

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Ages 18-21

Guide and What You Need to Know

Connecticut's Division of Autism Spectrum Disorder

5/19/2023

A quick reference checklist and guide for parents and/or caretakers of a child with Autism.

Connecticut's Division of Autism Spectrum Disorder Services



Ages 18-21

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Medical and Related Information

Understand the Current Diagnostic Criteria for Autism Spectrum Disorder

The DSM-5 is now the standard reference that healthcare providers use to diagnose mental and behavioral conditions. Understand the current diagnostic criteria for ASD by visiting Autism Speaks website at <https://www.autismspeaks.org/dsm-5-criteria>

Review “Connecticut’s Guidelines for a Clinical Diagnoses of Autism Spectrum Disorder”

Read into depth information related to Autism Spectrum Disorder, the diagnostic evaluation, evaluation results, early intervention and special education. Visit <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DPH/CYSHCN/Connecticut-Guidelines-for-a-Clinical-Diagnosis-of-Autism-Spectrum-Disorder.pdf>

Learn about Evidenced-based Practices and Therapies

The EBP is an intervention and instructional practices or programs having scientific evidence that shows that they are effective. To know more please visit the Organization For Autism Research website at <https://researchautism.org/use-of-evidence-based-practices/>.

Select an evidence-based practice to access a module about the practice at <https://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/evidence-based-practices>

Explore Behavioral Supports if Necessary

People with Autism may display behaviors that are challenging to understand or manage. **Autism Speaks** offers *The Challenging Behaviors Tool Kit* which provides strategies and resources to address challenging behaviors and help support you during difficult times. To download a FREE toolkit, visit <https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit/challenging-behaviors-tool-kit>

Schedule Regular Re-Evaluations and Medical Follow-up to Measure Progress and Identify Challenges

Car Autism RoadMap- Medical Diagnosis vs. Educational Eligibility for Special Services: Important Distinctions for Those with ASD <https://www.research.chop.edu/car-autism-roadmap/medical-diagnosis-vs-educational-eligibility-for-special-services-important-distinctions-for-those#:~:text=In addition to the possible,condition has on student learning.>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention- Screening and Diagnosis <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/screening.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention- Screening and Diagnosis for Healthcare Providers <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/hcp-screening.html>

Develop a System to Organize Your Paperwork

Raising a child with Autism has its rewards and has its challenges. To assist parents with the overwhelming amount of paperwork your child may have, **Pathfinders for Autism** developed a template you can use to help organize all that paperwork <http://pathfindersforautism.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/A-Guide-to-Organizing-Your-Paperwork.pdf>

Assistive Technology

Learn about Assistive Technology Devices and Adaptations

Assistive technologies can be used to support and enhance communication for people with autism with or without speech impairments. **Autism Speaks** offers an **Assistive Technology for Communication Roadmap** to help individuals learn how to start using assistive technologies for communication <https://www.autismspeaks.org/worksheet/assistive-technology-communication-roadmap> or call the Autism Response Team at 1-888-288-4762.

NEAT Marketplace (New England Assistive Technology Center)- Provides information, assistive technology assessments, instruction and demonstration of the latest adaptive equipment www.neatmarketplace.org

Assistive Technology Corner at State Education Resource Center (SERC)- Displays of low, mid and high tech AT devices Contact them at 860-632-1485 x4 or <mailto:libraryhelp@ctserc.org>

Connecticut Assistive Technology Guidelines- Guidelines for considering, implementing, and evaluating assistive technologies from low- to high-tech <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Publications/atguide/Appendix/Section1/Appendix-5-section-1-Connecticut-Assistive-Technology-Guidelines.pdf>

Explore Financial Assistance for Assistive Technology

Autism Care Today- Provides financial assistance for services that the person would otherwise not be able to afford. Areas of support include but are not limited to: ABA Therapy, Assistive Technology, Medical Testing & Treatments, Speech and Occupational Therapy, Safety Equipment, Summer and Social Programs, and Quality of Life Supports <http://www.act-today.org/our-funds/autism-care-today/>

FODAC (Friends of disabled adults & children)- FODAC assists adults and children with disabilities in need of wheelchairs, other medical equipment, vehicle adaptations, assistive technologies, refurbished computers, and equipment repair. Visit <https://fodac.org/>

Jaden's Voice- Provides funding to families affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder. Our assistance supports a family's immediate expenses related to the well-being of the family member diagnosed with autism on a case-by-case basis. Examples include: effective treatments, assessments, adults who are actively looking for employment or need additional supports, graduate minority students specializing in

autism in the areas of speech, behavior or occupational therapy, parent groups, etc.

<http://jadensvoice.org/jadens-voice-cares-grant-program/>

Medic Alert Foundation- Autism Medical IDS & 24/7 wandering support services

<https://www.medicalert.org/autism-importance-of-autism-wandering-support-services> or

1.800.432.5378

National Autism Association- Provide Communication devices to individuals with autism who are non-verbal or minimally verbal, and whose communication challenges put them at increased risk of injury or harm <https://nationalautismassociation.org/family-support/programs/naas-give-a-voice-program/>

Organization for Autism Research- provides a tool kit and assist with fundraising for services needed. 1-866-366-9710

Pervis Jackson Jr Autism Foundation- Pervis Jackson Jr Autism Foundation helps needy parents of children with disabilities to get respite or other support services. Grants can be used for Camp Sessions, Respite of Parent's Choice, Cleaning Help, Cooking Help, Spa Day, Urgent Bills, Other Parent Needs.

