



Utah Parent Center
Special needs, extraordinary potential

Transition Ideas for Those with Significant Disabilities

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The transition process for students with significant disabilities follows the same process as others with mild or moderate disabilities. Issues such as housing, employment, recreation need to be addressed.

- **Visit the Utah Parent Center (UPC) Website:** Review the Utah Parent Center's transition to adult life manual for excellent information and ideas. Look in there for examples of IEP transition goals for your child. Look for information sheets and resources on transition. Become informed watch videos and webinars on different transition issues. Visit www.utahparentcenter.org/transitiontoadult/
- **Utah Family Voices (UFV):** Because the needs of children and youth with special health care needs are chronic and complex, parents and caregivers are often challenged with finding the resources to provide and finance services for their children. Utah Family voices is all about supporting families with special needs and is run by parents of children with special needs. UFV provides information and resources, consultations, parent to parent support and workshops and trainings. <http://www.utahfamilyvoices.org/>
- **Person Centered-Planning** is an important component of any transition plan because it is person (youth) centered. Person Center-Planning provides a structure to ensure that the youth's dreams are honored and voice heard while allowing those who support them to collaboratively plan for the youth's future. A person-centered team is developed which includes the individual with a disability and individuals who are familiar with his/her abilities, interests and needs to support the youth with daily living, school, social settings and work. These supportive individuals or "natural supports" can be parents, siblings, family members, friends, neighbors, former teachers, professionals, service providers, or other caring and knowledgeable individuals who know the young adult. The person-centered planning team provides families with an opportunity to involve individuals who want to help in ways that make a difference. Be sure to include the sibling who will become the guardian later in the individual's life. <http://ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=1431>

In Utah, the **Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD)** encourages the use of such planning. DSPD encourages the Person-Centered Planning process in determining the needs of persons receiving services. Input from the person and their Team (which includes the person's family members, friends, provider staff, DSPD Support Coordinator, etc.) should guide and direct this process. www.dspd.utah.gov

- **Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD):** The Division of Services for People with Disabilities (Division or DSPD) is part of the Utah Department of Human Services. DSPD offers services that assist people to live, learn, and work as part of their communities. The services that the DSPD provides are based on eligibility. Services include supported employment, day or partial day supports, respite care, family assistance and support, family training and preparation, residential supports, host home, supported living and the Utah State Developmental Center. DSPD does not serve all individuals with disabilities. To see if your child is eligible for DSPD services check their website. www.dspd.utah.gov intake: 1-877-568-0084

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When you first contact DSPD, they will need to determine if your child or adult are eligible to receive services. Anyone seeking to apply for services from DSPD should call the toll-free number 1-877-568-0084 and ask for an Intake Worker. The Intake Worker will gather information to begin the process of determining eligibility. DSPD is usually not able to offer immediate services to eligible individuals so they are placed on a waiting list. As funds become available, individuals on the waiting list are notified by a DSPD Intake Worker and brought into services. While waiting for services, continue to work with the DSPD and inform them of any changes in your child's situation to see if that might affect the wait status. When your child reaches adulthood, service options will change, let DSPD know. Be sure you fill out and return the requested information annually so your child's name is not dropped from the list.

For employment supports check out **Supported Employment** through DSPD. Supported Employment includes job development, placement, intensive on-the-job training, and support on the job by a job coach. It is intended for those people who may not be able to work in the community without some form of support.

