

Birth to 18 Years Skills List

Birth to 3 Years

Social/Parent-child Interactions

- Allow your child to develop at his/her own rate - encourage them to do what they can for themselves
- Encourage language and communication – the more vocabulary that is understood and expressed, the better
- Begin financial planning – set aside money for when your child transitions to adulthood
- Find a primary care provider that will care for your child’s special needs and will coordinate care with other doctors and connect you with community providers

Medical

- Learn signs and symptoms of health problems and take action early – discuss these problems with your health care provider
- Prevent secondary problems that can further limit your child
- Begin keeping a record/summary of your child’s early interventions and medical history including conditions, operations, treatments, medications, allergies, hospitalizations, and immunizations
- Ensure regular visits with your teen’s community doctor

Education

- Start a file for records including assessments, report cards, community certificates, records of completion, etc.

Community Supports

- Involve your child and family in community recreational activities that include children with and without special needs
- Seek out parent programs for emotional support and networking, especially those including parents with similar experiences
- Stay connected to partners, friends, family, faith based organizations, community organizations
- Seek professional help when you need it

Services

Obtain a birth certificate and/or proof of citizenship

[Apply for your child's Social insurance Number \(SIN\)](#) which may be needed to receive certain government services and benefits

[Apply for the Canada Child Benefit](#)

[Apply for the Universal Child Care Benefit](#)

See if your child is eligible for [Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities \(ACSD\) benefits](#)

If applicable, [apply for Special Services at Home \(SSAH\)](#)

[Apply for the Disability Tax Credit](#)

4-7 Years

Social/Parent-child Interactions

- Assign your child chores appropriate for his/her ability
- Encourage decision-making skills by offering choices
- Teach your child the consequences of his/her actions and decisions
- Discipline your child like you would your other children
- Begin teaching your child about his/her condition and special needs
- Begin teaching self-care skills, including those that relate to his/her condition
- Make sure your child has an effective communication system

Medical

- Determine what your child needs to function more independently – therapy, equipment, technology?
- Maintain proper nutrition and exercise
- Ensure yearly follow up with your child's community doctor
- Emergency planning for family

Education

- Involve your child in social activities, such as preschool, religious education, co-operative play groups, day care
- Consider carefully what type of schooling your teen will receive – make sure that he/she is included as much as possible in the typical school program
- Explore regular kindergarten options in your neighborhood school

- Your child may require special accommodations at school – find out more about the [Individual Education Plan \(IEP\)](#)

Community Supports

- Continue involvement in community recreational activities that include children
- with and without special needs
- Have your child participate in leisure activities so they can begin to understand their likes and dislikes. [Visit the City of Ottawa, Special Needs Recreation eGuide.](#)

Services

Review services listed in section ‘Birth to 3 years’ as your eligibility may have changed

8-11 Years

Social/Parent-child Interactions

- Assess your child’s knowledge of his/her special needs – encourage them to ask questions during doctor’s visits
- Continue to teach your child self-care skills – encourage all attempts and reward successes.
- Encourage hobbies and leisure activities
- Continue to encourage decision-making skills
- Teach your child personal information such as address, phone number, etc.
- Encourage regular physical activity
- Teach your child life-skills such as money management and shopping skills – give your child an allowance and allow him/her to choose how to spend it

Medical

- Promote self-advocacy - encourage your child to talk directly with doctors and other health care providers
- Begin networking with other parents who have recently experienced transition planning
- Ensure yearly follow up with your child’s community doctor

Education

- Explore communication systems that support language and literacy
- Allow your child to complete homework assignments on their own – let them come to you when they need help
- Include your child in meetings about their education through the IEP process

Community Supports

- Involve your child in neighborhood and community activities such as Scouts, swimming lessons, story time at the library, etc. Wherever possible, allow them to participate without you
- Consider a summer camp program for your child to attend:
 - Neuro gym
 - [Easter Seals Camp](#)
 - [City of Ottawa, Special Needs Recreation eGuide](#)
 - [Miracle League of Ottawa](#)

Services

Review services listed in section 'Birth to 3 years' as your child's eligibility may have changed

