

Age 14 to Age 21

Plans for Transition, Preparing for the Future, Secondary Options (Continued Education), Employment Options and Support, Guardianship & Alternatives to Guardianship, Healthcare Transition



Ready, Set, Know

RESOURCES

Ages Fourteen to Twenty One



NAVIGATING YOUR WAY

The following resources are described in *Navigating Your Way, Ages Fourteen to Twenty One* is the fourth in a series of videos that provides a bird's eye view of services, supports and resources for every stage of life. Visit informingfamilies.org/14-21 to watch the video.



SERVICES

Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)
Case management and supportive services for children and adults with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities in Washington State. Learn more at: dshs.wa.gov/dda.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
Pre-Employment services provide job exploration and work readiness for students with IEPs and 504 plans ages 16-21—or as young as 14 if included in the IEP. Visit dshs.wa.gov/dvr to learn more.

HEALTH CARE

Apple Health
Medicaid health care coverage for children and adults. Visit wahealthplanfinder.org to learn more.

Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT)

EPSDT provides children who receive Medicaid regular check up and treatment for medical issues found during an exam up to age 21. Call 1-800-562-3022 and ask about EPSDT services.

Got Transition

The Child Neurology Foundation has information and tools for transitioning to adult health care. Visit gottransition.org to learn more.

WithinReach

Helps families connect with the resources they need to be healthy and safe. Call the Help Me Grow Washington Hotline at 1-800-322-2588 or visit parenthelp123.org.

FINANCIAL

Supplemental Security Income

A cash benefit administered by the Social Security Administration for individuals with low income who are aged, blind or disabled.. 1-800-772-1213; ssa.gov

ABLE Savings Accounts

A way for individuals with disabilities to save money without losing financial eligibility for government benefits such as SSI. washingtonstateable.com

DD Endowment Trust Fund

A public-private partnership special needs trust that shelters and protects assets that would otherwise disqualify someone for government benefits, such as SSI and Medicaid. ddef.wa.gov

SUPPORT & ADVOCACY

Office of Education Omuds (OEO) resolves complaints, disputes, and problems between families and public schools. 1-866-297-2597; oeo.wa.gov

Parent to Parent (P2P) provides emotional support and information to families of children with special health care needs or other disabilities. arcwa.org/parent-to-parent.

Partnerships for Action, Voices for Empowerment (PAVE) provides information, training and support to families. wapave.org

People First of Washington

Self advocacy chapters throughout the state, including creating Student First chapters in high schools. For more information, visit peoplefirstofwashington.org.



RESOURCES

Ages Fourteen to Twenty One



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HELPFUL IDEAS AND PLANNING

High School Transition Toolkit

A free four page toolkit that includes a timeline and checklist for identifying specific goals to include in the student's individual education program, or IEP. To order a print copy, or download a PDF in English or Spanish, visit: informingfamilies.org/transition-toolkit.

My Life Plan

Free online planning tool for every stage of life. Visit mylifeplan.guide to get started.

Star Form

Worksheet for identifying sources of support to reach any goal: informingfamilies.org/star.

Supported Decision Making/Alternatives to Guardianship

Supported Decision Making is an approach that offers less restrictive alternatives to guardianship, such as Powers of Attorney for medical and financial decisions, Representative Payee to manage Social Security benefits, and a trusted relationship with family or others who can provide good advice.

Learn more about Supported Decision Making, as well as different types of guardianship, at: informingfamilies.org/sdm.

RECREATION & COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

The Family Community Connections Guidebook

Information and Resources for Families and Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in Washington State. Includes worksheets for identifying people, places and ideas to help broaden your family member's social circle and community connections. Download a free copy in English or Spanish: informingfamilies.org/publications.

Special Olympics Unified

Special Olympics Unified school programs bring students with and without disabilities together to participate in sports, clubs and other school events that promote an inclusive school environment. To learn more about Unified, visit: specialolympicswashington/unified.

