

TRANSITIONING TO ADULTHOOD

Unlocking opportunities beyond school for young people with additional needs starts with gathering information. Explore various post-school options below.



Third Level

The Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) is a programme that aims to improve college access for school-leavers with additional needs.

- DARE Assigns third-level places based on reduced point requirements.
- You must apply through the Central Applications Office (CAO).

Learn more about the process below:

<https://accesscollege.ie/dare/>

Institutes of Further Education

Institutes of Further Education provide other opportunities for progression.

- Apply directly to the school or college offering that course.
- Institutes of Further Education can provide advice, information, and support.
- Students should disclose their needs early.

Learn more about the further education options available here:

<https://www.autismsupportlouth.com/resources-for-adults-with-autism/>

Specialised Courses

There are specialised courses around the country that are aimed at supporting students with additional needs to learn and develop new skills. Some examples are:

- DKIT'S Certificate in Skills for Independent living.
- Trinity College's Cert in Arts, Science and Inclusive Applied Practice.

Learn more about these courses here:

<https://www.dkit.ie/courses/school-of-health-and-science/nursing,-midwifery-and-early-years/certificate-in-skills-for-independent-living.html>

<https://www.tcd.ie/tcpid/courses/certificate/>

Day Services

School leavers from both special schools and Autism classes may decide to attend Day Services:

- The policy governing Day Services is called New Directions.
- This process usually starts in Autumn of the final school year.
- The Day Opportunities Officer will contact you for a short assessment in Oct/Nov and to support in applying for your child's budget and day service.
- Day services can be deferred for up to 3 years.
- They can be Attended part-time.
- The Day Opportunities Officers can guide people to choose training and day services tailored to their needs.

Information on Day Services can be found here:

<https://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/NCSE-Post-School-Education-Training.pdf>

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/newdirections/access-to-day-services-for-adults-with-disabilities.html>

www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/newdirections/new%20directions%20report.pdf

Residential Services

Initiating this conversation can be extremely difficult. However, if you have decided that residential services would suit you best you should contact your social/key worker, or Disability Manager for adult residential services.

- There are big waiting lists for residential services.
- All residential services funded by the HSE and provided by 3rd party providers
- Community-based houses for independent living.
- Applicants must go on their local authorities housing list.
- Must operate under HIQA standards.

Adult Respite Services

No automatic transfer from Children's to Adult Disability Team. You should contact your key/social worker at age 17 to confirm referral to the adult team.

- Obtain referral details and follow up.
- New application required for Adult Respite.

Learn more about the Respite and residential options available in Co.Louth and Co. Meath here:

<https://www.autismsupportlouth.com/resources-for-adults-with-autism/>

Planning for the Future

1. Preparation for leaving school should start 2 years before leaving.
2. Form a team with family and school staff, and seek advice from experienced parents and relevant agencies.
3. To provide the best support, assess your young person's interests, strengths, and needs, and align your search accordingly.
4. Autism Support Louth&Meath hosts an annual 18+ expo in November, showcasing the options and offering a chance to meet service providers-bring your questions.

***Your young person should have as many choices and options as any other person. Their likes, strengths and interests should be taken into account as well as their support needs.**

If you would like help or support completing any application form or have queries on the process, please contact Trish Flood, Autism Support Louth&Meath's Parent Information Office on **0860787356** or trish@autismsupportlouth.com who will help you through this process.