

# Thinking about the future

## A quick guide to transition

FOR PARENTS AND CARERS of young people with additional needs

# Welcome

This quick guide is for parents and carers who want a fast and easy pointer to the services they need to help their son or daughter move smoothly towards adulthood and employment.

I hope you will find it useful. It is a reduced version of the Thinking about the Future transition guide – please do ask for the fuller guide if you think you would prefer it. Or you can download the full guide by visiting [www.hertsdirect.org](http://www.hertsdirect.org) and typing 'transition guide' into the search box.



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The guide has been developed in partnership with parents and Hertfordshire Local Authority.



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### What is transition planning?

- It is about creating a plan for the move from childhood to adulthood, keeping the young person's needs and wishes as the main focus.
- It is about moving from children's services to adult services.
- The annual review is an important part of transition planning.

## The transition plan

### Why is it important?

Because without a plan it will be harder for your son or daughter to know what their goals are and to achieve their aims in life. It is never too early to make a plan.

### Where and when do you start?

- ▶ For those with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, planning starts at age 13 (Year 9)
- ▶ Talk to your son or daughter about their options, their hobbies and their favourite subjects
- ▶ What is important to them and why?
- ▶ Visit your local college and further education provision. Where would your son or daughter like to go?
- ▶ Speak to your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser (read more about this on page 8)
- ▶ Think about practical things your son or daughter will need such as health care, transport, help to get a job, and accommodation

It's very useful to do the above first steps before you go on to create the transition plan together with professionals in a transition meeting...try to make some notes and write down your questions

### Creating the plan

- ▶ A first transition plan meeting should be held to create what is called the 14-25 Preparing for Adulthood Transition Plan

- ▶ The plan will contain all the most important points about your son or daughter's strengths, aims, and wishes. You can add your views
- ▶ The Ideas 4 Life software is a 'person centred' planning tool that could be filled out with your son or daughter in school. He or she can add their own views and can ask for support in doing this. It can be very creative, with photos and videos, producing a plan of what your son or daughter would like to do
- ▶ The plan forms the basis for the future and will be updated formally once a year; there may be other discussions during the year

#### Who will be at the initial planning meeting?

- ▶ You and your son or daughter
- ▶ School staff
- ▶ Your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser
- ▶ A representative from Social Services
- ▶ Anyone else who works with your son or daughter such as a therapist or medical worker
- ▶ Your son or daughter can ask for a friend or advocate to be there too

