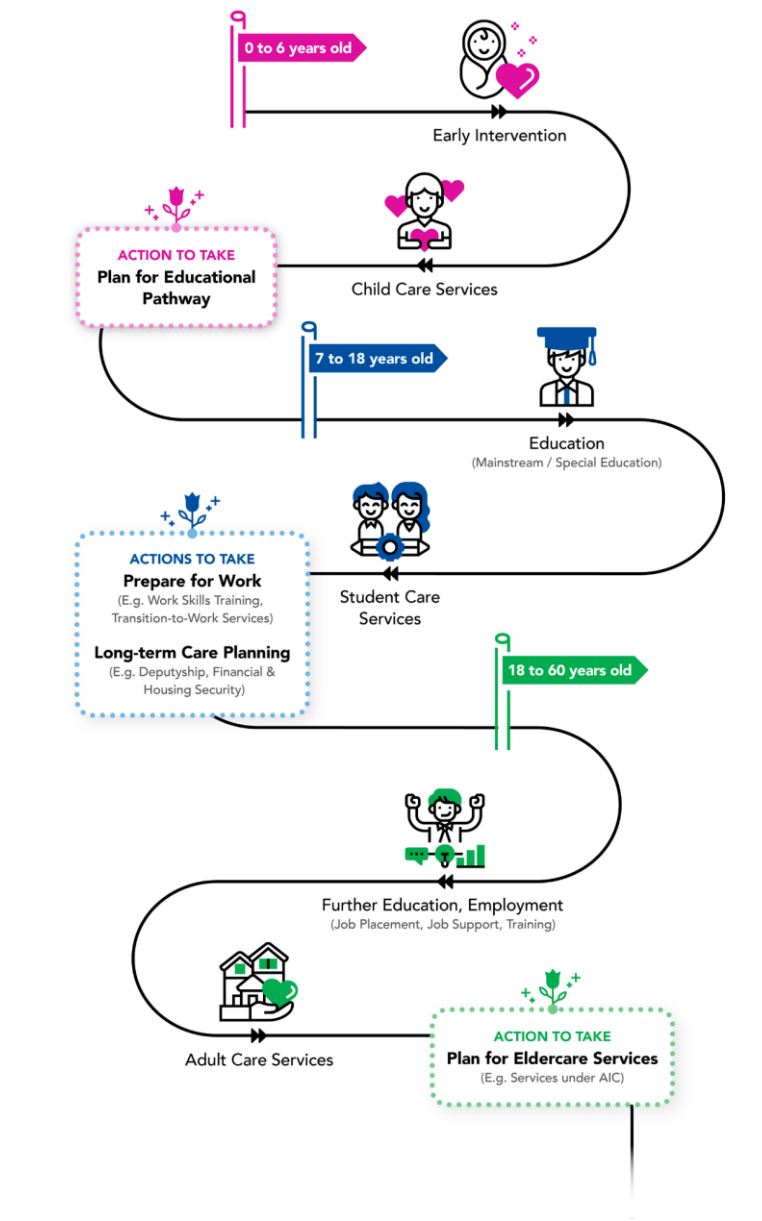


Autism Adulthood Transition Planning

Transitioning to a new stage in life can be daunting due to the changes, and this is especially true for individuals with special needs. As such, we have prepared this resource sheet to help individuals with autism and their caregivers to better plan and prepare for the transition to adulthood. Do speak to a social worker or your doctor at any touchpoint (eg. family service center, hospital etc.) to further explore the options mentioned below and to apply for the various services.



1. Independent living and recreation

Activity-based programmes

These programmes aim to promote social integration of persons with disabilities. They provide meaningful engagement for clients such as weekly enrichment activities in sports, art, music, outings and more. These programmes also serve as a respite for caregivers.

