

# The Arc of Greater Haverhill–Newburyport

[www.thearcofghn.org](http://www.thearcofghn.org)

Presenter:  
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# The Arc of GHN

- The Arc of Greater Haverhill–Newburyport is a grassroots 501(c)(3) nonprofit founded in 1962, to advocate with and for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We are celebrating 60 years!
- We provide customized and individualized supports and services in a home or community setting. We are unique!
- We are one of 18 Arc's in Massachusetts and 730 in the country.
- We are not The Northeast Arc but consider ourselves their little sister!
- We stand united with *The Arc of Massachusetts* to enhance the human and civil rights of all persons with disabilities.

**Join their email list to stay up to date on advocacy efforts!**

[www.thearcofmass.org](http://www.thearcofmass.org)

# Department of Developmental Services (DDS)

- Is the State agency that provides services and supports to:
  - ✓ Children with Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (up to age 22)
  - ✓ Adults with Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities
  - ✓ Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Prader Willi and Smith–Magenis Syndrome
- Serves approximately 44,000 children and adults in Massachusetts
- DDS services are based on eligibility and funding; they are not to replace school supports and services which are an entitlement under FAPE



# DDS Family Support Center

Contracts with human services agencies such as The Arc of GHN.  
For families with individuals living at home through the lifespan.  
Families may use both their Family and Autism Support Centers.

Services  
Available  
to Anyone:

- **Information & Referral** Call or drop-in services available.
- **Family Trainings** on topics such as special education, legal matters, public benefits, etc.
- **Family Networking** opportunities for families to connect, including parents, grandparents, siblings and self-advocates.
- **DDS Eligibility Application:** Support Centers can help families apply for DDS, SSI, Food Stamps, etc.

Services  
Available  
to DDS  
Eligible  
Families:

- **Service Navigation** helps families navigate health insurance, special education, elder services, etc.
- **Social/Recreational Activities** both at the Center and in the community.
- **Community Connections & Resources** helping families learn about what exists in their community for recreation, emotional and spiritual support, financial assistance, etc.
- **Flexible Funding** to purchase goods and services.

# Greater Haverhill-Newburyport Family Support Center

## Eligibility Requirements:

- ***Live in the Merrimack Valley*** - Amesbury, Andover, Boxford, Georgetown, Groveland, Haverhill, Lawrence, Merrimac, Methuen, Newbury, Newburyport, North Andover, Rowley, Salisbury, or West Newbury.
- ***Be eligible, or potentially eligible, for services from the Department of Developmental Services (DDS)*** - Families must be caring for a loved one who has an intellectual or developmental disability.

## The DDS Family Support Center Provides:

- Family Advisory Council
- Information & Resources
- Webinars & Workshops
- Support & Networking Groups
- Social & Recreational Resources
- Administration of Flexible Funding (DDS Referral)

# Autism Support Center at The Northeast Arc

For families with individuals ages 0-22 with ASD.  
Families may use both their Family and Autism Support Centers.

Services  
Available  
to  
Anyone:

- **Information & Referral** Call your Center with questions!
- **Family Trainings** on important topics such as understanding Autism, behavior management, social skills, and more
- **Family Networking** opportunities for families to connect, including parents, grandparents, siblings and self-advocates.
- **DDS Eligibility Application:** Autism Support Centers can help you apply for DDS.

Services  
Available to  
DDS  
Eligible  
Families:

- **Service Navigation** helps families navigate health insurance, special education, elder services, etc.
- **Social/Recreational Activities** both at the Center and in the community.
- **Community Connections & Resources** helping families learn about what exists in their community for recreation, emotional and spiritual support, financial assistance, etc.
- **Flexible Funding** to purchase goods and services.

# What is Transition Planning?

Transition is about planning for life!



## Federal Law

The Purpose of the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#): ...to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet ***their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living... 20 USC §1400(d)(1)(A)***



