

# Charting the LifeCourse



## Adulthood

### LIFE DOMAIN



### LIFE STAGE



Adulthood is defined as the period from the time we turn 18 years old to age 65, when we enter our golden years. For most of us, adulthood is the longest stage of life. Even though the school years have ended, you can continue to learn and grow throughout your adult life.

This 4-pager is designed to help you think about the common experiences, concerns, and questions for each life domain during this stage. Life domains are the different, but connected, aspects of life, like where we live, who we spend time with, and what we do every day. On the back, you will find questions to help you think about the supports you and/or your family may need during this life stage.

Individuals and families may focus on their current situation and life stage but may also find it helpful to look ahead to think about life experiences that will help move them toward an inclusive, productive life in the future. To see questions for other life stages, refer to the Life Stage Series of 4-Pagers and the *Charting the LifeCourse: Experiences & Questions* booklet at [lifecoursetools.com](http://lifecoursetools.com)

This publication is based on the Charting the LifeCourse Framework, which was created to help individuals and families of all abilities and all ages:

- develop a vision for a good life,
- think about what they need to know and do,
- identify how to find or develop supports, and
- take steps to live the lives they want to live.



## Daily Life & Employment

School, employment, volunteering, communication, routines, life skills

As a child, you spent much of your day in school. Now that you are an adult, it's important to have an idea of how you want to spend your time. Do you want to work, attend college or trade school, or volunteer? How will you make a living and stay busy? What are the daily routines and activities that give your life meaning? Making choices and having activities that you feel good about will help lead you to the kind of life you want.

- What is something I've always wanted to learn more about, or what skills or interests would I like to explore?
- How do I find ways to continue learning at my job, through volunteering, in the community, or with friends?
- What are the things I really like or want to do?
- What kind of job or volunteer opportunity matches my passion or interests?
- What assistive technology, adaptations and supports are available to help me with my daily activities or routine?



## Community Living

Housing and living options, community access, transportation, home adaptations and modifications

Having a roof over your head is a must have to be able to survive day-to-day life. Knowing your options and having a home you are comfortable in and proud of is key to the good life. Living in a community you like and learning how to navigate it is an important part of being an adult. Being active in your neighborhood and community life is an important part of adulthood.

- What kind of living options do I know about or might want to try?
- What skills do I need to live as independently as I like, and how do I find help when I need it?
- How am I being supported to have valued roles in my community?
- What kind of accessibility issues should I think about when choosing my home or apartment?
- How do I get around to places I need or want to go?
- How do I pay for different transportation options, such as driving my own car, public transportation, or other options, like ridesharing or bike rental?



## Safety & Security

Emergencies, well-being, guardianship options, legal rights and issues

There are many layers to staying safe and secure. We have to be ready for an emergency and know what to do and who can help us if something goes wrong. We need to be able to make responsible choices and decisions and take responsibility for our own lives. We need to know when to ask for help and who we can count on. We also have to manage our money and assets so we can live comfortably well into our golden years.

- If I cannot be at home alone or access the community without help, what kind of supports do I need?
- Do I understand who I should and should not let into my home?
- Who can I call if I don't feel safe or need assistance, and do I know how to call for help?
- What am I doing to be ready in case of an emergency such as practicing safety drills, and how do I make a disaster plan that takes my needs into account?
- Who is partnering with me with in supported decision making?
- What income sources do I have to cover my monthly expenses?

It is important to make sure our bodies are healthy, strong and free of illness and injury so that we can do all the things we need and want to do each day. Making good choices about the foods you eat, what you put in your body, and getting plenty of exercise and physical activities will help you to enjoy a long and healthy life. It is also important to understand your health and be an active part of your health care.

- What supports do I need to manage my own medications, talk to my doctors and other medical professionals, and participate in making medical and health decisions?
- Do I get regular physicals and routine exams, such as mammograms, prostate checks, and blood pressure monitoring?
- What information do I need to understand and communicate with others about my disability or special healthcare needs and how it affects me?
- What support do I need to eat healthy meals and snacks and stay physically active?
- What technology am I using to monitor my sleep patterns, exercise or activity and other health related things?



## Healthy Living

Health care, physical fitness, mental and behavioral health, wellness and nutrition

A good life includes having people we care about and who care about us in our lives. It means doing things that are interesting and fun and that help us connect with other people. Having a network of people in your life can help with many other things in life, such as your job, staying safe, or just having someone to talk to. Some people want to be part of a faith community where they can have meaningful roles and connections.

- How am I maintaining friendships and making new ones?
- What kinds of relationships do I have or want in my life?
- What kinds of things can I do in the community for fun and friendship?
- How am I exploring or developing my interests or finding new ones?
- What do I need to participate in faith-based and spiritual practices of my choosing?
- Do I have a supportive faith community, and what extra supports do I need to fully participate?



## Social & Spirituality

Friendships and relationships, leisure activities, personal networks, faith community

Each of us has rights and responsibilities as citizens. We have the right to a good life and to be treated equally. At the same time, we have the duty to follow and be educated about the laws and rules that affect us so we can stand up for ourselves. We also have to carry out our civic responsibilities if we want our voices heard. Getting involved in our communities helps us become leaders and gives us a sense of purpose and pride.

- What support do I need to lead a planning team, share my vision, life plan and goals, and help identify objectives?
- Am I making most of my own life decisions and taking responsibility for the consequences?
- How am I encouraging my parents/family and others to step back and enable me to make my own choices and decisions about my life (with support as needed)?
- Who in my life knows me well and promotes my success?
- In what ways do I want to get involved in civic engagement or leadership?



## Citizenship & Advocacy

Civic engagement, valued roles, decision-making, goal setting, personal responsibility



## SERVICES & SUPPORTS

People, places, and things that help us get through the day and help us accomplish our goals

We all use a variety of supports to help us get through our daily lives, including using our own assets and capabilities. Most of us have people in our lives who do things for us (and vice versa). We tap into technology, as well as businesses, organizations and resources in the community. Even though you may need paid services, remember to consider other types of support as well.

- What strengths and assets do I bring to the table?
- Who can I count on to be there when I need a helping hand or a shoulder to cry on?
- What people do I have in my life that care for me and can support me?
- Where are the places I go where everyone knows my name?
- What technology do I have access to that could help support me?
- Do I have a basic understanding of public benefits I might qualify for, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Income (SSDI), Medicaid, Food Stamps, or other state and local eligibility-based sources?



## FAMILY UNIT

Flexible, comprehensive, and coordinated strategies to help people supporting family members with I/DD address the emotional, physical and material well-being of the entire family.

For many of us, family is central part our lives. We are connected to our families throughout the life course, even though the roles of our family members may change as we age. Our family often has a key role in the helping and guiding us as adults. What does your family need to help you on your journey to the good life? Here are some things to think about and discuss with your family:

- What does my family need to understand my choices, like moving out of the family home and other options?
- Are other family members getting older and in need of supports?
- How do we understand and mesh supports available to me and to our family?
- How am I helping my family understand my wants and needs and what is most important to me?
- Do my family or key supporters need information on how to partner with me in supported decision-making?

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A University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)

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