The following is a brief checklist of things to help you get started. This checklist is meant to serve as a guide only and is not exhaustive of all services and supports you should explore for your child or family member.

For the supporting information and details, visit www.pathfindersforautism.org/autism-by-age.

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)
___ Learn how to access behavior supports 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
___ Learn more about Medical Assistance
___ Explore dental resources
___ Prepare your young adult for becoming responsible for his/her own health care
___ Explore miscellaneous health and medical resources
___ Learn about funding options for medical care

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
___ Learn about 504 Plans
___ Explore homeschooling as an educational option
___ Read the guide on how to get scholarships and grants for students with disabilities
___ Explore additional special education legal resources as needed
___ Continue to refine your child’s IEP and understand the IEP process
___ Explore additional education resources

SAFETY

___ Address issues of being on their own, legal ramifications

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EMPLOYMENT
___ Develop employment experiences, either paid or volunteer
___ Make sure your teenager 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

HOUSING
___ Apply to the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)
___ Apply to the local public housing authority Section 8 waiting list
___ Help your young adult establish credit
___ Explore residential housing
___ Explore community housing with supports
___ Explore rental options
___ Explore home ownership
___ Investigate additional housing information
___ Learn about Social Security and housing
___ Investigate foreclosure assistance and information if you need it

SOCIAL AND RELATIONSHIPS
___ Continue to 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 “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
___ 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
___ Involve your other children

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