Things to Know About Self-Determination

Self-determination (having a say in the important decisions in your life) has been linked to better transition outcomes, including:

- better employment
- independent living
- recreation and leisure outcomes
- better quality of life
- life satisfaction

There are many resources that teachers can use to help you make your own choices. Your teacher can find these resources at ngsd.org.

The more you are able to make decisions for yourself at the end of high school and take responsibility for them, the more you will be ready for becoming an adult.

Some people will be able to learn many or even all of the skills they need to take charge of their own lives. Others will always need a lot of support to have a say in the important decisions of their lives. It is important that those supporting you (your family, teachers, health care professionals, and others) help you to participate as much as you can in all decisions in your life. This may mean that families and support people need to listen or watch very carefully to learn your wishes, especially if you do not use words to communicate. Not being able to speak does not mean that you cannot let your preferences and choices be known and understood or that you cannot play a major role in planning for the future.



Think About What Will Help You Become More Self-Determined

What do you need to learn?

What experiences do you want to have?

What decisions or responsibilities can you share?

What supports do you need to plan and work on your future?

Things to Know About Culture

- Everyone has a culture.
- Culture is about the beliefs and traditions of a family and a community.
- Culture is about what is important to families and communities.
- Culture helps make you part of a community.
- Culture helps you think about how you are connected to other people.



Think About Your Culture

What is important to your family and community?

What are some of the traditions in your family and community?

How do you participate in these traditions? Is there more you would like to do in the future?

Things to Know About Collaboration

Collaboration means working together. If all the organizations that will affect your life work together, they will be better able to help you become an adult.

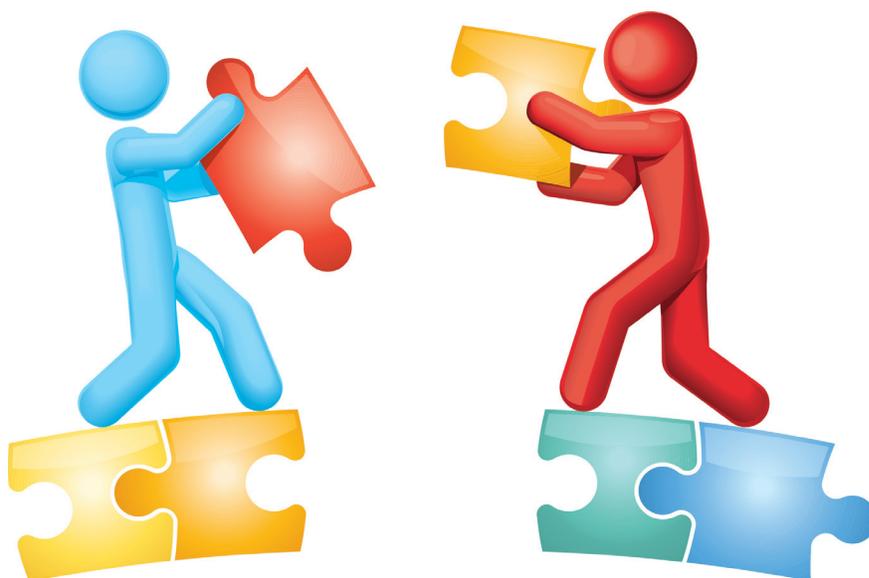
Some of the organizations that will affect your life are in your home community. These include:

- your school
- your doctor
- organizations that support adults
- businesses that might give you a job
- groups and organizations to which you might belong
- places where you can have fun

Some of the organizations that will affect your life are in your state. These include:

- the state office of vocational rehabilitation
- the state office of adult services
- the state office of public transportation
- the state social security office

Visiting or talking to these organizations will help you understand how they can help you be an adult.