<http://www.pjjraf.com/>

The Disabled Children's Relief Fund- DCRF grants for assistive devices, equipment, rehabilitative services, and for innovative arts and humanitarian services. The online application is available between April and September. For more information, visit [Disabled Children's Relief Fund - National Organization for Rare Disorders \(rarediseases.org\)](http://www.disabledchildren.org/)

Education

Understand the Requirements/Criteria for Exiting with a Diploma vs. Certificate of Completion

The **State of Connecticut General Assembly** has legislation providing details about the requirements to obtain a high school diploma <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2015/fc/2015SB-01059-R000502-FC.htm>

The Anderson Community Schools special education division in Anderson Indiana has useful information which helps individuals understand what a certificate of completion is

<https://sites.google.com/a/acsc.net/anderson-community-schools-special-education-services/parent-pages/what-is-a-certificate-of-completion>

For more information regarding high school diploma and certificate of completion requirements, contact your local school districts board of education.

Review IEP for Achievable, Measurable Objectives that Reflect your Young Adult's Transition Goals

Autism Society- The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is a written document that outlines a child's education. Learn about the goals of an IEP, the contents within an IEP, and what to know about the IEP meeting <https://autismsociety.org/resources/education/>

Autism Speaks- offers an IEP toolkit which has been put together by a team of lawyers at Goodwin Procter LLP offering a summary of an IEP, information of the process, and practical tips <https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit/individualized-education-program-iep-summary-process-and-practical-tips>

This publication, from the **CT State Department of Education**, provides a clear explanation of the laws, regulations and policies affecting special education programs and services https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Special-Education/Parents_Guide_SE.pdf

Complete Functional and Community-based Assessments and Interest Inventories

Autism Speaks provides a *Community-Based Skills Assessment* guide to help you create a transition plan which focuses on the individual's strengths, needs, challenges and preferences. This tool is divided into three levels based on age with eight areas of functional life skills to be assessed <http://www.vcuautismcenter.org/documents/finalcommunityassessment711141.pdf>

Prepare for the Transition out of High School

Autism Speaks has a Transition Tool Kit that provides suggestions and options for you to consider as your child moves from high school to adulthood. The kit is broken into sections and discuss

- Self-Advocacy
- Developing Independent Living Skills
 - Planning for Transition
 - Legal Matters to Consider
 - Community Living
 - Employment and Other Options
- Postsecondary Educational Opportunities
 - Housing and Residential Supports
 - Health
 - Technology
 - Conclusion
 - Resources

Visit the Autism Speaks website and download a free Transition Tool Kit at <https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit/transition-tool-kit>

The **State of Connecticut Department of Education** provides a Secondary Transition Planning IEP Checklist which teaches parents what to know about transitioning https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Special-Education/Transition_Planning_IEP_Checklist_.pdf

MyFUTURE provides a resource for high school students who want to be sure they are on the correct college career track beginning from Freshmen to Senior year. To view the College Planning Timeline, please visit <https://myfuture.com/college/college-planning-timeline/>

The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Batter (ASVAB) is a questionnaire and test designed to help students figure out possible career paths that they would enjoy and excel in. It is designed for all students who have an interest in obtaining employment upon graduating high school, joining the military or going to college. ASVAB is free and you can ask your counselor if the test is available at your school. For more information, visit <https://www.asvabprogram.com/>.

CT Parent Advocacy Center in partnership with Connecticut State Dept. of Education- Has developed a guide for middle school and high school transition planning which involves planning in the areas of college, training, employment and independent living. This guide also assists with self-advocacy skills https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/6efb4a_f9498a10a76c4c258ddf95d07316e3d7.pdf

Apply to the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS)

The **Bureau of Rehabilitation Services** assist individuals with physical and/or mental disabilities prepare for, find, and maintain employment.

Vocational Rehabilitation Program – (VR) services assist Connecticut residents with significant disabilities to find and keep employment. If you receive SSI or SSDI, you can speak with a Community Work Incentive Coordinator (CWIC) at BRS to discuss how employment will affect your benefits. You may be able to work and still receive benefits depending on your earnings. You can contact the closest BRS office to you and request to speak with a Benefits Specialist:

Greater Hartford and Willimantic: (860) 723-1400;
Greater New Britain and Meriden (860) 612-3569;
Greater New Haven and Middletown (203) 974-3000;
Greater New London and Norwich (860) 439-7686;
Fairfield County and Danbury (203) 551-5500;
Greater Waterbury and Torrington (203) 578-4550.
Spanish-speaking Benefits Specialists are available.

Driver Training Program- Program is for any qualified permanent Connecticut resident who requires special equipment in order to operate a motor vehicle.

Requirements

You may be eligible for the Driver Training Program (DTP) if you:

- Are a permanent Connecticut resident;
- Have a **physical disability** which requires special equipment to operate a motor vehicle;

- Received medical clearance from the DMV Driver Services Division
- Have a [valid license or, if you are a new driver, have a valid Learner's Permit](#);
- Complied with the [DMV](#) identification, residency, vision screening, knowledge testing and driver education requirements; and
- Are able to independently transfer from your wheelchair (if you use one) to the driver's seat of the DTP training vehicle. Or, we will provide the training in your own specially-equipped vehicle that has already been modified to accommodate your wheelchair. All vehicles used for training shall be properly registered, insured, and equipped with an instructor's brake.

