

POST SCHOOL LIVING OPPORTUNITIES



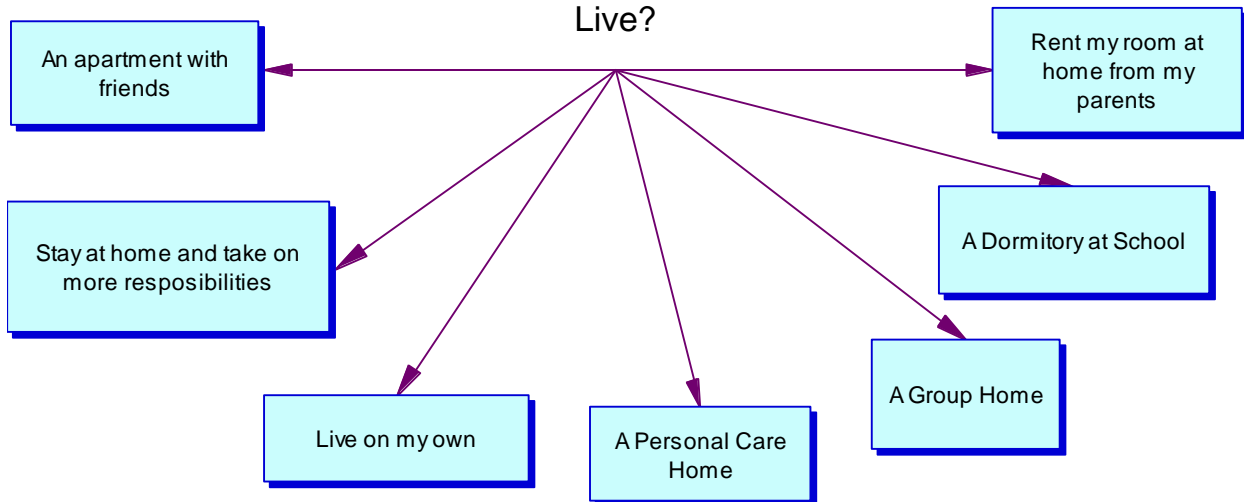
POST- SCHOOL LIVING OPPORTUNITIES

COMMON QUESTIONS / POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

- **What are my parents going to say when I tell them what I want?**
- **What kind of help will I need?**
- **Do I have medical needs that require assisted living?**
- **How much can I afford?**



Where Do I Want To Live?



POST-SCHOOL LIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Graduating from school and facing changing residential options can be frightening for the student and for the family. Traditionally, this fear is well known for all students but particularly so for students with disabilities. As individuals with disabilities become more empowered and develop more independence, self-advocacy and self-determination skills, transitioning from high school to adult life is not as overwhelming to the student as it was in previous decades. Students with disabilities are now realizing their hopes and dreams and are becoming increasingly independent.

Factors to consider in choosing a housing option:

- How much can I afford?
- Is the neighborhood safe?
- If I share my living space, will my housemate or roommate be compatible?
- Is the house, apartment or room in good condition?
- Will transportation to shopping and/or work be a problem?
- How much support will I need to carry out everyday activities?

Options for Community Living Opportunities and Supports

The agencies that provide support will evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the student, identify needs and implement a program to remediate deficits, prepare him/her to move to the next higher level of independence, and monitor his /her actions and development. This approach based on assessing readiness will determine when the person would exit one environment and move to the next. This focus is on a person's development instead of environmental accommodations for access.

The Person Centered Approach

Using the Person Centered Approach to identify a system of supports for community living options would provide a refreshing change in the mindset and perception of individuals with disabilities. The agency's role would be to provide this system of supports that would last for as long as they are needed in order to enable the student to successfully live in a home or apartment of his/her own in the community while gaining more competence, control, and confidence with activities in life that are meaningful to him/her. There are many options for living. Whether they include living independently in an apartment, or with friends, choosing to stay at home or living in an apartment in the home, they need to be designed with the student's interests and personal needs in mind.

