

AEA 10
Transition Topics and Agency
Profiles for
Linn County

Acknowledgements

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Getting Started in Transition

What Is Transition?

WHAT?

Transition is about preparing for and moving from high school to adult life. This move brings about many changes to the lives of the young person and the family. Planning is essential to make the transition easier.

FOR WHOM?

All children in special education.

WHY?

Transition is an issue in planning because differences in school and adult services are huge. Some of the differences between schools and adult services are:

SCHOOL

- Addresses the total child
- Brings issues and concerns to your attention
- Serves all students
- Free

ADULT SERVICES

- Separate agencies address employment, recreation, living and education services
- You must initiate communication and follow-up
- Serve people with specific disabilities; some have waiting lists
- Funding is not guaranteed

WHEN?

Transition planning is required to begin by age 14 at the child's IEP meeting. Transition will occur when the student begins accessing adult community services and/or graduates from the public school program.

HOW?

Transition is about preparing students to:

- Make choices
- Plan for their future
- Set goals
- Develop their career skills
- Perform needed daily living skills
- Participate in their community

WHERE?

Transitions take place at school, at home and in the community. Information about transitions and transition planning is available from:

Your child's teacher; consultant, Work Experience Coordinator, and PEP educator from [Grant Wood AEA](#), (319) 399-6700; and from community agencies.

What Does Adulthood Look Like for People with Disabilities?

WHAT?

People judge success in adulthood in different ways. Researchers measure quality of life through these indicators: income level; employment; community participation; and access to buildings and transportation.

FOR WHOM?

Families, educators and community service providers can benefit from this information.

WHY?

Understanding the typical quality of life for adults with disabilities helps us realize the importance of beginning planning and transition services in junior or senior high school years.

WHEN?

At any age, but especially when planning with students ages 14 and older.

HOW?

National surveys show that real improvements in the lives of people with disabilities have been slow to materialize. The 1990 passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has resulted in much greater awareness of disability and of the barriers. However, it has not shown a marked increase in the quality of the lives of people with disabilities. There are still huge gaps in their success indicators as reported in the 1998 US Census Bureau.

Incomes Are Low

- Jobs are often part-time. Wages are lower than non-disabled.
- Even full-time earnings tend to be lower than non-disabled co-workers are.
- 30% of adults with disabilities live in poverty.

Less Social Participation

- People with disabilities live in relative social isolation. They are twice as likely to live alone.
- Lack of a full social life is a problem for many.

Unemployment

- 38.8% of 25-34 year olds with a disability are employed.
- 61.2% of 25-34 year olds with a disability are unemployed.
- 87.6% of nondisabled persons are employed
- This picture is even more dismal for those with a severe disability. Only 18.3% of those 25-34 year olds are in the labor force.

Physical Barriers

- Despite strong gains from ADA in building access and public transportation, barriers still exist.

WHERE?

Studies referenced are from The Disability Statistics Abstract, May 1998/Number 21, Disability Statistics Center. Institute for Health and Aging, School of Nursing, U of California, Box 0646 Laurel Heights, and 3333 California St., San Francisco, CA 94143-0646 www.dsc.ucsf.edu

The Emotional Impact of the Transition Planning Process

WHAT?

Families are often unprepared for the emotional impact that comes with transition planning. After all, this should be a time of anticipation and excitement. However, that may seem clouded with concerns, fears, anxiety and increased stress levels.

FOR WHOM?

Families of children with disabilities.

WHY?

Research has shown that professionals most often overestimate the impact of disability at the time of diagnosis and underestimate its impact at the time of transitioning from school to adult life. Transition times can be difficult, especially the transition of sons and daughters from school to adult living. Transitions put parents in touch with what might have been had the child not had a disability. Emotions return that haven't been this strong since the time of diagnosis. While this emotional reaction is part of the life long adjustment related to coping with disability, it can catch parents by surprise.

WHEN?

Transition planning may begin at any age. It is required for children in special education by age 14. Every transition, especially developmental milestones and moving from one program to another, can generate emotional reactions.

HOW?

FOR THE FAMILY WITH SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN:

While there are the stresses of:

- Making decisions about inclusion and special programming
- Participating in IEP conferences
- Dealing with the reactions of peers and generating friendships
- Arranging for extracurricular activities
- Adjusting emotionally to on-going implications of the disability

There are also the positives of

- Getting accustomed to implications of the disability in the educational arena
- Settling into the routine of how school systems work
- Watching sons and daughters fit in and get involved
- Recognizing strengths and seeing success
- Understanding and getting comfortable with the IEP process

FOR THE FAMILY WITH YOUNG ADULTS:

There are the stresses of:

- Adjusting emotionally to the adult implications of the disability
- Dealing with issues of sexuality
- Planning for residential, transportation, financial and post secondary training needs
- Dealing with an array of fragmented services versus one educational system
- Having to work with a whole set of new providers
- Facing fears of the unknown - finances, relationships, independent living...
- Balancing the need for independence with the need for on-going support

- Recognizing needs for continuing family responsibility
- Establishing new interests and self-identity for parents
- Knowing retirement options won't be the same as those for parental peers

Given all that can cause stress as children with disabilities become young adults, it isn't surprising that the emotional impact on families at the time of transitioning to adulthood is major.

It is important for families to know this is all part of a normal healthy process. Understanding the reality of their emotions will help families recognize why they may be feeling overwhelmed, anxious, burned out, isolated, resistant to getting involved, or not anxious to take important and necessary actions. Acknowledging fears and anxieties can be first steps to addressing them and moving on to celebrating the success and achievement that are also a part of transitioning to adult life.

TIPS FOR ADDRESSING THE EMOTIONAL IMPACT:

- Acknowledge the feelings and their source
- Remember that the emotions are part of a normal healthy process
- Focus on your son or daughter's progress and accomplishments
- Enjoy his/her excitement and readiness to move on
- Regard and treat your daughter or son as a young adult who happens to have a disability
- Be aware of existing supports from family, educators and the community
- Identify additional supports and services needed for your family and young adult
- Communicate with other families who have survived the transition to adulthood
- Develop relationships with adult service providers who will assist your son/daughter
- Take risks and practice letting go, a little at a time. You may discover your young adult is better prepared than you had thought

WHERE?

PEP has parents and educators on staff who are familiar with the transition process and are willing to visit with you about your individual situation.

PEP networks with local disability specific groups where one might find others who have been there from whom to draw strength and information.

For more information contact your child's teacher; consultant, Work Experience Coordinator, and PEP educator from Grant Wood AEA at (319) 399-6700.

Role Of The Student

WHAT?

Involving the young person in making decisions about his/her life is extremely important.

WHY?

If the student has a say in making plans for the future he/she is more likely to feel a strong commitment to making the plan work.

FOR WHOM?

Any student in special education.

WHEN?

Active participation by the student in their IEP is important at any age. At age 14 their participation in the IEP is required.

HOW?

All too often decisions are made for, rather than with, young people with disabilities. With this in mind some helpful suggestions might be:

1. Have the student take ownership of their IEP. They could help with the scheduling, facilitating and planning of the IEP meeting.
2. Help them become their own advocate. When possible have them learn about their strengths, needs and supports necessary for success.
3. Include the student in reviewing information and visiting adult service providers to assist with the decisions that affect his/her own future.
4. Support them in asking questions regarding their disability and how it may affect their future. They may want to consult others with the same disability for information about creative solutions to common problems.
5. Prepare students to participate in their IEP meeting by learning to make choices and state preferences.

WHERE?

Preparation for their role takes place both at home and at school.

Self-Advocacy

WHAT?

Self-Advocacy skills (sometimes called self-determination) are critical for adulthood. These skills are frequently taught in special education and included on the IEP.

Self determined individuals:

- Are aware of their personal needs
- Choose goals and persistently pursue them
- Make their needs known
- Evaluate progress toward their goals
- Adjust their performance

FOR WHOM?

Individuals with disabilities.

WHY?

The ability to make choices isn't developed overnight; rather, it's learned over the course of a lifetime. Students with disabilities can have highly structured classrooms and/or home environments that allow few choices. Both home and school must provide opportunities for practice. Research finds self-advocacy skills among the key elements for a successful transition to employment and post secondary education.

WHEN?

Children can learn self-advocacy skills at any age. Young children can begin learning the foundations by learning preferences and making choices. Older children can learn and use the skills identified above.

