

MAY 2025



**NORTHEAST  
TRANSITION  
COLLABORATIVE  
NETWORK**

INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS & STRATEGIES

# RESOURCE GUIDE



## About NTCN

Northeast Arc's Community Resource Center created the Northeast Transition Collaborative Network in response to gaps in communication and collaboration between school districts, agencies/providers, young adults, parents/caregivers, and community groups. The Northeast Transition Collaborative Network hosts monthly virtual sessions about adult services available and opportunities in the community. Quarterly professional development opportunities are hosted for school district representatives on topics related to person-centered transition. In addition, workshops are held for families around the person-centered planning process.

## Our Goal

To unify resources, provide trainings, and create a collaborative space for everyone involved in the person-centered transition process from school to adult services in the Massachusetts Northeast Region.

## About This Guide

This guide was created by the Community Resource Center at Northeast Arc. We recognize that not every program on this topic may have been highlighted here. Services and programs are constantly changing. This is meant as an overview of services available to people in Northeastern, Massachusetts. We may update these resource guides periodically; if you know of a resource that can be highlighted here, please reach out to us at [CommunityResourceCenter@ne-arc.org](mailto:CommunityResourceCenter@ne-arc.org)



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## **Classroom Resources**

### **Advocate Medical Group: Adult Down Syndrome Center**

<https://adsresources.advocatehealth.com/search/people-with-down-syndrome/>

A library of free visuals, social stories, and visual checklists for young adults related to social scenarios, hygiene, personal safety.

### **Bitsboard App**

<https://www.bitsboard.com/>

Bitsboard is an interactive app that offers a variety of flashcard games and activities. The app has a library of pre-made activities and users can create their own to customize content. Free and paid options available.

### **Functional Life Skills System by Conover Company**

<https://www.conovercompany.com/conover-online/functional-skills-system/>

An online subscription-based program that uses video modeling to help learners function independently in their homes, schools, communities and workplaces.

### **Pink Cat Games**

<https://www.pinkcatgames.com/>

Pink Cat Games has a library of teacher-created content and games and the option to customize your own set with the content you are targeting. Free and paid subscriptions available.

### **Sherlock Center Resource Library**

<https://sherlockcenter.ric.edu/resources>

The Sherlock Center offers over 400 FREE adapted versions of popular literature for students with complex disabilities and hundreds of online resources and publications on topics across the lifespan, from early intervention to transition to person-centered thinking, employment and self-determination.

### **The Pay Off: Practical Money Skills Game**

<https://www.practicalmoneyskills.com/en/play/payoff.html>

An immersive experiential game for youth ages 14+ to learn about financial basics. The game simulates a phone where players can chat with characters, check their bank, check e-mail and more. Students' scores go up when they save money and make good financial decisions, and go down when they spend money or make poor decisions. The game allows for players to play solo or teachers can set it up for multiple players.

### **Unique Learning System**

<https://www.n2y.com/unique-learning-system/>

Unique Learning System is subscription online standards-based program that provides access to different levels of the general education curriculum. Unique Learning offers news2you, which has current event articles with comprehension questions, and activities to correspond with the content.

### **Wordwall**

<https://www.wordwall.net/>

Wordwall creates interactive games and printed materials for students with teacher provided content. Teachers can access a library of resources or create their own. Activities include: quizzes, matching games, and hangman. Wordwall has free and paid subscriptions.



## Inclusion & Friendship

### **Pathways to Friendship - The Arc of Massachusetts**

<https://www.thearcofmass.org/friendship>

Pathways to Friendship is a collaborative initiative on social inclusion between the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and The Arc of Massachusetts. Pathways to Friendship provides information and resources to help individuals, families and community organizations engage in and sustain those relationships.

OUR PRESENTERS

### **Merge: Diverse Abilities Consulting Group**

<https://www.mergeconsulting.org/>

MERGE offers trainings related to inclusion by providing expert guidance to recreation, sport, camp, and community organizations. Their tailored training programs empower places to welcome, engage, and support individuals with diverse abilities.

### **Best Buddies Friendship Programs**

<https://www.bestbuddies.org/mari/friendship/>

Best Buddies Friendship programs build one-to-one friendships between people with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), offering social interactions while improving the quality of life and level of inclusion for a population that is often isolated and excluded. Through their participation, people with IDD form meaningful connections with their peers, gain self-confidence and self-esteem, and share interests, experiences and activities that many other individuals enjoy.

### **Institute for Community Inclusion**

<https://www.communityinclusion.org/>

Research and training institute that promotes the full inclusion of people with disabilities in every aspect of society through training, research, consultation, and clinical and employment services.