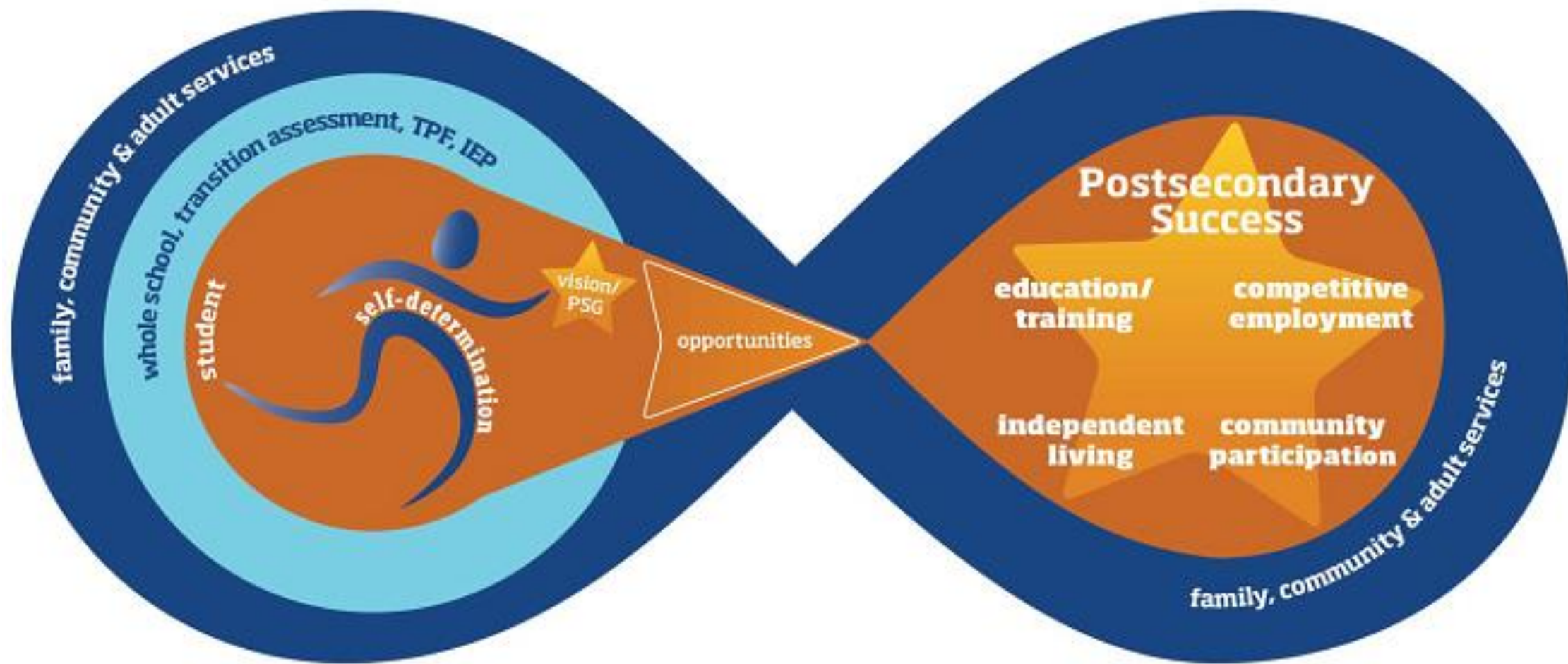
# Turning 14

(Massachusetts Law – Chapter 285)

- ✓ Transition planning begins at age 14 for those on an IEP.
- ✓ Beginning at age 14, the student is invited to the IEP meeting as a full member of the Team in any capacity.
- ✓ Start EARLY for the best outcome!



# Massachusetts Student-Driven Secondary Transition Model



# Self-Determination

- ✔ Choice Making
- ✔ Decision Making
- ✔ Problem solving
- ✔ Goal Setting
- ✔ Self-Regulation
- ✔ Self-Advocacy
- ✔ Self-Awareness



## Role of the Student



### **Participation in IEP meetings helps student**

- ✓ Build self-advocacy skills.
- ✓ Gain awareness of their disability, modifications and accommodations they are receiving.
- ✓ Take a more active role in the meeting and with their IEP overall especially if student led.

## Role of Parents & Caregivers

- Have an important role to play in transition planning.
- Are the primary collaborators with their student, school and their community.
- Can provide essential information regarding their student's strengths, weaknesses, needs, preferences and interests.
- Often are the key individuals who can articulate clear and realistic outcomes for the student's future.
- Encouraged to attend every IEP meeting and invite people that can help define the student's vision.
- Practice self care and...breathe...

## Transition Planning Form (TPF)

A **tool** that drives the IEP goals

- The TPF should be filled out before or at the beginning of the annual IEP meeting by Team members every year.
- Each year, the student vision may change.
- Discussing estimated date of graduation is important!



**TRANSITION PLANNING FORM (TPF)**

Massachusetts requires that beginning when the eligible student is 14 for the IEP developed that year, the school district must plan for the student's need for transition services and the school district must document this discussion annually. This form is to be maintained with the IEP and revisited each year.

<b>Student:</b>	<b>SASID:</b>	<b>Age:</b>
<b>Date form completed:</b>		
<b>Anticipated date of graduation:</b>	<b>Current IEP dates from: _____ to: _____</b>	
<b>Anticipated date of 688 referral, if applicable:</b>		

**POST-SECONDARY VISION**

Write the student's **POST-SECONDARY VISION** in the box below. In collaboration with the family, consider the student's preferences and interests, and the desired outcomes for post-secondary education/ training, employment, and adult living. This section should correspond with the vision statement on IEP 1.