HOW?

Some ways students build self-advocacy skills include:

SCHOOL

1. Include self-advocacy skills in the IEP.
2. Invite students to attend and participate in their IEP conference.
3. Base educational activities in the IEP on the student's needs, preferences and interests.
4. Ask school personnel to prepare the student for the IEP meeting so the student:
 - Understands their own strengths and skills and is able to tell others about them
 - Knows about his/her disability and is able to explain it to others
 - Knows what types of accommodations help him/her succeed
 - Advocates for him or herself
 - Knows his/her vision and long range goals

HOME

1. Use every day situations at home to build your child's power to make choices.
2. Allow mistakes to be made and learning to occur from making mistakes.
3. Inform your child of the options he/she may have.
4. Listen more carefully to what your son/daughter says and respond accordingly.
5. Have respect for his/her likes and dislikes.
6. Model competence.
7. Model problem-solving and making adjustments to meet goals.
8. Encourage your child to take risks and broaden their experiences.

WHERE?

- Your child's teacher
- The special education consultant or Work Experience Coordinator from Grant Wood AEA who serves your school
- The PEP program at Grant Wood AEA

[Grant Wood AEA](#)

4401 6th St SW
Cedar Rapids IA 52404
(319) 399-6700
(800) 332-8488
TDD (319) 399-6766

Transition Planning Grid For Students And Parents

WHAT?

The educational activities in the IEP are based on student's needs, preferences and interests. Goals are based on this information from the student and family.

FOR WHOM?

Students engaged in transition planning and their families.

WHY?

Thinking about the future can seem fuzzy and distant. Families lead busy lives with many immediate concerns. Careful thought about the future takes some time to reflect. A little time now will pay off in big ways by easing your family into the next step of life.

Answering specific questions can help see transition in a concrete manner. It can help develop your family vision. The family vision is a statement teachers will ask you to formulate to guide the development of the IEP.

WHEN?

Engage in the process before each IEP meeting. Completing the grid annually allows reconsideration as needs and goals change with new experiences. Schools are required to initiate the transition planning process with students who are age 14 and older.

HOW?

Your child's teacher may have a format to use to assist in developing a vision statement and IEP goals. Complete that or use the grid at the end of this page.

1. Complete the grid separately or together with your child.
2. Allow ample time for explanation and discussion. This is a time for dreaming of possibilities.
3. From this discussion, formulate a family vision statement for the IEP meeting. See Transition Topic "Student and Family Vision" for guidance in formulating this statement.
4. Bring the completed grid to the IEP meeting.

WHERE?

Complete the grid at home and bring to the IEP meeting for you and your child to use as a resource in presenting your vision statement and developing IEP goals.

TRANSITION PLANNING GRID

Transition Areas (ideas to consider)	What does your child do now?	What goals do you and your child have for his/her future?	Is support needed to participate?	What agencies or support services are you using now?
Home Living (live alone, with a roommate, with support, with family or relatives, or in a group home)				
Community Participation (drive car; use bus, taxi, SEATS; shopping; make dental or medical appointments; bank, vote, participate in religious or community events)				
Recreation and Leisure (participate in sports, hobbies, group activities, fitness activities, family events, clubs, make or maintain friendships, volunteering)				
Careers or Job Preparation (full, part-time, supported or sheltered employment; on-the-job training, volunteer work)				
Post-Secondary Education (community college, community and adult basic education, on-the-job training, military service)				

Developing a Vision

WHAT?

The Student and Family Vision describes the student and family's hopes for employment, living arrangements and community participation after graduation.

FOR WHOM?

For any school-aged child in special education.

WHY?

The vision statement helps ensure the IEP goals and activities reflect what the family and student want. Family members know the student best and will provide that young person with ongoing support during adulthood. The vision also promotes working together as a team. It helps the team focus on the whole child, considering his/her strengths and needs.

WHEN?

The vision statement is part of every IEP. Beginning at age 14 it should include thoughts and plans for life after graduation.

HOW?

The IEP (Individualized Education Plan) team works with the student and family to develop a vision tailored to the student preferences and interests. Your son's or daughter's interests, preferences and choices are an important part of the Vision Statement. Include him/her in discussion and planning. Anyone who works with or knows your child can also be a source of information about your child's strengths, needs and interests. The Transition Topic "Transition Planning Grid" provides a framework for this discussion.

Educators typically provide families with information and examples of vision statements. Here are some questions that would help families think about what they might want included in their vision statement:

- What is it you want for your child? (within the next 3 to 5 or more years)
- What does the child want for him or herself?
- What do we need to do in order to accomplish what you want?

Examples of Vision Statements:

- Renee has not yet formulated a career goal. She needs experience and ideas to do this. She plans to live with her family after graduation, but eventually to live independently. Her family would like to investigate local possibilities for supporting independent living.
- John hopes to be competitively employed in a retail or office setting after high school, doing a job cashiering or data entry work. Although he plans to live with his family for a while after graduation, he anticipates eventually getting his own apartment, perhaps with a roommate.
- Mary plans to attend the community college to study child development. She wants to improve her study skills and organization. Also, Mary would like to practice explaining her disability and accommodations she needs in regular classes. Mary will continue her job at the YMCA Daycare Center.
- Chris doesn't have a clear picture of what a job is. He likes most things. We are not sure how he can work on a job because he can't do chores independently at home. We'd like for him to live in

some type of supported living situation, but are not sure what is available. He will always need care and supervision.

Our vision statement is:

WHERE?

Your child's classroom teacher can help you develop your vision statement. Grant Wood AEA consultants, Work Experience Coordinators and PEP Staff can also be a resource in this process:

[Grant Wood AEA](#)
4401 6th St SW
Cedar Rapids IA 52404
(319) 399-6700
(800) 332-8488
TDD (319) 399-6766

[Parent Educator Partnership Program](#) is located in our 33rd Avenue Facility at 1120 33rd Ave SW, Cedar Rapids. Please use the mailing address and phone numbers at left.

Role of Parents

WHAT?

What's my role as a parent in all of this? may be a question running through your mind, as you become aware of the transition planning process. It's a good question. This can be a tricky time for parents who frequently hear two opposing messages: Be involved! and Let go!

FOR WHOM?

Any child in special education.

WHY?

Parents have a major influence on their children's attitudes toward work and life. Many studies have noted the effect of parental influence on educational and career decisions. Young people with disabilities have a special need for parental guidance.

WHEN?

At any age, but required for children ages 14 through 21. Starting early to think about and plan for the future of a child with a disability can help families make the needed adjustments and become more comfortable with those adjustments. The early transitions, from home to center-based, from preschool to elementary, etc., can provide a foundation for later transitions.

HOW?

To address the question of parental involvement, we've identified six roles for parents in the transition planning process. Remember that nobody does them all. Roles shift as parent's concerns and students' strengths and needs change over time.

1. Providers of Unique Information:

Parents know many things about their children's strengths and needs that won't be taken into consideration if parents don't share what they know. Parents know what motivates their children, what catches their interest and what sends them into a frenzy. Parents have unique insights into their children's traits, interests and capabilities. They are experts in developing reasonable accommodations. Such expertise is very valuable in transition planning.

2. Role Models:

Children form opinions about the value of work, different careers and self-worth from what they observe their parents saying and doing. With spoken and unspoken messages, parents communicate the expectation that their child will be an important member of the community - living an adult life that includes opportunities for work, life-long learning, recreation, family, friends, volunteer activities, etc.

3. Case Monitors:

Often the good intentions of working agreements and plans are not fully met. So parents may find themselves with the responsibilities of suggesting, reminding, confirming and checking up with busy educators and service providers. The better understanding parents have of the transition process, the less likely important information, deadlines and opportunities fall through cracks.

4. Promoters of Independence and Self-Advocacy:

Few of us live totally independent lives. The same is true for young people with disabilities. With regard to transition plans, it is vital that the student be actively involved in the process. Parents can provide numerous opportunities for their children to practice communicating their

interests, preferences and opinions so students will be experienced in expressing their choices and needs effectively.

5. **Planners of Future Finances and Support:**

Taking time to plan increases the chances of shaping a future that includes the opportunities and activities most desired by the young person with disabilities. By planning, the young person and his/her family will have a clearer picture of what they want and need, who should be involved and when certain steps should be completed.

