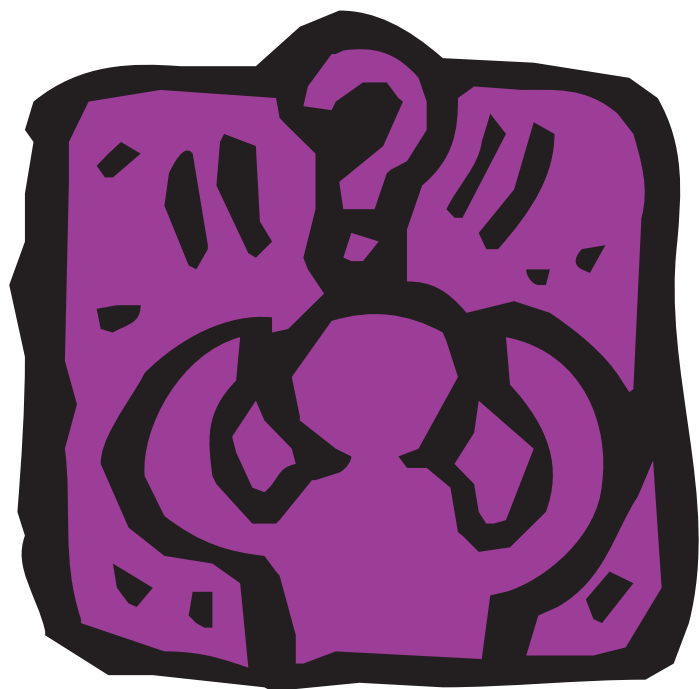


TRANSITIONING TO THE ADULT WORLD...



supporting
young
adults
as
they
grow
up



Notes



SUPPORTING CHILDREN MOVING FROM CHILDHOOD TO ADULTHOOD: LIVING, LEARNING, EARNING

Transitions always involve both excitement and anxiety—excitement at moving on to something new, and anxiety about leaving the familiar and entering the unknown. Your son’s or daughter’s transition from childhood to adolescence to adulthood represents a new step in your family’s journey after brain injury. This transition means changes: physical, hormonal, emotional, and social. In addition, your child will begin the process of exploration, trying out new ideas for his or her future. This is a process that usually concludes with a young person leaving school, and moving on to employment or the next level of education.

Successfully accomplishing the transition from childhood to adulthood takes time. Planning in advance and giving your child and yourself plenty of time is crucial. Your son or daughter may be working to achieve greater independence and more control over decision-making. His or her involvement in gathering information and making choices is important to a successful transition and the development of positive self-esteem. Your child might still seem childish, but a young adult is beginning to emerge. New interests might come up that will need to be explored. Your son or daughter will be trying to understand himself or herself, and asking questions like, “What do I like?” “What do I do next?” “Where will I live?” “How will I support myself?” “Can I have a job?”

This booklet is a starting point for transition planning. It suggests questions to ask your son or daughter, yourself, your school district, and other people involved in providing services and supports for your child. The booklet also provides basic information and possible options to explore. Your child will need your help and support to sort through all these questions. And, you will need to be there, especially if your son or daughter makes a decision you think is not the best. In order to grow, children and young adults need to experience both the positive and negative consequences of their choices. This is an important part of growing up. This booklet is designed to help you and your child understand the complexities of transition, and help you negotiate the path that lies ahead.

Feel free to contact the **Brain Injury Association of New York State** to ask questions about any information in this booklet, or any other questions about your child’s care. A description of the Association and the contact information can be found on page 15. One person who can be extremely helpful to you is the Brain Injury Association of New York State’s FACTS Coordinator. “FACTS” stands for the Family, Advocacy, Counseling and Training Services program of the Association. The FACTS Coordinator is a knowledgeable individual who can provide you with information about brain injury and community resources, as well as support. You can find out the name of the FACTS Coordinator in your area by contacting the Association.



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HOW DO WE GET STARTED WITH MAKING THE TRANSITION TO POST-SECONDARY SCHOOL AND EMPLOYMENT?

