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Communication Sciences and Disorders – NH-ME LEND Trainee

Leadership Liaison, Alan Kurtz, Ph.D.

## NH-ME LEND

- NH-ME Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (NH-ME LEND) aims to improve the systems of care overall for children and families in Maine and New Hampshire.
- Prepares trainees from a wide variety of disciplines to assume leadership roles in maternal and child health/developmental disabilities.

## Maine Coalition for Housing and Quality Services

- Maine Coalition for Housing and Quality Services (MCHQS) is a family-centered organization advocating for affordable housing and services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in Maine. The coalition consists of over 4,000 advocates and parents of individuals with I/DD.

## Leadership Development

- As result of engaging in this project, I have experienced scheduling, initiating, and leading meetings with organizations.
- During my time with MCHQS, I improved my ability to communicate with others by maintaining contact members of an organization and in working collaboratively with them in developing this project.
- Through my research, I gained a greater understanding of the types of services and supports available to individuals with disabilities and their families, as well as becoming more aware of a variety of Maine agencies and organizations.

## Introduction (Project Description)

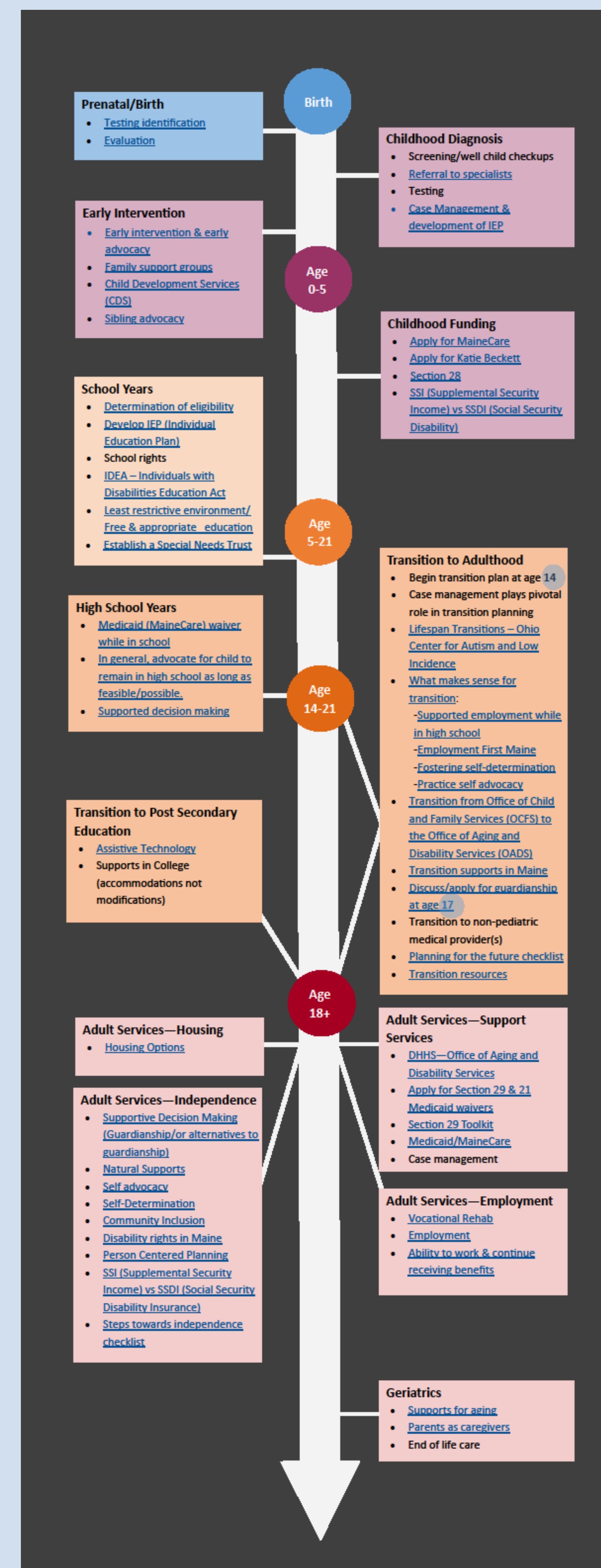
- The service timeline provided by MCHQS was created to help Maine families as they navigate through the complex system of services and supports available to those with I/DD.
- The timeline is divided into categories from Prenatal/Birth, through School years, Adulthood, and ending with Geriatric services. In each category there are sub-categories and web links to examples of supports a person with I/DD might need.

## Project Activities

- Reading the timeline with a fresh set of eyes.
- Assessing each point on the existing timeline to better understand the existing points.
- Researching what information might be missing and what could be added using resources and advice from MCHQS, leadership liaison Alan Kurtz Ph.D., and other interdisciplinary professionals.
- Adding credible and comprehensible websites found through research.
- Condensing information that might have been redundant.
- Sending revisions to MCHQS for updating.

## Project Outcomes to Date

- An updated timeline that can be found on the MCHQS website at <http://www.maineparentcoalition.org/service-timeline.html>
- Expanded information available to families on special education including “least restrictive environment” (LRE) and “free and appropriate education” (FAPE). A number of links were added to that section of the timeline including those to information about FAPE, Wrights Law (a website with information for parents about special education law), and a PDF explaining special education services.
- Addition of links to local advocacy and support websites for families in Maine such as the Maine Parent Federation, MaineFamilies.org, and the Gear Parent Network.
- Addition of a PDF explaining the role of each person on a Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team as well as an IEP acronym dictionary so that families could gain a better understanding of the IEP process and who is involved.
- A few resources were added to the timeline about the importance of self determination, independence, and secondary transitions for individuals with I/DD.



**MAINE COALITION FOR HOUSING & QUALITY SERVICES**

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[www.maineparentcoalition.org](http://www.maineparentcoalition.org)