6. **Advocates for Practical Plans and Activities:**

The school years are most valuable when they are used to teach persons with disabilities concrete everyday skills that will allow them to achieve the kind of adult life they want for themselves. Useful transition plans are ones that provide work, leisure, transportation, communication and independence experiences in the community. Parents can help provide these experiences and encourage their inclusion in school plans.

WHERE?

- PEP's Resource Library includes many materials that address the transition planning process. Call PEP's Resource Specialist and Grant Wood AEA's van mail will deliver the items to your closest neighborhood school where you may pick up. Or have your young adult bring them home to you.
- PEP has parents and educators on staff who are familiar with the transition process and are willing to visit with you about your individual situation.
- PEP will assist schools in setting up a Transition Information Evening for a building, a district, or any group of interested parents and educators.

For more information, call:

[Grant Wood AEA](#)
4401 6th St SW
Cedar Rapids IA 52404
(319) 399-6700
(800) 332-8488
TDD (319) 399-6766

[Parent Educator Partnership Program](#) is located in our 33rd Avenue Facility at 1120 33rd Ave SW, Cedar Rapids. Please use the mailing address and phone numbers at left.

The Importance of Record Keeping

WHAT?

A record keeping system helps you organize and readily use information you have gathered from school and community agencies.

FOR WHOM?

Any student in special education who is planning for transition.

WHY?

Moving from school to adult services involves a lot of information and paperwork.

WHEN?

At age 14 you will begin discussing transition issues at your child's IEP conference. This is a good time to begin a folder to keep transition information.

HOW?

The record keeping process can vary depending on how you choose to organize your information. Information many people choose to keep includes school records and information about agency services.

School Records:

1. Recent IEP's and transition plans
2. High school transcripts
3. Evaluation reports
4. Work experiences, on the job training, and work history reports
5. Resume and employer evaluations

Agency Records:

- name of the agency and program
- dates of contact
- contact person's name
- notes of phone conversations with agency personnel
- services available, eligibility requirements, referrals
- brochures or handouts from each agency
- copies of letters and documentation written by you to agencies and received from agencies

Periodically go through your records to refresh your memory about issues still pending.

WHERE?

A folder may be provided for keeping transition information, or you may make and organize your own. Keep and take the folder with you to transition and agency meetings to use as a resource and planning guide.

The Transition Planning Team

WHAT?

Transition planning is a team process.

FOR WHOM?

Anyone involved in transition planning.

WHEN?

A transition planning team is required for all children 14 years or older, but is also required for any child engaged in transition planning.

WHY?

The changes and challenges a young person faces after graduation are huge. Planning that includes people that know your child from a variety of perspectives and have knowledge about different aspects of transition issues is essential.

HOW?

The student and parent are essential to the planning team (see Transition Topic pages that discuss these roles in more depth). Responsibilities of team members include, but are not limited to:

Student:

- Attend IEP and transition meetings
- Choose career/work areas of interest
- Learn about post-school opportunities for working and living
- Develop skills for working and independent living

Parent:

- Suggest ideas at the IEP or transition meetings:
- skills you want addressed
- your child's likes/dislikes, strengths and needs
- strategies that work
- any concerns
- Learn about services available after graduation:
- get suggestions from your teacher and team members
- visit agencies and ask questions
- take advantage of training opportunities for parents
- teach and give responsibilities at home for daily living activities, (e.g., cooking, shopping, money management, laundry, car maintenance, cleaning)

Teacher:

- Provide daily instruction that supports the family and student's vision
- Suggest areas to be addressed
- Suggest community resources; invite community agency personnel to attend transition meetings
- Maintain open communication between team members
- Schedule meetings as needed or requested

Support Staff (guidance counselor, Work Experience Coordinator, consultant, school social worker, speech pathologist, OT, PT, psychologist):

- Participate in IEP and transition meetings
- Suggest activities, based on their area of expertise, that will support the student in achieving their vision
- Assist with the application process for obtaining community resources
- Provide information about community resources
- Identify ways to enhance a smooth transition

Community Agency Personnel (personnel from Vocational Rehabilitation, disability services from your county, and other adult service agencies):

- Attend IEP meetings when invited
- Identify and explain program services, eligibility requirements, and application procedures
- Assist the family in exploring options

WHERE

The student's teacher is often the person who, with input from the family, forms the transition planning team. Call the consultant, Work Experience Coordinator, or PEP educator at Grant Wood AEA for additional information or support in forming the team and the roles people may play.

[Grant Wood AEA](#)
4401 Sixth Street SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404
(319) 399-6700
(800) 332-8488
TDD (319) 399-6766

<http://www.aea10.k12.ia.us>

Acronyms and Abbreviations: A Glossary

WHAT?

Many professionals use abbreviations and initials that sound like a foreign language. This glossary of terms and acronyms can help you sort out educational jargon.

FOR WHOM?

For anyone not familiar with the abbreviations or initials commonly used by educator and community agency personnel.

WHY?

Part of the intimidation that parents feel during the transition process is caused by new language. Teachers and adult service providers forget that you are unfamiliar with their jargon.

WHEN?

Use this as a reference when you come across acronyms.

HOW?

GLOSSARY

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
BP	Behavior Disability
CEC	Child Evaluation Clinic
CPC	Central Point of Coordination
CSALA	Community Supervised Apartment Living Arrangement
DD	Developmental Disabilities
DHS	Department of Human Services
DVR	Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
EC	Early Childhood
FIP	Family Investment Program (formerly AFDC)
GWAEA	Grant Wood Area Education Agency
HCBS	Home and Community Based Services
HR	Human Resources
ICF	Intermediate Care Facility
ICP	Individualized Comprehensive Plan
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IEP	Individualized Education Plan
IHP	Individualized Habilitation Plan
ITBS	Iowa Test of Basic Skills
JTPA	Job Training Partnership Act
KCC	Kirkwood Community College
LD	Learning Disability
MD	Mental Disability
MH/DD	Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities
MI	Mentally Ill
MR	Mentally Retarded
OJT	On the Job Training
OT	Occupational Therapy
PEP	Parent Educator Partnership
PT	Physical Therapy
PWD	People with Disabilities
RCF	Residential Care Facility
RTP	Resource Teacher Program
S/P	Severe/Profound Disability
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
VITAL	Vocational Individualized Training and Learning
WAT	Work Adjustment Training
WEC	Work Experience Coordinator
WIC	Women, Infants, and Children Services

Education

Grant Wood Area Education Agency (GWAEA)

Special Education Transition Services

WHAT?

The services support students in their movement from home to school, school to school, and to their post-school employment, education, and living settings.

FOR WHOM?

For any child planning for transition.

WHEN?

At any time the team is planning for transition for your child. Transition planning and services are required for children ages 14 and older.

WHY?

Children and youth with disabilities often require individualized or specialized services to plan and prepare for success in their desired future settings.

HOW?

GWAEA provides consultative, direct and coordinating transition services to children, their families and school personnel at no cost to families. Services include:

- Individualized student assessment for identification of learning needs in relation to desired outcomes;
- Individualized transition planning with students and families to address learner needs at school and for success in desired future settings;
- Individualized or small group instruction or therapy (in the areas of learning, hearing, communication, motor, health, vision, assistive technology, career development and work experience, or social) to support their transition goals.
- Information about transition planning; identifying a vision and outcomes; self-determination and preparing students and families for the Transition/IEP meeting; work experiences; and post-school educational and community services/interagency linkages for residential, employment and community living arrangements.

WHERE?

Services are provided at the student's school, in the home or in the community. To find out about services, ask your child's teacher or principal; or call GWAEA at the number below and ask to speak to the Regional Facilitator for your child's school district.

Grant Wood AEA

4401 Sixth Street SW

Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

(319) 399-6700 or (800) 332-8488

TDD (319) 399-6766

<http://www.aea10.k12.ia.us>

Work Experience Program

Grant Wood AEA

WHAT?

The Work Experience Program provides hands-on experience in a variety of work settings in the community allows students to explore careers and identify careers they may wish to pursue after high school.

FOR WHOM?

High school students in special education programs.

WHY?

Why are the initial experiences nonpaid?

