

Transition to Adulthood: Having an Active Social Life

General Information:

Having an active social life is an important part of adult life. Group activities can help you meet people, make friends and find new hobbies. An active social life can help make life more fun and help you feel better about yourself.

How can the IEP help?

If you have an IEP (Individualized Education Plan), public schools are required by law to include and use a transition plan at age 14. This plan includes activities that help you get ready for life after high school. The IEP helps you find and use community resources after high school. It is important that you take part in the IEP process. Examples of IEP goals that support an active social life include learning how to:

- Express yourself. This is called self advocacy.
- Explain your interests and needs. This is called accommodations.
- Learn and improve skills you need to be independent.
- Meet new people and make friends.
- Use community resources that have group activities.

What are some ideas?

Many communities have social or fun group activities. They may include:

- Travel
 - There are travel companies that help people who have some independence, like TravAbility <http://travability.travel/>.
- Sports
 - Adaptive sports are for those with physical disabilities or visual impairments (<http://www.wisconsinadaptivesports.org>)
 - Special Olympics are for those with an intellectual disability (ID) or other developmental disabilities (<http://www.specialolympicswisconsin.org>)
- Arts
 - Very Special Arts Wisconsin (<http://www.vsawis.org>)
- Classes on self-improvement, like personal development or self-advocacy. There are also adult summer camps and some may be diagnosis-specific.

More information about social options:

- Contact your local Regional Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs for local agencies and organizations in your area:
<http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/health/children/RegionalCenters/index.htm>
- ARC Wisconsin: <http://www.arc-wisconsin.org/>
- Life Navigators (used to be ARC of Greater Milwaukee): <http://www.lifenavigators.org/>
- IndependenceFirst: <http://www.independencefirst.org/>
- Very Special Arts Wisconsin: <http://www.vsawis.org/>
- Easter Seals Wisconsin: <http://eastersealswisconsin.com/>.

You can also contact your community recreation department.

If you do not have a computer or internet access, you can use a computer in The Daniel M. Soref Family Resource Center at Children's Hospital. Your local public library might have computers as well.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.