



# Get The Life You Want

## Transition Toolkit

Green Mountain Self-Advocates

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Montpelier, VT 05602

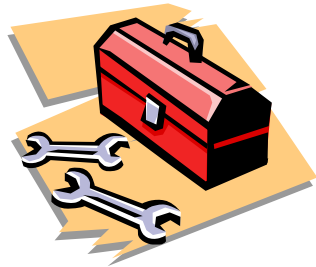
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# Getting Started On Your Toolbox



## Things We Will Cover...

- What is Transition?



- What in the world will you do with the rest of your life?

- Your Toolbox:

✂ What is it?

✂ How to make it?

**It's Your  
Choice!**

- Topics

# Getting Started On Your Toolbox



## People are talking about your “Transition.”

This means a lot of things.

1. Having fun
2. Making friends
3. Learning about yourself
4. Speaking up for yourself
5. Learning new skills to take care of yourself
6. Working
7. Setting a date for you to finish school



A transition plan needs to be written. It will say what you will do from now until you finish high school for good.

**Now** is a good time to get involved in the planning.

You may have questions as we go along. That’s good. It means you are thinking!

The **important** thing is to ask your questions. No question is silly. We will be glad to answer if we can.

**Any  
Questions?**



# Your Toolbox

It's Your Choice!



Your Toolbox is a way to organize your life. It will help you:

1. Plan for your future in school and after graduation.
2. Learn how to organize important documents.
3. Keep records of school and community learning.
4. Showcase your accomplishments—what you have done that you are most proud of.
5. Learn about and collect information on adult services and community resources.

Your Toolbox will help you organize the information you need to become an **active** member of **your** Transition Team.



You may be thinking  
“*What is a  
Transition Team?*”  
So, **ASK!!!**

Do not be the high school graduate who says, “I found my Transition Team annoying because **I had no say.**”

**Transition Teams** are **you**, your parents, your Special Educator, teachers, Voc Rehab Counselor, and any other important people in your life.



You have a say about who is on your team.

This team helps **you** plan for **your** future.

A diploma is your ticket to the rest of your life.



# Let's begin by making "Your Toolbox"

**It's Your  
Choice!**



## Step 1: Your box

You can use:

- A cardboard box
- A plastic file box
- A three ring binder
- or ??????

Decorate the box in a way that tells others something about you. Be creative!



You and your team need to decide where to keep your box. In school or at home?  
If possible lock it up.

## Step 2: Topics

Your toolbox will hold information on many different topics. The topics can be worked on in any order. This will depend where you are in transition.

### **Which topics do you want to work on?**

Look over the list and mark the ones that interest you. There will be topics that other Team members think are important for you to work on. Sometimes you need to push yourself to learn things you are not really interested in. This is part of becoming an adult.

## Which topics do you want to work on?



It's Your  
Choice!

- My dreams, strengths and needs:** How do you make a plan?
- Communication:** How do you let people know what you are thinking? What do you want to learn about communicating? How to use a cell phone, the Internet, Facebook, texting...?
- Assistive technology, equipment and accessibility:** What equipment or technology do you use each day? How do you become more independent when using it? How do you advocate to get the technology you need?
- Personal information:** Including ID cards, Social Security card, resume, medical information... Where is it?
- High School:** Your I.E.P., goals, interest inventories, assessments, Transition Plan... What is your plan for the future?
- Education after high school:** Is this possible? What do you need to know while you're still in high school?
- Friends and relationships:** How to make friends? What about a friend that is becoming more than a friend?
- Fun, recreation, arts, and leisure:** What do you do now? What would you like to try in the future?
- Alcohol, drugs and smoking:** What are these all about? How do you keep yourself safe?
- Health:** What are your health issues? How do you learn to manage them yourself?
- Spirituality:** How do you keep your spirit alive?

## Which topics do you want to work on?



It's Your  
Choice!

- Sexuality:** What do you need to know? How do you express yourself and keep yourself safe?
- Mental Health:** Are you feeling emotionally strong? What can you do if you have emotional problems?
- Safety:** What do you need to know to keep yourself safe at home and in the community?
- Advocacy:** What is it? How do you become a self-advocate? How to get involved?
- Alternatives to Guardianship:** What are the options? How can I get the help I need without having a guardian? What is a good guardian?
- Money:** What skills do you have already? What do you need to learn for an independent future?
- Developmental Services:** What is this all about?
- Civil Rights:** What do you need to learn about your rights and responsibilities?
- Caring for yourself:** What do you know about taking care of yourself? Cooking, cleaning, time management... What do you need to learn?
- Transportation:** How do you get around now? How will you get around in the future?
- Housing:** Where will you live when you get out of school? How do you find out about the options?
- Getting and keeping a good job:** Why is this so important?
- Volunteering or community service:** What have you done? What is out there? How do you get involved?
- Voting:** What are the requirements? How do I decide who to vote for?

# Transition Toolbox



**It is up to you to speak up!  
Let your Transition Team  
know what you want to do.**

## **For each topic you will:**

1. Be given a folder and handouts.
2. Read a story about the topic written by someone who has already graduated.
3. Learn what each topic is about.
4. Make choices about what you want to know. Decide how to Speak Up.
5. Organize the information you already have and new information you learn along the way.

## **Step 3: Label & Collect Information**

We will begin by making a folder for the information we have gone over today.

1. Take a folder, label it **Transition Toolbox**.
2. The first page of each handout is a Table of Contents. Check or highlight what is in the folder.
3. Staple the Table of Contents in the front of the folder. Then at a quick glance you will know what is in that folder.
4. Make a plan to get information you do not have.
5. Put all the pages in the folder. The folder goes in the Toolbox.



# Transition Toolbox



**Dream!**

**Value Yourself**

**Take Care of Yourself**

**And be Good To Yourself**

Tell your team where you want to start. Your team will help you collect all the information and support you to come up with the realistic goals you want to achieve.

Your team will come up with your goals **with or without you**. Pay attention so you have a say in what you do in high school.

Use your Toolbox to collect information as you go through high school.

Look at it a few times a year. Use it to help make decisions. Knowing what your goals are will help you decide what courses to take.

The information is yours and will go with you when you leave school.

- **What is the Transition Toolbox all about?**

The Transition Toolbox is a personal portfolio that is designed to help students with developmental disabilities understand and prepare themselves to write their Transition Plan with their teams.

The Toolbox will give a student a way to save important documents. It can be customized for each individual. It can be used as part of a curriculum in a classroom setting or as a training tool in other settings.

The Toolbox will be valuable to the student, teachers, parents and other professionals as the student plans for his/her future. S/he will use it to:

- plan for their future
- learn how to organize important documents
- keep records of school and community learning
- showcase their accomplishments

- **When should we start using the Toolbox?**

Looking at best practices, we see that Transition Planning starts at 14 or 16 years old. The student's team needs to determine the most appropriate start date for each individual. The system is set up to begin at any time. The Toolbox will grow throughout the years and there may be many revisions before the student graduates.

- **What are the topics covered?**

The Toolbox is a system to collect information needed to make decisions. Each Toolbox will be different depending on the individual student. Toolboxes will be organized by topics/sections with questions/guidelines for collecting information to facilitate a student making their own decisions about their Transition plan. The topics may be introduced in any order. We have listed them alphabetically.

**TOPICS:**

**Getting Started:** What is Transition? What is the Toolbox? How do I build a Toolbox?

**Advocacy and Information Sources:** Local self-advocacy group, disability rights organizations, 211 and other information/ referral sources, how to advocate for yourself, how to stick up for yourself.

**Alcohol, drugs and smoking:** What are these all about? How do you keep yourself safe?

**Alternatives to Guardianship:** Do you have a guardian? Are there alternatives? What is a good guardian?

**Assistive Technology, Equipment and Accessibility:** Equipment that increases a person's ability to fully participate in society. Getting evaluated, locating needed equipment, finding the money to pay for it

**Belonging, Fun, Recreation:** Library information, community organizations and contact information, clubs, health club information.

**Communication:** Preferred method of communication and accommodations, using a cell phone, using email, internet safety.

**Developmental Services:** Personal Care, Flexible Family Funding, Medicaid Waiver, choosing an agency, hiring and supervising support staff, directing your services, facilitating your team meetings, self-managing your services.

**Dreams, strengths and challenges:** What do I already know? How do I use the information?

**Education After High School:** information on SAT accommodations, scores, Accuplacer tests, copies of applications sent to post-secondary schools.

