TAKE CHARGE
OF YOUR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

A GUIDE FOR YOUNG ADULTS IN RHODE ISLAND’S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEM
February 2018

Dear Youth and Young Adults,

We are pleased to provide this new resource to assist you as you transition from the youth behavioral healthcare system into the adult system.

We consider the transition to adulthood to be a gradual process that happens between the ages of 14-25, rather than a legal change that occurs on one day. We recognize that your 18th birthday is just a day, and does not suddenly make you completely able to handle all the responsibilities and decisions that your new legal status gives you.

There is a lot of responsibility that will be given to you on the day you turn 18. You will have more independence and more ability to direct your own future, with rights such as being able to vote, marry, oversee your own medical treatment and education records, as well as the ability to sign contracts.

While transition into adulthood is an exciting stage of your life, it can also be one of unique challenges for you and your family, and this may be particularly difficult if you have behavioral health challenges. Challenges can include: moving from a system overseen by DCYF or the schools to one overseen by BHDDH; moving from pediatric to adult providers; moving from one insurance coverage to another; moving from home to college; and going from being a student to joining the workforce. Some people who have helped you manage your behavioral health challenges in the past may no longer be available. You may have to switch healthcare providers and obtain new insurance. We encourage you to turn to your parents, guardians, or other trusted adults for advice and value their input as you make important life decisions.

Luckily, there are lots of resources to help you during transition. This Guide provides a roadmap for your transition, helping you locate and use available resources that will enable you to become a successful adult. We hope you find it helpful!

Sincerely yours,

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This Guide was funded through the SAMHSA Now is the Time-Healthy Transitions grant, SM061885.
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Special Thanks: Sue Storti (Substance Use Mental Health Leadership Council); Lisa Conlan, Matt Finkler (Parent Support Network); Linda Mahoney, Lori Dorsey, Brenda Amoedo, Christine Emond, Susan Hayward, Denise Achin, Sarah Smith, Kate Breslin Harden, Thomas Martin (BHDDH); Susan Lindberg, Mike Burk, Tanya Alderman (DCYF); Chantele Rotolo (EOHHS); Carlos Ribeiro (DLT); Alice Woods, Jane Slade (RIDE); Colleen Polselli, Deb Golding (DOH); JoAnn Nannig (ORS); Lauranne Howard (DOC); Tara Townsend (RIPIN); Cindy Elder (NAMI-RI); Ruth Feder (MHARI); Anne Mulready (Disability Law Center); Sarah Dinklage, Leigh Raposa (RISAS); Benedict Lessing, Bridget Bennett, Mary Turillo (Community Care Alliance); Daniel Wartenberg (Newport Mental Health); Jane Hayward (RIHCA); Jessica Nievera McCluskey (Foster Forward), and Claire Rosenbaum (Sherlock Center).

A very special thanks to the youth and young adult focus group participants at the Kent Center and Parent Support Network- your input was invaluable!

This Guide was researched, written, and designed by Suellen Rizzo, L.C.S.W.
What is behavioral health?

Behavioral health is a term that covers the full range of mental and emotional well-being – from the basics of how we cope with day-to-day challenges of life, to the treatment of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. Your behavioral health is interconnected with your physical health.

Behavioral health conditions are common. People of all ages, genders, races and ethnicities have these conditions. Behavioral health conditions include mental health issues and substance use disorders.

- A mental health issue involves changes in your thinking, mood, and/or behavior.
- A mental illness is an illness that affects the way people think, feel, behave, or interact with others. There are many mental illnesses, and they have different symptoms that impact people’s lives in different ways.
- A substance use disorder is usually diagnosed by the continued use of alcohol and/or drugs despite negative consequences such as emotional, relationship, poor functioning at home, work, school or health issues.
- An individual with a mental illness and a substance use disorder is said to have a co-occurring disorder. Individuals with two disorders are vulnerable to relapse and a worsening of symptoms. The integration of treatment for both disorders is critical for recovery.
- An individual with a behavioral health condition and a medical condition (like diabetes or asthma), is said to have a comorbid condition.
- Recovery is a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach for their full potential.

What is behavioral healthcare?

Behavioral healthcare is a combination of treatments and supports tailored to fit the needs of each individual. This can include counseling, medication, assistance with getting or keeping a job or housing, as well as educational, social, and emotional support. Behavioral healthcare usually starts with a screening. Screenings can be brief questions. They can be done in a doctor’s office, medical practice, or a school-based setting. If the screening finds a concern, a more detailed assessment may be done for a diagnosis. An assessment is a more comprehensive interview to determine your needs. You may receive services like therapy or counseling, medication, and recovery or supportive services. Early identification and treatment can help you feel and get better and prevent a condition from getting worse.
How do I take charge of my behavioral health?

One of the most important things you will do as an adult is to take charge of your behavioral health needs. School, community, job, and relationship success depend largely on how well you are managing your behavioral health challenges. Continuing access to health resources is important when you are transitioning into adulthood.

When you turn 18, you are considered a legal adult. This means that you are in charge of your medical decisions – including your physical and behavioral healthcare needs. Your care providers will ask you about your medical needs, your health history, and what treatments you may or may not want. You need to be prepared to make these decisions and manage your behavioral health as you transition to adulthood.

But this doesn’t mean you have to do everything yourself. Don’t be afraid to ask close family and friends for support and guidance as you make the transition to adulthood.

