

SHERMAN ISD

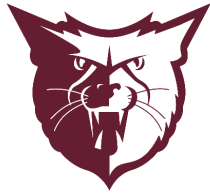
SPECIAL POPULATIONS

ACES 18+ Transition Program Learning Continuum

A Family Guide to Your Young Adult's Growth Toward Adult Life

How to use this guide: The table below shows the milestones and adult-life skills your young adult is working toward through the ACES 18+ Transition Program. Each row represents one area of growth. The columns show what to expect at each stage of transition to adult life. Use this alongside your young adult's IEP and transition planning documents to understand progress and set goals together with the school team.

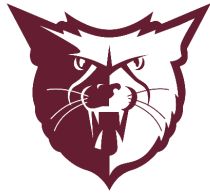
Area of Growth	Program Entry	Building Independence	Increasing Community Readiness	Preparing for Exit	Adult-Life Readiness	After Program Goals
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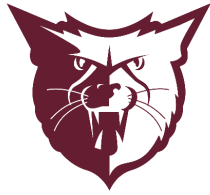
Workplace Skills & Job Performance	Explores what work is like; learns basic workplace expectations such as showing up on time, following directions, and completing simple tasks with close support.	Participates in job sampling and vocational training; builds work habits; begins to understand different job roles and expectations.	Completes job tasks consistently in supported employment or job-training settings; builds relationships in the workplace.	Performs job duties with minimal support and maintains workplace behaviors independently in most situations.	Maintains competitive, integrated employment with natural supports and handles workplace tasks and relationships independently.	Sustains employment, adapts to workplace expectations, and continues building long-term career stability.
Career Planning & Job Seeking	Explores interests and begins to think about future work options; career goals are just beginning to take shape.	Completes interest inventories; explores career options; builds a job portfolio; practices applications and interviews.	Identifies realistic career goals and practices job-seeking skills while connecting with Vocational Rehabilitation and other supports.	Applies for jobs, participates in real interviews, and uses community job-seeking resources with limited support.	Independently seeks, applies for, and secures employment while maintaining a current resume and using community job resources confidently.	Uses career planning skills independently, updates employment materials as needed, and advocates for ongoing job growth.



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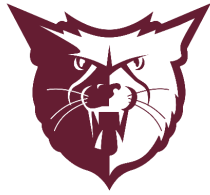
Home & Personal Care Skills	Needs significant support with hygiene, dressing, meal preparation, and household chores; daily routines are a major focus.	Completes personal care tasks and basic household routines with prompting while building confidence in home management.	Manages hygiene and dressing independently; completes household tasks with visual supports and occasional reminders.	Independently manages personal care, meal preparation, cleaning, and household responsibilities with little to no prompting.	Lives as independently as possible while managing the home environment with supports matched to personal needs and goals.	Maintains daily living routines, personal care, and home responsibilities as independently as possible in adult settings.
Money, Banking & Transportation	Learns basic money skills and begins to explore community settings; banking, budgeting, and transportation are introduced.	Learns to make purchases, use a bank account or debit card, and navigate familiar community locations with support.	Manages simple financial transactions and accesses community locations such as grocery stores, banks, and restaurants with increasing confidence.	Manages a personal budget and bank account with minimal support; navigates the community and uses transportation with growing independence.	Fully manages personal finances, transportation, and community access while handling unexpected situations calmly and confidently.	Uses budgeting, banking, and transportation skills to support independent adult living and community participation.



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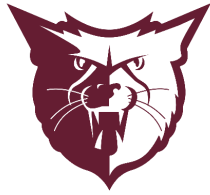
Communication in Adult Settings	Works on communicating in workplaces, community locations, appointments, and phone or digital interactions; these settings require new skills.	Communicates needs and preferences in familiar adult settings; practices phone calls, emails, and workplace communication with support.	Communicates effectively in structured adult settings; makes phone calls, sends messages, and manages common transactions with some support.	Communicates independently across most adult settings, including appointments, workplace situations, and unfamiliar interactions.	Communicates confidently and independently across adult settings; advocates for personal needs and manages communication demands of adult life.	Uses communication skills to manage employment, appointments, relationships, and community needs independently.
Social Skills & Relationships	Learns adult social norms, workplace etiquette, appropriate boundaries, and the basics of building relationships in adult settings.	Practices social skills through role-play and community experiences while building confidence in adult interactions.	Navigates workplace and community social situations with occasional support and maintains positive relationships with coworkers and community members.	Manages adult social interactions independently, maintains appropriate boundaries, and builds meaningful friendships and workplace relationships.	Participates fully in workplace, community, and personal relationships with confidence and is recognized as a valued community member.	Sustains healthy relationships, participates in community groups, and navigates social expectations of adult life successfully.