Options:

- **Eden Activity Club (EAC)** by Autism Association (Singapore) for adults with Autism:
<https://www.autismlinks.org.sg/programmes/eac>
- **Me Too! Club** and **MINDS MYG** by MINDS for adults with intellectual disability:
<https://minds.org.sg/other-services/befriending-services/>
- **Young Adult Activities (YAA!)** by Rainbow Centre for adults with moderate to severe disabilities:
<https://www.rainbowcentre.org.sg/community/>

Day Activity Centers (DACs)

DACs are community-based facilities that provide care and skills training to persons with disabilities aged 18 and above. They are designed to equip persons with disabilities with daily living skills and community living skills to maximise their independence while providing social and recreational activities. Therapeutic and behavioural intervention services may be provided at some centres. DAC is suitable for family members who are unable to take care of them or require some respites during the day. They offer full/part-time day programmes, over the weekdays. Likewise, transport for those who need it and meals are provided. Fees are means-tested.

Residential care

This is intended for people who have disabilities who have limited care support at home and are unable to live independently.

Those who may need more support can consider **adult disability hostels**, which offer short-term residential-based training in work and life skills, and aim to help people resume independent living in their own homes or in alternative forms of assisted community living.

Adult disability homes provide long-term residential care for adults with disabilities who cannot live independently and are neglected or whose caregivers cannot provide support. For adults with disabilities ≥ 55 years old, do consider senior community homes or nursing homes instead.

More information:

Day activity centre

<https://www.enablingguide.sg/im-looking-for-disability-support/child-adult-care/day-activity-centres>
<https://www.enablingguide.sg/services-listing?qLifes=&qAdulthood=&qDis=&qServ=day-care-for-adults%7C&qCare=&qSecFilter=&search=day%20activity%20centre>

Adult disability hostel

<https://www.enablingguide.sg/services-listing?qLifes=&qAdulthood=young-adulthood%7Cadulthood%7Colder-adulthood%7C&qDis=&qServ=residential-lodging%7C&qCare=&qSecFilter=&search=adult%20disability%20hostel>

<https://www.enablingguide.sg/im-looking-for-disability-support/child-adult-care/adult-disability-hostels>

Adult disability home

<https://www.enablingguide.sg/im-looking-for-disability-support/child-adult-care/adult-disability-homes>

2. Post education

National Service

Under the Enlistment Act, all male Singaporean citizens and Permanent Residents (PRs) are required to serve NS once they turn 18. However, they could be partially or fully exempted from this requirement if they are assessed to be unfit for services, have physical disabilities or severe medical conditions. Exemption will depend on the results of the pre-enlistment medical check-up and the decision of the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) medical board. The SAF would usually contact the health care institution for a medical report as part of the pre-enlistment assessment to decide on one's suitability for enlistment.

Further education

All publicly-funded Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs), including universities, polytechnics and ITE Colleges, have a Special Education Needs (SEN) Support Office on campus. These offices serve as a first-stop support for students with SEN who are looking into transitional support, in-class learning assistance and access arrangements. Other support provided by IHLs include barrier-free accessibility, student activities that are inclusive, dedicated support for internships and job search etc. One can approach the school counsellor or education office for individual support.

Employment

It is important to plan early for life after school, with transition planning programmes or job preparation initiatives. If your child/ ward is enrolled in a SPED school, the school will work with students and parents to provide support through work transition programmes. SG Enable also works with participating SPED schools on the School-To-Work (S2W) Transition Programme (collaboration between MOE, MSF and SG Enable) and other work preparation initiatives.

For adults with disabilities who are not suitable for open employment, sheltered workshops are an option. Clients engage in simple vocational tasks under close supervision, in a dedicated setting. They receive an allowance and gradually gain job skills and experience. Clients typically spend a full day, five days a week at sheltered workshops.

More information:

National Service

<https://singaporelegaladvice.com/law-articles/national-service-singapore-citizen-permanent-residents>

Employment training

<https://www.enablingguide.sg/im-looking-for-disability-support/training-employment#PrepForWork>

Sheltered workshops

<https://www.enablingguide.sg/im-looking-for-disability-support/child-adult-care/sheltered-workshops#:~:text=Sheltered%20Workshops%20offer%20employment%20and,broken%20down%20into%20simpler%20steps.>

3. Long-term planning

Developmental Disability Registry (DDR) Identity (ID) card

Consider applying for the DDR ID card to help members of the public identify and extend appropriate assistance to your child/ ward with special needs when needed. You can apply via DDR-registered agencies or approach Bizlink if the applicant is not a client of any agency.

