

# Family Role in Transition Planning

## WHAT IS ADULT TRANSITION

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Transition planning is about supporting your child with a disability to learn what they want to do as an adult and creating the supports to help them get there successfully.

Transition in special education focuses on the movement of your child with disabilities from school to appropriate post-high school outcomes and support for the preparation it takes to move into the next stage in life. Not every youth will have the same goals and outcomes. All youth should have goals for future employment whether it is full or part-time employment that includes assistance as needed to be successful. All students should have goals and outcomes for postsecondary education or training that they will need to reach their employment goals. Your child may even have specific independent living goals.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); our nation's special education law states that the purpose of the legislation is "to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living." IDEA requires that formal transition goals be in place by the youth's 14th birthday. However, it is never too early to support your child in preparing and planning for their transition into adult life. In Mississippi, transition plans start at 14.

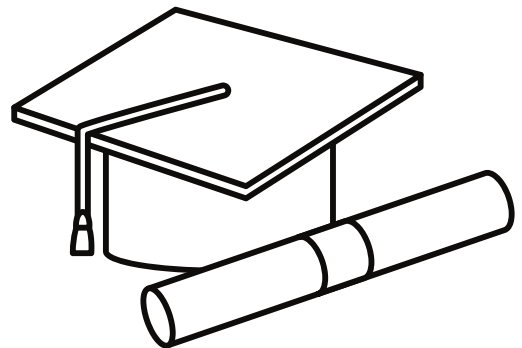
All members including parents, youth, educators, and community service providers are important members of your child's transition planning. They can all offer insight and expertise to support your child in transitioning to adult life.

## TRANSITION COMPONENTS

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Informed participation requires all IEP members to understand the concepts and supports the following can play in successful transition planning:

- IDEA 2004 transition planning requirements
- Entitlement Vs. Eligibility
- Information on Postsecondary Education Disability Support Services
- Student Role in Transition Planning
- Parent and Family Role in Transition Planning
- Transition Linkages to other Adult Support Agencies
  - Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services
  - Mississippi Department of Mental Health
  - Other Adult Agencies that can provide services to your youth or young adult.



# FAMILY ROLE IN TRANSITION PLANNING

## FAMILY ROLE IN TRANSITION

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Families can prepare to participate in their child's transition process and also help their child to take the lead in planning their life after high school.

Parents can **talk with their children** about what they want for themselves. This can include a discussion about their interests and preferences; what activities they like or dislike; and what post-school activities their children or youth want to do.

Parents can **promote self-advocacy** skill-building in their child or youth from an early age. Parents should encourage their children to be their own voice. This can be done by allowing your child to make choices, understand their strengths and abilities, and what supports help their child.

Parents should get **familiar with adult service agencies** that can provide support for employment, post-high school education, and independent living supports that may help their young adults after high school achieves their own goals.

Parents should support their children's **dreams**. All things are possible.

Parents can help their youth prepare for their IEP meeting by helping them to **organize their thoughts** about what they want after high school.

Parents should **maintain a home file** with information about their child that may be useful in transition planning and accessing adult supports and services. This file can include the following information about your child:

- Individual Education Plans,
- Health care plans,
- Contact information for adult service organizations,
- Medical information including health insurance or Medicaid information if applicable,
- Copies of assessments and evaluations,
- Timelines for adult services applications,
- Any correspondences with adult service agencies concerning your child, and
- Other information you may have that can be helpful in transition planning.