- **Hire My Care:** Hire My Care is a web-based marketplace for aging and disability resources in Utah. Hire My Care connects people who need in-home care with the individuals and businesses who provide it, for more information visit <http://hiremycare.org>
- **Guardianship:** At age 18 the individual with a disability reaches the age of majority and is considered the adult. Decision making is now the legal responsibility of the individual with a disability unless parents take out guardianship. If your child is unable to make decisions, guardianship should be considered. There are different levels of guardianship the judge can grant full guardianship or partial guardianship in any of the following areas: medical, habilitation, education, residential, and financial. Only a court can determine if a person is incapacitated. In the State of Utah, the ward in the guardianship proceeding is represented by an attorney. The petitioner has a choice regarding attorney representation. The petitioner can choose to have an attorney to represent them or choose to represent themselves. For more information call the Utah Parent Center at (801) 272-1051 or contact **Guardianship Associates of Utah** at <http://guardianshiputah.org/>
- **Trusts:** Insure your will and trust are up to date and plans for your child after you are unable to care for him/her are clearly defined. Inheriting assets can affect your child's benefits, so this must be addressed in your trust. Be sure the attorney understands the intricacies of a special need trust. For more information about trusts, contact the Utah Parent Center at 801-272-1051 or at 1-800-468-1160.
- **Utah Futures Website** helps students to make education and career plans online. Students and their parents search living options, career information, and college options, take assessments, and complete activities. Have your student with a disability get a reality check. Does he/she see themselves renting an apartment or owning a house? Driving a car or taking the bus? Eating out a lot or a little? On Utah Futures find out how much money he/she will need to earn to cover his/her expenses and what occupations will support his/her lifestyle. The elementary school version might be easier to use depending on your child's level, find out more at <http://www.stepuputah.com/utah-futures/>
- **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), Utah State Office of Rehabilitation:** The mission of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is to assist eligible individuals in obtaining employment and increasing their independence. Don't rule out some type of employment just because your child's disability is more significant. VR can offer counseling and guidance, job development and placement, career evaluation, supported employment and job coaches. Contact VR to see what types of programs and assistance is available. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation provides transition services to eligible students with disabilities as they

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transition from school to adult life. The school can invite a transition counselor to the IEP to discuss what possible assistance can be provided. The school will ask you to sign a permission form in order for them to invite outside agencies. Contact VR at www.usor.utah.gov or 1-800-473-7530.

- **Self-employment** is something many people with disabilities has found to be successful for addressing their needs and interests. Owning a business often provides the flexibility that is necessary to those who require frequent medical attention, flexible hours, accessible work space, or other special considerations. Vocation Rehabilitation can help with supports and funding to build his/her own business. Your family will need to help develop a business plan and advocate for self-employment, find more information at <http://www.workabilityutah.org/cd/02/Resources/SelfEmployment.html>
- **Employment Personal Assistance Program (EPAS)** is Medicaid personal care services provided to people with disabilities to support them in maintaining employment. The individual needs to receive Medicaid and work at least 10 hours a week. EPAS is designed to provide personal assistance for people who may have physical, mental, cognitive, and/or developmental disabilities that are working in integrated, competitive employment. The assistance provided is for tasks directly related to maintaining employment. Services include support with eating, bathing, dressing, transportation, mobility, meal preparation, shopping, money management, medication management and symptom management. Learn more about EPAS at <http://workabilityutah.org/healthcare/epas.php>
- **Utah Work Incentives Planning and Services (UWIPS):** Many parents are concerned that if their child works, benefits will be lost. Utah Work Incentives Planning and Services (UWIPS) helps people on Social Security understand how working impacts their Social Security and other benefits (including Medicaid, Medicare, food stamps, housing, and many others). <http://www.usor.utah.gov/benefits-planning> Call UWIPS at 1-866-454-8397 for individual assistance.
- The **Utah Medical Home Portal** helps parents to learn how to better care for his/her child with chronic and complex conditions, and become a more effective partner in your child's care. The website provides reliable information and resources to help physicians and parents care for children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN). There is also a special section on "Navigating Transitions with Your Child." This link provides information in many areas including resources, checklists, self-advocacy, transportation, etc. <http://www.medicalhomeportal.org/>
- **Medicaid** is a source of health insurance coverage for Utah's vulnerable populations. Medicaid is a state/federal program that pays for medical services for individual's low-income individuals with disabilities pregnant women, children, individuals who are elderly and parents. To qualify, these individuals must meet income and other eligibility requirements visit <https://medicaid.utah.gov/>
- **Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability** programs are the federal programs that provide assistance to people with disabilities. These two programs are different in many ways. Both are administered by the Social Security Administration. Only individuals who have a disability and meet medical criteria may qualify for benefits under either program.

