

# **TRANSITIONS THROUGHOUT THE LIFESPAN**

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# **TRANSITIONS**

- **ASSUMPTIONS**

- **TRANSITIONS OCCUR AT A VARIETY OF LEVELS**

- **BETWEEN ACTIVITIES**

- **BETWEEN LOCATIONS**

- **MAJOR LIFE CHANGES**

- **TRANSITIONS CAN BE PARTICULARLY CHALLENGING FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

# **WARM-UP**

- **WRITE DOWN THREE TRANSITIONS YOU ENGAGED IN TODAY.**

# **WARM-UP**

- **WRITE DOWN AT LEAST THREE MAJOR TRANSITIONS A CHILD WILL PROBABLY EXPERIENCE BY THE TIME THEY START 1<sup>ST</sup> GRADE.**

# **Major Life Transitions**

## **Blazing a Trail**

**1920-1970 – Segregation**

**1970s – Mainstreaming**

**Early 1980s – Graduation**

**1990 – Transition Planning**

**(Marquette, 2007)**

# **IDEA 2004 TRANSITION SERVICES LEGISLATION**

***THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT  
(UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (IDEA), 2004) DEFINES  
TRANSITION SERVICES AS FOLLOWS:***

**A COORDINATED SET OF ACTIVITIES FOR A CHILD WITH A DISABILITY THAT**

**IS DESIGNED TO BE WITHIN A RESULTS-ORIENTED PROCESS THAT IS FOCUSED ON IMPROVING THE ACADEMIC AND FUNCTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT OF THE CHILD WITH A DISABILITY TO FACILITATE THE CHILD'S MOVEMENT FROM SCHOOL TO POST-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT, CONTINUING AND ADULT EDUCATION, ADULT SERVICES, INDEPENDENT LIVING, OR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION;**

(United States Department of Education, 2004)

- ***IS BASED UPON THE INDIVIDUAL CHILD'S NEEDS, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE CHILD'S STRENGTHS, PREFERENCES, AND INTERESTS;***
- ***INCLUDES INSTRUCTION, RELATED SERVICES, COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES, THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND OTHER POST-SCHOOL ADULT LIVING OBJECTIVES, AND IF APPROPRIATE, ACQUISITION OF DAILY LIVING SKILLS AND FUNCTIONAL VOCATIONAL EVALUATION [PART A, SECTION 602(34)]***

(United States Department of Education, 2004)



# IDEA TRANSITION SERVICES LEGISLATION

***BEGINNING NOT LATER THAN THE FIRST IEP TO BE IN EFFECT WHEN THE CHILD TURNS 16, OR YOUNGER, IF DETERMINED APPROPRIATE BY THE IEP TEAM, AND UPDATED ANNUALLY THEREAFTER, THE IEP MUST INCLUDE:***

- ***APPROPRIATE MEASURABLE POSTSECONDARY GOALS BASED UPON AGE-APPROPRIATE TRANSITION ASSESSMENTS RELATED TO TRAINING, EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND, WHERE APPROPRIATE, INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS; AND***
- ***THE TRANSITION SERVICES (INCLUDING COURSES OF STUDY) NEEDED TO ASSIST THE CHILD IN REACHING THESE GOALS [SECTION 614(D)(1)(A)(VIII)]***

(United States Department of Education, 2004)

“

***... SUPPORTING STUDENT AND FAMILY PARTICIPATION WAS IDENTIFIED AS ONE OF THE FIVE NATIONAL CHALLENGES CURRENTLY FACING SECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRANSITION SERVICES.***

”

(MICHAELS & FERRARA, 2005)

# **BEST PRACTICE**

- **VOCATIONAL TRAINING**
- **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**
- **PAID WORK**
- **SOCIAL SKILLS TRAINING**
- **INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION**
- **INDIVIDUALIZED PLANS**
- **COMMUNITY-BASED INSTRUCTION**
- **COMMUNITY-REFERENCED CURRICULUM**
- **FOLLOW-UP EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**
- **INTEGRATION**
- **VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT**

