

# Transition



## Information for Young Adults with Special Needs & Their Parents



January 2014

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## **TRANSITION - A NEW BEGINNING**

The transition from school to the adult world is a significant milestone for any young adult. This transition takes on special importance for youth with disabilities. When high school ends, so does their entitlement to special education and related services. Young adults with disabilities - and their families - must pursue and coordinate needed services and supports for themselves.



The options can seem confusing and even overwhelming at times. There are many resources, services and supports available to adults with disabilities in Florence County. This booklet is designed to help you understand some of the options and decisions you will face as you transition into adulthood. Hopefully the following information will help make your transition into adulthood a smooth, informed and organized process. Included in this booklet are listings of web - based transition resources and checklists that are excellent tools to help you plan for your future. With some planning and preparation, this can be a very exciting time for you.

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### **AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER (ADRC)**

#### **Information & Assistance**

ADRC Information and Assistance (I&A) Specialists have information on a wide range of resources, including information about Long Term Care and Disability Services. If you or someone you care for are turning 18 and have a disability, an I&A Specialist can provide confidential options counseling, assist you in determining eligibility for long term care services, and refer you to other resources that may be needed following high school. You can request assistance from the ADRC at 17 years, 9 months of age and all of the services are provided free of charge. To find out more, contact an I&A Specialist Monday through Friday, 8:30am to 4:00pm at 715-528-4890, Toll-free 1-855-528-ADRC(2372), TTY 715-528-5023, stop in at the historic Florence County Courthouse, 501 Lake Avenue – Lower Level, Florence, WI 54121, or visit the web site [www.florencecountywi.com](http://www.florencecountywi.com) (click on Departments then ADRC).

#### **Disability Benefit Specialist Program**

A Benefit Specialist provides free and confidential assistance to people with disabilities between the ages of 18 and 59. The goal of the program is to:

- Provide current, accurate information about public and private benefit programs;
- Counsel individuals about eligibility for various programs & benefits;
- Help people apply for benefits or appeal a denial of benefits.

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Some of the programs and information a Disability Benefit Specialist can help with are:

- Medicaid
- Social Security Disability Income (SSDI)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Medicare, and;
- Other financial assistance programs that might fit your needs

For more information about the Disability Benefit Specialist Program, contact the ADRC at 715-528-4890.

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## **TURNING 18: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF BECOMING AN ADULT**

On the day of your 18<sup>th</sup> birthday you legally become an adult. Unless you have been determined “incompetent” by a judge and have been appointed a guardian, having a disability does not change the fact that you are an adult and have the same rights and responsibilities as everyone else. This is a very exciting time because you now have certain new rights that allow you to be more independent. In Wisconsin, you are automatically given the following rights when you turn 18:

- The right to vote
- The right to get married
- The right to make a contract
- The right to apply for credit
- The right to obtain a driver’s license (if you do not have a driver’s license you should get a state issued photo ID from the DMV)
- The right to obtain medical treatment without your parents consent



With those rights also come new responsibilities, and as an adult you are personally accountable for your actions. The following are new responsibilities that you did not have before turning 18:

- If you break the law you will be tried in adult criminal court
- Your parents are no longer required to support you
- You may be sued by others
- You’re eligible for jury duty
- All males must register for Selective Service

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## **Registering For the Selective Service**

Selective Service registration is the process that the U.S. Government uses to collect names and addresses of men ages 18 through 25 to use in case of a national emergency that requires rapid expansion of the Armed Forces.

Every male citizen residing in the United States, regardless of disability, must register for the draft within 30 days of his 18th birthday. If you want to, you can register as early as 120 days before that date.



## **How to Register**

You can choose to register one of the following ways:

- On line at [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov)
- At a post office where you can pick up a “mail-back” registration card
- By mail, most young men will receive a reminder “mail-back” card around the time they turn 18.