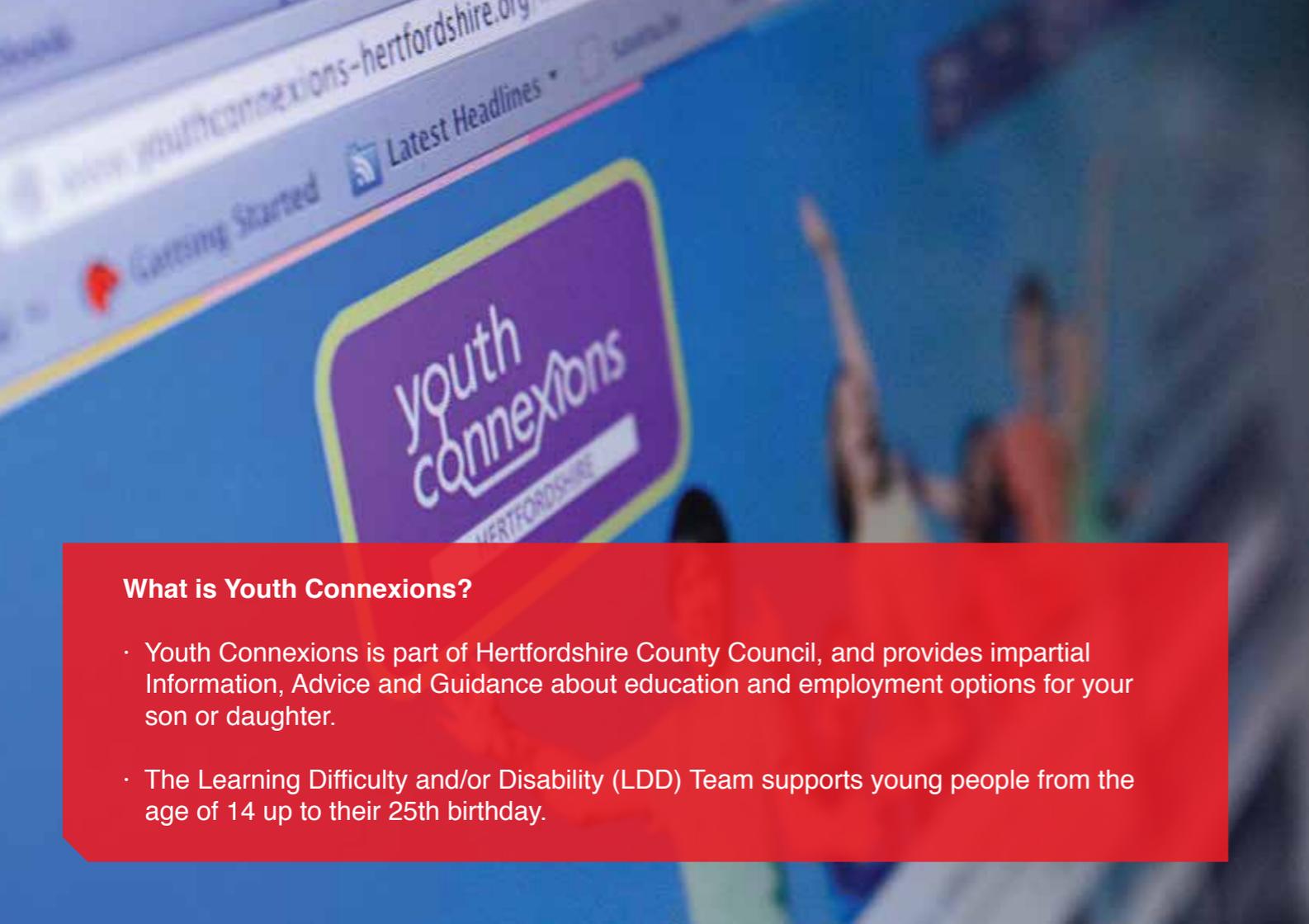
#### What happens after the planning meeting or annual review?

- ▶ The school will write or update the transition plan to include the input of those at the meeting, including yours
- ▶ You will receive a copy of the plan
- ▶ Your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser will work with the school and other professionals to make sure the things set out in the plan happen



#### Important things to think about when your son or daughter is aged 13 (Year 9):

- Your son or daughter and you have the right to choose who will be involved in creating the transition plan. Your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser or Social Worker can advise you
- Your child's Statement of Special Educational Needs ceases once he or she leaves school, so it's important to plan now for the support they will need later



### What is Youth Connexions?

- Youth Connexions is part of Hertfordshire County Council, and provides impartial Information, Advice and Guidance about education and employment options for your son or daughter.
- The Learning Difficulty and/or Disability (LDD) Team supports young people from the age of 14 up to their 25th birthday.

## Youth Connexions Support

These are some of the services your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser will provide:

- ▶ Work with you and the school or college to produce the transition plan for your son or daughter
- ▶ Encourage your son or daughter to make the best choices for the future for themselves
- ▶ Arrange to visit your son or daughter for a review if they are in a residential school or college out of county and/or at home during holiday periods

### Who will support my son or daughter as an adult?

Youth Connexions Personal Advisers usually work with young people until they are 19. If your son or daughter continues to need extra support, they may be able to work with them up to the age of 25 if they have a Learning Difficulty and/or Disability.