**What you can do:**
- Know what your goals are in treatment
- Keep track of your appointments & commitments
- Be ready to ask & answer questions about your health
- Know your medications - learn what they’re for & when & how to take them
- Find out about your family’s health history
- Learn how to stay healthy, prevent illness and maintain good health
- Create and know your Aftercare and Crisis Plans

**You have:**
- The right to receive equal and nondiscriminatory treatment
- The right to be fully informed and participate in decisions regarding treatment and services
- The right to be treated with dignity, respect for privacy, and confidentiality
- The right to question your mental health services through a formal process
- The right to request information about the professional experience, training and credentials of your provider
- The right to change providers

When you turn 18, the primary responsibility for your healthcare shifts from your parent, guardian, or social worker, to you. As you grow into adulthood, your healthcare needs will change and you may need to change providers. You can rely on trusted adults – parents, guardians, or other trusted friends – to help you with this transition. Keep these points in mind as you begin to take more responsibility for your healthcare needs:

- Many pediatricians stop seeing their patients between the ages of 18 and 21;
- If you see a doctor who is a family or general practitioner as a child, you may choose to continue to see this doctor as an adult. This doctor can also help you transition to the adult system, so you should speak to them about your adult healthcare needs;
- Sometimes the services you may have received as a child from public programs through DCYF, the schools, or Medicaid may be very different from the services available to you as an adult. Getting access to the services you need – and knowing how to pay for them – is a critical step during your healthcare transition process;
- Your healthcare needs will include addressing adult issues. These include reproductive healthcare and screenings for adult risk factors such as diabetes, high cholesterol, etc.;
- Most teens with behavioral healthcare needs have health insurance through their parents’ plans or through public programs. If you are on your parents’ public plan, your eligibility for Medicaid will change when you turn 19. See page 12 for more information on Medicaid;
- Changing insurance sometimes makes it necessary to change providers.

Transitioning to adult healthcare is part of the process of becoming independent and learning to manage your own health, but it is a personal journey that is based on your unique circumstances and history.

See the following pages to discover key steps in your behavioral healthcare transition process.
IF YOU TURN 18 WHILE LIVING WITH YOUR PARENT OR GUARDIAN . . .

1. Talk to your parent or guardian about your move into the adult behavioral healthcare system. Find out if your current providers see adult patients.

2. If you are currently covered under your parent or guardian’s commercial policy, ask if you are eligible to remain on it until age 26. For more information about insurance, see page 12.

3. If you will continue coverage under your parents’ commercial policy, or will obtain your own commercial coverage, contact the insurance company to ask for referrals for adult providers. Use the member services number on the back of your insurance card to get started.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW:

Maintaining Medicaid:
If you are covered by Medicaid after age 19, you will get a letter from Medicaid every year to confirm that you still live at this address. Be sure to use a permanent address, and be sure to return this letter to Medicaid each year! If you don’t, you may lose coverage.

You may receive special education services; if so, make sure that your healthcare needs are addressed with your transition team at school so they can help with the planning.

If you are covered under Medicaid, contact your Medicaid group health number, using the member services number on the back of your insurance card. Ask your current providers for their recommendations and verify insurance coverage.
IF YOU TURN 18 WHILE IN FOSTER CARE, OR IF YOU LEAVE FOSTER CARE ANY TIME BETWEEN YOUR 18TH AND 21ST BIRTHDAY . . .

1. Talk to your DCYF Social Case Worker. Make sure they know you will need behavioral health services after you turn 18. Let them know where you will be living and what services you will need. Your social worker should help you with finding adult providers.

2. If you are in foster care and open to Family Court on your 18th birthday, you are entitled to healthcare benefits until you are age 26 as long as you remain a Rhode Island resident. Your social case worker will make sure you are automatically switched to Medicaid before you leave DCYF.

3. Sometimes you are able to keep your healthcare providers after you turn 18. Some only work with children and teens. Your current provider and your DCYF social case worker can help connect you to adult primary care and behavioral health providers.

You may receive special education services. If so, make sure that your healthcare needs are addressed with your transition team at school so they can help with the planning.

If you received Supplemental Social Security (SSI) benefits while at DCYF, your DCYF social worker will help you re-apply for benefits before you turn 18. Adult criteria for SSI eligibility differs from childhood eligibility criteria. See page 16 for more information on SSI.

If you need more information about finding adult behavioral healthcare providers, see page 9.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW:

Maintaining Medicaid:
Youth that age out of foster care are ENTITLED to Medicaid coverage up to their 26th birthday, but some accidentally lose their coverage when they don’t confirm their Rhode Island address each year to Medicaid. Use a permanent address or a Post Office box to ensure you always able to receive and return letters with Medicaid.

Eligibility Specialists:
If you need help or information about your healthcare benefits, contact one of the DCYF Medicaid Eligibility Specialists at DCYF by calling: 401-528-3500.
IF YOU TURN 18 AT THE RHODE ISLAND TRAINING SCHOOL, OR IF YOU LEAVE THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AFTER AGE 19...

1. **Plan Your Transition**
   - The social workers at the Training School or the Department of Corrections will discuss your behavioral healthcare needs as part of the transition plan they create for you prior to release. You should work closely with the social worker to coordinate your discharge planning. Let the social worker know where you will be living, and what behavioral health services you will need.

2. **Verify Your Benefits**
   - The social workers at the Training School or the Department of Corrections will work with you to complete all of the necessary medical insurance documents, including for Medicaid. You will need to follow-up and submit paperwork once you are in the community. If you are over age 19, you will have to obtain your own insurance. This can be Medicaid, commercial insurance provided through your parent or employer, or insurance provided through your college or university. For more information about insurance, see page 12.

3. **Find New Providers**
   - The social workers at the Training School or the Department of Corrections will help connect you with adult behavioral health providers as part of your transition plan. If you need more information about finding adult behavioral health providers, see page 9. Also, ask your current providers for their recommendations and verify insurance coverage with new providers.

**THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW:**

**Maintaining Medicaid:**
If you are covered by Medicaid after age 19, you will get a letter from Medicaid every year to confirm that you still live at this address. Be sure to use a permanent address, and be sure to return this letter to Medicaid each year! If you don’t, you may lose coverage.
IF YOU HAVE A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY...

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) at BHDDH oversees eligibility and services for adults with developmental disabilities. If you have a developmental disability (DD), start discussing whether or not you will apply for services before you leave school. You should apply for services 2 months prior to your 17th birthday. It is up to you whether or not you choose to disclose a behavioral health issue when applying for DD services.

You can apply for eligibility at bhddh.ri.gov/developmental_disabilities, or call (401) 462-3421 to request an application. You will receive a confirmation letter from BHDDH after your application is received. Your completed application will be reviewed within 30 days.

If you are found eligible, a staff member at BHDDH (known as a SIS worker) will meet with you and some of your closest supports (family, friends, teachers, service providers) to assess your needs.

At this meeting, your SIS worker will do an assessment using a standardized tool called a Support Intensity Scale (SIS). It takes about 2-3 hours to complete the SIS. The result of this assessment will help plan the services you may need. This assessment may be completed up to two years before you leave school.

You will be assigned a social case worker. This case worker will help you plan for your future and the services you may need. You will choose a service provider who will help you create an Individual Service Plan (ISP). You have the option to receive individualized services through a provider agency or through self-directed supports.

Once you choose a service model, you and your support staff will create an Individual Service Plan (ISP). The ISP will list the steps you need to take to reach your goals. Your Individual Service Plan is submitted to BHDDH for approval each year.

If you need behavioral health services, you will have to apply for these services separately (see pages 9-11 and page 15 to learn more).

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW:

The following supports may be available to you through your DD provider:

- Case management
- Supported employment
- Integrated day and community activities
- Transportation
- Community and residential supports
- Emergency assistance

If you are found not eligible for services and you want to appeal the decision, send a written request for an appeal within 30 days of receiving your decision letter to the attention of the Office of Legal Counsel, BHDDH, 14 Harrington Road, Cranston, RI 02920-3080
How do I find behavioral health services?

Behavioral health providers work in hospitals, community mental health centers, substance use agencies, primary care practices, schools, colleges, and private practices.

An important step to getting behavioral healthcare is finding a provider. There are different ways to do this:

1. Ask your Primary care provider. They may be able to screen and treat your problem, or provide you referral assistance. Check with your insurance company or call the behavioral health provider’s office to be sure they accept your insurance and are an in-network provider.

2. If you have commercial insurance, call the member services number on the back of your insurance card to get help finding providers. You can also look at their website, or check your member handbook to find behavioral health providers in your network.

3. If you have Medicaid, call the member services number on the back of your insurance card to get help finding providers. You can also look at provider directories on the HealthSource RI website: https://healthsourceri.com/individuals-and-families/find-a-plan/#directories

4. Ask family, friends, or another person in your community for suggestions and recommendations.

5. Check out Zencare, a web-based referral service that can help you find a therapist in Rhode Island: https://www.zencare.co/therapists/rhodeisland

6. The Substance Use and Mental Health Leadership Council of RI (SUMHLC) maintains a list of mental health and addiction treatment providers on its website: https://www.sumhlc.org/treatment-locator/. This list includes the Community Mental Health Centers, discussed on the next page.

7. BHDDH maintains a provider directory, located on its website. http://www.bhddh.ri.gov/mh/individual%20Copy.php


Types of Behavioral Health Providers

Psychiatrists
Physicians who diagnose mental and substance use disorders, prescribe and monitor medications, and provide counseling and therapy.

Psychiatric or Mental Health Nurse Practitioners
Provide assessment, diagnosis, and therapy for mental and/or substance use disorders. They can also prescribe medication.

Clinical Psychologists
Make diagnoses and provide counseling and therapy.

Counselors
Make diagnoses and provide counseling. They help with improving life and relationships.

Clinical Social Workers
Make diagnoses and provide counseling, therapy, case management, and advocacy.

Substance Use and Addiction Counselors
Can provide counseling, information about the healthcare system, provide emotional and social support, and help your recovery.

Peer Specialists/Recovery Coaches
People who have experienced mental or substance use disorders and are in recovery. They can teach you about the healthcare system, provide emotional and social support, and help your recovery. Peers receive training and are certified.
Where can I learn about my Community Mental Health Center?

Rhode Island has a network of six private, nonprofit community mental health centers, known as CMHCs: Community Care Alliance; Gateway; The Providence Center; The Kent Center; East Bay Community Action; and Newport Mental Health. Rhode Island’s network also includes a specialty provider, Fellowship Health Resources. This network provides comprehensive behavioral health services to adults with behavioral health needs. Typically, these centers provide behavioral health services ranging from emergency services, general and intensive community-based outpatient treatment, substance use treatment, and other services. They may offer vocational and supported employment services, navigators who can help you get health insurance, tax preparation assistance, and housing supports. If you receive services as a child, they will help you transition to adult services or programs provided within or outside their agency.

The Community Mental Health Centers are regionally based as indicated on the map below. However, as a RI resident, you may access services at any CMHC. Refer to page 11 to get more information about location and hours of operation for each center. Residents of any town can access services at Fellowship Health Resources.

If you are experiencing a crisis, you can walk into any of these Community Mental Health Centers during their normal business hours and they will provide treatment. For after-hours emergency treatment, call the Center’s emergency number or call 911.
When you call the intake line, you may get an appointment for an assessment with a staff member. They may also ask what type of insurance you have and discuss payment options. Some centers have a wait list for services, so don’t be discouraged! If you are in crisis, see page 14.

