

TRANSITION HANDBOOK

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY

MONROE COUNTY

*A Guide for Transition Services for students ages
14 to 21, Parents, and Teachers*



Colonial Intermediate Unit 20

Northampton/Monroe County Transition Council

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Reference Guide Contains

- The Transition Process
 - Role of the Family
 - Developing a Transition Plan
 - Transition Checklist
- Directory of Resources

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The Northampton/Monroe County Transition Council

C/O Colonial Intermediate Unit #20

6 Danforth Drive

Easton, PA 18045

610-252-5550

Web Address: www.ciu20.org

Co-chairpersons for Northampton/Monroe County Transition Council

Jennifer Jones-Baur, CIU 20 Transition Program Specialist

Susan McCollian, CIU 20 Transition Program Specialist

Representing the following schools

Bangor
East Stroudsburg
Northampton
Pocono Mountain

Bethlehem
Easton
Pen Argyl
Saucon Valley
Wilson

Delaware Valley
Nazareth
Pleasant Valley
Stroudsburg

Bethlehem Area Vocational-Technical School
Career Institute of Technology
Monroe County Vocational-Technical School
Colonial Academy
Colonial IU 20

- The mission of the Transition Council is to assist and provide students, families, educators, and community agencies with information, knowledge, and resources to prepare the students for life after high school.
- The Transition Council is comprised of educators, agencies and parents. The council provides information for students, parents, educators, and service providers, and develops and maintains local transition inter-agency agreements.
- Transition services are provided because of state laws, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1990 and reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) in 2004 to address the needs of young people with disabilities.
- The Northampton/Monroe County Transition Council has meetings 4 times per year. We discuss the laws and policies from our different school districts and how they affect families, educators, and businesses in our community.
- You can become a member of the Transition Council by contacting the Co-Chairpersons, Jennifer Jones-Baur 610-252-5550 x6159 or Susan McCollian 610-252-5550 x6107.

Transition Resources Directory

VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

Bethlehem Area Vocational/Technical School	(610) 866-8013
Career Institute of Technology	(610) 258-2857
Lincoln Technical Institute	(610) 398-5300
Monroe County Career & Technical Institute	(570) 629-2001



Transition Resources Directory

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

East Stroudsburg University	(570) 422-3825
Kutztown University	(610) 683-4108
Lehigh Carbon Community College	(610) 799-2121
Lincoln Technical Institute	(866) 438-7545
Muhlenberg College	(484) 664-3100
Northampton Area Community College (NCC)	(610) 861-5342
Tannersville Campus	(570) 620-9221
Penn State Lehigh Valley	(610) 285-5000
Welder Training & Testing Institute	(800) 223-9884

SCHOOL DISTRICTS/IU

Bangor Area School District	(610) 588-2163
Bethlehem Area School District	(610) 868-8268
Delaware Valley School District	(570) 296-1800
East Stroudsburg Area School District	(570) 424-8471
Easton Area School District	(610) 250-2428
Nazareth Area School District	(610) 759-1170
Northampton Area School District	(610) 262-7811
Pen Argyl Area School District	(610) 863-3191
Pleasant Valley School District	(570) 402-1000
Pocono Mountain School District	(570) 839-7121
Saucon Valley School District	(610) 838-7026
Stroudsburg Area School District	(570) 421-1991
Wilson Area School District	(484) 373-6000
Colonial Intermediate Unit 20	(610) 252-5550
PA Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN)	(800) 441-3215

INTRODUCTION

We all experience transitions throughout our lives. As parents, we will ask our sons and daughters these questions, "What do you want to do with your life, and what are your dreams for the future?" We must **LISTEN** and respect their dreams and begin to think about the possibilities for a desirable future. What will happen when they finish school? What are all of the opportunities available to young adults as they take their personal journeys through adult life? Whether it is taking post-secondary education classes, working, volunteering, starting a business, traveling, living independently, enjoying leisure activities, or participating in the community, it doesn't really matter. What matters is that **ALL** of these options, not just some of them, be available to enable people with disabilities to truly experience the transition from teenager to adult with excitement and passion.

