

Birth–Age 3

Next Steps to Independence: Skills and Strategies

Legend: C=Complete; P=In Progress; N=Not Needed

Directions: The Next Steps checklist lets educators, families, and students monitor continued progress on skills needed for future success. The legend indicates three levels (complete, in progress, and not needed). The reviewer will mark the box indicating the child’s current performance level. Notice the two important resources on the second page. Educators and families can support children with **Teaching and Learning Strategies** in all four categories under the corresponding area. Also, complete the **Important Action Steps for Families** as appropriate.

Choice Making & Decision Making

- C P N Child can: make choices between two items.
- C P N indicate preferred toys through gesture, gaze, or voice.
- C P N demonstrate beginning choice-making ability.
- C P N make choices without complaining when they do not get their way.

Goal Setting & Independence

- C P N Child can: assist with putting items away (e.g., dirty clothes and toys).
- C P N wash and dry hands with visuals or prompts.
- C P N follow 1-2 step directions.
- C P N demonstrate independence (e.g., I can do it myself).
- C P N put on pants and shoes with minimal assistance.
- C P N share a desire to accomplish a task (e.g., build tower, make simple snack).
- C P N ask for help when needed.
- C P N use words or gesture to meet needs.
- C P N express the need to use the restroom and gain independence in toileting.

Self-Management & Self-Awareness

- C P N Child can: express likes and dislikes for toys and food.
- C P N follow simple routines (e.g., bedtime, bathtime).
- C P N express frustration and disappointment.
- C P N demonstrate object permanence (i.e., understand things they cannot see still exist).

Self-Determination & Self-Advocacy

- C P N Child can: communicate wants and needs using words, gestures, or voice in a variety of settings (e.g., with peers, with adults, in large and small groups).
- C P N engage in back and forth conversations (can include babbling).

Continue to the next page.

Birth–Age 3

Next Steps to Independence: Skills and Strategies continued

Important Action Steps for Families

- Put your child’s name on interest lists for Medicaid waiver programs as soon as disability is identified. Call 1-877-438-5658 for more information. If your child is already on the interest lists for Medicaid waivers, check their status each year (checking around their birthday is an excellent way to remember to do this).
- Explore services available for children with disabilities, such as the Medically Dependent Children Program (MDCP). Call 2-1-1 or visit www.211.org to find out what is available in your community.

Teaching and Learning Strategies



Choice Making & Decision Making

- Establish predictable routines.
- Limit choices to reduce frustration.
- Offer choices given two options.
- Create an organized play area to reduce over-stimulation.
- Acknowledge child’s choice when using their style of communication (e.g., eye gaze, gestures, voice).



Goal Setting & Independence

- Encourage requests for help.
- Break down tasks into small steps to build independence.
- Encourage expression of preferences and desires.
- Model how to accomplish goals.
- Encourage independence by allowing mistakes and self-correction.
- Help child set small goals (e.g., put a puzzle together, build a tower with blocks).
- Encourage attempting unfamiliar tasks.



Self-Management & Self-Awareness

- Encourage trying different activities, foods, toys, etc.
- Teach calming and breathing strategies.
- Encourage expressing emotions appropriately.
- Reward/reinforce desired behaviors.
- Acknowledge feelings and emotions (e.g., “You’re feeling sad/happy/excited right now.”)
- Encourage independent expression of likes and dislikes.



Self-Determination & Self-Advocacy

- Allow child to try and solve problems independently (e.g., building blocks, playing with toys).
- Place toys slightly out of reach to promote independence.

Continue to next age/grade band, but keep this record and continue to update.



Age 3–5 (Inc. Kindergarten)

Next Steps to Independence: Skills and Strategies

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Choice Making & Decision Making

- Child can:**
- C P N enjoy playing with other children rather than alone.
 - C P N engage in beginning negotiation skills with peers and adults.
 - C P N begin to develop ability to solve own minor problems.
 - C P N express strong preference (e.g., toys, food, friends).
 - C P N make choices between three or four items, preferred and non-preferred.

