

# Supporting the Journey to Adulthood: A Practical Seminar for Families of Young Adults

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# Disclosure

We have no financial interests in this presentation.



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# Objectives

1. To create goals for a thriving future
2. To learn practical tips and strategies to increase independence and skill building
3. To gain additional ideas from the collective wisdom of the seminar participants

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# Outline

1. Introductions
2. Imagine the future
3. Creating a vision
4. Strategies and Tips for Each Area of Focus
5. Discussion
6. Questions



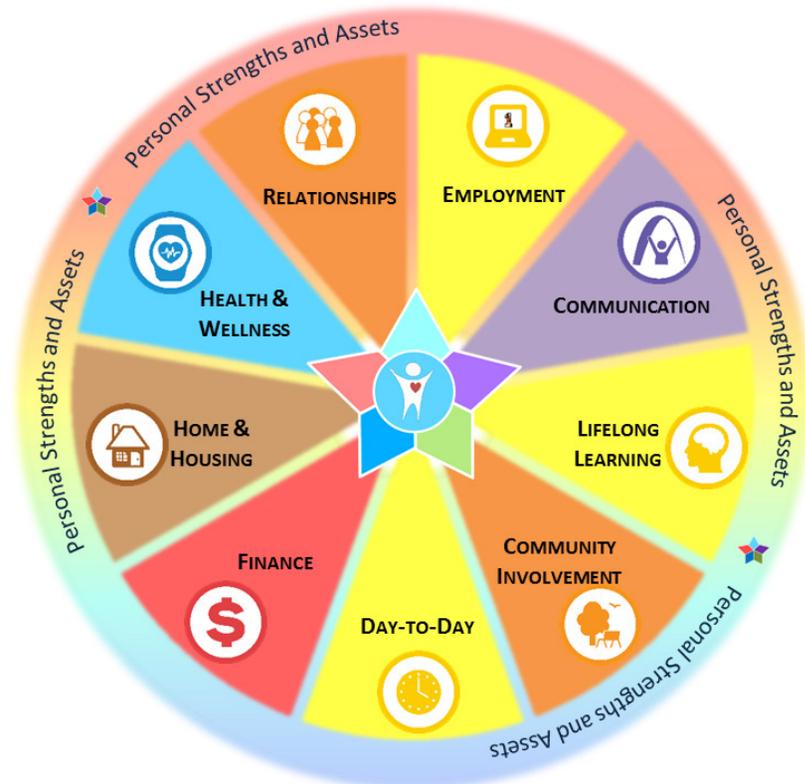
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# Creating a Vision for the Future



## Individual Journeys

- Transition comes in many forms – school, services, medical needs, personal supports, housing.
- Each individual has their own strengths, challenges and areas of need.
- Transition will look different for every individual and every family.
- Set personal goals for your young adult and your family.

[www.doe.mass.edu/sped/secondary-transition/indicator13-requirements.docx](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/secondary-transition/indicator13-requirements.docx)



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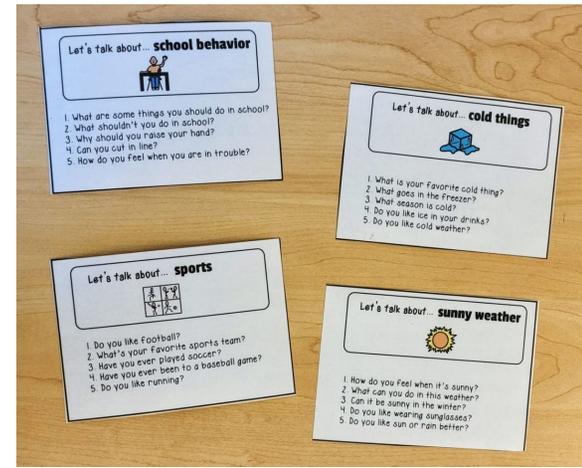