Check out the Island County Transition Guide: School Age to Adulthood: In-Depth for more information

SCHOOL DISTRICTS: SPECIAL EDUCATION AGES 3-21

[Oak Harbor School District \(360\)279-5073](#)

[Coupeville School District \(360\)678-2420](#)

[South Whidbey School District \(360\)221-6808 xt 2206](#)

[Stanwood/Camano Island School District \(360\)629-1236](#)

[South Whidbey School District Resource: Readiness to Learn Foundation \(360\)221-6198 xt 4602](#)

IEP: Individualized Education Program: Special Education Ages 3 to 21 years old

An IEP lays out the special education instruction, supports, and services a student needs to thrive in school. IEPs are part of PreK–12 public education. An IEP is a legal document and students are entitled to receive all of the services outlined in the IEP. An IEP should be tailored to a child and his or her educational needs, and it can include creative strategies for delivering services. Approximately 143,000 eligible students in Washington State receive special education and related services. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) fulfills the requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which ensures all children with disabilities have access to a free appropriate public education. Check our section on Child Find to find your local school district contact information. <https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/special-education>

HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITION

Regardless of disability, there are opportunities and expectations for your child to work and participate fully in your community. Your own advocacy, as well as your child's self-advocacy, will be essential to maximizing and developing these and other resources.

Like any successful journey, planning is everything. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, your child is entitled to receive special education services until age 21. The advantages of taking this path of staying in school include additional training to be job ready and three additional years of education and support. If your son or daughter leaves school at age 18, he or she is not eligible for any potential long term job support until age 21.

Transition planning should begin as early as possible, but at least by age 16. At this time, parents should be asking to have employment goals integrated into your child's individual educational program. This would be a good time to become actively involved with your student's IEP transition plan. You may want to contact your county DD office about resources available to connect you to your community now and in the future. Island County Coordinator: Mike Etzell (360)678-7883 mikeet@islandcountywa.gov

Think of this time as a train to catch rather than a stop along the road. There's a lot of territory to cover, so be ready to roll. Don't stand on the tracks waiting for the next ride. When special education services end, many parents feel as though they've been run over by a train they didn't see coming.

It's a sobering reality, for sure, but there are definite steps to take, resources available, and opportunities for you and your child to hone your advocacy skills.

As your child's transition plan is developed, be sure that he or she is an integral part of the process. Learning how to speak up, plan and take risks will help your child become more independent and successful after high school.

TRANSITION PLANNING AND THE IEP

Prior to ninth grade, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) of a student with a disability focuses mainly on the student's educational and functional needs and what services the school will provide to help the student make educational progress. At age 16 10 (or earlier if the IEP team decides it is necessary), a student's IEP changes to focus more intently on preparing a student for life after graduation. This requires long-range planning to meet goals for school completion and increase the likelihood of a student's success after high school as an adult. This process is what is commonly called "transition planning," and is required under IDEA to begin no later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually thereafter. A transition plan is added to a student's IEP as the student prepares to 'transition' out of the district's special education program and into the adult world. The IEP will also continue to include a focus on education and functional needs. The first transition plan for your student's IEP is a time to do thoughtful planning about your student's goals and what it will take to achieve them. As part of this discussion, the student's expected graduation date will be determined. This is a critical part of planning based on the student and his or her needs. Expected graduation date is based on the date a student enters 9th grade. If a student needs to change the expected graduation date, it should be documented on the IEP transition plan in the year in which the student turns 16 (WAC 180-51-035). The process is important in bringing together schools, students, families, and community agencies in a joint effort to plan the most appropriate path to adult life. "The transition plan drives your student's IEP & successful transition to life as an adult." 11 Six Essential Steps to take when creating a Transition Plan for your student's IEP:

1. Conduct transition assessments (formal and/or informal) to identify your student's:
 - Strengths (talents/skills)
 - Interests (desired career/line of work)
 - Preferences (desired work/school or living environment)
 - Needs (accommodations, modifications, and other support(s) to minimize limitations resulting from a disability)
2. Develop appropriate and measurable post-secondary goals based on transition assessments data related to:
 - Education/Training (required goals area)
 - Employment (required goal area)
 - Independent Living (required if determined appropriate by the IEP team)
3. Identify individualized transition services in the areas related to supporting your student's achievement of post-secondary goals and/or meeting graduation requirements. Some key example areas to consider are:
 - Instruction
 - Related Services
 - Community Experiences
 - Development of adult living objectives
4. Write a relevant course of study that takes into consideration what types of classes your student should plan to take during the remainder of their time in the school to support her/his identified post-secondary goals. Multi-year planning may be necessary.
5. Coordinate services with Adult Service agencies that your student might utilize after he/she is no longer eligible for education services.
6. Write IEP goals to support the post-secondary goals identified for your student.