Goal Setting & Independence

- Child can:**
- C P N establish short term goals to accomplish small, preferred tasks with adult assistance.
 - C P N complete self-help skills (e.g., toileting, brushing teeth, bathing) with increasing independence.
 - C P N choose weather-appropriate clothing and dress accordingly.

Self-Management & Self-Awareness

- Child can:**
- C P N express likes and dislikes (e.g., food, activities, toys).
 - C P N persist without getting frustrated when unable to complete certain tasks.
 - C P N request help when needed.
 - C P N make friends and has a best friend(s).

Self-Determination & Self-Advocacy

- Child can:**
- C P N engage in role playing.
 - C P N request preferred items and identify non-preferred items.
 - C P N take the lead in play activities with confidence.
 - C P N negotiate to get desired activities and items at beginning level.
 - C P N cooperate with adult-supported conflict resolution.

Continue to the next page.

Age 3–5 (Inc. Kindergarten)

Next Steps to Independence: Skills and Strategies continued

Important Action Steps for Families

- Put your child’s name on interest lists for Medicaid waiver programs as soon as disability is identified. Call 1-877-438-5658 for more information. If your child is already on the interest list(s) for Medicaid waivers, check their status each year (checking around their birthday is an excellent way to remember to do this).
- Explore services available for children with disabilities, such as the Medically Dependent Children Program (MDCP). Call 2-1-1 or visit www.211.org to find out what is available in your community.

Teaching and Learning Strategies



Choice Making & Decision Making

- Provide choices in food, materials, and activities.
- Use visuals to support choice-making.
- Model how to make choices by providing a variety of learning centers and activities.
- Discuss how to make appropriate decisions when given options.
- Model and role-play how to ask for help.
- Discuss the positive and negative consequences of making decisions.
- Provide opportunities for independence (e.g., encourage and support child to do for themselves some of the tasks you are currently doing for them).



Goal Setting & Independence

- Use a daily schedule and mark off items as they are completed.
- Break down activities into smaller steps and check off steps as they are completed.
- Support child in becoming independent with self-care activities at school and home.
- Provide visuals to encourage independent clean up after play.
- Model how to accomplish goals.



Self-Management & Self-Awareness

- Discuss individual strengths and weaknesses, focusing on abilities.
- Provide opportunities to focus on individual strengths.
- Teach strategies to help child manage their own feelings and behavior.



Self-Determination & Self-Advocacy

- Assist child with expressing preferences and ordering their own meals.
- Allow child to lead activities (e.g., modeling, role playing, play activities).
- Give child responsibilities (e.g., taking care of a pet, cleaning, classroom jobs).
- Reward and reinforce desired behaviors.
- Use books, social stories, and narratives to teach about emotions.

Continue to next age/grade band, but keep this record and continue to update.



Elementary School (Grades 1–5)

Next Steps to Independence: Skills and Strategies

Legend: C=Complete; P=In Progress; N=Not Needed

Directions: The Next Steps checklist lets educators, families, and students monitor continued progress on skills needed for future success. The legend indicates three levels (complete, in progress, and not needed). The reviewer will mark the box indicating the child’s current performance level. Notice the two important resources on the second page. Educators and families can support children with **Teaching and Learning Strategies** in all four categories under the corresponding area. Also, complete the **Important Action Steps for Families** as appropriate.

