

What is SSI?

SSI is short for Supplemental Security Income. SSI is a program under the Social Security Administration (SSA) that pays monthly benefits to people who are age 65 or older, are blind or have a disability and who have limited resources and income.

Often times, children (under 18 years of age) applying for SSI do not meet the financial and resource limitation allowance due to required reporting of all household income. However, when a child becomes an adult at age 18, the family's income and resources will no longer be considered when determining a child's financial SSI eligibility. Students should make application for SSI in the month after they turn 18. The individual applying must be present at the meeting, along with the parents to assist with answering questions.

If you plan to have your child apply for SSA disability benefits, you need to call SSA to schedule an appointment or apply online at www.ssa.gov. For phone numbers of regional offices, go to www.ssa.gov, click on "Find a Social Security Office" on the right hand side and then enter your zip code.

NOTE: If your child with a disability is receiving SSI benefits prior to age 18, he/she **must reapply** with SSA for SSI benefits as an adult. For this application, SSA will use somewhat different disability criteria than were used to evaluate his/her disability as a child. The adult definition of disability for SSI eligibility states: "An individual age 18 and older is 'disabled' if he or she has a medically determinable physical or mental impairment, which results in the inability to do any substantial gainful activity, and can be expected to result in death; or has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months.

SSI is to be used to pay the costs of food, clothing and shelter for the recipient. If your child is living with you and is approved for SSI after he/she turns 18, the SSI check will be reduced by one-third unless he/she is paying living expenses. The amount of living expenses does need to be a fair amount, one that a parent would charge for anyone who may rent a room in the household. A rental agreement between the parent and child should be developed and sent to SSA to address this reduction.

For more information about Social Security benefits: <http://www.ssa.gov/multimedia/video/as/>

Opportunities for Your Child in the Adult Services System

Family Support 360 PLANS is a program for people with developmental disabilities. These services will make it easier for people to live and work in the community on their own. Contact the Division of Developmental Disabilities at 1-800-265-9684

Independent Living Centers provide services to individuals with disabilities in the areas of advocacy, information and referrals, independent living skills and training and peer support. Contact an Independent Living Specialist at 1-800-265-9684

DakotaLink provides assistance to individuals of all ages to acquire and use the latest available assistive technology devices that best meet the need to maintain independence at home, work, in the classroom or in leisure activities. Contact DakotaLink at 1-800-645-0673 or www.dakotalink.net

South Dakota Benefits Specialist Network provides advice and support on Social Security work incentives, Medicaid, Food Stamps, TANF, Housing Assistance and other disability related benefits. Contact South Dakota Benefits Specialist Network at 1-800-224-5336 for more information.

The Law & Guardianship

It can be a particularly worrisome time if you question your child's ability to make important life decisions when he/she turns 18. Guardianship may be an answer.



To learn about the pros, cons, and alternatives to guardianship or for more information, contact either:

The Guardianship Program, Inc.
(605) 224-9647 or 1-866-228-9119
sd.guardians@gmail.com

South Dakota Advocacy Services
(605) 224-8294 or 1-800-658-4782
sdas@sdadvocacy.com



Transition Services Liaison Project

www.tslp.org

Black Hills Special Services Coop.

Dan Rounds, Coordinator
Pierre, SD 57501
1-800-224-5336 or (605) 224-6287
Email: drounds@tie.net

Regional Transition Liaisons

Bev Petersen, South Eastern Region
Sioux Falls, SD 57103
(605) 367-5330
Email: bev.petersen@state.sd.us

Cindy Kirschman, North Central Region
Aberdeen, SD 57401
(605) 626-2398
Email: cindy.kirschman@state.sd.us

Dave Halverson, Western Region
Sturgis, SD 57785
(605) 347-4467
Email: dhalverson@bhssc.tie.net

South Central Region
Pierre, SD 57501
(605) 224-6287

South Dakota School for the Deaf
2001 East 8th Street
Sioux Falls, SD 57103-1896
Phone: 605.367.5200
Fax: 605.367.5209
<http://sdsd.sdbor.edu/>

SDSO serves as a resource for families and local schools by providing a specialist in hearing loss as a member of the educational team.

So your child is deaf or hard of hearing and getting ready to transition into adulthood . . .

Tips for Parents

"A young person with a disability should be given opportunities to make choices and experience the consequences of those choices..."

"Learning to behave responsibly comes with support, practice, and mistakes..."

"Few things help children more than placing responsibility upon them and letting them know that you trust them..." (Authors Unknown)

While in high school, your child should...

- ✓ Apply for the Youth Leadership Forum (www.tslp.org).
- ✓ Learn about his/her disability.
- ✓ Become involved in extra-curricular activities.
- ✓ Share strengths, learning styles, challenges and needed accommodations with the general education teachers.
- ✓ Consider applying for services through the Division of Rehabilitation Services.
- ✓ Actively participate in IEP meetings.
- ✓ Engage in volunteer work experiences.
- ✓ Explore career opportunities and develop career interests.
- ✓ Participate in job shadow opportunities.



If your child is going on to post-secondary schooling, they should also...

