



Transition Considerations for Individuals with Significant Disabilities

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School: Young adults with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) may choose to stay in school until they are 21. Check your student's IEP for transition goals (Post Secondary Transition Plan). Those goals should talk about what the student wants (or his family wants for him) after he or she leaves school. School should then be working on some skills and exploration of options to help with that transition. Learn more at:

http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/sped_transition and <http://dpi.wi.gov/files/sped/pdf/spp13-ptp-parentyouth-guide.pdf>

Decision Making: If a young adult is unable to make informed decisions, you may need to file for Guardianship. Every adult is considered to be competent and responsible for their own decisions when they turn 18. For those who are not able to make informed decisions, a legal process is required to obtain the determination that they need a guardian to make decisions for them. The process starts with a Psychological Evaluation Report from the primary care doctor or a psychologist. *The report needs to be fairly recent, so you should schedule an appointment with a doctor for the young adult when they are no younger than 17 years and 6 months. That is the earliest you can file the petition and report with the probate court. The court hearing will be scheduled when the petition is filed. The hearing cannot be held before the young adult is 17 years and 9 months.* An attorney can be hired to assist with this process. Learn more at about guardianship at:

<http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/P2/p20460.pdf> For more information about filing for guardianship, contact the Southeast Regional Center.

Medicaid: When a child who has Medicaid through Katie Beckett turns 18, they can apply for SSI (Supplemental Security Income). SSI is a needs-based program, so eligibility is based on disability determination plus income and assets. Once an individual is 18, the social security administration will consider only their income and assets, and not their family's. Disability determination is different for adults than it is for children. Disability determination is based the individual's medical disability and their ability to work. If an adult is found eligible for SSI, then they would automatically (in Wisconsin) be eligible for Medicaid as well. Don't submit your application before the month of their 18th birthday or it may be denied due to family income. *When the young adult is 17 years and 6 months, you can begin the application process online at: <http://www.ssa.gov> . Choose "Benefits" from the blue bar at the top of the page and click on "Apply Online for Disability". After reviewing Step 1, go to Step 3: Fill out the Adult Disability Report.* There is a way to stop throughout the report, and save a re-entry number so that you can go back and continue through the report. That way, you can work on it ahead of time, but not submit it until their birthday month. Once the young adult reaches their birthday month, go back to Step 2: Fill out Disability Benefit Application. Complete and submit the application, along with the Disability Report. One helpful hint is that it is a bit easier to go through this process if you already have established guardianship. You can do it without guardianship, but it may be a little more complicated.



Family Care, Partnership and IRIS: Family Care is an adult long-term care program in Wisconsin for adults with physical or cognitive disabilities and frail elderly. In a sense, Family Care is like Family Support Program, providing services needed to support your adult in the community. If eligible, an individual can choose a managed care organization to develop a plan and provide services. Some counties offer Partnership, which manages social needs as well as health care services. A third option is IRIS (Include, Respect, I Self-Direct). With IRIS, the individual is given a monthly budget and they are allowed to develop their own plan and hire their own services. (The plan must be approved and there is a consultant to help you through the process.) To determine eligibility, you can *contact your County's Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) when your young adult is 17 years and 6 months*. Many ADRC's have a Transition Person who have expertise in working with youth. For more information about Family Care (sometimes called Publicly Funded Long Term Care), visit: <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/lcicare/> To learn more about Partnership, go to: <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/WIpartnership> For more information about IRIS, visit: <http://www.wisconsin-iris.com/>

Health Care Transition: Health Care Transition requires planning and practice. It's important to think about which doctors, specialists, dentists and facilities will continue to see your child as an adult and how long they will do so. This will be different in each practice, so it's important to start asking at each visit once your child is 15 or 16 years old. Ask the provider to help you help your youth learn about taking responsibility for health care decisions, keeping track of health care needs, ordering supplies and scheduling appointments, etc. Since each young adult and each provider are unique, there will be some advocacy needed! Visit <http://www.healthtransitionwi.org/> or <http://www.gottransition.org> or ideas and tips.

This is a very brief overview of some of the main transition issues to think about. Working parents may want to plan to use some vacation days to work on these issues.

In summary, to get started on the above options:

1. SCHOOL: Look over your student's IEP to see if school can help with preparing for "Life after High School".
2. GUARDIANSHIP: Schedule an appointment with a primary care doctor for the purpose of completing the psychological evaluation report (must be done with patient present) for 17 years and 6 months. The reports may be found and printed at: http://www.wicourts.gov/circuit/ccform.jsp?FormName=&FormNumber=&beg_date=&end_date=&StatuteCite=&Category=18 Scroll down to "Notice of Rights; GN-3125 and "Examining Physician's or Psychologist's Report" GN-3130.
3. SSI: Begin the online application at 17 years and 6 months: <http://www.ssa.gov>
4. FAMILY CARE: Contact your ADRC at 17 years and 6 months to ask about eligibility determination for Family Care/IRIS and benefits counseling.
5. HEALTH CARE: Ignoring the topic will not make it go away! Health Care Transition is sometimes the most emotionally-charged area of transition. For helpful guidelines and tools from staff who understand, contact the Southeast Regional Center.

For more information about and assistance with these options as well as other transition issues, please contact the Southeast Regional Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs: 414-266-6333.