Think About the Organizations That Might Affect Your Life

Organizations in Your Local Community

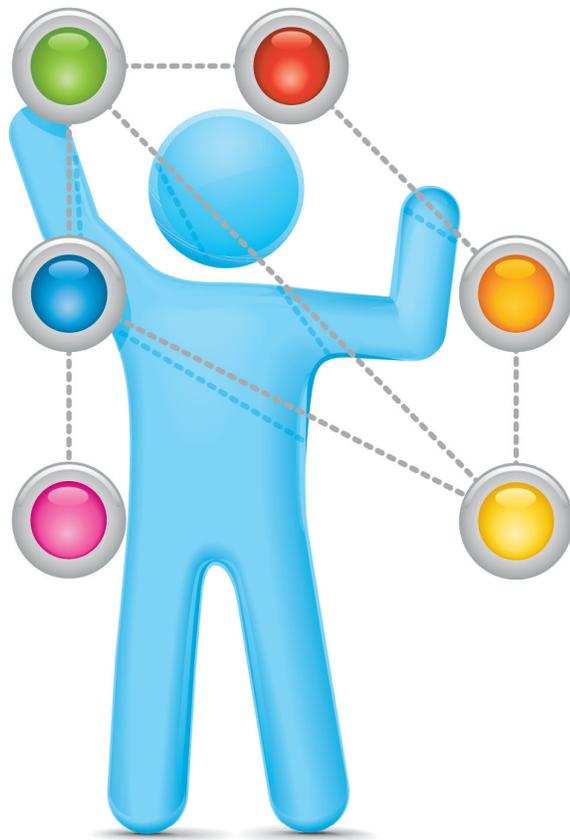
Organizations	Where are they located?	What is the name of the person you should talk to?	What questions do you want to ask?
Your School			
Your Doctor			
Organizations that support adults			
Businesses			
Groups			
Your Faith Community			
Places for fun			
Other places			

