

Transition – Recreation

Taking Charge of Your Health Care:

A handout for adolescents and young adults with special health care needs and disabilities

Meet people...make friends

- Work at making friends; it isn't easy for anyone. Reaching out is hard, but it's worth the effort.
- Join clubs or committees that you are interested in. This is a good way to meet people.
- Get to know what other kids are interested in: movies, music, clothes.
- Figure out the people at school who can help you connect with other teens such as a teacher or guidance counselor.
- Go to school functions such as school dances, plays or sports events.
- Spend time with friends with disabilities and special health care needs.
- Spend time with friends who do not have disabilities and special health care needs.

Enjoy recreation in your community

- Try out different activities to find out what you might enjoy.
- Call organizations such as the local YMCA to see if their activities are a good fit for you.
- Visit the place where the activity may be held so that you can plan accordingly.
- Identify your need for accommodations.
- Work with the recreation staff to adapt the program for you.
- Discuss with your doctor any health-related issues you should consider when planning your activities.

Have fun at home

- Keep fun in your family. Take time to enjoy yourself with your family.
- Think about activities you'd like to do at home with a friend.
- Invite friends to your home.
- Ask your parents to let you bring a friend along when you go to places such as the movies.
- Include your friends in activities that you do at home.
- Consider participating in recreation or fitness activities with your family.

Know where to get information about recreational experiences

- Check out the school or local library for flyers on upcoming activities.
- Ask other adolescents about activities they enjoy and participate in.
- Surf the Internet. Many cities and towns have recreational Web sites.
- Look in the calendar section of the newspaper for events close to home.
- Join a group where you can meet other adolescents with special health care needs and disabilities.
- Consider the following as good places to find out about activities:
City/town recreation department, Chamber of Commerce, Cultural council in your city/town, Colleges and universities, Health and fitness clubs, YMCA?YWCA, United Way, Easter Seals, Boy/Girl Scouts, Parks and beaches in your local area.

Reproduced with permission. From "Transition Planning for Adolescents with Special Health Care Needs and Disabilities: A Guide for Health Care Providers," edited by Stephanie Porter, Linda Freeman, and Lynne Reeves Griffin (2000). Produced by the Institute for Community Inclusion at Children's Hospital, Boston, as part of the Massachusetts Initiative for Youth with Disabilities, a project of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Supported in part by a grant from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, HRSA, DHHS.