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Self-Advocacy & Knowing Rights	Begins to understand disability, personal rights, and available supports; learning to speak up is a primary goal of the program.	Learns about rights, benefits, and supports while practicing how to express preferences and needs in familiar settings.	Advocates for needs in familiar settings and participates meaningfully in transition planning while connecting with adult support agencies.	Independently advocates across settings, understands and exercises rights, and leads planning meetings.	Fully directs life decisions and navigates adult systems such as benefits, agencies, employment, and housing with confidence.	Self-advocates effectively with employers, agencies, service providers, and community partners.
Goal Setting & Decision-Making	Begins to connect interests and strengths to future possibilities; goal-setting and decision-making are active areas of instruction.	Makes choices and identifies short-term goals with support through person-centered planning activities.	Sets and works toward personal and transition goals; makes decisions in familiar contexts and reviews progress with the team.	Independently sets and pursues goals across employment, housing, relationships, and community life while self-monitoring progress.	Fully directs life planning with natural supports as needed and makes informed decisions across major life areas.	Continues setting meaningful goals, making informed choices, and directing personal plans for adult life.



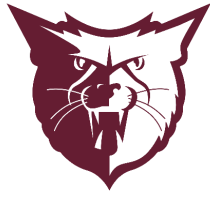
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Health & Personal Safety	Learns to manage health and safety needs; medical appointments, medications, and personal safety in community settings are key areas of focus.	Participates in health routines and follows safety procedures with support; learns to identify trusted adults and emergency resources.	Manages basic health routines with minimal support, including medication reminders, appointments with help, and safety practices in familiar settings.	Independently manages appointments, medications, and personal safety and accesses health services with confidence.	Fully manages personal health and safety across settings, including healthcare systems, insurance needs, and emergencies.	Maintains health routines, seeks support appropriately, and manages safety needs across home, work, and community life.
Community Participation & Leisure	Explores community resources and leisure activities; building community connections and recreational interests is a focus of the program.	Participates in planned community activities with support while identifying preferred leisure activities and becoming familiar with resources.	Accesses community settings and activities with minimal support, including parks, libraries, recreation centers, and events.	Independently participates in community activities of choice and manages leisure time while becoming a more connected community member.	Becomes a full, valued community member who participates in organizations, relationships, and activities as a contributing adult.	Maintains active community involvement, leisure interests, and meaningful participation in adult life.

All benchmarks are individualized through your young adult's IEP and transition planning process.

This continuum provides general guidance, not a fixed standard for every student.

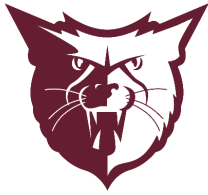


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Navigating transitions: Moving from program entry to adult life is an important journey. The table below explains what to expect at each transition stage, what supports the team will put in place, and specific ways families can stay involved and prepared.

Transition Stage	What to Expect	Supports from the Program Team	How Families Can Help
Entering the ACES Program	Your young adult joins the ACES 18+ program with a full transition assessment. Person-centered planning begins, and transition goals are established.	Transition assessment is completed; person-centered planning begins; IEP transition goals are established; adult agency options are introduced.	Attend IEP and transition planning meetings; share strengths, interests, and long-term hopes; ask questions and build a strong partnership with the team.
Building Real-World Skills	Your young adult participates in community-based instruction across employment, daily living, communication, and community access settings.	The team provides instruction in employment, independent living, communication, and community participation while monitoring growth and building agency connections.	Reinforce skills at home through transportation practice, home routines, money management, meal preparation, and communication opportunities.
Connecting to Adult Services & Employment	Your young adult enters job placement or vocational training while adult services applications and long-term supports begin to take shape.	The team supports job placement, vocational planning, agency applications, and benefits education related to adult services.	Participate in agency meetings; learn about Vocational Rehabilitation, SSI, SSDI, Medicaid waivers, and adult support systems early.



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Planning for Exit	Transition goals and postsecondary progress are reviewed as graduation or aging-out planning is finalized.	The team finalizes adult service connections, completes exit planning, and reviews progress toward adult-life readiness.	Attend exit planning meetings; confirm adult agency connections are in place; ask questions about next steps and community resources.
Thriving in Adult Life	Your young adult exits the program with natural supports and adult services in place as the next chapter begins.	The team helps ensure supports are in place and remains available for consultation during the transition to adult life.	Celebrate progress, continue encouraging independence, and support ongoing self-advocacy and community connection.

For questions about your young adult's IEP, transition planning, employment readiness, or available adult-life supports, contact your young adult's special education case manager or transition team.