



New York
State Office
of Children
and Family
Services

Commission
for the Blind
and Visually
Handicapped

Transition

A Guide for Parents and Students

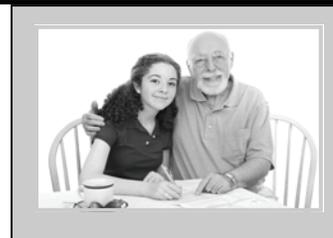


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Transition – A Guide for Parents and Students

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

What Is Transition?

Transition into the adult world can present challenges for all young people. The process of transition is more difficult for many youths with disabilities and requires unique strategies to enable each student to achieve the most independence in working, living and participating in the community as adults. Students with special needs often have a difficult time deciding what they want to do and knowing what they will be able to do once they have finished high school. They move from a supportive and familiar entitlement program within their school to a world of adult services based on varying eligibility requirements. Making the transition from school to the adult world requires careful planning and a cooperative effort among families, school staff and community service providers.

Planning transition services cannot be done in isolation, but must reach beyond the school boundaries into the community. Planning must also reach beyond a student's limitations to explore the student's strengths, interests, hopes and dreams.

What Is Transition Planning?

Transition is not a separate plan developed in isolation from a child's other services or needs. It is a team process that makes the child's education relevant to achieving future goals and dreams. Individualized transition planning should be viewed as an opportunity to focus attention on what it will take for the student to achieve success and independence as an adult.

Federal and state laws and regulations require transition planning and services. School districts are responsible for initiating transition planning and services to ensure that each child with a disability is prepared for post-school life before leaving school. Transition planning is a team process designed to link a child's educational program with his/her dreams for the future.

What Does the Law Say?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is the law providing for the education of students with disabilities. In accordance with IDEA, students with disabilities who are identified by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) require an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP is a written statement that specifies the special education goals and services that the school must provide to meet the unique needs of a student with a disability.

When Congress amended IDEA in 2004, it sought to improve postsecondary results for students with disabilities by requiring public high schools to provide better transition planning. IDEA requires transition planning to be initiated beginning no later than when the student is 16 years old. In New York State, transition planning must be included in a student's IEP beginning with the school year in which the student turns 15. The school district through its CSE has the legal responsibility to coordinate transition planning and arrange for transition services.

To be effective, transition planning should be infused throughout the child's IEP. The planning must be revisited, revised and refined each year until the student exits school. By the time the student is ready to complete formal schooling, it is expected that the programs, services, activities and goals in the IEP have reasonably enabled the student to reach his/her post-secondary goals of learning, working and living successfully.

IDEA defines the term “transition services” as a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that:



- a) are designed within a result-oriented process and focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;
- b) are based upon the individual child’s needs, taking into account the child’s strengths, preferences, and interests; and
- c) includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

The law requires that the IEP and its transition component contain the following:

- statement of transition service needs
- measurable post-secondary goals which reflect employment, post-secondary education, training and community living aspirations
- coordinated set of activities including responsibilities of the school district and provision of services by participating agency (if appropriate and if agency representative agrees)

What Parts of the IEP Mention Transition Services?

- Present Levels of Performance – This section indicates the student’s transition service needs taking into account the student’s strengths, preferences and interests as they relate to transition from school to post-school activities.
- Measurable Post-Secondary Goals – This section records the student’s long term goals for the future, when the student becomes an adult. The goals are developed collaboratively with a team, including the student. They should be based on age-appropriate transition assessments, and should include training, employment, education and, where appropriate, independent living.
- Measurable Annual Goals – These are the transition skills and knowledge that will be developed this year and description of how progress will be measured.
- Related Services – These are a category of recommended special education programs and services that will help the student meet his/her transition goals. If the student requires services that are designed to specifically address transition (i.e., transportation, speech/language pathology, psychological services, recreation [including therapeutic recreation], orientation and mobility or social work services), and these services are not being provided under another section of the IEP, they can be included in the coordinated set of activities.
- Participating Agencies – Any adult agency that has agreed to provide adult services to a transitioning student and will continue working with a student beyond high school must be listed on the IEP in the coordinated set of activities.





Coordinated Set of Transition Activities – This section summarizes the transition activities the student will participate in this year that address transition needs the activity description, and the district or agency responsible in the following areas:

instruction, related services, employment/other postsecondary adult living objectives, community experience, and, as appropriate, activities of daily living and functional vocational assessment. There needs to be clear indication of coordination between school district activities and participating agencies

IDEA outlines the importance of coordination and linkages between agencies to assure a smooth and productive transition from school to adult living. The process must focus on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student to facilitate movement from school to post-school activities.

In addition to IDEA, transition responsibilities were included in the Rehabilitation Act of 1998 to assure that there were no gaps in services received by students with disabilities as they leave the school's setting and/or are ready to begin vocational activities when an employment outcome is the primary focus. However, the inclusion of transition services in the Rehabilitation Act was not intended to shift the responsibility of service delivery from school districts to vocational rehabilitation during the transition years and schools continue to be responsible for providing transition planning and services.

Chapter 2 - What Are the Roles and Responsibilities in Transition?

Student's Responsibilities

Students are responsible for making vocational/career choices, stating their preferences and interests, helping identify their skills and needs, and taking an active role in planning their educational and transition services.



It is helpful for students to:

- ask questions;
- agree to follow through with all activities on their plan, or ask for changes;
- maintain current information about their educational program and their progress in school;
- communicate with their parents/guardians about school and personal interests;
- share their needs, interests, preferences, and desires and participate in the decision-making process during their IEP meetings;
- understand their disability and know their strengths and limitations;
- learn to advocate for themselves;
- get to know about the different adult agencies and the services they offer.

Parent's/Guardian's Roles

- Families are very important partners on the planning team for transition services. Family members need to be involved in the child's individualized education program (IEP) and CBVH employment plan (the Individualized Plan for Employment). As partners in the planning process for transition services, family members can assist by doing any of the fol-

- help their son/daughter understand his/her disability and limitations;
- encourage self-advocacy and self-determination by providing opportunities for choices and preferences;
- get to know about the different adult agencies and what they offer;
- help others on the team understand the student's dreams and plans and help them know the student;
- assist the student in establishing eligibility for long-term supports (as needed) from other community resources;
- assist the child in investigating schools, programs, or services that are available to help him or her develop skills and knowledge to prepare for adult life;
- help the student understand his or her rights and responsibilities when receiving services under an IEP or IPE (Individualized Plan for Employment – described later in this document);
- be a mentor and advocate for the student;
- have high expectations for the student, teach skills that would be taught to any child who is getting ready to go out into the world (i.e., how to do laundry, make a simple meal, and sew on a button, etc.);
- encourage gradual independence, including independent travel, self-care activities, money management and decision-making;
- commit and follow through with all activities and services developed in the plan;
- communicate with the CBVH transition counselor throughout the planning process and implementation of services (until the youth turns 18) and encourage the child to do the same;
- contact the CBVH transition counselor if they or their child cannot participate in a planned service;
- maintain communication with school and agency personnel.