The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program makes cash assistance payments to individuals who are aged, blind, or have a disability (including children under age 18). This program is based on a family's need, considering both income and resources. The federal government funds SSI from general tax revenues.

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Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) provides benefits to individuals with disabilities who are "insured" by workers' contributions to the Social Security trust fund. These contributions are the "FICA" which is deducted from your paycheck or the earnings of your spouse or your parents. Title II of the Social Security Act authorizes SSDI benefits.

Use Social Security's Benefits Eligibility Screening Tool to find out which programs your youth may be eligible for at <http://www.benefits.gov/ssa>

- The **Utah Center for Assistive Technology (UCAT)** is a statewide resource offering information and technical services to help people with disabilities acquire and use assistive technology devices. UCAT offers free evaluations to anyone within the state of Utah. Schedule an appointment with the Utah Center for Assistive Technology for a tour and evaluation of possible resources there. They have access to amazing computer programs and assistive devices that could help your child.

The **Computer Center** is an integral part of UCAT. It offers a unique resource through which people with disabilities can access more completely the power afforded by modern computers. Make an appointment and receive a free evaluation. Explore communication devices, different computer programs, apps and adaptations to see if they will work for your child with a disability.

For either service call (801) 887-9380 or visit <http://ucat.usor.utah.gov/>

- The **Utah Assistive Technology Foundation** offers low cost loans for assistive technology. The mission of the UATF is to assist Utah citizens with disabilities by enhancing their independence, education, employment, and quality of life through the use of assistive technology. The UATF also helps individuals with disabilities to obtain the assistive technology devices and services they need to communicate, complete daily tasks, succeed in inclusive classrooms, work competitively, and participate in community activities. <http://www.uatf.org/index.html>
- **Work with other parents** at your school to develop a social group to provide social opportunities for your child as an adult. Connect with other families who have youth with similar significant disabilities.
- **For Social Interaction** hire Peer Mentors that can do activities at home and in the community with your youth or adult with disabilities. Look at hiring high school and college students to be peer mentors.
- For **Recreation** check out the following:
 - Utah Parent Center Summer Activities: www.utahparentcenter.org
 - Centers for Independent Living at <http://usilc.org/il-centers>
 - Special Olympics at <http://www.sout.org/>
 - The National Ability Center at <http://www.discovernac.org/>
 - SPLORE at <http://splore.org/>
 - Many more organizations at www.activityreg.com.
- **Utah Centers for Independent Living** are non-residential facilities that provide services which enhance the independence of people with disabilities. Staff members, some of whom have a disability, play an important role in the delivery of independent living services which include four core services: Peer Support, Information and Referral, Independent Living Skills Training and Advocacy. Most services at the Independent Living (IL) Centers are free. The Independent Living Centers are state-wide and some centers provide a youth and transition program. Check your local Independent Living Center website to see what services are available or visit <http://usilc.org/il-centers>

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- **Be creative and think outside the box** when helping your child plan for a future. The time to plan is now. The transition process while your student is in school is the time to do your homework! The school team will work with you as well, but as always, parents are the child's best advocate.

Questions to consider when preparing for a transition IEP for youth with significant disabilities:

1. Can the young adult express interests? If no, get information from parents and caregivers to develop transition plan. Consider person-centered planning to come up with the young adult's interests from a variety of sources.
2. What are my youth's special health care needs?
3. What are needs/challenges preventing the young adult from working outside the home?
4. Who can provide education/training to assist the young adult?
5. What can the young adult accomplish without assistance?
6. What else could the young adult accomplish if assistance were provided by a job coach, habilitation training specialist (HTS), or other caregiver?

