

# Making transition decisions as a young person

You and your family may not know what you want to do when you leave school, and that's okay. Start to think about it early, when you are 14 years old. This will mean that you have time to consider your options and visit different places, so you can make an informed decision.

## Step 1 – Planning

### WHAT DOES 'TRANSITION' MEAN?

The transition to adulthood means becoming an adult. Planning for this involves looking at what you might like to do when you leave school. Further planning will include looking at where you might live when you are an adult.

### WHO WILL MAKE THE DECISIONS?

You have the right to make decisions about your future, but you might find support from your family and school helpful.

### WHEN WILL I HAVE TO START PLANNING FOR THIS?

This depends on where you live. Your family and school will support you to start thinking about this in Year 9 if you live in **England** or **Wales** and year ten if you live in **Northern Ireland**. If you live in **Scotland**, planning will start at least twelve months before you are due to leave school.

### WHY START AT THESE TIMES?

So that you have plenty of time to think and plan for your future and what you want to do, and to change your mind about things.

## Deciding between applying for a job or staying in education

This can be a difficult decision and you might want to discuss this with your family, friends or teachers.

College or sixth form gives you the chance to study for a number of vocational, professional and academic qualifications. Going to university means that you can study at degree level or above. There are other options, such as **traineeships**, **apprenticeships** and **supported internships**.

If you decide to look for a job, then think about your strengths and what interests you. You may find a specialist service such as **Remploy** can help you to develop your workplace skills and find suitable paid employment.

#### HOW MUCH HELP AND SUPPORT WILL I GET AS AN ADULT?

How much support you get will depend on what you want and need. It is important to find out what **benefits and care** you might be entitled to, and to learn about **managing money**.

If you think you will need lots of support, you might want to consider:

- **residential** – living in a shared house where you get support all day and night
- **supported living** – living on your own but with support from people who come to your house to help you.

Some people prefer a balance between receiving support and the chance to live independently. For this you might consider:

- **support centres** – a place away from where you live, where you can go in the daytime during the week to do different activities. The activities available will depend on what they can offer and what you are interested in. You will go back home at the end of the day.
- **one-to-one support** – that will help you to do activities outside of your home. Someone might come to meet you at your home, or at an arranged place and then go along with you to do something you need to do or are interested in. This could be something like doing your shopping, going to an art class, bowling, or going to the cinema.

If you plan to live independently, but need a little bit of help, you might like to consider these options:

- **buddy/befriending service** – this means being matched with someone you can talk to and do things with, like going to the cinema or the shops. The person you are paired up with is usually a volunteer who has had training to become a buddy.
- **social groups** – these give you a chance to meet other people and join in organised social activities. Some groups meet in the day whilst others meet in the evenings. It's a good idea to contact the group to find out where and when they meet and get an idea of what activities they do.

Find services and social opportunities in our [Autism Services Directory](#).



Step 2 – Looking at what is available

Once you have decided how much support you would like and what you might like to do, it is time to look at what is available. You might find making a list of your options helpful.

Prepare a list of questions that you can ask about each option. Here are some suggestions:

- Can I do what I am interested in whilst going there?
- Will I get to make new friends?
- How can I stay in touch with my family and friends whilst I am there?
- Who will be helping me?
- How will the people supporting me get to know me and what I like?
- What will I do when I am there?
- What if I am not happy there?

## Step 3 – Making a decision

To help make your decision, visit some of the places on your list. While you are there, record your thoughts. Here are some ways you can do that:

- take some photos to help you remember what it looked like (ask permission first)
- tell someone what you think and which ones are your favourite
- voice record what you think of each place whilst you are there (you could use a mobile phone to do this)
- rate each option that you visit:
  - Green = GREAT
  - Orange = OK
  - Red = RUBBISH

It might also be helpful to talk to people who already use the service, school or college. Writing out questions you could ask will help you prepare for this. Some questions you could ask are:

- What do you like about it?

- What don't you like about it?
- Do you feel you have enough independence?
- What did you do today?
- What are the staff like?
- What are the other people like?