### **Jewish Big Brothers Big Sisters: Friend 2 Friend (F2F)**

<https://www.jbbbs.org/>

Friend 2 Friend (F2F) provides adults with mild to moderate disabilities the opportunity to make new friends, socialize, stay active and be connected to the community. F2F programs support one-to-one friendships for qualifying adults (ages 18+). The program is open to adults across all religions, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, and ability.

### **Unified Sports**

<https://www.specialolympics.org/what-we-do/sports/unified-sports>

Special Olympics is dedicated to promoting social inclusion through shared sports training and competition experiences. Unified Sports joins people with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team.



## **Mental Health, Wellness & Healthy Relationships**

### **Center for Parent Information and Resources**

<https://www.parentcenterhub.org/sexed/>

Addresses one aspect of development that's important not to ignore with children with or without disabilities—the development of sexuality.

### **Elevatus Training**

<https://www.elevatustraining.com>

Elevatus offers training and a school curriculum on the topic of Sexuality, plus an excellent resources section on their website with many helpful articles.

### **Hello, It's Me**

<https://hello-itsme.com/>

This app was created for the IDD Community to bring people closer together and provide an inclusive place to interact and be yourself!

### **James Stanfield Programs**

<https://stanfield.com/courses/>

James Stanfield has a number of programs that are designed for students with disabilities on topics related to social skills, independence, transition, and more!

### **Jane and Terry Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior at UCLA-Social Skills Programs**

<https://www.semel.ucla.edu/peers>

The PEERS Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS®) is world-renowned for providing evidence-based social skills treatment to preschoolers, adolescents, and young adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety, depression, and other socio-emotional problems.

### **Kings County-FLASH lesson plans for Special Education**

<https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/locations/family-planning/education/FLASH/special-education>

Lessons related to sexuality, relationships, and safety designed to support individuals with disabilities. The information is older than other resources however, many lessons have components that apply and can be used to supplement other programs.

### **Positive Choices Curriculum for Educators - Oak Hill Relationship and Sexuality**

<https://relationshipandsexuality.oakhillct.org>

The program is designed for use in a school, but it also has free sample lessons that parents can use.

### **Relationships Decoded Curriculum**

<https://www.relationshipsdecoded.com/>

A free evidence-based curriculum that is designed to teach people with developmental disabilities how to develop healthy and safe relationships while also giving them information about sexual abuse and coercion.



## **Mental Health, Wellness & Healthy Relationships, cont.**

### **Respectability**

<https://www.respectability.org/resources/sexual-education-resources/>

Website with resources related to sexuality, dating, hygiene, puberty, body changes and more for caregivers and professionals to access.

### **Sex Ed for Individuals with I/DD**

<https://www.ncil.org/resource/sex-ed-for-individuals-with-i-dd/>

The National Council on Independent Living's project helps people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) learn about sex. There are ten videos that can be watched in any order.

### **Sex Ed for Self-Advocates from OAR (Organization for Autism Research)**

<https://www.researchautism.org/self-advocates/sex-ed-for-self-advocates/>

This guide is a sexuality and sex education resource written specifically for autistic people age 15 and up. In each of the nine sections of the guide, there are articles and brief videos for participants followed by opportunities to test their knowledge about a given topic and practice skills introduced.

### **Sexual Health Coaching & Education-Newton**

<https://www.nesca-newton.com/sexual-education-disability/>

Comprehensive Sexual Education and Classes geared towards adolescents and young adults who are not receiving or did not have sexual health education in their school setting.

### **Sexual Health Victoria**

<https://www.fpv.org.au/for-you/people-with-a-disability/talking-to-children-with-cognitive-disabilities>

Tips for educators and parents on how to address sexuality education conversations, sexuality education needs to suit your child's level of understanding.

### **Triangle Abuse Prevention & Safety Program**

<https://www.triangle-inc.org/taps/>

Triangle Abuse Prevention & Safety (TAPS) is a newly incorporated program that specializes in providing a variety of programs that empower and enrich the lives of people with disabilities as they pursue all of their personal and professional goals. Our programs are implemented in multiple settings and different stages in life – both youth and adults. TAPS programs are crafted with an understanding that abuse prevention programs need to reflect various situations as individuals grow into different stages in life. Each partnership starts by developing a deep understanding of the needs of each student to create and deliver customized and highly effective learning sessions. Topics include abuse prevention, healthy relationships, and personal safety.

### **Vanderbilt Kennedy Center Healthy Bodies Toolkits (Available in multiple languages)**

<https://vkc.vumc.org/healthybodies/>

The Healthy Bodies Toolkit contains a Parent's Guide on Puberty for Boys with Disabilities and a Parent's Guide for Girls with Disabilities.





