

Aspire's Mission:

Aspire's mission is to support children and adults with developmental and similar disabilities, helping them to live their lives to the fullest by providing individualized assistance based on personal choices.

What's Inside!

The Student to Adult Life Transition

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Save the Date

**DDAWNY Family
Committee Meeting
7 Community Drive
Cheektowaga, NY
Third Tuesday of the Month
7:00pm**

For event information,
please contact Shana Caldarella
at 716-505.5500 or via email at
intake@aspirewny.org

Aspire of Western New York, Inc.

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Getzville, NY 14068

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THE STUDENT TO ADULT LIFE TRANSITION

At school, students prepare for life ahead. For those with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), vocational planning often begins with a career assessment at age 12. These IEPs must include transition recommendations and activities by age 15, or earlier if appropriate.

However, we believe that conversations and preparations can (and should) begin sooner as schools begin to assess future needs and consider the student's exit plan. This way, services intended to help each student meet their goals after leaving school can be offered. Services can range from additional post-graduation academic support to on-the-job experiences, and even development of daily living skills. The school-based plan plays a big part in this transition, and as such, you should keep in close contact with the school team to ensure you understand any changes that are proposed and have the opportunity to ask questions along the way.

Outside of the school-based plan, there are many other community-based partners and resources available to support you and your student through this milestone, and beyond. Utilizing these services can provide your student with skills at home and in the community, allowing them to get started while in school.



How do you connect with these providers?

There are two routes: If an individual is already eligible through the Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), then your Care Coordinator is a great starting point! This person will be key in applying for and obtaining services during and after school. If you already have a Care Coordinator, we suggest connecting with them as soon as possible so they can be engaged in your student's transition plan. If your child is not yet eligible under OPWDD, you will want to start by contacting "The Front Door"; please see the next page for contact information.

Before, during, and after the transition from school to adult life, there are also other organizations, like Parent Network of WNY, that offer informational sessions on a wide range of topics. You can also reach out to us at Aspire of WNY. Our Central Intake division has a knowledgeable team that can help you and your loved one navigate and understand the OPWDD Front Door process and connecting with Care Coordination. They can also help you identify which combination of the services Aspire of WNY offers would be a good fit for your child.

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The transition from school to adult life can seem daunting, but rest assured, there is a great team waiting to support you and your child during and after transition.

Here are some key contacts and resources to help you during this process:

- Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) Front Door (Western Region only)
 - Phone : 1.800.487.6310
 - Website Links :
 - Get started with The Front Door or learn more about OPWDD supports: <https://opwdd.ny.gov/get-started/front-door>
 - Connect with or learn more about Care Coordination: <https://opwdd.ny.gov/find-care-manager>
- There are two Care Coordination Organizations (CCOs) in the WNY region
 - Person Centered Services: 1.855.208.3533
 - Prime Care Coordination: 1.844.347.3168
- Parent Network of WNY
 - <https://parentnetworkwny.org/>



For all other questions or to learn more about all the services offered by Aspire of WNY, please reach out to Aspire of WNY's Central Intake Department so we can help!

Phone : 716.838.0047 - then Press Option 1
Email : intake@aspirewny.org

Comments, Suggestions or Ideas?

If you have any comments, suggestions or a subject you would like to see in an upcoming newsletter, please contact Paula Kerber at 716-505-5262, or email paula.kerber@aspirewny.org.

Want an electronic copy of Transition Times?

Send your email to: paula.kerber@aspirewny.org and we'll send you an electronic version of Transition Times. Thanks for your interest!

Acronym Corner

- Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)
- Care Coordination Organization (CCO)
- Care Coordinator (CC)

For more definitions, visit Parent Network's Acronym List at:

<https://parentnetworkwny.org/acronym-list>