**For more information** about the Selective Service go to their website at:

[www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov)

## **The Right to Vote**

Unless you have been determined “incompetent” and your right to vote has specifically been revoked in your guardianship papers, you now have the right to vote in state and local elections. It’s important for people with disabilities to vote because it is your chance to let your voice be heard. Your vote tells elected officials what you think about how they are running the government. Every vote counts and this is one opportunity to make a difference in your community.

All municipalities in Wisconsin require voter registration before you are allowed to vote. You can register by mail, in person, or at your polling place the day of the election. You will be required to provide proof of residency and a form of identification such as a driver’s license or state id card with your registration application. Polling places can change so please contact the County Clerk’s Office if you have questions about how to register or where your polling place is located. The County Clerk’s office for Florence County is located at 501 Lake Avenue, Florence, WI 54121. Phone: 715-528-3201. You can also go to <https://myvote.wi.gov>. This site provides voting information and allows you to type in your address to find out the location of your polling place.

Federal and state law require that every polling place in Wisconsin be fully accessible to voters with disabilities. If you have problems with polling place accessibility or discrimination you should contact your municipal clerk to file a complaint.

## TRANSITION TO ADULT HEALTH CARE

Every young adult will transition from pediatrics to adult health care. However, if you have always gone to a family doctor who sees patients throughout the life span, you will not need to switch doctors. Individuals with disabilities often have complex medical needs and finding a new doctor can be a big decision. You will want to find someone that is knowledgeable about your special needs and someone with whom you feel comfortable communicating.

### **Finding Adult Health Care Providers**

Finding adult providers early will help you coordinate your health care and make your transition a smooth one. There are several ways to find adult medical providers. Listed below are some ideas to help you get started:

- Ask your pediatrician for referrals
- Ask friends and family for referrals
- Call your health insurance company
- Contact the ADRC (the ADRC will not endorse any single provider but can direct you to physician referral hotlines or other referral sources.)



It is perfectly acceptable to schedule an “interview” appointment with a new doctor so that you have a chance to meet him/her in person. This interview appointment allows you to ask questions and make sure you are comfortable with the doctor before making your final decision.

Once you have found a new doctor, you will need to have your medical records transferred. You can usually do that by contacting your pediatrician’s office. You will need to fill out a “Medical Release Form” and sign it before any information will be disclosed to your new provider. Transferring records can take some time so be sure to do it well before your first real appointment with your new doctor.

It is a good idea to make your first appointment while you are still being seen by your pediatrician in case there are any questions or concerns about your treatment or medications.



### **Taking Control of your Health Care**

Now that you are an adult and are in control of your medical treatment, it is very important to have the skills necessary to keep yourself safe and healthy. The “Transition Health Care Checklist: Preparing for Life as an Adult” is an excellent tool to help you evaluate and build necessary skills that will allow you to take charge of your health care. You can find the checklist on-line at:

[www.waisman.wisc.edu/wrc/pdf/pubs/THCL.pdf](http://www.waisman.wisc.edu/wrc/pdf/pubs/THCL.pdf)

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## HEALTH CARE DECISION-MAKING SUPPORT

Managing your own health care can be a complex and difficult thing to do, so it is important for you to ask for help if you need it. You can get health care decision-making support in a number of different ways. A brief description of options are discussed below and are listed from the least restrictive to the most restrictive.

### **Release of Medical Records and Information:**

HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act), otherwise known as the “privacy law” is a federal law that protects your confidentiality when it comes to your health care. Once you become an adult, your healthcare providers can no longer give information to anyone without your permission, including your parents. If you would like to grant your doctor permission to release all or a portion of your medical records to your parents or another person you can fill out a “Medical Release Form” and sign it. This is one way to give a trusted adult access to your medical information so that they can help you understand and make decisions regarding your health care.

### **Health Care Power of Attorney (HCPOA)**

This is an important document that should be filled out by every capable adult, regardless of disability. The form allows you to name a trusted adult as your health care decision maker (agent) in the event you become incapacitated and cannot make decisions for yourself. It also provides the opportunity for you to express preferences about your care. You can list a second adult as a back up in the event that the first person listed as agent is not available. This document only takes effect when two doctors agree that you are indeed incapacitated and cannot make your own decisions. You can get this legal form online at <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/forms/Advdirectives/index.htm> or at the ADRC of Florence County.