## **Assistive Technology (AT) for Independent Living Skills**

### **Accessible Chef**

<https://www.accessiblechef.com/>

Collection of free visual recipes and other resources to help teach cooking skills to individuals with disabilities at home or in a special education classroom.

### **BeeVisual**

<https://www.beevisual.com/>

Choice Works App to help improve the communication between children and caregivers. Easy-to-use format to help children learn social skills, develop self control, and complete daily routines.

### **Boardmaker**

<https://www.us.tobiidynavox.com/pages/boardmaker-7>

Software program that allows customization of visual supports, schedules, adapted books, etc.

### **Goally**

<https://visualschedule.getgoally.com/>

Create and print visual schedules with your own text and images and print FREE visual schedule.

### **Lesson Pix**

<https://www.lessonpix.com/>

An online resource to make custom printable materials (\$36 annually).

### **Northeast Arc's Assistive Technology Lending Library (Danvers, MA)**

<https://www.ne-arc.org/services/family-services-and-recreation/assistive-technology-lending-library/>

Choosing the right technology for you or a loved one can be challenging, which is why we launched the Assistive Technology Lending Library at the Center for Linking Lives. Visitors can test out and borrow some of the newest smart home and disability-specific applications and devices on the market.

### **REquipment**

<https://www.requipmentma.org/>

Durable Home Medical Equipment & Assistive Technology Reuse. REquipment provides free, gently used, durable home medical equipment (DME) and assistive technology (AT) throughout Massachusetts.

### **Seven Hills Assistive Technology Lending Library**

<https://www.sevenhills.org/at-lending-library>

The AT program has helped individuals increase their functional independence and quality of life outcomes. A robust technology bank of loaner low-tech and high-tech equipment is available to staff and individuals supported as they are supported to identify and access appropriate supportive technology.

### **US Currency Reader**

<https://www.loc.gov/nls/services-and-resources/us-currency-reader-program/>

FREE for blind/visually impaired-US government's Meaningful Access Initiative to assist individuals who experience difficulties identifying US currency.



## Parent & Interagency Collaboration

### **Building Effective Interagency Transition Teams**

[https://www.instrc.indiana.edu/tips-tools/\\_tips/index.html](https://www.instrc.indiana.edu/tips-tools/_tips/index.html)

Tips and Tools on building effective interagency transition teams from Indiana Secondary Transition Resource Center at Indiana University Bloomington.

### **Charting the Life Course Framework**

<https://www.lifecoursetools.com>

Charting the LifeCourse is designed to be used for own life, for your family members, or in the work you do. The framework and tools will help you organize your ideas, vision, and goals, as well as problem-solve, navigate, and advocate for supports.

### **National Technical Assistance Center on Transition**

<https://www.transitionta.org/lesson-starters/circles/>

Communicating Interagency Relationships and Collaborative Linkages for Exceptional Students (CIRCLES) is a three-team model of interagency collaboration that includes a teaming approach to support positive in-school and postschool outcomes for students with disabilities.





## Social/Soft Skills & Employment Readiness

### Driver's Education Programs

MassAbility participants who are eligible for Career Services may be referred for driving-related evaluations and resources. Available services vary depending on eligibility, financial need, and/or funding.

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massability-transportation-resources>

<https://www.hoffmanautoschool.com/>

<https://www.drive-rx.com/>

<https://centralmasafety.com/drivers-ed/adaptive-driving/>

<https://www.mass.gov/guides/first-time-driver-start-here#did-you-study-for-your-learner's-permit-or-road-test?>

### MBTA Travel Instruction Services and Tools

<https://www.mbtta.com/accessibility/travel-instruction-services-and-tools>

The MBTA offers a variety of free travel instruction services to help people with disabilities travel independently on the bus, train, and Commuter Rail. All services are available in person or digitally via Zoom upon request and can be customized. This page includes a series of videos on how to use transportation as well as a link to curriculum resources for teachers.

### Northeast Independent Living Program (NILP)

<https://www.nilp.org/>

<https://www.nilp.org/youth-services/>

The Northeast Independent Living Program is a peer run Center for Independent Living providing advocacy and services, referrals, peer counseling and training to people with all disabilities who wish to live independently in the community. The Youth Services Program helps young people develop basic work readiness skills, increase social and communication skills, and build self-esteem and self-confidence.

### NFI Youth Programs

<https://www.nfima.org/services/transition-age-youth-services/lofts/>

<https://www.nfima.org/services/transition-age-youth-services/safe-harbor/>

NFI offers multiple residential options for young adults including Lofts – a community-based pre-independent program where each person has their own room and there are life skills coaches available. Safe Harbor provides young adults their own apartment and each resident works with a case manager.

