

Charting the LifeCourse™ Guidebook

Envision your child's best life. Make a plan to get there.



Your best life,
your way.

Plan the best life for your child at any age, any stage.

This guidebook introduces you to Charting the LifeCourse™ materials. You can use these materials to plan your child's future and have more meaningful conversations with the people who support your child.

LifeCourse has tools that are flexible and can be used by anyone. You can make them work for your child and his or her needs at any stage. Use them yourself or share them with your child, other caregivers or family members, teachers, case managers, health care providers and more.

We've included examples in the guidebook to help spark your thinking. When you're ready to start, visit disabilityhubmn.org/guidebooks to download these tools for yourself or others.



My Profile Page

Identify what matters to your child. Capture your child's interests, strengths, talents and how people can best offer support.

page 5



Life Trajectory Worksheet

Create a vision for your child's best life. Include the experiences or support needed to get there.

page 7



Integrated Supports Star Worksheet

Identify the supports your child is using now, and think about other supports that might be helpful.

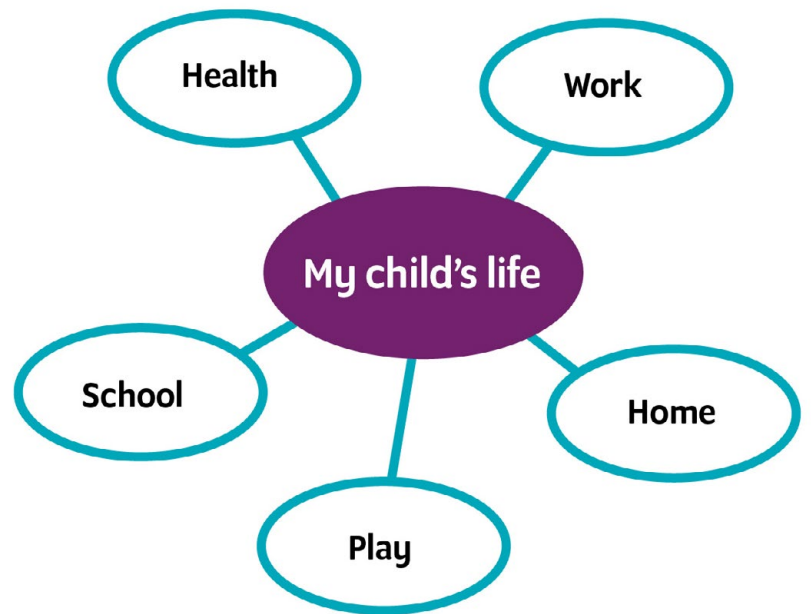
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Aim for a specific goal or look at the big picture.

You can use LifeCourse tools to:

- Capture your child's strengths and interests
- Plan for a successful school experience
- Share information with day care providers, teachers, medical staff or other providers
- Explore options for technology support
- Set a vision for work and community life
- Solve a problem
- Do anything!

There are no wrong ways to use the LifeCourse tools to plan for your child's best life.



“I want a job working with animals.”

“I want friends.”



Consider what's important to your child.

No one knows your child better than you. You can help the people who support your child understand what's most helpful. The **My Profile Page** is an at-a-glance way to know what really matters to your child. You can share it with anyone who interacts with your child.

- **Get started.** Use the My Profile Page to list your child's strengths and interests, and the best ways to offer support. Depending on your child's age and abilities, encourage your child to fill out his or her own profile page, too.
- **Use it.** Give your child's profile page to day care providers, teachers, neighbors, medical staff, your child's employers — anyone in your child's life. The more specific you can be in the profile page, the better.

“I gave it to the supervisor at my new job to introduce myself.”

“The My Profile Page is helpful for new school staff or medical staff at the clinic. It makes it easier for them to understand how to help my daughter.”



My Profile Page

This is a sample profile page for Sam. It's an overview of what really matters to him, his interests and how people can best offer him support. Sam shares this profile with the people he meets.



Charting the LifeCourse™



My Profile Page



Sam

's one-page profile

(Write your name on the line above)

What people like about me:

I have a great smile I get the giggles a lot.
I'm fun, silly and friendly!
I am willing to try new things.
I remember songs and who sings them.
I don't usually complain, even if something hurts.