Choice Making & Decision Making

- | | C | P | N |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Child can: demonstrate knowledge of decision-making (e.g., identify safe and unsafe situations, generate multiple solutions to social issues, identify consequences of decisions). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Child can: take the time to think about choices before making a decision. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Child can: demonstrate a sense of self and show empathy (e.g., use safe spaces in the classroom and at home, and recognize others’ emotions). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Child can: make choices and decisions related to safety concerns with guidance. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Goal Setting & Independence

- | | C | P | N |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Child can: keep up with and take care of personal belongings. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Child can: manage their self-care and dress independently. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Child can: plan for daily tasks and begin to display time management skills. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Child can: demonstrate preferences for friends or activities at a beginning level. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Child can: set short term goals and take steps to accomplish them with support. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Self-Management & Self-Awareness

- | | C | P | N |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Child can: engage in calming strategies when stressed or upset. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Child can: identify and show awareness of their areas of struggle and obtain assistance independently. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Child can: complete activities and assignments independently. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Child can: initiate friendships independently. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Self-Determination & Self-Advocacy

- | | C | P | N |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Child can: role-play leadership roles (e.g., play the teacher). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Child can: take the initiative to start familiar and unfamiliar tasks. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Child can: demonstrate persistence when an activity becomes challenging. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Child can: negotiate with teachers, peers, and family members. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Continue to the next page.

Elementary School (Grades 1–5)

Next Steps to Independence: Skills and Strategies continued

Important Action Steps for Families

- Put your child’s name on interest lists for Medicaid waiver programs as soon as disability is identified by calling 1-877-438-5658. If your child is already on the interest list(s) for Medicaid waivers, check their status each year (checking around their birthday is an excellent way to remember to do this).
- Explore services available for children with disabilities, such as the Medically Dependent Children Program (MDCP). Call 2-1-1 or visit www.211.org to find out what is available in your community.
- Collaborate with your child’s teacher to develop the individualized education program (IEP). Communicate your child’s strengths and interests.
- Begin talking with your child’s teacher and your child about them participating in their admission, review and dismissal (ARD) committee meeting. Resources for elementary students and families can be found at imdetermined.org.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Choice Making & Decision Making

- Create boundaries for choice making and decision making.
- Use a daily schedule and mark off items as they are completed.
- Model and role-play decision-making, including consequences.
- Explore and discuss potential career choices.
- Use career terminology for helper charts in the classroom and home setting.

Goal Setting & Independence

- Use a daily schedule and mark off items as they are completed.
- Assist with creating weekly goals and tracking progress toward completion.
- Allow child to vote on home activities and recreational trips.
- Encourage child to make choices throughout the day.

Self-Management & Self-Awareness

- Reward/reinforce desired behaviors.
- Teach strategies to help child manage their own feelings and behavior.
- Use self-evaluation checklists and forms to help child self-reflect.
- Teach time-management strategies.
- Role-play coping strategies paired with different emotions.
- Create connections between scenarios and different ways to feel.
- Model appropriate emotions for different situations.

Self-Determination & Self-Advocacy

- Engage in volunteer activities together.
- Encourage ordering their own food at a restaurant.
- Start a savings account and teach them about money.
- Have child participate in their ARD committee meeting, as appropriate.
- Assist child in identifying and expressing their needed academic supports.

Continue to next age/grade band, but keep this record and continue to update.



Middle School (Grades 6–8)

Next Steps to Independence: Skills and Strategies

Legend: C=Complete; P=In Progress; N=Not Needed

Directions: The Next Steps checklist lets educators, families, and students monitor continued progress on skills needed for future success. The legend indicates three levels (complete, in progress, and not needed). The reviewer will mark the box indicating the child’s current performance level. Notice the two important resources on the second page. Educators and families can support children with **Teaching and Learning Strategies** in all four categories under the corresponding area. Also, complete the **Important Action Steps for Families** as appropriate.

Choice Making & Decision Making

- Child can:**
- C P N demonstrate self-determination skills (e.g., select courses, volunteer in the community, negotiate with friends and family).
 - C P N select or give input on elective courses based on personal preferences.
 - C P N participate in admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee meetings (e.g., make introductions, discuss accommodations, talk about future classes).
 - C P N participate in clubs and sports.