For individuals receiving supports through Mental Health, Developmental, Disabilities, and Addictive Diseases (MHDDAD). Georgia has recently developed a standardized Individual Support Plan (ISP) that incorporates person centered planning into the process. The individual and those who know the individual best participate in the planning process. The support plan that is developed builds on the needs and preferences of the individual with the goal of assisting him/her in living a meaningful and satisfying life. The plan also addresses significant issues

regarding a person's health, safety, finances, and behavior. The ISP team considers the risks, aligns the supports to minimize risks, and revises the ISP as needs change. The plan encompasses many options for living whether they include independence in an apartment, or with friends, choosing to stay at home or living in an apartment in the home. The plan needs to be designed with the person's interests and personal needs in mind. The supports may include the natural support network and paid supports.

Post-School Living Opportunities through the Department of Human Resources/ Mental Health, Developmental, Disabilities, and Addictive Diseases (MHDDAD)

Mental Retardation Waiver Program (MRWP) Summary

This is Georgia's first waiver that began in 1989 and currently serves the most consumers. It provides individual fee-for-service reimbursement for an array of eleven different services that support people in the community. These supports range from providing twenty-four hour residential and day program services to periodic intermittent services such as respite. Waiver services also include reimbursement for environmental and vehicle modifications as well as medical equipment and supplies.

There are currently a large number of providers for the MRWP because they are often small organizations that only provide single services. MRWP providers may deliver a single service but are not prohibited from providing several or all of the services. Medical, dental, clinic outpatient, and pharmacy services are **not** included in this Waiver.

Residential Services

- 1. Residential Training and Supervision (RTS) Services** - These services include a range of interventions with a particular focus on training and support in one or more of the following areas: eating, drinking, toileting, personal grooming and health care, dressing, communication, interpersonal relationships, mobility, home management, and use of leisure time. Services are offered twenty-four hours a day. Recipients live in small group settings.
- 2. Personal Support (PS) Services** - These services include a wide range of interventions with a particular focus on training or support in one or more of the following areas: eating, drinking, toileting, personal grooming and health care, dressing, communication, interpersonal relationships, mobility, home management, and use of leisure time. Services are offered on an hourly basis for up to 24-hours each day. Recipients live in their own home, a foster home, or may choose to have one or two housemates.
- 3. Natural Support Enhancement (NSE) Services** - This service is designed to give consumers assistance in developing and strengthening the skills necessary to live more independently in the community. Services are targeted for people whom currently live or desire to live in the community and have access to a natural support system. Reimbursement is based on services and supports identified in the approved Natural Support plan.

Centers for Independent Living (CILs)

Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are nonresidential places of action and coalition, where persons with disabilities learn empowerment and develop the skills necessary to make lifestyle choices. Centers provide services and advocacy to promote the leadership, independence, and productivity of people with disabilities. Centers work with individuals as well as with local communities to remove barriers to independence and ensure equality of persons with disabilities (Department of Rehabilitative Services, 2003). The foundation of these services is the peer-to-peer relationship, in which people with disabilities act as mentors for other people with disabilities, showing them by example how to help themselves and to live independently. The core services that CILs provide are:

- Individual Advocacy and Systems Advocacy
- Peer Counseling
- Information and Referral
- Independent Living Skills Training

Other services that may be provided by a CIL include:

- Assistance in finding and obtaining accessible housing
- Financial Benefits Counseling
- Equipment Loan and/or Repair
- Personal Assistance Services
- Services related to Identifying, Hiring, Training and Firing a Personal Assistant
- Employment Readiness Services
- Mobility Training

**Statewide Centers for Independent Living:
BAIN (Bainbridge Advocacy Individual Network)**

316 West Shotwell Street

P. O. Box 1674

Bainbridge, GA 31718

Phone: 229-246-0150

TTY: call GA Relay 711 or at 800-255-0135

FAX: 229-246-1715

Serves the following counties in **Southwest Georgia**: Baker, Calhoun, Clay, Decatur, Early, Grady, Miller, Mitchell, Randolph, Seminole, and Thomas.