12-15 Years

Social/Parent-child interactions

- Help your teen identify and build on his/her strengths and personality traits to build self-esteem
- If appropriate, discuss personal safety and avoiding risky behaviors with your teen
- Begin exploring and talking about possible career interests and adult living plans
- Help your teen find volunteer or paid work opportunities in the home, neighborhood or community – help your teen develop good work habits
- Open a joint bank account with your teen
- Explore feasibility of a driver's license or, explore other modes of transportation to get to and from appointments
- Encourage healthy nutrition
- Obtain a diagnosis of disability in preparation for the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) application, must be done no later than age 17
- Obtain a psychological assessment in preparation for the Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) application, must be done no later than age 17

Medical

- Continue to help your teen advocate for him/herself
- Begin helping your teen keep his/her medical summary
- Continue to encourage your teen to talk directly to their healthcare providers
- If appropriate, discuss relationships and sexuality with your teen and how his/her condition may/may not affect this
- If your child has a community pediatrician, start transitioning to a family doctor at 14 years old
- At fifteen and a half you need to apply for a new OHIP card with signature and picture
- If the teen is unable to sign, or have their photo taken, a Health Card Medical

- [Exemption Request form](#) can be completed by your family doctor

Education

- Encourage your teen to join teams and clubs at school
- Carefully consider your teen's options for high school education – encourage community based job training and life skills if these activities are appropriate for your teen
- Find out more about the [Passport Mentoring program](#)
- Learn more about the [Ontario Skills Passport website](#) and developing employment skills

Community Supports

- Encourage your teen to continue involvement in activities outside of school
- Explore community support groups for teens
- Talk with other parents of teens with and without special needs
- If your teen requires specialized seating, they can be referred to the OCTC Seating and Mobility Service. Referrals must be received by age 14

Services

Make sure to have a psychological assessment done for your teen within ten years of their eighteenth birthday to prepare for DSO services (if needed)

Look into the [Assisted Devices Program](#) for support with communication technology

You may need to consult a lawyer if your teen is incapable of making financial and/or health-related decisions. [Seek information on becoming a substitute decision maker](#)

16 – 18+ Years

Social/Parent-child Interactions

- If possible, encourage your teen to find a job in the community or to pursue post-secondary education or training
- Support your teen in establishing appropriate living arrangements, including attendant services and supported living options
- If possible, support your teen and let them become the primary decision makers

Medical

- Continue to help your teen advocate for him/herself – if possible, take on the role of coach on the sidelines and let your teen become the decision maker.

- Obtain a medical summary report from your teens Primary Care Provider (PCP) or Most Responsible Physician.
- With support from your PCP, develop an emergency plan for admissions to hospital after 18 years.
- Continue helping your teen keep his/her medical summary up-to-date.
- Ensure yearly follow up with your family doctor
- Ensure teen’s specialists have started to make referrals to adult care
- Get appointment dates for adult specialists prior to being transferred from CHEO
- Ensure a review of Advanced Directives documents prior to transition to adult health care

Education

- If your teen has an IEP, make sure they receive proper accommodations during their post-secondary education:
 - [Algonquin college](#): 613-727-4723
 - [La Cite Collegial](#): 613-724-2493
 - [Ottawa University](#): 613-742-2493
 - [Carleton University](#): 613-520-2600
 - [St-Lawrence College](#): 613-544-5400 ext 1593
- When completing your teen’s [Ontario Student Assistance Program](#) (OSAP) application make sure to indicate that he/she has a disability as they may qualify for the Bursary for Persons with Permanent Disabilities
- Find out more about [scholarships and bursaries for students with disabilities](#)

Community Supports

- Adults eighteen and over living with a disability, may be eligible to receive assistance for income support through the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). [Contact ODSP](#) between the ages of 16 to 17 years so that assistance is not delayed once 18 years
- [Contact ODSP](#) for employment support to help your teen with job search and training
- Contact your local service agency for resources and training opportunities
- [Apply for the Passport Program](#) (18 years and over) for funding for services and supports for adults with a developmental disability
- [Special Olympics](#)

Services

Apply for adult developmental services and supports through Developmental Services Ontario (DSO):

- [DSO Ontario](#)
- [Attorney General](#)