What's important to me:

My family and friends
Going to the library
Going to church
My iPad
Being like everybody else, not
being treated differently.
Riding horses

How to best support me:

Include me in activities or when you're talking.
I don't like to spend time alone.
Know that I am listening even though
I may not look you in the eye at first.
Let me make choices.
Give me clear directions.
Tell me what you expect. That's when
I do my best.
Ask if I need help. Don't do things for me.

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Set high expectations for your child's future.

You have a vision for your child's best life. You can use this vision to set positive expectations for the future, starting in early childhood. The **Life Trajectory Worksheet** can help you envision your child's best life and identify the steps or experiences needed to get there. Champion your vision and encourage others to share your high expectations.

- **Get started.** Use the Life Trajectory Worksheet to describe your child's best life. If it's easier, start by listing what you don't want for your child.
- **Use it.** Bring the Life Trajectory Worksheet to school meetings, medical appointments and planning sessions with case managers or other providers. Use it to set goals and next steps.

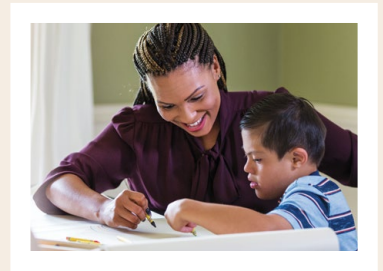
“I brought the Trajectory worksheet to my daughter's IEP meeting to make sure her new team knew what we wanted to work towards.”



Life Trajectory Worksheet

This is a sample trajectory for Sam. It's a list of the things that Sam's parents want – and don't want – for his future, and what it will take to get there.

Like Sam's parents, you may want a future for your child that includes friends, family, meaningful work, stable income, and the ability to try new things and learn from successes and failures. You may want your child to avoid things like loneliness, boredom, bullying or lack of money or choice.

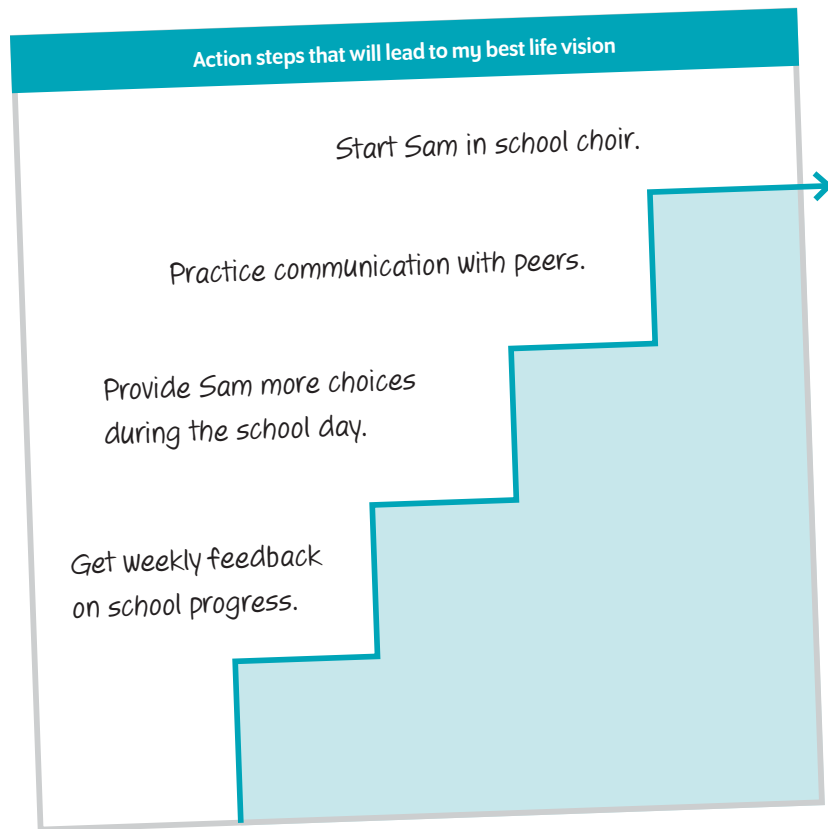


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Life Trajectory Worksheet

Use this worksheet to help you envision your best life and identify the steps or experiences needed to get there.