**Friends and relationships:** How to make friends? What about a friend becoming more than a friend?

**Getting and Keeping a good job:** resume, sample applications, job information such as check stubs, benefits, employer handbook, unemployment compensation information, volunteer and community service records, VR contacts, employment services information.

**High School:** records of courses taken, diploma, information on SAT accommodations, scores, assessment information the team will use to generate goals. This could be MAPS information, interest inventories, activities to explore dreams and preferences for the future, Transition and Vocational Assessments, and a copy of the IEP/ Transition Plan.

**Housing & Household Management:** living options, rental information, subsidized housing information, home ownership resources for people with disabilities, picture recipes, cleaning task visuals, schedule for cleaning, meal planning and shopping information, receipts, warranties and repair information.

**Mental Health:** Are you feeling mentally healthy? What can you do about it if your are not?

**Money:** credit card account information, bills, banking information, Social Security and SSI records and documents, copies of Income Tax forms, estate planning, supplemental income documents (food stamps, general assistance...), saving money, completing income taxes, banking and credit, budgeting/spending Plan, comparison shopping.

**Personal Information:** birth certificate, SS card, picture ID, voter registration card, marriage certificate, passport (copies)

**Personal Safety:** What do you need to know to keep yourself safe at home and in the community?

**Rules, Rights, and Responsibilities:** What do you need to know about your civil rights? What are the responsibilities that go along with rights?

**Sexuality:** What do you need to know? How do you keep yourself safe?

**Spirituality:** How do you keep your spirit alive?

**Staying Healthy:** Medical and dental insurance information, names and contacts of health care providers, health history, and medications.

**Transportation:** bus schedules and numbers, taxi numbers (*Ready to Go*: rides for low-income Vermonters to jobs), car records, safety information, ride share information, volunteer driver programs, deviated bus route information, mobility training information, driver training and adaptive equipment, *Good News Garage*.

**Volunteering and Community Service:** What have you done? What is out there? How do you get involved?

**Voting:** What are the requirements? Who do I vote for?

- **What the Toolbox is NOT:**

The Toolbox is **not** a curriculum. It is an **organizational system**.

- **Why should we use it?**

Do you ever wonder what happens to all of the information you give your students or the work they produce? Is there really a “black hole” in the universe where everything goes? Where’s your resume? ”I don’t know.” The Toolbox can serve as the **one** place where students keep the information and records they collect. Wouldn’t all this information be more useful to graduates and the adult service providers than sitting in a file at school or being swallowed up by the “black hole”?

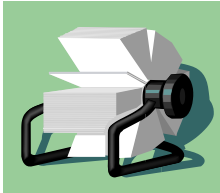
The Toolbox could be used to provide some of the evidence for Special Educators to meet Transition Plan benchmarks. Additionally, this could be a method for students to keep track of the accommodations they need to participate in activities, i.e. picture shopping list, microwave cooking only, programmed telephone, lighted fire alarm...

- **Where should the Toolbox be kept?**

The team needs to consider where to keep the Toolbox. Some sections need to be kept in a secure place to follow HIPAA regulations.



## YOU MAY WANT TO INCLUDE....



- **Contact information about your local self-advocacy group**



- **A schedule of meetings**



- **Copies of times you have advocated (such as letters, speeches...)**



- **Information you gather about self-advocacy**



# Advocacy



## *Advocacy by Todd Washburne*

One of the important things we can do is to advocate for ourselves. Plans are important and our taking part in making them is too. By taking part we can determine how we will live our lives. Becoming vocal about ourselves is part of being an adult.

Advocating for ourselves starts with firmly stating what we need to become the adult we want to become. This should be done in small chunks. I asked my team to give me help so I can get my high school diploma and begin college courses. This will be an important step toward a writing job someday. Jumping into it all at once would be too much, so we set small goals that help me towards the big one.

We need to keep in mind that goals change as time goes on. There may even come a time when we will have to change a plan because it's

not working. You can do much of this yourself, but it is ok to seek outside help. The way to get what you need is by making reasonable demands.

One time I was trying to get a new job coach. I had to convince my team it was important. I was successful but it took a long time. I had good advocates working with me but it still was very difficult. It became a major issue. Sticking with it was the key to that situation. I could not have been successful by myself.

There are many other ways that advocacy can be helpful like talking with legislators or schools to get better services for everyone. You are just as important as anyone else. You have a right to be standing up for yourself. You also have a right to expect others to listen to you.

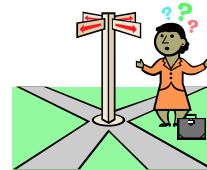
# Advocacy

It's Your Choice!

## Self-advocacy is...



Speaking up for yourself and helping others to speak for themselves.



Making your own decisions and knowing your responsibilities.



Getting to know yourself, being proud, and feeling good.



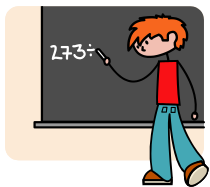
Thinking of all the other movements and preserving your rights.



Getting to know people around you and making friends.



Realizing you are not alone, that there are other people who are just like you.

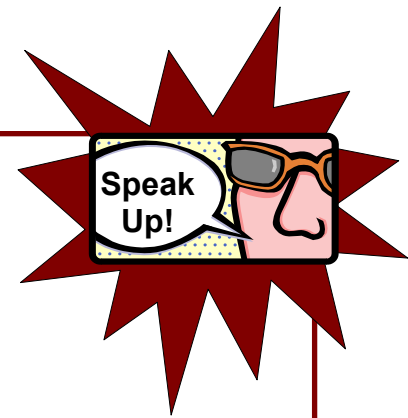


Learning new things, solving problems, finding resources, making your case, negotiating for what you want.



Being part of your community.

# Advocacy



**Let your team know if you want more information!**

**What about joining a self-advocacy group?**

**Who on your team will you tell?**

**I will tell \_\_\_\_\_**

- I want to become involved in a group.**
- I want to learn how to advocate for myself.**

**Green Mountain Self-Advocates is a statewide self-advocacy organization in Vermont. There are hundreds of self-advocates all over Vermont speaking up for themselves as members of local groups.**

**Call us for more information.  
1-800-564-9990  
This call is free in Vermont.**

# Alcohol, Drugs and Smoking



## YOU MAY WANT TO INCLUDE....



- Alcohol facts



- Drug facts



- Smoking facts



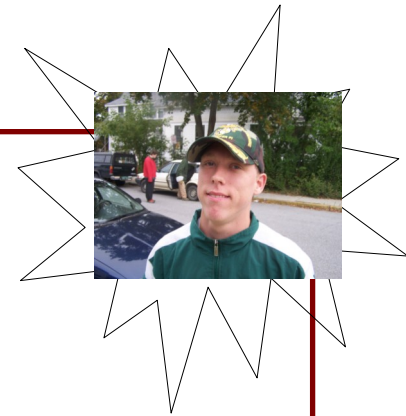
- Prescription medication side effects and warnings



- Resources if you, a friend or family member have a problem

# Alcohol, Drugs and Smoking

## Drinking Responsibly by Greg Hudson



I went to Montpelier High School.

I didn't drink in high school. I was all about keeping healthy.

Before I turned 21, I thought drinking was bad because it messed me up. One time I did drink with an older peer. I threw up and I didn't feel good. I thought I was going to pass out.

I learned I need to drink responsibly. Don't over do. Know my limits.

I just turned 21. People say, "Would you like a drink?" Sometimes I say yes and sometimes I say no.

The other day three kids asked me to buy beer for them. I said, "No." That's hard, but I don't want to get thrown in jail.

My tips for younger students are:

- 1. Don't drink in high school**
- 2. Know your limits**
- 3. Don't buy for underage kids**
- 4. Don't drink before 21. It is not worth it! You could go to jail or have to pay a fine \$\$\$.**



# Alcohol, Drugs and Smoking

**It's Your  
Choice!**

There's a lot of "information" out there about drugs, alcohol and smoking. The movies, music and news don't always tell you about the risks involved. Sometimes what you see on TV makes it look glamorous or cool to smoke, drink or use drugs.

With all the **hype** around drugs, you may not realize the facts that:

**most high school students  
choose not to do drugs**

There are a lot of reasons why people try or use drugs.

- Some people do it to change the way they feel.