Legal guardianship

For children with special needs who lack mental capacity, parents may need to prepare to apply to be their court-appointed deputies as the children approach the legal age of 21. This gives them the power to make important decisions on certain matters on behalf of their children, including personal welfare and health, ownership of property, and finance matters. The Assisted Deputyship Application Programme (ADAP) can help with this. Caregivers who do not qualify for ADAP may approach Society of Sheng Hong Welfare Services for guidance in their deputyship application. For caregivers of care recipients who have mental capacity, they may consider applying for the Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA), this would empower them to assist their care recipient in making decisions in future in the event when the care recipient does not have the mental capacity. This can be done through the Office of Public Guardian's website for more information.

Financial security and estate planning

Careful and adequate financial planning is required for families who have children with special needs. A Trust Fund is one of the many estate planning tools that parents can consider. It ensures that there is a steady income stream for their care recipients when they can no longer be cared for. With a minimum sum of \$5,000, a trust fund can be set up through the Special Needs Trust Company (SNTC), the only non-profit company with trust services for persons with disabilities. [<https://www.sntc.org.sg/>]

Caregivers may also consider writing a will, which is an integral part of estate planning. It allows caregivers to distribute their assets according to their wishes, and ensure that their children continue to be supported after their passing. [<https://mylegacy.gov.sg/>]

More information:

Developmental disability registry identity card

https://www.enablingguide.sg/docs/default-source/default-document-library/ddr-201001_foreg_jun2022.pdf?sfvrsn=1740a979_8

Deputyship and Lasting power of attorney application

<https://www.enablingguide.sg/im-looking-for-disability-support/child-adult-care#legalMatters>

[https://www.enablingguide.sg/im-looking-for-disability-support/child-adult-care/assisted-deputyship-application-programme-\(adap\)](https://www.enablingguide.sg/im-looking-for-disability-support/child-adult-care/assisted-deputyship-application-programme-(adap))

<https://www.enablingguide.sg/services-details/society-of-sheng-hong-welfare-services---life-point>

<https://www.msf.gov.sg/opg/Pages/The-LPA-The-Lasting-Power-of-Attorney.aspx>

4. Caregiver support

Caring for someone with disability is a long-term, if not life-long, commitment, so caregiver burnout and mental distress are very real issues. If you find that you are struggling to care for your loved ones or stop to enjoy what you used to do, it may be good to speak to someone or seek professional help. There are various ways to support you in this caregiving journey.

Courses

The Caregivers Training Grant (CTG) provides subsidies for the cost of training for caregivers to learn more about caregiving skills and techniques.

Self care and respite

Being a caregiver is not easy. It is important for you to take care of yourself, and more importantly, not to feel guilty when doing so. Do seek professional counseling or mental health support if you feel that your mental well-being is declining.

Consider respite care to give yourself a break. Common types of respite care are:

- Professional home-care services for home-based respite care
- Day activity centers for respite care during the day
- Disability homes for short-term respite care
- Activity-based programmes for respite care on a weekly basis

Support groups

Find a support group or meet other caregivers whom you can talk to. Keep in touch with friends. It is important not to be alone in your care journey.

More information:

Caregiving

<https://www.enablingguide.sg/caring-for-caregivers/empowering-caregivers>

Course

<https://www.aic.sg/financial-assistance/caregivers-training-grant>

<https://www.aic.sg/caregiving/caregiver-training-course>

Respite care

<https://www.enablingguide.sg/services-listing?qLifes=&qAdulthood=young-adulthood%7Cadolthood%7Colder-adulthood%7C&qDis=&qServ=home-based-care%7C&qCare=&qSecFilter=voluntary-welfare%7C&search=>

Support groups

<https://www.enablingguide.sg/caring-for-caregivers/informal-support-groups>