The formal transition process begins when your child turns 14. However, at age 12, New York State requires that a career assessment take place. This assessment is called a "level one assessment." This assessment sets the foundation for transition planning and services. The career assessment process is a team effort and should include you, your family, your child, and your child's teachers. For more information on the career assessment process contact your child's school guidance office.

Effective transition planning for students with brain injury planning to attain long-term employment requires the collaboration of students, parents, and education and services providers. Because you know your child better than anyone else, **you** play a critical part in the transition process.

Advance planning is the key to successful transition services. Students with special needs often have a difficult time deciding what they want to do and knowing what they will be able to do once their high school years are completed. As children move from the supportive and familiar world of school to a world of adult responsibilities, anxiety and confusion may result.

A visit to your child's school guidance office may be the best way for you and your child to explore the future. Transition is not a separate plan developed in isolation from your child's other services or needs. It is a total team process that makes your child's education relevant to achieving future goals and dreams.

GETTING THROUGH THE ROUGH TIMES

The process of transition may be difficult and overwhelming for you and your child. For some, the process can result in fear, anxiety and even depression. It involves a loss of self-esteem. Statements made by the young adult that they are not feeling "as good as other people," feeling "bad about myself," or "not caring about what happens," can all be signs of depression. Physical signs are sleeping too little or too much, loss of appetite, overeating, or neglecting ones' appearance. Any comments about suicide or death should be taken seriously.

School psychologists, social workers, and psychiatrists who work with schools can help in many ways. While all three professions have training in mental health, a psychiatrist also has a medical degree and can evaluate the effects and benefits of medications. These professionals can evaluate the seriousness of your child's emotional reaction and provide counseling. They can talk with them about their feelings and help them develop ways of responding to difficult situations. They can also be a "problem solver" in situations that your child cannot handle alone.

HOW CAN MY FAMILY PREPARE FOR THE TRANSITION TEAM PLANNING PROCESS?

Successful planning for a child with brain injury entering adulthood involves including your son or daughter as much as possible in all decision-making. Self-determination can improve successful transitioning from childhood to adulthood. Families can foster self-determination in a number of ways.

- ◆ Ask your child about his or her dreams and hopes for the future. This gives your son or daughter permission to dream, to stretch his or her visions and sense of self. Ages 14-21 gives your child a broad time frame within which to choose goals and learn about the results of their choices.
- ◆ Encourage your child to participate in educational or vocational planning, and reward that participation.
- ◆ Like all adolescents and young adults, youth with brain injury will make some decisions with which you or your child's teachers disagree. But, a good decision maker needs practice in making decisions and experiencing both the positive and negative consequences. These life lessons are crucial for your child's growth and independence.
- ◆ Help build self-advocacy skills, self-expression, decision making skills, and assertiveness. These skills help put choices into action.
- ◆ Give your child all the information necessary to make an informed choice.
- ◆ Talk about educational, emotional, and other concerns in reaching those goals identified by your son or daughter.
- ◆ Assist your child in investigating schools, programs, or services that are available to help him or her develop skills and knowledge to prepare for adult life.
- ◆ Encourage your child to take part in community experiences, learning opportunities, and household chores. Any preliminary work experiences or assessments should be conducted in real work settings that are varied enough to help your son or daughter make informed choices about the types of schools or work settings they prefer. The ultimate goal should be for your child to graduate, and begin the steps down their chosen educational and career paths.



You and Your Child: Leading Roles on the Transition Team!

The key people on the transition team are your child and you. Other possible members may include:

- teachers (regular education, special education, vocational education)
- FACTS Coordinators
- school counselors, transition specialists, support staff such as speech/occupational/physical therapists, social workers, psychologists, mental health providers
- significant people in your child's life (family, friends, or mentors)
- post-school service providers (such as the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID))
- representatives of agencies such as the Commission on the Blind and the Visually Handicapped (CBVH), Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD), and the Office of Mental Health (OMH)
- community agencies/adult services/service coordinators
- college special services coordinator for students with disabilities



ARE THERE ACADEMIC OPTIONS FOR MY CHILD AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

There are a number of post-secondary options available. Attending a junior college, a community college, or a four-year college or university are some of the choices. In making these choices, you may want to consider the information provided below.