### **Guardian of the Person**

The most restrictive decision-making support is Guardian of the Person. This type of guardianship is set up when a person is unable to make decisions that meet their needs for physical health and safety. If this is the situation, an alternative decision maker (called a guardian) is legally appointed to make decisions for that person (called the ward).

### **Who determines the need for guardianship?**

The need for guardianship is determined by a judge through a legal proceeding. A medical doctor (MD) or a PhD level psychologist must conduct an evaluation of a person's competence. The doctor makes recommendations to the court, but it is the judge that makes the legal determination that the person placed under guardianship is incompetent and unable to make his or her own decisions. Physical disability and/or poor judgment without a legal finding of mental incompetence **are not** sufficient reasons to establish guardianship.

### **Who can be a guardian?**

Any competent adult (age 18 and over) is eligible to serve as a guardian. Usually this includes family members, friends or advocates. It is generally not a good idea for paid staff to assume the role of guardian, since it presents a conflict of interest. Parents do not automatically become guardians of a disabled child once he or she turns eighteen. A parent's legal responsibility and authority ends at their child's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.



### **What does a guardian do?**

A Guardian of the Person has responsibility for overseeing the care and living situation of the ward, as well as medical decision-making. The guardian should encourage the ward to participate in the decision making process whenever possible. The guardian must have regular visits, in person, to observe the ward's condition, surroundings, and treatment. He or she must review treatment records, attend staffings, and consult with providers of health care and social services in making all necessary treatment decisions. A guardian is expected to make decisions based on what is in the best interest of the ward and is required to file a report with the court once a year explaining how the ward is doing. A Guardian of the Person does not have decision making powers over the ward's property (including finances) unless he or she is also appointed Guardian of the Estate or Representative Payee (discussed on page 15).

### **What is a *Guardian ad Litem*?**

A *Guardian ad Litem* (GAL) is an attorney who is appointed by the court to represent the best interests of the proposed ward during the court process. The GAL is a neutral party who will interview the proposed ward and make professional recommendations to the judge about the ward's best interest.

### **How does the guardianship process work?**

The process and paperwork involved in obtaining a guardianship is generally completed by a private attorney. The proposed ward and petitioner may incur costs for attorney fees, filing fees, a *Guardian ad Litem*, and a doctor or psychologist's evaluation. If you feel that guardianship may be appropriate in

your situation and you have questions, you can contact the ADRC for more information at 715-528-4890 six months prior to the potential ward's 18th birthday. If you currently have a case worker through Florence County, talk with your caseworker about guardianship options.

The process of appointing a guardianship includes:

1. Completion of a competency evaluation by a psychologist or physician;
2. Filing a petition with the courts (usually completed by a private attorney);
3. A court hearing

In Florence County, when health and safety issues are present, or protective placement is necessary, an Adult Protective Services worker will complete a comprehensive evaluation in addition to the above steps.

### **How can I learn more about guardianship?**

The ARC-Dane County's website offers an easy to use Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) guide about guardianship of adults with developmental disabilities. You can view it at: <http://arcdanecounty.org>. Click on Resources, Guardianship, then FAQ.

## HEALTH INSURANCE OPTIONS

Once you turn 18, your eligibility for health insurance coverage may change. Health insurance helps pay for medical expenses including office visits with your doctors, hospital stays and medications. Without health insurance, most people cannot afford the cost of health care. For many people, it is critical to staying healthy. Below is a brief description of possible insurance options for young adults.



### **Private health insurance through employment**

If you decide to go straight into the work force after high school, you may qualify for health insurance coverage through your place of employment. Most, but not all, employers offer health benefits so it is important to ask what benefits are offered before accepting a job. All insurance plans are different but most require you to pay monthly premiums and a yearly deductible. If you have this type of insurance it is important to know what your premiums and deductibles will cost you, what type of medical expenses are covered and which doctors you can see. If you have questions, you should contact your insurance provider directly.