SPECIAL NOTE: If you need accommodations **OTHER THAN** for a physical disability to obtain a driver's license, [contact the DMV for assistance](#).

The Independent Living Program- The Bureau's Independent Living (IL) program provides comprehensive independent living services, through contracts with Connecticut's five community-based independent living centers (ILCs). These centers promote empowerment and self-reliance for persons with disabilities. There are four core services provided by an independent living center: Peer support, Information and Referral, individual and systems advocacy, and independent living skills training.

For more information visit <https://www.ct.gov/brs/site/default.asp>

Contact CT State Department of Education Bureau of Special Education to file a Special Education Complaint, if Necessary

Any individual or organization may submit a complaint if they feel the Connecticut education agency (school) is not complying with requirements outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Special-Education/Bureau-of-Special-Education>

Address Any Instances of Bullying Immediately

Autism Speaks- has an article which provide guidance and tips for bullying prevention <https://www.autismspeaks.org/bullying-prevention>

Raisingchildren.net- provides information and strategies when dealing with bullying and your child is autistic <https://raisingchildren.net.au/autism/behaviour/common-concerns/bullying-asd>

Understand Matters of Discipline including Connecticut's guidelines regarding suspension and expulsions

Did you know a suspension can only last for up to ten days? Did you know an expulsion can last up to one year? Learn more about suspensions and expulsions by visiting the websites below.

SOURCE: CTLawHelp.org website <https://ctlawhelp.org/en/school-expulsions-child-expelled>

The **211 eLibrary** website offers literature on the topic of school expulsions

<https://uwc.211ct.org/school-expulsions-connecticut/>

State of Connecticut Department of Education- has created a guide book consisting of a compilation of school discipline-related laws and regulations

<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/discipline-compendium/Connecticut%20School%20Discipline%20Laws%20and%20Regulations.pdf>

State of Connecticut Department of Education- Provides guidance and tips for supporting students who are expelled from school <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Discipline-in-Schools/How-To>

Explore Postsecondary Education Options

Autism Speaks- provides postsecondary opportunities guide to help individuals with autism and their families explore different opportunities and learning environment after leaving high school

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/postsecondary-education>

Directory of Transition/Vocational Service Providers- A program providing students with disabilities, ages 18-22 (in some cases younger), with opportunities to address their individual transition goals in an integrated, age-appropriate university environment. Programs may include functional academics, career assessment and evaluation, vocational training, job seeking/job keeping skills, social skills, transportation training, recreational and leisure skills, independent living skills, and social advocacy skills, just to name a few <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Special-Education/Secondary-Transition/Connecticut-Transition-Programs>

***Due to a federal court decision--[A.R. v. Connecticut State Board of Education](#)—It has been determined that extended transition services are to be offered to individuals 18-22 years of age in Connecticut. The previous law which ended special education services to the year in which the student turns 21 was found to be in violation of IDEA.

Centers for Independent Living- The Bureau's Independent Living (IL) program provides comprehensive independent living services, through contracts with Connecticut's five community-based independent living centers (ILCs). These centers promote empowerment and self-reliance for persons with disabilities. There are four core services provided by an independent living center: Peer support, Information and Referral, individual and systems advocacy, independent living skills training

- Access Independence, <http://accessinct.org/>
- Disabilities Network of Eastern Connecticut, <http://www.dnec.org/>;
- Center for Disability Rights, <http://cdr-ct.org/>;
- Independence Northwest, <http://www.independencenorthwest.org/>
- Independence Unlimited, <http://independenceunlimited.org/>

American Job Corps- Job Corps is a federal education and job training program for at-risk young men and women, ages 16 through 24. Job Corps is a public-private partnership administered by the United States Department of Labor. The program provides disadvantaged young people with academic, vocational and social skills training they need to gain independence and get quality, long-term jobs or further their education. **For further information, contact the Connecticut Job Corps Centers in Connecticut:** <https://www.jobcorps.gov/>

Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA)- WIOA authorizes career services, job training and education programs and services for eligible youth and adults through partnerships with state, regional and local organizations <https://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/wia/wioa.htm>

Bureau of Rehabilitative Services (BRS)- assist individuals with disabilities with preparing, finding and keeping a job. BRS provides a wide array of individualized services which can include but is not limited to:

- Vocational counseling
 - Benefits counseling
 - Job search assistance
 - School-to-work transition services
 - Skills training and career education in college and/or vocational schools
 - On-the-job training in business and industry
 - Assistive technology services such as adaptive equipment for mobility, communication and work activities
 - Vehicle and home modification
 - Supported employment services
 - Services to assist in restoring or improving a physical and/or mental impairment
 - Help accessing other programs and services
-
- **Ask about Customized Employment (CE) Opportunities-** is an alternative method of finding competitive integrated employment that matches the strengths, skills, and abilities of individuals with significant disabilities with the unmet needs of employers. It is a highly structured, person-centered process, carried out over time. Customized Employment is comprised of three (3) primary components: Job Discovery; Job Development, Negotiation and Placement; and Post-Employment Supports.

To learn more about how BRS can help you, call **1-866-844-1903** or fill out an online form to request to speak with a BRS counselor at https://portal.ct.gov/rehabilitationservices/general-information?language=en_US.

Individuals can also speak with a benefits counselor who can explain how employment affects state/federal benefits (disability benefits from SSA, Husky, snap, etc...). To reach a benefits counselor, please visit <https://portal.ct.gov/AgingandDisability/Content-Pages/Programs/Benefits-Counseling> and find the closest office to where you live.