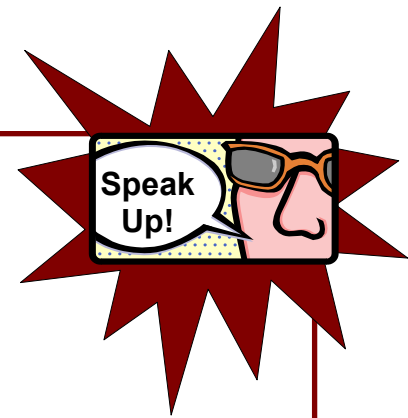
- Some people use drugs to have fun.
- Some people use them to forget something bad.
- Some people use drugs to fit in with a group.

Some users say that drugs ended up making them feel more alone.

Remember no one "plans" to become a drug addict, and every one of the millions of people hooked on drugs started out thinking they had it "under control."



# Alcohol, Drugs and Smoking



**Check out the drug facts. Get informed and decide for yourself.**

**Let your team know you want to know more about:**

- Smoking cigarettes
- Other drugs
- Marijuana
- Alcohol:
  - ⇒ Can I drink if I'm on medication?
  - ⇒ What are the laws?
- Prescription Drugs:
  - ⇒ What if someone takes mine?
- Getting help with a problem:
  - ⇒ How do I quit smoking?

- Getting help because someone in your life has a problem
- How to stand up to peer pressure. How do I say no?

**Who will you talk to?**

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# Belonging, Fun and Recreation



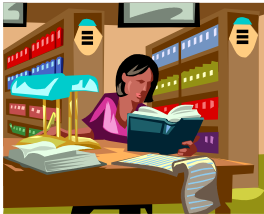
## YOU MAY WANT TO INCLUDE....



- Contact information for community organizations, teams, hobby clubs, health clubs etc.



- Entertainment, hang out places, cafes



- Copy of Library Card and library hours

- Navigating the community: social rules and common courtesies



- Accommodations I need to be successful



## I Ran Through The Doors That Have Been Opened For Me By Conor Cleveland



It has been difficult for me. I had been mainstreamed, but that did not always work because I am loud. Therefore I have to be by myself, so I don't distract others. Being alone has been hard because I am a social person. I can't help being so loud. I am loud because of my Autism. I am "stimulus aware." This makes me need to drown it out. The stimulus that bothers me is light, noise, sounds from the lights, and people in the room. I love people, but they make too much noise. I spent too much time going away in my head to escape the people in the room.

People do not understand and need to be educated on how to yap with a person like me. They assume that I am strange and stay away. This behavior hurts my feelings. Talking about disabilities is okay. I want to tell people why I behave the way that I do. My brain requires that I drown out excess stimulation so I can think. My hand movements help me to measure the world. I

need to measure it. Measuring helps me to see because my sight is poor. As I measure, I program my brain for the future memory.

I would have mainstreamed better if I was in smaller classes of about 5 people and had the lights turned off. I loved being in the class "Community Connections" at high school because I liked going to help others and felt important. We went to the Lane Shops apartments and volunteered by giving food to the elderly, and helped at the craft class.

I did not know that I could walk or communicate before good teachers came along. I felt trapped in a dead man's body. Good teachers encouraged me to try new things and I learned that **I am able**. Now I can walk, run, lift weights, and communicate by typing. I am alive and every day is a party. Open more doors for me to run through.

# Belonging, Fun and Recreation

It's Your  
Choice!

Which one are you?



Couch Potato?



Active?

What are you involved in after school?

- Sports?
- Theater?
- Art?
- Unified Sports?
- Work?
- Other?

What kinds of things do you do in your community?

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Everyone likes to have fun.  
Most students have fun at school or with school friends.

Start with being involved in school activities.

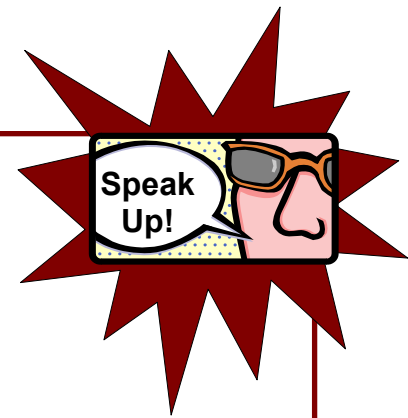
These are some ways to start:

1. Take part in school activities
2. Take part in church activities
3. Join a Unified Sports team
4. Join the Theater Group
5. Sing in the Chorus
6. Invite friends to your house
7. Go to the movies with a friend
8. Go to dances with friends

What ideas do you have?

When you graduate, you will need to find fun in other places.

# Belonging, Fun and Recreation



**It is not too early! You don't want to be left at home, alone.**

**You and your team should  
decide how to start.**

**But, remember, you have a say!!!**

**How do you want to start?**

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**What help do you need?**

- Ideas
- Someone to go with you at first
- Social stories about how to behave
- Transportation
- How to make a date
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Who will you talk to?**

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***Remember:***

Some people worry they will not be accepted in a group. Ask other self-advocates where they feel safe.

# Communication



More Communication Aids

Preferred method of communication

Accommodations

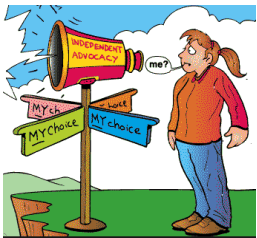


Using a cell phone



Using email

Internet Safety



Public Speaking

Answering telephone/message



Snail mail

# Communication



## *Communication by Todd Washburne*

Being assertive is important, but we need to do it in a polite and non-threatening way.

One example of important communication might be talking to a boss. Maybe you feel you deserve a raise because you are always doing good work and not absent unexpectedly. You should go to your boss and ask for it, explaining clearly why you think you deserve it. The boss might appreciate your approach. If he or she agrees with you, it might be granted. That would be a big thing in your life. This strategy is much better and more likely to succeed than getting angry. It's not about sugar coating our unhappiness, but instead, about selling our good points for our own benefit. This could allow us to have the rewards we deserve. This is a good approach for many situations in life.

It is also important to communicate clearly

with our friends. An offhand comment is not going to go as far as a straight statement that says exactly what is on our minds. This will help our friends to understand what we mean and what we want from them. This is good way to approach life.

How we show support to others who are having difficulty is also important. I think a simple, "I'm sorry", or, "I wish I had an answer for you", would make the person feel like they are not alone with their problem. This is always a good way to show our support with out being snobbish. We appreciate support when we get it and need to remember to give it to others.

My best advice is to always give the clearest message you can. This will prevent most controversy and make people understand and appreciate your point of view.

# Communication

It's Your  
Choice!

People communicate in many different ways:

- talking
- writing
- body language
- sign language
- facilitated communication
- behavior
- using an augmentative device

How do you communicate?

Communication is also listening.



**Listening uses your whole body** - your ears, eyes, nose, heart, mind.

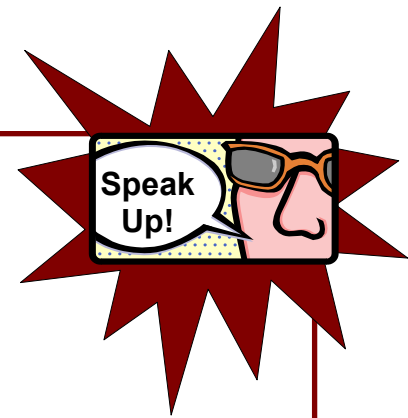
Communication is asking if you don't understand.



Examples:

- ◆ Please say that again.
- ◆ Tell me in another way.
- ◆ Could you show me?
- ◆ Please write that down.
- ◆ Draw me a picture.

# Communication



**What do you want to learn about communication?**

**Remember, you have a say!!!**

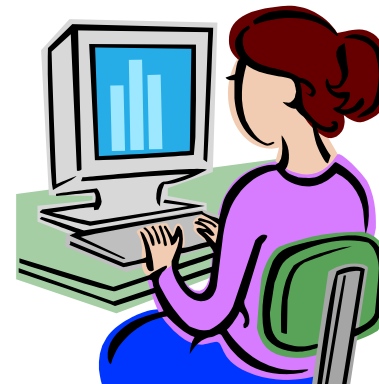
What communication skills do you want to learn before you graduate?

- Speaking up- being assertive
- Being a better listener
- Using a cell phone
- Writing letters
- Taking a message
- Making and answering phone calls
- Using the internet- instant messaging, email, research

**Who will you talk to?**



Are you aware of cell phone etiquette?



What about internet safety?



