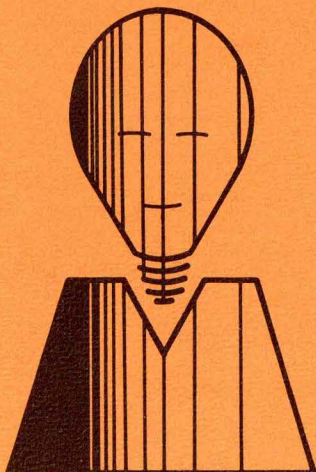


**A PARENT HANDBOOK:  
TRANSITION  
FROM SCHOOL TO ADULT LIFE**

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**SECTION C: WHO CAN HELP US GET THERE?**

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TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO ADULT LIFE**

John W. Struck

**SECTION C: WHO CAN HELP US GET THERE?**

May 1987

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## Illustrations

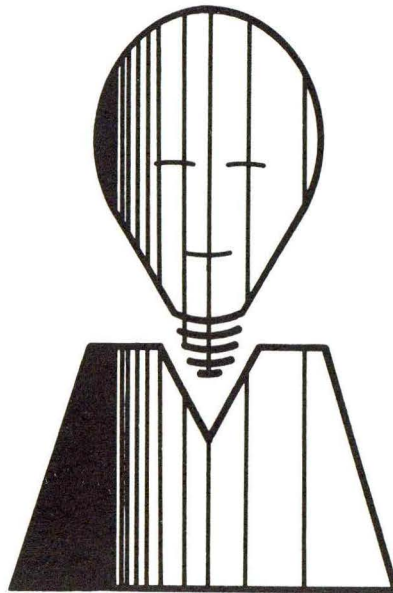
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
<b>SECTION C: WHO CAN HELP US GET THERE?</b>	
High School Programs .....	C-2
Programs Offered by Special Education .....	C-3
Programs Offered by Regular Education .....	C-4
Post-high School Programs .....	C-5
University and College Programs .....	C-5
Merged Area Community Colleges .....	C-5
Private Vocational Schools .....	C-6
Rehabilitation Facilities .....	C-6
Military .....	C-6
Employer Training Programs and Apprenticeships .....	C-7
Adult Service Agencies and Groups .....	C-7
Vocational Rehabilitation .....	C-8
Department of Human Services .....	C-9
Job Training Partnership Act Services .....	C-9
Department of Employment Services .....	C-9
Social Security Administration .....	C-10
Advocacy Groups and Self-Advocacy .....	C-10

# INTRODUCTION

In the first section, *“What Is Transition?”* we discuss what transition is, why it is important, and a transition planning process. In *Section B: “Where Are We Going?”* we discuss various employment options and living arrangements once your son or daughter leaves school. In this section, **“Who Can Help Us Get There?”** we share information about high school programs, post-high school programs, and adult service agencies. Although the material contained in this section applies equally to both males and females, we have used male nouns and pronouns throughout the entire section so that it is easier to read. *A reminder as you read this section: be sure to encourage and expect schools, adult service providers, your daughter or son, and yourself to communicate, cooperate, and commit to developing a plan that leads to a meaningful adult life.*



## SECTION C: WHO CAN HELP US GET THERE?

### SCENE THREE:

*(Two brothers, George and Frank, are cooking hamburgers on the grill. Frank finds the need to talk about George's son.)*

Frank: "George, this is none of my business, but Jack has been out of school for five months. Seems like he just sits around your house. What's going to happen to him? Is there anything I can do?"



George: "Frank, you read my mind. I'm worried about Jack, too. I'm not sure what he wants to do. I really appreciate your offer to help. I guess his mother and I feel it's our problem. We don't want to burden the family. Boy, there have been many nights I wish I could have talked to you. Meeting Jack's needs has made for some frustrating times."

Frank: "I bet they have. I know being a parent isn't easy."

George: "Well, maybe we should talk. I need to find out what options are available for Jack and *who can help us.*"

As you finished the last section, "Where Are We Going?" you might have been feeling like Frank and George. You were probably thinking: (a) What agencies are available to help my son find a job? (b) Whom do I contact in my community about private vocational schools? (c) How do I get more information on living arrangements? and (d) Are there any of these resources available in my area?