**DISABILITY RELATED NEEDS**

Write the skills (disability related) that require IEP goals and/or related services in the box below. Consider all skills (disability related) necessary for the student to achieve his/her post-secondary vision.

## Transition Planning Form (TPF)

The new IEP will have transition information imbedded into it which will include:

- [Postsecondary Transition Planning](#)
- [Community and Interagency Connections](#)
- [Transfer of Rights to Student](#)
- [Decision-Making Options for Student](#)
- [Transition to Adult Service Agency or Agencies-688 Referral](#)



# Diploma vs. Certificate of Attainment

- Diploma
  - Passed MCAS
  - Passed all local requirements in your district
- Certificate of Attainment "Completion"
  - Didn't pass MCAS but made good faith effort to meet the state standards
  - Completed all local graduation requirements, including attendance, course completion, and satisfactory grades



# Chapter 688 Referral

(for students who will need continued services)

- The primary goal of a Chapter 688 referral is to plan for adult services and supports needed by some individuals which is critical for state funding.
- Initiated by the funding school district 2 years before the student graduates with a diploma or turns 22.
- Chapter 688 referrals and supporting documentation are sent directly to the Bureau of Transitional Assistance (BTA) or the appropriate lead/adult agency deemed by the school (DDS, MRC, DMH, MCB, MCDHH).
- The lead agency will then send an application that must be filled out and returned to determine eligibility.

# Turning 18

- **Age of Majority** – A student is legally considered to be an adult even if they have a disability. This is called the “age of majority”. In the eyes of the law, they assume adult rights and responsibilities regardless of disability.
- **Consider Guardianship, Alternatives & Supported Decision Making Options**
  - Guardianship & Conservatorship Process
  - Supported Decision Making Options
- **Life Course Tools** – These materials are designed to help a person, family, or a professional explore areas where any person might need decision making support, plan for what it looks like and how it can happen and seek out the needed supports.

# Turning 18 Checklist

- ✓ [Health care transition](#) (changing to adult PCP's)
- ✓ Make sure a chapter [688 referral](#) has been completed (if needed)
- ✓ [Register to vote!](#)
- ✓ [Register for selective service](#) (males)
- ✓ Apply for [Mass ID card](#)
- ✓ [Transportation Resources](#) (including driving)
- ✓ Set up an [ABLE Account](#)
- ✓ Apply for [SSI](#) (1 month AFTER they turn 18) – If they qualify, will automatically receive MassHealth; can receive PCA/AFC services
- ✓ Think about [Future Planning](#); wills, special needs trusts etc.
- ✓ Apply for [Section 8](#) voucher or other state assistance (if needed)

# Ages 20 and 21

(if still in public school system)

- ALL mandated services end at age 22 (or when a diploma is accepted).
- Connect with adult services agencies, invite them to the IEP meetings.
- Start touring programs and understanding the adult service model and options.
- Continue to build connections within their community.



## WORTH NOTING

- Adult services and supports are based eligibility and funding; they are not an entitlement and are limited.
- There are few residential placements; they are based on need and funding.
- There is limited 1:1 supported employment; independence and self-advocacy is important.
- Transportation is one of the biggest obstacles in adulthood. Travel training is essential.
- It is never too late to start!

# Upcoming Webinars & Workshops

[\(Sign up for email updates to receive more information!\)](#)

- 1/9 Transition Binder Party @ Nevins Library in Methuen 10a-12p
- 1/16 Parent Autism Training 6:30p-8p
- 1/23 Anti-Bullying 6:30p-8p
- 1/30 How to Access Student Benefits 10:30a-12p
- 2/16 Transition to Adulthood 6:30p-8p
- 2/27 Future Planning 10:30a-12p
- 3/12 Navigating the new IEP 6:30p-8p
- 3/20 Guardianship or Supported Decision Making 11:30a-1p
- 4/23 Understanding Basic Rights 6:30p-8p

# Transition Resources

- MA DESE Secondary Transition Website:  
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/secondary-transition/default.html>
- DDS Transition Information:  
<https://www.mass.gov/lists/essential-dds-transition-information>
- The Federation for Children with Special Needs:  
<https://fcsn.org/realtransition/transition-resources/brochures/>
- Autism Speaks:  
<https://www.autismspeaks.org/family-services/tool-kits/transition-tool-kit>
- Turning 18 Checklists:
  - [Autism Housing Pathways Turning 18 Checklist](#)
  - [The Autism Program Turning 18 Checklist](#)





## CONNECT WITH US!

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