



THINKING ABOUT YOUR FUTURE

ADVICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH
SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

"I knew what I wanted to do from quite an early stage but I needed to know how to get there."

Starting to think about the future

Now you are in Year 9 it's time to start thinking about what you want to do when you leave school. It can be exciting to think about your plans for the future but it can also feel a bit scary. We hope this booklet will help you.

Why now?

Every young person who has an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan) must be given help to plan for the future.

During Year 9 there is a meeting when you think about what you want to do when you leave school. This usually happens as part of your Annual Review meeting. It is called a 'Year 9 Review meeting'.

A workbook to help you

The Foundation for People with learning disabilities produces a really useful workbook to help you plan your future.

'My kind of a future' has lots of information to help you think about what you want and what you need to know about after you leave school or college. You can download it from:

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/learning-disabilities/publications/my-kind-future>





What is the Year 9 Annual Review?

Your Year 9 Annual Review meeting is a chance for you, your family, and the professionals who work with you to get together and help you to start thinking about your future.



Who goes to the Year 9 Annual Review?

- **you** must be invited to the meeting because this is about your life and your future
- **your parents** are invited
- **a teacher** or someone who knows you from your school
- **the Casework Officer.** This is someone from the council's special educational needs team
- someone from **health** services (if you've got ongoing health issues)
- someone from **social care** (if social care services are involved in your life)



Everyone should get the invitation to the meeting at least two weeks before it happens. You can also ask someone you trust to go with you.

Where is the Year 9 Annual Review?

This is held in **a room at school**. Your school is responsible for organising your Year 9 annual review meeting. They will sort out times, dates and send out invitations and get all the paperwork that they need.



5 steps to a great meeting

This meeting is all about your future. The professionals will listen to you and offer advice about the kinds of help you can get now and in the future with health, education, care and more. And the more detail you can give them the better...so follow our STEPS below to make the meeting go brilliantly.

THINK FIRST

Spend some time thinking about your life before the meeting. You could use the questions on the page opposite to help you.

DREAM IT

What are your hopes and dreams for the future?
What kind of support will you need to make this happen?

GET ADVICE

Your parent or teacher can help you prepare for the meeting. Or ask Amaze for advice before the meeting.



TAKE A FRIEND

You can take a friend or a trusted adviser with you. They can help put your point across or remember stuff that's been said.

ASK QUESTIONS

If there's anything you don't understand, ask people to explain or get your friend to ask for you. It's your life so don't be afraid to speak up.



10 crucial questions

Ask yourself these questions before the meeting or ask someone you know and trust to help you think about them. Take them with you to remind you what to talk about and what's important. . If you prefer to have pictures to show people, you could take them to the meeting too.

1. What am I good at?
2. What do I find difficult?
3. What do I like doing?
4. What is going well in my life?
5. What is not going so well?
6. What can I see myself doing as an adult?
7. What support will I need to help me achieve my dreams?
8. What needs to happen to keep me healthy and safe in future?
9. Can I get around by myself? Would I like help to learn how?



"It's a good idea to prepare for important meetings. Practice what you want to say beforehand."





"The Casework Officer said "I'm here to write down what everyone thinks should happen next."

Who can help?

14-25 Casework Officers

When you are in Year 9 or 10 you will get support from a Casework Officer that works with young people aged 14-25 and their parents. Your Casework Officer can help you make changes to your EHC plan.

As you make choices about what to do when you are 16, your Casework Officer can help make sure your EHC plan fits your needs. They know about the different options, like college courses, training and apprenticeships, and jobs.

They will attend annual reviews from Year 10 onwards, and offer you support for as long as you have an EHC plan.

Contact the SEN team: 01273 293552

Your school

Schools all have someone who can give advice about things like college courses and careers. You can ask who this is in your school. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) can also help as you have an EHC plan.

Brighton and Hove Youth Advocacy Project (YAP)

The YAP Advocacy team are there to help young people in care, or involved with social services. They can pass on your wishes and feelings to people who make decisions about your care. They help you to speak up about what matters to you and let you know your rights. They can help you at meetings like your annual review. They are not part of social services and they work with you and no one else.

Call or text YAP on 07870 168948 or visit their website for more information at

www.bhyap.org.uk

What happens after?

The Casework Officer who comes to your Year 9 Review meeting writes your information into your **Education Health Care (EHC) plan**.

The **EHC plan** is a document that says what is important to you and what you want to do in the future. It also says what support and help you should have. It will include the help you need with education, health and social care.

Your **EHC plan** will go with you to college if you choose to go onto college.

At every Annual Review meeting after your Year 9 meeting, everyone should continue to help you to plan for your future. Your plans and ideas are sure to change a bit as you get older. The help you need will change too. So your **EHC plan** will need to change to keep up. You should always have your say on this.

Once you are 16 you are the person with the most say instead of your parents. You can still ask them to help you of course.



"A lady came and helped me think how to say what was going on and she came with me in case I got stuck. Then everyone listened."

How Amaze can help

Information, advice and support

Amaze can give you information, advice and support right up to your 25th birthday. We can help with things like getting the right support at school or college, with training and with health services or social care. We won't tell you what to do - we'll just give you advice so you can make your own choices.

We can help you understand what 's in your EHC plan now and any changes to it. We can help you ask for what you want and take part in meetings.

Meeting up with other young people

Amaze has several groups for young people:

The Power Group—for young people with learning disabilities aged 16-25. It's a lively group where you can meet other young people with learning disabilities and talk about what matters to you.

Peer Support Groups—for young people aged 14-25 with SEND. There is a mixed gender group, and a group just for young women and non-binary people, with fun games and arts and crafts. You can also get matched up with one of our trained **peer supporters** for some 1-to-1 support from another young person.

Leisure freebies, classes and discounts

If you're under 25 and have an EHC plan, our Compass Card can give you all sorts of leisure opportunities at a reduced cost or completely free.

Contact Amaze:

Helpline: 01273 772289

Open Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 2.30pm

Email: helpline@amazesussex.org.uk

Website: www.amazesussex.org.uk