

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A TRANSFER AND A LIFT?

The words "lifts" and "transfers" are often confused when reading a student's care plan, exercise plan or IEP. The following definitions may assist.

A **transfer** is a dynamic effort in which the student aids in the transfer and is able to bear weight on at least one leg, and can usually assist the caregiver in moving from one surface to another.

The need for a student transfer should be described and identified by the school/community physical or occupational therapist.

A **lift** involves moving a student who cannot bear weight on at least one leg or is totally dependent in moving from one surface to another. Many lifts require mechanical lifting devices to make them safe for student and caregiver(s), i.e. involves total assistance.

All lifts and lift types should be described and outlined in the student's care plan and should be monitored by the school/community physical or occupational therapist.



Example of a transfer



Example of a lift

Note: Ideally, any lifts and transfers should be photographed for consistency and safety and should be taught to the caregiver(s) by the school/community physical or occupational therapist.

Note: Injuries to caregivers during student transfers usually occur when a transfer suddenly becomes a patient lift. Always prepare and anticipate changes in your student's abilities.