

Future Ready Learning

Transitions for Students with Disabilities

OVERVIEW

This guide will help you and your support team navigate through the transition process to create a specifically designed plan to help you determine your future and achieve your goals.

Transition can be summed up in one word—change—and the transition process is as diverse as the people experiencing it. This guide can benefit any individual who is exploring career and community options and contains a wealth of valuable information.

In this guide, you will find:

- Helpful links to community resources and groups
- Accessibility options at post-secondary institutions, employment supports and community involvement
- Resources for life outside of work
- Human Rights information
- Supporting school-based teams with transition planning

BUILDING A TRANSITION TEAM

What does a transition team do?

Your transition team's mission is to help you set goals and make a plan to achieve them as you prepare for the transition to life after high school. The team is built by you and you may request the assistance of your school. One of the roles of schools is to assist students and families in preparing for this transition. Your transition team will help you identify goals, build a plan, and connect with key resources/disability-specific service providers to support you through your transition to life after high school. A team will meet more often if resources and supports will take more time to organize.

Who is invited to be on the transition team?

A transition team is typically comprised of professional and natural supports that you identify as integral to your future success. You may wish to lead your transition team or designate a team member to be the lead instead.

Natural supports you may wish to invite to be members of the transition team include:

- Parent(s)/guardian(s),
- Family members,
- Friends or neighbours,
- Mentors,
- Community contacts, etc.

Professional members you may wish to invite to be members of the transition team include:

- Healthcare providers (doctor, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, etc.)
- Educators (teachers, guidance counsellors, resource teachers, administrators, educational assistants, etc.),
- Social worker,
- Disability-specific community support providers,

- Assistive technology specialists,
- Representatives from post-secondary organizations (employment and/or education), etc.

When should a transition team begin meeting?

Transition is a lifelong process. It is commonly accepted that transition to life after high school begins on the first day of school, or perhaps even before. As such, your transition team will begin to form naturally over your time in school. The key factor that determines when to bring the team together is the time required to prepare for the transition to life after high school.

Based on their experience with transition timelines, schools, transition specialists, and disability-specific community service providers often assist in calling the first team meeting and determining the meeting schedule. It may be recommended that this team be formed during eighth grade or ninth grade.

Ideas for your first transition team meeting

During the first meeting, it is important to have each member of the transition team clarify their role on the team:

- What is their connection to you?
- What is their personal or professional role?
- What do they feel they can contribute to your successful transition?

In addition, it is critical to identify the frequency of meeting times and the preferred communication methods:

- Will the team meet once per year, twice per year, or monthly; less frequently in the beginning and more frequently closer to graduation?
- Will the team communicate via telephone, email, and/or in online or in-person meetings?

At the end of the first meeting, assign action items to team members and plan your next meeting date, time, and location.

RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR TRANSITION TEAMS IN NEW BRUNSWICK

- [AT Help Desk](#) (Neil Squire Society)
- [Directory of Non-Profit Community Services](#) (Premier's Council on Disabilities NB)
- [Family Supports for Children with Disabilities Program](#) (Department of Social Development)
- Transition Guide for Transition Planning (Transition NB – Ability NB)
English ([pdf](#)) ([e-book](#)) French ([pdf](#)) ([e-book](#))

POST-GRADUATION SUPPORTS

Many of the supports and services you have used throughout high school (e.g., Personalized Learning Plan) can also be accessed at post-secondary (e.g., academic accommodations or assistive technology at post-secondary institutions, provided through accessibility centres) or the workplace (e.g., employment accommodations provided employment support agencies). Various options after high school completion are open to you, depending in which direction you wish to go: post-secondary study, work (paid or unpaid), internship (paid or unpaid), etc. You may also pursue one or more of these options at the same time, subject to your identified study/career goals.

Personalized Learning Plans

One type of support a student with a disability may have during their school years is a Personalized Learning Plan (PLP). A PLP is required for practical strategies, goals, outcomes, targets and educational supports to help a learner meet with success. The following are three types of PLPs:

1. **Accommodated:** This PLP provides strategies, supports and technologies that help a learner to fully access the curriculum without changing the content. The plan is intended to remove barriers to learning and help learners master the same content as their peers.
2. **Adjusted Curriculum:** This PLP adjusts the grade level curricular outcomes of a subject to address the specific needs of the learner. The intent is to keep the integrity of the course while keeping, deleting or changing the outcomes to help the learner work to their potential and meet with success.
3. **Individualized:** An Individualized PLP supports a student's skill development and does not follow the prescribed curriculum. This plan can include goals for academic, social, communication, behavioural, functional, social-emotional, motor, and personal care. The decision to create an Individualized PLP is straightforward as the outcomes have little resemblance to prescribed provincial curriculum and address the individual needs of the student.

