



## Free Special Education Resources, Consultation, Trainings Your Arizona Parent School Connection

### **Beyond High School: Exploring Vocational Education and Other Training Opportunities for Students with Disabilities**

Students and their families look forward to graduation from high school and the possibilities the future holds. The shift to adulthood doesn't magically happen following the commencement ceremony. Careful planning takes place prior to graduation to ensure a successful transition. Starting at 16 years of age, the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) addresses his/her vocational interests.

#### **Individualized Education Program**

A coordinated team of educators, service providers, school counselors, and agencies assist the student and his/her family to explore training opportunities. The student's needs are assessed and team members assume a variety of roles to help the student reach his/her goals. Post-secondary education, vocational training, employment options, adult social services, independent living skills, financial planning, and community participation are all transition topics the team considers.

#### **Vocational Education**

The IEP addresses individual strengths and needs. Academic classes, work place skills aligned with the Arizona Standards, vocational programs, and job training experiences tailored to his/her needs help the student prepare for the transition to adulthood. Vocational education—education for employment—is critical for the student who wants to enter the work force following high school. Job Corps, EVIT, CAVIT and NAVIT courses offered for junior and senior students through high schools should be considered. Career exploration, decision making, learning appropriate ways of interacting in social and work situations, finding and maintaining employment, and learning self-advocacy skills should be a part of the program. Services may start during high school and continue after graduation. That's why it is crucial for the IEP team to involve agency representatives who can offer support services beyond high school.

#### **Employment**

Vocational options range from competitive jobs to supported employment environments. As needed, services offered by Vocational Rehabilitation may include: evaluation, help in finding employment, job skills training, job shadowing opportunities, disability specific accommodations and/or modifications in the work setting, assistive technology, and access to additional resources. Individuals with disabilities may also be eligible for services from the Division of Developmental Disabilities or financial assistance from the Social Security Administration.

#### **Community Participation**

High school activities and community programs prepare the special education student for inclusion in adult social pastimes. Students should be included in extracurricular sports and clubs. They may also be interested in participating in city recreation programs to foster interest in other activities and to form new friendships. Young adults, who have a variety of hobbies and special interests, such as independent and group involvement in sports, clubs, and civic activities, tend to be more satisfied with their transition after high school.

#### **Independent Living Skills**

Independent living skills should be included in the transition planning process. The student should be prepared to the best of his/her ability to manage personal care, income and finances, transportation needs, medical care and living arrangements.

Some students will be capable of living independently. Other students may need assistance. In any case, the student with a disability should have options and assistance to reach his/her full potential. IEP team participants can use their knowledge and resources to make transition from high school to adulthood as meaningful and successful as possible.

## Organizations

*Trade schools and Technical schools listed in your local directory may also be of interest to students.*

Arc of Arizona, 3839 N. Third Street, Suite 105,  
Phoenix, AZ 85012, 602-234-2721, 866-501-2721,  
[www.arcarizona.org](http://www.arcarizona.org), guardianship and self-  
advocacy services

AZ Bridge to Independent Living/ABIL, 1229 E.  
Washington St., Phoenix, AZ 85034-1101, 602-256-  
2245, 800-280-2245 V/TTY, [www.abil.org](http://www.abil.org),  
independent living services

Arizona Center for Disability Law, 3839 N. Third St.,  
Suite 209, Phoenix, AZ 85012, 602-274-6287  
V/TTY, 800-927-2260 or 100 N. Stone Ave., Suite  
305 Tucson, AZ 85701, 520-327-9547 V/TTY, 800-  
922-1447, [www.acdl.com/](http://www.acdl.com/), printed resources,  
advocacy services

Arizona Department of Education, ESS, Transition  
Services, 1535 W. Jefferson St., Phoenix, AZ 85007,  
800-352-4558, 800-842-4681 TTY, [www.azed.gov/  
ess/transitionservices](http://www.azed.gov/ess/transitionservices), resources and training  
information