School's Responsibilities

Based on individual needs, preferences and interests, the student and his/her educational team should begin to set goals for graduation/exit from the school system. Instructional and vocational needs, social and daily living skills and community experiences are all areas that need to be addressed in the plan. The team should also begin to look at the support that will be needed in the community to achieve goals and assist the student in applying for services.

The school district can be expected to:

- provide the student appropriate education to help him/her become as self-sufficient as possible;
- help with formal arrangements (sometimes called “referral”) in applying for adult services;
- advocate on the student’s behalf and help get the services needed;

Vocational Assessment in the Transition Process

After high school, the student may choose to go to college, attend a vocational training program, or go directly to work. It may be difficult for the student to choose which direction is best when he/she might be unsure of interests, needs or preferences. The CSE can assist with identifying the student’s strengths and abilities through a student-centered vocational assessment. Vocational assessment is a hands-on process to determine a person’s abilities and needs. The vocational assessment involves the collection of information of interests, skills and any work experiences that have been held by the student.

Level 1 Assessment (mandatory)

Although transition services must begin the year that the student turns age 15, or earlier as appropriate, the New York State Education Department requires that a career assessment take place at age 12. This assessment is called a Level One assessment. This assessment sets the foundation for transition planning and services. The career assessment process is a team effort and should include the student, his or family, and the student's teachers. The Level I Assessment identifies the starting point for the CSE to begin exploring career options with the student.

Level 2 Vocational / Career Assessment (not mandatory)

A Level 2 assessment may be recommended by the CSE at any time to determine the level of a student's vocational skills, aptitudes, and interests. A Level 2 can be conducted at any age, as appropriate, and can help with developing post-school employment and other post-school adult living objectives. Though it is recommended that a trained vocational evaluator or rehabilitation counselor administer or supervise this level of assessment, an experienced guidance counselor, special education teacher, or occupational education instructor can also be trained to conduct the assessment.

This is accomplished through standardized or functional assessment techniques with emphasis placed on the techniques which prove to be most meaningful to the student and accurately reflect ability. Collected data could include: interest inventory, perception (visual/auditory/tactile), motor (dexterity, speed, tool use, strength, coordination), spatial discrimination, verbal (reading, writing, speaking, numerical (measurement, money skills), comprehension (task learning, problem solving), attention (staying on task), and learning styles.

Level 3 Vocational/Career Assessment (recommended)

This is a comprehensive vocational evaluation that uses work, real or simulated, as the basis for assessment and vocational counseling. A trained vocational evaluator should administer or supervise this level of assessment. Level 3 assessment options include:

***Vocational Evaluation** - Acquired abilities, aptitudes and interests are compared with specific performance criteria to predict potential vocational success. Work samples must be valid and reliable.*

***Situational Vocational Assessment** - Real work settings are used to enable the student to explore vocational aptitudes, to demonstrate the types of support services needed to enhance optimal performance, or to assist the student to acquire specific skills and abilities. This on-the-job assessment considers what has been learned and how, what aptitudes are demonstrated, and what training and support strategies are necessary for developing competencies.*

Student Exit Summary (SES)

IDEA 2004 created a new requirement for schools that should help students with disabilities make a smoother transition to post-school employment or education. Schools must now provide a “Summary of Performance” known as the SES in New York to students whose special education eligibility is ending, whether due to exceeding the age for services or due to graduating with a regular diploma. This summary must include information on the student’s academic achievement and functional performance and include recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting postsecondary goals.

Congress intended for this summary to provide specific, meaningful and understandable information to the student, the student's family, and any agency, including postsecondary schools, that may provide services to the student upon transition.

Schools are not required to conduct any new assessments or evaluations in order to provide the SES. The SES is a part of transition planning, and provides the student with useful and relevant information about the student's skills and needs as well as recommendations to support a successful transition to post-school opportunities.

New York State Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped (CBVH)

CBVH serves individuals who are legally blind (i.e., corrected acuity of 20/200 or less) who may or may not have additional disabilities. CBVH has a Children's Program that provides advocacy and other services to infants and children through age 14. Vocational rehabilitation counselors generally become involved in transition planning at age 14. The transition process is started at this young age with the expectation that students have opportunities and experiences during their school years to prepare them for post-school environments as well as time to rethink their plans along the way. Transition services provided by CBVH are individualized, and eventually lead to an employment outcome. In New York City, youth transfer to a Transition Counselor at age 10 to begin prevocational exploration

Each eligible CBVH vocational rehabilitation consumer may receive a wide array of services. The services provided will depend on what is needed by the individual to achieve the planned employment outcome. Examples of services provided by CBVH include evaluations, planning and counseling, skills development training, adaptive equipment, support services while completing training and such employment services as job-seeking skills.

It is the responsibility of CBVH to provide vocational rehabilitation services to eligible students as necessary to reach the employment goal as identified on the approved Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The IPE is mutually developed and is unique to each individual. In some cases, an Individualized Plan for Employment Development Plan (IPEDP) will be completed.

CBVH does not take responsibility for services and assistive technology that the school district is mandated to provide. The Commission's primary role with school-age youth is to provide consultation that may include the following:

- recommending assessments and assisting in the interpretation of results, if requested
- providing information on resources in the area and assisting in identifying the need for involvement by other state agencies and service providers
- providing assessments for in-school youth in order to meet the planning needs of CBVH
- providing information on vocational rehabilitation services and outcomes
- providing information to assist in the selection of suitable vocational goals
- attending or providing input to Committee on Special Education meetings

- providing services written into the student's IEP by the CSE with the direct involvement and agreement of CBVH

Services provided by CBVH while the student is still in high school may also include the following:

- rehabilitation teaching – outside of school hours
- orientation and mobility – outside of school hours
- low vision exams and devices
- adaptive equipment for home use
- social casework services
- summer or after-school youth employment and/or work experiences, which may include job coaching
- reimbursement to the employer for training expenses (wages)
- a training stipend to the student to cover work-related expenses (e.g., maintenance and transportation) when the student is not paid wages by the employer
- technology assessments, training and equipment; provided if needed for application in a post-secondary setting, vocational training specific to the student's vocational goal, or placement for a job

What can CBVH offer to schools?

- consultation as early as possible in the transition process to assist education in planning for the transition of a youth from school to post-school activities
- joint planning to facilitate the development and completion of the IEP
- determination of eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services
- identification of a suitable employment outcome

When appropriate and feasible, the CBVH counselor will participate in the student's IEP or 504 planning meeting when post-school transition will be discussed. The employment plan IPE must be coordinated with the IEP or other education plans in terms of goals, objectives and services.

