

Section 8 Looking Ahead- Transition to Adulthood

Another important component of any transition plan is that it is person (youth) centered. Person-Centered plans build upon partnerships between the youth, their family, friends, professionals, and other supports to create collaborative plans to support the youth to meet their goals. Person-Centered planning provides a structure to ensure that the youth's dreams are honored and voice heard while allowing those who support them to collaboratively plan for the youth's future.

There are several Person-Centered Planning tools/models and resources that you could use to assist youth in creating a plan. Each model/tool has its strengths and they can be adapted based on a youth's preferences and styles. There are a variety of names for Person-Centered Planning on the internet, including whole life planning, personal futures planning.

Considerations for Transition Planning

Teens and young adults should be active participants in the transition planning. This is a time for parental support without being overprotective. "Letting go" is a necessary process experienced by both parent and young adult. Where do you start? Choose a goal that your young adult feels is most important to his or her independence and identify "safety nets." Safety nets are smaller steps taken to achieve independence and the support that is needed to assist them on their journey. Having these safety nets in place will make it much easier to transfer the responsibility to your young adult.

Guardianship

- At age 18, in Wyoming, adolescents reach the age of majority and are expected to make decisions about their own care.
- Parents discover that they are no longer legally active participants in many of their young adults' lives.
- Sometimes, a guardian is necessary to protect the interests of a young adult with a chronic illness or disability that prevents them from living and managing their affairs completely on their own.
- For more information on guardianship, contact the Wyoming Guardianship Program, in Cheyenne at (307) 635-8422 or visit their website at www.wyomingguardianship.org.

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Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

- A person of any age can receive SSI, if they are disabled and meet the income and asset limits. In the case of minor children who live with their parents, Social Security Administration considers the parents' income and assets. Once a child is 18, the parental income or assets are no longer considered.
- Disabled means you have a physical or mental issue that keeps you from working and is expected to last at least a year or to result in death.
- For more information about benefits for your young adult, please contact the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213 or visit their website at <http://ssa.gov/>.

Health insurance

Under President Obama's healthcare plan- *the Affordable Care Act*, if your health insurance plan covers children, your children can now be covered under their parents' health policy until they turn 26, whether or not they remain in school or college. Your children can remain on your policy even if they are:

- Married
- Not living with you
- Attending school
- Not financially dependent on you
- Eligible to enroll in their grandfathers plan*

* (There is a temporary exception: until 2014, "grandfathered" group plans do not have to offer dependent coverage to age 26 if a young adult is eligible for group coverage outside their parent's plan.)

Learn what questions to ask as you explore other insurance options. Be sure the plan will meet your young adult's needs. It may be helpful to refer back to the Insurance Coverage and Financial Resources section of Packaging Wisdom, and double check your current insurance policy, or call your claims representative to see what is available as your child gets older.

- Involve your young adult in discussions about health care financing.
- Does your young adult know how find and apply for medical insurance?
- Does your young adult understand his or her medical insurance, coverage, out-of-pocket expenses and limits?

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Health care providers

Allow time for your teen or young adult and the doctor to be alone during an appointment. It is important that he/she have time to ask the doctor questions when you are not present. This conveys to the doctor that they are competent to ask personal questions and get correct information.

You and your young adult should talk to your doctor about his or her future medical needs.

Adult Health Care

- Is your young adult able to take responsibility for making doctor appointments and getting prescriptions filled?
- Is your young adult able to manage medications?
- Does your young adult understand his or her illness or disability?
- Do they know their rights to medical information, to decline services, and to understand complications of a medical procedure?
- Are they able to communicate their needs to the doctor or be comfortable in asking that all communication be written down to help them remember correctly?
- Is your young adult able to seek independent living supports?

Health needs at work

- Is your young adult able to manage medication needs while at work?
- Is it necessary for an employer or a mentor to know about medications and the effects it could have on your young adult while they are at work? (Consider work schedule versus medication schedule.)
- Are there certain tasks and/or machinery that should not be assigned?

Sexuality

Knowing the answers to sexual questions reduces vulnerability. Parents are in the best position to teach sexuality to their teen or young adult. Parents are the constant in their child's life and they know them best. If you need further resources to introduce your teen or young adult to his or her sexuality, don't be afraid to ask for help. Disability organizations, parenting groups, teachers and doctors can provide resources and information.

Other Transition Areas to Consider:

If you have one, a copy of your most recent IEP should be included here.

Other questions to answer are:

- Do I need a vocational rehabilitation advisor (available through the Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation at <http://wyomingworkforce.org/>) to transition from school to work? If yes...

Name of Contact: _____

Phone number: _____

Date Contact Initiated: _____ First Meeting Date: _____

TO DO List Prior to the First Meeting:

- Do I need an independent living advisor to transition from home to adult living? If yes...

Name of Contact: _____

Phone number: _____

Date Contact Initiated: _____ First Meeting Date: _____

TO DO List Prior to the First Meeting:

- Do I need any additional help transitioning from secondary school to college or technical school? If yes...

Name of Contact: _____

Phone number: _____

Date Contact Initiated: _____ First Meeting Date: _____

TO DO List Prior to the First Meeting:

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- Do I need help managing my transportation needs in order to meet my transition goals? If yes...

Name of Social Worker: _____

Phone number: _____

Date Contact Initiated: _____ First Meeting Date: _____

TO DO List Prior to the First Meeting:

- Do I have any other needs that need to be met prior to implementing my transition plan? If yes list them here and talk to your doctor.

Resources:

Wyoming Statewide Independent Living Council <http://www.wyomingsilc.com/>

Wyoming Independent Living Rehabilitation <http://www.wilr.org/>

Wyoming Protection and Advocacy <http://wypanda.com/>

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