Families should be part of continuous planning meetings during the school year. Students should be encouraged to participate from early grades, but particularly as they progress through high school. There are ways to facilitate this participation, even for non-verbal students, which is essential in developing self-determination and autonomy.

Listed below are some of the supports students with a disability can access **after** leaving school:

- [Special Admissions at NBCC](#) is a service that provides accessible education and training opportunities for applicants who have graduated from high school with modified outcomes. NBCC has a limited number of allocated seats under special admissions for fall programs.
- **Accommodations** for classes and assessments at post-secondary institutions. Contact the student accessibility centre/services once you have enrolled to ensure required documentation is provided and there is adequate time to put in place the necessary supports for the start of your course.
- **Assistive technology and adaptive equipment** may have been used during your school years and this is also an option for support once you leave school. It is important for students to discuss their technology use with potential post-secondary institutions or employers prior to starting a course of study or starting employment.
- **Workplace supports** are available through employment support agencies or other specialized programs.
- **Other agencies and support programs** are available to you, depending on your disability and support requirements. Discuss possible options with your Guidance Counsellor or Resource Teacher.

Other Opportunities in Preparation for Post-graduation

- The Essential Skills Program is a program of study offered in many NB high schools which may be appropriate for you. Please see [Essential Skills Achievement Pathway](#) for further information on this course of study.
- Many students enjoy employment opportunities throughout their high school career. This employment may come in many forms, depending on the individual student: part-time employment, summer employment, volunteering, job-shadowing, or co-operative education/career exploration. Work experience may lead you to a particular career or study path.

HEALTH, RECREATION AND LEISURE

Recreation and leisure opportunities, as well as health-related needs, are important to consider for all students transitioning to adult life. Individuals with disabilities sometimes require specialized programs and supports in order to have the same access to these opportunities. The following are some connection points for students with disabilities as part of their transition process.

[Premier's Council on Disabilities](#) publishes directories of services for people with disabilities in New Brunswick. They have information on programs and services available from the federal government, the provincial government, non-profit groups, as well as other groups. These directories include Sports & Leisure, Medical Funding, Transportation Services, and the Vehicle Retrofit Program.

[New Brunswick Association for Community Living](#) (NBACL) has a variety of programs set up to assist individuals with social inclusion as well as recreation and leisure opportunities. The NBACL also offers the Sexcess! Program, which supports individuals with an intellectual disability in achieving healthy sexuality and relationships.

[CNIB Foundation](#) provides programs and services for individuals impacted by blindness. The Foundation's "Play" programs include culture, recreation, and sports activities. These activities are designed to foster an active and healthy lifestyle and give the opportunity to connect with others.

[Special Olympics NB](#) provides a number of programs for any person with an intellectual disability. These include developmental programs for younger children and daily active living programs for all ages, as well as competitive opportunities.

[Easter Seals NB](#) offers a variety of programs and equipment to help individuals achieve a healthy, active lifestyle. Some of these include the Abilities Program, which introduces youth to a variety of recreational activities and sports; Camp Rotary, which is designed for all ages; an assistive technology program; and an equipment recycling program.

[Parasport NB](#) is committed to ensuring all people living in New Brunswick have an opportunity to participate in positive and rewarding parasport activities such as basketball, tennis, and more.

SELF ADVOCACY—HUMAN RIGHTS

Do you know what your rights are as a person living with a disability?

We all have rights. You are no different. Understanding what you are entitled to and having the confidence to stand up for yourself will reduce that risk of someone violating your rights.

Being a Self-advocate

Self-advocacy, or being a self-advocate, means you make decisions on what you want, both now and in the future, and you communicate those decisions to those around you.

Who can help advocate?

If you find yourself in a situation that you don't agree with and you are unable to advocate a solution for yourself, you may want to have someone help you with the process. Family members, friends, neighbors, paid supports, or teachers are good people to reach out to for support. Depending on the situation, the people you want to help advocate for you may change. If you are enlisting the help of others you will want to make sure they are someone you trust, want the same results you do, are comfortable advocating for you, and have knowledge about what the issue is.

Your Rights

Do you know what your rights are as a person living with a disability? How about your rights when it comes to education? Or working at your job? There are some very important guidelines that must be followed in Canada as the standard for how we treat others.

Appeal Process

It is important to know that with most government programs you have the right to appeal a decision you don't agree with. Ask about appeal forms and the process if you do not agree with a decision that has been made.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities

The Convention explains the rights of people living with disability internationally. It calls on countries to adopt the convention to promote and protect the rights of individuals living with disability. Canada signed on in 2010.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

The Charter is part of the Constitution of Canada. It protects the rights and freedoms of all Canadians.

The New Brunswick Human Rights Act

The New Brunswick Human Rights Act is a provincial law that prohibits discrimination and harassment. It deals with employment, housing, public services, publicity and some associations. People who believe they are being discriminated against can file a complaint with the Human Rights Commission for no cost.