# **BARRIERS TO TRANSITION PLANNING**

- **LACK OF FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**
- **LACK OF STUDENT/FAMILY AWARENESS OF RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND OPTIONS**
- **INCLUSION IS VIEWED AS AN OBSTACLE**
- **PROCESS IS TIME CONSUMING**
- **PLANNING IS INITIATED TOO LATE**
- **EDUCATORS ARE NOT AWARE OF COMMUNITY OPTIONS**
- **RESISTANCE FROM SCHOOL PROFESSIONALS**
- **NO INFRASTRUCTURE WITHIN SCHOOL SYSTEM TO SUSTAIN PERSON CENTERED PLANNING (PCP)**
- **\*\*LACK OF CULTURAL RELEVANCE OF THE PLAN\*\***

(Blessing, 2000)

# **TRANSITION ASSESSMENT**

***“IN EDUCATION, ALL INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES  
BEGIN AND END WITH ASSESSMENT.”***

**(Wehman, Smith, & Schall, 2009)**

# **DEFINITION OF TRANSITION ASSESSMENT**

***“AN ONGOING PROCESS OF COLLECTING INFORMATION ON A STUDENT’S STRENGTHS, NEEDS, PREFERENCES, AND INTERESTS AS THEY RELATE TO THE DEMANDS OF CURRENT AND FUTURE LIVING, LEARNING, AND WORKING ENVIRONMENTS.”***

**(Sitlington, Neubert, Begun, Lombard, & Leconte, 2007)**

# **PURPOSE OF TRANSITION ASSESSMENT**

**THE PURPOSE OF TRANSITION ASSESSMENT IS TO DEVELOP AND UPDATE A TRANSITION PLAN, EMBEDDING SKILLS INTO THE TRANSITION IEP THAT MOVE THE STUDENT TOWARD *HIS OR HER* DESIRED CAREER AND ADULT LIFE.**

**(Leconte, 2006)**

# **DIFFICULTIES WITH ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES**

- **DIFFICULTY GENERALIZING SKILLS BETWEEN SETTINGS, MATERIALS, AND PEOPLE**
- **CAN BECOME PROMPT DEPENDENT**
- **CAN EXHIBIT *STIMULUS OVERSELECTIVITY***
- **POOR RESPONSE TO CHANGES IN ROUTINE**
- **DIFFICULTY IMAGINING THEMSELVES IN DIFFERENT SITUATIONS**

**(Wehman, Smith, & Schall, 2009)**



# **WHICH AREAS ARE IMPORTANT TO ASSESS FOR TRANSITIONS?**

# WHAT DO WE ASSESS?

- **INTERESTS**
- **PREFERENCES**
- **COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT/ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**
- **ADAPTIVE BEHAVIOR**
- **INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP SKILLS**
- **EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MENTAL HEALTH**
- **EMPLOYABILITY AND COMMUNITY SKILLS**
- **COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

(Wehman, Smith, & Schall, 2009)

# **Cumulative Assessment Example:**

## **TTAP: TEACCH TRANSITIONAL ASSESSMENT PROFILE**

### **• AREAS ASSESSED**

- VOCATIONAL SKILLS**
- VOCATIONAL BEHAVIORS**
- INDEPENDENT FUNCTIONING**
- LEISURE SKILLS**
- FUNCTIONAL COMMUNICATION**
- INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIOR**

### **• TARGET POPULATION**

- INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM (IN ELEMENTARY THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL) WHO MAY ALSO HAVE A MILD TO SEVERE COGNITIVE DISABILITY**
- INDIVIDUALS WITH ASPERGER SYNDROME OR HFA MAY NEED ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT**

# **Specific Assessment Example: Measuring Self-Determination**

- **ARC's SD Scale (Wehmeyer, et al.)**
- **AIR SD Assessment (Mithaug, et al.)**
- **ChoiceMaker SD Assessment (Martin, et al.)**
- **Wayne State University SD Assessment Battery (Field, et al.)**