OSPI – <http://www.k12.wa.us/SpecialEd/Families/Transition.aspx>

TRANSITION TOOLKIT

*** HIGHLY RECOMMENDED THAT YOU LOOK AT THIS TOOLKIT AND WEBSITE***

When does high school transition begin? What do goals look like and what do parents need to think about? When it comes to planning for life after high school, there's a lot to think about: Independent Living, Employment and Post-Secondary Education Health & Safety, Social, Financial, Legal, Housing and In-Home Supports.

This four-page Transition Toolkit provides:

- ◆ A Star Form to help identify supports to reach a student's transition goals.
- ◆ Tips for transition planning and goal setting.
- ◆ Transition timeline of things to do from age 14-21.
- ◆ Transition checklist of skills, activities, and services when creating your child's high school transition plan for his/her IEP.
- ◆ Ways to gain job skills during high school.

Resources for post-secondary education. Order or download Transition Toolkit (in English and Spanish)

<https://informingfamilies.org/transition-toolkit/>

LOCAL POST SECONDARY/AFTER HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

Skagit Valley College (360)416-7623 Campuses in Island and Skagit Counties. Offers 2 year Associate Degree, professional certificates, basic education and continuing education. They offer the **INVEST** program. INVEST Fast Track Employability Certificate: The INVEST program is designed to address the unique academic and employment needs of post-secondary students with intellectual disabilities. INVEST students may earn a 1 or 2 year local employability certificate. INVEST courses focus on academic enrichment, inclusive socialization and recreation, assistive technology, self-advocacy, independent living skill development, career exploration and integrated work experiences. Contact the Director of Disability Services for more information. "Individualized Next Step Vocational Education and Social Skills Training" (INVEST)

All colleges and universities have developed some means by which students can request and receive specific disability-related accommodations. The goal of these accommodations is to level the playing field so that students with disabilities can have equal access to the programs and activities offered in their college environment.

Examples of such accommodations may include: Extended time and a distraction-reduced environment for exams, Note-takers for lectures, Access to certain assistive technology, & Housing accommodations

Very helpful Toolkit, with or without Autism, regarding college/university/secondary education:

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/2018-08/Postsecondary%20Guide.pdf>

For more post-secondary/after high school opportunities, check out the Island County Parent to Parent Transition Resource Guide <https://www.islandcountywa.gov/198/Parent-to-Parent>

High School Transition



Planning for Life After School

Creating a successful transition to adulthood requires support from a lot of different sources. This Transition Toolkit provides a timeline and checklist to help you make the most of your high school years. The following STAR FORM offers an example of ways to identify helpful people and resources to help reach your goals. Download your own STAR FORM at informingfamilies.org/star.

Jon's Goal: Successful Transition

Technology I Own or Have Access To (devices, apps, equipment)

Library computer
Smart phone
Blood sugar app
Transit app

Personal Strengths & Assets

I like anything to do with computers
I like to do one thing at a time, focused
Curious, like to learn

Personal Relationships (family, friends, others I know)

Mom and Dad
Leland (Neighbor)
Church friends

Sources of Support to Reach My Goal



For more help with planning, use our free online planning tool at www.mylifeplan.guide.

Library
Public Transit
Community College (Photography)
Parks & Rec (Cooking)
Special Olympics

High school transition program
County DD program (need to find out more)
Community First Choice (for personal care and assistive technology)
Housing Authority (on wait list for Section 8 Voucher)

Community Based (free and low-cost resources in my community)

Eligibility Specific (paid services and benefits)

Informing Families
Today and Tomorrow

Informing Families is a collaboration between the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC), Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) and other partners throughout the state. We offer trusted news and information that empowers individuals and families to be active participants in planning and creating opportunities to live a full, inclusive life. Sign up here: informingfamilies.org/news.



Disability Employment Services & Supports

Ages
14-21

High School Transition Plan



High school transition planning officially begins at age 16, but you can start as early as age 14. Be sure to include employment-related goals in the student's IEP, such as: identifying career interests and abilities; learning self-advocacy and social skills; riding the bus; improving communication; and using technology.

Pre-employment services, offered by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), provide job exploration and work readiness for competitive, integrated employment after high school for students with IEPs and 504 plans ages 16-21 (or as young as 14 if included in the IEP). Talk to your IEP team or contact DVR to learn more: dshs.wa.gov/dvr.