This section of the handbook will deal with these questions. A variety of resources can be used to help your son meet the objectives of his Transition Plan. The resources, either public or private, will have the same common goal: to provide support or assistance to adults with disabilities. What should you expect from these resources?

An Iowa parent has these expectations!

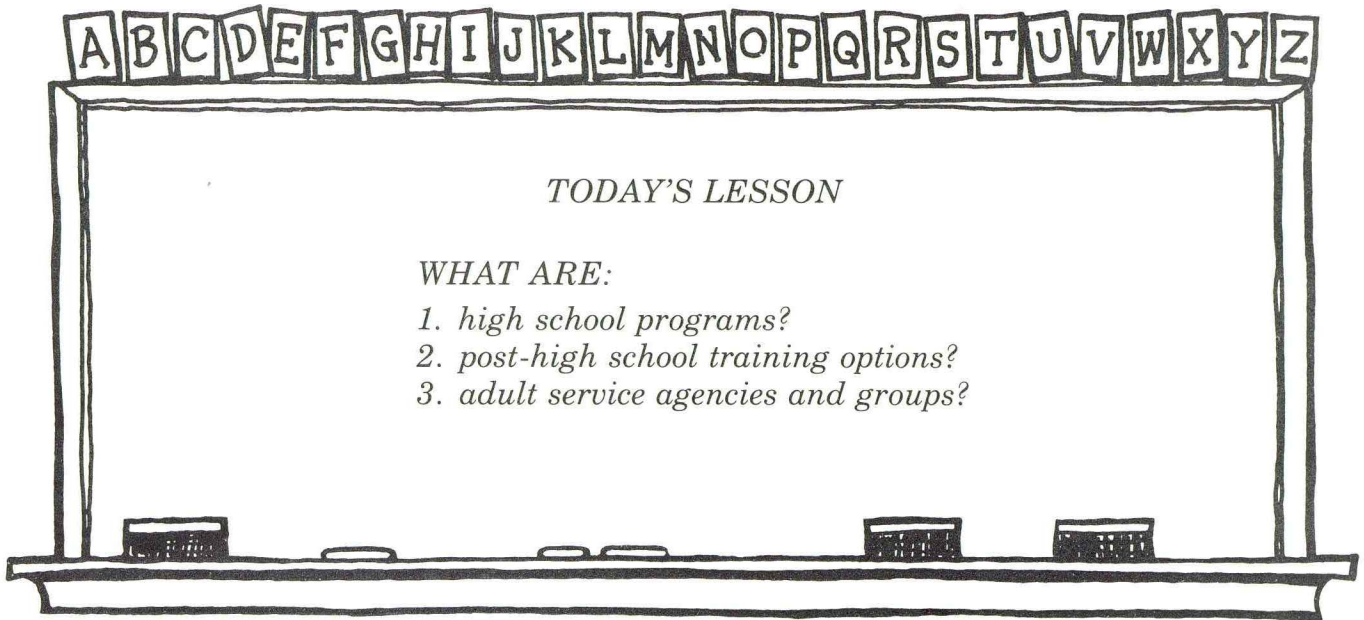
*From the school, we need information on Rick's ability to function in a post-secondary school or an employment setting. We need information regarding the availability of finances if he decides to go to college.*

*From adult service agencies, we need information about issues such as funding for an attendant at school and at home.*

*From both the school and rehabilitation personnel, we need information on program options available. In addition, we need information on employability averages: What could Rick expect to earn per year versus what would it cost to care for himself.*

*We need a road map to get through services. What agency provides services for what we need? Rick wants to know how to use Human Services to get his mother out of his hair. Who's going to help him find a job if he can't find one on his own?*

The expectations you have may not be the same. What resources you use will depend on the needs of your son. As we begin our transition (movement from one place to another) from the section "Where Are We Going?" to this section, "Who Can Help Us Get There?" let's review on the chalkboard what is ahead.



