

## Resources

Transition is challenging for parents and young adults alike. Here are some resources that might help you network and build a circle of support.

- College Living Experience – Independent Living Skills Checklist 800-486-5058
- After the School Bus Stops Coming (by Sari Hornstein) <http://bit.ly/2Fdjm1x>
- PACER National Parent Center on Transition and Employment <https://www.pacer.org/transition/>
- Organization for Autism Research – a Guide for Transition to Adulthood <https://researchautism.org/resources/a-guide-for-transition-to-adulthood/>
- ImDetermined.org – core components of self determination
- Life Assessment and Career Matrix <http://bit.ly/2FfMiWI>
- Maryland Access Point [marylandaccesspoint.info](http://marylandaccesspoint.info)
- Supporting Families <http://supportstofamilies.org/states/maryland/>
- LifeCourseTools [www.lifecoursetools.com](http://www.lifecoursetools.com)
- [GotTransition.org](http://GotTransition.org)

It's never too early  
to encourage children  
to make choices and practice  
becoming independent.

# Letting Go: Easier Said than Done

## Conversations for Parents

What could your child do  
if given more opportunities to learn?

What does independence mean for your child or young adult?

Can you respect the dignity of risk  
and your adult child's right to make choices?

Transition Work Group of Montgomery County  
with Montgomery County Public Schools

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## Risk-taking

- Can you let your child make mistakes that are not life-threatening? (order a meal, try public transportation, spend money) Self-determination and the right to take risks is essential: respect the dignity of risk.
- Are you emotionally prepared to respect your adult child's choices?
- How do you encourage your child to meet new people, visit new places, ask questions, solve a problem, speak up?
- Can you respect a decision your child makes even when you know the outcome may not be what he/she envisions?
- Is it ok with you when your child fails? Do you allow your child to own it? Or do you feel that you have failed?
- Do you have some language for your child and yourself to help you bounce back from a disappointment?

## Flexibility and Resilience

- In what ways are you encouraging your child to be more capable and resilient?
- What are your child's strengths (capabilities) and weaknesses (challenges)?
  - How does each one affect the workplace or social life?
- How could your child's interests, dreams and skills relate to employment possibilities?
- Is your child present and participating in all meetings related to him/her?
- Do you model flexible and resilient behavior in your own life?
- What soft skills could your child improve - communication, hygiene, learning a new skill and using it.
- What are you doing now to help your son or daughter be more flexible with goals and plans, and develop self-determination and self-advocacy skills?

## Making Choices

- What is independence for your young adult?
  - Is it living alone, choosing his/her own pizza, being with a new caregiver?
  - Are you aiming high or underestimating?
  - Have you thought about employment, education/training, housing, social activities?
- Have you asked your child to identify his/her interests, preferences, needs?
- What do you want your child's life to look like in 5 years, 10, 20? What do you NOT want in your child's life? What does *your child* want/NOT want in his/her life?
- What choices can your child make at home, school and community now? (what to wear or eat, what social activity or class to attend)

## Helping Not Doing

- Practice conversations with doctors, employers, friends
  - Practice making appointments, asking for help
  - Practice resolving a problem
  - Practice explaining his/her disability and the accommodations needed for success: self-advocate!
- Keep it simple: work on a single area or skill at a time
  - Establish independent routines for sleeping, awakening, self-care, time management, laundry, cooking/eating, household upkeep, health, safety/emergency preparedness, community navigation, money management, social skills
  - Use apps to assist with tasks
  - Practice following directions, using good manners
- What supports/networks/resources/relationships exist to help your child when you are not around?
- What opportunities are there for independent self-care? (turning on the shower, making the bed, packing a lunch)
- What jobs would your young adult *like* to do? What could your child do in *your* workplace? Does your child have tasks and responsibilities at home from a very young age?
- How often do you make decisions or take actions yourself just to keep things moving?