Every person, regardless of type or level of disability, can be successful with the appropriate supports, accommodations, assistive technology, and/or modifications. Smooth transition is not easy and plans do not always work out the first time. However, all of the people involved in transition planning must think creatively, utilize resources in ways that make sense, try and fail, then regroup and try again. This booklet offers ideas about preparing and planning for transition, and it also identifies the agencies and resources that will assist your sons and daughters to move forward with their personal journeys.

Written by Kathy J. Garcsar, parent

What is Transition?

Transition is change or movement from one area of life to another. For parents, transition began upon discovering that their child had a disability. The child's education process and transition probably began with infant stimulation, followed by preschool, and then special education. For a student with a disability, transition takes on a whole new meaning at age fourteen through age twenty-one. The final movement for him/her will be from school to adult life.

Transition is also a coordinated set of services mandated in 1990 by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) in 2004. It is an outcome oriented process that is formalized at age 14 in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and continues through graduation. Transition includes activities related to post secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment, continuing adult education, adult services, and independent living. The student's interests, strengths, and needs drive transition planning. It can be simply looked at as a bridge between school age programs and adult life. It involves parents and students working together with teachers, schools, and the community to maximize adult life potential.

Once a young adult leaves school, he/she will spend the rest of his/her life in the community. Parents must become involved in working with teachers, school, and adult services to ensure that their young adult can live as independently as possible, perhaps enter employment, and have a full social life.

Transition Resources Directory

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired	(610) 433-6018
Best Buddies of PA	(215) 569-0069
Children with Attention Deficit Disorder (CHADD)	(570) 421-0509
Down Syndrome Parent Network	(800) 435-7039
Easter Seals	(610) 264-4322
	(570) 421-1254
Fitzmaurice Community Service	(570) 424-6223
Job Accommodation Network (JAN)	(800) 526-7234 V/TTY
Kids Peace National Centers	(800) 854-3123
Learning Disabilities Association	(610) 458-8193
Lehigh Valley Autism Society	(610) 778-9212
Lehigh Valley Resource Directory for People with Disabilities	(610) 740-5610
Parent Education Network (PEN)	(800) 522-5627
Parent Support Group	(570) 839-5365
Parent to Parent of Pennsylvania	(800) 986-4550
Parent's Involved Network (Regina Erickson, Parent Advocate)	(570) 476-1037
PA Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing	(800) 654-5988
PA Parents & Caregivers Resource Network (PPCRN)	(800) 522-5827
PA Self Determination Consumer & Family Group	(800) 459-1838
Pennsylvania's Assistive Technology Lending Library	(877) 722-8536 V/TTY
Pocono Autism Society	(570) 421-2299
Pocono Services for Families & Children	(570) 421-2711
Resources for Human Development	(570) 992-0879
Speaking Out for Ourselves—Monroe County	(570) 476-6633
The Arc of Lehigh and Northampton Counties	(610) 849-8076
The Special Kids Network	(800) 986-4550 or (570) 829-0519
Twin Rivers House (Clubhouse Program)	(610) 250-9630
Unity House of Bethlehem (Clubhouse Program)	(610) 691-1580
Valley Youth House	(610) 954-9561

Volunteer Opportunities are listed in Human Service section of telephone book.

Transition Resources Directory

Monroe County

RESIDENTIAL/INDEPENDENT LIVING

Devereux Pocono Center	(570) 676-3237
Northeast PA Center for Independent Living	(800) 344-7211
Wakefield Cottage LLC	(570) 722-8883
Human Resources Center	(570) 223-9375

RECREATION

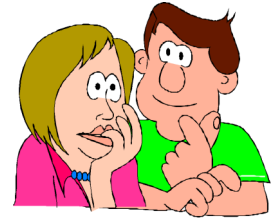
Equi-librium	(570) 421-8500
Monroe County Recreation	(570) 992-2733
Monroe Special Olympics	(570) 421-5624
Special Olympics of Pennsylvania	(610) 630-9450
Special Olympics-Adults	(610) 588-7651
YMCA	(570) 421-2525

TRANSPORTATION

Advocates for Public Transportation of Monroe County	(570) 476-6377
Monroe County Transportation Authority (MCTA)	(570) 839-6282
Monroe County Shared Ride	(570) 839-8210



The Role of the Family



- Share information and goals by completing parent and student surveys
- Decrease the student's dependency on the family by increasing his/her participation in the community.
- Attend and participate in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings for transition. Areas that will be addressed include: post-secondary education/training, employment, and independent living.
- Become familiar with agencies that provide recreational, financial, social, employment, transportation, and residential opportunities for young adults with disabilities.
- Due to potential waiting lists, referrals to agencies need to be made in a timely manner.



