

Chapter 1 – Transition

Getting Ready for Adult Living

While you are in school, your teachers, parents, coaches and other supportive people all work with you to help you learn many new things. It is also a time for you to be with many people your own age and hopefully make some friends.

It is important to understand that everybody needs help sometimes. Your parents, teachers, coaches and friends will ask for help or plan on help with things that they cannot do by themselves. It is important to keep learning new things. It takes a lot of practice to be able to do most things completely independently.

You may take classes at school about independent living skills, cooking, computer skills or physical fitness. All of these classes help you learn how to take care of yourself when you are an adult. You may take classes that will lead you to a high school diploma, a college degree, a certification or a certificate. These classes may help you find work someday.



At home, your parents help you learn how to take care of your body by

What Should Parents Do?

Start making connections with people you meet when your child is young. These same people may become potential roommates years later.

Build your child's expectation to live as independently as possible. Help your child recognize that independence is a worthwhile goal to pursue.

Teach how to cope and be appropriate in common areas of the home and throughout the community. Teach resilience and self advocacy, along with personal hygiene and safety.

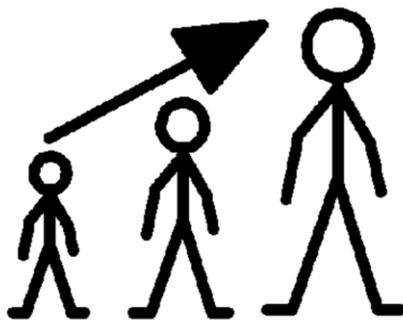
Understand and accept your child's strengths and limitations. Teach your child how to live with the expectation that you will not always be in the same home.

teaching you healthy habits such as good hygiene, nutrition and exercise. You may learn how to take your medications by yourself. Parents teach you how to be polite, friendly and how to act in public places. They may teach you to do household chores and to shop at the store. Parents help you learn how to stay safe at home and in the community.

Another important part of adult living is being able to advocate. When you advocate for yourself, you may tell or show others what you need, let other people know that you are not being treated properly, ask for help, or try to fix a problem.

Taking Steps Now That I Am An Adult

All people have changes in their life. The simplest changes to understand are the growing ones. You are born an infant and then grow to be a toddler, child, teenager and finally an adult. It is easy to see these changes because your body gets bigger, you learn so many things and you change schools many times.



Transition is a process of change. Transitions have many steps and are a part of everyone's life. Sometimes transitions take many years and need a lot of planning. Once you are an adult, you and your family will work together on several transitions in your life. This guide was written to help you think about, plan and get ready for the big transition of changing where you live and who lives with you.

What Should Parents Do?

Assisting your child to move out of your home is a substantial long term transition process. Perhaps you will move out and your child will stay in the home?

Prepare yourself through education and planning. Small steps are much easier than one big leap.

Learn More

The Michigan Family-To-Family Health Information and Education Center has a free DVD called *Helping Young Adults with Disabilities Reach Their Hopes and Dreams* by [Jackie Igafote'o](#). Young adults, parents and professionals offer their perspectives regarding the overall Transition planning process. Find it free on line at: <http://www.vimeo.com/9602485>

Remember, no matter where you live, your parents and family will love you and will be an important part of your life. You should keep learning things that will make you more independent. If you eventually decide to change where you live, you will probably need some help because most people do. Knowing when you need help and finding the best ways to get help are important when you are an adult. You can do it!

Making Choices About My Life

Has anyone ever asked you where you would like to live as an adult? Do you like to do some things with your parents and other things without your parents? When you are older, will you still want to live in your family's house, or will you want to live somewhere else? One of the first ways to start thinking about this is to visit places and see if you like them. Would you like living in a neighborhood home, an apartment, in the country or just somewhere else?



Is there someone that you already know who might want to live in the same home with you someday? You and your family should think about your friends, former classmates and people that you know in the community. You and your family may want to talk with them about this

What Should Parents Do?

Use Social Stories to help your child understand and prepare for the transition to a different living arrangement.

Consider visiting prospective residences with your child. Ask if your child can try out the situation by beginning with a weekend overnight visit. Consider what safety provisions will be needed.

Go through the process of estate planning, thinking about saving for long term housing needs. Include in the plans your child's extended family.

To really understand the system from the inside, consider integrating yourself into adult housing options by becoming a home checker, support staff, or other employee in the field.

idea. Ask questions about this person's plans for living as an adult. What do you both like and dislike? How much support does each of you need? Think about whether you could work together to become roommates someday.

Wherever you live, your family will continue to care about you and help you, and so will other people. Adult advisors, teachers and your family are helping you learn to prepare, learn more and make choices about your life. Sometimes your choices may lead to wonderful changes that make a great difference in your life. Other times, you will need to adjust your choices and plans for various reasons. Keep your mind open to new ideas and ways to fix any problems, so that you can be happy at your new address.

**"Just don't give up trying to do what
you really want to do.**

**Where there is love and inspiration,
I don't think you can go wrong."**

**"Start by doing what's necessary;
then do what's possible; and suddenly
you are doing the impossible."**

[Learn More](#)

The Michigan Department of Community Health has a workbook that offers tips, tools and strategies to help you with Transition Planning. Topics include Health Care Transition, Educational Transition, Adult Living, Transition Plan of Care and Navigating the Maze of Community Agencies. The 16 page workbook is called **Transition Planning: A Guidebook for Young Adults and Family**. This free guide is available on line at:

<http://www.michigan.gov/mdch>

Search for "Transition Planning Adulthood Guidebook"

