



## Caregiver Tip: Promote Self Determination and Autonomy

Tips to help parents and caregivers develop a person's decision-making skills:

- Be sure the person is actively involved in setting their high school goals and planning their transition to adulthood during high school.
- Prepare students to actively participate in and perhaps lead their IEP team meetings.
- If already out of school, involve the person in other opportunities for planning, such as a person-centered planning meeting.
- Gradually increase the level of difficulty of choices to be made as person ages.
- Discuss pros and cons of potential decisions with them.
- Help each person identify other trusted people they can go to for advice about difficult decisions.
- Allow the person to take responsibility for some decisions.
- Review the outcomes after a decision is enacted.
- Whenever possible, let the person learn from their mistakes rather than trying to protect them from the consequences.
- Do not interfere with a person's desires when it is not truly necessary.

Adapted from Think College - Consider the Alternatives: Decision-Making Options for Young Adults with Intellectual Disabilities. By Deborah Leuchovius and Barb Ziemke, Issue 41, 2019.

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