# Get The Life You Want

## Transition Toolkit

Green Mountain Self-Advocates

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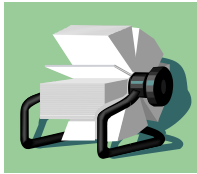
[gmsa@sover.net](mailto:gmsa@sover.net)



# Developmental Services



## YOU MAY WANT TO INCLUDE....



- Contact information for your agency
- Contact information for your service coordinator



- Contact information for your Voc Rehab Counselor



- Copy of your service plan
- Copy of funding information

# Developmental Services by Nicole Leblanc



I graduated from Randolph Union High School in 2004. After graduation I took a college art class. I wanted to take more college courses but I had great difficulty with the placement test. My Voc Rehab counselor helped me go to Grafton Job Corps. I graduated from the Job Corps with certificates in Data Entry, Peer Facilitation, Peer Mediation, and medical records.

Now it was time to look into Adult Services. I went through some testing to find out more about my disability. Then I looked into what services I might be eligible for. My dreams were to move out of my parent's house and out of my small home town. I also wanted to move into a new independent life and career.

My advice to younger self-advocates ready to plan for leaving school is to:

1. Go to a Development Services agency to find out if you are eligible for services.
2. Do a needs assessment.
3. Get job experience while still in high school.

4. Learn to self-advocate at your I.E.P. meetings.

You have a right to say, "This is what I want my future, my life to look like."

5. Get involved with a local self-advocacy group.

6. Learn how to network and make connections.

The first time my agency went to the funding committee I was denied a waiver. My team got together and rewrote the request. The second time my funding went through. I was given a Medicaid Waiver to pay for:

⇒ a service coordinator

⇒ a roommate to live with

⇒ transportation

⇒ and respite

Don't give up. Keep trying even when the going gets tough and you find the road to getting services very frustrating.

Reach for the STARS!



# Developmental Services



**It's Your  
Choice!**

## What are Developmental Services?

### They...

- help keep people living in their communities
- keep people out of institutions
- prevent or respond to abuse and neglect
- keep a person safe (if their health or safety would be at risk if left alone)
- support adults who are or may become homeless
- help high school graduates keep a job they got when in high school
- prevent adults from causing a danger to someone else

## Why is this important to me?

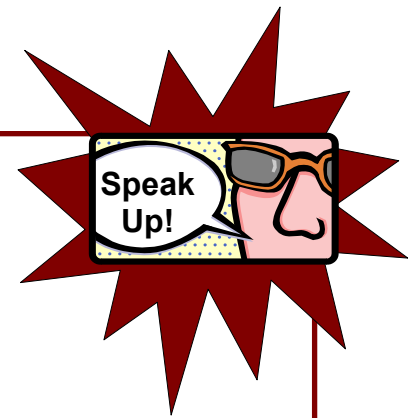
The answer is in what you want.

### Do you want to:

- ⇒ live and get around in your community?
- ⇒ be independent **and** safe?
- ⇒ get help with staying healthy and safe?
- ⇒ get help if you find yourself without a home?
- ⇒ get help with keeping a job?
- ⇒ get help keeping people around you safe?

**Developmental Services may be able to help.** Your team and someone from Developmental Services will do an assessment to decide if you are eligible.

# Developmental Services



## Let your team know you want more information

Check the topics below that you want to find out more about.

- What can Developmental Services actually do?
  - How do I find out if I am eligible for Developmental Services?
    - ⇒ What is involved?
    - ⇒ Who does it?
    - ⇒ How is it paid for?
    - ⇒ What if I don't agree?
  - What other kinds of services are available?
  - Do I have to get services from an agency?
  - What are my choices?
- Who is in charge of my services?
  - What do I do if I feel unsafe or confused?

**You and your team should find out what services are available after high school. Start looking at least 2 years before you leave school.**

**But, remember, you have a say!!!**

**Who will you talk to?**

---

# My Dreams, Strengths and Needs



## YOU MAY WANT TO INCLUDE....



- My Dreams



- My Strengths



- What are my needs so I can reach my dreams?

# Dreams, Strengths and Needs



## *My Personal Strengths and Dreams by Todd Washburne*

I didn't know that I had a lot of strength inside of myself until I had to face hard situations. One difficult thing was getting a former staff person back only to lose her after a few months. The agency is not working well for me at the moment. I know I will get through it because I am basically a strong person who will bounce back. I have been through a lot in my life and it will get better.

As life goes on we need to find inner strength to meet the challenges that come our way. I would prefer to live by myself and have much to learn before I can take that giant step. For now I need help but I am strong enough to get there. First I must prove that I can be safe on my own. Money is a big challenge for me and I don't want to understand it. I am being strong about this and trying to hang in there until it makes sense. By finding that strength I can contribute more to

my life than I thought possible. Strength always seems to be there when we need it. We can always work hard on the things we care about in this world. My road is long but if I work hard enough I can get there.

The best we can do is to live our lives the best we can. The strength we need will come from inside ourselves. Giving up cannot be allowed if we are going to be successful in what we want – we can work hard enough to accomplish anything. We can do a lot more than we think we can and need to always remember that. The strength we need is within us. We need to put it to good use. Good luck finding your own inner strength to keep moving forward

# My Dreams, Strengths and Needs

**It's Your  
Choice!**

Close your eyes and picture in your mind:



- What do you dream of doing when you leave high school?
- Where do you see yourself living?
- What do you see yourself doing for work?
- What are you doing for fun?
- How are you getting around?
- Who are you with?

**Stumped? That's OK.**

**Let your team know you need help with this.**

What are your strengths?

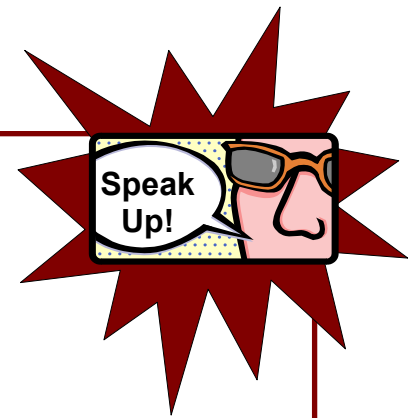
We are all better at some things than others.

Are you:

- Strong?
- A good reader?
- Good at remembering?
- A computer whiz?
- Good with money?
- Friendly?
- On time?

These are just suggestions. Do you know your strengths? Your team can help you uncover those inner strengths Todd talks about in his story.

# My Dreams, Strengths and Needs



**When you know your dreams and strengths,  
you can develop realistic goals.  
And it will be clearer what you need to reach them.**

**You and your team should  
decide how to start.**

**Who will you talk to?**

**But, remember, you have a say!!!**

**Where do you think you need to start?**

- I want to work on dreaming about my future.**
- I need help finding my strengths.**
- How do I turn my dreams into goals?**
- Who is out there to help me?**
- Other \_\_\_\_\_**



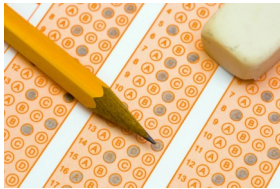
# Education After High School



## YOU MAY WANT TO INCLUDE....



➔ Information on SAT's and accommodations



➔ SAT scores

➔ Accuplacer Tests



➔ Copies of applications sent to schools

➔ Information on post-secondary schools/programs



➔ Copies of correspondence with schools

➔ How to go on a college visit

# Education After High School



## *If I Had Known by Nicole LeBlanc*

The decisions you make in high school will affect what you can do after high school. During my high school years I attended the Vocational Incentive Program (VIP) at my local tech center where I was able to get all the credits I needed to graduate. I also learned basic life skills and participated in career exploration. However, the VIP program did not prepare me for higher education and the Accuplacer test which is required by community colleges in order to take their college level courses.

One of my teachers didn't want my wonderful spirit damaged by setting expectations beyond my ability. My high school didn't have modified mainstream classes. So I ended up choosing VIP instead of a regular high school program. I didn't take college prep classes. When I took the Accuplacer for Community College of Vermont, I failed 3 times.

I took 4 years of classes in a vocational program and I still didn't have the skills to get a job

when I graduated. As I look back, I wish I had stayed in a regular high school program and taken college prep classes instead of getting my high school credits through an easy vocational program.

### **Advice for students thinking about College:**

1. Think about college before you get into high school
2. Visit Colleges- find out about programs for students with disabilities.
3. Take college prep classes. (Go slower, 6 years rather than 4)
4. Be willing to work hard

Don't take the easy way out because it is not always the best option. Staying in high school for an additional 2 years may actually be a smarter move than completing high school in 4 years.