Because nonpaid experiences are really better for exploring careers. This allows for :

- Hands-on learning
- Job tryouts at several business
- More careers are available, because qualification is not a requirement
- Willing support from the business community
- Short term commitments that match a school trimester/semester
- 2-3 class periods in the community

WHEN?

Community work experiences occur throughout high school. Prerequisites include career education classroom instruction and bus training or other transportation arrangements.

HOW?

Students begin by learning about jobs and employee attitudes in the classroom. Initially students try out various non-paid jobs at work sites in the community. They can progress to holding down a paid job on a long-term basis.

Students in the program have a wide range of abilities and needs for support. The coordinator strives to match student interests and abilities with tasks available at local businesses. Students with independent work abilities are provided individual work experiences. Students needing frequent supervision or support are provided small group or work crew experiences. School personnel accompany the work crew to the business and provide direct supervision during work and transportation time.

WHERE?

Talk to your child's teacher about how and when to get involved with the Work Experience Program. The Work Experience Coordinator can be contacted at:

[Grant Wood AEA](#)

4401 Sixth Street SW

Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

(319) 399-6700 or (800) 332-8488

TDD (319) 399-6766

<http://www.aea10.k12.ia.us>

Kirkwood Community College

WHAT?

[Kirkwood](#) offers college credit courses, continuing education courses, and high school completion programs. Course work for many programs can be obtained through a center in your community. See the Agency Profile on the [Kirkwood VITAL program](#) that is designed specifically for students with disabilities.

FOR WHOM?

Youth or adults who wish to further their education post-high school.

WHY?

Many careers require post-secondary education and training.

WHEN?

When a person has completed their high school education and desires further education or training.

HOW?

Kirkwood programs cover a wide range of academic areas, from agriculture and art to social welfare and physical therapist assistant. Coursework in the Arts and Sciences prepares students for transfer to a four-year institution. Career Option programs prepare students to enter a specific career area upon graduation or to transfer and continue their educational goals at a four-year college or university. Technical Career programs in the Applied Science and Technology departments prepare students for various career opportunities upon graduation.

WHERE?

Kirkwood Community College's main campus is located in Cedar Rapids, Iowa on 320 acres near the intersection of I-380 and Highway 30 on the southern edge of town. Twenty-six modern buildings house classrooms, laboratories, and lecture halls. Some of the other special features of the campus are a Career Development Center, a Library with over 50,000 volumes, a full-service bookstore, indoor and outdoor athletic facilities, Counseling/Student Support Services, an Information Technology Center with 175 computer stations for instructional use, and a 300-acre agricultural crop laboratory. Campuses are located in Cedar Rapids, Marion, Monticello, Belle Plaine, Tipton, Vinton, Washington, and Williamsburg.

Contact the admissions office for help with classes, financial assistance, and planning your education:

[Admissions Services](#)

221 Linn Hall

(319) 398-5517 or 1 800 363-2220

Or register in person, over the Internet or by using K-TRAC. If you need more information or would like to visit with Enrollment Services, stop by room 216 in Kirkwood Hall or e-mail us at: enserv@kirkwood.cc.ia.us, or you can make an appointment by calling (319) 398-5635 or 800 332-2055, ext. 5635.

Kirkwood VITAL Program

WHAT?

The [VITAL program](#) is designed to help high school special education students enroll in a vocational/technical major at [Kirkwood Community College](#).

FOR WHOM?

Students referred to the VITAL program must meet three requirements:

- Be enrolled in a high school special education program
- Have vocational training goals and objectives in their current IEP
- Have completed all academic requirements but still have unmet vocational training goals.

WHY?

Students can get valuable training at the community college level while still in high school. The program also prepares students for valuable careers.

WHEN?

The local school's multi-disciplinary team should refer students by the first semester of the senior year.

HOW?

While students are enrolled in VITAL, they officially remain a secondary student, but they take the regular Kirkwood curriculum and required courses in their vocational major. Credits earned while in VITAL will count towards credits required for a Kirkwood degree, diploma or certificate appropriate to their major. Students must commit themselves to a specific vocational major; VITAL is not for career exploration. VITAL students must attend Kirkwood full-time (at least 12 credits hours per semester).

Students participating in VITAL are enrolled in regular vocational/technical majors. Majors available include:

- Agricultural Technologies
- Business
- Career Option
- Health Sciences
- Industrial Technologies

In addition, each VITAL student receives individual support such as:

- Tutoring
- Alternative testing
- Tape-recorded textbooks
- Proofreading, editing and assistance with written assignments
- Study skills instruction
- Organization/time management
- Progress follow-up with instructors
- Note taking accommodations

WHERE?

1. The local school s multi-disciplinary team refers the student to the VITAL program. VITAL sends the student an application packet.
2. The student applies for admission to Kirkwood and to VITAL.
3. The student takes a placement test (COMPASS, ASSET, or ACT).
4. A Kirkwood vocational instructor from the student's selected vocational major interviews the student.
5. The VITAL staff interviews the student.
6. To participate in VITAL Kirkwood must accept the student into a specific vocational major.
7. For those students for whom VITAL is being considered, the local school hosts a staffing including the multi-disciplinary team, a VITAL staff member, the student and the parent(s).
8. A new IEP is developed, detailing the vocational training goals.

For more information on the VITAL program or the referral process, contact your local high school child study team.

VITAL WEBPAGE at: <http://www.kirkwood.cc.ia.us/developmental/vital1.html>

Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School

WHAT?

The [Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School](#) is the state's NCA accredited K-12 educational program for students who are blind, visually impaired, or blind/visually impaired with additional disabilities.

FOR WHOM?

School-aged children, who are blind, visually impaired, or blind/visually impaired with additional disabilities.

WHY?

Children with both visual impairments and other disabilities often require specialized services to support them in obtaining an education and preparing for adult life. Beginning services early in the child's life and continuing throughout the years can make a difference.

WHEN?

We plan with you from the time your child is age 14 (sometimes even earlier!)

HOW?

Nearly 500 Iowa children and young adults are served both on-campus in Vinton, Iowa and throughout the state in their local communities. The school is governed by the State Board of Regents and is funded by a state appropriation. There is no charge for students to attend the Iowa Braille School or to receive services from the school in their local community. Transition services include:

- 1) Transition Planning:
Individual Transition Plans (ITP) are created for your child by an IEP team. The plans include things like where your child will live and work as an adult. Planning will help make that transition from school to the adult world go more smoothly.
- 2) Educational Consultations, Evaluations, and Therapies:
Occupational, physical, speech, psychological and educational consultation and therapy are available both on campus and in the home community to plan for and support the educational program.
- 3) Assistive Device Training Center:
Students have daily access on campus to the center. It has the equipment necessary to help students use technology as a tool for learning and for preparation for employment.
- 4) Recreation/Leisure:
This service helps parents with the exploration of recreation/leisure possibilities for children by building an awareness of programs/services available in the home community. Demonstration of adaptations used for various sports and activities is also available as well as assistance with getting the child involved in community activities.
- 5) Orientation and Mobility:
In order for children who are blind to become more independent they must learn to travel independently. Teachers of orientation and mobility work one on one with students teaching them to move safely as independently as possible and to become more aware of where they are as they move.
- 6) Career/Vocational Program:

- Work Experience - Students have paid work experiences in a variety of jobs in the community.
- Career Education- Students learn about the world of work, how to write a resume, and about different jobs through job shadows.
- Community Class- Students learn skills in the community setting.
- Workplace Readiness- Students under 16 have jobs at Iowa Braille where they learn skills for future employment.
- Orientation to the World of Work- Students attend a summer program on the campus of the University of Northern Iowa at Cedar Falls. The six-week sessions provide students with paid work experience and instruction on the skills of independence, orientation and mobility.

WHERE?

For services provided in the local school district, contact Ian Stewart, Director of Outreach Services at 1-800-645-4579 Ext. 1209.

For services provided on the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School campus, contact [Michael Hooley](#), Director of Center-Based Services at 1-800-645-4579, ext. 1130.

For transition information call the Transition Coordinator, [Nancy Oddo](#), at 1-800-645-4579, ext. 1223.

Employment

Am I Ready to Work?

WHAT?

Are you interested in getting and keeping a job? Trying out jobs is a good way to discover a career that matches your interests and abilities.

FOR WHOM?

Special education students in junior high school should read this page.

WHEN?

Your teenage years are the perfect time to explore career options.

WHY?

