

# TRANSITION PLANNING:

## FINDING THE RIGHT PATH FOR YOUNG ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

### Show Takeaways

**Start Early:** Transition planning begins in the IEP process (age 14–16).

**Guardianship Matters:** At 18, your child is legally an adult. Explore guardianship or supported decision-making options before their birthday to avoid gaps in care.

**Personalized IEP Goals:** Focus on skills that build independence, workplace readiness, social skills, transportation, daily living.

**Vocational Rehabilitation (VR):** Connect with VR before graduation. They provide assessments, job training, internships, and job coaching.

**Adult Day Programs:** Offer structure, socialization, and skill-building for adults. Visit in person, ask questions, and trust your instincts.

**No One-Size-Fits-All:** Every path is unique. The goal is meaningful opportunities matched to your child's needs, strengths, and potential.

### Questions to Ask in Transition Planning

- ☐ What skills should we prioritize now for post-graduation success?
- ☐ What vocational or day programs are available in our area?
- ☐ How can VR get involved before graduation?
- ☐ What supports are available for job training or supported employment?
- ☐ What community resources can we connect with today?

### Pro Tips

- **Tour Programs Early:** Visit multiple programs, meet staff, and ask detailed questions (staffing ratios, medical supports, safety policies, activities).
- **Network with Parents:** Other families are often your best resource for program recommendations and real-life feedback.
- **Don't Rush:** If the first option doesn't feel right, keep looking. The right fit matters more than the quickest fit.
- **Mix & Match:** A combination of day programs, vocational training, and supported work can create a balanced schedule.

### Reflection

- ☒ What are my biggest hopes for my child's life after high school?
- ☒ What skills could we start practicing now that would help them thrive later?
- ☒ Who in my community (teachers, VR counselors, other parents) can I reach out to for support?
- ☒ What programs should we research or tour this year?