- ◆ Prior to choosing a post- high school placement, a comprehensive neuropsychological evaluation may help to fully assess strengths and weaknesses in your child's academic readiness and cognitive functioning.
- ◆ Socialization skills help all young people to make more successful adjustments to greater independence. Does your child have difficulty in establishing and maintaining friendships and are there strategies in place to address these issues?
- ◆ Specific motor skills may be necessary to support some of the choices you are considering. What strategies are in place to help respond to these challenges?
- ◆ Involvement with substance abuse, aggression, poor choice of friends or other negative activities will impede progress. Are any of these issues present in your child's life?

How do we make the best post-secondary education choice?

Students who are challenged often encounter barriers in post-secondary education placements. To support the most positive outcome possible, you and your child's Transition Team should consider a number of things.

- ◆ Will all services and accommodations at the post-secondary level be available to my son or daughter when they are needed?
- ◆ What is the size and location of the school?
- ◆ What services and accommodations address my son's or daughter's particular concerns? (These can be physical adaptations as well as academic adaptations.)
- ◆ Are support services and financial assistance available?

You may want to contact the Disability Services Coordinator of any school campus under consideration to arrange a visit. These site visits will provide important information. Keep in mind that the name of the coordinator offices may vary from campus to campus. Some examples are: Handicapped Student Services, Disabled Student Services, and Office for Handicapped Students.

Tour the campus and buildings in which your child will have classes. If possible, ask the Disability Services Coordinator to arrange for your family to talk with others who have similar needs. If accessible housing is a concern, the school's residential office may be helpful.

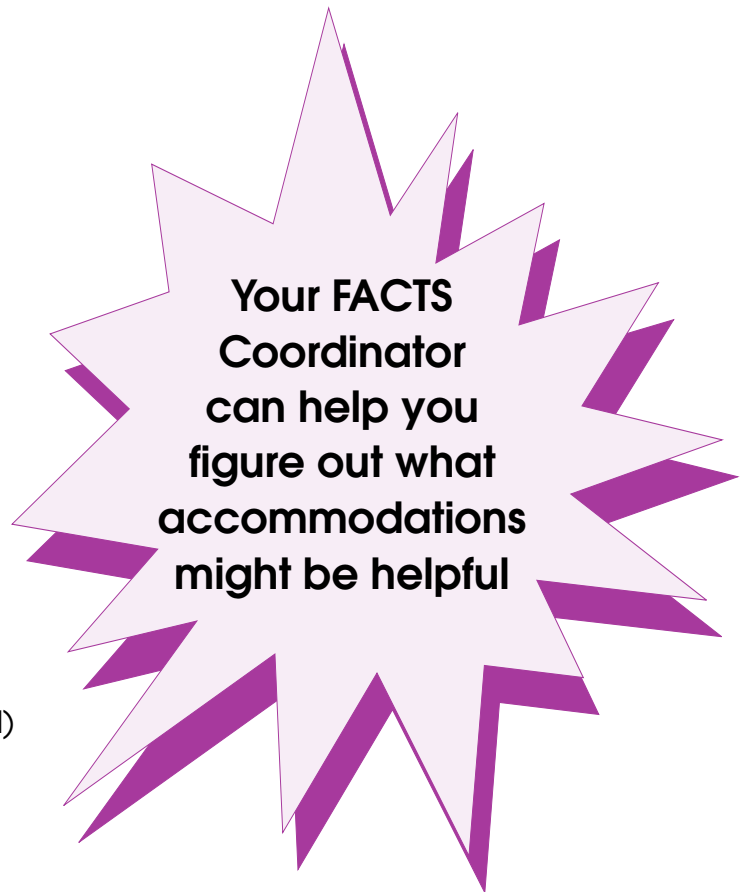


**Remember—you are not alone.
The Brain Injury Association of New York State is here to help.
Call us at 1-800-228-8201 or reach us on the
web at www.bianys.org.**

What kind of accommodations may be available to support my son's or daughter's educational program?

Both academic and personal support services may be available to support mainstreaming into the general college program. Following is a partial list of accommodations that schools may provide to students with brain injury.

