

Ages 18-21 Lifespan Checklist



PATHFINDERS
FOR AUTISM



Pathfinders for Autism 443.330.5341 www.pathfindersforautism.org

Health and Medical Care, and Related Therapeutic Interventions

- Understand the definitions for Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), and why a person should be diagnosed
- Learn about treatment options and therapies
- Apply to the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)
- Investigate Behavioral Support Services if you need them
- Identify a General Practitioner/Family Practice/Primary Care doctor
- Schedule regular re-evaluations and medical follow-up to measure progress and identify challenges
- Develop a system to organize your paperwork
- Develop a good group of providers and supports that will continue to work with your family on a long term basis

Assistive Technology

- Learn all you can about Assistive Technology services available
- Explore financial assistance for Assistive Technology
- Students should exit school with a communication system that they can use comfortably and that they can take with them into the adult world

Education

- Understand the requirements/criteria for exiting with a Diploma vs. a Certificate of Completion
- Make sure that the IEP contains achievable, measurable objectives that reflect the student's transition goals
- Determine with your IEP team which state assessment tests are most appropriate for your child
- Contact your Parents' Place of Maryland, Partners for Success Family Center, or the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) for assistance with school issues, IEP development, school resources
- Prepare to transition out of high school
- Understand your student's placement options
- Address any instances of bullying immediately
- Understand matters of discipline including suspension and expulsion
- Get involved with your local Special Education Citizen's Advisory Committee (SECAC) or the Maryland Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC)
- Apply to the MSDE Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)
- Explore summer time options
- Explore college options
- Explore secondary education options (technical school, culinary school, apprenticeship, etc.)
- Develop a system to organize education records

Employment

- Develop employment skills and make sure your young adult has employment experiences, either paid or volunteer
- Make sure your young adult has a resume that may include a list of skills and competencies as well as a video portfolio showing him/her at work
- Apply to the MSDE Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)
- Explore employment services and opportunities available in Maryland
- Evaluate interests and strengths – vocational assessments
- Make a decision about disclosure (of diagnosis)
- Learn about 504 Plans

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Housing

- Explore housing options (residential, community supports, rental options, home ownership)
- Apply to the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)
- Apply to the local public housing authority Section 8 waiting list
- Help your young adult establish credit

Social and Relationships

- Help your young adult learn about appropriate social skills
- Teach your young adult about sexuality and relationships
- Develop the recreational and leisure activities that your young adult enjoys

Funding for Services and Legal Issues

- Review the Pathfinders' article, "Financial Things Every Parent of a Child with Autism Needs to Know"
- Understand what it means to move from Entitlement to Eligibility
- Apply for Social Security Benefits
- Apply to the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)
- Investigate Low Intensity Support Services (LISS)
- Learn about life planning tools and options
- Explore the legal implications of reaching age 18
- Develop a system to organize financial and legal records

Support: Support Groups and Respite

- Network with others at a support group
- Investigate support groups for your young adult
- Identify needs of support and establish a support system
- Take care of yourself, your spouse, your other children
- Investigate respite care options

Transportation

- Explore options including public transportation, Mobility, and driver's license
- Apply for all appropriate transportation programs
- Help your young adult obtain a Maryland State ID card issued by the Motor Vehicle Administration

Advocacy and Self-Advocacy

- Make a decision about disclosure (of diagnosis)
- Learn about becoming an advocate at the local and national level. Consider joining local and national autism groups and listservs.
- Get involved with your local Special Education Citizen's Advisory Committee (SECAC) or the Maryland Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC)
- Help your young adult learn self-advocacy skills

For the supporting information and details, visit www.pathfindersforautism.org