Chapter 3 – General Transition Issues

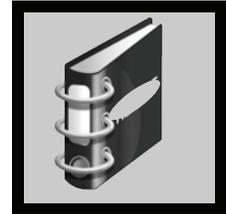
SSI and Transition

Many youth with disabilities, upon turning 18, will be eligible for Social Security benefits. Accessing these benefits is an important part of transition planning.

One of these benefits is SSI (Supplemental Security Income), which is an income support program that provides monthly payments to persons who have disabilities and limited income and resources.

The Transition Portfolio

A transition portfolio is an organized way of keeping things you need for your future, such as getting a job or moving to a new home. You might try using a three-ring binder with section dividers and page protectors.



Here are some things to put in your portfolio:

- “Who Am I?” - include information such as a list of interests, things you are good at, things you feel you need to improve
- Career Goals – describe what you want to be and why; jot down what you will need to do in order to accomplish your goals; include all vocational assessment information that you may have
- Vocational Documents – include such things as certificates, a resume, supports you may need (such as a job coach, adaptive technology for a job)
- Academic Documents – report cards, diplomas, awards
- Samples of Work – job place assessments, self-reflection reports after work experiences, letters of recommendation

Transition-age youth can receive benefits if they meet both a disability and financial needs test. The Social Security Administration (SSA) has special rules for people who are blind, including allowing them to earn a higher income and still maintain SSI eligibility. SSA has developed many Work Incentive Programs that allow individuals to work and earn wages without jeopardizing their benefits. A blind or disabled child who is a student regularly attending school, college or university, or a course of vocational or technical training can have limited earnings that are not counted against his or her SSI.

There are a number of Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Projects across the country that work with SSA beneficiaries with disabilities on job placement, benefits planning, and career development. Also, most Independent Living Centers in local communities provide benefits advisement services to assist individuals in applying for benefits or appealing a denial of benefits.

If a child or adult receives a monthly SSI check, even as little as \$1, Medicaid eligibility is automatic. Medicaid will pay for doctor visits, hospitalizations, therapies (physical, occupational, speech), home health aides, a home nurse, an intermediate care facility, prescription drugs, transportation, day treatment programs, durable medical equipment (such as wheelchairs, augmentative communication equipment), and other items that are medically necessary.

To find additional information about SSI, contact:
www.ssa.gov

To find additional information about Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Projects, contact your local SSA office or call 1-800-772-1213.

How Parents Can Help in the Career Search

There are many things that parents can do to assist their child to explore interests that may eventually lead to a full-time job or attendance at a technical school, community college or university. By exploring interests early through volunteer work, hobbies, or internships, you can better help your son or daughter decide which career path to take upon graduation. You might encourage your son or daughter to participate in some of the following activities:

- read books that describe jobs people with visual impairments are performing successfully (one example: *Jobs To Be Proud Of: Profiles of Workers Who are Blind or Visually Impaired* - Kendrick,1993)
- job shadow
- participate in community or faith-based service projects
- enroll in programs that are open to high school students at a community college, university or technical school;
- interview adults with or without disabilities doing the kinds of jobs in which they are interested (Check out the American Foundation for the Blind **Career Connect** site on the Internet) It is a free resource for people who want to learn about the range and diversity of jobs performed by adults who are blind or visually impaired throughout the United States and Canada: www.careerconnect.org
- volunteer in the community
- attend specialized summer camps
- participate in internships or part-time jobs
- attend pre-college programs



Chapter 4 - College Information for Students and Parents

Differences Between High School and College

The following is reprinted with permission from www.FamilyConnect.org by the American Foundation for the Blind:

There are major differences in the laws that cover special education services in high school and college. Services for individuals with disabilities change dramatically after high school.

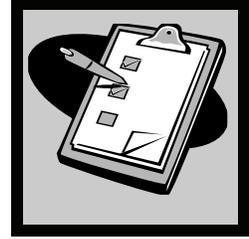
Essentially, much that is required by federal law during a child's early, elementary, middle, and high school years is no longer required by law for students attending postsecondary schools. The child will need to be aware of the importance of arranging for services he/she needs and will have to be prepared to take responsibility for those arrangements. To do that effectively, the student will have to be well-organized and develop skills in negotiating accommodations that are needed.

The following is a summary of the specific differences between the laws applying to high school and to college:

- **In high school:** The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) requires that all children, including those who are visually impaired, receive free, appropriate public education.
- **In college:** The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) require colleges to provide accessibility and reasonable accommodations to prevent discrimination on the basis of disability.

- **In high school:** Visually impaired students are covered by IDEA from birth until they reach 22 years of age (or until they meet standard requirements for a high school diploma or leave school).
- **In college:** Section 504 and ADA requirements apply to individuals with disabilities regardless of age.
- **In high school:** School and all educational services are provided free of charge and attendance is mandatory.
- **In college:** Most students will have to pay tuition and they decide whether or not to enroll and attend classes.
- **In high school:** Local school districts must identify students with disabilities through free assessment and the **Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Program (IEP)** process.
- **In college:** To receive any accommodations, students are responsible for identifying themselves as disabled and supplying supporting documentation to their colleges.
- **In high school:** Students receive special education and related services based on their assessed needs.
- **In college:** Colleges are not required to assess incoming students or provide special education services.
- **In high school:** Services, based on the IEP, may include disability-specific instruction, classroom modifications, and accommodations designed to meet the individual student's needs.
- **In college:** Accommodations may be made to ensure equal access, but colleges are not required to tailor aspects of the curriculum, program, or activity to meet a student's needs.

- **In high school:** School personnel may receive program support to meet an individual student's needs based on the IEP.
- **In college:** Colleges are not required to provide program support for instructors or administrators or to provide for accommodations that pose an undue burden on the school.
- **In high school:** Progress toward meeting IEP goals is monitored and reported to the parents and/or the student.
- **In college:** Students must monitor their own progress, communicate their needs, and negotiate accommodations with their instructors.
- **In high school:** Students receive help from the school in connecting with local support agencies if the need is identified in the IEP.
- **In college:** Students have to make their own connections with community support groups.
- **In high school:** Parents are expected and encouraged to be involved in their children's education.
- **In college:** College staff is not allowed to disclose information about students, even to parents, in accordance with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).



A College Planning Time Line

The following is reprinted with permission from www.FamilyConnect.org by the American Foundation for the Blind:

If a child can and wants to pursue academic training after high school, a community college or four-year university are options to explore. This checklist will help keep track of the steps that will need to be taken as students prepare to be ready to apply to the school of their choice in their senior year.