Youth Connexions can help you get in touch with other professionals such as Social Workers and Disability Employment Advisers who may be able to provide support in the future. This can include helping to arrange planning meetings so that, where possible, any necessary ongoing support is arranged.



### Raising of the Participation Age (RPA)

The Raising of the Participation Age (RPA) means from 2013 all young people will continue in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17. In 2015 this rises to the academic year in which they turn 18. This change does not necessarily mean staying in school.

## Choices post-16

Possible options include the following routes:

- ▶ full-time education, such as school, college or home education;
- ▶ work-based learning, such as an apprenticeship; or
- ▶ part-time education or training, if they are employed, self-employed or volunteering for more than 20 hours a week

### Staying at school

Some young people will benefit from staying at school after Year 11. This option will need to be discussed carefully with your son or daughter, school staff, the Special Educational Needs Officer and your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser.

You can also call Children's Services on **0300 1234043**.

### Going to college

Further education colleges generally offer courses to meet a wide range of needs and abilities. They provide support for students with additional needs, including specialist teaching support, personal helpers, lifts/ramps or specialist equipment. Youth Connexions Personal Advisers can tell you about local courses, and also about funding and transport options.

## Higher education

For some young people, this is the next step after further education, and results in a higher level qualification such as a Foundation Degree or a Bachelor Degree (BA or BSc). Find out more through [www.ucas.ac.uk/students/wheretostart/disabledstudents](http://www.ucas.ac.uk/students/wheretostart/disabledstudents)

## Training and work

If your son or daughter feels confident enough to start work, he/she may benefit from attending a work-based learning course. This will help him or her to develop the skills needed. There may be a suitable Apprenticeship scheme. Your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser can discuss this and introduce you to other people who can help such as the Disability Employment Adviser at the Job Centre or Jobcentre Plus.

A young person may benefit from the Supported Employment/Work Solutions or support from the Health and Community Service Transition Team. Your son or daughter may be able to have a support worker alongside them for a while.

Call **0300 1234043** for the Health and Community Service Transition Team  
Call **01438 844911** (East Herts) or **01442 454464** (West Herts) for the Supported Employment/Work Solutions Team.

The Youth Connexions LDD Team also has a Supported Employment Team; for more information please call the Duty Line on **01438 844999**.

## Looking after yourself as a parent/carer

Being a carer can be confusing, bewildering and frightening. All carers need support and back up.

While your son or daughter is under 18, you may have a joint assessment with your child to see what support you are able to receive. Sometimes a child can be a carer in their own right.

Once your child turns 18, you are considered an adult carer and are entitled to a separate assessment.

The support you can get as a carer may include a break from caring. The important things to remember about a Carers Assessment are that :

- ▶ You will be listened to
- ▶ No-one will judge or criticise you
- ▶ No benefits will be affected
- ▶ The person you care for does not need to be receiving services
- ▶ The assessment outcome may help you in your caring role
- ▶ You are not obligated by the results of the assessment. The decision about any proposed support is yours and you don't have to take it

Free, confidential advice for carers is on Carers Direct, call **0808 802 0202**. Lines are open 9am to 8pm Mon to Fri (except Bank Holidays). Calls are free from UK landlines and mobiles.

## Support for money, health and leisure

### Money

When your son or daughter reaches 16, he or she can claim benefits in their own right. This may affect some benefits that you receive as the parent/carer.

Think about what financial support you may need.

Your Social Worker may be able to advise you and there are other places to find information about financial support you might be entitled to:

- ▶ Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) – call **0800 88 22 00**
- ▶ Citizen's Advice Bureau – visit **[www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)**
- ▶ Benefits and financial support for people with disabilities, including Higher Education Allowances – visit **[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)**
- ▶ A bursary of up to £1200 a year may be available for students between 16 and 19 years old – ask within the school or college about this.