Review your Young Adult's Rights Under IDEA

Connecticut State Dept. of Education, Bureau of Special Education- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) requires schools to provide parents with a notice containing a full explanation of the procedural safeguards under the IDEA and the regulations implementing IDEA. A copy of this notice must be given to the parent one time each year and when the following occurs:

- The first time you or the school district asks for an evaluation.
- You ask for a copy of these procedural safeguards.
- The first time in a school year you request a due process hearing or file a state complaint.
- A decision is made to take a disciplinary action against your child that is a change in placement.

To view the entirety of the document titled '*Procedural Safeguards Notice Required Under IDEA Part B*', visit <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Special-Education/Prosaf.pdf>

Employment

Develop Employment Skills and Make Sure your Young Adult has Employment Experiences, Either Paid or Volunteer

Autism Speaks provides an employment tool kit to help with researching, finding and keeping employment <https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/2018-08/Employment%20Tool%20Kit.pdf>

United Way of Connecticut 2-1-1 Infoline has an extensive database which lists agencies offering volunteer opportunities, summer job opportunities, and job training programs throughout the state 2-1-1 (1-800-203-1234) or www.211ct.org

The Bureau of Rehabilitative Services (BRS) assist individuals, as young as 16 years old, with disabilities in preparing, finding and obtaining workplace experience. BRS provides a wide array of individualized services which can include but is not limited to:

- Vocational counseling
- Benefits counseling

- Job search assistance
 - School-to-work transition services
 - Skills training and career education in college and/or vocational schools
 - On-the-job training in business and industry
 - Assistive technology services such as adaptive equipment for mobility, communication and work activities
 - Vehicle and home modification
 - Supported employment services
 - Services to assist in restoring or improving a physical and/or mental impairment
 - Help accessing other programs and services
- **Ask about Customized Employment (CE) Opportunities-** is an alternative method of finding competitive integrated employment that matches the strengths, skills, and abilities of individuals with significant disabilities with the unmet needs of employers. It is a highly structured, person-centered process, carried out over time. Customized Employment is comprised of three (3) primary components: Job Discovery; Job Development, Negotiation and Placement; and Post-Employment Supports.

Check that your Young Adult has a Resource that Includes a List of Skills and Competencies

Connecticut Division of Autism Spectrum Disorder Services – has on its website a life skills inventory checklist which allows individuals to grade their level of knowledge and function for the following categories: personal care, health care, food management, housekeeping, household maintenance, money management/banking, community safety, transportation, phone use, internet use, time management, career/employment, community skills/resources, leisure skills, legal issues, social skills, and health relationships https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Departments-and-Agencies/DSS/Health-and-Home-Care/Autism-Spectrum-Disorder/Lifeskills_Inventory.pdf?la=en. This will allow individuals to be self-aware of strengths and areas in need of improvement.

The Connecticut Department of Labor – provides tips for job seekers on finding a job with skills they already have. This information can be used to assist individuals with creating a list of skills they currently have <https://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/progsupt/jobsvrce/skills.htm>

Teach your Young Adult the “Soft Skills” needed for Employment (i.e. being on time, dressing appropriately, taking directions)

Monster provides information about soft skills to help an individual’s career <https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/soft-skills-you-need>

Careerbuilder provides helpful tips about what to wear to an interview

<https://www.careerbuilder.com/advice/what-to-wear-for-different-job-interviews-based-on-the-company>

U.S Dept. of Labor- provides information and tips on soft skills that give employees a competitive edge

[Soft Skills: The Competitive Edge | U.S. Department of Labor \(dol.gov\)](https://www.dol.gov/eop/soft-skills)

Make Sure your Young Adult has a Resume that includes a list of Skills and Competencies

Organization for Autism Research- provides tips on writing a resume in an article titled 'Writing a Resume- Where to Begin?' Also provides samples of a resume and a link to view a step-by-step breakdown of a resume <https://researchautism.org/writing-a-resume-where-to-begin/>

Careerbuilder provides an article titled 'Effective strategies for job seekers with autism'. Article provides tips on including skills within the resume that match the company goals and shows how your skills will benefit the company <https://www.careerbuilder.com/advice/effective-strategies-for-job-seekers-with-autism>

Autism Speaks has a downloadable 'Employment Toolkit' that provides employment information for individuals with ASD including information on completing resumes, cover letters and applications

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit/employment-tool-kit>

Explore Employment Services and Opportunities

Autism Speaks provides an Employment tool kit for job seekers with autism. Provided within the packet are topics ranging from self-advocacy to your employment rights or job interviewing techniques to creating your cover letter <https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit/employment-tool-kit>

TheSpectrumCareers.com A tool for job seekers with Autism and the business community

<https://thespectrumcareers.com/>

Job Accommodation Network (JAN) offers free, expert, and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues <https://askjan.org/>

2-1-1 Infoline- Contact Connecticut's 2-1-1 Information and Referral line to inquire about Youth Employment Opportunities or volunteer opportunities in your area. Just dial 2-1-1 or visit

<https://www.211ct.org/>

Connecticut Youth Employment program- intended for young people ages 14-24 who are looking for summer jobs, part-time employment and/or full-time work. The Connecticut Youth Employment program runs year-round and is implemented by the state's five Workforce Development Boards to increase youth leadership, improve job readiness, and strengthen economic stability. This can be a great opportunity for youth to build professional networks, gain valuable work experience, and improve their resumes.

