

Individualized Transition Planning and Training: It's all about YOU!

When we talk about individualized transition planning and training this is what we mean: you are the expert on you. Not us. We want to hear from you, learn from you and get a full picture of who you are, what are your talents, skills and interests; what are your struggles, barriers and frustrations in relation to school, work, friendships and home life, and what goals you want to set to have the most thriving, integrated future possible. We call this “person-centered” planning. You are the person and our work and support is centered on YOU!

We can help plan your services by:

- listening intently to what you want/need
- asking questions and making sure we understand your goals
- helping to identify barriers to your goals
- teaching self-advocacy and self-expression to help you advocate for yourself throughout the planning and service delivery
- inviting you to create an IEP Podcast if you have an IEP
- making sure you understand and are aware of your rights as a person with a disability and as a student with an IEP if that applies

Through person-centered planning, we can create an individualized transition plan that may include:

- executive function skill-building: self-advocacy, communication, problem-solving etc.
- IEP support
- employment readiness training: resume-writing, interviewing, skill-building, job search
- planning for college or technical training
- attending peer group activities
- finding volunteer opportunities
- career development training
- and much more!

My student doesn't engage with their classmates and feels isolated

Making connections can be hard at any age and in any circumstances. For youth with disabilities, it may be even more challenging to identify a friendship base and feel included.

We can help by:

- establishing peer group activities
- teaching effective communication
- working on self-advocacy and problem-solving skills
- connecting youth to community activities and volunteer opportunities
- identifying strengths, interests, and needs



We feel unprepared at IEP Meetings and don't know how to contribute

IEP meetings can feel intimidating to students and families.

IEP and 504 planning can be a complex process that many students and their families don't fully understand.

We can help by:

- explaining the IEP/504 process in depth
- educating on student and family rights
- helping you set goals and plan for your IEP
- sitting in on IEP/504 meetings
- teaching self-advocacy skills
- helping build confidence through knowledge of the process
- Creating an IEP Podcast with your student

My child is only 10 - why would we start transition planning so early?

Transition planning and training is like any other necessity - starting early is key. We wouldn't wait until 10th grade to start playing an instrument in the high school band would we? Preparing for life after high school takes time.

We utilize long-term planning and thinking-ahead techniques to start laying the groundwork for a thriving future.

We can help by:

- early essential skill-building like problem-solving and critical thinking through fun and educational activities
- helping to identify strengths and talents
- creating vision boards and long-term goals
- building effective communication strategies

I don't think my child will ever be able to work or attend college

Unfortunately, this is thinking is all around us and grew out of wide-spread discrimination against people with disabilities prior to the Civil Rights Movement - and still creates an attitudinal barrier to independent living to this day. With programs, services, supports, training, advocacy and knowing your rights, anyone can work and learn.

We can help by:

- educating on disability rights law
- explaining reasonable accommodations
- identifying strengths, weaknesses and barriers to employment or education
- identifying assistive technology needs
- training in employment readiness skills

My child doesn't have a formal diagnosis but is struggling in school

We don't require an official medical diagnosis to work with your student. If your child self-identifies as having a disability, we can help. Many disorders like ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Anxiety Disorder, Major Depressive Disorder, Dyslexia, Sensory Disorders and even difficulty hearing and low vision can often go undiagnosed.

We can help by:

- listening to your experience and needs and connecting you to appropriate resources
- working on social skill-building and peer relations
- advocating for accommodations - even if there is not a formal IEP or 504

My student will graduate soon and we have no idea what to do

This is not uncommon! Many people don't realize how much preparation it takes to plan for a successful transition out of high school and into whatever is next. It's never too late to start training and planning for life after high school!

We can help by:

- creating a transition plan based on the students goals, interests and talents
- pre-employment training
- job searches and application assistance
- independent living skills training
- money management and budgeting training
- college or technical school-readiness training

My student dropped out of school and I'm uncertain about their future

Often youth who experience difficulty in their early school years feel they have no other choice than to quit school.

Often this can be remedied with appropriate services and supports to help your student back into formal education or alternative education like virtual or home school.

Many times, however, students get their GEDs and go on to live thriving lives in higher education or the workforce.

We can help by:

- work with your student on executive functioning skill-building
- explaining your options and advocating for and with your child
- connecting your student with appropriate resources to help them re-enter the public school system
- work with your student to get them enrolled in an instruction-based GED program
- advise your student on tuition-free certificate programs through local junior colleges once they have received their GED