## Communication



# Communication

- Total communication approach
- Promotion of Conversation skills
- Mastering the introduction
- Practicing in community – deli, phone calls
- Speech therapy – intelligibility/articulation focus
- Assistive Technology Devices



## Communication

- Self-advocacy – using their voice, making choices
- Presenting themselves at IEP/DDS meetings
- How to call for help – sharing important info
- Emergency preparedness



**IN CASE OF  
EMERGENCY  
CALL 9-1-1**





## Lifelong Learning

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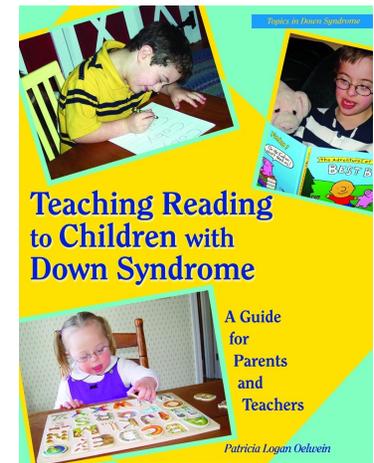
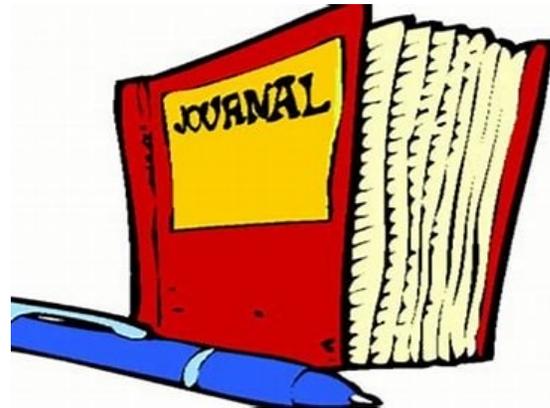


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# Lifelong Learning

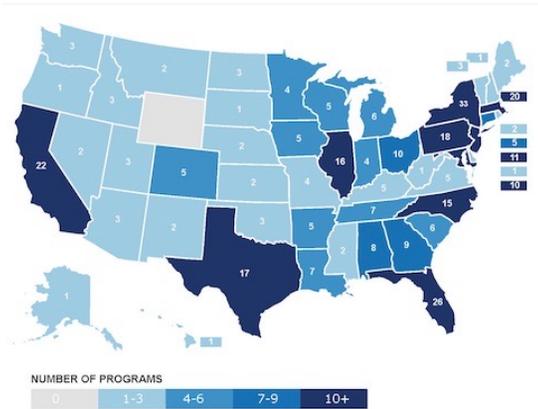
- Literacy skills
  - Book clubs
  - Book discussions at home
- Writing/Typing
  - Texts
  - Emails
  - Creative Writing, Lists, Journals
  - Completing job applications
  - Signatures – by hand/stamp



# Lifelong Learning

## MassAbility

- Supplemental learning programs beyond school?
- Learning beyond academic goals – self-care, independence goals
- Community education – cooking, arts, etc.
- Consider future options for educational opportunities – Think College
- Certificate programs
- Trade programs
- Mass Ability – trainings/workshops/education





## Community Involvement

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## Community Involvement

- Library activities
- Community Events
- Camps, summer programming
- Volunteerism
- Religious activities
- Councils, Boards, Membership, etc



# Community Involvement

## Recreation

- MDSC AIM
- Special Olympics
- Waypoint Adventures
- Gym memberships
- Personal training
- Dance Classes/Programs
- Community Rec Programs
- Spedchildmass.org