It's hard to find places that might hire young people without experience. You might be scared to go ask for a job. Such a fear is normal. Your disability might make it hard for you to go alone to find a job. There are things you can do to prepare, and support available to help you when you are ready.

HOW?

You can do this by taking part in the Work Experience Program, by getting an after school or summer job, and by enrolling in vocational programs at your high school. Jobs that you have now will help you to decide what you would like to do as an adult.

- Do chores at home and volunteer in your community. This will help you learn to work and will give you experience to document to an employer that you know how to work.
- Do the best you can in school to learn to read, do math and handle money. These are all skills an employer will want you to have.
- Ask your teacher about vocational options at your high school. Sit in on one of the classes to find out what it's like.
- Talk to the Work Experience Coordinator to find out about their program. Consider if it would be a good choice for you.
- Ask your family and friends for ideas on your strengths and about jobs in which you might do well.
- When you are ready to get a job, ask your family members to help you answer these questions:
 1. What kind of job would I be good at doing?
 2. How many hours a day can I work? How many days a week?
 3. Where are the places I should look for those jobs?
 4. How would I get to the job?
 5. Do I need help to ask for a job?
 6. Do I need extra help to learn how to do a job?
 7. Where can I find help to get, learn and keep a job?

WHERE?

Places to find more information are:

- Other information sheets in this Employment section.
- AEA 10 School to Work web site: www.aea10.k12.ia.us/stw
- America's Career Kit web site: www.alx.org

Shopping For Vocational Support

WHAT?

There are many sources of help available for people with disabilities who want to work after high school. Vocational supports could include an evaluation of work skills, training to learn new skills, helping you find a job or help in finding a job or in learning the job once you are employed.

FOR WHOM?

Young persons with disabilities and their parents.

WHEN?

At the latest, start this process by the junior year of high school.

Parents should begin shopping for vocational support during early high school years. Selecting an agency before the senior year allows time for agency staff to attend IEP meetings and get to know your child. Sometimes there are waiting lists. Acquiring funding to pay for vocational support also takes time.

WHY?

After graduation, a school district no longer has a legal responsibility to provide services. There are several vocational service agencies in the Linn County area. Not all services are offered by all agencies. In order to pick an agency that will give you the services you need, you should shop around.

HOW?

When looking for an agency to provide vocational support, it is important to get answers to questions that help you learn if that agency is right for you. Shop around by requesting an interview and then visiting with people at the agency. Some ideas for questions to ask are listed below.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSUMERS TO ASK:

1. What is your agency's philosophy? What do you think is important? What are your goals?
2. How could you help me find employment in the community? Would I have a choice in the type of job?
3. Where do your consumers work? What is the range of support you give them?
4. What are the different ways you help people get a good job match? Assessment? On-the-job-training? Work crew? Job carving?
5. How would I get started with your agency? Is there a waiting list?
6. What do your services cost? Can I get financial assistance? Where?
7. How many years has your program existed? How do you evaluate your services?
8. What is your consumer to staff ratio? Who would I work with?
9. What do you do if an employer fires a consumer or discriminates against them?
10. What if a consumer loses or quits a job?

WHERE?

Vocational agency resources in Linn County include:

The ARC of East Central Iowa
214 1st Street SW
Cedar Rapids IA 52404
319-365-0487

Goodwill's Employment and Training Center
1441 Blairs Ferry Rd NE
Cedar Rapids IA 52402
319-393-3434

[Iowa Workforce Development](#)
800 7th St SE
Cedar Rapids IA 52401
319-365-474

Options of Linn County
1019 7th St SE
Cedar Rapids IA 52402
319-892-5800

REM Developmental Services
915 Boyson Court
Hiawatha IA 52233
319-378-9333

Vocational Rehabilitation
4403 1st Ave SE
Cedar Rapids IA 52402
319-294-9308

Vocational Rehabilitation (DVRS)

WHAT?

Time limited services to help persons with disabilities become employed.

FOR WHOM?

A student who has a medical, psychiatric or learning disability that results in a significant problem for them in getting or keeping a job.

WHEN?

Ages 16 and older, usually beginning in the last term of the sophomore year or later. Due to limited resources, DVRS is maintaining a waiting list for services based on severity of disability and eligibility date, with those determined to have the most significant disabilities being served first.

WHY?

Work can be a large segment of how you spend your time. It is important that you feel good about your work and that it provides you with a sense of well being. Vocational Rehabilitation can assist you in developing your potential in the world of work. We provide time limited funding to purchase vocational services you need from other community agencies.

HOW?

Not everyone needs every service we offer and all services must be directed toward an employment goal. Possible services include:

- Medical, psychiatric or psychological evaluations to determine eligibility (needed only if current records are not sufficient).
- Referrals to community support services, assistance with transition planning at IEP meetings.
- Services to help a person decide on a job goal, including counseling, testing and vocational evaluation.
- Service coordination with other community resources.
- Services to prepare a person for employment, such as training in college or a vocational/technical school; supported employment; job coaching; medical restoration.

WHERE?

The student's teacher, guidance counselor, school nurse, Work Experience Coordinator, or other school personnel refer a student. An individual or their parent may also make direct application. A Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor will meet with you to describe services, discuss needs and begin the application process. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors are assigned to area high schools. The Cedar Rapids Office serves Linn, Jones, and Benton Counties:

Vocational Rehabilitation
4403 1st Ave SE
Cedar Rapids IA 52402
319-294-9308

See Transition Topic Shopping for Vocational Support for a list of questions for reference during your visit to Vocational Rehabilitation.

The Arc of East Central Iowa

WHAT?

The ARC of East Central Iowa provides vocational services that place individuals in community employment settings.

FOR WHOM?

Individuals with a diagnosis of mental retardation, developmental disability or brain injury are eligible.

WHEN?

Age 18 and throughout adulthood.

WHY?

People with disabilities often need support to realize their goals of where and how they learn, live, work and play.

HOW?

Vocational services of the Arc include:

- Job placement
- Skills training
- Follow along/ongoing support
- Resume & interviewing assistance
- Job development
- Transportation

WHERE?

Contact the Executive Director or our Employment Specialist at:

The ARC of East Central Iowa

214 1st Street SW

Cedar Rapids IA 52404

319-365-0487

See Transition Topic Shopping for Vocational Support for a list of questions for reference during your visit to the Arc.

Goodwill's Employment Services

WHAT?

Goodwill's Employment Services works with an individual to develop a career plan and obtain a desired job match in a variety of fields, including clerical, janitorial and retail.

FOR WHOM?

Individuals with disabilities.

WHEN?

Our services to students transitioning from school begins when the student is still high school.

WHY?

We attend IEP meetings and begin communication with parents and work experience staff early. When the student is ready to look for permanent employment, Goodwill already knows the student and has current information about the student's strengths and need areas. We believe this ongoing information is crucial to assist us in developing a good job match in a timely manner for the student.

HOW?

Goodwill's Employment Services assists individuals identify and obtain employment that meets their needs and desires. After a student obtains a job, job coaching assists them to learn the job tasks and interact in the work environment in order to maintain their job.

Individualized services offered to consumers include the following:

- Vocational and work evaluations
- Skill training
- Job seeking/interviewing skills training
- Vocational counseling
- Community-based assessments
- Job development and placement
- Job coaching
- Follow up and maintenance support

WHERE?

To apply for placement services or receive additional information, contact the Employment Services Program Director. We will set up a meeting to tell you about our services and to answer any questions that you may have.

Goodwill's Employment Services

1441 Blairs Ferry Rd NE

Cedar Rapids IA 52402

319-393-3434

See Transition Topic Shopping for Vocational Support for a list of questions you can ask during your visit to Goodwill's Employment Services.

Goodwill Industries

WHAT?

Goodwill Industries offers evaluation, training, community job development and job coaching.

FOR WHOM?

Persons with disabilities who need vocational support.

WHEN?

Vocational evaluation is offered for ages 16 and 17. Other services can begin at age 18 and continue throughout adulthood.

WHY?

Goodwill Industries is an agency that has a history of success with its consumers.

HOW?

Vocational services include:

- Evaluation/training related to work behaviors.
- Work skill acquisition.
- Assistive technology evaluation/training.
- Evaluation/training on computers.

WHERE?