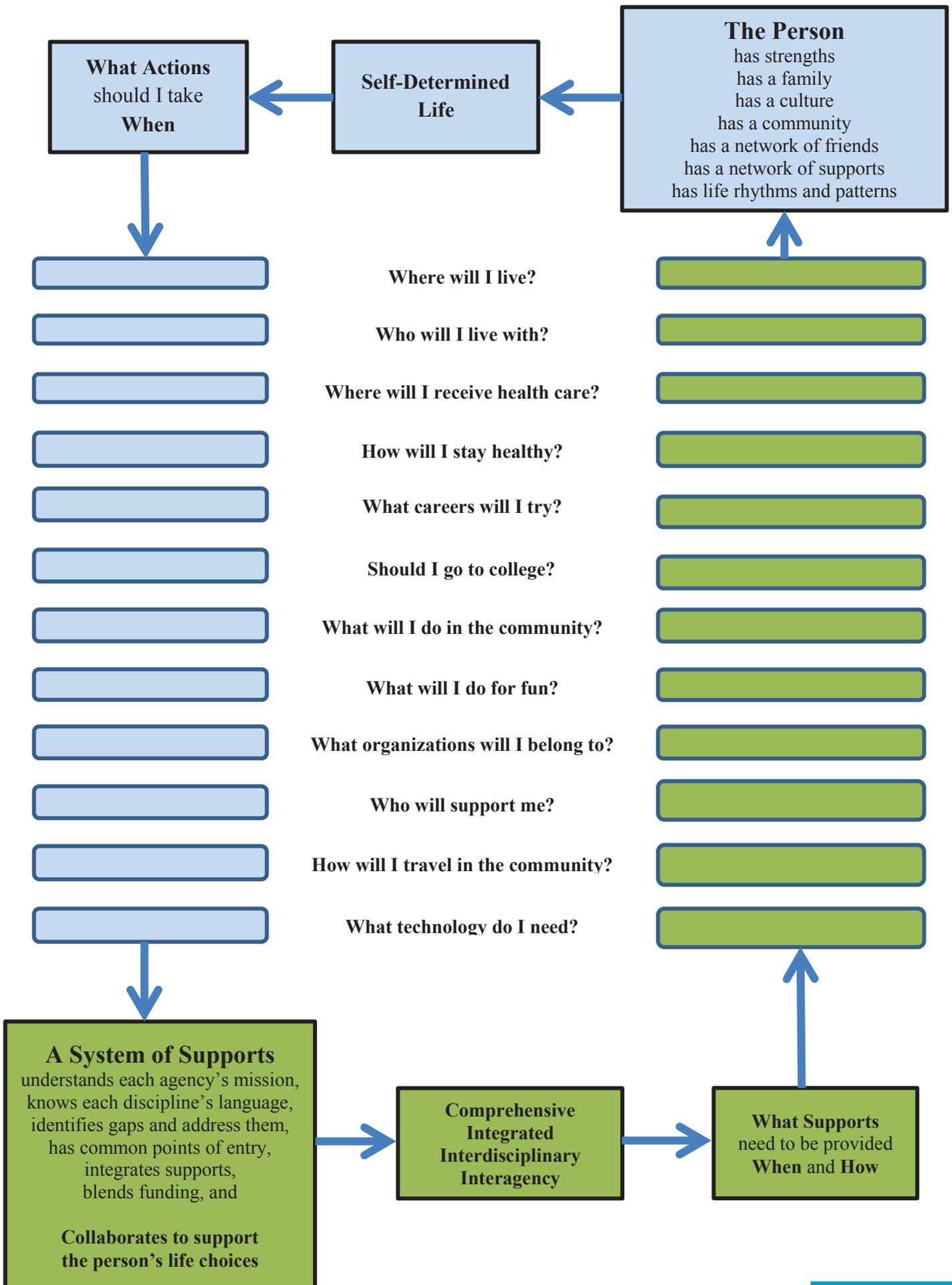
Organizations in Your State

Organizations	Where are they located?	What is the name of the person you should talk to?	What questions do you want to ask?
Vocational Rehabilitation			
Adult Services			
Transportation			
Other			

There are Many Things to Think About When Planning Your Adult Life

- Health Care
- Staying Healthy
- School Assessments
- Possible Jobs
- College
- Living in the Community
- Housing
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Technology
- Your Faith Community
- Building Relationships





Things to Think About in Middle School

Planning and Getting Ready <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk with my family and friends about what I would like to do after I finish school.• Develop a person-centered plan: a plan to help you achieve your goals.• How can I find out more about my interests? Who should I talk to? What questions should I ask them?• Find someone who can guide me and my family through the transition process.	Specific Things I Should Do
Making the Most of School <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How can I prepare for my IEP?• Talk to my teacher about the goals in my IEP.• Decide what decisions I can make.• Decide what I need to know to do before I make those decisions.	Specific Things I Should Do
Thinking about Health Care <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk to my doctor. Think about what I want to know about my health.• Decide what I can do to stay healthy.• What parts of my health care can I do by myself?	Specific Things I Should Do

Thinking about Employment

- What assessment activities will help me make decisions and set measurable goals for my future employment? Are these listed on my IEP? Who is responsible for arranging those experiences?
- What careers would I like to experience? Can I visit work places? Can I volunteer? Who will help me make those arrangements?

Specific Things I Should Do

Thinking about Education after High School

- What assessment activities will help me make decisions about going to college or other schools after I finish high school? Are these listed on my IEP? Who is responsible for arranging those experiences?

Specific Things I Should Do

Thinking about Living in the Community

- What are the things I like to do in my community? Where do these activities happen? How do I get there? Plan the route. Plan what transportation to use.
- Learn more about transportation. Learn about what transportation I can use to get around the community.

Specific Things I Should Do



Things to Think About in High School

Planning and Getting Ready <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk with my family to help me plan and run my own person-centered planning meeting.• How can I to find out more about my interests? Who should I talk to? What questions should I ask them?• Find someone who can guide me and my family through the transition process.• Talk with my family and with school advisors about alternatives to guardianship.	Specific Things I Should Do
Making the Most of School <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How can I prepare for my IEP? Talk to my teacher about the goals in my IEP. Decide what decisions I can make. Decide what I need to know to do before I make those decisions.• By my 16th birthday, my IEP should list my goals for work, other education or training, and living in the community. My IEP should list all the supports I need to work towards these goals. Does my IEP list specific activities to help me work on these goals? Does my IEP list who is responsible for these activities? Does my IEP list when these activities will happen?• What courses do I want to take in high school? What courses will expand my interests? What courses will help me reach my goals? How do I schedule these courses?	Specific Things I Should Do

Thinking about Self-Advocacy

(Self-advocacy means speaking up for the things that are important to you.)

- Are there any self-advocacy organizations in my community? How do I become a member?
- What self-advocacy skills do I need to learn? Will my teachers help me learn these skills? Are these skills listed as goals on my IEP?

Specific Things I Should Do

Thinking about Technology

- Think about what technology will help me in school, my future career and my community.
- Talk to my teachers about how to get the technology I need. Talk to my family and my teachers about how to pay for this technology.
- Who will teach me how to use this technology?
- Learn how to use information search tools such as Google Search.

Specific Things I Should Do



Thinking about Health Care

- Talk to my doctor. Think about what I want to know about my health. Ask my doctor for a health care summary that I can give to others involved with my health care.
- Decide what I can do to stay healthy. Make an exercise schedule.
- What parts of my health care can I do by myself or with my family? Can I help schedule appointments? Can I remember when to take medications? Can I develop a health care schedule?
- With my family, choose a doctor who provides health care to adults.
- Visit the doctor who provides health care to adults a few times before I stop seeing my original doctor. I want to be comfortable with my new doctor.