Ages
18-21

DVR Transition Liaison



Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Transition Liaisons partner with school districts to help students enrolled in High School Transition programs prepare for and find employment. Be sure to include the school's DVR Transition Liaison/Counselor as part of the student's IEP team. For more information, visit: dshs.wa.gov/dvr and click on the link for School Transition, or call 1-800-637-5627.

Ages
21 +

Adult Services



DVR provides short-term employment services to assess, train and find job placements for eligible adults with disabilities. Contact DVR for an application and a determination of eligibility. For a listing of local DVR offices, visit: dshs.wa.gov/dvr.

In addition to DVR, most individuals with I/DD will need DDA long term supported employment services, which are provided to DDA eligible individuals age 21 and older who are enrolled in the Basic Plus, Core, or Community Protection waivers. Enrollment is limited to available funding. To learn more and/or request services, visit: dshs.wa.gov/dda.



Ages 18-21: High School Transition Programs

When a student turns 18, they have the option to graduate OR walk the stage with their peers and continue on to a transition program until age 21.

Remaining in school until age 21 offers the benefit of a guided transition to adult life, a bridge to adult services, and the development of independent living skills.

Transition programs vary by location. For example, through *School to Work*, some school districts partner with county DD programs, DVR and others, with the goal of helping students to leave school with a job and make a seamless transition into adult life.

Not all counties have funding to provide this type of wraparound service (beyond what DVR offers in schools), so it's important to ask your school what kinds of activities and support its transition program offers. Some schools may even have more than one program to consider.

EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) (360)240-4732 OH (800)637-5627

Helps individuals with disabilities participate fully in their communities and become employed. Provides individualized employment services and counseling to people with disabilities. Also provides technical assistance and training to employers about the employment of people with disabilities.

Island County School Transition Coordinator/DVR: (564)900-0407

Service Alternatives (800)292-6697

Community & Employment Services (CES), a division of Service Alternatives, Inc., provides a multitude of services designed to support people finding and keeping meaningful employment in their communities.

Washington Vocational Services (WVS) (360)419-0910—Burlington (425)774-3338—Everett

Provides employment services to persons with a variety of disabilities while specializing in services to person who are deaf or hard of hearing and person with disabilities who desire customized employment services.

Sherwood Community Services (425)334-4071

Sherwood never stops believing in the abilities and potential of people.

Pathways to Employment www.pathways.dshs.wa.gov

Helps people with a disability make informed decisions about going to work.

WorkSource Whidbey (360)675-5966

Provides employment and training services to the public through partnership of government, non-profit and community service organizations. Dedicated to meeting the needs of our local business by building a skilled workforce and contributing to our region's economic growth.

ISLAND COUNTY DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY

Coordinates, funds, and manages local services for children from birth to three and for adults 21 and over who have developmental disabilities. We work actively with families, schools, the business community, as well as local, state, and federal governments to facilitate full contribution for all citizens who experience developmental disabilities. Our underlying belief is that all individuals with developmental disabilities have the skills, interests, and talents to enhance their community and have a responsibility to do so. We also know that employment is a powerful way to contribute both to the larger community as well as to continue to grow and learn. To contact the coordinator for Island County Developmental Disabilities please call or email Mike Etzell at **(360) 678-7883** or MikeEt@islandcountywa.gov

Additional Transition Planning Along with school-based planning, there are a few other adult considerations and responsibilities to plan for and navigate. Use this checklist to guide you.

Informing Families...Today and Tomorrow

High School Transition Toolkit

TRANSITION PLANNING 101

Transition is a term educators use to talk about preparing for life after high school, and it spans several years.

Officially, transition planning can begin at age 14, but families and schools should be planning and planting the seed/thoughts/expectations even earlier than that.

By the time your child turns 16, his/her Individualized Education Program (IEP) is focused on transition services.

The transition plan charts a course for graduation and life after high school, with measurable goals related to post-secondary education, employment, independent living, housing, and community participation.



The transition plan is created by the IEP team, with your son/daughter's participation. It identifies the skills, services and supports necessary to reach the student's goals.

It's a lot to consider, but you are not alone. Organizations such as PAVE (wapave.org) and Parent to Parent (arwca.org/getsupport) can help guide your way.

For a list of other high school transition resources and publications, visit: informingfamilies.org.