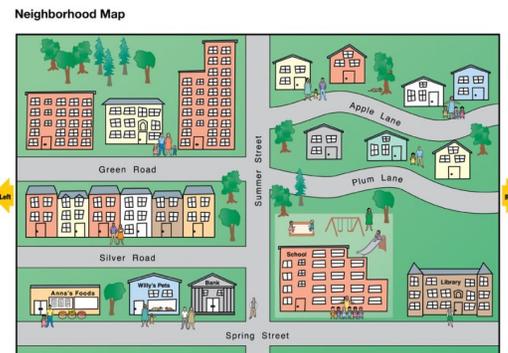


**Special  
Olympics**



# Community Involvement

- The Ride, MBTA, Uber/lyft
- Walking in the community
- Identifying businesses/people in your area
- Community inclusion in activities/functions to promote engagement
- Voting



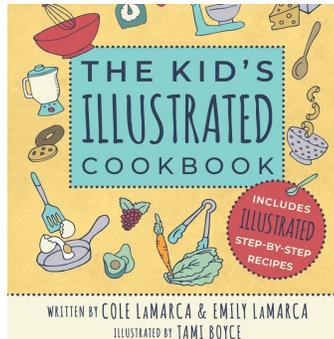
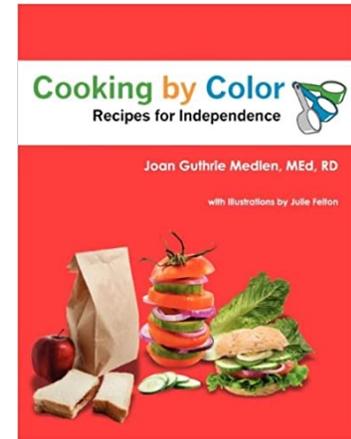
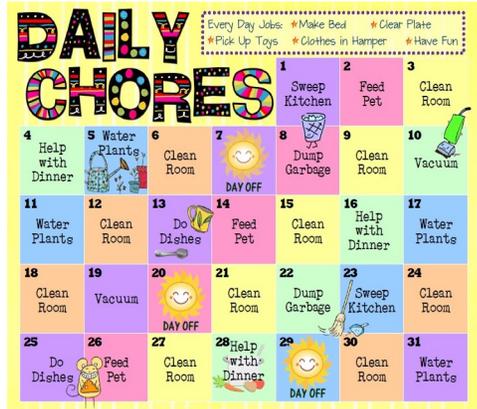


## Daily Living Skills



# Daily Living Skills

- Independence around ADL's
- Cooking – preparing meals
- Cleaning house/chores
- Personal hygiene awareness
- Toileting and bathing



# Daily Living Skills

- Shopping in the community
- Choosing clothing options
- Dining etiquette
- Ordering food at restaurants from menus
- Taking medication
- Haircuts, grooming



## SHOPPING LIST

MILK	
OATMEAL	
BROCCOLI	
BLUEBERRIES	
PRUNES	

### My Medication Log – Keep it Handy

\* List all prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs, vitamins and herbs.  
\* Bring this to every doctor's appointment and if you go to the emergency room or hospital. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Dose of Your Medicine	This Medicine is for	How Much and How Often?				Reminder: When do I take it?
		Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Bedtime	
Example: Simvastatin, 40 mg	Example: High cholesterol					Example: After I brush my teeth.

If you have any problems with your medicine – do not wait. Talk to your health care provider right away.

Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_     
 Name of Primary Care Provider: \_\_\_\_\_     
 Primary Care Provider Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

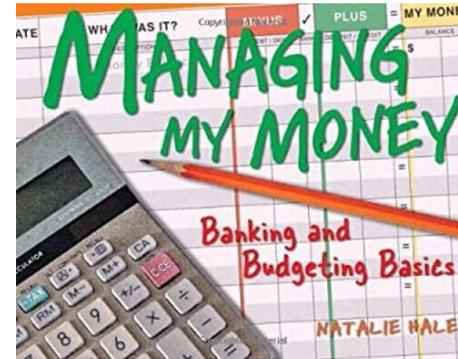
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## Finances

