

Introduction

This handbook prepared by Southwest Allen County Schools is a guide to assist you in identifying the various options available for your student in developing your student's Individualized Education and Individual Transition Plans (IEP and ITP).

Between the ages of 18-21 years, young adult with disabilities and their families exchange the security of the school environment for a complex system of adult services program. The federal, state and local agencies that support adults with disabilities each have a different set of rules and requirements and, unlike the schools, are not mandated to service all citizens. It is important to remember that while all students are entitled to a free appropriate public education, access to adult services is based on eligibility and availability of funds.

Definitions

IEP – Individualized Education Program. Developed each year in the Annual Case Review (ACR) with parents, teachers, and student. This plan outlines your student's goals and objectives for the upcoming 12 months.

ITP – Individual Transition Plan. A part of the IEP, developed annually once the student turns the age of 14. It guides the development of the special education and related services; the student will pursue a diploma or certification of graduation.

Guardianship – Rights transfer of to the student at eighteen (18) years of age under, unless a guardian or an educational representative has been appointed for the student. Seek legal advice if you have questions regarding guardianship.

BDDS – Bureau of Development Disabilities Services. The BDDS assists eligible individuals with developmental delayed to receive the community and residential support needed for success. Contact your local office for eligibility requirements.

OVR – Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. OVR works with eligible individuals with disabilities to achieve their employment goals. Applicants must have an intellectual or physical impairment that substantially interferes with their ability to work. Students should apply to OVR during their final two years of high school.

Medicaid – Provides coverage for persons of limited income and resources that require ongoing medical assistance.

Early Childhood:

- Enroll in First Steps program (birth -3 years).
- Help develop your student's first IEP (3 years +).
- Look into Social Security, Medicaid, and Respite Programs.
- Develop behavior management strategies.
- Create a file for medical information.
- Get your student involved in the community.
- Contact BDDS to get your student's name on waiver waiting lists. It can take up to 10 years for services.
- Explore what options are available for your student's education: inclusion, resource, or combination.

Elementary School:

- Continue Early Childhood list above
- Attend every Case -Conference/IEP meeting! This is where you will plan for your student's future.
- Examine Independent living needs.
- Where will your student live after graduation?
- Explore residential options.
- Use routines at home for self-care and daily living skills.

- Support the introduction of in-class jobs at school.
- Introduce the concept of work into everyday activities,
- Make your child a productive part of the household by introducing chores and allowance.
- Help student develop friendships and social skills at home.
- Explore available opportunities at the upper grade levels and beyond.
- Get involved in after-school programs.

Middle School:

- Continue above lists.
- Attend every Case Conference/IEP meeting.
- Begin career exploration in school and in community. Job shadow, volunteer and participate in community service projects.
- Support teachers' efforts to provide job training as part of the school program, including jobs at school.
- Explore what options are available for your student's education: inclusion, resource or combinations.
- Explore student's community recreation and leisure interests. Get involved.

Age 14:

- Continue above lists.
- Attend every IEP meeting. Transition planning begins. Help develop the ITP.
- Research how funding sources can benefit your student (SSI, Medicaid, etc.)
- Find out about graduation requirements (certificate or diploma).
- Decide if student is on diploma or certificate track for high school graduation.
- Expand career exploration.

Age 15:

- Continue above lists
- Attend every IEP meeting and continue to develop ITP.
- Be sure class choices are appropriate; explore vocational training program.
- Attend Transition Fairs with your child and other educational opportunities that offer information about future planning needs such as residential, guardianship, employment, recreational activities.
- Continue to maintain medical and updated schools psychological testing records.

Age 16:

- Continue above lists.
- Attend every IEP meeting and continue to develop ITP.
- Find and hold a part-time paid or volunteer job in the community.
- Discuss how long the student will attend high school (4 or more years through age 21).
- Attend information meetings about future planning.
- Make sure finances are in order.
- Obtain Indiana State ID card a local License Branch.
- Take Driver's Education when appropriate.
- Investigate guardianship or power of attorney procedures and determine student's best interest.

Age 17/Junior Year:

- Continue above lists.
- Attend every IEP meeting and continue to develop ITP.
- Enroll in vocational classes if appropriate.
- Establish graduation date.
- Investigate post-secondary education options.
- Discuss age of majority and transfer of rights to student at age 18.

- Investigate guardianship procedures and determine student's best interest.
- Refer student to Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Sign a Release of Information Form.
- Investigate post high school living arrangements

Age 18/Senior Year:

- Continue above lists.
- Make necessary applications to colleges and other post-secondary institutions.
- Re-apply for SSI and Medicaid.
- Register to vote.
- Investigate Selective Service – Who Must Register.
- Transfer of rights to the student.
- Establish legal guardianship or power of attorney, if necessary.
- Review health insurance coverage; inform insurance carrier of student's disability and investigate rider of continued eligibility.
- Make sure school psycho-educational assessment is up-to-date

Age 19-21:

- Continue above lists.
- Monitor Vocational Education.
- Make contact with post-secondary personnel.
- Continue close contact with Adult Service Providers.
- Ensure all necessary support services are ready to be provided immediately after graduation.

Prior to Graduation/Secondary Education:

- School psycho-educational assessments need to be updated.
- Obtain any special testing records.
- Contact VR.
- Consult with high school guidance counselor and teacher of record to get a thorough understanding how much support is necessary for success.
- Make certain the college or vocational school you are interested in has support services.
- Investigate post-high school living arrangements.

Individual Benefits Planning for SSI and SSDI recipients entering or re-entering employment

What is Indiana Works?

Indiana Works is a free and confidential service funded by the Social Security Administration. Specifically, trained benefits counselors assist individuals who receive either SSI and/or SSDI benefits to understand the impact of wages on their disability benefits. Indiana Works is part of a national services of benefits counseling. Nationwide, nearly 115,000 individuals receiving disability benefits have reviewed benefit counseling.

Who is eligible for benefit counseling?

Any person with a disability who receives Supplemental Security Income or Social Security Disability Insurance and who is either employed or thinking of becoming employed should call for benefit counseling.

Why do I need benefit counseling?

The fear of losing cash benefits often scares people from trying to work and moving ahead with employment options. Benefits counseling can reduce this fear by giving accurate and up-to-date information on the impact of wages on disability benefits and on other programs from which a person may receive assistance (e.g. Food Stamps, housing). Benefit counselors can also help you understand the impact of wages on your health insurance, such as Medicaid.

What services does Indiana Works not provide?

The benefit counselors of Indiana Works do not determine eligibility for any public assistance program. The counselors cannot provide assistance on Social Security Administration overpayment situations, nor do they determine eligibility for any Social Security Administration work incentive. Their role is to help individuals understand the rules and provide information on work incentives that may be applicable to a beneficiary's individual circumstance.

How can I contact Indiana Works?

The toll free number is (855) 641-8382. When you call our number, a member of our support team will take your name, phone number and other important information. The benefit counselor assigned to your county will then contact you. Because of the large number of information requests, it may take a few weeks before your benefit counselor is in contact with you. Please be patient.

The northern team of Indiana Works is employed by the Center for Mental Health, Anderson Indiana.

Adult Service Agencies

Division of Family and Children's Services
Social Security Administration
Vocational Services
Indiana Workforce Development

Vocational/Residential Services

Benchmark
Bureau of Developmental Disabilities

Other Services:

Easter Seals Arc of Northeast Indiana
Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services
The League
Park Center Inc.

Post-Secondary

Ball State University Office of Disability Services
International Business College
Purdue Fort Wayne
Indiana Institute of Technology
Indiana Wesleyan University
Ivy Tech State College
University of St Francis