- ✎ Alternate testing arrangements
- ✎ Computers with speech synthesizers
- ✎ Interpreters
- ✎ Note takers
- ✎ Readers
- ✎ Recorders/tapes
- ✎ Talking calculators
- ✎ Adaptive physical education
- ✎ Individualized class schedules
- ✎ Tutoring (both peer and professional)
- ✎ Counseling/guidance
- ✎ Vocational training
- ✎ Job placement
- ✎ Adaptive computer technology
- ✎ Evaluation/assessment services



After determining which services your child will need to be successful, you will want specific information about getting and using needed services. You will need information about eligibility requirements for receiving special services, criteria for special funds available for students with brain injuries, and determining whether school or medical records related to brain injury are required for accessing funding or services.

Once you and your child have chosen a post-secondary program, the coordinator of services for students with disabilities at the college should be invited to become a member of your child's Transition Team.

How can I financially plan for my child's post-secondary education?

Scholarships, grants, loans, and work-study are all forms of financial aid available to students.

Support may be available from the federal government, state government, or the college. In addition, financial assistance is available to dependents and/or survivors of veterans through the Veterans Administration. Contact your college financial aid counselor and high school guidance counselor for more information.

ARE THERE VOCATIONAL OPTIONS FOR MY CHILD AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

Transition planning and services to ease access to vocational options are required by Federal and State law and regulation. Your school district is responsible for initiating the transition process to ensure that advance planning and coordination of those services that lead to vocational options begins before your child leaves school. While your school district might not be the provider of transition services, it still has the responsibility to coordinate them.


How do I work with the Transition Team to assure my child's placement into a vocation of their choice?

- ◆ Employment skills, behavior challenges, and access to adult services should be considered. The family can ensure that community work experiences are a big part of transition planning. On-the-job training programs can help students develop a resume of work skills and references prior to leaving the school system.
- ◆ Invite a representative from the N.Y.S. Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) to be a member of the Transition Team and open a case file for your child, even if services are not anticipated before your child leaves school. Your son or daughter may want to change jobs, or may lose their job. Having a knowledgeable VESID counselor and an open case file can help with these changes and perhaps allow your child to remain in the competitive work force. (For more information on VESID, see the description on page. 10.)
- ◆ Family members should begin networking with their own employers and those of their friends to identify school-based training sites and future job openings that might interest your child as school ends.
- ◆ Do not be discouraged if your child does not keep their first job. As with the general population, many individuals need to experience several jobs before they can decide what type of job or work environment they like, and what best suits their needs and skills.

What are some of the work-related challenges that individuals with brain injury might have?

Work-related challenges resulting from brain injury will vary from individual to individual. The significance of problems also depends on the work that your child intends to do. The following list describes common work-related problems that might influence your child's ability to keep a job. These should be taken into consideration when choosing employment.

- ◆ **Short and long term memory loss:** Memory loss can cause problems with daily scheduling, retaining verbal and written instructions, and remembering people's names. A written journal for appointments, job tasks, and people's names can be helpful. A pocket computer or a calendar can provide useful reminders. In some situations, it can help to pair up with a co-worker for reminders.
- ◆ **Distractibility:** Your child may have difficulty staying with detailed tasks without being distracted. The work environment needs to be assessed for noise coming from windows, glare from lighting fixtures, traffic patterns or other employees. Work spaces out in the open, or a cubicle with partitions may be particularly problematic.
- ◆ **Impulsivity:** Your son or daughter may have difficulty with acting and talking before thinking. This may be a problem, especially when they are also having difficulty understanding what others are saying to them. Double-checking with co-workers to make sure the individual knows what is going on is a good strategy. Ask co-workers for feedback if they notice that the individual is acting impulsively. Reviewing actions at the end of the day, and learning to count to 10 before speaking or acting are other helpful techniques.
- ◆ **Slow Response Time:** Slow response time may be due to a combination of gross or fine motor issues or decreased cognitive functioning. Ideas, thoughts, and actions may take longer to carry out. Strategies to improve response time include practicing tasks until they become automatic. It may also be important to find a job that will allow for overtime to catch up or to begin work earlier.



**Your FACTS
Coordinator
can help you
with strategies**



What are some questions to ask when looking for a job training program?

