

# EVOLUTION

AVC's Evolution transition program was created to meet the diverse needs of older students aged 18-22.

## Working Together for LASTING RESULTS

- Programs and staff-to-student ratio are formed to fit your student's individual needs.
- We pull from the community for resources and assistance.
- Self-advocacy and self-determination skills are embedded into the programs and activities to foster growth and independence.
- Evolution offers a 180-day program with the additional option of a five- or six-week extended school year program in the summer.

Students LEARN BEST through repeated routine and when the activity is a MEANINGFUL part of their day.



The Assabet Valley Collaborative (AVC) Evolution program is a transition program for students who continue to be eligible for educational services as they transition to adulthood. Evolution blends educational opportunities within real-world settings in the community. Our passionate and specialized staff works collaboratively with our students, families and the community to provide each student with a comprehensive and individualized program that utilizes their strengths and abilities to foster increased independence.

### Discover the opportunities for all learners through our programs and services

Evolution is designed to give students a voice and a choice in developing their plan for transitioning into adulthood. We provide a variety of services that include transition and vocational assessments and job coaching. We believe that blending special education, vocational training, and community-based supports cultivates positive and long-term outcomes for young adults with disabilities. Our programs and services include:

**Person-Centered Planning** – We bring together the student's family, school, community service providers, and supports to collaborate with the student to develop and implement plans for adulthood. Together, we help the student define a dream vision for the future, and identify the supports they may need and steps they must take to reach their vision.

**Therapeutic Services** – We provide direct and consultative nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, vision, speech & language, and counseling services. We work collaboratively and integrate therapy activities within the program, for example, hygiene care, sewing and cooking.

**Transition Inventories** – We utilize a variety of inventories to assess students' skills: academic skills, post-secondary skills, independent living, and community participation. Transition goals and objectives are developed from the results. Career and Interest Inventories are utilized to match a student's personality and interests to a specific work environment or career.

We believe that customized, ENGAGING, and MEANINGFUL community-based work experiences FOSTER INDEPENDENCE and reduce the impact of disabilities in work and adult life.

**Community-Based Work Experience (CBWEs)** – Evolution provides a variety of internships for students to explore vocational options. Students rotate through a variety of CBWEs throughout the school year. CBWEs currently include Beaumont Rehabilitation Center, The Shrewsbury Public Schools, Assumption College, Berlin/Boylston Public Schools, Curry Printing, Shrewsbury Crossing, Quinsigamond Community College, and Shrewsbury Public Library.

**Community-Based Instruction** – Students may participate in structured, supervised community service and/or recreation activities. These activities are geared toward putting daily living skills into practice, developing peer relationships, modeling appropriate behaviors in a variety of settings, and fostering a sense of community belonging.

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## NOTE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Our staff are skilled at using the incidental events that occur everyday in the program, in the community, and at work sites to directly teach students self-advocacy and self-determination skills. It is in these moments that the most powerful teaching happens, and the most impactful learning takes place. These moments are often more effective than planned lessons, and are the centerpiece of our curriculum.

- Karen Laskey  
Director of Satellite Programs



“It was a privilege working with your students this year. The kids have so much to offer, and they are eager to do a good job. I hope you have an opportunity to build your employer base since it’s a win-win for both the employer and the student! All kids deserve that opportunity to succeed. Keep us on the list for next year!”  
-Transition program employer partner

## Did you KNOW?

- Evolution helps empower students as they transition into adulthood.
- We provide a workshop series every year to highlight supports, services, and resources that families may need. Transportation and daycare is provided if needed.
- We use Google Hangout to promote collaboration and communication.
- Students have the opportunity to explore what life would be like on a college campus.
- Evolution has assisted a number of students to obtain their driver learner’s permit.
- We have over 60 internship sites established.
- Students can participate in “Friday Night Out” social activities.
- We have multi-disciplinary teams that work closely with state agencies including: DDS, MRC, and The Center for Living & Working.
- Evolution has shown success obtaining competitive employment for those students that are ready.

## Our STAFF is the CORNERSTONE of our success

Our highly-trained staff builds relationships with our students, their families, and the communities to which they belong. We make it our business to be well versed on the community resources and supports available to our students. Collaboration is at the core of our programming, and our staff emphasizes teamwork when working with students to help them create an individualized plan to transition into adulthood. We provide weekly opportunities for the students’ support team to meet and discuss their progress in meeting their personal goals.

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**Community Work-Based Agreements** – Evolution uses a program developed agreement highlighting the employer, program, and student responsibilities for each work internship. Within this agreement, the training objectives, as well as student targeted skills, are defined.

**Job Development** – Job development skills are provided to help students obtain competitive employment, based on their interests and strengths before they leave the program at age 22. The staff assists the students in developing a resumé and interview skills.

**Job Coaching** – The level of job coach support provided will depend upon the student’s needs and the natural supports available at the job site. The level of support can range and is designed to fade gradually over time. Job coaching includes data collection on skills, goals, and outcomes.

**Transition Portfolio** – Each student will assemble a transition portfolio that they will take with them when they leave the program at age 22. This portfolio, which comprises three sections: personal information, vocational planning, and adult living, serves as a useful tool to help them plan for future educational, vocational and adult living outcomes.

**Travel Training** – Students may participate in travel training with the Worcester Regional Transit Authority within the Shrewsbury/Worcester area. Students are given an assignment, as a group, to choose a destination point accessing the WRTA.

**College Buddies** – Our students and students from Clark University have joined forces to create a new chapter of the College Buddies Program. Students get together on a monthly basis for social events and activities and are paired with an age appropriate “buddy.”

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