# **FINAL THOUGHTS ON TRANSITION ASSESSMENT**

- **NOT EVERY TEAM WILL USE EVERY SINGLE ASSESSMENT METHOD**
- **ASSESSMENTS CHOSEN PROVIDE ANSWERS A TEAM NEEDS TO IMPROVE THE PLAN**
- **THE PLAN IS THE DRIVING FORCE FOR THE STUDENT'S FUTURE**
- **THE PROCESS MUST BE UPDATED YEARLY USING A VARIETY OF TOOLS**

**(Wehman, Smith, & Schall, 2009)**

# Developing Transition Goals

- **Start early**
- **Based off of assessment results**
- **Must be valid to the student & family**
- **Must be measurable and include a specific method for evaluation, timeline, and a schedule for team review/revision**
- **Include outside agencies and community support programs**
- **Must be a continuously evolving plan**

# **Transition Planning for Primary Grades 1-5**

## ***Goals: (The student will...)***

- **Develop leisure, household, and work interests**
- **Develop a sense of responsibility**

# **Transition Planning for Primary Grades 1-5**

## ***Objectives:***

- **To develop positive work habits**
- **To appreciate all types of work**
- **To develop disability awareness**



# Transition Planning for Primary Grades 1-5

## Possible Activity Areas

- **Inclusive activities**
- **Responsibility activities**
- **Work sample activities**
- **Career field trips**
- **Discussions about work**
- **Discussions of interests and aptitudes**
- **Exploration of technology**
- **Decision-making and problem solving activities**

**Others?**

(Baer, 2009)

# **Transition Planning for Middle School Grades 6-8**

## ***Goals:***

- **Identify career interests**
  - **Identify courses of study for high school**
- 
- ***Required: Statement of transition service needs relative to the desired high school courses of study by age 14.***
  - ***Recommended: Career Assessment & Individual Career Plan***

# **Transition Planning for Middle School Grades 6-8**

## ***Objectives:***

- **To identify interests, aptitudes, and preferences**
- **To identify work, education, independent living, and community options**
- **To identify desired courses of study in high school**

# Transition Planning for Middle School Grades 6-8

- **Visits to vocational/ technical schools**
- **Complete interest inventories**
- **Functional vocational assessment**
- **Career fairs**
- **Survey transition needs/ preferences**
- **Employability assessment**
- **Daily living skills classes**
- **Money and budgeting**

## Possible Activity Areas

Baer, 2009

- **Job shadowing**
- **Career guidance**
- **Self-determination/ advocacy training**
- **Training in use of disability technology**
- **Computer training**
- **Mobility training**
- **Counseling**
- **Employability skills training**
- **Decision-making and problem solving activities**

**Others?**

# **Transition Planning for High School Grades 9-10**

## ***Goals:***

- ***Explore work, postsecondary education, independent living, and leisure options.***
- ***Required: Statement of needed transition services relative to the student's postsecondary goals by age 16.***
- ***Recommended: Career Portfolio (Resume with data)***

# **Transition Planning for High School Grades 9-10**

## ***Objectives:***

- **To develop meaningful realistic goals**
- **To develop work, education, residential, and community participation skills**
- **To learn to manage disability and request accommodations**

# Transition Planning for High School Grades 9-10

## Possible Activity Areas

- **Technology assessment**
- **Update transition goals**
- **Self-determination training**
- **Life skills education**
- **Vocational education**
- **Work experiences**
- **Volunteering**
- **Placement in advanced classes**
- **Informational interviews**
- **Job shadowing**

**Others?**

**(Baer, 2009)**

# **Transition Planning for High School Grades 11-12**

## ***Goals:***

- **Obtain work, postsecondary education, residential, and leisure options**



# **Transition Planning for High School Grades 11-12**

## ***Objectives:***

- **To secure options for postsecondary education and/or employment**
- **To develop residential and community participation supports and contacts**
- **To develop linkages with adult services**

# Transition Planning for High School Grades 11-12

## Possible Activity Areas

- **Student-directed view of IEP and transition plans**
- **Individual career planning**
- **Self-determination training**
- **Apply for adult services**
- **Community memberships**
- **Transfer transition coordination**
- **Develop follow-up supports**
- **Job placements**
- **Apply for postsecondary education**
- **Financial planning**
- **Visit relevant postsecondary environments**
- **Develop job seeking skills**
- **Transfer transition plan to family or adult services**