Capital Workforce Partners

1 Union Place, Hartford 06103
(860) 522-1111

Workforce Alliance

560 Ella Grasso Blvd. New Haven 06519
(203) 624-1493

Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board

108 New Park Ave. Franklin 06254
(860) 859-4100

The WorkPlace, Inc.

350 Fairfield Ave. Bridgeport 06604
(203) 610-8500

Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board, Inc.

249 Thomaston Ave. Waterbury 06702
(203) 574-6971

American Job Corps- Job Corps is a federal education and job training program for at-risk young men and women, ages 16 through 24. Job Corps is a public-private partnership administered by the United States Department of Labor. The program provides disadvantaged young people with academic, vocational and social skills training they need to gain independence and get quality, long-term jobs or further their education. **For further information, contact the Connecticut Job Corps Centers in Connecticut:** <https://www.jobcorps.gov/>

Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA)- WIOA authorizes career services, job training and education programs and services for eligible youth and adults through partnerships with state, regional and local organizations <https://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/wia/wioa.htm>

Bureau of Rehabilitative Services (BRS)- assist individuals with disabilities with preparing, finding and keeping a job. BRS provides a wide array of individualized services which can include but is not limited to:

- Vocational counseling
- Benefits counseling
- Job search assistance
- School-to-work transition services
- Skills training and career education in college and/or vocational schools

- On-the-job training in business and industry
 - Assistive technology services such as adaptive equipment for mobility, communication and work activities
 - Vehicle and home modification
 - Supported employment services
 - Services to assist in restoring or improving a physical and/or mental impairment
 - Help accessing other programs and services
- **Ask about Customized Employment (CE) Opportunities-** is an alternative method of finding competitive integrated employment that matches the strengths, skills, and abilities of individuals with significant disabilities with the unmet needs of employers. It is a highly structured, person-centered process, carried out over time. Customized Employment is comprised of three (3) primary components: Job Discovery; Job Development, Negotiation and Placement; and Post-Employment Supports.

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Individuals can also speak with a benefits counselor who can explain how employment effects state/federal benefits (disability benefits from SSA, Husky, snap, etc...). To reach a benefits counselor, please visit <https://portal.ct.gov/AgingandDisability/Content-Pages/Programs/Benefits-Counseling> and find the closest office to where you live.

Explore Volunteer Opportunities

United Way of Connecticut 2-1-1 Infoline has an extensive database which lists agencies offering volunteer opportunities throughout the state 2-1-1 (1-800-203-1234) or www.211ct.org

The following article explains 9 reasons why teens with Autism and ADHD may benefit from volunteering at <https://autismadhdconnection.com/9-ways-volunteering-helps-autistic-teenagers/>

Make a Decision About Disclosure of Diagnoses

It's no secret individuals with autism view, experience, and process the world around them differently than their peers without autism. The disclosure of an autism diagnoses may be beneficial for certain workplace accommodations but can also negatively impact you since there are many stereotypes and biases lingering within today's society.

Autism Speaks provides an Employment tool kit for job seekers with autism. Provided within the packet are topics ranging from self-advocacy to your employment rights or job interviewing techniques to creating your cover letter <https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit-excerpt/disclose-or-not-disclose>

Life Skills

Make Your Young Adult Aware of Personal Hygiene and Healthcare Needs

Autism Speaks- Article titled ‘**Teen with Autism Needs Help with Hygiene & Appropriate Behavior**’ provides information about ways to assist teen daughters on the spectrum with hygiene by creating things such as visual aids, hygiene kits, teaching about menstrual hygiene and more. Visit <https://www.autismspeaks.org/expert-opinion/teen-autism-needs-help-hygiene-appropriate-behavior>

Autism Speaks has Transition Tool Kit which provides information about health needs for young adults, including personal hygiene. Visit <https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit/transition-tool-kit>

Teach your Young Adult Money Management Skills

The Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation in conjunction with Widener University created a guide related to money management titled “*Cents and Sensibility: A guide to money management for people with disabilities*” <https://fliconline.org/documents/patffinancialeducationbooklet-final.pdf>

Teach your Young Adult how to Manage Simple Daily Living Activities (i.e. operating microwave, doing laundry, cleaning)

Autism Awareness Centre Inc.- provides 7 household chores your child with ASD can do <https://autismawarenesscentre.com/household-chores-share-special-needs-child-grandchild/>

Middletown Centre for Autism- website provides a range of strategies to teach different types of household chores. Strategies include but are not limited to songs, visual cues, pictures, videos and much more. Visit <https://life-skills.middletownautism.com/strategies/work/household-chores/strategies-for-chores/#q1>

Safety

See that your Young Adult Understands Internet and Technology Safety

Center on Secondary Education for Students with ASD- provides an article titled ‘Internet Safety for Teens with ASD’ which provides information on internet safety and cyberbullying. Provides tips for internet safety <https://csesa.fpg.unc.edu/sites/csesa.fpg.unc.edu/files/Internet%20Safety%20for%20Adolescents%20with%20Autism.pdf>

Raisingchild.net.au- provides videos which discuss a wide range of topics related to bullying and cyberbullying <https://raisingchildren.net.au/teens/videos>

See that your Young Adult Understands Community and Relationship Safety

The **Organization For Autism Research** – A guide composed from parents, first responders, educators, and community members, who shared their strategies and resources to address safety threats that commonly arise during childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. This autism safety resource will educate parents about how to prevent and mitigate emergency events, safety threats that may affect their child in the future, and how to teach safety habits that will build a foundation for safety in adulthood <https://researchautism.org/resources/a-guide-to-safety/>