- ✓ For what kinds of jobs does the training program prepare participants?
- ✓ Who is the program designed to serve?
- ✓ What type(s) of accreditations does the program have?
- ✓ What credentials are held by the staff? Are Certified Rehabilitation Counselors or Certified Vocational Evaluators employed?
- ✓ What experience does the staff have in working with individuals with brain injury?
- ✓ What support services are offered (i.e., adaptive equipment, tutor, note taker, etc.)?
- ✓ Does this program help with finding a job, or is it a training program only?



Will my child lose medical or other benefits he or she now receives?

Benefits planning assistance and outreach are provided by the Social Security Administration through the **New York State Work Incentives Support Center (1-888-229-3272.)** If loss of medical or income supports is an issue, school-based job development can focus on either full time employment with health insurance, or part time employment that will not jeopardize government benefits. A case manager from the Work Incentives Support Center can be invited to be a member of the Transition Team to help determine exactly how much the student can earn without jeopardizing income and medical benefits.

Even if your child was receiving services from their school district, they may not be eligible for subsequent services as they transition out of their school system. However, a person cannot be denied services until a full consultation and a comprehensive assessment has occurred. The reasons for the determination of ineligibility must be provided in writing and explained during a personal interview. If you want this decision reconsidered, ask your counselor for information about appealing.

An illustration of a chalkboard with a dark green background. On the board, the quadratic formula is written in white chalk:
$$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$$
 Below the formula, the calculation $\sqrt{49} = 7$ is written in white chalk.

What is the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID)?

This is a state agency that can help an eligible person with a disability to:

- 📖 plan for a career;
- 📖 participate in paid work experiences;
- 📖 get training to achieve work goals;
- 📖 find a job that matches the person's abilities, interests, and needs; and,
- 📖 work with employers or colleges to make sure that the person receives reasonable accommodations, when needed, in order to remain competitively employed.



Who is eligible for VESID Services?

Anyone who has a disability and who would like vocational services should contact their local VESID office. If your child is eligible for services, a counselor will be assigned to work closely with him or her to help plan for an individualized program and provide some of the services necessary to meet his or her job goals.

What types of services are available to help a person meet their job goals?

VESID can provide many services designed to help your child achieve his or her goals.

- 📖 A vocational assessment to help identify skills, abilities, interests, and job goals
- 📖 A physical and psychological examination
- 📖 Guidance, counseling, and referral
- 📖 Vocational counseling and career planning
- 📖 Medical services (if not covered by insurance)
- 📖 New skills training
- 📖 Driver evaluation and training
- 📖 Homemaker evaluation and training

- 📖 Transportation, attendants, note takers, and interpreters
- 📖 Books and tools
- 📖 Telecommunication aids, adaptive devices and other available technology needed for rehabilitation
- 📖 Costs for modifications needed for work-site, home, and van or other vehicle
- 📖 Occupational licenses
- 📖 Training in job seeking skills
- 📖 Job placement services
- 📖 Supported employment
- 📖 Follow-up services
- 📖 Referral to independent living services
- 📖 Assistance in working with agencies such as the Social Security Administration, Department of Social Services, and Veterans Administration.



What are Regional Transition Coordination Sites?

The State Education Department maintains a network of Regional Transition Coordination Sites that assist local communities to implement transition planning and services. The objectives of the Transition Coordination Sites are:

- coordinate existing resources within the geographical area of each Site to provide information, training, and technical assistance to support districts, families, students, and community agencies in their implementation of transition planning; and
- assist at the local and community levels in expanding services that enhance transition of students with disabilities from school to postsecondary educational opportunities, community living, adult services and employment.

The Coordination Sites are organized into seven regions. For a complete listing of the Sites and contact information, go to www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/transition/tclist.



What are some of the vocational options available to my child with brain injury?

Tech Prep

Tech Prep is a course of study designed for high school students to acquire more technically oriented knowledge and skills. Tech Prep consists of two years of high school preceding graduation and two years of higher education following high school graduation. This program helps a student develop proficiency in mathematics, science, communications, and technologies. It is designed to lead to an associate degree or certificate in a specific career field.