Individual Education Plan (IEP)

- * The Transition Plan is integrated into the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and developed by team members at the IEP meeting.
- * Components of an IEP related to transition include:
 - Post Secondary Outcome(s)
 - Functional Vocational Assessment(s)
 - Instructional Areas to support outcomes
 - Person(s) responsible for coordination
 - Interagency responsibilities and linkages
- * Required members of the IEP team include:
 - Student
 - Parents and/or Guardians
 - Special Education Teacher
 - Regular Education Teacher and/or Vocational Teacher
 - Local Education Agency Representative (LEA) from your school district
- * Optional team members include:
 - School District Transition Coordinator
 - Transition Consultant from local Intermediate Unit
 - Job Coach
 - Guidance Counselor
 - School Psychologist
 - Community Agency Representatives (with parent permission)
- * Transition planning begins at age 14, or the IEP cycle during which the student turns 14 years old.
- * Transition planning is long range in nature and looks toward the future by determining the student's Desired Post School Outcomes.
- * Transition planning should address functional skills that will support the student in becoming a contributing member of the community.

*** IF YOUR SON/DAUGHTER IS 14 YEARS OR OLDER AND HAS NOT HAD A TRANSITION PLAN COMPLETED, CONTACT YOUR HOME SCHOOL DISTRICT FOR INFORMATION.

Transition Resources Directory Monroe County

AGENCIES

Mental Health/Mental Retardation (MH/MR)	(570) 421-2901
Office of Children, Youth, and Families	(570) 420-3590
Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	(800) 922-9536
*Pike County	(800) 634-2060

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Pennsylvania/Social Security Administration Benefits	
Counseling and Assistance Project (PASSABCO)	(866) 541-7005
Social Security Administration	(570) 422-1175
	(800) 772-1213

EMPLOYMENT/WORK OPPORTUNITIES

Burnley Employment and Rehabilitation Services	(570) 992-6616
Career Link (Workforce Investment Act-WIA)	(570) 620-2850
Developmental Education Services	(570) 424-5410
Human Resources Center (HRC)	(570) 223-9375
Youth Employment Service	(570) 620-2410

ADULT TRAINING FACILITIES

Burnley Employment and Rehabilitation Services	(570) 992-6616
Devereux Pocono Center	(570) 676-3237

DAY PROGRAMS

Developmental Education Services	(570) 424-5410
Devereux Pocono Center	(570) 676-3237
Options Program at Fitzmaurice	(570) 424-6223

Transition Resources Directory

Northampton County

TRANSPORTATION

Easton Coach	(610) 253-4055
LANTA	(610) 776-7433
Metro Plus Specialized Transportation	(610) 432-3200
Valley Association for Specialized Transportation (VAST)	(610) 433-7334



Developing a Transition Plan

TRANSITION PLANNING CONSIDERS:

- * Student interests, preferences, abilities, and aptitudes.
- * Instructional, ecological, and/or vocational evaluations.
- * Post-school outcomes in education or training, employment, adult services, and independent living.
- * Specific activities supporting the development of post-school outcomes.
- * Person(s) responsible for implementation of each specific outcome.
- * Support services, such as transportation, vocational counseling, case management, and medical services.
- * An agency or person responsible for continuation of transition planning and exchange of information following graduation. This person or agency must be identified in the plan no later than the final year of school.

TRANSITION PLAN SHOULD:

- * Represent the decisions of the student, family, educators, and other service providers.
- * Include information provided by the student concerning his/her future plans.
- * Incorporate data from the student's functional vocational assessment.
- * Provide for the participation of education and community service agency representatives.
- * Address the needs of the student seeking post-school employment and/or education.
- * Assure that the student and/or parent has the information necessary to link student to adult services.
- * Be reviewed and modified annually as part of the IEP.

