

# PARENT TIPSHEET: Transitioning from paediatric to adult services

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*This tipsheet is for parents who are looking for tips from other families about transitioning a child with a disability into adult services.*

- 1. Start with your family first and involve the child in as many steps as possible**
  - Involve the child who is transitioning in setting goals and what options they would want to consider as they become an adult (e.g. day program, housing, post-secondary school, job training, etc.)
  - What kind of future do you see?
  - Who will the child be with?
  - Where will the child live?
  - What does the child want to do?
  
- 2. Start early, but take one step at a time**
  - Don't feel like you have to know everything right away or feel like there can be only one plan – things change!
  - Families find that it is most helpful to start looking at services when their child is 16 years of age.
  - This time is used to better understand and digest all of the options and processes.
  
- 3. Familiarize yourself with the adult service system**
  - Create a list of questions that you might have.
  - Ask your clinicians for transition information.
  - Look for more resources online or through 211.
  
- 4. Create your own specialized resources**
  - Find resources and keep a list of them.
  - Network for ideas – ask other families about what they did and what their child might be doing currently.
  - Extend your research about resources into the community.
  - Ask: what is out there, which people can help, and how can you connect with these resources.

### **5. Form social support networks**

- Some families start with informal connections, at first, to form a base for more closer relationships.
- Gradually form an intentional network with people who can help advance the vision of your son/daughter.
- The more people involved with your family member, the fewer the risks. The support network acts as a safety net as well as a “Dream Machine”.
- Consider a Person Directed Plan. You can find Person Directed Planners at places such as Community Living and Partners for Planning.

### **6. See your records as an ongoing resource**

- Put your resources into one area.
- Keep contact information (like staff names, job titles, agencies, contact methods) in one place.
- Store reports, recommendations and important communication from services in this place.
- Encourage your child to be as involved with this as possible (e.g. opening letters, writing an ‘all about me’ profile, keeping things together).

### **7. Remember that it doesn’t hurt to try**

- It might be scary to transition out of services that the child has been through for a long time.
- As you keep trying new things, it might get easier.
- It’s important to remember that trying new things is your first step to a ‘new normal’.

*These tips were created in partnership by a family member and a Family Resource Centre staff.  
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