### **Continuation on family plan as dependent adult**

If you are dependent on your family for support because of your disability, you may qualify to remain on your family's health plan as a dependent adult. This may vary from plan to plan so it is important to review the policy details to learn which conditions would allow an adult child to remain on the family's plan. If you are allowed to stay on the plan you may be required to provide documentation of your disability. You or the policy holder should contact the insurance company directly to find out what is required. The Affordable Care Act mandates that all individual and group policies that cover dependents must cover adult children to 26 years of age, unless the adult child is eligible for qualified coverage through his/her own workplace.

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## **COBRA Health Insurance**

COBRA is a short-term health insurance option for young adults who lose coverage under a family plan because they are no longer eligible as dependents. This would entitle you to coverage for 36 months under COBRA. If you want health care coverage under COBRA you must notify your plan administrator of this “qualifying event” within 60 days of ceasing to be covered as a dependent under plan rules.

## **Medicaid**

Medicaid pays for medical services such as hospital stays, doctor appointments, and prescription drugs. You may qualify for Medicaid if you: are a citizen of the United States or a qualifying immigrant; meet the financial eligibility requirements; AND are: blind or disabled, under age 19, age 65 or older, or pregnant. If you are applying for Medicaid because of a disability, you must have a disability determination from the Social Security Administration.

There are several different Medicaid programs available in Wisconsin, for example Katie Beckett, Medicaid Purchase Plan, and Badger Care. Each have different eligibility criteria. For more information about Medicaid programs, contact the Northern Income Maintenance Consortium at 888-794-5722 or on-line at <https://access.wisconsin.gov/>.

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<h2><b>BENEFITS</b></h2>
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Now that you are an adult, your parents no longer have the legal responsibility to support you financially. It is important to think about how you will support yourself and manage your own money. If you are unable to earn enough money to support yourself because of your disability, you might be eligible for one or more of the benefit programs discussed below.

## **Social Security & Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**

Social Security programs provide financial protection to workers and their families, and pay monthly retirement, disability, or survivor benefits to individuals.

**The Supplemental Security Income (SSI)** program pays monthly benefits to individuals who have little or no resources and who are elderly, blind, or disabled.

## **Social Security-Disabled Adult Child (SSDAC)**

If you have been determined disabled by Social Security and have a parent who retires, receives Social Security Disability Income, or has died, you may be eligible for SSDAC based on your parent's work history. To apply for SSDAC you would use the same application process as if you were applying for SSI.

SSI is different than other Social Security programs in the following ways:

- SSI benefits are not based on your prior work or a family member's prior work
- To get SSI, you must have limited income and resources (\$2,000 or less in assets)
- SSI recipients automatically qualify for Medicaid
- SSI recipients may also be eligible for FoodShare
- To get SSI, you must be blind, disabled, or at least 65 years old

You can apply for SSI on or after your 18th birthday. If you are determined disabled, benefits begin the month after your application was filed. If you received SSI prior to age 18, Social Security will review your record to see if you are eligible as an adult.

To apply for SSI, you may contact the local Social Security office in Rhinelander at 1-888-868-8185. TTY: 1-715-369-6881. You can call to make an appointment or you can also start the application process online at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov). For a listing of Social Security offices in Wisconsin visit: [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/medicaid/contacts/medcontact8.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/medicaid/contacts/medcontact8.htm)

When you apply for benefits you will need the following information:

- Original or certified birth certificate and Identification
- Medical records, if available
- Names and addresses of doctors, hospitals and other medical providers with dates of service
- List of current medications and name of prescribing doctor

If you begin working and are receiving SSI, your cash benefit will change based upon your monthly earnings. There are several work incentive programs available to assist you in keeping some of your SSI cash benefits while you work. For more information on working while on SSI, see the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program (WIPA) section of this booklet on page 13.

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## **SSI - Exceptional Expense Supplement (SSI-E)**

If you receive SSI and have long term care needs, you may be eligible for additional financial benefits through the SSI-E program. This program provides an extra monthly payment to help with these expenses.