Specific Things I Should Do

Thinking about Housing

- Think about where I want to live in the future.
- With my family, visit some housing options.
- With my family, learn about how public benefits and subsidies impact housing options.

Specific Things I Should Do

Think about Who will Support Me as an Adult

- With my family, learn about how I apply for adult supports.
- Do I have a Case Manager?
- How do I apply for adult supports?
- With my family, select organizations that support adults that match my interests and goals.
- Decide what questions I want to ask those organizations.
- With my family, visit those organizations. Plan times to talk with organizations with which I and my family are already involved, like my church.

Specific Things I Should Do

Thinking about Employment

- What assessment activities will help me make decisions and set measurable goals for my future employment? Are these listed on my IEP? Who is responsible for arranging those experiences?
- What careers would I like to experience? Can I visit work places? Can I volunteer? Who will help me make those arrangements? What careers or jobs do I want to try? Who is responsible for arranging those experiences? Can I do internships? Will I be paid?
- Do I know my Rehabilitation Counselor? What supports can I receive from Vocational Rehabilitation? What do I need to do to apply?
- Who are people I already know who could help me find possible job opportunities?

Specific Things I Should Do



Thinking about Education after High School

- What assessment activities will help me make decisions about going to college or other schools after I finish high school? Are these listed on my IEP? Who is responsible for arranging those experiences?
- Are there colleges or other community education programs I would like to visit? Who will help me arrange these visits?
- If I decide to go to college, how do I apply?

Specific Things I Should Do

Thinking about Living in the Community

- What are the things I like to do in my community? Where do these activities happen? How do I get there? Plan the route. Plan what transportation to use.
- Learn more about transportation. Learn about what transportation I can use to get around the community.
- Who can teach me how to travel in the community? Who can help me learn the routes to get to all the places I want to go in my community?
- Make a schedule of all my community activities.
- What parts of my community schedule can I arrange by myself or with my family? Can I help schedule these activities? Can I help plan how to get to the activities.

Specific Things I Should Do

Other Things I Should Think About

Specific Things I Should Do



Things to Think About After High School

Planning and Getting Ready <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk with my family to help me plan and run my own person-centered planning meeting.• How can I to find out more about my interests? Who should I talk to? What questions should I ask them?• Talk with the person who is guiding me and my family through the transition process.• Talk with my family and with school advisors about alternatives to guardianship.	Specific Things I Should Do
Making the Most of School <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How can I prepare for my IEP? Talk to my teacher about the goals in your IEP. Decide what decisions I can make. Decide what I need to know to do before I make those decisions.• Even though I am out of school, my IEP should list my goals for career exploration, other education or training and living in the community.	Specific Things I Should Do

Thinking about Health Care

- Talk to my adult doctor. Think about what I want to know about my health.
- Decide what I can do to stay healthy. Make an exercise schedule.
- What parts of my health care can I do by myself or with my family? Can I help schedule appointments? Can I remember when to take medications? Can I refill my prescriptions? Can I develop a health care schedule?
- With my family, choose a doctor who provides health care to adults.
- Visit the doctor who provides health care to adults a few times before I stop seeing my original doctor. I want to be comfortable with my new doctor.

Specific Things I Should Do



Thinking about Employment

- Do I have a job?
- Use my self-advocacy skills to advocate for those accommodations that I will need at my work site.
- If I don't have a job, what careers or jobs do I want to try? Who is responsible for arranging those experiences? Can I do internships? Will these internships be paid?
- Do I know my Rehabilitation Counselor? What supports can I receive from Vocational Rehabilitation? What do I need to do to apply?
- Use my self-advocacy skills to advocate for those accommodations that I will need at my work site.
- Learn how to use any technology that will help me.

Specific Things I Should Do

Thinking about Education after High School

- Decide on any other courses or training I might want. Who will help me arrange these?
- Use my self-advocacy skills to advocate for those accommodations that I will need at my school or training site.
- Learn to use any technology that will help me.

Specific Things I Should Do

Thinking about Living in the Community

- What are the things I like to do in my community? Where do these activities happen? How do I get there? Plan the route. Plan what transportation to use.
- Make a schedule of all my community activities.
- What parts of my community schedule can I arrange by myself or with my family or adult support? Can I help schedule these activities? Can I help plan how to get to the activities.
- Learn to use any technology that will help me.

Specific Things I Should Do



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A companion publication to
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Several youth and family members
offered input and comments