Social

Help your Young Adult Learn Appropriate Social Skills

Autism Speaks- provides information about social skills, what social skills consist of, the importance of social skills, and some tips to help your child social skills. Offers a directory of *social skills programs* in your community. <https://www.autismspeaks.org/social-skills-and-autism>

Teach your Young Adult about Sexuality and Relationships

Sexuality Resource Center for Parents- offers tools, tips and tricks to teaching children and young adults about human sexuality <https://www.yai.org/resources/sexuality-resource-center-parents>

The **Organization For Autism Research**- the resource covers a range of safety topics, including: wandering and elopement, physical and sexual safety, bullying, internet safety, and money safety <https://researchautism.org/resources/a-guide-to-safety/>

Encourage Participation in Recreational and Leisure Activities that your Young Adult Enjoys

Leisure activities are an important part of life for everyone. Finding fun and enjoyable activities for an autistic child may be more challenging due to difficulties in behavior, social interaction and communication. Visit **Autism Awareness Centre Inc.** and read “Developing Leisure Activities for Individuals with ASD” to learn about leisure activities <https://autismawarenesscentre.com/developing-leisure-activities-for-individuals-with-asd/>

Autism Speaks provides information about the benefits of recreation and provides answers to frequently asked questions. Visit <https://www.autismspeaks.org/recreation-0>

The **Connecticut Tourism Office** website provides a listing of statewide activities held each week for individuals and families of all ages

http://www.ctvisit.com/?utm_source=Google&utm_medium=Paid_Search&utm_content=Winter2019&utm_campaign=Brand&gclid=EA1aIQobChMIyYfm-bal4AIVDK_ICh2irwqwEAAYASAAEgJijfD_BwE

Additional suggestions:

- **Autism Families of Connecticut in Newington**
 - Recreational and Social activities for youth and adults. There may be a small fee per class/event. To learn more, visit <http://www.autismfamiliesct.org/about/>
- **Autism Services and Resources Connecticut in Wallingford**
 - Offers a variety of social and recreational activities throughout the year, in person and virtually. Must register with Sara Taussik first. In-Person events may take place at different regions throughout the state to give individuals from different regions opportunities to participate. To learn more visit <https://ct-asrc.org/>
- **Connecticut Family Support Network (CTFSN) in Glastonbury**
 - Maintains a Camp and Recreation Database of agencies offering recreational activities and those serving as family destinations for individuals with disabilities. To learn more visit <https://ctfsn.org/>
- **Museums for All**
 - is an initiative of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Through Museums for all, individuals with SNAP benefits can gain free or reduced admission to museums by simply presenting their EBT Cards and a photo ID. You can use the website search engine to find a participating museum in CT by visiting <https://museums4all.org/>.

Funding for Services and Legal Issues

Apply to the Department of Social Services Division of Autism Spectrum Services

- Visit www.ct.gov/dss
- Click on 'Programs and Services'
- Click on 'Autism Spectrum Disorder-ASD'
- Select the 'Eligibility' tab
- Towards the bottom of page, select **Please follow this link for the eligibility application.**
Application is available in **Spanish**

Understand What it Means to move from Entitlement to Eligibility

According to The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), once your child either earns a high school diploma or a Certificate of Program Completion, this means that public education is now complete. Your child has transitioned from the stage of Entitlement to the stage of Eligibility.

Pathfinders for Autism website contains information related to Entitlement vs. Eligibility
<https://pathfindersforautism.org/articles/maryland-services/the-dilemma-of-entitlement-vs-eligibility/>

Apply for Social Security benefits

The Social Security and Supplemental Security Income disability programs are the largest of several Federal programs that provide assistance to people with disabilities. Social Security Disability Insurance pays benefits to individuals who have work long enough and paid Social Security taxes while Supplemental Security Income pays benefits based on disability status and financial need.

You can apply online at <https://www.ssa.gov/> . Once you finish the online process, a Social Security representative will contact you for any additional information needed for the applications. You can also call 1-877-405-4874.

Apply for Medicaid at your Local Department of Social Services

Medicaid is a wide-ranging health insurance program for low-income individuals of all ages. Jointly funded by the state and federal government, it provides health coverage for various groups of Connecticut residents, including pregnant women, parents and caretaker relatives, adults with no dependent children, disabled individuals, and seniors.

Medicaid in Connecticut is also called HUSKY Health, and Medicaid for state residents who are aged, blind & disabled is called HUSKY C.

- Households and individuals who wish to apply for or renew health coverage for children (HUSKY A & B); parents with dependent children (HUSKY A); caretakers/guardians of minor children (HUSKY A); pregnant women (HUSKY A); and adults under 65 **without** dependent children (HUSKY D), can apply online at www.accesshealthct.com or call 1-855-805-4325.
- Households and individuals who are over 65 and older, blind or with disability and wish to apply for or renew Medicaid (HUSKY C) or Medicaid for Employees with Disabilities (MED-Connect) can apply online at www.connect.ct.gov, under 'Apply for Benefits' or by calling the DSS Client Information and Benefits Center Line 1-855-626-6632.