GOAL SETTING

A transition plan drives the IEP and maps a successful transition to life as an adult. Ask yourself what instruction, support & services are needed to achieve goals related to:

- Employment and/or Post Secondary Education
- Independent Living (e.g., money management, decision-making, shopping, cooking, using the bus)
- Housing/In-Home Support
- Social/Recreational
- Financial/Legal
- Health & Safety



HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITION TIMELINE



Include the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Transition Counselor as part of the IEP team at age 14.

Age 14

- Transition planning.
- Include the student in planning.

Age 15-16

- Apply for a Washington State ID Card.
- Begin transition services.
- Include self-advocacy & self-determination goals in the IEP.
- Determine graduation date.
- Learn what the school's 18-21 transition program(s) offer.

Age 16

- Register to vote.
- Open checking account.
- Apply for SSI benefits.
- Enroll in Medicaid.
- Consider decision-making alternatives to guardianship.

Age 18

- Enroll in High School Transition program until age 21, or continue on to postsecondary education.
- Consider decision-making alternatives to guardianship.
- Assess transportation options.

Age 20-21

- Request long-term employment supports from DDA (if funding is available).
- Apply for short-term employment services from DVR (or, if available, your county DD program). Visit dshs.wa.gov/dvr to find your school's DVR Transition Counselor.

IMPORTANT: Apply for DDA Eligibility by Age 18

Applications for eligibility from the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) can be made at any age, but it's a really good idea to apply by age 18. Programs such as Individual & Family Services (IFS) and Community First Choice (CFC) offer a variety of home and community services to increase health, safety, and independence. Learn more: informingfamilies.org/dda-services.

High School Transition Toolkit

TRANSITION CHECKLIST



Consider the following checklist of skills, activities, and services when creating your child's high school transition plan for his/her IEP.

Independent Living

Identify skills and abilities that will help your son or daughter be as independent as possible:

- Money management/budgeting
- Opening a line of credit (to establish credit history)
- Bill paying
- Decision-making
- Self-advocacy
- Sex education
- Registering to vote
- Communication
- Transportation training
- Daily living skills (e.g., cooking, shopping)

Financial and Legal

- Apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
- Arrange for a Representative Payee for SSI benefits (if money management is a concern).
- Seek benefits planning (including Social Security Work Incentives, such as PASS and IRWE).
- Establish a special needs trust.
- Seek guardianship (if less restrictive decision-making alternatives are not appropriate).

Social/Recreational

- Build friendships outside the family.
- Create a circle of support (family, friends, neighbors).
- Identify and connect with groups that share similar interests, such as:
 - Athletic
 - Faith-Based
 - Creative
 - Technological
 - Humanitarian
 - Environmental
 - Civic/Leadership

Employment/Post-Secondary Education

- Identify potential jobs/careers.
- Identify personal contacts useful in finding jobs.
- Research college programs.
- Gain work experience.
- Practice job skills.
- Obtain Assistive Technology and Training.
- Apply for employment services from DVR (last year of school) and DDA (age 21).

Adult employment services are provided through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA). Learn more: informingfamilies.org/employment.

Health & Safety

Identify needed skills and/or resources to be healthy and safe:

- Emergency recognition and response
- Personal care/hygiene
- Counseling
- Healthy relationships
- Physical/Occupational therapy
- Adult medical care provider

TIP for IEPs

Talk to the IEP Team about ways to include supports and instruction needed to reach goals that meet the student's needs.

Housing and In-Home Supports

- Apply for DDA services/supports (e.g., Personal Care, Supported Living, Companion Home, Adult Family Home).
- Apply for HUD federal housing assistance. (Contact your local Housing Authority to find out how long the waiting list is.)
- Research home ownership programs for adults with I/DD:
washingtonaccessfund.org/resources/homeownership.php

To order copies of this Transition Toolkit for your school, agency or organization, visit: informingfamilies.org/transition-toolkit.