## High School Programs

The road your son follows to become a productive adult begins during grade school and continues beyond high school. The chances of your son being prepared for a meaningful adult life increase with appropriate Individual Educational Plan (IEP) development, vocational training, ongoing communication, and transition planning.

During the high school years, a number of career-related program options are available. The objectives of these programs are (a) awareness of a broad range of occupations, (b) exploration of a number of these occupations, and (c) preparation or skill training in a specific vocational area.

Program content at the high school also includes work habits and attitudes everyone needs to get and hold a job. The goal of the program is to offer the young adult a wide variety of experiences on which to base selection of a job area.

Specific programs offered throughout Iowa vary from school district to school district. The basic program types are described in the following paragraphs. It is possible that your school district or Area Education Agency (AEA) will not have all of the programs discussed. Contact them for information about programs they do offer.



## ***Programs Offered By Special Education***

Career and vocational programs offered by the special education program are called *specially designed* career and vocational programs. These are described below.

***Experiential exploration (in school and community).*** Experiential exploration provides a student in the special education program with an opportunity to explore a number of occupations or jobs during a school year. This model gives him opportunities to get “hands on” experience in different occupations or jobs while getting school credit towards graduation. The student does not receive any pay, since these experiences are short-term. Paid employment is not the goal at this time. Classroom instruction is needed to receive school credit. Experience Based Career Education (EBCE) is one example of experiential exploration. EBCE can also be offered through the regular career education program.

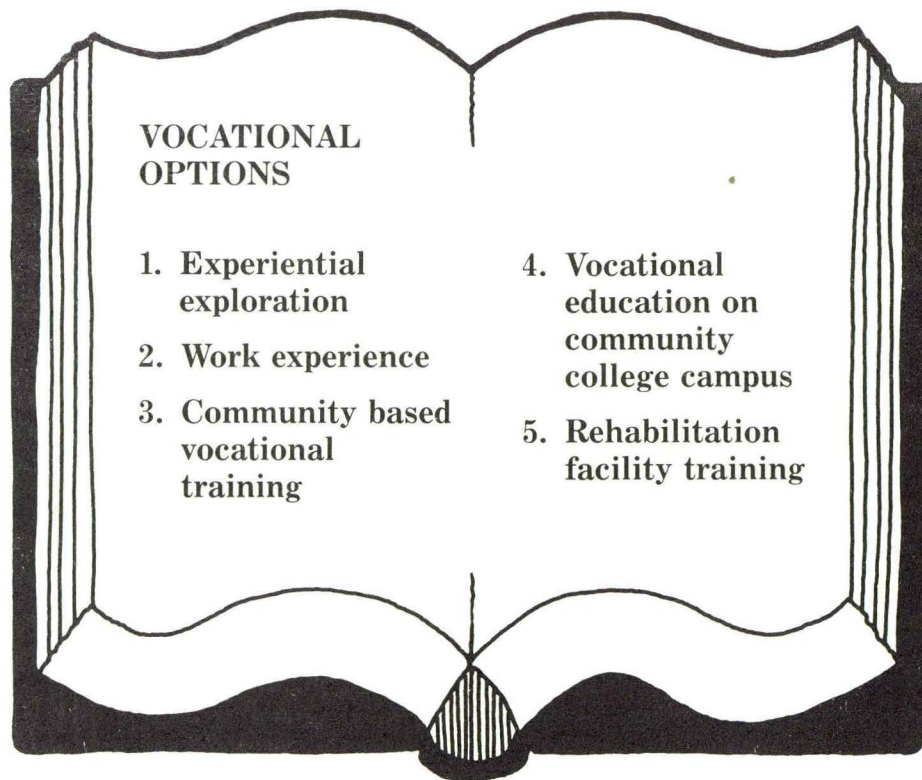
***Work experience.*** This program places the student at a site in the community for up to twelve weeks. Its purpose is for the student to receive “hands on” work experience. He may or may not be paid. He does receive school credit. The special educator works on employability skills such as getting along with co-workers and being dependable. The work experience site offers an opportunity to evaluate the student’s development of these skills before he receives more detailed vocational training. Work experience allows the student to stay on a specific job for a longer period of time than experiential exploration.

