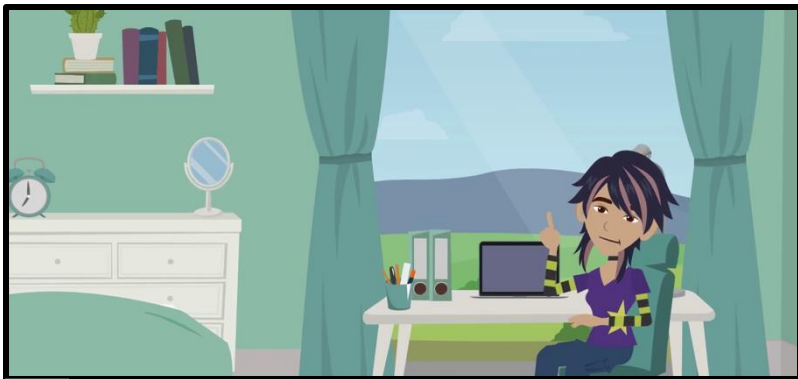


# SELF-ADVOCACY



## Meet Ash

1 Hi! My name is Ash.



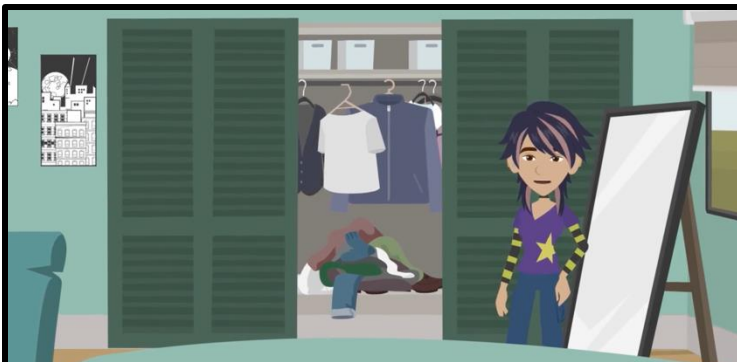
2 I'm a teen with an intellectual disability, and I'm learning how to speak up for myself and make choices about my future.



3 Making big decisions can be tough, like when people ask what I want to do after high school.



4 I've learned it helps to start with smaller choices, like picking out what clothes I want to wear each day.

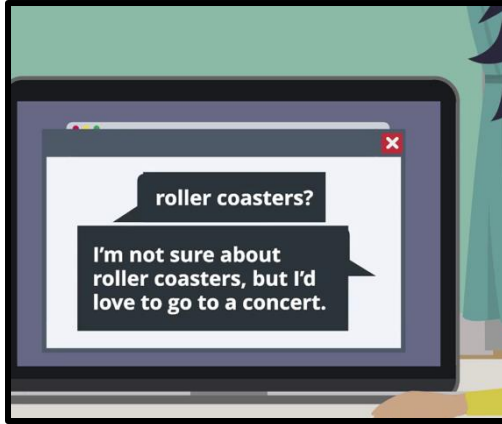


5 I'm figuring out what styles I like, and that builds my confidence for bigger decisions. Or, when I think about where I want to work after graduation, I break it into smaller choices like what type of job environment or tasks I'd enjoy.





6 I also practice speaking up with my friends.



7

For example, when planning a group hangout, I let my friends know what I'm comfortable with, like saying, "I'm not sure about roller coasters, but I'd love to go to a concert!"

8 It can be hard, but I feel more included and respected when I speak up.



9 One of the things I've been working on with my neighbor, Lizzy, is how to speak up about what I need in different situations.

10

She's a few years older than me, also has a disability and totally understands what I am going through.



11 For example, at track practice, I learned to tell my coach if I need a break or if something doesn't feel right.

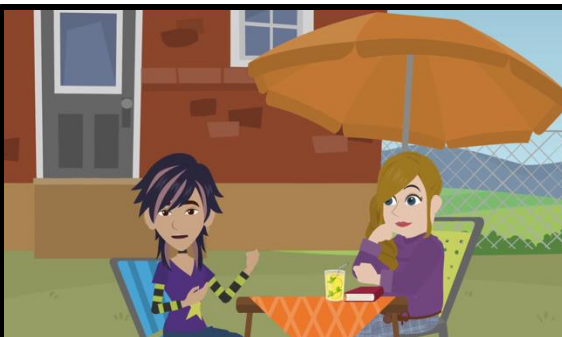


12 Lizzy also helps me think about what kind of support I might need in the future, like for a job.



13

By focusing on my strengths and areas where I need help, I can make a plan that works for me.



14

It feels great to take control of my life and my future, and with the support of trusted adults, I'm building the confidence to make decisions that are right for me.

THE END