

# KEYS TO SUCCESS

## Finding Your Voice

*Telling your story and standing up for yourself are keys to becoming self-determined.*

### IDENTIFY YOUR INTERESTS, STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, & PREFERENCES

Pay attention to how you spend your time, how you like to do things, what you're good at, and what is difficult for you.

Have new experiences. Pay attention to how you feel during the activity. Ask yourself, "What did I like?" and "What would I change?"

Talk to a parent, teacher, or counselor about options and your views. Ask them for their observations.

Take a survey to identify your interests.

### SET SMART GOALS

Goals should be:

- Specific (it says exactly what is going to happen)
- Measurable (you'll know when you've reached your goal)
- Achievable (it's possible for you to reach your goal)
- Relevant (it's important to you)
- Timely (there is a date that you will reach your goal)

### CREATE A PROFILE OF YOURSELF TO HELP TELL YOUR STORY

Keep them brief and include your interests, strengths, and goals. Preferences and needs may also be included, depending on the situation.

### PRACTICE TELLING YOUR STORY TO A TRUSTED ADULT OR FRIEND

Practicing helps reduce anxiety about sharing your story. You can take slow, deep breaths, stand in a power pose, or picture yourself sharing your story with others.

### CREATE ASSERTIVE MESSAGES

Share your feelings and opinions honestly and directly. Ask respectfully for what you need.

