



# AGE OF MAJORITY FACT SHEET

## Did You Know?

- When your child reaches 18, the age of majority, your status as natural guardian expires, without regard to your child's disabilities.
- As of his/her 18th birthday your child becomes an adult, responsible for his/her own decisions. He/she is on his/her own regardless of disability status.
- Records custodians may not legally disclose your child's medical information to you.
- You may lack the authority to direct, or participate in, your child's medical treatment, except as a proxy during an emergency.
- Banks and government agencies have neither the duty, nor the authority, to discuss benefits or financial issues with you.
- Upon turning 18, your child has no one to legally speak on their behalf.
- The fact that your child might not be able to handle these issues on his/her own does not alter these results.
- In order to re-establish your status as legal guardian of your child, you must initiate a court proceeding.
- There is a relatively simple process to restore the parents' protective powers: a legal action in probate court called Guardian Advocacy.
- This process delegates several of the individual with developmental disability's rights to another person without declaring him/her incapacitated.
- Even when aware of this opportunity, many care providers do not address the issue, often fearing the expense or complexity of court.
- When an emergency finally occurs, emotional stress multiplies and fears of expense and complication become reality.

*\* Adapted from the Center for Guardian Advocacy website – [www.centerforguardianadvocacy.org](http://www.centerforguardianadvocacy.org)*