

**I. Self-Employment is a Viable Option for People with Autism. By Jennifer Terry**

[www.suite101.com/content/self-employment-is-a-viable-option-for-people-with-autism-a330304](http://www.suite101.com/content/self-employment-is-a-viable-option-for-people-with-autism-a330304)

- a. Self-employment is *flexible*
- b. *Creativity* and *inventiveness* are traits shared by most successful small business owners
- c. Most small business owners contract out services that they do not want to do or cannot do themselves. Business owners with Autism can do the same.
- d. *Family support* is also very important for a small business owner, and this is also true for small businesses owned by people with Autism.
- e. Self-employment offers people the opportunity to work in an area they enjoy while also receiving a *paycheck*.

**II. Thinking about Tomorrow: The Transition of Adult Life**

National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS)

[www.ndss.org](http://www.ndss.org)

- a. There are no national or state laws which entitle your child or family to any assistance because your child has Down Syndrome.
- b. What do you do? Prepare, prepare, and act!!
- c. Listen to your child. What are his/her interests, abilities, and dreams?
- d. Some families use a process called Person Centered Planning, which is a process of learning what your child's dreams are, accessing need to be accomplished, and creating action plans that layout steps for reaching each goal.
- e. Have an idea of your child's skills related to the real world in effort to help you identify what needs to be addressed.
- f. Graduation is an important aspect to leaving school. Consider when your child will finish secondary school in the high school environment end? (check on state guidelines for issuing a high school diploma)
- g. Plan for post high school SOONER THAN LATER. Consider three main categories: employment, living arrangements, and leisure time. (choices, options, and financial needs)

**III. Benefits, Assets, & Life Planning- Benefits available to People w/ Down Syndrome**

- a. Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
  1. Must have disability that prevents them from engaging in a "substantial, gainful activity & disability has lasted or is expected to last at least twelve continuous months
  2. Cannot have more than \$2,000.00 in resources (\$3,000.00 if married)
- a. Plans to Achieve Self-Support (PASS) Program
  1. Federal program for SSI recipients

2. Allows income saved or used in order to achieve a vocational goal is not counted toward SSI, with the end result that the person can have more assets and still qualify for services (SSI payment amounts may even increase)

**IV. Joshua O’Neil and Zeshan Tabani Enrichment Fund**

[www.nads.org/pages\\_new/enrichment\\_fund.html](http://www.nads.org/pages_new/enrichment_fund.html)

- a. Offers financial assistance to young adults w/ Down Syndrome who are 18 years or older, and wish to continue to participate in post-secondary education programs or enrichment courses to gain employment and other important life skills contributing to their independence
- b. Grants of up to \$2,000.00 are available by completing an extensive application process

**V. Ready, Set, Fly: A Parent’s Guide to Teaching Life Skills**

[www.caseylifeskills.org/pages/res/rsf%5CRSF.pdf](http://www.caseylifeskills.org/pages/res/rsf%5CRSF.pdf)

- a. This guide can help parents with teaching daily living skills, housing, transportation and community resources, money management, self-care, social development, work, and study skills.

**VI. Think College**

<http://thinkcollege.net/publications>

- a. Initiative of the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) at the University of Massachusetts, Boston.
- b. ICI currently has three federal grants designed to conduct research, training, and technical assistance for professionals, families, and students related to postsecondary education for individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities

**I. Act Now**

[www.northampton.edu/student-Resources/Disability-Services/Special-Projects/ACT-Now.html](http://www.northampton.edu/student-Resources/Disability-Services/Special-Projects/ACT-Now.html)

- a. Curriculum and training program helps assist students with disabilities transitioning from high school to a post-secondary institution.
- b. Curriculum can be purchased for \$50.00 plus shipping and handling.

**II. Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS)**

[www.rehab.state.al.us](http://www.rehab.state.al.us)

- a. ADRS operates four primary programs that serve different age groups: Early Intervention, Children’s Rehabilitation Services, Vocational Rehabilitation Service, and Independent Living/Homebound Services.
- b. All 67 counties in Alabama are served by a network of regional, community-based offices managed by the department.

- c. Each office provides diagnostic, medical, and other health-related clinic services, supportive services, as well as education and employment assistance.
- d. ADRS also collaborates with employers throughout the state, providing services and resources to help companies recruit, train, and accommodate workers with disabilities.

**III. Team Transition Clinic**

- a. Team clinic for youth w/ special healthcare needs from ages 12-21 who are eligible for Children's Rehabilitation Services and are beginning to plan for transition to adulthood.
- b. Young adults in this clinic discuss their goals and explore their options for the future. The clinic team, including the young person and family, collaborates to address issues and problems in planning for the future.
- c. Contact any CRS office for information on the Teen Transition Clinic.