

Building Bridges to the Future



By HikingArtist.com

*Assisting families and professionals in transitioning
students with developmental disabilities to the
world of adult services*

Building Bridges to the Future

- A collaborative grant proposal developed by Intersect for Ability Agencies
- Initially funded by the Coleman Foundation
- Collaborative grants submitted and awarded for the continuation of financial support

Intersect for Ability

- Intersect for Ability is a collaborative network of eleven agencies located in the Chicago Metropolitan area that serve individuals with Developmental Disabilities.
- These agencies include: The Coleman Foundation, The Hope Institute for Children and Families, Barbara Olsen Center of Hope, Clearbrook, Countryside Association, Easter Seals Metropolitan Chicago, Elim Christian Services, Helping Hand Center, Little Friends, Inc., Misericordia Heart of Mercy, PACTT Learning Center, Park Lawn Association, and Seguin.

Why was Building Bridges Created?

Students with developmental disabilities and their parents are faced by the challenge of not getting adequate information, support, and assistance, from school and state funded agencies to make decisions and linkages that will ensure students successful transition to adulthood.

Project Activities

- The project consists of Helping Hand Center, Seguin, Clearbrook, Elim Christian Services, Park Lawn Association, PACTT, Countryside Association, Easter Seals Metropolitan Chicago, and Barbara Olsen Center of Hope
- Each partnering agency hired a Transition Outreach Specialist to provide students and their parents with coaching, linkages to financial, medical and legal resources, and adult services training experiences to ensure the students' successful transition to adulthood.

Timeline for Transition

- Transition begins at age 14 and ends at age 22, when the child exits school.
- During those 8 years, there are multiple items that need to be completed to help plan for your child's future
- To help, a transition timeline was created as a reminder of what to do at what age.

Transition Timeline

Timeline for Transition Students Based on Age

14 years old

- Filling out application for PUNS if not done already
- Complete questionnaire on transition needs (usually given by the school)
- Make transition goals a part of the IEP
- Develop independent living skills
- Begin early career exploration
- Increase self-advocacy skills
- Explore recreation and leisure activities

15 years old

- Update PUNS information
- Make transition goals a part of the IEP
- Attend transition fairs for students with special needs
- Develop independent living skills
- Increase self-advocacy skills
- Look into SSI
- Explore recreation and leisure activities
- Explore adult service providers

16 years old

Prioritization for Urgency of Need for Services (PUNS)

- The State of Illinois created a database of unmet service needs for individuals with developmental disabilities.
- The state would like to have all individuals with a need for services added to this database
- The PUNS database will help the state with planning for the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities through requesting the appropriate funding necessary to provide these services.
- It is important that you complete the PUNS questionnaire, if you have not done so already.
 - This must be completed before any adult services can be offered to individuals with a Developmental Disability
 - Including Full Scale IQ below 70, Cerebral Palsy and Autism

How to get on PUNS

- You must call a Pre-Admission Screening (PAS) Agency
- Make sure to update PUNS annually by calling the PAS Agency
- For more information on PUNS and an example of the questionnaire, please see page 10 in your Building Bridges to the Future Manual

Age 18

- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - Assets cannot be over \$2000
 - They will look back 3 years for sources of income
- Medicaid
 - Wait to apply until approval from SSI
 - Easier process than SSI
- Guardianship or Power of Attorney
 - Complete immediately when your child turns 18!
 - This can be done at the same time as applying for SSI and Medicaid

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

How to Apply for SSI:

There are two options of how to apply for SSI. Applications can be completed on the internet at ssa.gov or in person at the local Social Security office. Below are directions for both options.

Applying at the Social Security Office

- 1) Go to your local social security office and express that you need to apply for SSI.
- 2) Make sure to bring the following documentation with you: **birth certificate, social security card, state or school picture ID, medical/diagnostic information, all medical history** (doctor information, hospital stays, etc.), **prescription medication information, school reports/evaluations (IEP), guardianship paperwork** (if applicable), **banking information, special needs trust information** (if applicable).
- 3) A staff member at the social security office will call your name and begin the application process. **Please be sure to provide accurate information.**
- 4) You will be asked to sign a consent form in order for social security to contact the appropriate people/organizations if more information is needed.
- 5) If applying on behalf of an individual, it is suggested to bring that individual to the social security office; if the individual can tolerate large crowds and waiting for long periods of time, **without** becoming agitated.
- 6) After the application is submitted, it can take anywhere from three to six months for approval. Children (under age 18) may qualify for expedited payments while their application is under review. This only applies to children with certain medical diagnoses; ask social security if your child qualifies

Please see page 71 in your Building Bridges Manual for more information regarding SSI

Medicaid

How to Apply for Medicaid:

- 1) Collect information about income, monthly expenses, and current health benefits. They may require additional information depending on program being requested.
- 2) Complete current application form for Cash Assistance, Medical Assistance, and SNAP (food stamps). This can be done on a paper application or online at www.dhs.state.il.us.
- 3) Bring paper application and/or supporting documentation to local office closest to your home.
- 4) You may be assigned a phone or in-person interview. Please respond accordingly to any mailed correspondence from the local office regarding your application or benefits.
- 5) This process may take between 2 weeks and 1 month.

Local Healthcare/Family Services Offices: *May be located online by zip code (www.dhs.state.il.us)

Cook – West Suburban

2701 W Lake St
Melrose Park, IL 60160
Phone: (708) 338-7600
TTY: (866) 439-3720

Cook – South Suburban

3301 Wireton Rd
Blue Island, IL 60406
Phone: (708) 293-4700
TTY: (866) 439-3715

DuPage County

146 W Roosevelt Rd, Suite 2
Villa Park, IL 60181
Phone: (630) 530-1120
TTY: (866) 322-3092

Kane County

361 W Old Indian Trail
Aurora, IL 60506
Phone: (630) 844-7400
TTY: (866) 323-0616

Will County

45 E Webster St
Joliet, IL 60432
Phone: (815) 740-5350
TTY: (866) 322-2586

Please see page 74 in your Building Bridges Manual for more information regarding Medicaid

Guardianship

- If your child is 18 years old and needs help making decisions about finances and/or health care, it is imperative that you obtain guardianship so that you have the legal right to make decisions on behalf of the person with a disability.
- This must be done through the court system where a judge will determine if guardianship can and should be granted.
- There are several steps that are involved when petitioning for legal guardianship
 - For more information you can go to www.illinoislegalaid.org to get answers to questions you may have.
 - You can also look on your county's court website to print out guardianship forms and fees associated with filing for guardianship

Power of Attorney

- Power of Attorney is an authorization to act on someone else's behalf in a legal or business matter.
- If your child will need guidance when making decisions and handling affairs, it may be a good idea to look into power of attorney
- You will have to find a lawyer in your area with experience in Disabilities law.
 - It is imperative that you file for power of attorney before the child reaches their 18th birthday.
 - This assures that the family retains control of the dependents' affairs.

Supports and Services Offered

- Attend IEP Transition Planning Meetings
- Provide Building Bridges to the Future
Transition Manuals
- PAS/PUNS linkage assistance
- Legal referral assistance
- SSI application assistance
- Self Advocacy Training
- Community Exploration Opportunities
- Linkage to Transportation Opportunities
- Recreation and Leisure Referrals
- Transition Experience Programs

For Further Assistance or Information

Please Contact

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Transition Outreach Specialist
708.352.3580 x271

Or

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SERVING CHILDREN & ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES