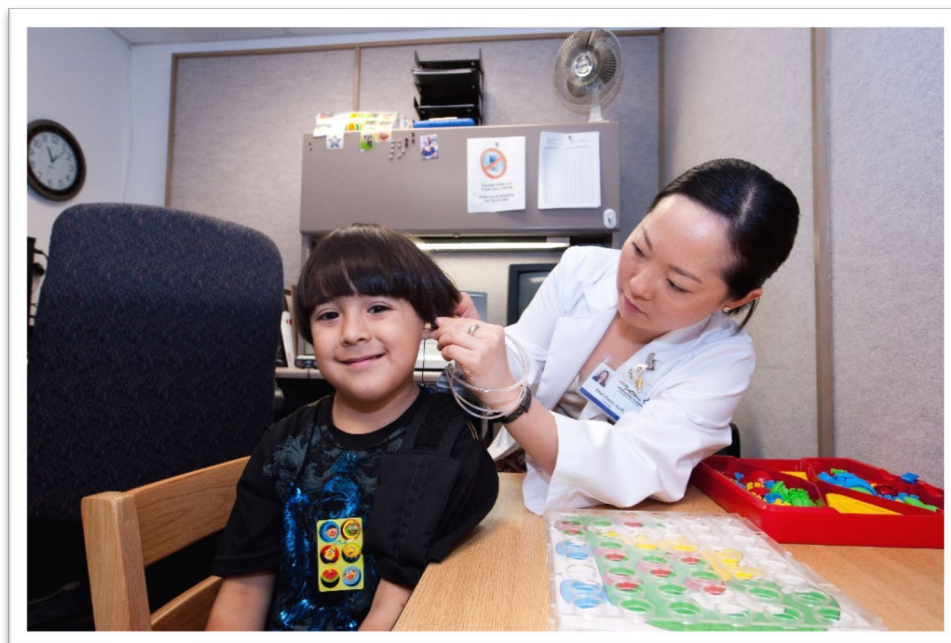




Transition Planning for Deaf or Hard of Hearing Students By Shari Kwon, Au.D.

Transition is a process deaf or hard of hearing (deaf/hh) students experience as they move from the high school setting to become successful members in the adult world. Transition planning is helpful for deaf/hh students, as they may face educational and realworld challenges as a result of their hearing loss. Transition planning involves a team including the deaf/hh student, parents, teachers, school guidance counselors, and other service providers (i.e., adult service agencies, educational professionals, etc.). It is a goal-oriented process that focuses on the student's interests, preferences, ability levels, and unique needs, which affects the student's personal decisions, whether one decides to live in the adult world and work to support oneself, or pursue post-secondary education.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that schools include transition planning for deaf/hh students as early as 14 years of age and no later than 16 years of age in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process. For students who have the intention and ability to pursue post-secondary education, it is crucial to create a plan with the IEP team. Thus, the IEP team helps the students achieve post-high school goals with a coordinated set of activities that maps out an educational program with experiences to prepare the students for post-secondary education options.



What are some of the post-secondary education options?

- Four-year colleges or universities offering various, traditional programs of study for students to obtain a bachelor degree.
- Public community colleges offering two-year degrees or technical colleges offering technical program certificates prepare students to transfer to a four-year college or enter employment.
- Private career colleges providing specialized education prepare students to enter employment.
- Apprenticeships and internships allow students to train under a working professional to learn a craft or trade.

What are some of the considerations related to jobs and adult life?

- Job search services are available through Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) with additional services available through TWC's Vocational Rehabilitation program.
- There are organizations available that help with navigating the four different Social Security Administration (SSA) disability benefit programs.
- Services and support from state or local community agencies through the Texas Health and Human Services Commission are available to transition from high school to adulthood to help with independent living.
- There are considerations regarding guardianship and alternatives to guardianship in cases where students transitioning to adulthood need assistance with decision-making related to daily living, medical, or financial aspects of life.

What is a good starting point in guiding deaf/hh students and parents through transition planning?

- The Texas Transition and Employment Guide available through the Texas Education Agency: <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/special-student-populations/specialeducation/parent-and-family-resources/texas-transition-and-employment-guide> • Starting the Conversation available through the Texas Workforce Commission: https://lmci.state.tx.us/shared/PDFs/STC_Book.pdf

What regional resources are available for transition planning?

- Deaf & Hard of Hearing Transition Resources for Texas:
<https://www.dhhtexastransition.org>
- National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes:
<https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/resource/transition-planning>
- Texas Department of State Health Services: <https://dshs.texas.gov>
- Texas Health and Human Services: <https://hhs.texas.gov> ○ Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services:
<https://hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/deaf-hard-hearing> and
<https://hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/deaf-hard-hearing/dhhs-resources>
- Texas Transition Network through the Texas Education Agency:
<https://www.transitionintexas.org>
- Texas Workforce Commission: <https://twc.texas.gov/students> ○ Labor Market and Career Information: <https://lmc.state.tx.us/explore/TSC/YBF.asp>
 - Vocational Rehabilitation Services:
<https://twc.texas.gov/jobseekers/vocational-rehabilitation-services>