If you live in your own home or apartment and need at least 40 hours of long term care supportive services a month, you may be eligible for this benefit. The Florence County Department of Human Services must certify that you require the care through an assessment process.

SSI recipients who wish to apply for SSI-E should contact the ADRC at 715-528-4890.

## **Work Incentive Benefit Specialists (WIBS)**

Work Incentive Benefit Specialists assist people with disabilities by helping them wade through the complexities to make informed choices about the impact of work on their benefits. WIBS can provide a written and oral analysis of a person's services and benefits and how work will change their cash payments, medical coverage, and continued eligibility.

WIBS services for Florence County are provided by Employment Resources, Inc. in Madison; basic questions can be answered over the telephone. There is a charge for additional services. You can also request a copy of "**Am I Ready to go Back to Work**" from the ADRC. This handout provides resources that can help with your decision about returning to work.

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# **FUNDING FOR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

## **Long Term Waiver Programs (COP & CIP)**

The Community Options Program (COP) and Community Integration Program (CIP) provide the funding for a wide range of long-term support services. These services may include: residential programming, transportation, day programs, home care and much more. Eligible individuals are adults over the age of 18 with a physical or developmental disability, and elderly persons with long-term conditions requiring care. You must meet functional and financial criteria in order to qualify for these programs. There may be a waiting list for funding in Florence County. To be referred, contact the ADRC at 715-528-4890.

## **FINANCIAL DECISION-MAKING SUPPORTS**

Managing finances and budgeting are difficult things to do for many young adults, so it is important for you to ask for help if you need it. You can get financial decision-making support in a number of different ways. A brief description of options are discussed below and are listed from the least restrictive to the most restrictive.

### **Voluntary Banking Restrictions**

If you need help with your finances it may be a good idea to give a parent or another trusted adult access to your bank accounts, records and bills so that they can provide the assistance that you need. It is very important that the person you give this access to is a trusted adult and someone who is looking out for your best interest. There are several different banking options that would allow you extra support managing your money and paying your bills. Some options may include: direct deposit, joint bank accounts, dual signature checking accounts, and automatic bill paying programs on-line. You can talk to a representative at your bank for more information about these options.

### **Power of Attorney for Finances**

A Power of Attorney for Finances allows you to choose a trusted adult who will manage or help you manage your money and assets. You determine what money or assets you want that person (called an agent) to have authority over.

The point at which your agent's authority becomes effective depends on the language you use in your Power of Attorney for Finances. If you give your agent "immediate power," your agent's power will start when you sign the document. Even if you sign a document granting your agent immediate power, you may continue to handle all of your own property and finances as long as you are able. Essentially, either you *or* your agent makes decisions about your finances.

### **How Do I Get a Power of Attorney for Finances?**

You may hire a lawyer to draft a document that fits your needs. Or you can visit the website: [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/forms/AdvDirectives/index.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/forms/AdvDirectives/index.htm) and click on "Printing the forms from the internet" for a copy.

The ADRC strongly recommends that you have the help of an attorney when filling out a Power of Attorney for Finances. Completing this form incorrectly or listing an agent that does not have your best interests in mind could put you at risk for financial abuse.

## **Representative Payee**

If you receive SSI or SSDI benefits and need help managing your money, Social Security Administration can appoint a relative, friend, another interested party or a professional agency to serve as your representative payee. Your benefits are then paid to your payee on your behalf.

The representative payee must use your benefits for current basic needs of food, clothing and shelter. The payee must provide a simple accounting report of how the money was spent (usually on an annual basis) to Social Security and to the beneficiary. A payee only has authority over the SSI or Social Security benefits, not over any other finances or income. The representative payee must also report any change in circumstances (income, resources, live arrangements, return to work, etc.) to Social Security.

