



# SPIN NEWS

The Newsletter for Parents of Children with Disabilities

SPECIAL  
PARENT  
INFORMATION  
NETWORK

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SPIN is co-sponsored by the Disability & Communication Access Board and the Department of Education. Services include a phone line for information referral and support, a quarterly newsletter, an annual conference and community workshops. SPIN is guided by an Advisory Committee made up of parents, teachers and people with disabilities.

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## Smoothing the Path Forward

*"Life is a story of transition. You are always leaving one chapter behind while moving on to the next."*  
--Anonymous

As parents of children with disabilities, we don't always feel ready or adequately prepared to help our children move smoothly through transitions, whether they be big or small. Sometimes we're fearful of the unknown, or we want to hang onto routines and relationships that we are familiar with. But let's face it: change happens!

SPIN was founded on the belief that giving parents access to information will support their ability to make decisions that are the best fit for their family. By taking action, parents boost their courage and build confidence.

In the next few pages, we put together some informational tools that offer guidance through some common transitions:

- ✓ **Planning for Transitions** gives a big picture view of what elements are common to all transitions. It offers the reassurance that while stressful, transitions can lead to a brighter tomorrow with the right planning.
- ✓ **3 Ways to Transition Your Keiki Back to School In-Person** offers tips to ease the anxiety and health-related issues that go along with returning to school fulltime.
- ✓ **Tips for Timely Transitions** talks about strategies most teachers of young children have learned--how to move a child with a disability

from one activity to another with the least amount of disruption.

- ✓ **Transitioning Students to More Inclusive Placements** offers an informal planning tool that helps families of children who have been receiving their education in self-contained classrooms think about the supports needed to move to an inclusive classroom or community activity.



- ✓ The two infographics that talk about **Transfer of Parental Rights at Age 18** discuss options for parents whose children will still be receiving services through their IEP after their 18th birthday.

- ✓ Finally, **SPIN's Recipes for Success** points you to our latest series of virtual workshops on transition that are meant for families of all ages and offer local expertise and resources. The last in the series--**Arriving at the Future**-- can be viewed live on June 19th.

### What's Inside

Planning for Transitions	2
Transition Back to School	3
Tips for Timely Transitions	4
The MAPS Tool	5
Transfer of Rights Discussion	6
Transfer of Rights Options	7
SPIN Recipes for Success	8



# PLANNING FOR TRANSITIONS

**Transition** is movement from one stage or place to another. Examples of transition are when your child moves from one grade to another, or one kind of educational placement to another. Job changes and family moves are also examples of transition. All transitions appear to have several things in common:



A period of uncertainty & questioning. Growth often occurs at this time.



A change in our support system. Family, friends & co-workers are often affected.



Increased feeling of stress or anxiety triggered by the change or adjustment.

Transitions require some advance planning to make the move less hectic, more efficient and successful. They also require the efforts of a *team*. By recruiting friends, family, teachers and other supportive folks to join the transition planning process, we make our load lighter and the journey easier. Think of transition planning as building bridges to your future.

## Steps to take for a smoother transition for you or your child.



**1. Write down what your next transition will be.**



**2. Ask yourself & your family members what a successful transition would look like.**

For instance, if your child is graduating from high school, would a successful transition include a job? More education? Continuing friendships?



**3. Write down worries you may have.**

This step will help you to develop any needed contingency plans.



**4. Think about your support network.**

Which family members, friends, service providers and advisors might help you in this transition?



**5. Describe some steps to take to move you forward.**

Delegate some of these tasks to your support network.

