

# FUTURE



## ★ What Does “Your Future” Mean?

When we talk about your future, we’re talking about:

- what you want for your life
- what you hope for
- what you dream about
- the plans you’d like to make

Your future can be about:

- ✦ big dreams for when you’re an adult
- ✦ goals for next year
- ✦ ideas for next term at school
- ✦ even small hopes for next week

Some young people like thinking far ahead.

Others prefer thinking about the near future because far-away plans feel stressful.

**Both ways are completely okay.**

## ★ Setting Goals in a Way That Works for You

Sometimes thinking about the future feels too big.

That’s why it helps to break it down:

**One big goal** broken into **small, easy steps**.

Small steps feel safer and less overwhelming.

You get to choose your own goals.

Your plans should be about what *you* want — not what other people think you should want.

Goals can change.

You can change your mind.

That’s a normal part of growing up.

## ★ Your Strengths Matter

You might have strengths like:

- focusing really well on things that interest you

- remembering important details
- staying motivated when something matters to you



These strengths can help you move towards your future, one step at a time.

## ★ Building Your Confidence and Independence

Grown-ups can help you:

- take small steps toward independence
- try new things
- learn skills that help you feel more confident
- get involved with your community in ways that feel comfortable

There is no one “right” way to grow up.  
Your story is your own.

A good approach means:

- ✦ not trying to change who you are
- ✦ helping you use your strengths
- ✦ supporting your dreams, not replacing them

Plans can change over time — and that’s healthy.

## ★ Thinking About Becoming an Adult (Transition)

As you get older, you might hear the word “**transition.**”  
This means moving from children’s services to adult services, usually around age 18.

This change can feel:

- exciting
- scary
- confusing
- hopeful

You might feel excited about:

- being more independent
- meeting new people
- studying something you enjoy
- getting a job

And it’s also okay if you feel worried about these changes.

Lots of young people feel the same way.

## ★ Your Rights (In Simple Words)

There are laws that help decide what support young people get.

These laws use words like:

- **must** (they have to help)
- **should** (they really need to help)

Both are important, and sometimes this can get confusing for families. That's why having people who can explain things is really helpful.

## ★ Why the Move to Adulthood Can Be Hard

Transition isn't one day — it's a long process.

And for many neurodivergent young people, change is really difficult because:

- routines feel safe
- new situations feel scary or confusing
- support often changes after school finishes

This is normal.

And you deserve support that makes the process smoother.

## ★ Important Things to Think About for Your Future

Your future isn't only about school or jobs.

It can also include:

- where you want to live
- friendships and relationships
- what kind of work or study you want
- money skills
- travel skills
- hobbies you enjoy
- support services you might need
- things that help you feel safe and happy

There are many parts to an adult life, and you don't have to plan all of them at once.

## ★ What Can Go Wrong Without Good Planning

If adults don't plan things properly, young people might:

- lose support suddenly
- fall between services
- not get the help they need



- feel ignored or unprepared
- miss out on important skills

That's why planning early and clearly is so important.

## ★ What Helps When Thinking About the Future

Here are things that make planning easier:



### 1. You being heard

Your choices matter.

You can share your ideas by:

- talking
- drawing
- using pictures
- using technology
- writing things down

### 2. Advocacy

If it's hard to say what you want, trusted adults can speak up for you.

### 3. Everyone working together

It helps when home, school, and services all follow the same plan.

### 4. Flexible support

Some kids like reminders.

Some kids don't.

Support should fit *what you* need.

## Things You Can Do Yourself (With Support)

### Talk to someone you trust

This might be a parent, carer, teacher, or another grown-up.

### Practise speaking up for yourself

You can learn to say what you want and need — step by step.

### Think about what you enjoy

Your interests can help you choose subjects, jobs, or hobbies.

## Try using social stories

These help explain:

- what will happen
- what to expect
- how to handle change

They make new situations feel less scary.

## Learn life skills slowly

Things like:

- cooking
- travel
- money skills
- appointments
- work skills

You don't have to learn them all at once — small practice makes a big difference.

### ★ Key Message for You

There is **no one right path** your life has to follow.

Your future belongs to **you**.

With:

- support
- patience
- planning
- people who respect you

...you can build a future that feels right for **who you are**, not who anyone else wants you to be.

✦ **Small steps today can create a strong and brilliant future tomorrow.** ✦



# Timeline for Building Adult Life Skills

for Teenagers with Autism



## Phase 1: Foundation (Ages 14-15)

**Goal:** Build confidence with basic routines and money awareness

- Practice simple chores (making bed, washing dishes) using checklists
- Learn to handle pocket money, track spending with visual chart
- Role-play greetings and short conversations
- Establish consistent sleep and meal routines



## Phase 2: Independence Skills (Ages 15-16)

**Goal:** Expand responsibilities and introduce planning

- Learn 3-5 simple meals with step-by-step picture guides
- Manage a small monthly allowance, save for personal goals
- Use a visual calendar for school, hobbies and chores
- Use clear examples for personal space, and online safety



## Phase 4: Transition to Adulthood (Ages 17-18)

**Goal:** Build confidence for independent living

- Understand bills and basic banking (with visual guides)
- Plan weekly meals, maintain a tidy space
- Role-play interviews, practice workplace etiquette
- Schedule own appointments with reminders



## Phase 5: Adult Readiness (18+)

**Goal:** Maintain independence and adapt to new challenges

- Open a bank account, manage income and expenses
- Learn basics of renting—reading simple contracts
- Engage in safe social activities—voting basics
- Keep a support network for guidance when needed

### Online Resources

- [What does the law say A legal guide for council staff including lawyers and social workers](#)
- [Resources for autistic teenagers](#)
- [NHS England » Useful autism resources and training](#)
- [Home | Spectrum Gaming](#)
- [Parent Handouts & Resources | Explaining Brains](#)
- [Neurodiversity-Understood-Parent-Guide.pdf](#)
- [Words-Matter-Talking-to-neurodivergent-children-and-young-people.pdf](#)
- [ADHD in children and young people - NHS](#)
- [A quick guide to ADHD | Resources | YoungMinds](#)