These services are provided in the following locations: Contract Area, ACCESS Center (Iowa City), Goodwill Stores, Community-based jobs, and Supported Employment.

It is important that you meet with our staff to ask questions about what services Goodwill offers and to discuss your employment needs. You need bring only your willingness to work and information about your employment history and career interests.

If you are interested in meeting with our agency to gather more information or request services, please contact the Program Director at:

Goodwill Industries
Cedar Rapids Office
1441 Blairs Ferry Rd NE
Cedar Rapids IA 52402
319-393-3434
Fax 319-393-8535

See Transition Topic [Shopping for Vocational Support](#) for a list of questions you can ask during your visit to Goodwill Industries.

Iowa Workforce Development

WHAT?

Iowa Workforce Development (formerly Job Service of Iowa) is a state agency that performs job placement services for job seekers.

FOR WHOM?

Workers of all ages from age 14 to retirement.

WHEN?

Any time employment assistance is desired.

WHY?

Iowa Workforce Development can provide a valuable service to job seekers by providing information on current hiring activity and trends in our area.

HOW?

Services available at Iowa Workforce Development include:

- Job Opening Referral- we advertise the requirements, duties and salary of job openings for area employers. Listings are available at our office and on the Iowa Jobs Homepage at <http://www.state.ia.us/jobs>
- Skills Testing- We administer Work Keys, 10-key, data entry, typing, math, and grammar tests to help workers assess and improve their marketable skills and to certify those skills for employers.
- Labor Market Information- we provide unemployment rates, average starting pay, and overviews of the area's economy and quality of life.
- Technology Resources- Computers with Internet access enable job seekers the opportunity to explore job openings or career resources. Resumes and cover letters can be created and printed by job seekers with basic computer skills.
- Work Permits- we provide the permits required for 14 and 15 year olds who enter the workforce.
- Unemployment Insurance- Compensation to employees that become unemployed through no fault of their own, and who are able and available to work while they seek new employment.

WHERE?

Interested individuals can register to use all services available by completing an application form from our office. The office in Linn County is located at:

Iowa Workforce Development
800 7th St SE
Cedar Rapids IA 52401
319-365-9474

REM Developmental Services

WHAT?

Provides vocational services for individuals with development disabilities.

FOR WHOM?

Developmentally disabled or traumatic brain injury.

WHEN?

Typically anyone over 18, but transition before graduation may occur.

WHY?

To advance skills to be as independent as possible in work and daily living.

HOW?

REM Developmental Services include:

- Classes in social skills, job seeking, independent living, etc.
- Sheltered workshop: production/manufacturing of garbage bags and craft items for resale.
- Work activity programs: sub-contract with local industries, mobile work crews.
- Supported employment.

WHERE?

REM Developmental Services
915 Boyson Court
Hiawatha IA 52233
319-378-7333

See Transition Topic Shopping for Vocational Support for a list of questions for reference.

Options of Linn County

WHAT?

Options offers evaluation, training, community job development and job coaching.

FOR WHOM?

Persons with disabilities who need vocational support.

WHEN?

Vocational evaluation is offered for ages 16 and 17. Other services can begin at age 18 and continue throughout adulthood.

WHY?

Options is an agency that offers success.

HOW?

Vocational services include work skill acquisition as well as evaluation/training related to work behaviors.

WHERE?

It is important that prospective consumers meet with Options staff to ask questions about the services provided and employment needs and career interests.

If you are interested in meeting with our agency for more information or to request service, please contact:

Options of Linn County
1019 7th St SE
Cedar Rapids IA 52401
319-892-5800

See Transition Topic [Shopping for Vocational Support](#) for a list of questions you can ask during your visit to Options of Linn County.

Living Arrangements

What Are Living Arrangements?

WHAT?

Options for living arrangements available to parents and students.

FOR WHOM?

Individuals with disabilities.

WHEN?

Any age.

WHY?

Persons with disabilities, like everyone else, deserve the highest level of independence possible. Parents will want to find living arrangements that strive for independence while assuring that their child's basic health and safety needs are met.

HOW?

Options for living arrangements include the following:

- Independent Living: The individual is able to maintain a home or apartment with no help.
- Semi-independent Living: The individual is living in their own home or apartment. Family members and/or adult service providers provide help.
- Supervised Living Arrangement: The individual lives in a supervised apartment or group home. A service agency provides ongoing assistance with daily living needs.
- Residential Care Facility (RCF): The individual resides in a group home that provides ongoing support.
- Intermediate Care Facility (ICF): The individual requires 24-hour care. This is a medical service for persons needing continual nursing or medical care.

WHERE?

See additional transition topic pages, [Respite Care Services](#), [Shopping for Adult Living Arrangements](#), and [Supported Community Living](#) for more information.

A list of agencies that offer living arrangements for persons with disabilities in Linn County is on the following page. Each agency has a complete description on an [Agency Profile](#) page in this [Living Arrangements Section](#).

Abbe Center for Community Care
1860 County Home Road
Marion IA 52302
319-398-3534
Fax 319-399-3504

The ARC of East Central Iowa
214 1st SW
Cedar Rapids IA 52404
319-365-0487

Crest Group Homes
116 27th St NE
Cedar Rapids IA 52402
319-364-6774
Fax 319-364-3925

Evert Conner Rights and Resources Center
20 E Market St, Iowa City, IA 52245
319-338-3870 or
1-800-982-0272

Hillcrest Family Services
205 12th St SE
Cedar Rapids IA 52403
319-286-2172

Life Skills, Inc.
483 Hwy 1 West
Iowa City IA 52246
319-354-2121

Linnhaven, Inc.
1199 Blairs Ferry Rd
Marion IA 52302
319-377-9788
Fax 319-377-7641

New Horizons
Mary Williams
1220 5th Ave SE
Cedar Rapids IA 52403
319-366-8704

REM-Iowa, Inc.
102 A Avenue
Hiawatha IA 52233
319-294-0430

Systems Unlimited
4089 21st St SW
Cedar Rapids IA 52401
319-654-9195

Discovery Living
PO Box 10980
7004 Baldrige Place NE
Cedar Rapids IA 52410
319-378-7470
Fax 319-395-6682

Supported Community Living (SCL)

WHAT?

Services to help persons with disabilities live as independently as possible. This program was formerly referred to as CSALA services.

FOR WHOM?

Individuals with disabilities who want support in living out of their parent s home.

WHEN?

Any age.

WHY?

To develop new skills and enhance those already possessed.

HOW?

SCL teaches:

- Independent living skills
- Meal planning and preparation
- Cleaning
- Budgeting (managing a checkbook, assist with paying bills)
- Socialization skills
- Scheduling and organizing activities, learning to plan
- Using appropriate behavior in social situations
- Establishing healthy relationships
- Communication and coping skills
- Appropriate conversations
- Problem-solving techniques
- Stress and anger management
- Recreation/ leisure activities
- Community plays, Friday night concerts, the county fair, etc.
- Local sporting events
- Bowling, swimming, hiking, etc.

WHERE?

Title XIX and Linn County fund SCL services. See Transition Topic section on Funding for more information about paying for SCL services.

See Shopping for Adult Living Arrangements for a list of questions to consider when you meet with providers of SCL.

Respite Care Services

WHAT?

Short-term relief for the family or guardian of children and adults who have mental retardation and live at home.

FOR WHOM?

Parents or guardians.

WHEN?

Respite is appropriate at any age, and when help is needed maintaining the least restrictive environment.

WHY?

Respite care services allow the family or guardian a break by providing an approved care provider for the person with mental retardation. This service provides support enabling the family to function in the least restrictive manner.

HOW?

The family or consumer has a choice of how much service is needed and when it is provided.

- Respite may vary in length from one hour to 336 hours per month. It can be provided in the family's home, provider's home, or a community setting.
- Services can be funded three ways: through the HCBS-MR Waiver, through MH/DD Services, or purchased privately. If using the waiver or MH/DD Services, a case manager or social worker will make the appropriate referral.

WHERE?

LIFE Skills, Inc
Ask for: Shelly Marston
483 Hwy 1 West
Iowa City IA 52246
319-354-2121

The ARC of East Central Iowa
214 1st St SW
Cedar Rapids IA 52404
319-365-0487

REM Community Services
102 A Avenue
Hiawatha IA 52233
319-294-0430

Systems Unlimited
4089 21st St SW
Cedar Rapids IA 52404
319-654-9195

See [Shopping for Adult Living Arrangements](#) for a list of questions to consider when you inquire about respite services at the above agencies.