Disability Connections

170 College Street

Macon, GA 31201

Voice: 478-741-1425

Toll Free TTY/Voice: 800-743-2117

FAX: 478-755-1571

Serves the following counties in **Central Georgia**: Baldwin, Bibb, Crawford, Houston, Jasper, Jones, Monroe, Peach, Pulaski, Putnam, Twiggs and Wilkinson.

Disability Resource Center (formerly ACIL)

470-A Woods Mill Drive

Gainesville, GA 30501

Voice 770-534-6656

TTY: call GA Relay 711 or at 800-255-0135

FAX: 770-534-6626

www.disabilityresourcecenter.org

Serves the following counties in **North Georgia**: Banks, Dawson, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union, and White

disABILITY Link

755 Commerce Drive, Suite 105

Decatur, GA 30030

Voice (404) 687-8890

TTY (404) 687-9175

Toll Free Voice/TTY (800)239-2507

FAX: 404-687-8298

<http://www.disabilitylink.org>

Serves the following counties in **Metro Atlanta**: Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Newton, and Rockdale

disABILITY LINK - Northwest

411 Broad Street
Rome, GA 30161
Phone: (706) 314-0008
TTY: (706) 802-0280
FAX: (706) 314-0011

Serves the following counties in **Northwest Georgia**: Bartow, Catoosa, Chattooga, Dade, Fannin, Floyd, Gilmer, Gordon, Haralson, Murray, Paulding, Pickens, Polk, Walker, and Whitfield.

LIFE (Living Independence for Everyone)

17-19 East Travis Street
Savannah, GA 31406
Voice: 912-920-2314
TTY: 912-920-2419
Toll Free: 800-948-4824
FAX: 912-920-0007

<http://www.lifecil.com>

Serves the following counties in **Southeast Georgia**: Bryan, Bulloch, Camden, Chatham, Effingham, Evans, Glynn, Liberty, McIntosh, Tattnall and Toombs

Multiple Choices

999 Gainesschool Rd
Athens, GA 30605
Voice: 706-549-1020
FAX/TTY: 706-549-1030
Toll Free: 877-549-1020
Toll Free fax/tty: 866-449-2020

www.multiplechoices.us

Serves the following counties in **Northeast Georgia**: Barrow, Clarke, Elbert, Greene, Jackson, Madison, Morgan, Oconee, Oglethorpe, Walton

Walton Options for Independent Living

P. O. Box 519
Augusta, GA 30903-5019
Voice: 706-724-6262
TTY: 706-261-0199
Toll Free: 877-821-8400
FAX: 706- 724-6729

<http://www.waltonoptions.org>

Serves the following counties in **East Georgia**: Burke, Columbia, Emanuel, Jefferson, Jenkins, Johnson, Lincoln, Richmond, Screven, and Washington.

Warrenton Satellite Office

(706) 465-1148

FAX: 465-1168

Serves the following counties in **East Georgia**: Glascock, Hancock, McDuffie, Taliaferro, Warren, and Wilkes.

For additional information, contact:

Statewide Independent Living Council of Georgia, Inc.

755 Commerce Drive, Suite 415

Decatur, GA 30030

Voice: 770-270-6860

Toll Free: 888-288-9780

TTY: Use GA Relay, 711

Fax: 770-270-5957

www.silcga.org

Additional Resources:

Georgia Options, Inc.

185 Ben Burton Circle

Bogart, Georgia 30622-1791

706-546-0009

fax: 706-546-0215

email: foundation@georgiaoptions.org

website: www.georgiaoptions.org

Concrete Change

600 Dancing Fox Road

Decatur GA 30032

404-378-7455

www.concretechange.org

The previous sources may be of help to you as you consider the transitional needs of your student. While these sources are provided to assist you in your search, it is your responsibility to investigate them to determine their value and appropriateness for your situation and needs. These sources are provided as a sample of available resources and are for informational purposes only. THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION DOES NOT MONITOR, EVALUATE, OR ENDORSE THE CONTENT OR INFORMATION OF THESE RESOURCES. NONE OF THESE RESOURCES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED THE ADVICE OR GUIDANCE OF THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

