



Transitioning to Post-Secondary: Building Independence and Self-Advocacy for Students with LDs

A curated collection of transition resources

The transition from secondary school to post-secondary education is a significant shift for students with learning disabilities, including those with co-occurring ADHD and other neurodiverse learning profiles. It requires increased independence, a deeper understanding of one's learning profile, and the ability to navigate supports in new environments.

Success in this transition depends not only on academic readiness, but also on the development of self-advocacy, confidence, and a strong sense of identity as a learner. Students must be prepared to understand their strengths and needs, communicate effectively, and make informed decisions about their learning pathways.

At LD@school, supporting this transition means bringing together research, lived experience, and practical strategies. The resources below are designed to help educators, families, and professionals foster independence and self-advocacy and increase awareness of supports available in post-secondary settings. While this collection focuses on post-secondary education, many of these resources also support students in preparing for workplace pathways and transitions beyond school.

Real Talk: What I Wish I Knew About the Transition to Post-Secondary

Michayla Del Guidice shares her lived experience navigating the transition to post-secondary education, reflecting on the lessons she wishes she had known along the way as a student with learning disabilities.

Drawing from both personal and professional experience, she highlights the importance of understanding one's Individual Education Plan (IEP) and diagnosis, choosing pathways that align with individual strengths and needs, and developing self-advocacy skills that support success in post-secondary settings.

Practical strategies are woven throughout, including how to access on-campus supports, communicate accommodation needs, and approach post-secondary pathways with greater confidence and self-understanding.

Together, these insights offer an encouraging, student-centered perspective to support educators, families, and students as they prepare for the transition to post-secondary education.

[Watch the Webinar](#)

These Are My Needs: How to Foster Self-Advocacy in Students with LDs and ADHD

Developing self-advocacy skills in students with learning disabilities and ADHD is essential for success across school and beyond. More than simply asking for help, self-advocacy involves building self-understanding, confidence, and a strong sense of identity as a learner.

Drawing on practical and research-informed approaches, the presenters explore how to support students in identifying their strengths and needs, understanding their learning profiles, and making connections to their IEPs, accommodations, and supports. Attention is also given to the role of self-confidence and belonging, as well as the impact of stigma and "invisible" disabilities on students' willingness and ability to advocate for themselves.

A shared advocacy model is introduced to support a gradual shift from parent- and educator-driven advocacy to student-driven advocacy as students move through elementary, secondary, and into post-secondary pathways.

Together, these ideas offer practical strategies and a clear framework to support educators and families in building students' independence and self-advocacy over time.

[Watch the Webinar ... add link](#)

Transitioning from High School to Post-Secondary with a Learning Disability: A Student-Informed Guide

Grounded in research and student voice, this guide explores the experiences of students with learning disabilities as they navigate the transition from high school to post-secondary education. It highlights the shift toward greater independence, new expectations for self-advocacy, and the need to access supports in unfamiliar environments.

Drawing on lived experiences, the guide examines both the challenges and strengths that shape this transition, including navigating stigma, building self-confidence, and developing a stronger sense of identity as a learner. It emphasizes that transition is not only academic, but also emotional and identity-based.

Practical strategies are integrated throughout, supporting students in understanding accommodations, accessing supports, and building self-advocacy skills over time. The guide also highlights the importance of recognizing strengths such as resilience, creativity, and empathy as part of each student's pathway forward.

Together, these insights provide a research-informed and student-centered perspective to support educators, families, and students in navigating the transition to post-secondary education.

[Access the Guide](#)

Navigating the Transition Process for Students with Learning Disabilities

Effective transition planning plays a critical role in supporting students with learning disabilities as they move from secondary school to post-secondary pathways. This article outlines how intentional, strengths-based planning can support students in preparing for a range of post-secondary options, including college, university, and workplace pathways.

Drawing on Ontario policy and practice, the article highlights the importance of early preparation, collaboration among educators, families, and community partners, and the use of key planning tools such as the Individual Pathways Plan (IPP) and IEP-based transition plans.

A focus is placed on aligning supports with students' strengths, developing self-advocacy skills, and ensuring coordinated access to accommodations and services in post-secondary settings. It also provides an overview of the supports, processes, and resources available to help students navigate this transition.

The article also situates transition within a broader system context, recognizing both the barriers students may face and the structures that can support their success.

Together, these insights provide a practical overview of the planning processes and supports that can help students with learning disabilities navigate the transition to post-secondary education.

[Access the Article ... add link](#)

Moving Forward: Supporting Successful Transitions

The transition from secondary school to post-secondary pathways is a significant milestone that requires thoughtful planning and ongoing support. When students with learning disabilities are supported in developing self-awareness, independence, and self-advocacy, they are better prepared to navigate new environments and expectations.

Educators, families, and community partners all play a critical role in this process. By working together to align supports and build on student strengths, they help create the conditions for successful transitions.

With the right preparation and coordinated supports in place, students with learning disabilities, ADHD, and other neurodiverse learning profiles can approach post-secondary pathways with confidence and a strong foundation for continued learning and success.