***Community based vocational training.*** Community based vocational training involves placing a student in the community within a business or industry. The purpose is to give the student skill training in a specific occupation or job. A training agreement and training plan are needed. The student receives instruction in the special education classroom which supports the training being provided on the job. This placement can be either paid or not paid. Credit is given for successful completion of classroom and job site training.

***Vocational education on the community college campus.*** In some areas, arrangements are made to have high school students with disabilities participate in regular vocational training programs offered by the community college. This program option may be provided when no appropriate regular vocational education program is available at the local high school. Although students attend classes on the college campus, they are enrolled in high school and receive credit toward high school graduation. One or more special education teachers are placed on the community college campus to support the students in these classes.

***Rehabilitation facility training.*** In this type of program, assessment, training in work habits and attitudes, and/or work experience are provided by adult agencies usually called work activity centers or sheltered workshops. A training agreement and training plan are needed and the school district is responsible for the program. You, your son, the school district, and the work activity center or sheltered workshop staff should work together on the Individual Educational Plan (IEP).

As you can see, there are many vocational options for your son through the special education program. For a quick review, let’s look at the book of facts.



## VOCATIONAL OPTIONS

1. Experiential exploration
2. Work experience
3. Community based vocational training
4. Vocational education on community college campus
5. Rehabilitation facility training

### ***Programs Offered by Regular Education***

The second group of programs is offered by the regular vocational education department in the high school. Students may have some experiences in the specially designed programs described previously and some experiences in the programs listed below. As with the specially designed programs, some regular education programs may not be available in your area.

***Experience Based Career Education (EBCE).*** This program is similar to the Experiential Exploration program described in the previous section. Experience Based Career Education (EBCE) can also be offered through the regular career education program in the school. EBCE can be available to all students, not just those in special education.

***Industrial arts or home economics.*** These programs are ongoing education programs that provide experiences in industrial arts or home economics areas such as woodworking, metal working, cooking, and sewing. These programs also develop good work habits and often provide training in the basic skills needed for a job.

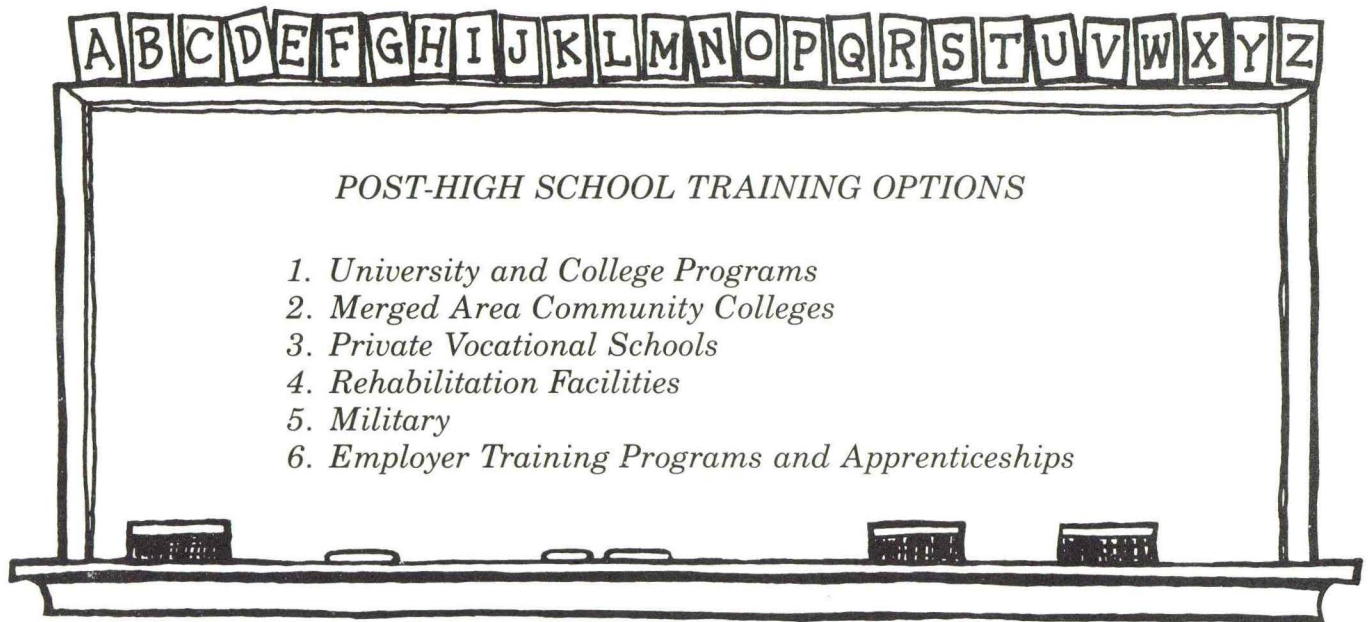
***Regular vocational education programs.*** Regular vocational education programs offer specific skill training in a number of areas: (a) agriculture and natural resources, (b) business education, (c) health occupations education, (d) home economics, and (e) industrial technology.