### Health

Your son's or daughter's transition plan should also include preparing to move from children's health care to adult health care. Most young people attending hospital regularly move on to an adult hospital when they are between 16 and 18 years old.

A big change once this happens is that young people are encouraged to play a much bigger part in decisions about their own health.

To prepare for this change,

- ▶ Help your son or daughter to learn about their own condition and treatments
- ▶ Help them to ask questions at appointments
- ▶ Encourage them to take responsibility for their own medicines, making their own appointments and knowing who to contact in an emergency

### Health - My Purple Folder

All adults with a Learning Disability in Hertfordshire can have a 'My Purple Folder'. It has all their health information and details of the support they need. It helps them get the best health care from doctors, nurses, dentists and so on.

To ask for a folder, ask the Transition Team, Community Learning Disability Team, a Social Worker or Health Worker.

## Leisure

Leisure is important and should be included in your transition plan.

It's not just about having fun - activities can help gain independence and confidence.

Think about your son's or daughter's interests. The following websites have ideas about events, clubs, volunteering and projects:

- ▶ [www.hertsdirect.org/localoffer](http://www.hertsdirect.org/localoffer)
- ▶ [www.mogozout.org](http://www.mogozout.org)
- ▶ [www.zincarts.org.uk](http://www.zincarts.org.uk)
- ▶ [www.dofe.org](http://www.dofe.org)
- ▶ [www.do-it.org](http://www.do-it.org)
- ▶ [www.princes-trust.org.uk](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk)
- ▶ [www.vinspired.com](http://www.vinspired.com)

Transport to and from activities will need thinking about. Ask the school or college whether they have a travel training scheme.



# Housing

There are many options for where your son or daughter might live as an adult. Thinking about this now will help find the best solution for your son or daughter.

Some of the possibilities might be:

- ▶ Living with friends
- ▶ Living alone with support if needed
- ▶ In an adult placement
- ▶ Residential care
- ▶ Supported lodging or supported housing
- ▶ Renting privately
- ▶ Renting from a council or housing association

## Paying for where you live

Housing benefit may pay for some or all of your son's or daughter's living accommodation, but this will depend on circumstances

Find out about welfare benefits, housing benefits and funding that may be available from:  
**[www.hertsdirect.org](http://www.hertsdirect.org) or [www.housingoptions.org.uk](http://www.housingoptions.org.uk)**

Talk to your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser or Social Worker in Children's or Adult Services (HCS Transition Team)



## Social Care

Your son or daughter may already have a Social Worker. If so, they will be involved in the transition plan and will help ensure the social care support continues into adulthood if your son or daughter is eligible.

But don't worry if you don't currently have a social worker and feel you may need support in future from Social Services.

You can ask for an assessment from Hertfordshire County Council's Health and Community Service Transition Team on **0300 1234043**.

Young people who are eligible for social care services may be offered Self Directed Support - this means taking control of their own support needs and being given a Personal Budget to manage

Those with complex health care needs may receive continuing health care funding.



### Remember:

Thinking now about planning for the future will make things much easier

## The most important contacts

**Youth Connexions LDD Team Duty Line** 01438 844999

**Your son's or daughter's school or college**

**The social care team:**

**Children's Social Care** 0300 1234042

**Health and Community Service Transition Team** 0300 1234043

**Your son's or daughter's doctor/GP**

A fuller list of useful contacts along with more detailed information is available in the full 'Thinking about the Future' transition guide. Ask your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser if you need a copy.



**This booklet is issued by:**

Hertfordshire County Council, Services for Young People.

You can contact us in the following ways:

**By post**

Youth Connexions LDD Team, Postpoint 105, Farnham House,  
Six Hills Way, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 2FQ

**By telephone**

Duty phone number: 01438 844999

**By email**

Duty email: [LDD.DutyYouthConnexions@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:LDD.DutyYouthConnexions@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

**or visit our website**

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

The information contained in this booklet can be translated  
and/or made available in alternative formats, on request.

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