What to bring to your first appointment

Most of the centers recommend the following documents:
- Photo ID
- Health insurance card
- If uninsured, bring two pay stubs or two bank statements showing your electronic pay deposits or your most recent federal tax return.

What to expect at your first appointment

The first appointment consists of an assessment, where you will discuss your behavioral health history and any current issues you may be having. Your clinician will use this visit to determine with you what your behavioral healthcare needs are.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Center Name</th>
<th>Main Address</th>
<th>Intake Phone #</th>
<th>Emergency Phone #</th>
<th>Walk-in hours</th>
<th>Closest bus stop*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Care Alliance</td>
<td>800 Clinton Street (1st floor), Woonsocket</td>
<td>235-7121</td>
<td>235-7120</td>
<td>Monday-Friday 8 am – 2 pm</td>
<td>Route 87 Cumberland@ Clinton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateway (Johnston)</td>
<td>1443 Hartford Avenue, Johnston</td>
<td>273-8100</td>
<td>273-8100</td>
<td>Monday-Thursday 9 am – 2 pm</td>
<td>Route 28 @ 1481 Atwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Kent Center</td>
<td>50 Health Lane, Warwick</td>
<td>732-5656</td>
<td>783-4300</td>
<td>Monday-Thursday 8:30 – 3:30; call to schedule an appointment for evenings</td>
<td>Route 29 @ Kent County Hospital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateway (Charlestown)</td>
<td>4705A Old Post Road, Charlestown</td>
<td>364-7705</td>
<td>364-7705</td>
<td>No walk-in hours; call to schedule an appointment</td>
<td>Route 204# (Westerly Flex) will stop at Center on request</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newport Mental Health</td>
<td>127 Johnny Cake Hill Road, Middletown</td>
<td>846-1213</td>
<td>846-1213</td>
<td>Monday-Friday 9 am – 2 pm</td>
<td>Route 60 W, Main @ Dudley; also Route 231 Flex will stop at Center on request</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Bay Center</td>
<td>601 Wampanoag Trail, East Providence; 2 Old County Road, Barrington</td>
<td>246-1195</td>
<td>246-0700</td>
<td>No walk-in access; call to schedule an appointment</td>
<td>610 Wampanoag: 32, 30, 61X; Old County Road: 60, 61X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Providence Center</td>
<td>530 North Main Street &amp; 355 Prairie Avenue, Providence</td>
<td>276-4020</td>
<td>274-7111</td>
<td>No walk-in access; call to schedule an appointment</td>
<td>N. Main: Route R at University Heights; Prairie Ave: Route 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateway (Pawtucket)</td>
<td>101-103 Bacon Street, Pawtucket</td>
<td>273-8100</td>
<td>723-1915</td>
<td>Monday-Thursday 9 am – 2 pm</td>
<td>Route 80 Columbus Avenue @ Memorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellowship Health Resources, Inc.</td>
<td>45 Sockanossett Crossroad, Unit 4, Cranston,</td>
<td>383-4885</td>
<td>1-866-779-4106</td>
<td>Monday-Friday 8 am – 4 pm</td>
<td>Route 21 New London Turnpike @ Chapel View</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Flex buses are available by appointment. Call RIPTA 24 hours before to reserve at 1-877-906-3539.

*LogistiCare (LGTC) manages non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) for Medicaid members. You can receive a ride to a Medicaid-enrolled medical practitioner/provider. Call the Medicaid Member Reservation line at 1-855-330-9131 or go to https://member.logisticare.com to request a ride.
What is health insurance?
Health insurance helps pay for healthcare services like office visits, annual wellness check-ups, or counseling and prescription medication. Health insurance helps protect you financially if something unexpected happens. It also helps you pay for services to keep you healthy and deal with ongoing physical and behavioral health conditions.

What behavioral health services does health insurance include?
Most health plans generally cover mental health and substance use disorder services, including these behavioral health treatments:

- Access to behavioral health providers like psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, registered nurses, and counselors
- Treatments like psychotherapy, counseling, medication, and addiction treatment
- Inpatient services like a hospital or emergency room visit
- Pre-existing conditions
- Preventive services like alcohol and depression screenings are covered at no cost under most health insurance plans

What costs do you still have to pay when you have insurance?

- **Deductible**: the amount of money you must pay before an insurance company will pay a claim. Medicaid does not have deductibles.
- **Co-insurance**: when you pay a share of the payment made against a claim.
- **Co-payment**: a fixed amount you pay for a covered healthcare service after you've paid your deductible. Medicaid does not have deductibles.
- **Premium expenses**: the amount of money charged by your insurance company for the plan you’ve chosen, usually paid on a monthly basis.
- The cost difference between seeing a provider in-network and out-of-network.

What is the Sherlock Plan?
The Sherlock Plan is a Medicaid Buy-In Program for employed adults with disabilities that provides comprehensive health coverage to help individuals with disabilities maintain or obtain health coverage and other services and to enable them to maintain employment. There are income guidelines and there may be a monthly premium. To find out more or to apply, call 1-855-967-4347.
What resources are available to me in college?

Some possible accommodations on campus:

**In the classroom**
- Preferred seating
- Breaks during class
- Voice-recorded lectures
- Classmate acts as note-taker
- Text and syllabus available in advance
- Frequent feedback on ongoing classwork
- Alternate format for assignments

**During exams**
- Exams in alternate formats
- Extended time for test-taking
- Exams given one-on-one
- Breaks allowed during test
- Testing in room with limited distractions
- Take an exam over multiple sessions

**Completing assignments**
- Extended time allowed
- Advance notice of assignments
- Textbook available on tape
- Assistive technology (calculators, spell checkers)
- Working in pairs for in-class assignments
- Help with assignments during hospitalizations

**In general**
- Reduced course load
- First choice when selecting classes
- “Incomplete” instead of “failure” if relapse occurs

Behavioral health on campus

Don’t let your behavioral health condition keep you from pursuing higher education. State, federal, and local laws prohibit discrimination against students with disabilities (including behavioral health conditions), and schools are required to provide extra supports and services to help you succeed.