Transition Checklist

The following is a checklist of transition activities that you and your son/daughter may wish to consider when preparing transition plans with the IEP team. Your son/daughter's skills and interests will determine which items on the checklist are relevant. Use this checklist to ask yourself whether or not these transition issues should be addressed at IEP/transition planning meetings. The checklist can also help identify who should be part of the IEP/transition team. Responsibility for carrying out specific transition activities should be determined at the IEP/transition meetings.



AT AGE 14 OR YOUNGER

- ✓ Identify personal learning styles and the necessary accommodations to be a successful learner and worker.
- ✓ Identify career interests and skills, complete interest and career inventories, and identify additional education or training requirements.
- ✓ Explore options for post-secondary education and admission criteria.
- ✓ Identify interests and option for future living arrangements, including supports.
- ✓ Self advocate and learn to communicate effectively your interests, preferences, and needs.
- ✓ Self advocate and learn to explain your disability and the accommodations you need.
- ✓ Learn and practice informed decision making skills.
- ✓ Investigate assistive technology tools that can increase community involvement and employment opportunities.
- ✓ Broaden your experiences with community activities and expand your friendships.
- ✓ Pursue and use local transportation options outside of the family.
- ✓ Investigate money management and identify necessary skills.
- ✓ Acquire identification card and the ability to communicate personal information.
- ✓ Identify and begin learning skills necessary for independent living.
- ✓ Learn and practice personal health care.

Transition Resources Directory Northampton County

ADULT TRAINING FACILITIES

Associated Production Services, Inc. (APS)	(610) 867-4049
Burnley Employment and Rehabilitation Services	(570) 992-6616
Good Shepherd Work Services	(610) 776-3355
LifePath, Inc.	(610) 814-3141

DAY PROGRAMS

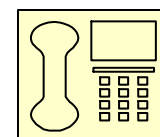
Access Services	(610) 866-6667
Community Services Group, Inc. (CONCEPTS)	(610) 866-7600
LifePath, Inc.	(610) 814-3141
Northwestern Human Services of the Lehigh Valley	(610) 866-8331
SPARC (at The Arc)	(610) 849-8076

RESIDENTIAL/INDEPENDENT LIVING

Access Services	(610) 866-6667
Community Services Group, Inc. (CSG)	(610) 866-7600
Lehigh Support for Community Living	(610) 758-4888
Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living (CIL)	(610) 770-9781
LifePath, Inc.	(610) 264-5724
Northwestern Human Services of the Lehigh Valley	(610) 866-8331
Step By Step, Inc.	(610) 867-0688
Via of the Lehigh Valley	(610) 317-8000

RECREATION

Bethlehem Special Olympics (Northampton County)	(610) 954-0935
Equi-librium	(570) 421-8500
Special Olympics of Pennsylvania	(610) 630-9450



Transition Resources Directory

Northampton County

AGENCIES

Mental Health/Mental Retardation (MH/MR)	(610) 559-3270 (for new referrals)
	(610) 974-7500 (main number MR Unit)
	(610) 974-7555 (main number MH Unit)
Office of Children, Youth, and Families	(610) 559-3290
Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	(610) 821-6441

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Pennsylvania/Social Security Administration Benefits	
Counseling and Assistance Project (PASSABCO)	(866) 541-7005
Social Security Administration	(610) 258-9033

EMPLOYMENT/WORK OPPORTUNITIES

Burnley Employment and Rehabilitation Services	(570) 992-6616
Career Link	(610) 437-5627
Community Services Group, Inc.	(610) 866-7600
Community Skills Program	(610) 263-0668 or (610) 376-3390
Good Shepherd Work Services	(610) 776-3369
Lehigh University Supported Employment	(610) 758-3229
Lehigh Valley Supportive Employment Program	
Private Industry Council (PIC)	(610) 439-1123
LifePath, Inc.	(610) 266-4066
Living Unlimited Program	(717) 526-2111 x224 (800) 310-7776
Main Line Rehabilitation Associates, Inc.	(610) 280-0180
Transitions Unlimited	(484) 223-0044
Via of the Lehigh Valley	(610) 317-8000