Freshman Year

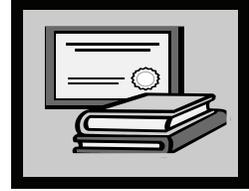
Fall Term

- If your child has been working with an educational team, you and she/he should meet with the teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI) and other team members to begin discussing what she/he thinks she/he would like to do after high school. At this point, the discussion should focus on four key points:
 1. your child's academic and other interests;
 2. when and how to begin transition planning
 3. what a transition Individualized Education Program (IEP) ought to include for him/her
 4. how to begin working with a counselor from your state department of rehabilitation

Your child should also meet with his/her school counselor to discuss academic goals and map a program of study. It's essential that his/her courses meet general college requirements. Encourage your child to explore extracurricular activities, particularly community service and leadership opportunities, which colleges value as indications of maturity and commitment.

Spring Term

- Be sure your child schedules a follow-up meeting with his/her counselor and educational team members early in the term to review freshman year progress and plan the sophomore program.
- As part of planning the sophomore program, the student should talk with his/her TVI about arranging for whatever standardized tests and test-taking accommodations he/she will need in the coming school year. If the student is unable to take standardized tests in the standard pencil-and-paper format, he/she will have to have documentation demonstrating his/her disability on file with the school before the end of the spring term in order to be eligible for accommodations in the following term. The school counselor, working with the TVI, can make the necessary arrangements but there is a fair amount of paperwork involved, so it's wise to start the process as early as possible.



Sophomore Year

Fall Term

- Encourage your child to take the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) in October to practice for taking other tests and to qualify for National Merit scholarship programs (their sophomore score won't count toward qualifying for a National Merit Scholarship but will give them the benefit of already being familiar with the test when it is taken during their junior year; the score report will also help identify any academic areas that need improvement).
- Students should continue to take rigorous college prep courses, work to improve their academic performance, read as widely as possible, and maintain involvement in extracurricular activities.

Spring Term

- Take your child on a tour of a local college-just to give him/her a sense of what a college campus is like.
- It would be a good idea for him/her to take SAT Subject Tests in June in subjects he/she has mastered and doesn't plan to continue at a higher level. These are tests designed to assess a student's understanding of the information covered in high school courses such as World History, English, Biology, and other academic courses. Some colleges require one or several SAT Subject Test scores, either for admission or placement, so it's best to take the test as soon as the student has completed the course, while the information is still fresh.

Junior Year

Fall Term

- Be sure your child registers to take the PSAT/MNSQT in October (junior year score is used to qualify for National Merit Scholarships).
- Review the PSAT score report carefully with your child to find out if there are any academic areas that need to improve.

Winter

- Help your child begin the college search process. The Internet can be an invaluable tool in providing detailed information about colleges and ways to narrow the search based on personal priorities and preferences.

Spring Term

- Review your child's junior year progress and be sure he/she schedules a meeting with his/her counselor and other educational team members to discuss the senior year program. June is the time to take SAT Subject Tests.

- Consider encouraging your child to enroll in a summer program on campus to get a sense of what college life is like or to apply for an internship to explore possible career options.

Summer between Junior and Senior Years

- If possible, visit colleges that your child is interested in. Take a virtual tour via the Internet if your family can't get there in person.
- Have your child contact admissions departments to request applications and course catalogs, and to schedule interviews in the fall. Most of this can be done by e-mail.

Senior Year

Fall Term

- Help your child develop a comparative checklist of all the colleges he/she is considering. A reasonable number would be anywhere from four to eight colleges. The checklist should include admission application and financial aid application deadlines, notification dates, tests required, costs, number and type of essay questions, recommendations, and any other requirements.
- You may want to remind your child to request recommendation letters from teachers and others well in advance of the due date.
- Recommend that your child re-take SAT and/or ACT tests a second time if he/she thinks they can improve scores; talk to his/her counselor about the advisability of retaking the tests.
- Be sure your child completes and asks his/her school to submit their application forms and supporting materials to colleges as early as possible.

Spring Term

- Encourage your child to maintain or improve his/her academic performance. Colleges look carefully at senior year grades and choice of courses.
- After you and your child have reviewed colleges; acceptance letters, be sure hi/she responds promptly to advise admissions offices whether or not they will enroll.

For more information see *College Bound: A Guide for Students with Visual Impairments* by Ellen Trief and Raquel Feeney.

Scholarships and Grants for Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired

American Council of the Blind (ACB)

Scholarship Office

1155 15th Street N.W., Suite 720

Washington, DC 20005

Telephone: 800-424-8666

Website: www.acb.org

American Foundation for the Blind (AFB)

The American Foundation for the Blind administers a scholarship program for deserving students. Each year individuals who are blind or visually impaired can apply for financial awards to support their post-secondary education. For applications or additional information contact:

American Foundation for the Blind

Information Center

11 Penn Plaza, Suite 300

New York, NY 10001

Telephone: 212-502-7661

Website: www.afb.org/scholarships.asp

Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER)

The Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired offers the Ferrell Scholarship to students who are legally blind and are preparing for a career in the education or rehabilitation of blind or visually impaired children or adults. For an application or additional information contact:

AER Ferrell Scholarship Fund
4600 Duke Street, Suite 430
Alexandria, VA 22397
Telephone: 703-823-9690
Website: www.aerbvi.org

The Blinded Veterans Association (BVA)

The Blinded Veterans Association offers scholarships to dependent children and spouses of veterans of the United States Armed Forces who are blind (either service or non-service connected.) Veterans need not be members of the Blinded Veterans Association. For applications or additional information contact:

The Katherine F. Gruber Scholarship Program
Blinded Veterans Association
477 H Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20001-2694
Telephone: 202-371-8880
Website: www.bva.org

The Christian Record Services

The Christian Record Services offers scholarships in all areas of study to undergraduate students who are legally blind. For applications or additional information contact:

Christian Record Services
4444 South 52nd Street
Lincoln, NE 68516
Telephone: 402-488-0981
Website: www.christianrecord.org

The Foundation for Exceptional Children

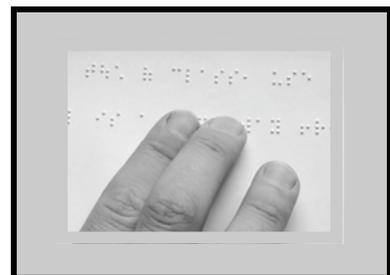
The Foundation for Exceptional Children offers scholarships to incoming college freshman who are disabled. For applications or additional information contact:

Yes I Can! Foundation for Exceptional Children
1110 North Glebe Road, Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201-5704
Telephone: 800-224-6830 ext. 462
Website: www.cec.sped.org

The Jewish Braille Institute of America, Inc.