- ✓ Tour and visit with disability services office at colleges of interest.
- ✓ Attend Catch the Wave (www.tslp.org).
- ✓ Address the possible need for accessing assistive technology devices.
- ✓ Challenge themselves with rigorous courses in the general education setting.
- ✓ Set high standards for themselves.
- ✓ Set up a regular study schedule.
- ✓ Share strengths, learning styles, challenges and needed accommodations with the general education teachers.
- ✓ Take ACT (American College Testing) or SAT (Standard Achievement Testing) exams early.

Going to college? Attend Catch the Wave!



Catch The Wave is a one-day conference designed specifically for high school students who have a disability and are considering post-secondary education (either college or technical institutes). Students will learn about preparing for college life, securing appropriate accommodations, and developing self-advocacy and communication skills. Highlights of the conference will be panel discussions with individuals who have a disability and have experienced a post-secondary setting, as well as disability coordinators discussing entrance and eligibility requirements. For more information on the date and location, contact the transition liaison in your area or go to the TSLP website at: www.tslp.org



SDMyLife is a FREE online program for South Dakota students to help them better understand themselves and how their interest, skills, and knowledge relate to real-world academic and career opportunities. Students use SDMyLife to research, select, and plan their careers. They can explore by career cluster, keyword, or school subject. Students can also research postsecondary education and training options, build a portfolio, study with Method Test Prep and find out about scholarships opportunities. They can also save assessment scores, log career planning activities and extra-curricular involvement, and even build a resume!

Parents are also able to create a FREE portal to see what their child has been researching for employment ideas as well as have access to a number of resources that will be helpful in their child's career planning.

To learn more go to: www.sdmylife.com



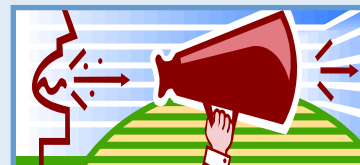
iTransition is a free, online transition curriculum to help students who are deaf or hard of hearing prepare for life after high school. There are three separate trainings with activities to help students learn about themselves, their career goals, and the skills they need to be successful in the future.

- Career Interests and Education Choices: It's My Plan!
- First Year College Success: Be the One!
- Essential Skills for College Living: It's My Life!

<http://pepnet.org/itransition>
(Create a free account to access)

The Power of Self-Advocacy

Self-advocacy is the art of speaking up for yourself and your needs and being able to explain a disability clearly and concisely. Once your child understands his/her disability, the next step is to know what actions or things are needed to be successful. No one at a college, technical institute or work can, or will, seek your child out because they think that your child may have a disability. Students with disabilities need to be able to self-identify and request accommodations. The skill of being able to explain your disability and to speak up for what you need and deserve is of the *utmost importance* to your child in being successful!



Communication Services for the Deaf (CSD) has Deaf Advocacy Training available. Contact Lance Sigdestad at LSigdestad@c-s-d.org or (605) 367-5760.



Getting a Job! is an online training developed and designed for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Focusing on the transition from school to work, the training offers a series of activities, supporting documents and topical videos designed to help the job seeker prepare for the world of work. All the videos in the modules are presented in ASL, and are also voiced in English and captioned.

<http://pepnet.org/e-learning/getajob>

Create a free account to gain access to all of Pepnet's valuable information!

South Dakota School for the Deaf offers a variety of activities for teens, elementary kids, preschool kids and families.

For more information go to <http://sdsd.sdbor.edu/activities.htm> or call 605.367.5200



HIGH SCHOOL WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

Project Skills is a paid work experience program for South Dakota high school students with disabilities. The program is a cooperative arrangement between the Division of Rehabilitation Services and local school districts. **Project Skills** provides students the opportunity to learn different skills in a variety of job placements, with the assistance of a job coach.

Many times, students with disabilities don't get an opportunity to participate in a paid work experience while in high school. While Division of Rehabilitation Services covers the cost of wages and additional supports, **Project Skills** enables employers to provide these students with valuable work experiences in a real work setting.

Over 80% of South Dakota school districts are participating in **Project Skills** and giving their high school students with disabilities the opportunity to further develop career interests and gain work experience.

For further information regarding this program, contact your local Division of Rehabilitation Services office, high school special education teacher or Transition Services Liaison Project.



<http://www.pepnet.org/>

Their Mission: To increase the educational, career and lifetime choices available to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Their Goal: To improve postsecondary outcomes for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, including those with co-occurring disabilities.

Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)

can offer services to students with disabilities. If your child hasn't applied for these services, please request the school to invite a VR counselor to meet with you and/or your child or attend an IEP meeting. Some services DRS may provide (based on eligibility, financial need and individual needs) are:

- ✓ guidance in transition planning;
- ✓ financial assistance for college or training, when appropriate;
- ✓ vocational counseling and guidance;
- ✓ work experience through Project Skills and/or job placement, job coaching, and employment/follow along services for competitive employment in the community.
- ✓ assessing the need for assistive technology equipment and services.

For information on the address/phone number of the DRS office nearest you, go to <http://dhs.sd.gov/drs/>; phone/TTY (605) 367-5330.