Goal Setting & Independence

- Child can:**
- C P N give input on their individualized education program (IEP) goals.
 - C P N give input on their IEP accommodations and modifications.
 - C P N give input on their postsecondary goals.
 - C P N choose weather-appropriate clothes and dress independently.
 - C P N prepare to participate in a student-led ARD committee meeting.

Self-Management & Self-Awareness

- Child can:**
- C P N maintain good attendance.
 - C P N take medication on their own or with minimal support.
 - C P N keep a preferred planner to manage school and extracurricular work.
 - C P N appropriately interact with peers in social situations, structured and unstructured.
 - C P N effectively use behavior strategies to be successful in a variety of situations and environments.
 - C P N identify peer pressure and strategies to avoid it.
 - C P N demonstrate awareness of their disability and can name it.

Self-Determination & Self-Advocacy

- Child can:**
- C P N exhibit self-determination skills (e.g., problem solving, setting long-term and short-term goals, advocating for their needs).
 - C P N participate in their ARD committee meetings.
 - C P N participate in career exploration classes.
 - C P N assist in creating their course of study.
 - C P N answer “what if” questions.
 - C P N select elective courses independently based on personal preference.

Continue to the next page.

Middle School (Grades 6–8)

Next Steps to Independence: Skills and Strategies continued

Important Action Steps for Families

- Collaborate with your child’s teacher to develop the IEP. Communicate your child’s strengths and interests.
- Put your child’s name on interest lists for Medicaid waiver programs as soon as disability is identified by calling 1-877-438-5658. If your child is already on the interest list(s) for Medicaid waivers, check their status each year (checking around their birthday is an excellent way to remember to do this).
- Support your child in participating in their ARD committee discussions about planning for the future and consider the link to transition planning (e.g., introduction, sharing about themselves, reviewing transition and postsecondary goals).
- Explore services available for children with disabilities, such as the Medically Dependent Children Program (MDCP). Call 2-1-1 or visit www.211.org to find out what is available in your community.

Note for middle school students & families:
See the [Texas Transition and Employment Guide](#) for more detailed information on transition.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Choice Making & Decision Making

- Assist child with choosing elective courses.
- Provide child with opportunities to choose accommodations for classes.
- Provide child with a list of chores to do at home.
- Support child in describing their accommodations.
- Assist child in explaining how their accommodations support their learning.

Goal Setting & Independence

- Support child in the use of checklists to monitor self-help skills.
- Encourage child to participate in developing their IEP goals.
- Develop and track weekly or monthly classroom or home goals with child.
- Encourage child to attend and actively participate in their ARD committee meetings.
- Teach child what to do in an emergency (e.g. fire, accident, bad weather) and practice these routines until the child can respond to emergencies independently.

Self-Management & Self-Awareness

- Encourage child to use a planner or calendar.
- Help child prepare to participate in their ARD committee meeting.
- Help child articulate how medication makes their body and emotions feel.
- Encourage child to consider others’ points of view.
- Prepare child to provide information about how they learn best at their ARD committee meeting.

Self-Determination & Self-Advocacy

- Assist child with asking for help.
- Encourage child to ask questions when they don’t understand.
- Help child develop different techniques to ask for help.
- Help child discover and articulate their disability-related strengths and weaknesses.
- Teach child how to describe their disability.

Continue to next age/grade band, but keep this record and continue to update. 

High School (Grades 9–12)

Next Steps to Independence: Skills and Strategies

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Choice Making & Decision Making

- | | C | P | N |
|--|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: demonstrate self-determination skills (e.g., select courses, apply for jobs and colleges, negotiate with friends and family). | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: assist in developing their individualized education plan (IEP) goals with their case manager. | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: give input on appropriate accommodations and modifications. | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: participate in career exploration. | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: attend a college day visit or career fair, on or off campus. | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: demonstrate understanding of transfer of rights. | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: demonstrate understanding of guardianship alternatives and supported decision-making. | | | |