To view income guidelines for Medicaid, please visit <https://portal.ct.gov/HUSKY/How-to-Qualify>

Apply for Community First Choice (if Applicable)

State community care supported program offered to active Medicaid and eligible Medicare members as part of the Affordable Care Act, assists individuals to receive supports and services in their home. Community First Choice (CFC) services can include, but not limited to, assistance with activities of daily living (bathing, dressing, transferring, etc.), meal planning and preparation, shopping for food, clothing,

and other essential items, and performing essential household chores. Program will cover eligible individuals in residential settings including individual homes, apartment buildings, retirement homes, and group living environments that meet Community First Choice Residential Criteria. You can apply online at <http://ctmfp.com> or call 211, between 8:30am and 5:00 PM Monday through Friday- Choose Option 3

Explore Insurance Coverage for Autism Services up to the Age of 21

Autism Speaks Initiative provides answers to frequently asked questions about the Autism Insurance Reform Law and what you need to know <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Departments-and-Agencies/DSS/Health-and-Home-Care/Autism-Spectrum-Disorder/Connecticut-Autism-Insurance-Law.pdf>

Carelon Behavioral Health (1-877-552-8247) manages the autism spectrum disorder (ASD) benefits for Medicaid beneficiaries who have Husky A, C, and D and are under age 21. A feature of the program provides access to a Carelon Peer Specialist and Care Coordinators to assist with explaining benefits covered under Medicaid, helping families navigate the health care system, and coordinating non-traditional services <https://www.ctbhp.com/autism-spectrum-disorder-asd/>

Direct Questions Regarding ASD Insurance Issues to the Office of the Healthcare Advocate

Office of the Healthcare Advocate (1-866-466-4446) Provides assistance with selecting health insurance coverage. Agency will answer questions about health insurance issues, including, but not limited to, enrollment/eligibility issues, clarification of plan benefits, plan benefit limitations, and out-of-network services www.ct.gov/oha

Explore the Legal Implications of Reaching Age 18 (Conservatorship)

The age at which an individual is considered legally an adult, or “age of majority”, in most states is 18.

SOURCE: CGS Sec. 1-1d https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_001.htm#sec_1-1d

This means individuals in the State of Connecticut are old enough to be considered legally capable of making personal and financial decisions. Individuals with autism, however, may be unable to direct his or her own personal affairs and/or financial decisions, therefore, matters related to their safety, health, and finances are of concern.

A **conservator** is a person appointed by the probate court to oversee the financial or personal affairs of an adult determined to be incapable of managing his or her own affairs or unable to care for himself or herself. There are two basic types of conservatorships:

- A **conservator of the person** is appointed to supervise the personal affairs of an individual who is found by the court to be unable, even with appropriate assistance, to meet essential requirements

for personal needs. These needs may include, but are not limited to, the need for food, clothing, shelter, health care, and safety.

- A **conservator of the estate** is appointed to supervise the financial affairs of an individual who is found by the court to be incapable of doing so himself to the extent that property will be wasted unless adequate property management is provided. This may include, but is not limited to, actions to obtain and manage assets, income and public assistance benefits.
- A person may be in need of one or both types of conservators. Two separate individuals may perform these two roles, or one person may serve in both capacities. A conservator of the estate or person may be an individual, a legally authorized municipal or state official, or a private or nonprofit corporation. However, hospitals and nursing homes cannot be appointed conservators of either the person or the estate, and banks cannot be appointed conservators of the person.

SOURCE: UWC 211 eLibrary <https://uwc.211ct.org/conservator-of-estate-conservator-of-person/>

To become a conservator, please visit the **Connecticut Probate Courts** website at <http://www.ctprobate.gov/Pages/Conservatorships.aspx>

Learn about Life Planning Tools

ABLE Accounts

- Funds within an able account may be used for qualified disability expenses (QDEs), which can assist the beneficiary with expenses that can include things like education, training, expenses related to improve health, and their independence (life skills coaching, job coaching, for example).
- ABLE accounts allow individuals with disabilities to save money and use the funds for qualified disability expenses while remaining eligible for state and federal benefits programs, which many have asset tests.
- The total annual amount of contributions by individuals, including family members, is \$17,000 per year. The maximum amount someone can have within an ABLE account without benefits being affected is \$100,000 in any given year. To learn more about CT's ABLE Accounts visit <https://savewithable.com/ct/home.html>

Special Needs Trust

- Allows a person with a disability to have additional assets and still qualify for benefits.
- Permits a family member to leave an inheritance to a person with a disability without disrupting entitlements.
- Provides funds for supplementary services (i.e. clothing, home visits, phone service etc.).
- Creates protection against creditors.

- Assures family members that they or their relative with a disability will continue to live a dignified life.

Individuals with Special Needs Trusts can use the funds to:

- Supplement state and federal benefits
- Help maintain self-sufficiency
- Purchase services and items or pay bills
- Enhance quality of life

For more information, contact PLAN of CT at 860-523-4951 or visit <https://www.planofct.org/>

Develop a System to Organize Financial and Legal Records

Pathfinders for Autism- offers a guide to organizing your paperwork

<http://pathfindersforautism.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/A-Guide-to-Organizing-Your-Paperwork.pdf>

Wrightslaw- You need a simple, foolproof document management system. In this article, you will learn how to organize your child's file. After you organize the information about your child into a file, you will have a clearer understanding of your child's disability and needs

<https://www.wrightslaw.com/info/organize.file.htm>

Support

Network with Others at Support Groups

Connecticut Family Support Network (CTFSN) - Parent-to-parent organization offering support groups, training, email list serve, information and advocacy www.ctfsn.org