Hands on experience is provided through simulated situations within the school (in the school restaurant or a house being built by the vocational education class) or through paid or nonpaid experiences in the community. The student also receives classroom instruction about the skills needed for the job.

## Post-High School Programs

Another path for your son after he completes high school is to enroll in a training or school program. The general goal of obtaining more training and education is to further develop skills that prepare a person for a career and increase his opportunity for competitive employment.

There are a variety of post-high school training and education options. Let's move to the chalkboard and review these.



### *University and College Programs*

All universities and most colleges offer a four-year program; however, some colleges offer a two-year program and are called junior colleges. Many universities and colleges provide support services to individuals with disabilities. The type and degree of support vary with each school. You and your son should contact the college or university Admissions Office, identify your son's specific needs, and ask for information about support services provided by the university or college.

### *Merged Area Community Colleges*

Iowa has fifteen state supported vocational/technical schools, commonly called merged area community colleges. The merged area community colleges are generally located within the same geographic region as the Area Education Agency (AEA). The colleges offer a variety of vocational/technical training programs. The time it takes to complete a program varies among colleges and programs. However, the longest program takes two

years. Each college has an Admissions Office which provides information about admission procedures and training programs offered. Each community college also has a Special Needs Coordinator who provides a variety of support services and special programs to students with disabilities. You and your son should contact the Special Needs Office, identify your son's specific needs, and ask for information about support services and special programs that are available.

### ***Private Vocational Schools***

Iowa has many private vocational schools. Private vocational schools generally specialize in one or more specific occupational or job field. The length of the program, type of support offered, and the degree or license received depend on the training program offered. Business Institute of Technology, American Institute of Business, and School of Hair Styling are examples of private vocational schools. As with other post-high school programs, you and your son should contact the Admissions Office for information about programs and support services provided.

### ***Rehabilitation Facilities***

One of the roles of rehabilitation facilities (sometimes called sheltered workshops or work activity centers) is to offer training programs to adults with disabilities. The training goal is to develop the work habits and attitudes and specific vocational skills necessary for a job. Individuals in these programs often begin in the vocational assessment phase to determine their vocational strengths and areas that need improvement. Service providers are trained to work with adults who have disabilities. Specific services that rehabilitation facilities offer are (a) vocational assessment, (b) development of appropriate work habits and attitudes, (c) job training, (d) placement, and (e) follow along services.

### ***Military***

The armed forces is made up of five branches: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard. Each branch offers a variety of education and vocational training opportunities. Even though the enlistment requirements vary among branches, enlistment is usually based on a written aptitude test [*Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)*] and a physical examination. Information on each branch of the military and enlistment requirements is available by contacting a military recruiter in your community. The telephone numbers of the recruiters for each branch are in the telephone book under United States Government — Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, Navy.

## ***Employer Training Programs and Apprenticeships***

Employers also offer post-secondary training options, including employer training programs and apprenticeships. Each of these is described below.