RESOURCES/ADVOCACY/SUPPORT

Office of Education Ombuds (OEO)

Resolves complaints, disputes, and problems between families and public schools **(866)297-2597**

WA PAVE (800)5PARENT

Provides information, training and support to families. www.wapave.org

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY ADMINISTRATION (DDA)

(Formerly DDD)

A division of DSHS. Assists individuals with developmental disabilities and their families to obtain services and supports based on individual preference, capabilities and needs. Services are based on DDA guidelines and available funding. DSHS Statewide Disability Support **(800)491-5266**
www.dshs.wa.gov/disability-support

Island County - Region 2

Oak Harbor (360)544-6543 www.dshs.wa.gov/dda

Island County Region 2: Eligibility and Intake: (425)977-6520

General Questions for Region 2 (360)544-6539

To request a DDA Application Packet in English or Spanish, contact Island County Parent to Parent (360)632-7539 call/text t.wheeler-thompson@islandcountywa.gov

ISLAND COUNTY DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY

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SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME (SSI)

<https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/ssi/> **(800)722-1213**

The program provides monthly payments to adults and children with a disability or blindness who have income and resources below specific financial limits. SSI payments are also made to people age 65 and older without disabilities who meet the financial qualifications. You may be eligible to receive SSI monthly payments even if you are already receiving Social Security Disability Insurance or retirement benefits.

IDENTIFICATION CARD: Washington State Department of Licensing

(360)675-6466 656 SE Bayshore OH <https://www.dol.wa.gov/driverslicense/gettingidcard.html>

Things to know, There are two options: A Standard ID card and enhanced ID (EID) You can get an ID/EID card at any age at any of our driver licensing office locations. Parents/guardians - you can get an ID/EID card for your children. Your child must be with you at the office to get it.

REGISTER TO VOTE

<https://www.sos.wa.gov/elections/register.aspx>

Mental/behavioral competency and voting rights

Only a Superior Court can declare a person unable to vote due to mental incompetency and therefore unable to vote. Do not assume that a person under a guardianship due to their mental capacity is ineligible to vote. A guardian may not vote on behalf of a person under guardianship. Power of attorney does not extend to voting. Whether a person under guardianship may vote depends on when the guardianship was imposed and whether the guardianship is full or partial.

Voters with Disabilities

As a voter with a disability, you can request a reasonable accommodation or assistance to vote. The Office of the Secretary of State is committed to ensuring accessibility at voting centers, and that you have the opportunity to vote privately and independently. Voting centers must meet all of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. To request a reasonable accommodation or assistance, contact your county elections department.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) <https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/ssi/> (800)722-1213

The program provides monthly payments to adults and children with a disability or blindness who have income and resources below specific financial limits. SSI payments are also made to people age 65 and older without disabilities who meet the financial qualifications. You may be eligible to receive SSI monthly payments even if you are already receiving Social Security Disability Insurance or retirement benefits. ** When applying at age 18, only the individual's income is counted towards eligibility. Not the households, like when they are child.

BENEFITS PLANNING

Benefits planning helps you to be more informed about, and better prepared for, the potential impact work has on your benefits, including benefits like cash, medical, housing, personal-care services, and food benefits. A benefit specialist can help you explore and leverage work incentives and also help you develop a plan to ease your transition to work.

Why is benefits planning important? Educates you about how work can impact benefits;

Reduces your uncertainty; Empowers you to work to your potential, instead of limiting your earnings in order to keep benefits; Informs you about Social Security work incentives and other programs that can help pay for items and services you need to maintain employment; and Helps you explore healthcare options. How do I connect with a benefit specialist in my area? As a customer of Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, services you receive from DVR include benefits planning. Use the benefit calculators to estimate how wages from a job would impact your Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

A helpful, resourceful website to walk you through state and federal benefits is Benefit U

<https://www.benefitu.org/>

GUARDIANSHIP AND ALTERNATIVES TO GUARDIANSHIP

WHAT IS GUARDIANSHIP?

Guardianship, also, referred to as conservatorship, is a legal process, utilized when a person can no longer make or communicate safe or sound decisions about his/her person and/or property or has become susceptible to fraud or undue influence. Because establishing a guardianship may remove considerable rights from an individual, it should only be considered after alternatives to guardianship have proven ineffective or are unavailable. What types of guardianships are there?

Guardianship of Estate: responsible for financial and estate matters only.

Guardianship of Person: responsible for non-financial decision making.

Guardianship of Person and Estate: a full guardianship of person and estate.

Alternatives to guardianship may include: Representative or substitute payee, Case/care management, Health care surrogacy, Trusts, Durable powers of attorney for property, Durable powers of attorney for health care, Supported Decision Making, Living wills, Joint checking accounts, etc

WHAT IS HEALTH CARE TRANSITION?

Health care transition, or HCT, is the process of getting your youth ready for health care as an adult.

