

Resources to Help Plan for Your Child's Future

This resource list includes both national and Minnesota organizations. Many of the Minnesota-specific organizations are also available in other states. If you need assistance finding one of these organizations in your state, please contact PACER at (800) 537-2237.

Employment and Career Planning Resources

Career Guidance: Most schools have guidance counselors and access to computerized career information.

Disability Benefits 101: Offers tools and information on employment, health coverage, and benefits, including how work and benefits go together. db101.org

Friends and Relatives: People close to you may be good resources for finding a job. Networking is the most important tool you have in helping your child find a job.

Minnesota CAREERwise Education: Provides information on Minnesota careers, education, jobs, and self-employment. careerwise.minnstate.edu

Minnesota Work Incentives Connection: Provides answers about the impact of work on benefits, so people with disabilities make choices and take advantage of opportunities. Call (651) 632-5113 voice; (651) 632-5110 or MN Relay-711 TTY; or (800) 976-6728 toll free. goodwilleasterseals.org/services/WIC

National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth: Works to ensure that transition-age youth are provided full access to high-quality services in integrated settings. Helps with education, employment, and independent living skills; also offers a range of technical assistance services. ncwd-youth.info

PACER's National Center on Transition and Employment | Inspiring Possibilities: PACER's National Parent Center on Transition and Employment builds on PACER's decades of experience providing parents, youth, and professionals with high-quality assistance and support on transition topics. This innovative project puts the needs of families at the forefront and helps youth with disabilities find success in postsecondary education, employment, and life in the community. Call (800) 537-2237 or (952) 838-9000. PACER.org/Transition

State Services for the Blind (SSB): Offers services for persons who are blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind by fostering the achievement of vocational and independence goals. Call for more information and eligibility requirements: (651) 539-2300; (800) 652-9000 toll free; Communication Center Customer Service: (800) 722-0550. mnssb.org

Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS): Provides vocational rehabilitation services for people with disabilities. Most of these services are located at a WorkForce Center. A counselor is assigned to each high school and may be able to provide information on the current job market, referrals, job coaching, and partial funding for assessments or assistive technology. Call for more information and eligibility requirements: (651) 259-7366 voice or (800) 328-9095 toll free. mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/disabilities

WorkForce Centers: Provide job training, education, and employment services at a single neighborhood location. To locate a center, call (888) 438-5627. TTY: (651) 296-3900. mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/workforce-centers

Postsecondary Education and Training Resources

ACT Assessment: Information about online test preparation, dates, how to apply for accommodations, and more. actstudent.org

Collegeboard: Provides information about Advance Placement (AP) and PSAT/NMSQT and SAT assessments for students with disabilities, including test preparation, dates, and how to apply for accommodations. collegeboard.org/students-with-disabilities

Also provides information about the ACCUPLACER® test to determine a student’s academic skills in math, English, and reading. accuplacer.collegeboard.org/students

DO-IT Program: The DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology) Center is dedicated to empowering people with disabilities through technology and education. (888) 972-DOIT (3648) toll free voice/TTY. washington.edu/doit

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA): Provides online registration and downloadable applications to apply for federal grants and loans. fafsa.ed.gov

The HEATH Resource Center at the National Youth Transition Center: A web-based clearinghouse that provides educational resources, support services and opportunities. The HEATH Resource Center gathers, develops, and disseminates resource papers, fact sheets, website directories, newsletters, and resource materials. heath.gwu.edu

Minnesota Department of Education: Provides resources and tools to help students, parents, and educators plan for transition using both federal and state requirements. education.state.mn.us

Minnesota Office of Higher Education: Provides a website with information about preparing for college, financial aid, entrance requirements, and evaluating colleges. www.ohe.state.mn.us

Minnesota Programs of Study: A sequence of courses, both required and elective, that begin in middle or high school and progress throughout postsecondary education. The information on this site is intended to help students understand the combination of courses currently available at their school that will provide the best preparation for the education/career direction he or she would like to explore. It also offers information about programs and majors in the pathways at various colleges and universities. mnprogramsofstudy.org

Student Financial Assistance: U.S. Department of Education resource that provides free information about preparing for and funding education beyond high school. Call (800) 433-3243; (800) 730-8913 TTY. studentaid.ed.gov

Teens Succeeding with Technology (TeST): A collection of four video trainings that incorporate innovative, web-based technologies and resources to help high school students with disabilities transition successfully to postsecondary training and careers. More information about this replicable model can be found online at PACER.org/stc/videos.

Think College: Provides resources, tools, and a database for students, families, and professionals who are interested in inclusive postsecondary options. thinkcollege.net

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights: Provides a guide with information for students with disabilities who are preparing for postsecondary education options. View “Transition of Students with Disabilities to Postsecondary Education: A Guide for High School Educators” online at www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transitionguide.html.