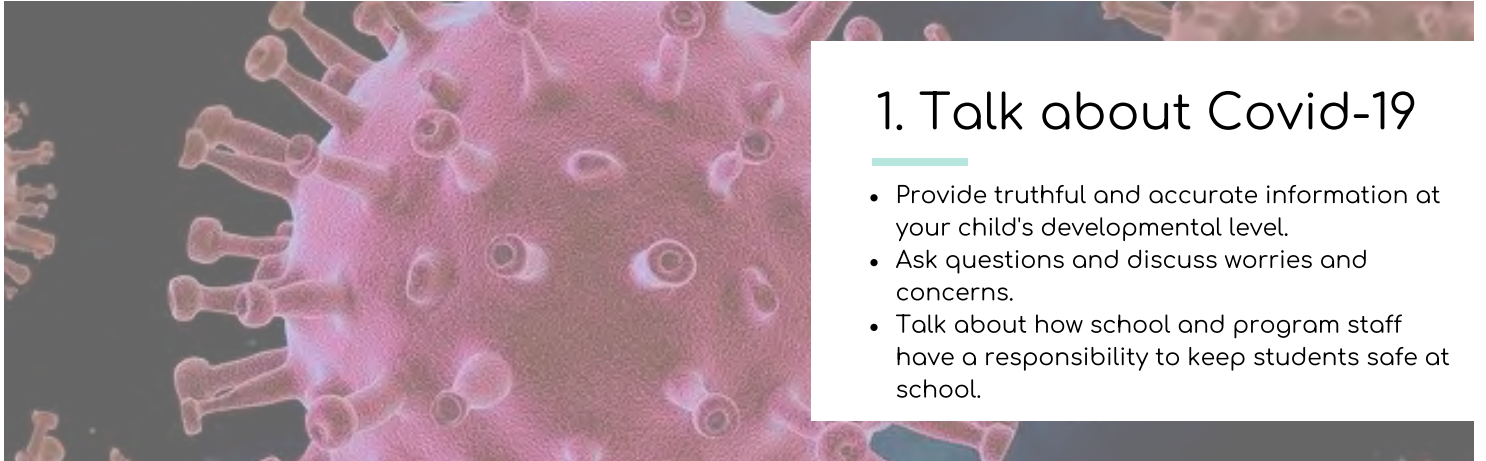


**6. Keep a positive attitude and celebrate successes!**



SPIN May, 2021

# 3 Ways to Transition Your Keiki Back to School In-Person



## 1. Talk about Covid-19

- Provide truthful and accurate information at your child's developmental level.
- Ask questions and discuss worries and concerns.
- Talk about how school and program staff have a responsibility to keep students safe at school.

## 2. Practice Good Hygiene

- Wash hands with soap and water before eating, after using the bathroom and when returning home after being out.
- Use hand sanitizer if you are not able to wash hands with soap and water.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or elbow.



## 3. Develop New Habits

- Practice wearing masks during different activities (reading, playing, talking, etc.).
- Add spare masks, hand wipes and sanitizer to your child's bag and rotate with clean supplies.
- Review and practice social distance guidelines.

# Tips for Timely Transitions

*Moving from one activity to another can be challenging for young children. Here are some helpful tips to keep your day frustration-free.*

1

## *Give Warnings*

One of the most effective strategies in transitioning from one activity to the other is to give a warning of impending change. Give a 5 or 10 minute warning to prepare your child for the next thing. You can also talk about the day's activities, so they know what to expect.

2

## *Use a Timer*

Timers or visual schedules allow children to see what comes next. It gives them a focus when time itself is a hard concept to understand. "When the timer runs out, it's time to turn off the T.V." Reward timed transitions with praise, so they see the timer as something positive.

3

## *More Time Between Activities*

In our sometimes over-scheduled world, consider what you are asking of your child. Don't forget that unstructured time between activities allows for down-time, play time and time to be a kid.

4

## *Make it Fun*

How do you get your preschooler to leave the TV and get in the car? Try hopping like a kangaroo or singing a favorite song while putting on shoes.

You can also point out why transitions can end in something fun. "It's time for dinner now, and after, we'll make dessert together."

5

## *Natural Breaks*

Look for natural breaks in your child's activity to make it easier to move on to the next thing. If they are watching TV, wait for a commercial before turning it off. If they are reading a book allow them to finish the page, chapter or story first. Remember to give a warning and count down.