Goal Setting & Independence

- | | C | P | N |
|--|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: meet with their counselor to discuss their course of study. | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: secure and maintain a part-time job. | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: apply for college, trade school, or other postschool options. | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: express where they want to live after high school. | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: conduct a student-led admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee meeting. | | | |

Self-Management & Self-Awareness

- | | C | P | N |
|--|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: take their medication independently or with minimal assistance. | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: keep a preferred planner to manage school, extracurricular work, and personal obligations. | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: appropriately interact with peers in a variety of situations. | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: effectively use behavior strategies to be successful in a variety of situations and environments. | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: identify peer pressure and strategies to avoid it. | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: overcome obstacles when things become difficult. | | | |

Self-Determination & Self-Advocacy

- | | C | P | N |
|--|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: demonstrate the ability to reason (e.g., make educated guesses, decide between two desired choices). | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: understand consequences of their actions, positive and negative. | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: participate in their ARD committee meetings (e.g., create presentations, read from a script, lead the meeting, discuss plans for the future). | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: assist in developing their postsecondary goals. | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Child can: identify their disability and advocate for their unique needs in a variety of situations. | | | |

Continue to the next page.

High School (Grades 9–12)

Next Steps to Independence: Skills and Strategies continued

Important Action Steps for Families

- Put your child’s name on interest lists for Medicaid waiver programs as soon as disability is identified by calling 1-877-438-5658. If your child is already on the interest list(s) for Medicaid waivers, check their status each year (checking around their birthday is an excellent way to remember to do this).
- Talk with your child’s doctors, insurance company, and/or benefits provider about what will change when your child turns 18.
- Before graduation, work with your child’s teachers to develop the Summary of Performance (SOP).
- Ask your child’s Transition Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (TVRC) or your child’s ARD committee about Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) opportunities.
- Have your child reapply or apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) at 18 based on their income, not the family’s income. If your child is receiving SSI, ask your child’s TVRC about work incentive programs to ensure they keep their benefits while earning income.
- Assist your child in researching entrance requirements and cost for any postsecondary education programs they may be interested in.
- Prior to your child turning age 17, review the information the school shares about the transfer of rights at age 18.
- Your child’s graduating year, complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA) with help from the school counselor, or sign an opt-out form if you choose not to complete or submit these applications.
- Work with your child’s academic counselor to request needed accommodations on college entrance exams.
- Help your child contact the disability services office at college of interest to find out about supports they offer.
- Before your child’s 18th birthday, decide what, if any, supports your child will need to make legal, financial, and medical decisions.

Teaching and Learning Strategies



Choice Making & Decision Making

- Assist with choosing elective courses and the program of study for graduation.
- Provide opportunities to choose accommodations and supports for each class.
- Provide a list of clubs or activities for child to participate in before or after school.
- Encourage child to provide information at their IEP meeting regarding how they learn best, and their likes dislikes, and dreams.
- Support the student-led IEP, with the child as an active member of the ARD committee.



Goal Setting & Independence

- Talk about the transfer of rights.
- Encourage child to create academic and personal goals.
- Develop and track weekly or monthly classroom or home goals with child.



Self-Management & Self-Awareness

- Encourage child to use a planner or calendar.
- Help child develop strategies to handle emotions.
- Help child articulate how medication makes their body and emotions feel.
- Help child define what success means to them.



Self-Determination & Self-Advocacy

- Assist child with asking for help.
- Encourage child to ask questions when they don’t understand.
- Help child develop different techniques to ask for help.
- Help child discover and articulate their disability-related strengths and weaknesses.
- Support the student-led IEP, with the child as an active member of the ARD committee.

Note for high school students & families:
See the [Texas Transition and Employment Guide](#)
for more detailed information on transition.

Continue to next age/grade band, but keep this record and continue to update.