The Jewish Braille Institute of America, Inc., offers scholarships to students who are blind or visually impaired and plan to study Judaica. For applications or additional information contact:

The Jewish Braille Institute of America,
Inc.
110 East 30th Street
New York, NY 10016
Telephone: 212-889-2525
Website: www.jbilibrary.org



Jewish Guild for the Blind

GuildScholar

The Jewish Guild for the Blind offers an annual scholarship program for college-bound high school students who are legally blind. Applications are accepted from students at the end of their junior year, with recipients selected and scholarships awarded later in their senior year. For information about the scholarship, contact:

The Jewish Guild for the Blind

15 West 65th Street

New York, NY 10023

Telephone: 212-769-7801

Website: www.jgb.org/guildscholar.asp



Lighthouse International

Lighthouse International offers scholarships to students who are legally blind and residents of the eastern region of the United States. Scholarships are available for academic programs leading to undergraduate or graduate degrees or for vocational programs leading to career changes. For applications or additional information contact:

Lighthouse International

Lighthouse International Scholarship and Career Awards

111 East 59th Street

New York, NY 10022

Telephone: 212-821-9428

Website: www.lighthouse.org

National Federation of the Blind (NFB)

The National Federation of the Blind offers a broad range of scholarships. Applications for scholarships will be accepted from July 1 through March 31 of each year. For applications or additional information contact:

NFB Scholarships Committee

805 Fifth Avenue

Grinnell, IA 50112

Telephone: 515-236-3366

Website: www.nfb.org

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation offers scholarships to disabled students. Scholarships are awarded to New Hampshire residents only. For applications or additional information contact:

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation

37 Pleasant Street

Concord, NH 03301-4005

Telephone: 603-225-6641

Website: www.nhcf.org

Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic

Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic offers scholastic achievement scholarships to students who have been enrolled in the recording for the blind program for one year prior to application. For applications or additional information contact:

Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic

Scholarship Office

20 Roszel Road

Princeton, NJ 08540

VSA (Very Special Arts)

VSA offers the Panasonic Young Soloists Award to disabled individuals who are twenty-five years of age and younger and are instrumentalists or vocalists that perform as soloists. For an application or additional information contact:

VSA

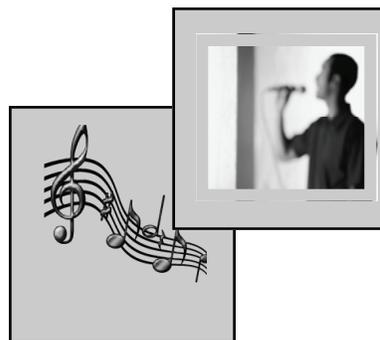
1300 Connecticut Avenue N.W.

Suite 700

Washington, DC 20036

Telephone: 800-933-8721

Website: www.vsarts.org



Chapter 5 – Employment Issues

CBVH Sponsored Pre-Vocational Seminars/Programs

Many private agencies for the blind throughout New York State hold pre-vocational programs for transition age youth.

Service Providers

CBVH is unique among other state programs in its relationship with the private sector. Not-for-profit private agencies for the blind, some founded before the establishment of CBVH, provide services to consumers through contracts with CBVH. These agencies provide on-the-job training, placement services, assistive technology and other services.

Following is a list of not-for-profit agencies for the blind in New York State.

Archdiocesan Catholic Guild for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Inc. 1011 First Avenue New York, NY 10022 Phone: (212) 371-1000; www.visionaware.org/catholic_charities

Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired - GOOD-WILL 422 South Clinton Avenue Rochester, New York 14620-1198 (585) 232-1111; www.abvi-goodwill.com

Association for the Visually Impaired, Inc Rockland County 260 Old Nyack Turnpike Spring Valley, NY 10977 Phone: (845) 574-4950 **Orange County** 130 Dolson Avenue, Suite 3A Middletown, NY 10940 Phone: (845) 355-6119; www.avi-eyes.org

Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment 174 Court Street Binghamton, New York 13901; www.avreus.org

Aurora of Central New York, Inc. 518 James St., Suite 100
Syracuse, NY 13203 Phone: (315) 422-7263;
www.auroraofcny.org/home TDD: (315) 422-9746 24-Hour
Interpreter Hotline: (315) 422-7263

Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired 507
Kent St Utica, NY 13501 Phone: (315) 797-2233;
www.cabvi.org

Chautauqua Blind Association 510 West 5th Street James-
town, NY 14701 Phone: (716) 664-6660;
www.chautauquablind.org

Elizabeth Pierce Olmsted Center for the Visually Impaired
1170 Main Street, PO Box 398 Buffalo, New York 14209-0398
Phone: (716) 882-1025; **www.olmstedcenter.org**

Glens Falls Association for the Blind 144 Ridge Center Glens
Falls, NY 12801 Phone: (518) 792-3421

Helen Keller National Center
141 Middle Neck Road, Sands Point, NY 11050
Phone: (516) 944-8900; **www.hknc.org**

Helen Keller Services for the Blind; www.helenkeller.org

Brooklyn

57 Willoughby Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201
Phone: (718) 522-2122

Nassau

One Helen Keller Way, Hempstead, N.Y. 11550
Phone: (516) 485-1234

Suffolk

40 New York Avenue, Huntington, N.Y. 11743
Phone: (631) 424-0022

Jewish Guild for the Blind; www.jgb.org

15 West 65th Street, New York, New York 10023

Phone: (212) 769-6200

Phone: (800) 284-4422

Lighthouse International; www.lighthouse.org Information

and Resource Service Lighthouse International 111 East 59th

Street New York, NY 10022-1202 Phone: (212) 821-9713

Phone: (800) 829-0500

Northeastern Association of the Blind; www.naba-vision.org

301 Washington Avenue

Albany, NY 12206

Phone: (518)463-1211

North Country Association for the Visually Impaired P.O.

Box 1338 North Elba Town Hall Lake Placid NY 12946 Phone:

(518) 523-1950; www.ncavi.org

VISIONS Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired

500 Greenwich Street, 3rd Floor

New York, New York 10013-1354

Phone: (212) 625-1616; www.visionsvcb.org

Western New York Center for the Visually Impaired 4511 Main

Street Amherst, NY 14226-3097

Phone: (716) 839-2217

Phone: (716) 839-2218

Pre-vocational programs generally bring blind teenagers together to discuss various pre-vocational topics, share ideas and concerns related to school and work, and develop friendships. The purpose of the programs is to assist teens to develop career interests, build specific skills which they can use to seek/maintain employment and higher education more independently, and to build self-confidence. Topics include mobility/transportation, personal and communication skills, adaptive technology, job seeking and interviewing skills. Activities may include taking interest inventories, exploring personal values, practicing phone and job interviewing skills, job shadowing and field trips to local businesses, team building, and various social activities.

Contact CBVH or the private agencies in your area for information about upcoming programs.

Examples of Pre-Vocational/Pre-College Programs



Adirondack Experience, Lake Placid, NY –

This is a 10-day “outward bound” type program located just outside of Lake Placid, N.Y. Participants engage in adventure-based experiences such as hiking, rock climbing, rappelling, canoeing, swimming, backpacking, camping and high and low rope courses. All programs have been adapted to accommodate youth who are legally blind.