6

## *Sensory Breaks*

Meltdowns can happen when we try to transition a child who is tired, cranky or frustrated. Before you ask them to move to a new activity, try reading a book together, have them sit quietly for a few minutes, or get into the practice of mindful breathing.

7

## *Be Consistent & Calm*

Easier said than done, it's up to us to model a calm attitude when speaking to our children. Try to set bedtime or meals around the same time, so they know what to expect and when. Kids like routines and respond well to them.

8

## *Offer Choices*

Providing choices will allow kids some power over their lives and can help them be more cooperative. Steer clear of open-ended questions like, *What do you want to drink?* Instead, ask, *Would you like apple juice or milk?* You are still in control of what they get, and they get to choose.

9

## *Give Praise, Avoid Threats*

Kids will work for praise. They want you to be proud of them. Stickers and stars that lead up to a reward are also good motivators. Keep things positive, reward good behavior and tell them when they are doing good.

Source:

<https://www.mindfulmazing.com/transition-strategies-for-kids-9-tips-to-ease-transition-troubles/>  
<https://theinspiredtreehouse.com/transition-strategies-preventing-tantrums-during-daily-routine/>  
<https://www.friendshipcircle.org/blog/2017/05/10/coping-with-transitions/>



Adapted by SPIN  
May 2021

# Transitioning Students to More Inclusive Placements

The **McGill Action Planning System (MAPS)** was developed by **Marsha Forest, Jack Pearpoint & Judith Snow** at the **Center for Integrated Education in Canada** in the late 1980s as a planning process to help children with significant disabilities experience more inclusion within their schools and communities.

It is not intended to take the place of the IEP. It helps to make the IEP more personal by exploring the student's dreams and wishes and inviting the student's circle of support--friends, family members and helping professionals--to identify needed supports, including natural supports.



- ▶ MAPS is still used by individual schools and teacher training programs like the UH College of Education.
- ▶ MAPS offers creative solutions for students who do not succeed in typical ways.
- ▶ The success of mapping depends on gathering the key people in a student's life, including his or her non disabled peers to visualize goals and dreams.
- ▶ The MAPS process can help make sure the student and his or her peers will have positive learning experiences in the classroom.
- ▶ MAPS is similar to other person-centered planning strategies that put the person with the disability in the center of the plan and work toward allowing him or her the ability to choose from the same range of options and experiences as persons without disabilities.

## 7 Questions

### 1. What is the student's history?

Family members share important information about the student's health, social and educational history.



### 2. What is your dream for the student?

Team members share what they want for the student's future and what they think the child wants. It's helpful to dream BIG.



### 3. What is your nightmare?

Once team members, including the family, share their fears of what may happen to the student, they can commit to making sure the nightmare never happens.



### 4. Who is the student?

Everyone talks about what comes to mind when they think about the student. When the list is complete, the team picks the top three descriptions to highlight.



### 7. What would an ideal day be like at school (or in the community)?

Start with a typical day for children the student's age who do not have disabilities. What supports are needed to achieve this vision?



### 6. What are the student's needs?

These include social-emotional, behavioral, physical, health and academic needs.

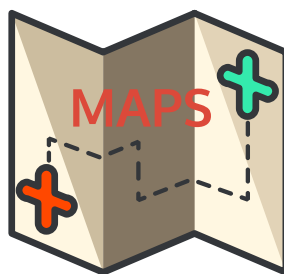


### 5. What are the student's gifts?

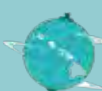
The focus of discussion is on what members believe the child CAN do--the child's contributions--rather than what they cannot do.