**Others?**

**Baer, 2009**

# Transition Activities for All Ages

## Life Skills Instruction

**Social Skills  
Instruction**

**And Much, Much,  
More!**

**Teaching  
Self-Determination**

**Person Centered  
Planning**

**Community Based  
Instruction**



# Group Conversation

- **Name at least one transition activity that your child has experienced. (If none, then one you would like to see)**
- **Who decided on this activity?**
- **Which transition skills were addressed with the activity?**
- **Were these skills valid to the student and you (the family)?**
- **How was data collected on the mastery of these skills?**
- **Was the activity beneficial?**
- **What changes would you make if doing it again?**

**\*\*Use these questions to reflect and help guide your conversations with the school team.**

# **Finally....**

**As a parent, here is what I am currently advocating for and working on at home...**

- **Self-Determination**
- **Student-Led IEPs**

# What about self-determination?

***... the development of self-determination in students with disabilities should actually be considered one of the hallmark success features or outcomes of the transition process***

**(Halpern, 1994)**

# **Self-Determination**

***... an educational outcome referring to acting as the primary causal agent in one's life and making choices and decisions regarding one's quality of life free from undue external influence or interference .***

**Wehmeyer & Lawrence, 1995**

# Benefits of Self-Determination

**Students with intellectual disabilities who leave school with high level of self-determination:**

- **Are more independent 1 year after graduation**
- **Are more likely to live somewhere other than where they lived in high school after graduation**
- **Are significantly more likely to be employed for higher pay and with benefits after graduation**
- **Are more likely to live independently 3 years after graduation**

(Wehmeyer, 2007)



# Components of Self-Determination

- **Choice-making skills**
- **Decision-making skills**
- **Problem-solving skills**
- **Goal-setting and attainment skills**
- **Self-observation skills**
- **Self-evaluation skills**
- **Self-reinforcement skills**
- **Self-instruction skills**
- **Self-advocacy and leadership skills**
- **An internal locus of control**
- **Positive attributions of efficacy and outcome expectancy**
- **Self-awareness**
- **Self-knowledge**

**(Wehmeyer, 1999)**

# Barriers to Self-Determination

**Teachers report barriers to promoting self-determination include:**

- **Belief about whether the student will benefit**
- **Insufficient time particularly in context of *No Child Left Behind***
- **Insufficient training and knowledge about promoting self-determination**

**(Wehmeyer, 2007)**

# Measuring Self-Determination

- **ARC's SD Scale (Wehmeyer, et al.)**
- **AIR SD Assessment (Mithaug, et al.)**
- **ChoiceMaker SD Assessment (Martin, et al.)**
- **Wayne State University SD Assessment Battery (Field, et al.)**

# Instruction

- **Vary by age, ability, interest, and situation**
- **Young children can make choices about their daily routine**
- **Primary-age children can learn about their disability to better understand their strengths and weaknesses**
- **Elementary –age students can learn goal-setting and goal-attainment skills**

(Renzaglia, et al., 2003)

# Instruction

## Mild Disabilities

- **Self-advocacy, self-awareness, goal-setting and attainment**
- **Direct instruction**

## Significant disabilities

- **Choice-making and problem-solving**
- **Experiential learning**

# Promoting Student Involvement In IEPs

- **Student involvement and self-determination have a reciprocal effect**
- **Only between 48%- 64% of students (ages 14-22) participate in their IEP meeting**
- **Published curricula/ PCP are effective in increasing student involvement in IEP**

(Wehmeyer, et al., 2007; Wood, et al., 2004)

# **Student Involvement Programs**

- **Self-Directed IEP**
- **Whose Future is it Anyway?**
- **Next S.T.E.P.**
- **A Student's Guide to the IEP**  
... and many others

# Questions?

## Contact Info

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## Recruitment

**Have you ever thought of becoming a special education teacher? If so, please contact me.**

**We NEED good special education teachers and parents already have the expertise!**



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