"The choices you make in High School ultimately determine your destiny" rephrased from Rosa Parks.

# Education After High School



**It's Your  
Choice!**

When you are 15 or 16 it is hard to think about what you want in the future. Let me tell you right now, what you do in school in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades can impact what happens after high school.

- ➔ Did you know that some people with developmental disabilities go to college?
- ➔ Did you know there are schools that teach job skills?
- ➔ Did you know you can take classes and not be working towards a degree?

Learning about yourself and what you want in the future is very exciting.

**➔ Do you want to learn more about  
education after high school?**

Most college programs require you to take specific classes in high school. Now is the time to look at some programs and see what you need to do in high school. This takes planning and your team needs to know your thoughts.

# Education After High School



## What do you think?

### Why are you thinking about college?

- Everyone else is doing it.
- Sounds like fun.
- My parents want me to.
- All my brothers and sisters went.

### What do you hope to get out of college?

- A good job.
- Fun.
- Learn new things.
- Grow up.

If Education after high school is what  
you want....

You and your team should  
decide how to start.

Who will you talk to?

---



## YOU MAY WANT TO INCLUDE....



- How to get evaluated
- Locating needed equipment
- Finding the money to pay for it
- Warrantee information
- Community Resources

# I Rely On Equipment by Todd Washburne



I am very dependent on my machine to communicate. It is my link to the real world. I am unable to talk like most of you can and can only do it by typing. I use my machine like most people use their voices. The biggest problem is that my typing finger can't move as fast as others can talk.

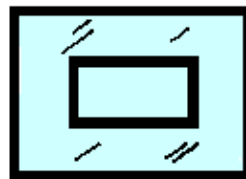
My machine is much like a laptop and has voice software that can read back my words so others can hear what I have to say. This is a big thing when I am in a group and I can adjust the volume. I am sure that without my machine I would be lost in my world of silence and it is very important to me that I have a voice. This allows me to have some say about jobs and my day program, and to tell people what I am thinking. Otherwise they would just be guessing, and these decisions are too important for that. I am not the silent disabled kid people

thought I was for years. However now my voice is heard about many issues and I have even been known to use a bad word or two but not often.

pocket comm. book



eye-gaze board



There are many types of machines designed to help people with various disabilities. A few of the more common ones are wheelchairs, Braille books and watches, and special toilet seats. These are as important to those who need them, as my machine is to me. Thank you's need to be given to the people who invent these helpful tools. We who need them are much better off with the results of their work, and new inventions are coming out all the time. So, if you have a need, check to see if there is a machine that could help. I think we are very lucky that there are so many helpful gadgets for those who are in need of them.

# Assistive Technology, Equipment and Accessibility

**It's Your  
Choice!**

## Assistive Technology (AT) is a tool that helps you:

- take care of yourself – *like using adapted silverware*
- do things as quickly as your peers – *like writing on the computer*
- to participate in activities you wouldn't be able to – *like using a bowling ball slide*
- stick with a task you would normally be too hard to finish – *like using word prediction software*
- concentrate on learning or working – *like using a tape recorder for class notes*
- get information – *such as books on tape*
- interact with peers and adults – *like using an output device*
- go to regular class in a regular school – *by use of elevator*

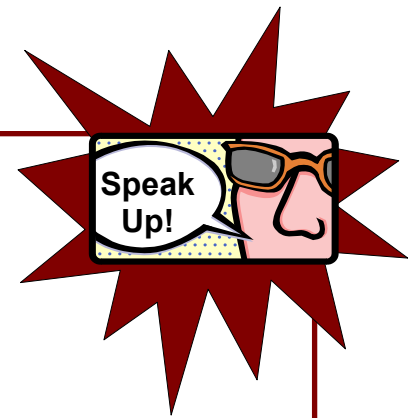


Did you know...

1. it is harder to learn when you are not actively involved?
2. if the school buys your equipment, they own it when you leave?
3. AT needs should be included in your Transition Plan?

Do you need help...

- walking or moving?
- seeing or hearing?
- with writing?
- with money, budgeting, math?
- talking or communicating?
- eating or dressing?



## Next Steps

**You and your team should  
decide how to start.**

Steps your team can help with:

1. Getting evaluated
2. Deciding on your needs
3. Trying out AT
4. Finding money to pay for the AT
5. Making sure your equipment is warranted
6. Putting you in touch with people who can help you

If you need AT or help with your equipment,  
let someone know. **Don't shut down!**

Who will you tell?

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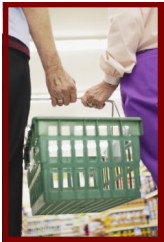
# Friends and Relationships



## YOU MAY WANT TO INCLUDE....



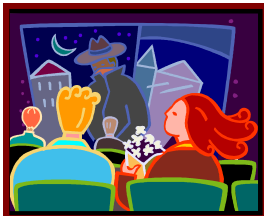
- Making Friends



- Keeping Friends



- Names, Numbers, Addresses, Emails, Birthdays



- How to Make a Date

# Friends and Relationships

## How To Meet New Friends And Keep Them *By Robert Kay*



When I was in school it was not easy to make friends. I started to get out in my community and meet people at groups, volunteering, clubs and playing sports.

And it is a big challenge to find a friend. You have to put yourself out there to find the right friend. Friends that don't care if you have a disability or not. Friends that like you for who you are, not what you give them.

Friends are great to have to go out to movies or just hang out at your house or go out on Friday night.

Friends can introduce you to other guys and women. Maybe one of them will find you a boyfriend or girlfriend.

Overall, having friends is great. You can have many friends.

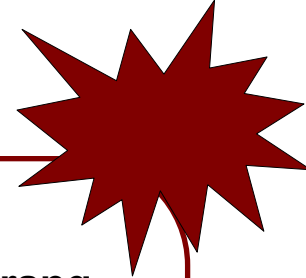
I have a lot all over the world. I still have a friend from grade school. His name is Joel.

And I meet new friends every day.

### What You Need To Do To Find A Nice Friend?

1. You need to walk, cruise over and introduce yourself and shake the person's hand and tell them your name.
2. After you meet that person you need to spend time with them and see how they act around you.
3. And my advice is don't get a girl in the middle of a friendship.

# Friends and Relationships



We all have many different relationships in our lives.



You have **family** and some of you are likely enough to have **friends that are very close to you.**

In these relationships you experience love, trust, enjoyment of company and dependability.

**Casual friends and acquaintances** are different relationships. These are people you go to school with, teammates, people you see regularly at church, at Special Olympics, self-advocacy meetings. You like them, enjoy being with them, and have fun with them.



Other people are **paid** to have a relationship with you. These are your teachers, para-educators, doctors, counselors, coaches. You feel friendly towards them. You have shared interests or activities.



The rest of the people are **strangers** or people you don't know. You are polite with them, but do not have a relationship with them.

While you are going to school you see a lot of people every day. This leads you to think you have lots of friends.

## **STOP and THINK!**

**In your mind, think of someone you call a friend. Is this a person:**

- ‡ Who you trust?    Y        N
- ‡ Who you can tell your secrets? Y    N
- ‡ Who is fun to be with? Y        N
- ‡ Who you do things with outside of school?        Y        N
- ‡ Who you could ask for help? Y        N

5 Yes = **Friend** (Don't forget not paid.)

1 or more No = **Acquaintance**

# Friends and Relationships



My Friends are...

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Things We Do Together

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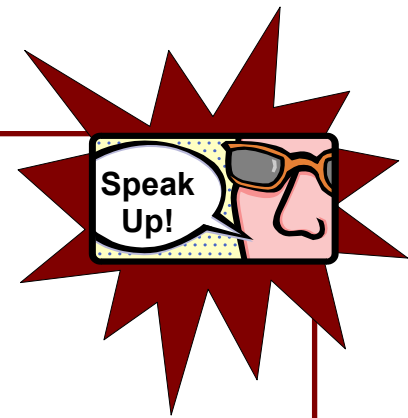
Practice making dates (scheduling to do something with a peer) with your peers now. Then you will know how when you graduate. Remember there won't be school to get together with your friends. It can get pretty lonely out there.

Once you get this friend-thing figured out, you may be ready for a romantic relationship.

It takes two to be friends. It is a responsibility you both need to take seriously.

# Friends and Relationships

Let your team know friends are very important to you.