The activities foster self-esteem, trust and teamwork. Children who attend are usually between the ages of 12-18 and physically able to engage in fairly challenging outdoor activities. A video describing the program is available in each CBVH district office. There are usually two sessions held each summer and many children attend a reunion session during the February or April school break.

Contact your counselor at CBVH, or contact The Adirondack Experience directly at 518-523-1718; website:

www.adkexperience.com

SUNY Albany Pre-College Summer Experience, Albany, NY - The Pre-College Summer Orientation Program is designed for students who are college bound and expect to receive sponsorship from CBVH. Participants have the opportunity to learn about the college environment, develop advocacy skills, and learn about their rights and responsibilities as a student with a disability. Many of the workshop leaders are individuals with disabilities who are now employed in various occupations. Peer counselors live in the residential hall with the participants. A \$125 participation fee is expected from the families of each participant.

Contact your CBVH counselor for additional information.

Lions World Services for the Blind Transition Programs, Little Rock, Arkansas – Two nine-week transition courses are offered in the summer. One is a program for vocational readiness and/or to obtain a General Educational Development (GED) diploma.

This program prepares the person for transition from school to work.

The second program is the College Preparatory for transition to college. This program was started to bridge the gap between the more structured high school program and the less structured college schedule and lifestyle.

The three general areas of training are:

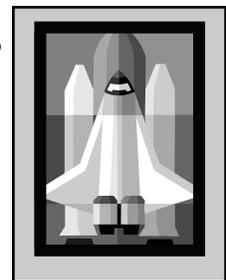
- 1) personal adjustment or adaptive skills,
- 2) academic skills, and
- 3) socialization skills. The program is geared toward college bound high school students, and lasts approximately nine weeks. Part of the time students live in an actual college dorm and use the cafeterias and library.

Contact Sherrill Wilson, Director of Training, at 501-664-7100 or 1-800-248-0734. Website: www.lwsb.org.

E-Mail address: training@lwsb.org.

Perkins School for the Blind Summer Programs for Teenagers, Watertown, Massachusetts -Perkins has a number of weekend, school vacation and summer programs for transition age youth, including: “Dealing with the Present While Preparing for the Future,” A Sampling of the World of Work” and “Cape Cod Outreach Teen Weekend for High School Junior and Seniors.” For additional information, visit their Website: www.perkins.org or contact Kelly Cote, Perkins Outreach Services, at 617-972-7867

Space Camp for Visually Impaired Students, Huntsville, Alabama - This is a weeklong camp that takes place at the US Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama. The camp is designed to educate young people about aviation and the space program.



Sessions are designed around simulated space missions conducted in space orbiter mockups. Trainees learn the basics of shuttle operation, the science and history of the space program, leadership skills and teamwork.

Contact your local Teacher of the Visually Impaired, or visit the Texas School for the Blind website: www.tsbvi.edu/space

The Elizabeth Pierce Olmsted, M.D. Center for the Visually Impaired – Summer Work Experience, Buffalo, NY -This five-week program provides students between the ages of 16-19 the opportunity to learn about the world of work during the summer months. Students live in a university dorm and participate in supervised work experiences four days each week. In addition to work experiences, the students receive technological training, work skills training and independent living skills training. Job coaching and orientation and mobility are provided, as well as weekend supervision, activities and meals.

Contact your CBVH counselor, or Joli Blaha, 716-882-1025, or visit the website: www.olmstedcenter.org.

Colorado Center for the Blind, Littleton, Colorado

The Colorado Center for the Blind is a National Federation of the Blind sponsored training center located about 13 miles south of Denver. Transition age youth can participate in any of three summer programs: Initiation to Independence Middle School Program, Earn and Learn High School Program or Summer for Success College Program. Each program has core classes in Braille, orientation and mobility, home management and adaptive technology. Students live with counselors in supervised apartments near the center. The program also includes a number of recreation opportunities.

Contact your CBVH counselor, or visit the website at www.cocenter.org.

Helen Keller National Center Summer Seminar, Sands Point, NY

This two-week seminar is designed for deaf-blind high school students to provide information and practical experience and expand awareness, knowledge and skill in the areas of: vocational exploration, accessing college and community supports and services, IEP and transition planning, adaptive technology and other communication aids and devices, self advocacy, tactile sign language and other preferred methods of communication, study skills, and orientation and mobility. CBVH covers all costs except personal allowance and transportation.

Contact Dora Carney, Admissions Coordinator, at 516-944-8900, Website: www.hknc.org

Carroll Center for the Blind Summer Youth Programs, Newton, Massachusetts

The Carroll Center offers a variety of summer work and college readiness programs for teens. Some of the programs are: Youth in Transition, Student Assessment, Computing for College, and Real World Work Experience.

Call 1-800-852-3131 to learn more about the various programs, or visit the website at: www.carroll.org.

Louisiana Center for the Blind Summer Training and Employment Project (STEP), Ruston, Louisiana

This eight-week program is designed to introduce blind teenagers to positive blind role models and to provide participants with summer work experience.

The program consists of two four-week components. During the first component, blind counselors and teachers provide instruction in alternative techniques of blindness, including classes in Braille, cane travel, computer literacy and daily living skills. Seminars are offered regarding job readiness, job interviewing skills, resume writing and job responsibilities.

The second component consists of a continuation of all aspects of the aforementioned training plus a real work experience of 15-20 hours per week at a local business, for which students will earn a minimum wage. Staff attempts to meet the job interests of students. Staff provides on-the-job coaching as needed. Fun-filled recreational activities such as water skiing, camping and field trips are included, designed to foster self-confidence and independence.

Website: www.lcb-ruston.com

Summer Employment / Job Placement Services

Interested in working during the summer? Contact your CBVH counselor and request to be referred to the agency in your area for assistance in finding summer employment. Referrals should be made in early spring so that Employment Consultants from the agencies will have plenty of time to get to know you, your interests and abilities, and employment opportunities within your area.

One-on-one training or job coaching to help you get started is sometimes available. CBVH may be able to cover salary expenses if the employer is unable to.



Business Enterprise Program – Summer Work Experience

The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) provides training and employment for consumers of CBVH as BEP facility managers in government buildings and at some large corporations. The facilities are either newsstands or cafeterias. All BEP managers are legally blind and, after they complete training, are considered fully independent operators. In the summer work experience, youth will work as a Manager's Assistant at one of the various BEP facilities. Youth will learn the day-to-day operations of the facility, such as customer relations, merchandising, labor relations, management skills, over-the-counter sales, stock and inventory control, facility sanitation, and financial management. ; communicate effectively; stand, stoop, kneel and carry;

Youth must be age 16 and above; able to lift 30-35 pounds; travel independently; neat, clean and dress appropriately and must display good interpersonal skills. The work experience runs four continuous weeks and youth work up to 24 hours per week. Currently this work experience is only offered in the New York City area. Contact your CBVH counselor in early spring if you are interested in this program.