Another example is a 2+ 2 program that allows students to earn credit at a community college for some courses they have taken in high school. Arrangements are made ahead of time between the high school principal or vocational education supervisor and the Dean of Career Education at the community college.

Workforce Investment Act Programs

Workforce Investment Act Programs (WIA) provide an opportunity to prepare economically disadvantaged, disabled, and other people with special needs for entry into the labor market.

Services connected with a WIA-funded program include:

- ☞ pre-employment training;
- ☞ remedial education;
- ☞ literacy training;
- ☞ job placement assistance;
- ☞ on the job training; and
- ☞ vocational training;
- ☞ basic skills training;
- ☞ bilingual training;
- ☞ work experience;
- ☞ summer youth employment program.

To obtain additional information contact, www.workforcenewyork.org or call the regional VESID office.

Internships and Apprenticeships

Internships are short-term, paid or unpaid jobs, which allow an individual to sample the type of work available in a general field.

Apprenticeships offer the opportunity to learn skills necessary for an occupation while working under the supervision of experienced workers. Apprenticeships generally take from three to four years to complete, but participants are paid during the apprenticeship.

Sponsorship of an apprentice program is usually done by a company or a group of companies, a public agency or a union. Information about apprenticeships is available from a number of places.

- ☞ Local unions
- ☞ Vocational/Educational programs in the community
- ☞ VESID
- ☞ State Employment Office
- ☞ Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training Regional Office. To locate the office serving your area contact: www.workforcenewyork.org or call your local VESID office.

RESOURCES

NEW YORK STATE AGENCIES

New York State agencies provide a wide range of services to individuals with disabilities. Some of the agencies listed below have special programs for persons with brain injury and their families. You will also find information about financial assistance, educational/vocational resources, and advocacy.

New York State Education Department; Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID)

Special Education Policy and Quality Assurance

One Commerce Plaza

Albany, NY 12234

800-222-5627 • 518-474-2714

Web Site: www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialled/transition

VESID promotes educational equity and excellence for students with disabilities, and advocates for the rights and protections to which they are entitled. The network of regional transition coordination sites provides a wealth of knowledge and assistance with transitions.

New York State Department of Health (DOH)

Bureau of Long Term Care

Brain Injury Program

Office of Medicaid Management

One Commerce Plaza

Albany, NY 12260

518-474-6580

E-mail: nyhealth@health.state.ny.us

Web Site: www.health.state.ny.us

DOH provides many essential services for individuals with brain injury and administers the Home and Community Based Services TBI Medicaid Waiver.

New York State Office of Advocate for Persons with Disabilities

One Empire Plaza, Suite 1001

Albany, NY 12223-1150

800-522-4369 • 518-473-6005 (Fax)

E-mail: information@oapwd.state.ny.us

Web Site: www.advoc4disabled.state.ny.us

This agency's mission is to ensure that people with disabilities have every opportunity to be productive and participating citizens through access to emerging technology and information, legislation, and state policy development.

New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD)

Statewide TBI Coordinator

44 Holland Avenue

Albany, NY 12229

518-473-8652

www.omr.state.ny.us

OMRDD serves individuals with developmental disabilities resulting from traumatic brain injury sustained before the age of 22.

OMRDD operates district offices known as Developmental Disabilities Service Offices (DDSOs) throughout New York State.

Client Assistance Program (CAP) Advocacy

401 State Street

Schenectady, New York 12305

Albany, New York 12210

1-800-624-4143 • 518-473-3215 (TDD)

Advocacy and advice on benefits, legal issues, VESID and Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped services.

New York State Higher Education Assistance Corporation (HESC)

99 Washington Avenue

Albany, New York 12255

518 473-1574

Toll Free: 888-NYS-HESC (697-4372)

Web Site: www.hesc.state.ny.us

HESC helps people pay for college by administering the Tuition Assistive Program (TAP), guaranteeing student loans, offering guidance, and administering the college savings program.



