

HEELS 2 Transition

Higher Education, Employment, Living Success

Supporting individuals with intellectual disabilities transitioning to adulthood

Our Mission

HEELS 2 Transition (H2T) offers a range of strengths based programs supporting young adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities toward a self-determined life.



Our Vision

To support individual and community capacities for inclusion through a strengths-based approach. We affirm the right of people of all abilities to lead lives of dignity, choice, & access to their desired participation in society.

- **Our programs utilize a strengths-based and person-centered approach to help individuals reach their goals!**

Who can participate in H2T programs? Individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD) ages 18-26.

What do H2T programs do? Our programs provide learning opportunities both in and out of the classroom. We teach skills in career development, mental health, goal setting, life skills, college academics, and navigating life as an adult.

How do H2T programs help participants? We offer hands-on learning opportunities that are individualized and strengths-focused for each participant. H2T programs offer an opportunity for participants to engage with peers and form social connections while learning important skills for adult life.

Where are H2T programs? We utilize both in-person and virtual options. In person programming takes place on UNC Chapel Hill's campus.

Why do we do this? Many young adults with I/DD experience the "service cliff" after exiting high school. Additionally this population has lower employment and college enrollment when compared to neurotypical peers. H2T programming is targeted at building skills around post-secondary education and employment while building confidence in the participants.

When can I apply? Applications open in January. Please see our website for more information and to apply. Participants are typically notified of acceptance in March.



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Our Programs

HEELS Prep

An intensive summer program held over a 4-week period in June and July. This program incorporates interactive classroom learning and 1:1 coaching. Through a hybrid model participants will engage in both in-person and virtual learning. HEELS Prep addresses key skill-building areas for the transition to adulthood, including self management, life skills, career development, mental health, and community safety. Participants gain understanding of adult roles, rights, and responsibilities.

HEELS UP

HEELS UP is an inclusive postsecondary education (IPSE) program. Students participate in orientation sessions and enroll in one Summer Session II course based on their career and/or personal interests. Session courses are approximately 1 month long over June and July. HEELS UP students also participate in social and recreational opportunities on campus alongside other UNC students. Students are supported to pursue their goals for adult life through an individualized, person-centered plan and 1:1 coaching sessions. On-campus housing during the program is available.

HEELS Week Away

Specifically developed for H2T program alumni, HEELS Week Away provides an on-campus, overnight experience to practice living with peers away from home. This program includes a week-long stay in a dorm that targets independent living skills such as cooking, grocery shopping, cleaning, and laundry. Participants also navigate the community using public transportation, explore leisure interests, and engage in social activities. Week Away builds on skills learned in previous H2T programming while incorporating novel experiences.

“He was empowered with some skills to help make him feel confident about trying to do things on his own” – Parent Testimonial



“Saying the speech at the end of the week made me feel proud and excited about the future.” – HEELS Prep Alumnus



“We look at the materials about every other day!” – Parent Testimonial