### Pre-Employment Transition Services (PRE-ETS)

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/pre-employment-transition-services-pre-ets-0>

Career decision-making and future planning, catering to a broad spectrum of interests and goals, from first summer jobs to post-school career paths (up until their 22nd birthday).

### Soft Skills to Pay the Bills

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/program-areas/individuals/youth/transition/soft-skills>

"Skills to Pay the Bills: Mastering Soft Skills for Workplace Success" is a curriculum developed by ODEP focused on teaching "soft" or workforce readiness skills to youth, including youth with disabilities. Created for youth development professionals as an introduction to workplace interpersonal and professional skills, the curriculum is for young people (14-21) in both in-school and out-of-school environments.



## Self Advocacy & Human Rights

### **Advocates for Autism of Massachusetts (AFAM)**

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

Advocacy for Autism, Legislation

### **The ARC - Center for Future Planning**

<https://futureplanning.thearc.org/landing>

The Build Your Plan® tool helps people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) think about and plan for their future. The interests, preferences, and skills of the person with I/DD are the main focus.

### **The Arc of Massachusetts**

<https://thearcofmass.org>

Through advocacy, programs that promote inclusion, and engaging the community, The Arc of Massachusetts creates tangible changes in the community and in the lives of people with disabilities.

### **Autistic Self Advocacy Network**

[https://autisticadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/CurriculumForSelfAdvocates\\_r7.pdf](https://autisticadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/CurriculumForSelfAdvocates_r7.pdf)

Provides a detailed curriculum for self-advocates.

### **Charting the LifeCourse Nexus (CtLC) Framework**

<https://thearcofmass.org/lifecourse/>

Foundational principles and values to engage in family and person-centered thinking approaches. Tools and resources will support individuals and families in developing a vision to pursue full and rich lives engaged in community life.

### **Dignity of Risk**

<https://www.mhddcenter.org/self-determination-dignity-of-risk/>

Fact Sheet from the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities National Training Center.

### **Dignity of Risk Video**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUka52IKtdw>

Dignity of risk is about the human right to make your own decisions, to take risks, to live a life you choose.

### **Disability Law Center (DLC)**

<https://www.dlc-ma.org/>

The Disability Law Center (DLC) is the Protection and Advocacy (P&A) agency for Massachusetts. DLC is a private, non-profit organization responsible for providing protection and advocacy for the rights of Massachusetts residents with disabilities. DLC receives federal, state and private funding but is not part of the state or federal government. As the P&A, federal law provides DLC extensive access authority.

### **Massachusetts Advocates Standing Strong**

<https://www.wearemass.org/>

Our mission here at MASS is to empower self-advocates through education so we make choices that improve and enrich our lives.



## Self Advocacy & Human Rights, cont.

### **The Massachusetts Alliance for 21st Century Disability Policy (MA21)**

<https://thearcofmass.org/self-determination-and-self-direction>

The MA Alliance was formed in 2007 to protect the right of people with disabilities to self-direct, and through its efforts helped pass the Real Lives Law in 2014. MA21 is a partnership of self-advocates, family members, other stakeholders and disability advocacy organizations.

### **Massachusetts Down Syndrome Congress (MDSC) Self Advocate Groups**

<https://mdsc.org/programs/for-teens-adults-with-down-syndrome/>

Promoting the acceptance & inclusion of people with Down syndrome & their families. The MDSC offers the Advocates in Motion (AIM) group for teens and young adults age 13 - 22 and a Self Advocate Advisory Council for adults age 20 and up.

### **Massachusetts Sibling Support Network (MSSN)**

<https://www.masiblingsupport.org/>

Resources, and support groups for siblings of individuals with disabilities.

### **Mass Families**

<https://massfamilies.org/>

Advocacy and leadership training in pursuit of high quality, individualized community support and service options, including family support, for people with disabilities and their families.

### **Self-Determination - National Deaf Center**

<https://selfadvocacyonline.org/learning/>

How can self-advocacy skills be fostered in deaf people? Self-Advocacy Online

### **Vanderbilt Kennedy Center**

[https://vkc.vumc.org/assets/files/triad/tips/Three-Step\\_Self-Advocacy\\_EDU.pdf](https://vkc.vumc.org/assets/files/triad/tips/Three-Step_Self-Advocacy_EDU.pdf)

Offers a three-step self-advocacy process for educators.

### **Information on Voting Rights**

<https://www.dlc-ma.org/rev-up-voting-advocacy/>

<https://www.usvotefoundation.org/disabled-voter-guide/massachusetts>

U.S. Vote Foundation's Massachusetts Voters with Disabilities Guide provides valuable resources including information on accessible voting options, voter rights, and guidance on the voting process. This essential Massachusetts guide empowers individuals to exercise their right to vote in a private, independent, and accessible way.