## McGill Action Planning System



Team planning for school & community inclusion



Infographic by SPIN  
May 8, 2021

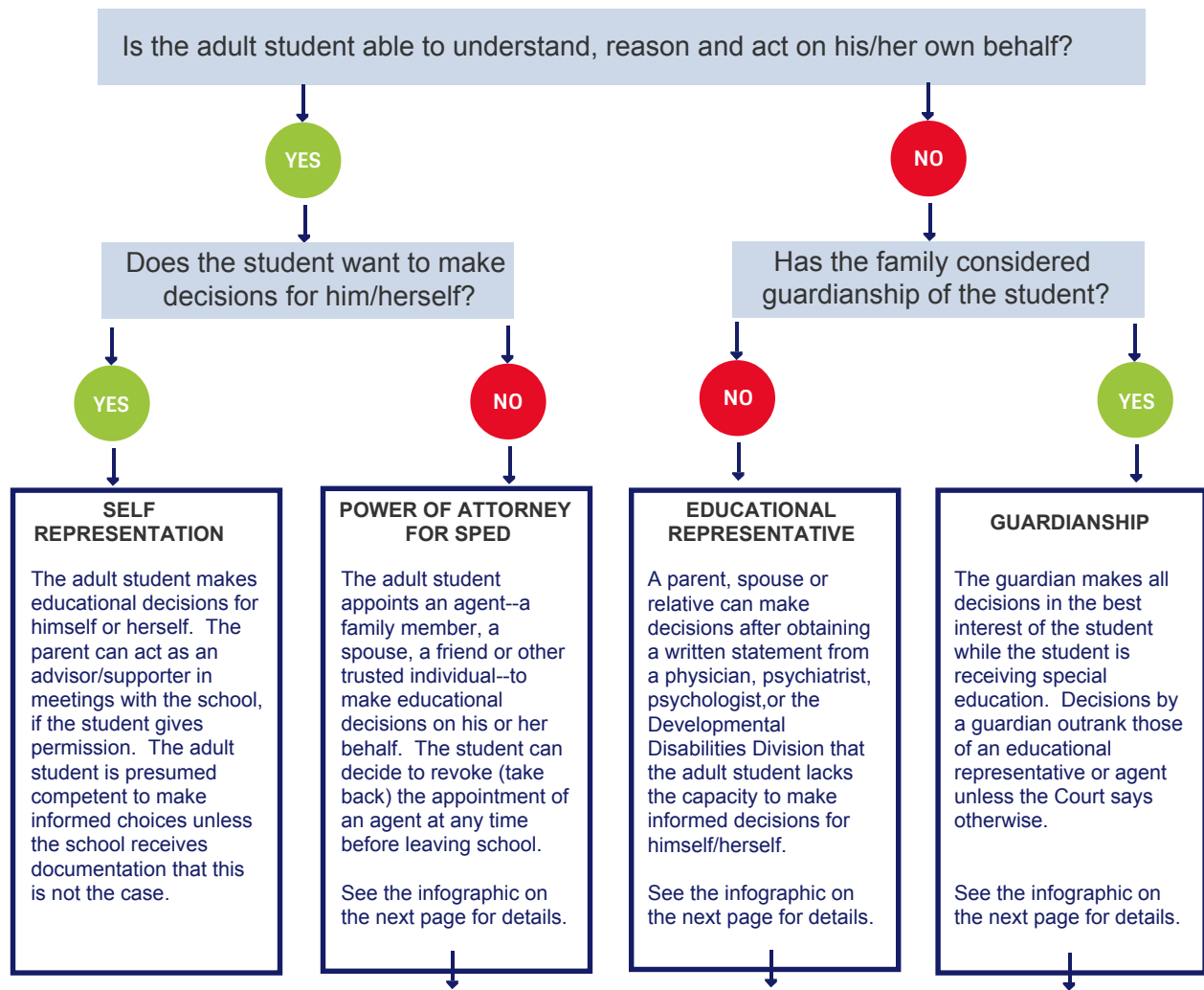
More information about MAPS can be found at:  
[https://education.rowan.edu/\\_docs/maps-doc.pdf](https://education.rowan.edu/_docs/maps-doc.pdf)



# Transfer of Parental Rights at Age 18: An Informal Process for Determining if Representation May Be Needed for the Adult Student with a Disability

Parental rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) transfer from the parent(s) to the adult student on the day the student turns 18 years of age. Parents are notified one year in advance of their child's 18th birthday that this transfer of rights means the student will have access to his or her education records, make his or her own education decisions, and have the authority to give or withhold consent for evaluations, services and placements. The discussion tool developed by SPIN below helps the student and family identify options for ensuring that the adult student is adequately represented and protected under IDEA until exiting special education.