18+ (Ages 18–22)

Next Steps to Independence: Skills and Strategies

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Directions: The Next Steps checklist lets educators, families, and students monitor continued progress on skills needed for future success. The legend indicates three levels (complete, in progress, and not needed). The reviewer will mark the box indicating the young adult’s current performance level. Notice the two important resources on the second page. Educators and families can support young adults with **Teaching and Learning Strategies** in all four categories under the corresponding area. Also, complete the **Important Action Steps for Families** as appropriate.

Choice Making & Decision Making

Young adult can:

- C P N secure and maintain a part-time or full-time job.
- C P N demonstrate self-help skills in multiple settings.
- C P N demonstrate independent living skills and follow a daily routine.
- C P N access community services when they graduate high school.
- C P N express preferences for guardianship alternatives such as supported decision making and power of attorney.
- C P N be supported by their family member or other person as their legal guardian.

Goal Setting & Independence

Young adult can:

- C P N make decisions about their young adult living accommodations (e.g., where they will live, who they will live with, how they will pay rent).
- C P N participate in continued education and training after graduating high school.
- C P N demonstrate independent transportation skills.
- C P N participate in community recreation and leisure opportunities.

Self-Management & Self-Awareness

Young adult can:

- C P N demonstrate transferable employability skills (e.g., critical thinking skills, leadership skills, communication skills, ability to work on a team).
- C P N refill prescriptions at the pharmacy independently or with minimal assistance.
- C P N follow a daily routine using calendar and schedule.
- C P N appropriately interact with peers in a variety of situations.
- C P N maintain attendance based on the schedule set in their individualized education program (IEP) or by their employer.
- C P N effectively use behavior strategies to be successful in a variety of situations and environments.
- C P N identify peer pressure and strategies to avoid it.
- C P N identify their disability and advocate for their unique needs in a variety of situations.
- C P N overcome obstacles when things become difficult.

Self-Determination & Self-Advocacy

Young adult can:

- C P N make decisions by themselves as well as identify a trusted adult when they need assistance.

Continue to the next page. →

18+ (Ages 18–22)

Next Steps to Independence: Skills and Strategies continued

Important Action Steps for Families

- If your young adult is on the interest list(s) for Medicaid waivers, assist them in checking their status each year by calling 1-877-438-5658 (checking around their birthday is an excellent way to remember to do this).
- Ensure that your young adult is participating in their ARD committee discussions about futures planning.
- Work with your young adult’s teachers to develop the Summary of Performance (SOP) prior to graduation.
- When your young adult turns 18, assist them in registering to vote if they want to participate in elections. If your young adult is male, you may also assist them in registering for a Selective Service (there are limited exemptions for men who meet the criteria for some medical conditions).
- Make sure your young adult is a registered consumer with any appropriate outside or state agency (e.g., Texas Workforce Commission-VR).

Note for young adults age 18 and over and families:
See the [Texas Transition and Employment Guide](#) for more detailed information on transition.

Teaching and Learning Strategies



Choice Making & Decision Making

- Provide opportunities to choose accommodations and supports for program activities.
- Provide a list of transition-related community activities for the young adult to participate in outside of school.
- Support the student-led IEP with the young adult as an active member of the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee.



Goal Setting & Independence

- Encourage the young adult to create academic and personal goals.
- Develop and track weekly or monthly school or home goals with the young adult.
- Help the young adult understand adult rights and responsibilities.



Self-Management & Self-Awareness

- Encourage the young adult to use a planner or calendar.
- Help the young adult develop strategies to handle emotions.
- Help the young adult articulate how medication makes their body and emotions feel.
- Support the young adult in assuming adult rights and responsibilities.



Self-Determination & Self-Advocacy

- Assist the young adult with asking for help.
- Encourage the young adult to ask questions when they don’t understand.
- Help the young adult develop different techniques to ask for help.
- Help the young adult discover and articulate their disability-related strengths and weaknesses.
- Support the student-led IEP with the young adult as an active member of the ARD committee.