

Transition-age is defined roughly as the period between 14 – 24 years of age when youth are preparing to move from adolescence to young adulthood in the areas of employment, education and independent living. The transition to adulthood can be challenging for all young adults – not just those with mental health needs. For young adults with mental health issues, the transition to adulthood can be longer and more difficult. The social and emotional delays experienced by youth with mental health needs impede the skills necessary to successfully transition to adulthood.

Transition-age youth with mental health needs do not necessarily fit the child or adult mental health system; services need to be tailored to their specific needs and developmental characteristics.

Youth coded with an “emotional disability” on an Individualized Education Program have the highest dropout rate of any disability group, hovering around 50% in Maryland. Transition-age youth with mental health needs have the lowest rate of engagement in continuing education or employment.

High School

If your child is eligible for an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan, s/he may be receiving mental health or other support services at school.

- An IEP is developed for students with more intensive mental health needs who qualify for special education.
- Your child’s IEP team is responsible for helping your child with transition planning and implementation.
- Under a 504 plan, the school can make special accommodations for your child if s/he does not qualify for special education.

If your child has a 504 plan, s/he will have access to the services for transition assistance, but you or your child may be responsible for initiating contact to access these supports.

High School Support Staff

- IEP Case Manager
- Guidance Counselor
- Transition Coordinator
- Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS counselor)

After High School

The transition from high school can be challenging for youth with behavioral issues. Some youth may wish to attend college or vocational schools and others may want to seek employment.

Education opportunities

- College
- Community College
- Vocational and Technical Schools
- Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) Workforce and Technology Center (WTC) in Baltimore

Apprenticeship Programs Employment opportunities

- DORS provides a range of services:
 - Career assessment
 - Career decision-making
 - Counseling and referral
 - Vocational training
 - Employment assistance
- Supported employment through the Mental Hygiene Administration

Housing

Most families of young adults will find their youth continuing to live with them, if not on a permanent basis, then on a revolving door trajectory – moving out for a time and then moving back in. Outside of the idea of living in the family home, there are both subsidized and private-pay housing possibilities.

Subsidized housing

- Transition-age youth Residential Rehabilitation Programs
 - Adult Residential Rehabilitation Programs
- For more information, please contact your local Core Service Agency.

Other housing options might be:

- Main Street Housing
- Section 8 housing
- Private-pay

Health Care

Health care in Maryland will change in the coming year with the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid expansion. To learn more or for enrollment information, visit www.marylandhealthconnection.gov

Health Care options include

- Medicaid
- Maryland Primary Adult Care (MPAC)
- Private Insurance

Resource Links

Children's Mental Health Matters!

Facts for Families — First Steps in Seeking Help
www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org
Facts for Families — School Services
www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org

Core Service Agencies or Local Behavioral Health Authorities

<https://www.marylandbehavioralhealth.org>

Department of Human Services

800-332-6347
<http://dhr.maryland.gov>

Main Street Housing

410-540-9067
<http://www.mainstreethousing.org>

Maryland Department of Disabilities

800-637-4113
<http://mdod.maryland.gov>

Maryland Transitioning Youth

1-800-637-4113
<http://mdod.maryland.gov/education/Pages/transitioningyouth.aspx>

Maryland's Vocational Rehabilitation Agency – DORS

To learn more about the wide range of services DORS offers, you can visit www.dors.state.md.us or call 410-554-9442 or 1-888-554-0334

For information on health insurance coverage for mental health/substance use disorders or Mental Health Parity please visit www.mhamd.org/information-and-help/paying-for-care/maryland-insurance-protections/ or call 443-901-1550

To apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) call 1-800-772-1213



Coordinated by



The Children's Mental Health Matters! Campaign is a collaboration of the Mental Health Association of Maryland (MHAMD) and the Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) with support from the Maryland Department of Health - Behavioral Health Administration. The Campaign goal, with School and Community Champions across the state, is to raise public awareness of the importance of children's mental health. For more information, please visit www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org