# Finances

- Basic money skills – rounding up
- Debit card
- Budgeting
- Apple Pay/Wallet
- Safe savings – ABLÉ account
- Awareness of assets in child’s name
- Wallet/personal identification (state ID)



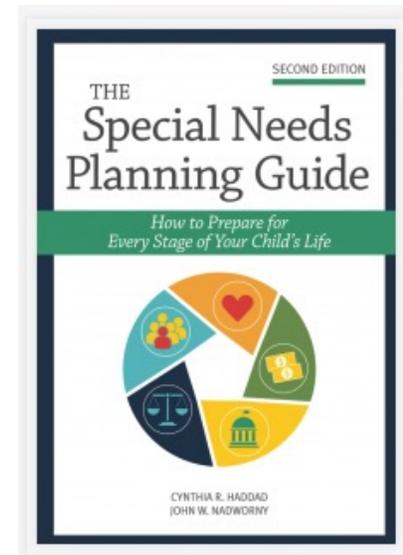
### The 5 W's of ABLÉ Accounts

- 1. WHAT is an ABLÉ account?**  
Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) accounts are tax-exempt 529A savings accounts that can only be used for qualified disability-related expenses of the owner or designated beneficiary.
- 2. WHEN were ABLÉ accounts established?**  
The Stephen Beck, Jr. Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act was signed into law on Dec. 19, 2014. Its passage led to the establishment of the account.
- 3. WHY were ABLÉ accounts established?**  
ABLE accounts allow individuals with disabilities to save for the future in a tax-advantaged account while continuing to be eligible for income-based government programs.
- 4. WHO are ABLÉ accounts for?**  
Any individual certified with a disability or blindness before age 26 is eligible to be the certified beneficiary of an ABLÉ account.
- 5. WHERE can I open an ABLÉ account?**  
ABLE account programs are available in 46 states. Accounts can be opened through your state's ABLÉ program website.



# Finances

- MassHealth at 18
- SSI at 18
- Contributing to the household
- Paying bills – talk about it, explain how it works
- Estate Planning/Special Needs Trusts

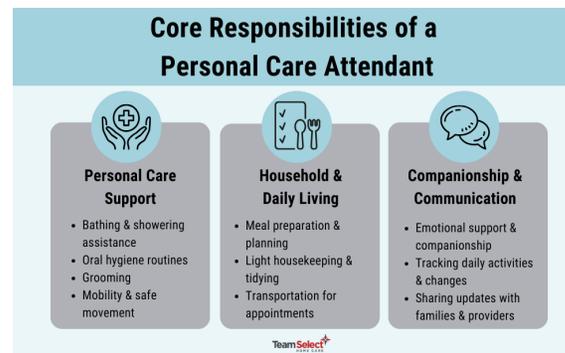




## Home and Housing

# Home and Housing

- Section 8, Vouchers/Public Housing – consider applying early at 18 - CHAMP
- Variety of housing options to explore - private pay, group homes, shared living
- Able to stay home alone? Who will supervise, if not?
- Respite needed? Parents getting break?
- Personal Care Attendant (PCA)

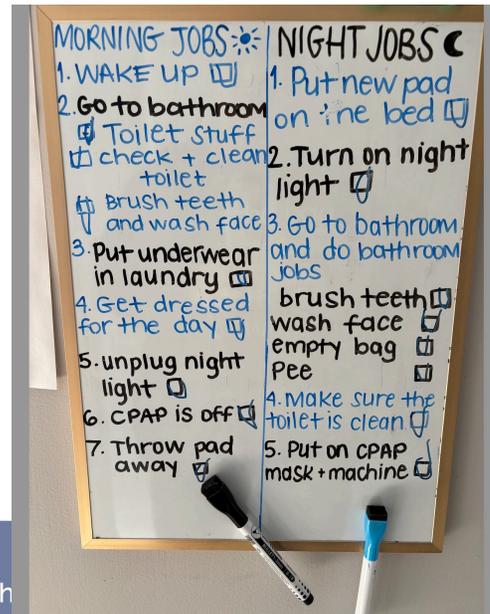


# Home and Housing

- Home adaptations to increase independence

Think out of the box...