## A Process for Discussing Transfer of Rights Options



Documentation is provided to the school, and the school acknowledges the rights of the agent/guardian/educational representative to legally make decisions.





# Transfer of Parental Rights at Age 18: Options for Parents to Continue to Represent Their Adult Child Under IDEA



## Power of Attorney Agent for SPED

The Power of Attorney for Special Education (POA SPED) is an option for students who:

- are considered to be capable of making informed decisions; and
- feel more comfortable having a parent or a trusted adult advocate on his/her behalf.

The POA SPED consists of a document written by the adult student with a disability that appoints an *agent* to make special education decisions only. The student can choose for his or her agent:

- a family member,
- a friend,
- any responsible adult,
- but not an owner or employee of the school the student attends.

There is no special form that must be used--just a written document containing required information than can be found in the sources at the bottom of this page. The student can also revoke or take back the POA SPED at any time.

Once the POA SPED is witnessed by two individuals or notarized by a notary public, the school is given a copy for the student's file.



## Educational Representative

When an adult student lacks the ability to understand, reason and act on his/her own behalf, Hawaii law allows for the parent(s) or the adult spouse of the student to act as the educational representative on behalf of the student.

Three kinds of information are needed:

- a statement by a qualified professional (primary physician, psychologist, psychiatrist) that the adult student lacks the capacity to make decisions,
- the name and contact information for the adult student, and
- the name, contact information and relationship to the adult student of the educational representative.

Once the school receives this information it will appoint the educational representative to participate in meetings about:

- the identification, evaluation and placement of the student;
- the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE), and
- providing input that takes into account the student's instructions, wishes, personal values and best interest.



## Guardianship

Guardianship is a legal means of protecting children and adults who cannot:

- take care of themselves,
- make decisions in their own best interest,
- communicate their understanding of issues, and/or
- handle their assets (like money).

Parents are the natural guardians of their minor children and are often surprised that they must petition the Court, if they want to become the legal guardian of an adult child with a disability.

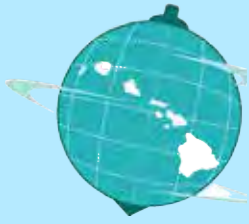
A judge makes the decisions about:

- whether guardianship is needed to protect the adult student,
- who is appointed guardian, and
- whether the guardian's powers are limited to some decisions or all aspects of the adult child's needs.

Some parents choose to avoid this option because of:

- the time involved;
- the out-of-pocket expense,
- the requirement to provide annual updates to the Court; and
- the availability of alternatives to guardianship that maintain their child's freedom of choice and self-determination.





# SPIN's Recipes for Success: Transition Workshops

SPIN has two workshops that are ready for viewing with our final event on June 19th. Be sure to visit our [SPINConference.org](http://SPINConference.org) website to access the videos and handouts and to register for our "Arriving at the Future" event.

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## Financing the Future - April 17

- Understanding the basics of benefits planning
- Learn about Hawaii's ABL Act and Kal's Law
- Speakers from UH and DD Council
- Handouts and slides from the presentation



## Pathways to the Future - May 8

- Add marathon skills to your parent tool box
  - Discover how to use person-centered planning tools
  - Speakers from UH, DDD & a parent/youth team
  - Download planning tools and presentation slides
- 

## Arriving at the Future - June 19

- Hear transition stories from 3 parent/youth teams
- Opportunities to ask questions
- Live Zoom event will be recorded for viewing later
- Register for FREE at [www.spinconference.org](http://www.spinconference.org)