Confidentiality

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prohibits colleges from disclosing health records – and other information – without the student’s written consent. Registering with disability services on campus will not appear on your transcript. Records from disability services cannot be distributed without your written consent.

Who can help me find out what services I qualify for?

- Check your college website to find the counseling center on campus. Most college counseling centers provide free therapy visits, as well as other supportive services for students with behavioral health issues.
- The Office of Rehabilitation Services (ORS) provides assistance for students with disabilities who are attending college, including counseling, accommodations, and possible funding. To learn more, go to [http://www.ors.state.ri.us/VR.html](http://www.ors.state.ri.us/VR.html)

Other behavioral health supports on campus

- [www.ulifeline.org](http://www.ulifeline.org): an online college resource that provides information about behavioral health issues and professional resources on campus.
- [www.activeminds.org](http://www.activeminds.org): a student-run organization dedicated to raising mental health awareness among college students. Currently there are Active Minds chapters at Brown University, Bryant University, Providence College, and Rhode Island College.

GETTING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ACCOMMODATIONS ON CAMPUS

1. Set up a meeting with your school’s disability service center.
2. Get documentation from a recent evaluation with your doctor or psychiatrist about your behavioral health condition.
3. Tell the person at disability services what accommodation(s) you think you will need.
4. Your school’s disability services center will approve the accommodation(s) you both agree are needed.
5. Provide a copy of your accommodation(s) letter to each of your teachers. You will have to do this every semester with every teacher.
6. You can always revise the accommodations later if you think they should be changed.
What if I have a crisis and may need hospitalization?

A crisis may occur when you are feeling overwhelmed. You might be in trouble with the law or thinking about injuring yourself. It's also a crisis situation if you find yourself developing a plan to take your own life or are considering hurting others. You may feel out of control or hopeless, or feel as though you are having trouble managing your medications. The most important thing you can do is to get in touch with someone who can help you. In the event of a crisis, refer to your Crisis or After Care Plan.

Possible actions you can take:
- Call your doctor or mental health counselor
- Call your pastor, priest, or faith-based leader
- Call a Community Mental Health Center (see page 11)
- Call RI’s Hope & Recovery Support Line: 401-942-STOP (7867)
- Call Call a crisis line: National Suicide Prevention Hotline 1-800-273-TALK (8255); Veteran’s Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255 press 1, or text 838255 (see page 20)
- Call 911
- Go to the closest emergency room or urgent care center

Types of hospital admissions:

**Voluntary Admission**
If you meet hospital level of care, you will most likely be offered voluntary admission to sign in to the hospital. As a voluntary patient, you can sign an “Intent to Leave” at any time, indicating that you no longer wish to be hospitalized. A doctor will assess you to make sure you can be safely discharged. If the hospital thinks you need further treatment to ensure a safe discharge, it can petition the Mental Health Court (MH Court) to review if you should remain hospitalized.

**Emergency Certification**
A qualified mental health professional may apply to have you hospitalized on an emergency certification basis if they believe you pose an immediate danger to yourself or others. If the hospital agrees you need treatment, they can hold you up to 10 days without going to MH Court. You may be discharged at the end of the 10 days, or you may be asked to stay voluntarily if the treating physician believes you need to remain hospitalized. If you refuse to remain voluntarily, they will petition the court for an order keeping you in the hospital for further treatment.

**Civil Court Certification**
This is the legal procedure that allows the medical system to treat you without your permission/involuntarily for up to 6 months. The court order specifies where and what treatment you must receive. Court-ordered treatment may be provided in a psychiatric hospital, a group home operated by a Community Mental Health Center, or mandatory treatment by a Community Mental Health Center while you live in the community.

For more information on emergency certifications or civil court certifications, please refer to RI Mental Health Law §40.1-5-7 and §40.1-5-8.

**While you are in the hospital:**

While you are in the hospital, you will work with a social worker, doctor, and other staff to create your treatment plan. The treatment plan will establish goals you need to meet before you are discharged. Most hospitals review their treatment plans daily.

If you have concerns about your care while you are in the hospital, contact the Rhode Island Mental Health Advocate at 401-462-2003 or the 24/7 Quality Assurance line at the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals (BHDDH) (401) 462-2629.

Hospitals should have a safe discharge plan in place for you before you are released, including what to do in a crisis. Most hospitals will discharge you with referrals, or with actual appointments at a community mental health center in your area.

**THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW:**

**Mental Health Court**
Rhode Island has a Mental Health Court that meets every Friday to review hospital certification for court-ordered outpatient and inpatient treatment. At Mental Health Court hearings, most patients are represented by the Mental Health Advocate, and hospitals are represented by an attorney from BHDDH.

**Court Orders**
Court orders can be for inpatient or outpatient treatment. Outpatient orders require that you continue your treatment at a community mental health center. Inpatient orders mandate that you remain in the hospital until you can be safely discharged.
What is a Substance Use Disorder (SUD)?

Substance use: A substance use disorder is usually identified by the continued use of alcohol and/or drugs despite negative consequences. The coexistence of a mental health disorder with a substance use disorder is referred to as co-occurring disorder, which is common in young adults. Read below to see if you might have a problem. If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant, you need to be especially careful with using substances as your baby can be born dependent on the drugs you use.

