

To Drive or Not to Drive

Driving is a complex issue that warrants a level of consideration not always needed for a neurotypical adult. As parents, guardians, teachers and support personnel, we need to take great care in weighing the pros and cons of driving for young adults with disabilities. Let's start with an understanding that driving is a privilege, not a right. Driving requires a combination of skills that involve laws, physical abilities and acceptance of great responsibility.

"I think the decision to drive should not be based on a diagnosis but rather a young adult and his or her parents deciding if they are mature enough to handle the responsibility. I didn't drive till I was 19 (I have ADHD and Dyslexia) but the reason for the later age is due to maturity - nothing else." - [Source: Disability Scoop](#)

A parent once told me that some kids just need a longer runway until they are ready to launch. The decision to drive does not always happen on a birthdate or other significant milestone. It happens when the individual is ready to be personally accountable for operating a car. Accountability is a complex thing.

One of my clients told me driving or sitting in the front seat of a car is like looking through a particle accelerator. He doesn't know where to focus his attention because so much is being projected at him. Others have shared that seeing the first video in drivers education class about how they can injure others while behind the wheel was the deciding factor. Driving wasn't for them.

"I went back to Courage Kenny for three lessons, and then I just started practicing

driving by myself with no radio or people in the car with me so I would not get distracted in the car. The more places I went by myself, I just got more confident. I'm still learning as I go."

- David (26 years old)

When considering if driving is right for adults with disabilities, be patient, encouraging and seek out professional resources

Resources

- ★ [Brain Games: On the Set of Life of the Brain](#)
- ★ [The Challenge of Driving with Asperger's](#)
- ★ [Free MN Permit Practice Tests](#)
- ★ [Metropolitan Center for Independent Living](#)
- ★ [Courage Kenny - Driver Assessment and Training Services](#)
- ★ [DS Driving School West](#)
- ★ [State of MN Office of Traffic Safety](#)
- ★ [Drivers Contract Template](#)

The skill of driving can enhance adulthood skills such as initiation, coordination, planning, identifying the "body language" of traffic, and the ability to stay calm and focused.

-[Source:lanCommunity](#)

These are all necessary skills for approaching important milestones on the path to independence such as post-secondary education, employment and social interests. With these tips, we're sure you will have a safe trip!