

5. Your IEP and Your Transition

5A Your Right to an IEP

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), public schools must provide free education through age 21 for students with disabilities who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP). IDEA gives you these rights:

- Your school should help you in a number of ways, based on your interests, preferences, and needs.
- The school should help you with your transition planning once you turn 14 years old, or earlier if your IEP team finds it appropriate.
- When you turn 16 years old, your IEP should include a statement of the transition services you need.
- You have the right to be educated with children who are not disabled (to the maximum extent appropriate).
- You have the right to access regular education classes, have high academic expectations, and modified curriculum (to the maximum extent appropriate).

These are the kinds of services that may be available to you in school:

- *education support*: gives you extra time to take tests, someone to help you take notes in class, speech therapy, an aide to help you with your personal needs, a seat that is closer to the front of the class, and other help
- *vocational training*: gives you the skills you need to be hired for and perform a specific job
- *life skills training*: teaches you the skills you need to live a successful life
- *after-school employment opportunities*: helping you get a part-time job after school or during the school day.