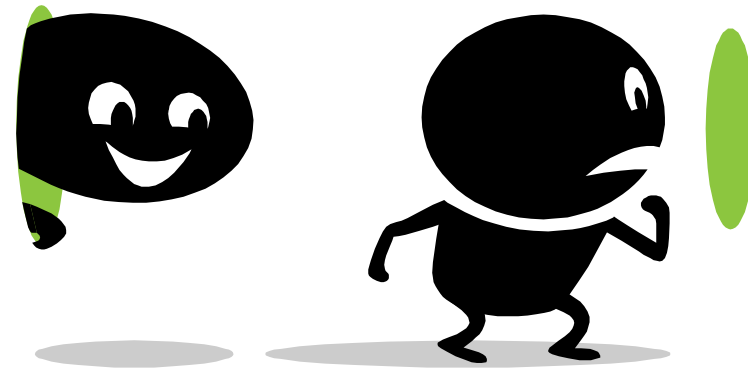
Who will you talk to?

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**Safety!**

What kind of help do you need?

- Thinking about others
- Making friends
- Keeping friends
- Making a date
- Communication – staying in touch, talking about problems, internet sites
- Transportation
- Keeping track of peers' telephone #'s and email addresses
- Keeping yourself safe



If **anyone** in any kind of relationship makes you feel uncomfortable-

**Tell your safe person, a trusted adult.**

It's better to be safe than sorry.

# Getting And Keeping A Good Job



## YOU MAY WANT TO INCLUDE....

- Resume
- Sample applications
- Job information such as check stubs, benefits, employer handbook, unemployment compensation information
- VR contracts, Benefit Counselor information
- Employment Services information
- Reporting to SSI
- Reference names, telephone numbers, addresses, & letters of recommendation
- Interviewing skills, how to research a place of employment



Item	Rate	Time Period	YTD	Pay Period	Net Pay
Base Pay	10.00	01/01/09 - 01/15/09	150.00	01/01/09 - 01/15/09	120.00
Health Insurance	5.00	01/01/09 - 01/15/09	75.00	01/01/09 - 01/15/09	0.00
Life Insurance	2.00	01/01/09 - 01/15/09	30.00	01/01/09 - 01/15/09	0.00
Retirement	3.00	01/01/09 - 01/15/09	45.00	01/01/09 - 01/15/09	0.00
Other Deductions	0.00	01/01/09 - 01/15/09	0.00	01/01/09 - 01/15/09	0.00
<b>Total Deductions</b>			<b>150.00</b>		<b>0.00</b>
<b>Net Pay</b>					<b>120.00</b>



# Getting And Keeping A Good Job

## **Problems With The Boss**    *By Todd Washburne*



It is possible that someday you will wind up with a boss who doesn't understand you or your abilities. There are many great bosses out there but all of them are not great. When a boss or a co-worker has a problem with their job, it might affect your job. It is important to realize that your boss is responsible for keeping his workers productive, but no one is productive when there is a problem in the work place

It is important to get a support person to help us. This can be a job coach, a case manager, or a vocational counselor who could talk to the boss with you. It is not wise to deal with a difficult boss alone because we may get upset and not do it well. After someone has helped us talk with the boss we need to look at whether the situation has improved or not. If it has improved, great. If not, the next decision is whether to stick it out or start

to look for a different job. This same difficult situation can exist with a co-worker. You may need the support person for that as well.

Bosses have a lot of pressures placed on them but that is not a good reason to take it out on us. On the other hand, we need to understand when he or she has a difficult day. We need to continue to do our best even when it is difficult. We must also get help to change the situation into a positive one. Your job can be the best job in the world, but only if you can work well with the boss.

It is sometimes hard to tell the difference between a good boss and a bad boss. Handling a difficult boss can be much easier if we get some help. It is also important to get an early start on the problem before it gets out of hand. We need to be a part of the team and help the work go as smoothly as possible.

# Getting And Keeping A Good Job



**It's Your  
Choice!**

## What work experience do you have?

- Chores at home.
- Babysitting.
- Paper route.
- Part-time job
- In-school job
- Volunteer work

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## While you are in high school you will want to learn about:

1. filling out an application
2. writing a resume
3. interviewing for a job
4. looking for a job
5. how to dress
6. social skills to keep a job
7. time management

Sometimes you can learn this in class.

Work experiences during school are important.

It is best to have a job before you graduate.

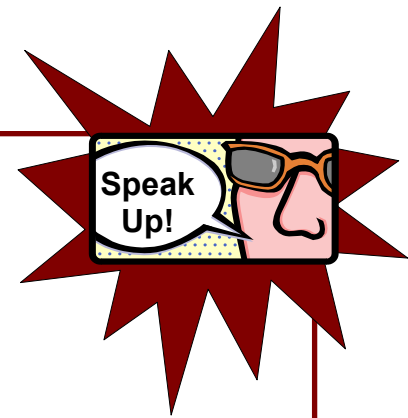
Funding for services after you graduate may be dependent on you having a job.

Mark the questions you want to answer while you are still in school:

- Do you have the skills necessary to obtain a paying job?
- What supports do you need to get and keep a job?
- What kind of jobs are available?
- What are my job interests and abilities?
- How do I keep track of my work experience?
- Are the classes you are taking appropriate for the job of my choice?
- Do you have the social skills you need for a job and living in the community?



# Getting And Keeping A Good Job



Let your team know working is very important to you.

Who will you talk to?

\_\_\_\_\_

What are the top 5 things you want to learn about getting and keeping a job?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

You will need to get to know your Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor. S/he will help you with jobs after you graduate.

Voc Rehab Counselor

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_

You may have to choose which employment service you want to work with. You do get a choice. **ASK** if someone doesn't tell you.

VR will give you a Roadmap to Employment. Start collecting the information now and your job will be very easy when you graduate.

# High School



## YOU MAY WANT TO INCLUDE....

- Records of courses taken
- Copy of diploma
- Copy of IEP
- Copy of Transition Plan
- Certificates or awards
- Samples of work
- Sports, clubs, Special Olympics
- Assessment results- MAPS, achievement test scores, interest inventories, exploration information
- Transition Plan with goals and objectives
- Summary of Performance



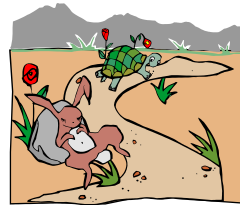
REPORT CARD				
GRADING PERIOD	1	2	3	4
READING	A			
WRITING/COMPOSITION	A			
LANGUAGE	C			
REASONING	B			
SOCIAL STUDIES	B			
ART	A			
MUSIC	A			
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	C			
Grade Point Average	B			
Comments:				
Parent:				
Teacher:				
U.S. Department of Education • U.S. Department of Health and Human Services				

# Transition from High School *By Todd Washburne*



Each of us leads a different road to independence.

Mine was very long, but some of yours may be much shorter. As we transition to adulthood we need to keep plugging along and setting achievable and reasonable goals. If we can keep moving forward in small steps we can become the best we can be. We all have a different set of needs and abilities.



There are many ways to help ourselves as we enter the adult world.

One of the first things we can do is to be a good planner and set some doable goals. The last thing we want to do is to fail early on our adult adventure. This will be different for each individual. We will feel better as we get a few successes under our belts. When we just start to spread our wings, we should not try to fly too far at first. Good things will happen as we move toward the independence that we all want for ourselves. We all

want different things and each person's plan is their own. Independence will be different for each of us. Your plan is your own. The road will become much clearer as we change and realize our goals toward real independence. We are kind of like the slow tortoise and may win the race over the hare who goes so fast that he may trip and fall.

The best thing we can do to help ourselves is to go slowly but steadily in the direction we want to go. The worst thing we can do is to be in a rush. We are much better off taking our time and doing it the right way. How we manage our lives is now in our hands more than ever before, and we can be successful if we move forward in small steps. You are going to surprise yourself as you discover how able you are. You will feel more confident and sure of yourself. The road may be longer than we want, but good things happen slowly sometimes.

# High School



A transition is moving between one thing and another. You are moving from high school to adulthood. You will leave high school and not come back. You will have different people to see, activities, and responsibilities.

While you are still in high school is the time to explore your likes/dislikes, strengths/weaknesses, and dreams.

## **TRANSITION REALLY STARTS FROM WITHIN:**

### **KNOW Yourself**

- Discover your strengths and weaknesses.
- Explore your likes and dislikes.

### **KNOW Your disability**

- What does it mean to you?
- How does your disability effect you differently in different places and situations?

