Easter Seals Ontario
Parent Tips for Transition of Health and Personal Care Supports at School

Some students with a disability will require health and personal care supports at school. Students may require assistance with the following:

- Feeding
- Fine motor skills (finger dexterity or grasp)
- Gross motor skills (large muscle movements like standing, sitting, rolling)
- Mobility issues (difficulty moving around a room, or using a walker or wheelchair)
- Respiration/breathing
- Speech impairments or swallowing
- Toileting

Changes in health and personal care supports are likely to occur during transitions at the start of school, at the end of high school or when eligibility for children’s services end.

Tip 1

Before Starting School:
1. Ask your child’s therapist or the current service provider, such as the Children’s Treatment Centre, what services and supports your child will need at school
2. Find out what services and supports will be provided by the school staff
3. Find out if your child is eligible for the eligible for the Community Care Access Centre CCAC, School Health Support Services Program, if the student requires:
   a. Dietitians
   b. Nursing
   c. Occupational Therapy
   d. Physiotherapy
4. Speech-Language Pathology (for speech disorders only)
5. Ask about the referral process for the Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) School Health Support Services Program and your role
Tip 2

Understand the Services to be Provided:
1. Ask questions about the service plan and find out:
   a. What services will be provided
   b. How often services will be provided
   c. Where they will be provided
   d. Who will be providing services and what qualifications they have
2. Review and sign any consent forms. You may be asked to sign consents for:
   a. Sharing of information with other organizations or professionals
   b. To determine whether your child is eligible for services
   c. To consent to treatment by a new agency or professional
      i. Note: In some cases consents may be requested over the phone.
3. Make sure that you understand:
   a. What you are signing and what it means
   b. Who information will be shared with
   c. What will be involved in the treatment plan
4. If a non-professional, such as an Educational Assistant, will be providing supports to the child, find out what training the person will receive and who will monitor the care they provide

Tip 3

Involve the Student:
As they grow up the student may take more responsibility for their health care. The parent has an important role in helping the student to become as independent as possible in their own health care.
1. Help your child to understand their disability or diagnosis, in terms and language that they can understand
2. Help your child to become comfortable in explaining their needs and expressing concerns if there is a problem
3. Involve your child in health care decisions and medical appointments as they grow up
4. Help your child to take responsibility for medication administration, or treatments and exercises as soon as they are able
5. Encourage your child to develop skills such as asking questions, and speaking about their concerns to the doctor, their therapists or school staff
Moving to Adult Health Services

At the age of 18 and/or when the student leaves school, the agency responsible for providing health services and supports may change. Some doctors or organizations only deal with children.

The student’s health needs will where they live will determine what types of health supports are required. A student living at home may be able to continue with some service providers however, if they are moving to attend college or university or for employment, new service providers will be involved.

Once the student is over age 18, the student may be required to provide consent for the continued involvement of his/her parents.

Tip 1

Preparation for Adult Health Services:
1. Find out about where your child will get services and supports as an adult
2. Ask about how your child will be referred to adult services and who can help with the transition
3. Involve your child in collecting information about adult health services
4. Encourage the student to get organized before health care appointments, by booking appointments or organizing the reports or information that may be needed at the appointment
5. If the student will be attending an apprenticeship or post secondary institution, contact the Disability Services department at the college or university for information about what health supports are available and how they are provided

Tip 2

Personal Care Supports:
Young adults may have personal care supports provided by an Attendant.
Students who require personal care assistance may need to learn:
1. How to direct another person to provide care
2. How to manage schedule that includes attendant care
3. How to protect themselves and ensure their own safety
4. How to handle conflict and issues that arise with workers
5. Where to get help if they have a problem

To help your child learn these skills, you can:
1. Demonstrate to your child how to talk to support workers and provide directions
2. Ask your child to decide or describe what they need
3. Encourage your child to ask support workers for help and provide directions
4. Discuss personal safety and encourage your child to talk to you when they are uncomfortable or unhappy
5. Talk to your child about what to do when they have a concern and who they can talk to about their concern
Tip 3

Developmental Services Ontario (DSO)

At the age of 18 years individuals with developmental disabilities can apply for adult services through Developmental Services Ontario. Adult services include residential and day programs, as well as individualized funding through the Passport program.

The application process involves two steps:
1. Determination of Eligibility for Services – requires a psychological assessment that confirms the individual has significant cognitive impairment and functional deficits
2. Determination of Needs and Service Requirements - The Support Intensity Scale is used to find out what supports the person needs in the home, in the community, in the workplace as well supports needed for behaviour and health and safety

Parent Tips
1. Start planning early and find out about Developmental Services Ontario www.dsontario.ca.
2. Start the application process for your child about six months before your child turns 18 years of age.
3. Find out what information you will need for the application process.
4. Find out if staff from the agencies you are connected with can help you with the application process, or attend the meetings.
5. Find out about the application process. It may include one or two meetings at your home or a convenient location.
6. Prepare for the application meetings by thinking about your child’s needs and the kind of lifestyle they want. Talk to your child and other people who know the child about their ideas for the future.
7. If your child is going to take part in the meeting talk to them about what will happen during the meeting. Make plans for what your child will do if they get tired or want to leave the meeting.
Helpful Websites:
- ARCH Disability Law Centre: [www.archdisabilitylaw.ca](http://www.archdisabilitylaw.ca)
  - Attendant Services Fact Sheets

- Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) provincial website: [www.ccac-ont.ca/](http://www.ccac-ont.ca/)
  - Specialized Health Services
  - School Health Support Services

- Developmental Services Ontario: [www.dso.ca](http://www.dso.ca)

- Holland Bloorview Rehabilitation Hospital for Kids: [www.hollandbloorview.ca](http://www.hollandbloorview.ca)

- Hospital for Sick Kids Good 2 Go Transition Program, Transition Interventions and Tools: [www.sickkids.ca/Good2Go/index.html](http://www.sickkids.ca/Good2Go/index.html)
  - Parent Tip Sheets
  - My Health Passport (for youth)
  - Transition Readiness Checklist for Patients
  - Transition Readiness Checklist – Parent version

- Ontario March of Dimes: [www.marchofdimes.ca](http://www.marchofdimes.ca)
  - Attendant Services