Chapter 6 - Resources for Families

Family Connect

Family members can talk to other families who may have similar issues and challenges by logging on to

www.familyconnect.org. Family Connect

is a website created by the American Foundation for the Blind and the National Association of Parents of Children with Visual Impairments to give parents of visually impaired children a place to support each other, share stories and concerns, and find resources on raising their children from birth to adulthood.



Blindline

Blindline is a fully accessible website created by VISIONS in collaboration with the American Foundation for the Blind to provide direct access to a New York statewide database of organizations and services for people who are blind or visually impaired, their family members, counselors, and other professionals.

The service includes a toll-free telephone number as well as a fully accessible website. The Blindline Call Center is available Monday through Friday from 9:00–5:00 and can be reached at: 1-888-625-1616. The website is www.blindline.org.

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The National Tele-Support Network for Parents of Children with Visual Impairment

The National Tele-Support Network hosts ongoing Telephone Support Groups for parents of children with visual impairment. Groups are composed of parents from across the country with children who often have the same eye conditions. They are professionally facilitated, at no cost to parents, and meet by phone on a weekly basis during daytime or evening hours. To register, call 800-915-0306.



Parent Network and Parent To Parent of NYS

Organization whose goal is to connect and support families of individuals with special needs. (866) 727-6970

www.parenttoparentnys.org/

Chapter 7 - Frequently Asked Questions

What determines the vocational goal for the student?

The vocational goal is determined jointly by the student and the CBVH counselor following a thorough discussion of the student's interests, preferences, needs, abilities and labor market opportunities.

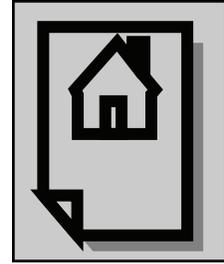
How can CBVH help young people become independent in their living arrangements beyond high school?

CBVH encourages students to develop independent living skills and will assist students to access the services of community agencies that will help students gain these skills. For example, Independent Living Centers are located throughout New York State. These centers help individuals with disabilities in the following areas: housing assistance, independent living skills, peer counseling, benefits counseling, interpreter services, attendant care services, and special transportation.

Is family income a factor in determining eligibility for CBVH services?

Family income is not a factor in determining eligibility for CBVH services. However, once it is decided that a person is eligible as a consumer for CBVH services, sponsorship for some services may be based on economic need. Economic need and the family's participation in the costs of specific services depends on whether the person is dependent on the family for support. Services not contingent upon economic need include planning, vocational assessment/evaluation, identification and referral to community services, job coaching and job placement.

Is the establishment of a vocational goal necessary to receive college sponsorship?



Yes, all training services sponsored by CBVH are based on the establishment of a vocational goal and pursuit of an employment outcome as outlined in the IPE. There is flexibility in the process, so a student can change his/her goal in consultation with his/her CBVH counselor.

What does CBVH pay toward college costs?

For students who meet economic need, CBVH will pay actual tuition costs (after the application of all comparable benefits including the Tuition Assistance Program, or TAP, and PELL grants) up to the rates established by the State University of New York (SUNY).

CBVH does not pay room and board expenses for commuting students.

What are students' rights if they are dissatisfied with a decision or process?



Every effort is made to reach agreement between CBVH and a consumer of services. In those instances where agreement regarding eligibility or services cannot be reached, there are a number of ways in which disagreements can be resolved. As detailed in the CBVH application packet, the consumer has the options of an informal meeting, an administrative review and an impartial hearing.

What is a State Education Department Regional Associate and how can they assist me when I have issues with my local school district?

Regional Associates, located in several regional New York State Education Department offices across New York State, are assigned to specific school districts and special education programs. The Regional Associate oversees preschool and school-age special education services, and serves as a resource to parents, school district personnel and private providers.

Their responsibilities include: conducting quality assurance reviews of public and private special programs; providing technical assistance and general information to parents, school district personnel and special education programs; and investigating complaints alleging a public or private education program's noncompliance with federal or state law or regulation pertaining to the education of students with disabilities.

To find your Regional Associate, visit:

www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/quality/regassoc.htm

Why should I participate in a work experience?

Developing skills in a real work environment is critical for young adults who have not had on-the-job experience. Work experiences along with education and training help to build resumes that enable individuals to successfully compete for jobs. CBVH expects that youth will participate in work experiences or internships during summer breaks and, if possible, during the school year. Every effort will be made to help the youth find a job that is relevant, challenging and skill enhancing. Whenever possible, the commission assists in developing an experience that is related to a career that is being considered.

The planning and provision of work experiences is a partnership among students, their families, CBVH and other public or private agencies at the state or local level. Collaborative planning and funding may be used for job coaching, job placement and various auxiliary supports, such as transportation, for community-based work experiences.

** Students and parents might ask that a community-based vocational training program be included on their IEP. In community-based vocational training, high school students leave the school grounds to learn to work in a community work site.

How will vocational rehabilitation services, or a work experience, affect SSI benefits?

The CBVH transition counselor can advise you generally about how your child's benefits may be affected when your son or daughter begins earning wages. You should also directly contact the Social Security Administration Work Incentives Coordinator to obtain specific information about the impact of your child's employment on benefits and about available work incentive allowances.

Chapter 8 - Glossary of Transition-related Terms (includes both Education and Rehabilitation Terms)

American with Disabilities Act (ADA) – This civil rights law protects persons with disabilities in the areas of employment, public accommodations, state and local government services, telecommunications and transportation. Title I deals with employment and covers all private and public employers with 15 or more workers. It protects any person with a disability who, with or without “reasonable accommodations,” can perform the “essential functions” of a job.

Assistive Technology – These are devices that are used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

Career Zone www.nycareerzone.org – This is career exploration system that was Initially designed for middle and high school students by the New York State Department of Labor with a grant from the United States Department of Labor. It is an interactive site designed to encourage students to explore career options as a means of making informed choices about their future.

Client Assistance Program (CAP) - The CAP program is responsible for assisting disabled individuals (consumers receiving services or client applicants requesting services) to secure the benefits and programs available under the Rehabilitation Act. Issues such as types of services offered, policies and procedures, and mediation of problem situations are all services available through the CAP centers.

Community Residence/Group Home - Ongoing supervision and staff assistance is provided for residents who can live safely in a group environment in the community. Individuals with additional needs may also be eligible for service coordination.

Competitive Employment – This is a term for paid employment in the private or public labor market, paying at least minimum wage. Training and support may be available on a time-limited basis.

Daily Living Skills Training (Rehabilitation Teaching) – This describes training in skills such as money management, shopping, meal preparation and homemaking.