***Employer training programs.*** Employer training programs train your son while he is actually working on the job. Employer training programs can be found in different types of jobs and provide the opportunity to “learn while you work.” The length of these programs varies, depending on the employer and the program. Most training is done by co-workers or supervisors and takes place in the employment setting or at another site.

***Apprenticeships.*** An apprentice is a worker with little experience who agrees to take part in a formal job training program called an apprenticeship. An apprenticeship program is used in many occupations and jobs such as plumber, electrician, and carpenter.

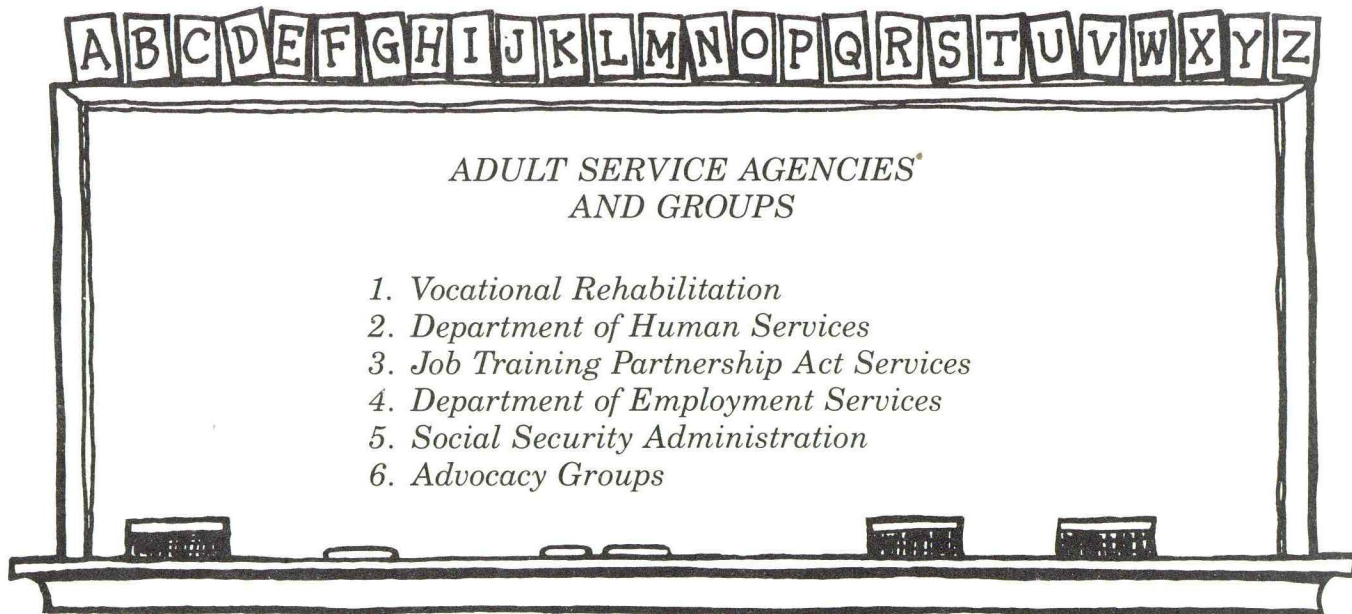
All apprenticeship programs are federally approved and have minimum skills for job mastery. Apprentices are paid for a normal work week during the training period. For application procedures and qualification requirements, contact your local Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training Office. The telephone number is in the telephone book under United States Government — Department of Labor.

As we finish this section on post-high school training options, remember that questions you may have can be asked during the transition planning meetings. Your school is a great resource!

## **Adult Service Agencies and Groups**

Private and public adult service agencies can help your son meet the objectives in his Transition Plan. Some of these agencies may have helped with the development of the Transition Plan. These agencies should be actively involved in bringing the plan to life. You need to know that the type and quality of service vary with each provider or agency.