Vision for my best life

- Friends
- School success
- Music - singing
- Be independent

What I don't want my life to look like

- Loneliness
- Behavioral struggles
- Isolation
- Lack of academic progress

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Your child can participate in the community with a combination of supports.

The right supports can help ensure your child's quality of life. Some supports are centered around relationships, technology, or personal strengths and assets. Others are based on eligibility criteria. Using various supports in combination can help your child live his or her best life.

The **Integrated Supports Star Worksheet** can help you see where your child has strong supports and where more attention might be needed.

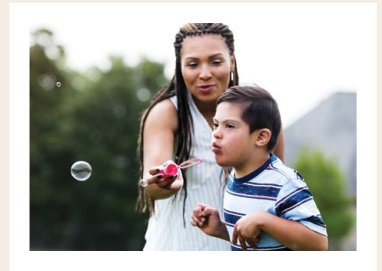
- **Get started.** Use the Integrated Supports Star Worksheet to identify your child's current supports.
- **Use it.** Look for areas that could have more supports developed. Brainstorm supports to solve specific problems or challenges.

"I discovered that my son could benefit from more technology supports."




Integrated Supports Star Worksheet

This sample is for Sam. It's a list of the supports he's using now and those that might be helpful to add to his plan.



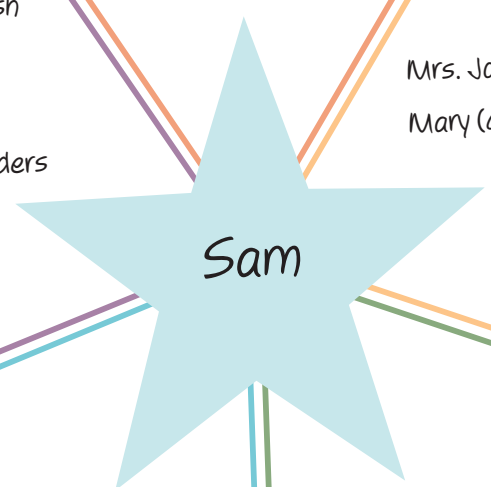
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Integrated Supports Star Worksheet

Write about the tools, resources and people you need to work in partnership in order to live an inclusive, quality, community life.



Sam

Technology

- Alexa
- IPAD
- Educational apps
- Electric toothbrush
- Cell phone
- Alarm
- Electronic reminders

Personal Strengths and Assets

Funny, Adventurous,
Energetic, Great smile,
Positive

Relationship Based

- Parents
- Grandparents
- Cousins
- Siblings
- Mrs. Johnson (teacher)
- Mary (day care provider)

Community Based

- School
- Library reading club
- Community education
- Soccer and basketball
- Church
- YMCA swimming

Eligibility Specific

- Medical Assistance
- Waiver
- IEP

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You can get help for any age, any stage.

LifeCourse materials include detailed life stage guides for specific ages and stages. These include:

- Early childhood guide (birth to age 5)
- School age guide
- Transition guide (school to adulthood)
- Adulthood guide
- Aging guide

Each guide includes age-appropriate questions centered around daily life, community living, safety, healthy living, social needs and advocacy. As your child gets older, the answers to these questions will support movement toward his or her best life.

Visit disabilityhubmn.org/guidebooks to download the life stage guides of interest to you.



Share your child's plans and progress.

Now that you've taken time to think about your child's life, share your notes and ideas with the people who interact with your child. Together you can take steps to help your child live his or her best life.

Use your LifeCourse tools to:

- Get ready for planning meetings
- Talk to the people who support your child about how they can help right now
- Help your child get the supports he or she needs
- Monitor progress toward your child's goals
- Adjust your child's plan as needed



**"I want to be a
race car driver!"**

The Hub is here to help.

When you're planning for your child's best life, there's no such thing as a wrong question. If you're stuck, contact Disability Hub MN™. Whether you're facing an immediate need or looking years ahead, our experts can help.

Contact the Hub at **1-866-333-2466** or visit **disabilityhubmn.org**

866-333-2466

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Your best life, your way.

Disability Hub MN™ is a free statewide resource network that helps you solve problems, navigate the system and plan for your future. Our team knows the ins and outs of community resources and government programs, and has years of experience helping people fit them together.

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