OTHER RESOURCES

Brain Injury Association of New York State

10 Colvin Avenue
Albany, NY 12206
518-459-7911
Fax: 518-482-5285
Family Help Line: (800) 228-8201
E-mail: info@bianys.org
Web Site: www.bianys.org

Resources for Children with Special Needs

200 Park Ave. South, Suite 816
New York, New York 10003
212-677-4650
Web Site: www.resourcesnyc.org

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY)

P.O. Box 1492
Washington, DC 20013
1-800-695-0285 (voice/TTY)
Fax: 202-884-8441
E-mail: nichey@aed.org
Web Site: www.nichcy.org

Parent Advocacy Coalition for Education Rights (PACER Center)

8161 Normandale Blvd.
Minneapolis, MN 55437
888-248-0822
Fax: 952-838-0199
E-mail: pacer@pacer.org
Web Site: www.pacer.org

Lash and Associates Publishing/Training

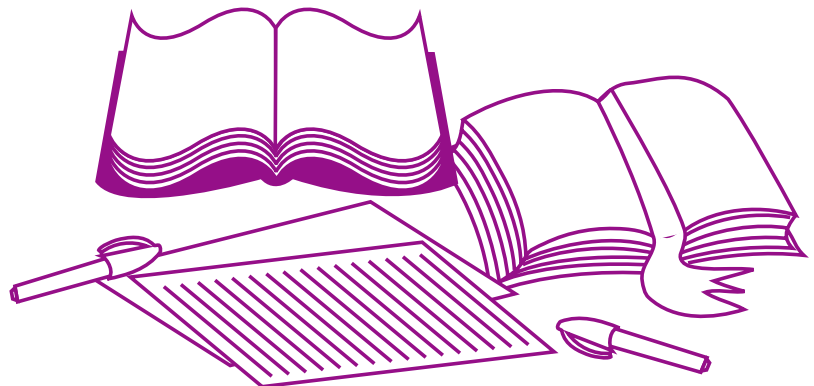
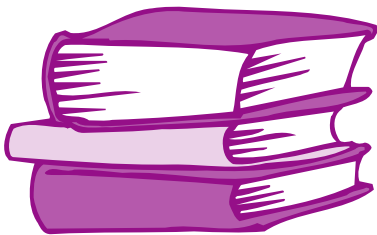
708 Young Forest Drive
Wake Forest, N.C. 27587
919-562-0015
Web Site: www.lapublishing.com

Independent Living Council, Inc.

111 Washington Avenue
Suite 101
Albany, New York 12210
518-427-1060 VOICE/TTD
1-888-469-7452 (NY only)
518-427-1139 FAX
E-mail: nysilc@global2000.net
Web Site: www.nysilc.org

Higher Education and Training for People with Handicaps (HEATH)

1 Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036
(800) 54-HEATH
Web Site: www.heath-resource-center.org



More About The Brain Injury Association of New York State

The Brain Injury Association of New York State is a statewide, non-profit membership organization that advocates on behalf of individuals with brain injury and their families, and promotes prevention. The Association provides an array of programs and services to assist families in advocating for a family member with a brain injury. These services include a state-wide network of chapters and support groups, a TBI mentoring program, educational programs, conferences, and an information and resource clearing house.

The Family Advocacy, Counseling and Training Services Program (FACTS) program of the Association is a support service for individuals who have sustained a brain injury before age 22 and their families. FACTS Coordinators are located throughout the state and are able to provide services in each county. The FACTS program provides persons with TBI and their families with the following free services:

- ★ supportive counseling and on-going emotional support for the individual and family
- ★ help in locating appropriate services in the community
- ★ information and linkage with state and local health education and employment systems
- ★ education, advocacy, and training of persons with brain injury and their families about TBI
- ★ assistance with the development of brain injury support groups
- ★ assistance with bringing back people placed out-of-state for services and preventing of out-of-state placements
- ★ assisting with outreach and training to local service providers such as hospitals and schools about TBI and with the development of services for persons with TBI

**10 Colvin Avenue
Albany, New York 12206-1242
Phone: 518-459-7911 • Fax: 518-482-5285 • Family Help Line: 1-800-228-8201
E-mail: info@bianys.org • Web Site: www.bianys.org**



PEOPLE INVOLVED IN MY CHILD'S TRANSITION TEAM

NAME/ROLE

CONTACT PHONE NUMBER

Name

Phone

Name

Phone

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Brain Injury Association of New York State

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Albany, NY 12206-1242

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