Many things determine who is eligible and what services are available. If you feel a program or service can address your son’s needs, you should contact the service agency and make an appointment to visit with the staff about eligibility requirements and services they offer (see Appendix F for a list of state agencies and their addresses and telephone numbers). Unlike school programs, adult services are not provided to *all* persons just because they have a disability. Adult services are provided through a variety of public and private settings and use a variety of funding sources. Based on the young adult’s needs and programs offered, adult services can be short-term or long-term. Let’s look at the chalkboard to review some of the adult service agencies that we will discuss.



### *Vocational Rehabilitation*

The purpose of Vocational Rehabilitation (Voc Rehab) is to assist persons with disabilities into employment. Since not every individual with disabilities is eligible for services from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, an initial step of the rehabilitation counselor is to determine eligibility through the collection and review of medical reports and other data.

Once eligibility is established, a variety of services is available to the counselor in assisting his client in achieving a vocational goal. Evaluation of the person's vocational potential, counseling, tuition, placement, maintenance, and therapy are examples of services which are available. Some of these services are based on economic need; others are not. An important service is the Individual Written Rehabilitation Program, a joint plan of action drawn up between the counselor and the eligible individual. This plan describes, in detail, goals and objectives necessary to achieve the vocation selected.

It is important that the Vocational Rehabilitation counselor begin establishing a working relationship with the school age person at the beginning of his junior year — earlier if necessary. You, as a parent of an adolescent with disabilities, need to be aware of Vocational Rehabilitation services. An early visit with the rehabilitation counselor for an explanation of services is encouraged. Rehabilitation counselors across the state visit schools on a scheduled basis. Appointments may be scheduled through the school counselor or by contacting the nearest area or state Vocational Rehabilitation office (see Appendix F for Vocational Rehabilitation's telephone number and address).

## ***Department of Human Services***

The Department of Human Services (DHS) is an agency that offers a variety of support services and assistance programs to children and adults. There are 99 county human service offices with district offices overseeing the services provided across the state. Some of the services provided to adults through DHS include adult protective services, family life homes, financial, food, and medical assistance. A completed application and an interview with a human services case worker, more commonly called a social worker, is necessary before your son's eligibility for some services can be determined. It may be helpful for you to contact your county or district human services office to discuss your son's needs and to get information on the programs they have available (see Appendix F for the Department of Human Services' telephone number and address).

## ***Job Training Partnership Act Services***

The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) is a federal program which took the place of the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA). The purpose of JTPA is to prepare youth and adults for competitive employment. This preparation may include (a) on-the-job training, (b) job placement, (c) job searching, (d) work experience, (e) vocational counseling, (f) job exploration, and (g) vocational classroom instruction. Iowa is divided into "service delivery areas." Each service delivery area has an office and staff who provide and organize the JTPA programs. During high school or as an adult, your son may participate in a variety of vocational opportunities funded by JTPA. Ask your son's school counselor or teacher, or call the nearest JTPA office to find out about specific JTPA vocational services and programs (see Appendix F for JTPA's telephone number and address).

## ***Department of Employment Services***

The Department of Employment Services, formerly Job Service of Iowa, is a public employment agency funded by state and federal dollars. Services provided by the Department of Employment Services include (a) job referral, (b) vocational counseling and assessment, and (c) training in job seeking skills. The Department of Employment Services lists various employment opportunities in the community and matches a job with a qualified person. A completed application and an interview with a counselor are necessary before receiving services. Most offices have a vocational counselor who works with adults who have disabilities. The Department of Employment Services serves all counties in Iowa (see Appendix F for the telephone number and address of the Department of Employment Services).

## ***Social Security Administration***

The purpose of the Social Security Administration is to provide information about and carry out various Social Security assistance programs. Social Security provides financial assistance to individuals who are eligible for assistance. The amount of financial support an individual can receive is based on individual income, expenses, debts, assets, and level of disability. One example of a Social Security program is Supplemental Security Income (SSI). The SSI program provides monthly payments to individuals with disabilities who have little or no income or resources. Individuals who are eligible for SSI are automatically eligible for Medicaid, a program that pays for medical expenses. The Social Security Administration's telephone number is in the telephone book under United States Government — Health & Human Services Dept. of — Social Security Administration, Local Office.