Transition Checklist

AT AGE 16

- ✓ Identify community support services (Vocational Rehabilitation-OVR, County Services (MH/MR), Center for Independent Living, etc.)
- ✓ Invite adult service providers, peers, and others to the IEP/transition meeting.
- ✓ Match career interests and skills with vocational course work and community-based vocational training.
- ✓ Gather more information on post-secondary programs and the support services offered, and make arrangements for accommodations to take college entrance exams.
- ✓ Identify health care providers and become informed about sexuality and family planning issues.
- ✓ Determine the need for financial support (Supplemental Security Income, state financial supplemental programs, Medical Assistance, etc.)
- ✓ Learn and practice appropriate interpersonal communication, and social skills for different settings (employment, school, recreation, with peers, etc.)
- ✓ Begin a resume and update it as needed.
- ✓ Explore legal status with regards to decision making.
- ✓ Practice independent living skills (budgeting, shopping, cooking, housekeeping, etc.)
- ✓ Identify needed personal assistant services, and if appropriate, learn to direct and manage these services.
- ✓ School services, through the Individual Education Plan (IEP), should reflect the needs listed above for instruction in school.

TWO YEARS BEFORE LEAVING SCHOOL

- ✓ Apply for financial support programs (Supplemental Security Income, Independent Living Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Personal Assistant Services, etc.)
- ✓ Identify post-secondary school and plan to attend and arrange for accommodations.
- ✓ Practice effective communication by developing interview skills, asking for help, and identifying necessary accommodations at post-secondary and work environments.
- ✓ Register to vote and for selective services (if male).

Transition Checklist

ONE YEAR BEFORE LEAVING SCHOOL

- √ Apply for financial support programs (Supplemental Security Income, Independent Living Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Personal Assistant Services, etc.), if you have not done so.
- √ Identify post-secondary school and plan to attend and arrange for accommodations, if you have not done so.
- √ Practice effective communication by developing interview skills, asking for help, and identifying necessary accommodations at post-secondary and work environments.
- √ Specify desired job and obtain paid employment with supports as needed.
- √ Take responsibility for arriving on time to work, appointments, and social activities.
- √ Assume responsibility for health care needs (making appointments, filling and taking prescriptions, etc.)

Getting Ready to Graduate or Leave School

TO PREPARE FOR THE TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO ADULT LIFE, THE YOUNG ADULT WILL NEED:

- √ A Social Security Number for work and registration with most agencies. Contact your local Social Security Office for an application.
- √ Draft registration is required for males when they reach their eighteenth birthday. Contact your local post office.
- √ Office of Social Security Insurance Benefits is available to children and adults with serious disabilities. Call (800) 772-1213 for the Social Security Administration Office in your area and information on applying. It is important to understand these benefits as they relate to work and eligibility prior to working, while working, and in the event of loss of job.
- √ The most important thing to consider when your child is leaving school is finding the right agencies. Ask questions and be aware of agency regulations and policies.



Agencies to Contact



- OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (OVR) - A referral and application must be completed which requires active participation by parents/guardians and the student. Services are primarily geared toward helping the individual obtain community employment. OVR services are based on eligibility for services and not an entitlement to services. Therefore, after the application is sent to OVR, a student must be certified by an OVR counselor as being eligible.
- BUREAU OF BLINDNESS AND VISUAL SERVICES (BVS) - A referral must take place, which requires active participation by parents/guardians. "Employability" is a key term for eligibility for services. BVS may require evaluations to determine eligibility for services.
- MENTAL HEALTH/MENTAL RETARDATION (MH/MR) - A referral must take place and/or requires registration. Your child must remain on the "active" case role in order to receive services. Find out what will happen if you do not use any services over a long period of time. A referral can be made by calling (610) 559-3270 for Northampton County or (570) 421-2901 for Monroe County. **It is recommended that you do not wait to make this contact. The earlier you apply for services at MH/MR, the smoother your child's transition will be.**
- CAREER LINK (FORMERLY THE JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACT—JPTA) - Provides programs for economically disadvantaged and persons with disabilities through the local Career Link that serves your county. Application must be made as a person with a disability.