## **How Can I Get a Representative Payee?**

If you would like help managing your benefits, you or someone interested in becoming your payee, can contact the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213, TTY 1-800-325-0778 to request an appointment to discuss your concerns. Generally, a trusted relative, friend, or other interested person can assume the role of representative payee. When friends or family are not available to serve as payees, Social Security looks for a qualified organization to be the representative payee. If you have further questions or would like to discuss these options, please call the ADRC at 715-528-4890.

## **Guardian of the Estate**

The most restrictive option for financial decision-making is Guardian of the Estate. This type of guardianship is set up after a person has been determined “incompetent” by a judge and therefore does not have the capacity to make financial decisions on his/her behalf. A court will only appoint a Guardian of the Estate if it finds that there is no less restrictive intervention available that the individual needing help will accept.

The process to get a court-appointed Guardian of the Estate is very similar to the process used to appoint a Guardian of the Person discussed on page 8. Once a Guardian of the Estate has been appointed, the “Letters of Guardianship” will be issued to the Guardian by the court, and will explain the scope of the guardian’s authority. The Guardian must submit an annual report to the court which can account for all funds received and spent on behalf of the Ward.

## TRANSITION WORKSHEET

Use this helpful worksheet to keep track of important dates for benefits and legal issues in the transition process.

Information	Contact	Timeline	Date
Guardianship	ADRC 715-528-4890	Up to 6 months before turning 18	
Long Term Care Funding (COP/Clp)	ADRC 715-528-4890	Must be 18 and have a disability determination from Social Security or have a determination pending.	
Social Security Benefits & SSI	Social Security 888-868-8185 <a href="http://www.ssa.gov">www.ssa.gov</a>	Apply the month of your 18 <sup>th</sup> birthday	
Medicaid	Northern Income Maintenance Consortium 1-888-794-5722 <a href="http://access.wisconsin.gov">access.wisconsin.gov</a>	Apply after your 18 <sup>th</sup> birthday OR if already on Medicaid through BadgerCare and living with parent(s), apply prior to age 19	

## TRANSITIONING TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION



If you have decided to transition to postsecondary education after graduation, it is important to know there are many differences between high school and college. Postsecondary education is governed by different laws and formal special education services are not available. Most colleges have a Special Needs Office where students with disabilities can go for support and assistance with accommodations.

In order to succeed in college it is important that you have developed important skills in self-advocacy and independent living. The **“Opening Doors to Post-Secondary Education and Training”** is an excellent tool to help you evaluate and build the necessary skills that will allow you to be successful in college. You can find the checklist on-line at: <http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/pdf/tranopndrs.pdf> or by contacting the ADRC at 715-528-4890.

## TRANSITIONING TO EMPLOYMENT

If you have decided to transition directly to employment after graduation it will be important for you to be able to identify your strengths and interests so that you can choose which type of employment you will pursue. You will also need to be able to identify and ask for the help that you may require in a work environment. **“Opening Doors to Employment”** is an excellent tool to help you evaluate and build the necessary skills that will allow you to succeed in the workforce. You can find the checklist on-line at:

<http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/pdf/tranopndrs-employmt.pdf> or by contacting the ADRC at 715-528-4890.

You may also want to contact the Aging and Disability Resource Center to request a copy of **“Do You Need Help Finding a Job? Employment Resources for Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities.”** This booklet includes employment resources and services available in Florence County.

### **The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)**

The Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is a federally and state funded program designed to assist individuals with disabilities in preparing for, finding and keeping employment. You may be eligible to receive vocational services from DVR if you have a disability that makes it difficult for you to work. If you are planning to transition to employment after graduation you should get connected with DVR at least two years before leaving school. If you haven't already, you can speak to your teachers about inviting DVR to one of your Individualized Education Program meetings.



DVR is located at the:  
Brown County Job Center  
701 Cherry St., Green Bay, WI 54301

Phone: 920-448-6760, toll-free 800-228-2637, TTY 1-866-223-5678  
Hours: Monday-Friday, 7:45am-4:30pm  
[www.dwd.state.wi.us/dvr](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dvr)

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING RECORDS

It is extremely important for you and/or your parents to develop a good record keeping system in order to keep track of important documents that you may need now and in the future.