## ***Advocacy Groups and Self-Advocacy***

Certain groups and organizations are organized to provide support to you, as the parent of a son with disabilities. The purpose of advocacy groups is to (a) provide information on available services; (b) promote improvements in services and programs; (c) identify new service options; and (d) provide a communication link among parents, educators, service providers, and the government.

Most advocacy groups include parents, educators, and concerned citizens. The Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC), the Association of Children and Adults With Learning Disabilities (ACLD), and the Commission for Persons with Disabilities are advocacy groups. Information on various advocacy groups can be obtained by calling your local school district or Area Education Agency (AEA) and by visiting with other parents (see Appendix G for examples of advocacy and support groups).

Another form of advocacy is *self-advocacy*. Self-advocates speak and act on behalf of themselves. They become aware of employment and living options, recreational and leisure activities, and their rights and responsibilities. They can also become active in the development of the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) and Transition Plan. People who self-advocate need to problem solve, communicate, make decisions, and be assertive. These skills can be taught, learned, practiced, and applied to individual and group situations. Self-advocacy is very important during any transition period. Decision making, problem solving, and planning are critical in developing and carrying out any transition plan. Skills to become a self-advocate can be practiced at school and home. Self-advocacy skills may need to be included in your son's Individual Educational Plan (IEP).

Let's look at the book of facts for a summary of skills needed to be a self-advocate.



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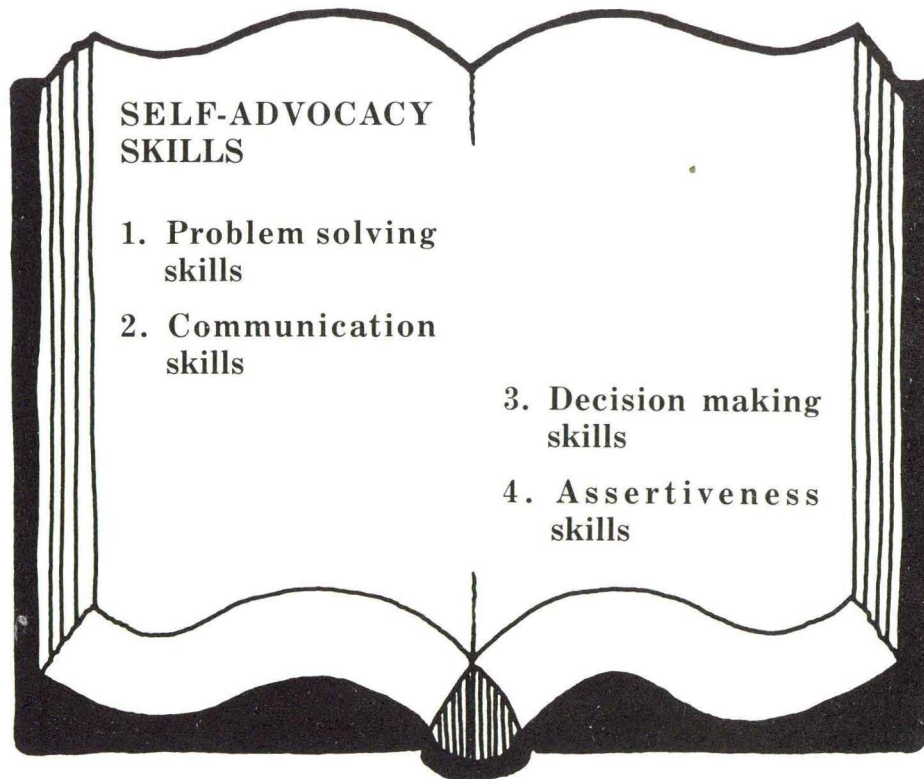
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Let's look at the book of facts for a summary of skills needed to be a self-advocate.



**SELF-ADVOCACY  
SKILLS**

1. Problem solving skills
2. Communication skills
3. Decision making skills
4. Assertiveness skills

You have finished with Section C. Please continue to Section D: "What Can You Do?"