Beach Center on Disability University of Kansas, Haworth  
Hall, 1200 Sunnyside Ave., Room 3136, Lawrence,  
KS 66045-7534, 785-864-7600, 784-864-3434 TTY,  
[www.beachcenter.org](http://www.beachcenter.org), transition and self-  
determination resources

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), Division on  
Career Development and Transition, P. O. Box  
144200, Salt Lake City, UT 84114, 801-538-7645,  
[www.dcdt.org](http://www.dcdt.org), resources and training information

Goodwill Industries, Central AZ: 1091 S. 4th Ave., Yuma,  
AZ 85364, 928-329-0173, [www.goodwillcentralaz.org](http://www.goodwillcentralaz.org),  
Northern AZ: 2225 N. Steves Blvd., Mail to: P.O.  
Box 1060, Flagstaff, AZ 86002-1060, 928-526-9188,  
Southern AZ: 1940 E. Silverlake Rd., Suite 405,  
Tucson, AZ 85713-4872, 520-623-5174,  
employment training services

Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, 3839  
N. Third St., Suite 306, Phoenix, AZ 85012, 602-  
277-4986, 602-277-4949 TTY, 866-771-9378,  
[www.azgcd.org](http://www.azgcd.org), information, referral, advocacy

Heath Resource Center, National Clearinghouse on Post  
Secondary Education for Individuals with Disabilities,  
George Washington University, 2121 K St. N.W.,  
Suite 220, Washington, DC 20037, 800-544-3284,  
202-973-0904 V/TTY,  
[www.heath.gwu.edu/links/Research&Stat\\_Links.htm](http://www.heath.gwu.edu/links/Research&Stat_Links.htm)  
information, referral, advocacy

National Center on Secondary Education and Transition,  
Institute on Community Integration, University of  
Minnesota, 6 Pattee Hall, 150 Pillsbury Dr. SE,  
Minneapolis, MN 55455, 612-624-2097,  
[www.ncset.org](http://www.ncset.org), information, referral, advocacy

National Dissemination Center for Children with  
Disabilities (NICHCY), P.O. Box 1492,  
Washington, DC 20013, 800-695-0285 V/TTY,  
[www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org), printed resources

New Horizons Independent Living Center, 8085 E.  
Manley Dr., Suite 1, Prescott Valley, AZ 86314,  
928-772-1266, [www.newhorizonsilc.org](http://www.newhorizonsilc.org), regional  
information and training centers

Rehabilitation Services Administration, 1789 W.  
Jefferson 2NW, Phoenix, AZ 85007, 602-542-3332  
V, 602-542-6049 TTY, or 800-563-1221,  
[www.de.state.az.us/rsa/](http://www.de.state.az.us/rsa/), statewide vocational  
services

Parent Information Network, Arizona Department of  
Education/ESS, 2384 N. Steves Blvd., Flagstaff, AZ  
86004, 928-679-8102, 800-352-4558,  
[www.azdes.gov/rsa/default.asp](http://www.azdes.gov/rsa/default.asp), resources, to  
include transition, self-advocacy and training  
information

Raising Special Kids, 2400 N. Central Ave., Suite 200,  
Phoenix, AZ 85004-1313, 602-242-4366, 800-237-  
3007, [www.raisingpecialkids.org/](http://www.raisingpecialkids.org/), books, videos,  
workshops

TASH, Equity, Opportunity and Inclusion for People  
with Disabilities, 29 W. Susquehanna Ave., Suite  
210, Baltimore, MD 21204, 410-828-8274,  
[www.tash.org](http://www.tash.org) or [www.arizonatash.org](http://www.arizonatash.org), resources

United States Office of Personnel Management, Federal  
Employment of People with Disabilities, [www.opm.  
gov/disability/aboutus.asp](http://www.opm.gov/disability/aboutus.asp), hiring information for  
employers

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