Before you leave high school obtain a copy of all transcripts, evaluations, tests, and transition Individualized Education Programs. Often times these records will be needed when coordinating adult services. Schools do not keep student records very long, so it is important that you request your own copies before, or right after, leaving high school.

In addition to keeping school records, it is just as important to keep medical records including any documentation from physical therapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, pediatricians and specialists. Keeping these types of documents organized and easily accessible will save you time and make your transition into the adult world a much smoother one.

## LOCAL TRANSITION RESOURCES

### Florence County Community Resources

**Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC):** 715-528-4890. Toll-free 1-855-528-ADRC(2372), TTY 715-528-5023, [www.florencecountywi.com](http://www.florencecountywi.com) (click on Departments then ADRC). Information regarding resources, guardianship, long term care, Disability Benefit Specialist Program, respite services and more.

### Benefits Counseling

**Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Florence County Disability Benefit Specialist Program:** 715-528-4890

Free benefits counseling, information on eligibility for various programs, and help with applications and appeals.

**Midstate Independent Living Consultants:** 715-369-5040 Rhinelander, 715-344-4210 Stevens Point. Work incentives and free benefits counseling for people who do not have a funding source.

**Social Security Administration:** 1-888-868-8185. Information on Social Security benefits, benefits counseling, SSI & Medicaid.

**Work Incentive Benefit Specialists:** 920-857-6222  
Information on work incentives and SSI, benefits analysis.

### Education

**Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC) Transition Services:** 920-498-6267. Special needs office, transition coordinator, support services.

**Bay deNoc Community College**  
906-302-3004 or 906-774-8547. Ask for Community Support Services

### Employment

**Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR):** 920-448-6760  
Toll free 1-800-228-2637. Information and employment supports.

**Wisconsin Job Center:** 715-251-1144. 705 Washington Avenue, Niagara, WI 54151. Career & job search resources, workshops, job-related skill building.

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## WEB BASED TRANSITION RESOURCES

### **ARC-Dane County: Guardianship FAQs**

<http://arcdanecounty.org>

Click Resources then Guardianship, then FAQ. Easy to use Frequently Asked Questions guide about guardianship of adults with developmental disabilities.

### **Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs**

<http://northeastregionalcenter.org>

Offers information and referrals, lending library, support groups, trainings and more for families who have children with disabilities.

### **Family Village—Transition & the Internet:**

<http://www.familyvillage.wisc.edu/sp/TRANS.html>

Transition information, links about employment and career interest inventories.

### **GWAAR – Guardianship Support Center**

<http://www.gwaar.org/for-seniors-and-families/elder-law-and-advocacy-center/wisconsin-guardianship-support-center.html>

Provides information and assistance related to guardianship.

### **Healthy & Ready to Work National Resource Center:**

<http://www.syntiro.org/hrtw>

Information specific to youth with special healthcare needs.

### **Job Accommodation Network:**

<http://askjan.org>

Resources about employment & workplace accommodations or questions about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

### **Learning Disabilities Online:**

<http://www.ldonline.org/questions/transition>

Q&A about transition from school to work for youth with learning disabilities.

### **National Center on Secondary Education and Transition**

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

Offers publications, resources and technical assistance related to secondary education and transition for youth with disabilities.

### **State Bar of Wisconsin**

[www.legalexplorer.com/resources](http://www.legalexplorer.com/resources)

Provides a lawyer search and legal research.

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## WEB BASED TRANSITION RESOURCES

### **Transitions RTC**

<http://labs.umassmed.edu/transitionsRTC/>

Resources for youth with serious mental health conditions who are trying to successfully complete their schooling and training and move into rewarding work lives.

### **Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (WBPDD)**

[www.wi-bpdd.org](http://www.wi-bpdd.org)

Helpful links, free publications on transition & other topics related to developmental disabilities.

### **Wisconsin Statewide Transition Initiative (WSTI)**

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

Excellent resource links, transition topics from A to Z.

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