Independent Living Resources for Recreation and Leisure, Community Participation, and Home Living

ARC Minnesota: Advocacy, resources, and community inclusion for people with developmental disabilities. (651) 523-0823. thearcofminnesota.org

Centers for Independent Living: Nonprofit organizations that advocate for the independent needs of people with disabilities; identify and provide access to existing resources, such as transportation; provide peer support; and offer opportunities for people with disabilities to acquire independent living skills. There are eight Centers for Independent Living across Minnesota. (651) 646-8342. mcil-mn.org

Community Education Programs: Offer lifelong learning for people with disabilities. These programs provide many types of classes, such as cooking, sports, money management, art, drama, music, computers, and a variety of other activities. Contact your local school district and ask for the community education coordinator.

Community Transition Interagency Committee (CTIC): Identifies current local services, programs, and funding sources within a community for transition-age youth and their families. Contact your county or school district to locate your area CTIC.

County Human or Social Service Departments: Provide programs that promote independence, productivity, and community inclusion, as well as services, such as semi-independent living services and medical assistance. The Minnesota Department of Human Services can be reached at (651) 431-2000 or (800) 627-3529 TTY. mn.gov/dhs

Disability Hub MN: Offers up-to-date information about community resources for people with disabilities. Information and referrals on disability benefits programs, home modifications, assistive technology, personal assistance services, transition services, accessible housing, employment, social activities, and disability rights. (866) 333-2466 toll free. disabilityhubmn.org

I'm Determined: A state directed project funded by the Virginia Department of Education, focusing on providing direct instruction, models, and opportunities to practice skills associated with self-determined behavior. This project facilitates youth, especially those with disabilities, to undertake a measure of control in their lives, helping to set and steer the course rather than remaining the silent passenger. imdetermined.org

Medicaid (Medical Assistance): A government-run health insurance program that can pay health care expenses, such as doctor appointments, therapy, hospitalization, prescription drugs, and personal care assistance. Contact your county Department of Human Services to determine eligibility.

Minnesota State Parks: Offers outdoor activities such as camping, hiking, and cross country skiing. Inquire about programs and services for individuals with disabilities. To locate a state park near you, visit dnr.state.mn.us.

PACER's Fun Times: A social program that connects high school teens and young adults with and without disabilities for social activities and relationship building. Visit the website for additional links to recreation and leisure resources. PACER.org/funtimes

PACER's Housing Project: Includes information and resources to help parents of children and young adults with disabilities understand their options for independent living and housing. (952) 838-9000; (800) 537-2237 toll free. PACER.org/housing

PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center: Unites, engages, and educates communities nationwide to prevent bullying through creative, relevant, and interactive resources. PACER.org/Bullying

PACER's Simon Technology Center (STC): Makes the benefits of technology more accessible to children and adults with disabilities. The STC involves parents, professionals, and consumers, and provide numerous services for your family, as well as resources and informative answers to your questions. The STC includes a software and device lending library. (952) 838-9000; (800) 537-2237 toll free. PACER.org/STC

Social Security Administration (SSA, Federal Government): Programs that pay cash benefits to people with disabilities based on eligibility criteria. Supplemental Security Income (SSI) pays monthly benefits based on financial need to people with disabilities who have limited income and resources. This financial support can be very helpful as youth with disabilities transition from school to adult life. Receiving SSI provides you with Medical Assistance/Medicaid health insurance. (800) 772-1213 voice; (800) 325-0778 TTY. ssa.gov/disability

Special Olympics Minnesota: Offers children and adults with intellectual disabilities year-round sports training and competition. Locate your local chapter at (612) 333-0999 or (800) 783-7732. specialolympicsminnesota.org

YMCA: Provides a variety of community-based programs accessible to people with disabilities. YMCA.net

Learning about Disability Rights as an Adult

ADA Minnesota (Americans with Disabilities Act): Gives civil rights protection to people with disabilities. (651)603-2015 voice; (888)630-9793 toll free. adaminnesota.org

Minnesota Disability Law Center: Provides legal help for Minnesota residents with disabilities. (612) 334-5970. mylegalaid.org/about/our-work/disability-law

Minnesota State Council on Disability: Provides information to expand opportunities, increase the quality of life, and empower all persons with disabilities. Services are provided to individuals with disabilities and their families, the governor and legislature, government and private agencies, employers, and the general public. (651) 361-7800 voice/TTY; (800) 945-8913 toll free voice/TTY. disability.state.mn.us

Office of Civil Rights, Region V, U.S. Department of Education: Provides information about federal civil rights laws and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule, which together protect fundamental rights of nondiscrimination and privacy. (800) 368-1019; (800) 537-7697 TTY. hhs.gov/ocr

PACER Center: A parent center for families of children and youth with all disabilities from birth through 26 years old. PACER expands opportunities and enhances the quality of life of children and young adults with disabilities and their families, based on the concept of parents helping parents. PACER provides individual assistance to families and offers more than 30 programs for parents and professionals. (952) 838-9000; (800) 537-2237 toll free. PACER.org