Substance use disorders and symptoms: A substance use problem is when you continue to drink or use drugs despite negative consequences, such as financial, relationships, legal, mental health, medical or other areas of your life. It often involves increased tolerance where you need more of the same substance to get the feeling you want and withdrawal symptoms when you stop using. Alcohol and benzodiazepine withdrawal are serious medical emergencies and need medical supervision.

- Alcohol use disorder: the continued or excessive use of alcohol which puts you at risk of developing tolerance to alcohol, (you need more and more to get the effects you want), risky behaviors or serious alcohol withdrawal symptoms which often requires medical detoxification.
- Tobacco use disorder: persistent smoking, including vaping nicotine (e-cigarettes), can damage nearly every organ in your body, often leading to lung cancer, respiratory disorders, heart disease, stroke, or other illnesses, and cause tolerance and withdrawal symptoms.
- Opioid use disorder: includes both illegal use of prescribed pain medications or those bought on the street, like heroin, or the misuse of legal drugs like Oxycontin, Vicodin, Tylenol with codeine… Continued use/misuse can lead to serious health problems that can include death. Tolerance does build up and many people must continue use to avoid severe withdrawal symptoms.
- Cannabis use disorder: cannabis (marijuana) use can change your mood, cause difficulty with talking and problem-solving, impaired memory and hallucinations, delusions and psychosis. Withdrawal symptoms include cravings, sleeplessness, irritability, and rage.
- Stimulant use disorder: the misuse of stimulants like Molly, Ecstasy, amphetamines, and cocaine can cause tolerance, long-term brain changes, sleep/appetite loss and more. Withdrawal symptoms: craving, fatigue, depression, hallucinations, violence, and paranoia.
- Hallucinogen use disorder: use of hallucinogens such as LSD, peyote, and mushrooms can make you feel out of control, experience problems with memory loss, anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts. Withdrawal includes irrational thoughts/behaviors, paranoia, violence...

Substance Use Treatment

These are some options available to treat substance use disorders:

Outpatient treatment: Treatment provided in an outpatient setting: individual and/or group sessions.

Intensive Outpatient and Partial Hospital Treatment programs: Usually provided in group settings with weekly individual and family counseling.

Residential treatment — Live-in (overnight) programs that offer substance abuse therapy and services for a longer period of time, usually 30 to 90 days.

Medication-assisted treatment — Treatment includes therapy and the use of medication like suboxone, naltrexone, or methadone.

Peer-to-peer support and recovery centers — Places where you can get support from people who are in recovery from a substance use or co-occurring disorder.

Where to find info and treatment

- Agencies licensed to provide substance use treatment in Rhode Island: [http://www.bhddh.ri.gov/substance_use/](http://www.bhddh.ri.gov/substance_use/). Click on “Licensed Treatment Providers”
- Centers of Excellence for Opioid Use Disorders: Provides assessments and treatment for opioid dependence, expedited access to care and a resource for community-based providers. [http://www.bhddh.ri.gov/sections/opioid_use_disorders.php](http://www.bhddh.ri.gov/sections/opioid_use_disorders.php)
- The Substance Use and Mental Health Leadership Council of RI (SUMHLC): Maintains a list of mental health and addiction treatment providers on its website [https://www.sumhlc.org/treatment](https://www.sumhlc.org/treatment). Click on “Licensed Treatment Providers”
- Call RI’s Hope & Recovery Support Line: 401-942-STOP (7867)
- Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs): see pages 10-11 for more information.

Resources written for parents, but containing useful information for young adults:

- What questions to ask when searching for a substance use treatment provider: [https://drugfree.org/download/questions-to-ask-treatment-programs](https://drugfree.org/download/questions-to-ask-treatment-programs)
What is Supplemental Security Income (SSI)?

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

SSI is a Federal program administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA), which provides Medicaid coverage and monthly cash payments to eligible individuals who meet income and disability criteria.

Adult Eligibility (18 and older)

There are different criteria for children birth to 18 and for adults 18 and older. At 18, your income and assets are used to determine income eligibility, and your disabling condition must meet criteria as defined by SSA for an adult disability. Disability is a medically determinable physical or mental impairment which results in the inability to do any substantial gainful activity and has lasted or can be expected to last for at least 12 months.

You may still be able to work once you qualify for SSI. If you are under 22 and attending school or a training/vocational program, SSI will not count some of your earnings before they reduce your SSI check. You can also save money for college and training programs while you are on SSI.

How to see if you might be eligible for SSI or other programs

You can use SSA’s online Benefit Eligibility Screening Tool (BEST) to see if you might be eligible for SSI or other programs and give you more information about how to qualify and apply. This tool is not an application for benefits; you still need to start an application. The Benefit Eligibility Screening Tool is available at https://ssabest.benefits.gov/benefits/benefit-finder#benefits&qc=cat_31

If you are found eligible, SSA starts paying your benefit amount and you are eligible to receive Medicaid coverage. You can file an appeal if you are found not eligible.

Applying for SSI Benefits

Phone
Call SSA’s toll-free number, 1-800-772-1213, to make an appointment to start an application at your local Social Security office or to set up an appointment for someone to take your claim over the telephone.

Text/Telephone (TTY): If you’re deaf or hard of hearing, you may call SSA’s toll-free TTY number, 1-800-325-0778, between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Online
You can apply online through the Social Security Administration at www.socialsecurity.gov

In Person
Local Social Security Offices are located at:
- 130 Bellevue Avenue, 1st Floor, Newport
- 4 Pleasant Street, Pawtucket
- One Empire Plaza, 6th Floor, Providence
- 2 Shaws Cove, Room 101, New London, CT (for Westerly residents)
- 2168 Diamond Hill Road, Woonsocket
- 30 Quaker Lane, Warwick

Disability Starter Kit:
If you schedule an appointment, SSA will send you a Disability Starter Kit to help you get ready for your disability claims interview. There are starter kits for both children and adults, available in English and Spanish. You can access them online at www.socialsecurity.gov/disability
Who can help me make decisions about my life?