During childhood, you usually help with health and health care needs—calling to set up appointments, filling out forms, and keeping track of medications. As your youth gets older, managing those needs becomes their own responsibility. Achieving this independence requires an organized transition process for them to gain independent health care skills, prepare for an adult model of care, and transfer to new clinicians.

APPLE HEALTH: HEALTH INSURANCE ACCESS

Washington Health Plan Finder

https://www.wahealthplanfinder.org/_content/Homepage.html 1-855-923-4633; TTY 1-855-627-9604

WAHealthPlanFinder.org is the official insurance exchange for Washington State. Use this site to apply for Apple Health for Kids, Medicaid, and Affordable Care Act (ACA) health plans.

Health Care Authority/Apple Health/Medicaid <http://www.hca.wa.gov/> (800)562-3022

Managed Care Health Plans offered by Apple Health

Amerigroup (800)600-4441

Community Health Plan of WA (800)440-1561

Coordinated Care Corp (877)644-4613

Molina Healthcare of WA (800) 869-7165

United Healthcare Community Plan (877)542-8997

*Many Apple Health recipients may qualify for a free cell phone with minutes/data. Call your Apple Health provider for more details.

FAMILY SUPPORT & RESOURCES

Island County Parent to Parent: Tiffany Wheeler-Thompson, Coordinator

call/text (360)632-7539

Email: t.wheeler-thompson@islandcountywa.gov



Island County Parent to Parent provides support and resources to families that care for a child/adult with disabilities and/or special healthcare needs.

<https://www.islandcountywa.gov/198/Parent-to-Parent>

Parent to Parent Services No Cost Services:

- Support
- Resources
- Newsletters
- Support Meetings
- Educational Workshops
- Social/Recreational Events
- Presentations in our Community

You are not alone. Reach out anytime. Parent to Parent is here to help you. All events are All Ages, All Abilities unless otherwise stated. Events and activities are subject to cancellation/rescheduling. Always check our Facebook Page for up-to-date info, especially if an event is outdoors

CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR ISLAND COUNTY DISABILITY RESOURCE GUIDES

Resources at your fingertips. Check out Island County Parent to Parent website.

<https://www.islandcountywa.gov/198/Parent-to-Parent>

Our Facebook Page has tips, tools, information, resources, up to date details on events, etc.

<https://www.facebook.com/islandcountyparent2parent>

NAS Whidbey Island: Exceptional Family Member Program EFMP (360)527-5266

Resource, information and support group for military families

Padre Apoyando Motivando Informando PAMI (787)529-6788

Spanish Support Group. Childcare offered with RSVP when not virtual. pamiespanol@gmail.com

People First of Washington: (360)720-4918

Support and advocacy for adults with disabilities that meets monthly for support, advocacy skills and social events. Email Diane pmmdfm@cablespeed.com

Support continued on page 15

Support and Resources Continued:

Washington Father's Network: <https://fathersnetwork.org/>

Mike Etzell (360)678-7883 Information and resources for fathers raising a child with special needs.

Flying Fingers Deaf & Hard of Hearing Social (360)221-0383 Langley Contact Susan for more details.

Family Caregivers Support Program

Coupeville (360)678-4886, SW (360)321-1600, OH (360)675-0311, Camano (360)678-4886

RECREATION/SPORTS/SOCIAL

Special Olympics of Washington <http://specialolympicswashington.org/>

Special Olympics programs for children ages 8 and up through adulthood with intellectual disabilities who love sports and want the challenge of competing with their peers. The programs run year round offering competition in several sports. The goal is to provide a physical fitness with an emphasis on sportsmanship, friendships, and FUN!

South Whidbey Coordinator –Dave Lenox lenoxhouse@verizon.net (Bocce, Basketball Skills, etc)
Mike Etzell (360)678-7883 (Basketball)

North Whidbey Coordinator – Chris Becker (360)320-2549
wispecialolympics@gmail.com (Bowling, Basketball, Track, Cycling, Bocce Ball, Soccer Skills)

Art as a Way Carol Way carol@artsaway.org **(360)730-1135**

Teaching life skills through art. DDA respite funds accepted.

Camano Center (360)387-0222

Offers support, resources and a variety of classes and events throughout the year..

SELF ADVOCACY

People First of Island County

Self-advocacy chapter provides opportunities for individuals to connect with each other and learn valuable self-advocacy skills. For more information contact Diane **(360)914-1494**