### **KNOW Strategies**

- Learn ways to get through life with your disability

### **KNOW Your rights**

- Learn your rights as a citizen and as a person with a disability.

### **KNOW How to get help**

- Don't be afraid or ashamed to ask for help.
- You should be proud that you have taken these steps to independence.

# High School



**Let your team know planning for after graduation is very important to you.**

## **Who will you talk to?**

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This is a good time to think about your IEP and Transition Plan.

What does it say about you?

Do you have questions about it?

Does it match with what you checked off to the left?

## **What kind of help do you need?**

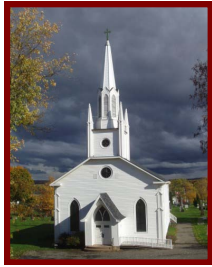
- Thinking about your strengths
- Dreaming about the future
- Exploring my interests
- Turning my dreams into goals
- Making a plan
- Feeling comfortable to try new things
- Sharing my goals with my family

## **Who will you talk to if you would like to see changes?**

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**It's your life. You need to be at the table to have a say!**

# Spirituality



Name of Church, Temple or Mosque (*contact*)



Yoga or meditation schedule (*contact*)



Massage therapist



Class or workshop to attend

# Spirituality



## **Spirituality Is Important** *By Todd Washburne*

Spirituality means a lot to me. I think that it means that everyone can get in touch with their souls and feel good about what they are doing. Spirituality is an important feeling when we can find it. I believe that there is a God and he or she seems cruel sometimes. At other times he is very well hidden.

Regardless of our religion, some kind of strong belief can help us to be at peace with ourselves.

Some of that peace comes from everyday life when stress levels are low. Each person needs to find a way to do his own thing to discover what helps to get that peaceful feeling regularly. That can be as simple as looking at the ripples in a stream or a pond. Some walking

in the woods might be your way of finding it. Other things might be listening to your favorite music, losing yourself in a good book, or sketching drawings or cartoons. You will need to find whatever it is that makes you feel good about your life and that you can turn to when life is not so good.



Often the simplest thing is what makes the difference between being calm or not. Be creative and have part of every day when you are making peace with yourself. Making this work for you is an important thing

for each and every one of us. I think we all need to make a plan for how we can find and keep our spirit going.

# Spirituality



Spirituality is about who you are inside. It is being clear about your core values and beliefs and being at peace with yourself.

What do you value? Pick 4 values that will make you feel good about your life. There are no right or wrong answers.

I will feel good about my life if...

- I am in good **health**
- I continue my **education**
- I have my own **home**
- I have a **job**
- I have my own **money**
- I have **fun**
- I have a romantic **relationship**
- I have **friends**

- I live in a clean **environment**
- I spend time with my **family**
- There is world **peace**
- I stay away from **drugs**
- I have **choices**
- I can exercise my **rights**

It is hard work staying clear about what you feel is important in life. Sometimes we struggle with finding inner peace. Taking time to look at your life, clear your mind, think a problem through, or give yourself a pep talk are some ways to help with the search.



# Spirituality



You Get To Decide How You Will Care  
For Your Spirituality Or Your Inner Peace

What do you do?



Being outdoors

Art



Music

Yoga



Write

Meditate



Massage

Go to church



Pray

Chant



What would help you?

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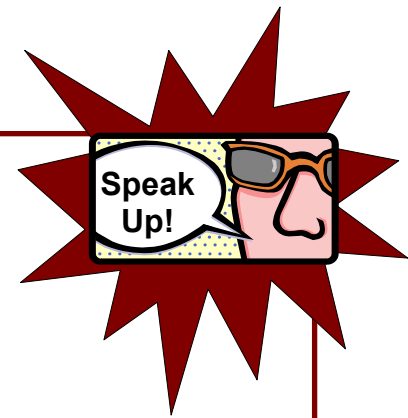
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# Spirituality



**Let your team know spirituality is very important to you.**

**Which team member will you talk to about making time to charge your batteries?**

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**What kind of help do you need?**

- Thinking about ways to be spiritual
- Getting more information
- Finding a group or class to join
- Trying out the group or class
- Transportation
- Making time each day or week to be spiritual
- Keeping track of contact telephone #'s and email addresses

# Transportation



## YOU MAY WANT TO INCLUDE....

- Bus schedules and numbers

Rideshare  Information



- Deviated Bus Routes
- Car records, Good News Garage



- Safety Information
- Taxi numbers (Ready to Go: rides for low-income Vermonters to jobs)



- Driver Training and adaptive equipment
- Volunteer Driver programs



- Mobility Training Information

# Transportation *by Max Barrows*



Soon you will be leaving high school. It is important to start thinking about ways that you can get around after you've graduated.

Like most students when I was in high school, I got rides on the bus and from my parents. Now that I am out, there is no school bus and my parents can't take me as often. I realize now that they had busier lives than I was ever aware of. So, I needed to find other ways to get to work, friends, meetings, etc. I learned in high school how to take the public bus, but it turns out that I only use it rarely. What I have learned since is that you can request a bus route deviation. This is asking for the bus to go up to a mile from the closest bus route to your house. Another thing I've learned is that there are often Volunteer Driver programs available to people with disabilities. After showing proof of your disability, you can call for a free ride with a minimum of two days notice. A third thing is that sometimes a support person can provide rides to and

from work. Before, I was totally dependent on my parents.

Learning all this has increased my feelings of independence. I used to spend a lot of time waiting for my parents to get off work. I had to hang out downtown after I was done working. Now I pretty much can go where I need to go and that feels great!

Now is the time to get out and research your transportation options. Start out with case managers, teachers, and other trusted adults. Ask them what's available. Check out the regional transportation agency in your area. You can look in the phone book, try the internet or check in information booths for schedules.

So, let's face it: your parents won't be able to drive you around forever! Start taking responsibility for your transportation needs. You'll probably feel more confident and independent!

# Transportation



**It's Your Choice!**

## How do you get from place to place now?

- Parents drive
- School bus
- Friends
- Support person drives
- Walk
- Bike
- Drive
- Wheelchair
- Public bus

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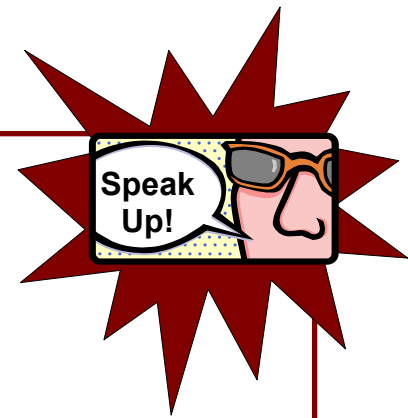
When you can get around by yourself you will have more independence.

## Mark what you need to know?

- How to arrange a ride with someone I know
- How to cross the street safely
- How to ride a bike- bike safety
- How to get a motorized wheelchair
- How to take a public bus and how to read a bus schedule and pay for it
- How to call and pay for a taxi
- How to use "Ticket to Ride"
- What is a deviated bus route?
- What about driving? How can I know if I can drive? Driver Education? Insurance? Buying a car?
- Planning ahead- you need time to make arrangements

Your parents will get tired of driving you around. You won't be able to go places, if you can't get there.

# Transportation



**Let your team know transportation is very important to you.**

I will talk to \_\_\_\_\_ about bringing this up at a Team Meeting.  
(name a person on your team)

## Public Transportation Etiquette

- If you have to stand don't block the doors.
- Courtesy seats are for people with disabilities or seniors.
- Personal audio devices– if people around you can hear your music, it is too loud.
- Food– moving vehicles and food don't mix. Don't eat or drink in vehicles.
- Cell phones– keep your voice down. Everyone around you doesn't want to hear your conversation.
- Backpacks and bags should be put on the floor, but not in the aisle. Your bag doesn't really need a seat!
- Personal Hygiene– on a crowded bus people around you will appreciate it if you use deodorant. Use perfumes and colognes sparingly. Some people are allergic.

