

A Timetable for Growing Up

When Does It Happen?

Starting kindergarten. Becoming a teenager. Graduating from high school. These are some of changes children go through as they grow up. These changes are called transitions. When planning for the future, families should start early and have positive hopes for their child.

As parents, we often get caught up in making it through the day. You may wonder, How can I think about tomorrow when I'm trying to survive today? It is important to give yourself time to think about the future and plan for transitions.

This timetable will give you ideas to help your child become more independent as they grow up. By sharing experiences with them and exposing them to different activities they will learn about themselves and the world around them.

All children should be encouraged to achieve their personal best. As a parent, it's important to have expectations for your child. Encourage your child to expect the best from themselves.

A child's cognitive level affects their goals for the future and how involved they are in the planning. Keep in mind that all children will transition to adult programs and services, regardless of their level of independence.



Birth to 3

4 to 6

Parenting

Let your child know the world is a good place.

Take short breaks from your child to renew your energy.

Help your child realize they can spend time away from you.

Find supportive community resources such as Special Services at Home.

Give your child choices so they learn to make decisions.

Teach your child the consequences of their behaviours and choices.

Social

Get involved in community activities that include children with and without special needs.

Socialize with your child at meals, on the playground, on outings and when playing games.

Foster your child's self esteem by structuring activities so they can succeed.

Let your child learn what they like to do by exposing them to different leisure activities.

Set up play dates for your child.

Self Care

Let your child make simple choices.

Let your child feed themselves.

Establish a consistent routine.

Teach your child everyday skills like brushing their teeth.

Teach your child self care skills related to their special needs.

Give your child chores that match their abilities.

Education

Read to your child.

Help your child learn with simple games like peek-a-boo and action songs.

Talk to your child about what they are doing.

Let your child explore toys and objects in their own way. Follow their lead.

When registering your child for school, request a case conference to decide on the best educational placement.

Help your child get ready for school by reading and playing games.

Keep a record of your child's educational history.

Medical

Be an active member of your child's team.

Ask questions and share concerns.

Keep a record of your child's medical history.

Teach your child what their disability is called.

Teach your child about their special needs.

As your child grows, continue with the suggestions from earlier years and add new activities and responsibilities as appropriate.

7 to 11

12 to 16

17 to 21

Let your child make mistakes.

Teach your child to speak up for their needs and wants.

Talk about sexuality.

Advocate for yourself.

Talk about dating and sex with your parents or someone you trust.

Look for older role models.

Use your parents as a resource.

Begin formal process to appoint a guardian for personal care and/or financial decisions before age 18.

Apply for Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) Income Supports before age 18.

Become a mentor for younger children.

Encourage hobbies and leisure activities.

Help your child make friends.

Support your child's participation in community activities without parents where possible.

Join teams and clubs at school.

Get involved in activities outside of school.

Hang out with friends.

Find out about community programs for adults that match your leisure or athletic interests.

Keep in touch with friends from high school or camp by phone or e-mail and make plans.

Take your child shopping.

Take your child on public transit.

Teach your child their personal information such as address, phone number, etc.

Let your child choose how to spend some or all of their allowance.

Direct your own personal routines.

Cook with your family.

Start to find your way around the community.

Talk with your parents about where you will live as an adult.

Learn independent living skills.

Plan and prepare meals.

Practice budgeting and banking skills.

Look at housing choices including attendant services and supported living options.

Let your child do homework independently as much as possible.

Support your child with homework by letting them tell you when help is needed.

Begin asking your child what they want to be when they grow up.

Take part in meetings about your education and keep a record.

Talk about career interests.

Find volunteer work or a part-time job.

Contact the Office for Students with Disabilities on college or university campuses.

Contact a youth employment centre for help with job search and training.

Contact the local Community Living Association for resources and training opportunities.

Ask your child what they know about their special needs and fill in the gaps in their understanding.

Help your child talk directly with doctors and other service providers.

Come to your appointments with your list of questions and concerns.

Begin to look for adult health care providers.

Attend part of your medical appointments alone.

Start to make your own medical appointments and keep a record of your medical history.

Transfer to an adult health care provider.

Get a summary of your medical record.

Notes

Who do I need to talk to? Write down the names of people that you think you should talk to (e.g. parents, health care professionals, teachers, friends, etc.).

Where do I need to go? Write down places that you need to visit or resources that you can use (e.g. local community centre, websites, etc.).

If you have questions about this timeline, or related programs and services, please talk to your health care team or e-mail lifeskills@hollandbloorview.ca

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