Abbe Center for Community Care

WHAT?

Residential Services

FOR WHOM?

For persons with mental illness, mental retardation, and mental development disabilities.

WHEN?

Ages 18 and older.

WHY?

To help stabilize a person's mental illness. To look at community based services available to the individual.

HOW?

Referrals from other agencies, family members, case managers, and physicians. Supported living is based on individual needs.

WHERE?

Abbe Center for Community care
1860 County Home Road
Marion IA 52302
319-398-3534
Fax: 319-399-3504

Abbe Center for Mental Health
520 11th St NW
Cedar Rapids IA 52405
319-398-562
(outpatient only)

See [Shopping for Adult Living Arrangements](#) for a list of questions to consider when you meet with Abbe Center for Community Care.

Shopping for Adult Living Arrangements

WHAT?

Suggestions for investigating adult living arrangements.

FOR WHOM?

Parents or guardians considering adult living arrangements for their young adult.

WHEN?

Any age. It is best to start shopping early. Sometimes there are waiting lists. Acquiring funding to pay for living arrangements also takes time. Start the process at least a year or more before you want your child to make a change in living arrangements.

WHY?

A normal stage of life that all young adults come to is living outside their parental home. For a young person with a disability the same is true, although sometimes at an older age. People with disabilities mature at a slower rate and that can delay a move from the parent s home. In other cases, the demands of raising a child with a particular disability can expedite a move to supported living. This timing is an individual family decision based on many factors.

HOW?

Obtain answers to key questions when looking for an agency or service provider for independent living. Shop around and ask questions so that you will select the services that best meet your child s needs. Questions to consider include:

1. What is your philosophy? What do you think is important and what are your goals?
2. Describe your programs and the opportunities for choice in each one.
3. How is eligibility determined?
4. How will services be designed to meet the needs of my child?
5. Is there a waiting list? If so, how long?
6. What is the cost of services? Who do I contact about financial assistance or funding?
7. What do you call the people you serve (clients, consumers)? Is it a positive name?
8. Can you provide names of other consumers and their families so I can ask about their satisfaction?
9. How do I let people know of my satisfaction with your program?

WHERE?

See additional Transition Topic pages for a description of the various types of programs offered to support living arrangements. Learning a bit about types of programs will help you understand the differences between the agencies that provide those programs and services.

See Agency Profile pages for a description of each agency in Linn County that provides independent living services.

The ARC of East Central Iowa

WHAT?

Supported community living (SCL) services.

FOR WHOM?

Persons with developmental disabilities and their families.

WHEN?

SCL services are appropriate at any age, and any time when help is needed developing skills in a specific area.

WHY?

Many people with disabilities do not have the opportunity or the resources to participate in the community with assistance. The ARC of East Central Iowa is committed to securing opportunities for persons with disabilities to choose and realize their goals of where and how they learn, live, work, and play.

HOW?

The family or consumer has a choice of how much service is needed and when it is provided. Individuals need to be referred through a case manager or social worker and self referral is possible. The family or consumer may refer an individual to provide the SCL services, or they can work with a provider who is already enrolled with the Arc. Supported Community Living services are funded by Title XIX and MH/DD Services. Individuals are usually referred through a Linn County Social Worker or Case Manager if they are already receiving some services. It is not necessary to already be receiving other services and families may self-refer. The ARC has a large complement of workers who can provide services. or can fund a provider with whom the consumer is already comfortable. There is no waiting list for these services from ARC.

WHERE?

The ARC of East Central Iowa
214 1st St SW
Cedar Rapids IA 52404
319-365-0487
e-mail: connect@arceci.org

See Transition Topic Shopping for Adult Living Arrangements for questions to ask a prospective agency.

See the Funding section for information about paying for ARC services.

Crest Group Homes

WHAT?

Provide services for supported community living, residential care and supported community living in housing and apartments. This is a well known provider throughout the state of Iowa.

FOR WHOM?

Individuals with mild/physical disabilities.

WHEN?

Ages 17 through adult.

WHY?

Provide needed support for individuals in society.

HOW?

- Supported community services based on individual needs. Hourly services also available.
- 5 bed facility, 5 houses, as well as apartment living.
- Supported living in Cedar Rapids and Marion area.

WHERE?

Please call or visit for more information

Crest Group Homes
Mary Wise
116 27th St NE
Cedar Rapids IA 52402
319-364-6774
Fax 319-364-3925
e-mail — CRCREST@aol.com

See Shopping for Adult Living Arrangements for a list of questions to consider when you meet with Crest Group Homes.

Evert Conner Rights and Resources Center

WHAT?

Evert Conner Rights and Resources Center provides independent living services and advocacy services. The Center is a non-profit, non-residential, community based organization run by and for persons with disabilities of any type.

FOR WHOM?

All ages, ethnicities and cultures, including the deaf culture.

WHEN?

Persons of any age.

WHY?

Our mission is to assist individuals with disabilities to maintain control over day to day activities and to advocate for themselves in order to achieve greater independence and full participation in an integrated society.

HOW?

- Skill training in the areas of self-advocacy, assistive devices, socialization, health care, sexuality, financial and time management, homemaking, community resources, and leisure and recreation.
- Advocacy — self-advocacy training, as well as support of their efforts defending legal, human, and civil rights on local, state, and federal levels.
- Information and Referral — Information is provided so consumers can make informed choices.
- Peer counseling — Persons with disabilities come together to share common experiences with each other, provide support and practical day-to-day problem solving.
- The Center provides service to people in Johnson, Jones, Linn, Cedar, Benton, Iowa and Washington counties.

WHERE?

Evert Conner Rights and Resources Center
20 E. Market Street
Ask for: Keith Ruff, Peer Coordinator
Iowa City, IA 52245
319-338-3870 (Voice/TTY)
(800) 982-0272

Hillcrest Family Services

WHAT?

Supported community living.

FOR WHOM?

For adults with mental illness.

WHEN?

Ages 18 and older.

WHY?

To help adults with mental illness lead meaningful and productive lives.

HOW?

To help adults with mental illness with supported living throughout eastern Iowa.

WHERE?

Hillcrest Family Services
205 12th St SE
Cedar Rapids IA 52403
319-286-2172

See [Shopping for Adult Living Arrangements](#) for a list of questions to consider when you meet with Hillcrest Family Services.

LIFE Skills, Inc.

WHAT?

Supported Community Living (SCL) services.

FOR WHOM?

Children, families, and individuals who have developmental disabilities, mental illness, mental retardation, brain injury, or those with emotional or behavioral difficulties.

WHEN?

SCL services are appropriate at any age, and when help is needed developing skills in a specific area.

WHY?

LIFE Skills, Inc. is a private, non-profit, in-home and community based educational social service agency committed to facilitating the highest level of independence for each consumer.

HOW?

The family or consumer has a choice of how much service is needed and when it is provided. All services are provided in-home or community based, following an educational model.

Services include:

- Community Supervised Apartment Living Arrangement (CASALA)
- Home and community based waiver services
- Respite
- Family Centered Services
- Supported Aging Services

WHERE?

Individuals need to be referred through a case manager or social worker. Supported Community Living services are funded by Title XIX and MH/DD and state and federal monies. Services are provided through MH/DD of Linn County.

To find out more about our agency call or visit:

LIFE Skills, Inc.

Ask for: Michelle O Leary or Shelley Marston

483 Highway 1 West

Iowa City, IA 52246

319-354-2121

See Shopping for Adult Living Arrangements for a list of questions to consider when you meet with LIFE Skills.

See Transition Topics section on Funding for more information about paying for LIFE Skills services.

Linnhaven, Inc.

WHAT?

Supported Community Living in Linn County.

FOR WHOM?

Any individuals with mental disabilities.

WHEN?

Age 18 through adult.

WHY?

Strives to integrate all individuals into all parts of society.

HOW?

Supported community living based on individual needs.

WHERE?

Linnhaven, Inc.
1199 Blairs Ferry Rd
Marion IA 52302
319-377-9788
Fax 319-377-7641
LINNHVNINC.@aol.com

See Shopping for Adult Living Arrangements for a list of questions to consider when you meet with Linnhaven, Inc.