Day Habilitation - Medicaid waiver program for individualized, community-based opportunities that can be volunteer and/or social in nature. Activities might include self-care, socialization, speech and physical therapy, recreational activities, volunteer experiences and pre-vocational skills. Intensive support may be available for individuals with significant physical and medical needs.

Day Treatment - Medicaid-funded program that provides needed services for individuals who are in non-vocational settings, including clinical (medical) services.

Enclave - Involves group placements in the community to provide work experience. Each work group is provided with at least one supervisor who assists in training and general supervision.

Family Care - Refers to living arrangements in which a person chooses to live with a foster family in the community.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (also called the Buckley Amendment) - Gives parents of students under 18 the right to review the student's educational records and to request that any incorrect or misleading information be changed or deleted from the records.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) – This is special education and related services that are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge to the parent, and that meet the standards of the state education department. Special education and related services must be provided in conformity with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), as required by IDEA.

Group Homes - Refers to living with up to four to six people in a house in the community. Group homes are staffed 24 hours a day.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA – Public Law 102-119) – IDEA is the federal law that guarantees students with disabilities a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment and authorizes appropriations in funding to states and school districts to assist them in providing special education and related services.

Individual Education Program (IEP) – The IEP is a legal document that sets goals and objectives for a student with disabilities, and describes the programs and services that will be offered to help the student reach those goals. The IEP is formulated by a team of professionals employed by the school district and the parents or guardians of the student.

Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) – A written plan to achieve employment developed by the student (consumer) and, as appropriate, his or her parent or guardian, in partnership with the CBVH counselor.

Intermediate Care Facilities (ICFs) – These are specialized community residences that provide active programming, room and board, and 24-hour supervision.

Job Coach – A job coach assists the worker with a disability and an employer by providing specialized training and job-related support services.

Job Development - Identification of existing job openings and determination of job requirements in order to obtain employment. This may also include creating an employment opportunity to meet the vocational needs of the individual.

Job Shadowing – An opportunity for a student to follow a worker through a typical sequence of activities so the student learns some of the skills and tasks required in that application.

Medicaid – A joint federal/state program that provides health care subsidies to persons with low incomes. Individuals with disabilities may be eligible for Medicaid on the basis of their incomes.

Medicare – This program is administered by the Federal Social Security Program and is designed to protect people 65 and over regardless of income, and people under 65 who have become disabled and have been entitled to Social Security disability payments for at least two years.

Medicare – This program is administered by the Federal Social Security Program and is designed to protect people 65 and over regardless of income, and people under 65 who have become disabled and have been entitled to Social Security disability payments for at least two years.

One-Stop Centers - Centers provide comprehensive employment and training services, and access to computers, fax machines, copiers, and telephones. There is usually a resume distribution program, a career resource library, labor market information, networking opportunities, job search workshops, on-site interviews with local employers, transferable skills information, job leads, and training programs. There are programs for youth, older workers, people with disabilities, adults, dislocated workers, Veterans, and TANF recipients.

Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS) – A PASS Plan allows an SSI recipient to set aside income and/or resources in order to achieve an occupation objective. A PASS can be used to establish a business, obtain occupational training, and pay for other reasonable expenses related to an individual's employment objectives.

Person-Centered Planning – A process or structure that assists people to plan for and implement their service plan. Most central to this process is the focus on the strengths, choices, preferences, and interests of the individual. Family, friends, community members, and professionals may be invited to participate. Creativity, imagination and collaboration are essential to developing the plan and finding the resources or ideas to implement the service plan.

Physically Handicapped Children's Program - Funding for medical services and equipment for children under age 21 who have physical disabilities.

Reasonable Accommodation – Any change or adjustment at work that permits a qualified person with a disability to apply for a job, perform the essential functions of a job, and enjoy the benefits and privileges of employment equal to employees without disabilities.

Rehabilitation Act – This is the federal legislation that administers the vocational rehabilitation program to eligible persons with disabilities. It is contained in Title VI of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, which contains the Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and resulting regulations.

Respite Services - Assistance for families who need periodic relief from caring for their child (of any age) with developmental disabilities.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - The law prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by agencies, institutions, and contractors who receive any funding from the Federal Government. The law states that students with disabilities must have the same options as students without disabilities. For example, students with physical disabilities should have access to all school programs, buildings and activities.

Service Coordination/Case Management - Services to coordinate multiple needs for a single individual. Service Coordination helps adults and children with developmental disabilities get the services that allow them to fulfill their goals in life.

Sheltered Employment/Extended Employment - Employment in a supervised setting with varying supervisory ratios for individuals who need to work on skills to maintain competitive employment.

Situational Assessment – Assessments that take place in a controlled or semi-controlled work environment in order to evaluate work-related skills and behaviors.

Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) – This is the dollar amount of earnings that is the cutoff point for eligibility for disability benefits. SGA amounts change every year.

Supervised Apartments - Refers to living in an apartment complex in a community that is agency-staffed 24 hours a day.

Supplemental Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) – This is a benefit for people considered disabled (by Social Security standard) who have worked enough to qualify for benefits. Minor children of parents receiving disability payments may also be eligible to receive their parent’s disability insurance.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) – The SSI program is administered by the federal Social Security Administration (SSA). A child under 18 may be found disabled if he/she has a physical or mental impairment or combination of impairments that causes marked and severe functional limitations, and that can be expected to last for a continuous period of at least 12 months. Individuals 18-22 years old are evaluated as adults. The Social Security Administration considers parental income and resources in determining financial eligibility. Some types of income and resources are not applied. In New York State, all SSI recipients receive Medicaid.

Supported Employment – Employment in the community with ongoing job support for individuals with disabilities who cannot sustain competitive employment without individualized long-term support. It must be consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice of the consumer.

Supportive Living - refers to living alone, or with up to three people, in an apartment in the community. Supportive apartments usually have agency staff providing daily to weekly visits with on-call assistance.

Transition – A period when a student is making significant change from school to other environments that might include postsecondary education, adult services, jobs or community living.

Transitional Employment - Provision of vocational support services that may include job development, job coaching and assistance with skills enhancement in order to obtain and independently maintain competitive employment.

Vocational Education Act of 1984 (also known as the Carl Perkins Act) – This act is intended to make vocational education programs equally accessible to all students. Schools must notify students with disabilities and their parents concerning vocational education opportunities no later than the ninth grade.

Vocational Evaluation – A comprehensive process designed to assist an individual in choosing and finding a job by systematically providing information about an individual's work-related strengths, aptitudes and weaknesses; incorporates medical, psychological, social, vocational, education, cultural, and economic data.

References

“After High School the Rules Change,” Reprinted from www.FamilyConnect.org © 2008 by American Foundation for the Blind. All rights reserved.

“College Planning Time Line,” Reprinted from College Bound: A Guide for Students with Visual Impairments © 2005 by American Foundation for the Blind. All rights reserved.

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"Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, the New York State Office of Children and Families will also make this material available on audiotape upon request."

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