- Adaptive kitchen tools, toothpaste squirter, detergent pods, trackers, etc.
- Visual Schedules
- Labels
- RING cameras
- Alarms/reminders





## Health and Wellness



## Health and Wellness

- Good sleep habits
- Diet/healthy eating
- Emotional Health
- Hygiene



# Health and Wellness

- Who are your doctors? list/pics
- Do they prepare questions for doctors?
- Do they know their needs/diagnosis?
- Medical Transition
- Healthcare Guidelines for Adults




**FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS:  
QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD'S DOCTOR ABOUT TRANSITIONING  
TO ADULT HEALTH CARE\***

**DURING YOUR CHILD'S ADOLESCENT YEARS:**

- How do I best prepare my child to meet with you alone for part of their visit to become more independent when it comes to their own health and health care? When will they start to have time alone with you?
- What does my child need to learn to get ready for adult health care? Do you have a checklist of self-care skills that my child needs to learn?
- Can I work with you to prepare a medical summary for my child and, if needed, a plan for what to do in case of an emergency?
- Before my child turns 18 and becomes a legal adult, what information about privacy and consent do we need to learn about? If my child needs help with making health decisions, where can I get information about this?
- At what age does my child need to change to a new doctor for adult health care?

**BEFORE TRANSFERRING TO A NEW ADULT DOCTOR:**

- Do you have any suggestions of adult doctors for my child to transfer to?
- What kinds of doctors in adult care does my child need (e.g., a primary care doctor, a specialist, a behavioral health provider)?
- Will you send my child's medical summary to the new adult doctor?
- If needed, will you communicate with the new adult doctor about my child's care?
- Before the initial visit is made to the new adult doctor, will you still refill their medicines and treat them for acute care needs?

**NOTES**

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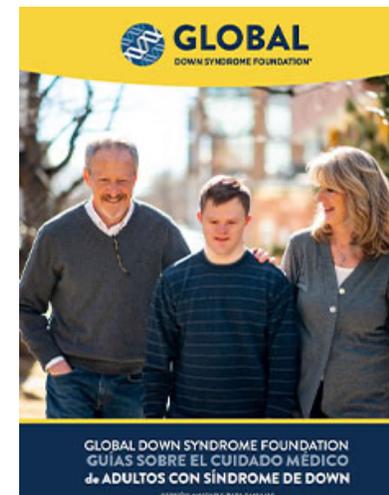


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\*The American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Family Physicians, and American College of Physicians encourage that all youth and young adults work with their doctor or other health care provider to build independence and prepare for the transition to adult care. For more information about transition, please visit [www.aap.org/transition](http://www.aap.org/transition) or [www.aafp.org/transition](http://www.aafp.org/transition).



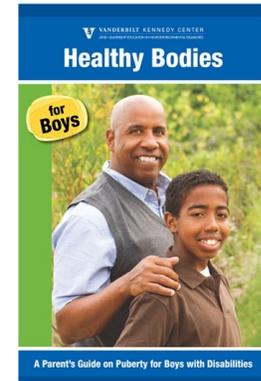
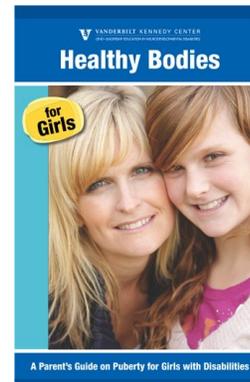
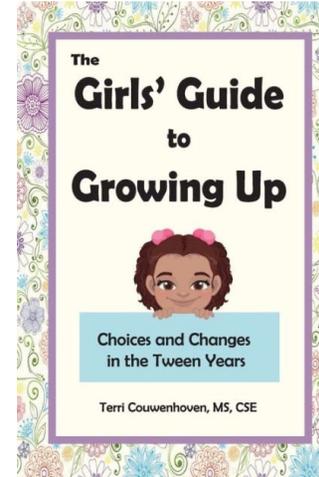
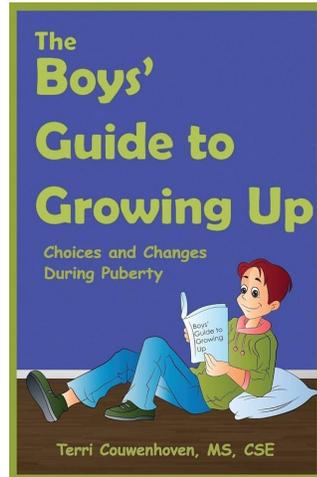