New Horizons

WHAT?

Residential and other services.

FOR WHOM?

For persons with developmental, physical, multiple, severe/profound, and behavioral disabilities.

WHEN?

Age 5 through retirement years.

WHY?

To achieve maximum level of independence striving for the person s maximum ability and quality of life.

HOW?

- Programming is provided for daily living, life skills, community services, therapeutic needs (OT, PT, SLP) and family support.
- New Horizons provided 24 hours per day support to individuals in all aspects of daily living.
- Residential Care Facility: Counselors and supervision that meets the needs of individuals.
- Services provided for Linn, Johnson, Iowa, Cedar, Jones and Washington counties.

WHERE?

Living Center St Luke s
Living Center East/New Horizons
Mary Williams
1220 5th Avenue SE
Cedar Rapids IA 52403
319-366-8704

See Shopping for Adult Living Arrangements for a list of questions to consider when you meet with New Horizons.

REM-Iowa, Inc.

WHAT?

Supported Community Living, respite services and an eight-bed intermediate care facility (ICF). REM is a well-known provider located in 16 states.

FOR WHOM?

Individuals with mental/physical disabilities brain injury and the elderly.

WHEN?

Any age.

WHY?

REM strives to integrate all individuals into all parts of society. Their goal is to turn disabilities into capabilities.

HOW?

- ICF: An eight-bed intermediate care facility for children, located in Coralville. Individuals may use this service until age 21 if they are still in school. Once the individual is ineligible for the children's program, they may move into REM's adult facilities (Kalona, Washington, Cedar Rapids, Hiawatha, Marion, or a REM 24 hour Supported Community Living).
- Supported Community Living: REM develops new 24-hour programs as referrals are received.
- Hourly supported community living or respite services based on individual need.

WHERE?

Please call or visit for more information at:

REM-Iowa, Inc.
Dawn Rudolph, Director of Admissions
2750 Heartland Drive, Unit A
Coralville, IA 52241
319-645-1227

Supported Community Living
Lori Becker
2205 Heritage Blvd
Hiawatha IA 52233
319-294-0264

ICF
Jinny Recker
102 A Ave
Hiawatha IA 52233
319-294-0264

See Shopping for Adult Living Arrangements for a list of questions to consider when you meet with REM staff.

Refer to Funding section for information about paying for REM services.

Systems Unlimited

WHAT?

Residential and other services.

FOR WHOM?

Persons with developmental, physical, multiple, sever/profound, and behavioral disabilities and persons with similar service needs.

WHEN?

Any age.

WHY?

Systems Unlimited, Inc. exists to empower individuals with disabilities and similar service needs to achieve their maximum potential and quality of life. Systems strives for self-sufficiency for the individuals we serve, empowering them to achieve their highest level of independence through normalization, least restrictive environment, and use of community resources.

HOW?

These programs are available:

- Supported Community Living: Systems will provide support to individuals in all aspects of daily living from several hours per month to 24 hours per day. This support can be given in an individual's home, in an apartment or duplex rented within the community, or at homes owned by Systems.
- Residential Care Facility Group Homes: These houses offer a live-in counselor, and supervision that meets the needs of individuals. Individuals may have unsupervised time in the community and several hours of unsupervised time at home. Systems has four residential care facility group homes: two for a mixed population; one for men with physical disabilities; and one for senior citizens.
- Family Centered Services.

WHERE?

Systems Unlimited
4089 21st St SW
Cedar Rapids IA 52404
319-654-9195

See Shopping for Adult Living Arrangements for a list of questions to consider when you meet with Systems Unlimited.

Discovery Living

WHAT?

Supported community living residential services.

FOR WHOM?

Persons whose primary disability is mental retardation (but may have other developmental disabilities as well).

WHEN?

Persons 18 years and older.

WHY?

To assist and support persons toward their chosen lifestyle and greater independent living in their community.

HOW?

Assistance in grocery shopping, menu planning, food preparation, household upkeep, scheduling medical appointments, and recreational and community activities. Discovery Living can also help administer medications, assist with budgeting needs and bank accounts.

WHERE?

Discovery Living, Inc.
PO Box 10980
7004 Baldrige Place NE
Cedar Rapids IA 52410
319-378-7470
Fax 319-395-6682

Health and Funding

Introduction to Funding

WHAT?

There are a variety of programs available to assist families in meeting the funding and health care needs of their disabled family member.

FOR WHOM?

Eligibility requirements vary for the many programs.

WHY?

Parents of children with special needs often have difficulty obtaining financial resources and services for their children. Most families are unable to financially afford the cost of many of the services that are needed to assist their child with special needs.

WHEN?

Some programs are available to a child with a disability at any age. Others are for those over age 18.

The application process can take more time than you might think (months!) so begin the process early.

HOW?

Funding options can include full funding; a sliding fee scale based on income; private insurance coverage; purchase without compensation; or a combination of funding options.

WHERE?

The following section gives a brief overview of some of the agencies or programs available to assist with funding of services and meeting health care needs.

Linn County Department of MH/DD Services

WHAT?

Linn County employs a central point of coordination (CPC) administrator and necessary support staff (Dept. of MH/DD Services). The CPC administrator is referred to as the Director of Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities (MH/DD) Services. The CPC is the head of the Dept. of MH/DD Services and reports directly to the Linn County Board of Supervisors.

WHY?

State law requires each county in Iowa to have a CPC. Coordination, authorization and monitoring of all services funded by Linn County with MH/DD money is under the authority of the CPC.

HOW?

The CPC and staff:

- Authorize service funding
- Contract for services with providers
- Set rates
- Collaborate with others
- Provide community education
- Review appeals
- Monitor the budget
- Intake service referrals

WHERE?

Craig Woods, Linn County CPC
Linn County Department of MH/DD Services
305 2nd Ave SE
Cedar Rapids IA 52401
319-892-5620
Hours: 8:00 — 4:30

Legal Settlement

WHAT?

Legal settlement is a status that identifies which county in Iowa is financially responsible to fund services for people with disabilities. Legal settlement is acquired by continuously residing in a county in Iowa for one year (six months for a blind person) without receiving any community-based services.

FOR WHOM?

Any person with a disability who wishes to apply for Linn County MH/DD Services.

WHY?

Each individual county decides which services they will fund for people with disabilities. There are specific services that are required by the state of Iowa. Legal settlement must be determined **first** to insure that a person can receive funding from Linn County MH/DD Services for services related to their disability.

WHEN?

Iowans of any age.

HOW?

Legal settlement is determined when you first apply for services at Linn County MH/DD Services. The family or individual provides verbal information on the individual's present and past residences and any MR or DD services.

Minor children acquire the legal settlement of their parents.

If an **adult** has not lived in a county in Iowa for one continuous year, they may be eligible to have services funded by the State Payment Program.

WHERE?

If MH/DD services are needed, call for an appointment with MH/DD intake at:
Linn County Department of MH/DD Services
305 2nd Ave SE
Cedar Rapids IA 52401
319-892-5620
TDD 319-892-5688
Hours: 8:00 — 4:30

Linn County Department of Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities Services (Linn County MH/DD Services)

WHAT?

MH/DD Services is a Linn County department responsible for providing case management/social work services to coordinate, monitor, facilitate, and fund needed community services (e.g., vocational, residential, HCBS Waiver services, respite, and day care).

This program is **not** the same as Johnson County DHS (Department of Human Services), a state agency. The program was previously called Linn County Social Services.

FOR WHOM?

Persons with mental retardation, developmentally disabilities, mentally illness, or who have an acquired brain injury.

WHY?

Each individual county decides which services they will fund for people with disabilities. The county needs a department to oversee this funding and the services.

WHEN?

All ages.

HOW?

The county provides the majority of the funding for services to people with disabilities in the community (excluding the school system). It is the main access point for entry into the system to get funding for MR/DD services in the community.

WHERE?

Apply for services at Linn County MH/DD Services. The family or individual provides verbal information and signs release of information forms on the individual s personal information, financial information, educational and vocational background, medical information, services needed, and legal settlement. Documentation on the person s diagnosis is required.

Call for an appointment with MH/DD intake at:

Linn County Department of MH/DD Services

305 2nd Ave SE

Cedar Rapids IA 52401

319-892-5620

TDD 319-892-5688

Hours: 8:00 — 4:30

