

I. Determine present level and needs of your student

- A. Who to ask?
- B. Options: Professional screening v. evaluation v. DIY screening
- C. Academic level, learning differences and disabilities, diagnosis.
- D. Social skills, life skills, motivation, job skills
- E. Humanities
- F. Maturity, wisdom, character

II. Set goals

- A. Pray
- B. Review, revise goals yearly
- C. Get your teen's input
- D. Post-secondary options: university, community college, college for students with disabilities, military, trade school, apprenticeship, other training, self-employment/entrepreneurship

QUESTION 1: IF you had to guess now, which would you say?

- E. Based on that destination, set intermediate goals
- F. Include career exploration.

QUESTION 2: Realistically what steps can you take before September to help you set goals: read one of these websites, skim a book I've mentioned? Name at least one step you will take before September.

III. Make a plan

- A. SMART goals
- B. Academic plan: Kinds of diplomas, awarding credit, remediation, accommodations.
- C. Transition plan
- D. College search, college special supports, special colleges.
- E. Entrepreneurship, trades

IV. Help following the plan:

- A. Review 3-4 times a year.
- B. Support for you
- C. Support for your teen
- D. Remember the plan will probably change

QUESTION 3: Name one thing you can do to seek support for you or your teen for next fall.

Evaluations

Evaluations are considered valid for three years. (If you plan a gap year, schedule accordingly.) If an evaluation is beyond your budget, there are free home screenings at SpedHomeschool.com and for HSLDA members at HSLDA.org. But an expert will discern more, so consult one if you can.

[Social skills assessment at TheOTtoolbox.com](#)

Transition Plan: by age 16, better at age 14 or earlier!

[Download sample transition plan from Understood.org](#)

General

- To understand different learning challenges, and diagnosis and treatment, read *The Mislabeled Child* by Brock Eide, MD, and Fernet Eide, MD (They homeschooled their kids.)
- SPEDHomeschool has many great resources including the Homeschool High School Checklist <https://spedhomeschool.com/high-school-help/>
- HSLDA's special needs pages <https://hsllda.org/teaching-my-kids/special-needs> and also see their pages on homeschooling through high school.
- *The Motivation Breakthrough* by Richard Lavoie.
- Help your child live a richer life, see Cheryl Swope, *Simply Classical: A Beautiful Education for Any Child* even if you don't plan on a classical approach.
- **Assistive technology:** tools to help: Joan Green is the best source for information and advice on finding the best assistive technology to help your teen wherever they are bound. She's an expert in helping people 1) get more out of the tech they already own, 2) find bargains on tech to help with many different needs. She keeps up with PC, Mac, Google, Android, and iOS, and she's a fan of homeschoolers. Visit innovativespeech.com to learn more or set up a free consultation. She's the author of the *Ultimate Guide to Assistive Technology in Special Education*.
- *Learning A Living: A Guide to Planning Your Career and Finding a Job for People with Learning Disabilities, Attention Deficit Disorder, and Dyslexia*, by Dale S. Brown [reviewed here](#).
- Chris Dendy, *Teaching Teens with ADD, ADHD, and Executive Function Deficits*.
- My review of *Smart but Scattered Teens* by Richard Guare, Ph.D, Peg Dawson, EdD, and Colin Guare.

- My first blogpost on “Helping Teens Overcome Learning Challenges” includes many other resources [LearnDifferently.com/2013/01/08/helping-teens-overcome-learning-challenges/](https://www.learnDifferently.com/2013/01/08/helping-teens-overcome-learning-challenges/)

Life skills

Steps to Independence by Dale S. Brown: [downloadable free here.](#)

-Chris Dendy and Ruth Hughes, *Launching into Young Adulthood with ADHD... Ready or Not!*

My blog series on [teaching life skills begins here.](#) The later posts focus on teens.

Social Skills

John Gottman, PhD., *Raising an Emotionally Intelligent Child: The Heart of Parenting.* Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize and respond appropriately to emotion in ourselves and others.

Ken Sande, author of *The Peacemaker*, gives online training on relational wisdom, [rw360.org](http://www.rw360.org)

Temple Grandin and Sean Barron’s book *The Unwritten Rules of Social Relationships.* (Written by two autistics, but helpful for others.)

Jed Baker, *The Social Skills Picture Book for High School and Beyond.*

Entrepreneurship MicrobusinessForTeens.com

Careers in the Trades

Blazing New Homeschool Trails: Educating and Launching Teens with Developmental Disabilities by Natalie Vecchione and Cindy LaJoy.

BlueCollarHomeschool.com and their Facebook group.

For teens who need more assistance or more time

- Your local chapter of the ARC can advise you on arranging guardianship or conservatorship, qualifying for Medicaid waivers (hint: start early!), and more. Your state has agencies to help, in Virginia, see all six at Virginia Disability Services Agencies. <https://www.dsa.virginia.gov>

College search and preparation for college

- Carol Reynolds, Ph.D., *Why Freshmen Fail and How to Avoid It.* [Read this sophomore or junior year with any teen.](#)
- Hal and Melanie Young, *Help is on the Way.* How to get accommodations for college boards and college, is [reviewed here.](#)

- Consultants like [Joan Wittan](#) and [Judy Bass](#) can help you find a college that's a good fit. Both give helpful webinars [here](#) and [here](#).
- Marybeth Kravets and Imy F. Wax, *K&W Guide to College for Students with Learning Differences*, 15th ed. published 2021.
- Peter and Pamela Wright are lawyers who've dedicated their lives to helping parents and students with disabilities navigate special education and ADA law. Here at [Wrightslaw.com](https://wrightslaw.com) is a helpful introduction to College Accommodations and the law.
- College accommodations and self-advocacy skills, [two-part blog post](#), is [here](#) & [here](#).
- College board website's special needs section, Services for Students with Disabilities. <https://accommodations.collegeboard.org>

Awarding credits to students with learning disabilities

To quote Faith Berens, HSLDA special needs consultant, Homeschooling Your Struggling Learner Newsletter, 4/14/11:

Q: How can I give my child high school credit for a course, such as math or history, if he is working or reading "below age/grade level"?

A: Struggling students, as well as functionally disabled students, are given high school credit and graduate from public high schools all the time. Therefore, in special cases, one should apply similar criteria to homeschool students who have a documented learning disability. For example, if a 10th-grade student is capable of doing only 6th-grade-level math, and that is truly his or her capacity according to the other conditions noted below, then he or she may be awarded a high school credit in math for completing the 6th-grade material.

Conditions

- If the student is in the 9th grade or above, and
- The student has been diagnosed as having a learning difficulty which has a documented history, and
- The student is performing at or near his or her capacity for learning in that subject, and
- The student is showing that this year's work is a progression from last year's work, and
- The student has completed all the requirements of the course to the satisfaction of the parent, and
- The work (or number of hours) have been documented to your satisfaction (120–180 hours).

"Then that student should be granted a high school credit for the course. Another example is a student who is reading below high school level. You can use adapted

materials, such as high interest/low readability materials, assistive technology such as print recognition software or reading pens, as well as books on audio for the literature and still grant the student high school credit.

“In these special circumstances, we are not attempting to lower high school standards or requirements, we are simply trying to make appropriate accommodations (and make the content accessible) for the student with a learning disability or special need. The goal is to help them attain their full, God-given potential and to make sure they are working up to their highest level of capability.”