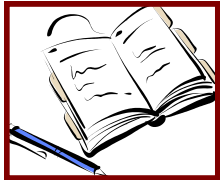
# Volunteering



## YOU MAY WANT TO INCLUDE....



- **Community Contacts**



- **Record of volunteer activities**



- **Certificates, awards, etc**

# Volunteering *By Max Barrows*



When I was in high school, I volunteered in several ways. One place, that always needs help, was the Vermont Food Bank in Barre Town. The Vermont Food Bank gives out food for those in need. This includes the elderly, those with low income, soup kitchens, etc. The work happens in a really huge warehouse. We boxed up all kinds of packaged foods. These orders went on a tractor trailer truck for delivery across the state. For the hour or two a week the work was fun. I also helped out with Meals on Wheels. This is a program that delivers lunches to older folks who can't get out easily. It felt good to give to the community and build relationships. Later, after I graduated, I volunteered at the Senior Center. There, I helped people learn Internet skills. This allowed them to stay in touch with family and friends through e-mail. This was my favorite volunteer work. The people seemed very happy to see me each time I came back. They appreciated the help in staying connected.

This kind of work makes me feel positive. I enjoyed building relationships with people I would never have known. I also enjoyed being appreciated for the work I did with them. When you give your time, you can sometimes get rewarded with good vibes. Volunteering can also be a preview of the work

world. You learn about scheduling and being on time. For example, you can't show up at any old time for Meals on Wheels. You've got to be there before lunch! You also learn about tasks that need to be done each day. The person in charge decides on priorities for you to do. This gets you used to the idea of working for a boss.

To get involved in volunteering, you should first know what might interest you. Volunteering is good, but not if it's something that turns you off. The next step is to find out the options available. Are there programs for students to connect with volunteerism in the community? If not, use your Individual Educational Plan (I.E.P.) to advocate for your needs. You should start learning to be in charge of your own I.E.P.! You can also search in the larger community for other opportunities, or with your local self-advocacy group!

Volunteering helped me prepare for work. It made me feel good by giving back to the community. I really liked the relationships I made with the people I worked for and with. You too can have an experience with good vibrations through volunteering!



# Volunteering



Volunteering is working without pay.  
You may be asking “Why would I do that?”

Answer the following questions.

	YES	NO
1. Do you want to learn something new?		
2. Do you have skills to offer?		
3. Do you enjoy computers and have access to the internet?		
4. Do you like to help others?		
5. Do you want to meet new people?		
6. Do you find yourself bored sometimes?		
7. Do you want to feel a part of something?		
8. Do you like to feel needed?		
9. Do you want to be busy?		
10. Do you want to feel better about yourself?		
11. Do you need to get some job experience?		
12. Do you need to practice skills so you don't forget them?		
13. Do you have enthusiasm and energy?		
14. Do you like to have fun?		
15. Do you want to give back to your community for some help you have gotten?		

# Volunteering



**It's Your  
Choice!**

**How many of the questions did you score a “Yes” answer for? \_\_\_\_\_**

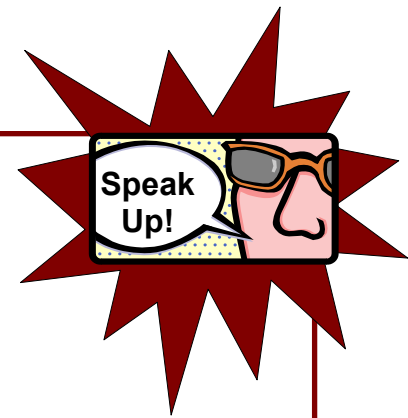
**That is how many reasons you have to volunteer!**

**You may be thinking, “What could I do?” There are many ways you can volunteer.**

**Here’s just a few. Mark the ones you might be interested in.**

- Serve at Homeless Shelters
- Stuff envelopes or sort food at the Food Bank or Food Shelves
- Knit sweaters, mittens, hats... and give them to an organization.
- Help raise money or help build a house for Habitat for Humanity
- Reading to people who are visually impaired or children.
- Hospitals need volunteers to transport patients and equipment or bring magazines around.
- Libraries and museums need guides or book organizers.
- Senior Centers need people to help with computers and other activities.
- Animal shelters need walkers, and cleaners.
- Red Cross need people to help in disasters or organizing.
- Salvation Army needs people to serve food or sort donations or ring the bell at the Holidays.
- Political Campaigns need people to make phone calls, stuff envelopes, go door-to-door, or hold signs.
- Virtual Volunteering might be typing for someone with a disability or emailing a shut-in.
- Parks, hiking trails need raking, clearing, picking up trash, or mulching.
- Volunteer Fire Departments need help keeping the equipment in working order, fighting fires, or supporting fire fighters.

# Volunteering



**Let your team know volunteering is very important to you.**

## **What do I need to think about?**

- What are my interests?
- What skills to you have to offer?
- How does volunteering help you reach your goals?
- What cause or issue is important to you?
- Do I have time in my schedule?
- How will I get there?
- Would it be fun to volunteer as a group?

## **Who should I contact?**

1. Who on my team should I ask for help?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. [www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org)
3. Look up specific organizations (Red Cross, Cancer Society, Local Hospital etc.) in the Yellow Pages and call them.

# Voting



## YOU MAY WANT TO INCLUDE....

- Registering to Vote



- Political candidates and their views



- Voting accommodations



- Getting to the polls

# Voting *By Todd Washburne*



Voting is something that I know a lot about. I voted for the first time at the age of 40. I told my mother and father that I would like to vote. They asked me some questions about voting, and checked to be sure I had logical thinking on some of the issues. They wanted to make sure that I was voting for all the right reasons.

Next I went to the town clerk of the town that I live in. He administered the Freeman's Oath and explained the process. I was able to take the absentee ballot home to look over before I actually made my choices. This process helped me to understand the details of how the whole thing works and how easy it is. Thinking about my options ahead of time was very helpful for marking my ballot. When I had

made all my choices I took my ballot to the Town Hall and they put it in the box.



I think that I learned a lot from voting. I believe that everyone should vote. That way they can have a say in how our government is run, and can't complain about who we have in the government. I feel that every citizen is better off if they take an active interest in politics and go to the polls at every opportunity.

I am proud that I am a registered voter. The political news is now more important to me than ever before and I look forward to casting my vote for the candidates of my choice. I believe you should consider political life as part of your role as an adult and exercise your right to vote.

# Voting



It is every citizen's right to vote.

If you are 18 or older, it is your right to vote.

It is your responsibility to:

- 1. Register to vote**
- 2. Find out about the candidates and issues**
- 3. Go to the polls and cast your ballot**

You may have questions about voting. Ask your parents, teachers, support worker or other self-advocates about voting. Keep asking until you find someone to help you.

There are many websites to visit to learn about voting.

[www.votegopher.com](http://www.votegopher.com)

[www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

[www.rockthevote.org](http://www.rockthevote.org)

[www.vote-smart.org](http://www.vote-smart.org)



Did you know?

Green Mountain Self-Advocates teach a workshop on voting rights for youth and adults with developmental disabilities. It includes segments on:

- 1. Voting rights**
- 2. Debunking the myths about why people don't vote**
- 3. How to register to vote**
- 4. How to decide who to vote for**

For information call 1-802-229-2600

Or email: [gmsa@sover.net](mailto:gmsa@sover.net)

# Voting

It's Your  
Choice!

## My Vote By Jeffery Ridgeway

They say I can't vote.

They say the decision is not mine.

They say I don't understand.

I guess they think they're being kind.

I wonder what they would say or think if  
they only knew

That when they call the President "Our  
President,"

I want to call him mine, too.

If I never get the chance to vote

-  
pulling the lever, punching the  
card or writing his name down-

I stay the same – misinformed,  
unchanged, not empowered.

That is what this world expects  
me to be.

But I want so much more!!!

I want to be the most educated – the most  
informed –

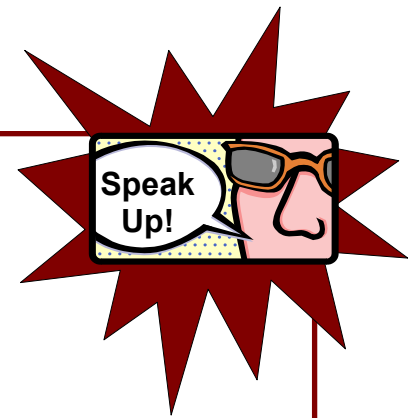
the most totally changed – the most totally  
empowered person I can be when I vote.

I **can** make a difference and then I can say  
with pride,

"Not yours,  
not theirs,  
but **my President**  
because I helped put him  
there."



# Voting



**Let your team know voting is very important to you**

**Who will you talk to?**

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**What kind of help do you need?**

- Answering your questions about voting
- Registering to vote
- Finding out about who to vote for
- Making decisions
- Getting a ride to the polls
- Help filling out the ballot