



It's YOUR Life!

Information for Eighth and Ninth Grade Students

Are you in the eighth or ninth grade in Minnesota and receive special education services? Then this information is for you. You are entering a new time in your life as you move to high school.

The more you are involved, the better your future will be. It's as simple as that! **You** have the right to help make changes in your education program at school.

You may be thinking:

“I don't know what I want to do in the future.”

“No one listens to me anyway.”

“I don't like to go to meetings at school where they talk about me.”

Remember that it is *your* life. Take a deep breath and start where you are comfortable, either at home or at school. First, think about what you want to happen in your life. Next, discuss and explore your ideas with your parents or other adults who are interested in you and care about you. You can always change your mind as you learn more about yourself.

Let your parents or other adults help you write down your thoughts on these questions (there are no right or wrong answers):

- What do I like to do?
 - At home? At school? In the community? Alone? With others?
- What am I good at? List everything you and your parents or teachers can think of. (*If you only do one thing on this list, make it this one!*)
- What help or support am I receiving in school now that helps me succeed? Is there other support I might need?
- What jobs would I like to know more about?
- Where might I want to go to receive more training or education after high school?
- Where might I want to live after high school?

A great place to start is your next Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting. Go to all or part of the meeting with your parents and teachers. Share your ideas. You may be surprised by how the adults will listen to you. Expect them to work with you to see that what **you** want gets written into your education plan.

It's *your* life. The law gives you the right to be involved in your own future. People who care about you will help makes plans for a good future for yourself!

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Remember the more involved you are, the better your future will be.