## Relationships



## Relationships

- Boundaries – safe bodies
- Appropriate behaviors
- Social Skills
- Dating
- Sex education



## Relationships

- Social media safety
- Peer Mentoring
- Making and keeping friendships
- Participate in social activities/opportunities
  - Natural and facilitated
- Parent/sibling relationships



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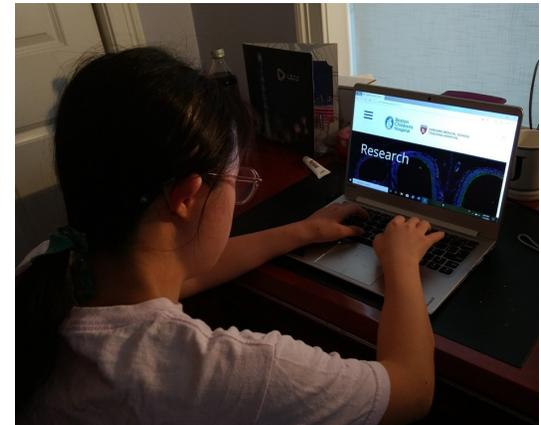




## Employment

# Employment

- Keyboard skills
- “Jobs” around house
- Using timers for reminders
- Deep diving into interest areas
- Talking about jobs in community



# Employment

- Development of transferable skills
- Incorporating therapists into training
- Job coaches
- Volunteer work, internships
- Vocational training
- Employment programs



**PERSON CENTERED PLANNING MEETINGS**

Gathering to plan/brainstorm  
Outside eyes beyond parents  
Focus is PERSON  
Can happen more than once

**SET IT UP**

Bank account  
State ID  
Ask about transition program at school  
Learn about options for child turning 18

- *Guardianship*
- *Health care proxy*
- *Power of attorney*
- *Supported decision making*

**FORMALIZE A PLAN**

School refers to Adult DDS services  
Personal goals to meet before 22  
Work closely with DDS to create plan for 22+  
Learn about day programs, self-directed funds, etc.  
Medical Transition

Age 14

Age 18

Age 22+

ANYTIME

Age 16-18

Age 19-21

**PREPARE AND PLAN**

Transition Planning Form  
Attend and help prepare for IEP meetings  
MRC can start at 14

**PUT IN ACTION**

SSI  
Masshealth  
Register to Vote  
Plan set for after senior year  
Post-secondary options  
Transition Program options

**WELCOME TO 22**

Public School Education ends  
Adult Services thru DDS start

## More things ahead to know about....

### Adult DDS Services – Dept of Developmental Services

- School referral 19/20
- Starts day after 22
- Self-directed funds
- Day programs
- Housing supports

### Adult Foster Care or Adult Family Care (AFC)

- MassHealth funded program
- Monthly tax-free stipend
- Child needs to be dependent on parent for more than one daily living skill
- Starts at age 16

### MRC – MA Rehab Commission

- Starting at 14 years old
- Training program
- Job matching and coaching
- Tuition support

### Independent living centers

- Work with individuals to meet personal goals towards independence
- Many locations

ANY  
QUESTIONS  
?



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