



What's Up with PTA?

Pathways to Adulthood: Our First Year

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In July 2012, TxP2P received a federal grant* to fund Pathways to Adulthood, a program to help families of children with disabilities to plan for and create high quality lives for their children after graduation from public school. After 9 months of work to build our program, here's a list of what we can do for families:

- present workshops around the state on the major transition areas that parents need to understand as they plan for the future and ideas for building work, living and social support opportunities (so far, we've presented in San Antonio, San Marcos, Lubbock, Amarillo, Ft. Worth, Houston, Austin, Waco, San Benito to about 125 parents)
- link a parent concerned about transition to a trained Supporting Parent Volunteer, who can assist the requesting parent through the emotional transition journey (we will have our first transition volunteer training the day before the annual conference, July 25, 2013, in San Marcos; please sign up if you are interested in becoming an SPV for transition)
- assist a small group of parents to form a Transition Action Group (TAG) to help one another with individual transition hurdles and explore group goals, such as social, work and living collaborations (we have started 3 TAGs in Austin, 1 in San Antonio, and have interest and contacts in several other sites)
- provide information on key transition areas with links to relevant websites on our transition webpage (see txp2p.org, go to Services and then to Pathways to Adulthood where you'll learn about planning, services and supports, legal issues, public school transition, medical transition and more)
- provide 2 full days of workshops on transition topics at our annual conference (July 26-27, 2013, in San Marcos, see txp2p.org for details)
- assist parents who get in touch with our office by answering transition questions, supporting parents with their transition fears and worries, and linking them with resources (the phone is usually answered by Cynda Green, who is working 30 hours per week on PTA; when needed she refers parents to me for more in-depth transition issues or Monica Castillo who speaks Spanish and is learning the transition landscape)

In the second year of the grant, we will continue to improve all services started in the first year (listed above) and in addition:

- build an active group for sharing questions, answers, ideas and resources through the TxP2P Transition Listserv
- expand the number of trained mentor parents
- expand the number of TAGS and provide find new ways to support TAG facilitators around the state

Texas Parent to Parent

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- bring to Texas a speaker from PLAN of Vancouver, a parent group that has been highly innovative in building high quality of life for adults with disabilities
- explore ways to fund this program after the grant ends in June of 2015

So, please give us feedback about your transition issues, call us when you need one of these services, and consider getting involved by hosting a workshop, becoming a support parent or starting a TAG in your area. Remember that planning NOW—whatever age your child—by gaining support, information and ideas about transition will pay off later. Start with a vision, move to planning, and finally start with one thing you can do now to improve your child's chances for a high quality life after graduation!

*TxP2P received the grant in collaboration with Texas Children's Health Plan in Houston.

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