As you become an adult, your parent or guardian’s role changes. Before you turned 18, they may have been involved with your medical care, educational progress, and helped you navigate the systems that serve your behavioral health needs. Once you turn 18, however, you are presumed to be an adult capable of making your own decisions, and you can determine your parents’ involvement.

In most cases, you will be able to manage this new responsibility. However, all adults can use help from others in making important decisions. Before you turn 18, you and your family should explore options for decision-making assistance that may benefit you once you become an adult.

**SUPPORT NETWORK**
You invite adults to help you keep track of appointments, medications, important medical records, communication with doctors, and other healthcare needs. You may need to sign releases if you want them to be able to communicate with your providers.

**OTHER SUPPORTS**
You may need help in other areas of your life. This includes things like housing, health care coverage, food, and transportation. Look at pages 18, 19, and 20 for resources in RI. You will find contact information for agencies that can help you find housing, food, application assistance and more. You don’t have to do it alone!

**HEALTHCARE OPTIONS**
You can draft a written statement that gives another person (your “agent”) the power to make healthcare decisions for you when you are not able. RI has a template for a Durable Power of Attorney that you can complete for this purpose.

**FINANCIAL**
If you receive Social Security or VA disability benefits and cannot manage those benefits, you can direct the SSA or the VA to appoint a person to manage your benefits. This person or agency is known as a “Representative Payee” or a “Fiduciary”. They are appointed through the filing of an application with SSA or the VA. They will receive your benefit checks and must use the income to meet your basic needs.

You also have the option to give someone power of attorney rights for you. A power of attorney gives another person (your “agent”) the power to act for you. You can appoint an agent to handle your financial affairs.

There are other less formal options for getting help to manage your money. These include joint bank accounts, credit cards with limits, bank cards with limited withdrawal amounts and notification alerts when an account is accessed...

A more permanent legal arrangement that others may suggest is called guardianship. This is a legal step that takes away your ability to make decisions for yourself and places those decisions – financial, healthcare, relationships, and place of residence – in the hands of a guardian appointed by the Court. Others may start this process without your involvement. You should explore all other options before considering guardianship. You and your family should talk about this option and all other alternatives before you turn 18. For more information about guardianship contact the Rhode Island Disability Law Center: call (401) 831-3150 TTY: (401) 831-5335 or website: [http://www.ridlc.org/resources](http://www.ridlc.org/resources)
Local Community Supports

## Education support

**Adult Education and GED (General Equivalency Diploma)**
Programs in Adult Education, GED, Workforce Training, and English for Speakers of Other Languages are offered during the day and evening to prepare adults for jobs and career pathways. Instruction can be provided face to face or online. For more information go to [www.ride.ri.gov](http://www.ride.ri.gov) or call (401) 222-8948

**The RI Resource Hub**
This is an online directory of education and career resources to search for jobs, classes, training programs, and career development opportunities. For more information go to [http://riresourcehub.org/](http://riresourcehub.org/)

**Way to Go RI**
This is a web portal offering free services to help students, parents & educators explore education and career options. High school students can develop personalized learning plans and do extensive college and job research. [https://www.waytogori.org/Home/_default.aspx](https://www.waytogori.org/Home/_default.aspx)

**College Planning Center**
The center provides free college planning services. This includes helping you find colleges, and with college and financial aid applications. Call 401-736-3170 or visit [https://www.risla.com/college-planning-center](https://www.risla.com/college-planning-center)

## Job and vocational support

**YouthWORKS411**
If you are between the ages of 14-24, you can go to a YouthWORKS 411 center. These centers are located across the state. Services are based on your individual needs and can include education, occupational skills training, job placement services, and connections to other social services. For more information go to [http://www.dlt.ri.gov/youthworks411/](http://www.dlt.ri.gov/youthworks411/)

**Office of Rehabilitation Services (ORS)**
ORS works with schools, families and students to prepare you for job training, career development and employment opportunities after high school. **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program** assists individuals with disabilities to choose, prepare for, obtain and maintain employment. To be eligible you must have a physical, intellectual or emotional impairment which is a substantial barrier to employment, and require VR services to obtain employment. For more information go to [http://www.ors.state.ri.us/VR.html](http://www.ors.state.ri.us/VR.html)

**Network RI**
The Department of Labor and Training matches jobseekers and employers through quality employment programs and services. Programs located throughout the state. Call 401-462-8900 or visit [http://www.networkri.org](http://www.networkri.org)

## Basic needs

**United Way of RI’s 211**
Rhode Island 2-1-1 is a free, confidential service that provides information and referrals related to lifelong learning, basic supports, and community engagement. You can get information about food, housing, or medical costs. The call is free and available in multiple languages. Call 2-1-1 directly, use online chat, text, or go to [www.211ri.org](http://www.211ri.org)

**Rhode Island Community Action Association**
This is the network of community action programs (CAPs). CAPs serve all cities and towns in Rhode Island. They can provide resources, support, and you need. To find your local CAP agency, go to [www.ricommunityaction.org](http://www.ricommunityaction.org)

**Crossroads Rhode Island**
If you need a place to sleep or are an emergency, contact Crossroads. Crossroads’ staff makes referrals to shelters that have available beds. Shelters provide a temporary place to stay and the basic necessities for individuals and families in crisis. 401-521-2255

**Rhode Island Community Food Bank**
You may be eligible to receive food through the Rhode Island Community Food Bank. It distributes food to people in need through a network of agencies statewide. [http://rifoodbank.org/find-food/](http://rifoodbank.org/find-food/)