Autism Services and Resources Connecticut (ASRC)- Provides advocacy and support groups, recreational and social opportunities, trainings, newsletter, and information www.ct-asrc.org

For a more comprehensive listing of information related to *Support Groups*, please contact the DSS Autism Unit and speak with an Autism Support and Resource Specialist by calling Nathaniel Calixto at 860-424-5677 or visit the DSS Autism website <https://portal.ct.gov/DSS/Health-And-Home-Care/Autism-Spectrum-Disorder---ASD/Autism-Spectrum-Disorder---ASD>

Investigate Support Groups for Adults

Find a support group or social network for adults near your area. Visit the State of CT Dept. of Social Services Autism Division resource library at:

- Visit www.ct.gov/dss
- Click on 'Programs and Services'

- Click on 'Autism Spectrum Disorder-ASD'
- Select the 'Related Resources' tab
- Select the 'Search by Topic' tab
- Select 'Support Networks and Groups' tab
- Open the document titled 'Support Networks for Adults'

Identify your Support System

Autism Speaks – Offers tips and guidance to parents and caregivers related to identifying and/or creating a support system after a child has been diagnosed with Autism

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/autism-and-your-family>

Raisingchildren.net.au- provides some ideas for building supportive relationships with your extended family and friends <https://raisingchildren.net.au/autism/communicating-relationships/family-relationships/family-friends-asd>

Take Care of Yourself, your Spouse and your other Children

Synapse- website offers self-care tips to parents of parents with an autistic child <http://www.autism-help.org/family-autism-self-care-strategies.htm>

Autism Resources and Community (ARC)- website offers parents an article on self-care <http://blog.stageslearning.com/blog/autism-parents-self-care>

Transportation

Explore Transportation Options including Public Transportation, Mobility, and Divers License

Autism Speaks offers has created the Autism Safety Project which contains a list of experiences and activities that take place in the community and put them into separate sections in order to focus specifically on safety in each of the components of daily living. Visit

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/safety-community>

CTrides is a free program that helps commuters find the best way to get to work or school. We provide resources for choice commuting options throughout Connecticut, including bus, rail, carpools, vanpools, biking, walking, and teleworking <https://ctrides.com/>

TIP: Find a driving school that specializes in providing a comprehensive driver program for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD):

- Visit www.ct.gov/dss
- Click on 'Programs and Services'

- Click on 'Autism Spectrum Disorder-ASD'
- Select the 'Related Resources' tab
- Select the 'Search by Topic' tab
- Select the 'Transportation' tab
- Open the document titled 'Drivers License'

The State of Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles- for more information on obtaining a learner's permit and to take the test for the driver's license. You can also access the locations where learner's permit testing sites are located and download practice test questions for the learner's permit via app (android, iPhone, iPad)

State of CT Dept. of Motor Vehicles The Blue Envelope- Effective January 1, 2020, The "Blue Envelope" was created by a new state law to enhance communication between a police officer and a driver with autism. The purpose of the envelope is to have the driver place their insurance card, registration, and driver license in it so it can be handed to the officer during a stop. The outside of the envelope provides helpful tips and instructions for both the officer and driver on how to successfully communication with each other. The envelopes are available at all DMV locations, police stations, driving schools and through autism advocacy groups. <https://portal.ct.gov/DMV/Licenses/Licenses/Autism-awareness>

Help your Child Obtain a Connecticut Non-Driver Identification Card through the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles

The State of Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles provides information regarding the eligibility criteria, what to bring, and locations to apply for a non-driver identification card <https://www.ct.gov/dmv/cwp/view.asp?a=805&q=490078>

Advocacy

Make a Decision About Disclosure of Diagnosis

The **Interactive Autism Network** has an article titled "Adults with ASD: Deciding When to Disclose". https://iancommunity.org/cs/adults/deciding_when_to_disclose

Organization for Autism Research provides an article titled "Understanding Disclosure and Workplace Accommodations" <https://researchautism.org/understanding-disclosure-and-workplace-accommodations/>

Help Your Child Learn Self-Advocacy Skills

Teaching your children social skills is crucial given an autistic child's limitation with certain social skills. As part of the social skills lesson, teach your child to self-advocate.

Organization for Autism Research- Too often, young people with disabilities have things done for them that their typical peers do themselves, which they could do as well. These well-intended supports can get in the way of their ability to advocate for themselves. In this week's blog, an autism specialist, Deborah Hammer, describes the steps you can take to help children learn to self-advocate. This post originally appeared in the [July 2015 edition](#) of the OARacle newsletter <https://researchautism.org/help-children-learn-how-to-self-advocate/>

Have an Understanding of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The **United Way of Connecticut 2-1-1 eLibrary** webpage has information regarding the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) <https://uwc.211ct.org/ada-the-americans-with-disabilities-act/>

United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division website offers information and technical assistance on the American with Disabilities Act <https://www.ada.gov/>

Additional Resources

For a more comprehensive listing of information related to Autism Spectrum Disorder, please contact the DSS Autism Unit and speak with an Autism Support Resource Specialist:

Nathaniel Calixto
Autism Support and Resource Specialist

Nathaniel.Calixto@ct.gov

Tel: 860-424-5677

Fax: 860-920-3170

***Please note: The contents of this document are provided solely for informational purposes. It is meant to give individuals with ASD and their families a choice regarding services and supports. The DSS Autism Division does not specifically recommend or endorse any individual provider or practitioner.