

- **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.