**Health Home Community Resource Guide**
This is a comprehensive listing of health and human services resources in Rhode Island. For more information go to [https://www.sumhlc.org/resources/health-home-resource-guide/](https://www.sumhlc.org/resources/health-home-resource-guide/)

**Rhode Island Housing**
Contact RIH if you need information about low-interest loans, grants, education and assistance to find, rent, buy, build and keep a good home. RIH maintains a list of affordable housing units in Rhode Island [http://www.rhodeislandhousing.org/](http://www.rhodeislandhousing.org/)

**RIPTA reduced-fare bus passes**
RIPTA is Rhode Island’s public transportation agency. Contact RIPTA at (401) 784-9500 ext. 2012. You may be eligible for reduced-fare passes.
Department of Health

The RI Department of Health, Office of Special Needs, has many resources to help you manage your transition. These include printed materials, and live trainings. Resources include a Youth Transition Workbook, Ready Set Go! Checklists, information about the Dare to Dream program, Healthy Lifestyles Classes, and a Youth Internship Program. For more information, call 401-222-5960 or visit http://www.health.ri.gov/

Youth Development and Education Aftercare Services

Aftercare Services is a voluntary program providing services and supports for young adults formerly involved with DCYF. Young adults are assisted in identifying and utilizing applicable community-based resources with the goal of having each young adult ready to live independently before or by their 21st birthday. For more information, contact DCYF at 401-528-3576.

Rhode Island Legal Services

Helps low income families, seniors, the elderly, and others with taxes, housing (evictions and foreclosure), domestic violence, income, consumer law, and other civil issues. Most services are free to income-qualified residents. https://www.helprilaw.org/

Rhode Island Parent Information Network (RIPIN)

RIPIN supports state agencies, schools, and parent organizations with the transition planning process. Staff can help you and your family identify resources and supports to help your transition to adult services. RIPIN’s resource-rich website is available at www.ripin.org

Mental Health Association of Rhode Island (MHARI)

MHARI has prepared a toolkit for young adults showing you how to access adult mental health services in Rhode island. It’s available at http://mhari.org

Sherlock Plan

The Sherlock Plan is a Medicaid Buy-In Program for adults with disabilities that provides comprehensive health coverage to help individuals with disabilities maintain or obtain health coverage and other services and to enable them to maintain employment. There may be a monthly premium. To find out more or to apply, call (401) 462-2354.
Hotlines and Other Resources

Hotlines
Please call 911 if you feel you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 24/7: 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)

Veteran’s Crisis Line/Text/Web 24/7: (veterans and families): 1-800-273-8255 press 1; Text: 838255;
web: https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/

RI’s Hope and Recovery Support Line 24/7: 401-942-stop/401-942-7867. English & Spanish.

NAMI Crisis Text Line 24/7: 741-741
Helpline: 800-273-8255

Narcotics Anonymous Helpline: 1800-974-0062;
NE Regional: 866-NA-HELP (866-624-3578);
Southern Rhode Island: 401-461-1110;
Family/Partner Supports: 1-800-477-6291

Alcoholics Anonymous: 401-438-8860 or 401-739-8777 or Spanish Speaking 401-621-9698

Child-Help USA: 1-800-422-4453
Assists child and adult survivors of abuse, including sexual abuse.

Other Resources

Prevent Overdose RI
This website provides the latest data on addiction and overdose in Rhode Island. You can find resources on preventing overdose written for family members, healthcare providers, and others. For more information go to preventoverdoseri.org

Prevention Coalition
A group of providers responsible for planning and delivery of regional substance use prevention activities. For more information go to http://www.bhddh.ri.gov/substance_use/providers.php

Sherlock Center
The mission of the Sherlock Center is to promote membership of individuals with disabilities in school, work, and the community. Focus areas include inclusion and community membership, transition, workforce and professional development, and self-determination. For more information go to www.ric.edu/sherlockcenter

Got Transition?
This is a national resource for healthcare professionals, families and youth that aims to improve transition from pediatric to adult healthcare by providing effective healthcare transition supports to youth, young adults, and families. For more information go to www.gottransition.org

Mobile Resources

Using the Medical ID feature on your smartphone
It is easy to set up and can be accessed by anyone in the event of an emergency. You can use this to enter all your health information including medications, providers, and emergency numbers whenever you need them. To set up Apple Devices:
http://www.gottransition.org/resourceGet.cfm?id=437
To set up Android Devices:
http://www.gottransition.org/resourceGet.cfm?id=439

Healthy Transitions Mobile App
You can use this to learn more about healthcare, insurance, healthy lifestyles and relationships. Available FREE on the Apple App Store and Android Market.

Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine (SAHM) Thrive Mobile App
Helps teens and young adults aged 16 to 25 understand their role and ownership over their own health. You will find a large library of teen health and wellness topics relevant to you. Available FREE on the Apple App Store and Android Market.
The following materials were invaluable in creating and structuring the information in this Guide. You may find these documents useful and we highly encourage you to look them up:

- **Georgia’s Healthy Transitions Provider Toolkit**

- **Utah’s Youth in Transition Service Guidelines**

- **Rhode Island Parent Information Network’s Connecting the Dots**
  [http://www.ripin.org/pdfs/Family%20Voices%20Resource%20Guide%202017%20FINAL.pdf](http://www.ripin.org/pdfs/Family%20Voices%20Resource%20Guide%202017%20FINAL.pdf)

- **Massachusetts’s Moving to Adult Life: A legal guide for parents of youth with mental health needs**

- **The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Roadmap to Behavioral Health**

- **Many materials created or archived on the University of Massachusetts Transitions to Adulthood Center for Research (ACR):**
  [https://www.umassmed.edu/transitionsacr](https://www.umassmed.edu/transitionsacr)

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