



Kids As Self Advocates

Transitions

by [Maia Wroblewski](#)

The transition from childhood to adulthood can be difficult. When you are a child you can depend on your parents to help you make hard decisions, but when you become an adult you are expected to be able to make decisions on your own. I have recently started to take responsibility for myself, and my lifestyle. Sometimes this new freedom can be overwhelming and scary. Not only are you responsible for your basic needs, but you are also required to make health decisions. I think that this time of transition is about gaining experience. Once you begin to do things regularly for yourself, it becomes easier to find a pattern and stick with it. It also helps to really plan out how and what you are going to start doing for yourself. Talk with your parents, and agree to jobs, or parts of your daily life for which you will be responsible. I have found this to be extremely helpful, as you become an adult. I began to prepare for my transition when I was still a preteen. Each year I would add more challenging responsibilities to my list. I am now a freshman in college, and I am happy to say that I am responsible for most of my health care and daily life needs.

Things that you can do to take more responsibility for your needs:

Daily Life

- start to wake yourself up for school
- gather your own laundry, maybe even agree to do a load or two
- pack your own lunch for school
- do your homework without being asked
- food choice at dinner - maybe you could plan a meal
- buying your own clothing - maybe suggest a budget that you can both agree on

Basically, take a look at your daily life and determine areas that you can be responsible for everyday. Add a new task every week or month as you feel ready.

Medically

In the medical area, you can begin to take more responsibility while you are still in the more controlled environment with your parents. It is probably a good idea to include your parents/guardian in your appointments. I always find that a second person, a "silent listener", can be helpful when making tough decisions.

- make a list/care book of your needs and take it with you when you see your doctor
- begin to go in to your appointments on your own (be sure to inform the doctor that you would like to talk with your parent/guardian before any decisions are made)
- review questions your doctor may ask you before your visit
- review questions you want to be certain to cover before the visit, maybe even write them down
- start to make your own appointments
- keep track of your medications, when you take them and when you need refills

I have found this next area to be especially difficult as I enter adult life, and begin my college career. I know parents can be a pain sometimes, they always have an opinion and it doesn't always agree with what you think, but there are ways to help them make the transition as well. It's kind of like a training session. Parents need to know that you want more responsibility as you get older.

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Talk with them, tell them what you want, and listen to what they are willing to help with. As you become more responsible and show that you can handle these complex issues, you'll be able to tell your parents that you want to do something that involves a lot more responsibility. Let them know you are doing fine and appreciate their respect for your independence and decision-making.

Although this is not a book on how to become an adult, it does list some of the experiences that I have had, as I have become a responsible adult. I hope they are helpful to you and your parents.

Maia is a freshman in college and has been advocating for herself since she was two. Maia is co-chair of the KASA board. Let us know what you think, send an email to Julie@fvkasa.org, attn: Maia. Read more about Maia by clicking [here](#).

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