(Guiding Questions for Secondary Transition Planning for Youth with Significant Disabilities, ideas from an Oklahoma working group: http://www.nsttac.org/sites/default/files/nsttac.OSEP.teleconference.I-13_SD.pdf)

Here is a list of websites with some excellent information for you to explore:

Transition

- <http://www.tisd.k12.mi.us/hps/pages/specedforms/pdf%20files/Transition%20Services%20-%20Helping%20Educators.pdf> This is an article by Ed O'Leary regarding transition services and gives some very specific examples of transition goals and planning.
- http://sonoranucedd.fcm.arizona.edu/sites/sonoranucedd.fcm.arizona.edu/files/CAREGIVING_Roadmap_021010.pdf Future Care Planning: A Roadmap for Family Caregivers. This is a user friendly planner for family caregivers and the individual with significant disabilities.
- <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure> The 411 On Disability Disclosure
This workbook helps young people make informed decisions about whether or not to disclose their disability and understand how that decision may impact their education, employment, and social lives.
- <http://workabilityutah.org/youth/toolkit/toolkit.php> Great toolkit to prepare youth for transition
- <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/topic> NCWD/Youth has an array of briefs, background papers, guides, manuals, and other materials to address issues for youth with and without disabilities; youth service professionals, workforce development professionals, policymakers, and many more.
- <http://nichcy.org/schoolage/transitionadult> This site includes information on the transition process, guardianship, disabilities and college, disabilities and employment.
- <http://www.nsttac.org/content/transition-planning-folder-mapping-out-your-childs-transition> This planning folder allows parents to map out concerns, ideas, or even courses by school year as they think about their child's transition from high school toward their post-secondary goals.

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Employment

- <http://askjan.org> The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is the leading source of free, expert, and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues.
- <http://www.careerinfonet.org/videos.asp?id=27,&nodeid=27> This government sponsored website offers a wealth of information about careers, skills needed, etc. This particular link has videos about different careers.
- <http://www.start-up-usa.biz/resources/content.cfm?id=681> This page on the site from Virginia answers some basic questions about self-employment and people with disabilities.
- <http://www.workabilityutah.org/> Information found on this site includes information about incentives for working, the Ticket to Work program, self-employment, etc. is a Utah site dedicated to opening doors for work to those with disabilities and information about services available to support them.
- <http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills> This is information from the US Department of Labor with activities parents and teachers can use to help their students develop soft skills necessary for job success.
- <http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/Resources.pdf> Additional resources to explore for transition and employment.

Person Centered Planning:

- http://www.onestops.info/article.php?article_id=189&subcat_id=102 Starting with Me: A Guide to Person-Centered Planning for Job Seekers
- http://www.pacer.org/publications/parentbriefs/ParentBrief_Feb04.pdf This article is an excellent explanation of what person-centered planning is and how it relates to the transition process.
- http://www.mnddc.org/extra/publications/choice/Its_My_Choice.pdf The booklet found here called, *It's My Choice*, is a workbook designed to help those with developmental disabilities participate in the person-centered planning process and transition.

Day Services

- <http://turncommunityservices.org> Turn Community Services offers residential and day services as well as other programs.
- www.riseinc.net Rise offers a variety of services including day, residential, employment programs, etc.
- <http://riseservicesinc.org/utah-cat/residential-services/independent-living/> The Latitude program was brought together by a parent group who could not get DSPD funding for their children. This program was designed to be paid for by the individuals' social security benefits. The clients pay the monthly fee for the services which include: menu planning, bus training, budgeting, shopping, job maintenance, housing search, roommate meetings, and group activities. For more information, call: 801-995-2357

More Resources

- <http://utahpooledtrust.org/> The Utah Pooled Trust is an entity separate from the person with a disability, and is established to hold and manage assets which have been set aside for that person. This type of trust allows people with disabilities to compensate for additional needs that are not covered by the government, without jeopardizing their eligibility for benefits.

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