

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



OUTREACH TO SYSTEMS-INVOLVED YOUTH AND THEIR FAMILIES

One of our primary initiatives with our Independence, Inc. Kansas Youth Transition Network Program is to reach the unreached and serve the underserved with transition training and support. We focus much of our outreach in not only underserved communities, but in systems that often trap youth and young adults in a cycle of poverty. We serve and assist these youth and families with:

- transition support and training for homeless youth and their families
- programs for youth in the foster care system
- training and transition preparation for youth involved in the juvenile justice system
- education and transition support for youth experiencing truancy
- GED advocacy, training and transition services for youth who have or planning on dropping out of school
- navigating pathways to employment for systems-involved youth
- self-advocacy training
- independent living skills training

We currently partner with

- McKinney-Vento Program
- Resilient Transitions and other foster care organizations
- USD 500, Piper and Turner School Systems

We are working on building partnerships with:

- local juvenile detention centers
- foster families
- local mental health organizations and providers





WHAT IS TRANSITION PLANNING

Transition planning is a student-centered process designed to prepare youth with disabilities for life after high school. It includes setting goals and taking steps toward postsecondary education, employment, independent living, and community participation. Starting early helps students build skills and confidence, and ensures families have time to access the resources and supports their child needs for success.

Transition planning looks different for each student, youth or young adult because every person, every situation and every mind is unique.

TRANSITION PLANNING MAY INVOLVE:

- pre-training surveys
- skill-building exercises
- executive functioning training
- games and learning exercises
- talent and interest identification
- IEP support
- pre-employment training like resume-building and mock interviews
- curriculum-based training and skill-building
- online modules and training
- GED or post-secondary education support and preparation
- job searches
- volunteer experiences
- internship opportunities
- peer group involvement
- self-advocacy support and training
- independent living skills training
- referrals to outside agencies or organizations



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

for SPED and General Education teaching
and paraprofessional staff

Throughout 2024 and 2025 we have partnered with local schools to provide professional development days. These have included:

- panels of professionals and service providers discussing area programs and services for youth transition
- workshops where staff can choose which topics are most important to them
- direct training on transition best practices, in-class curriculum and ways to support students with disabilities

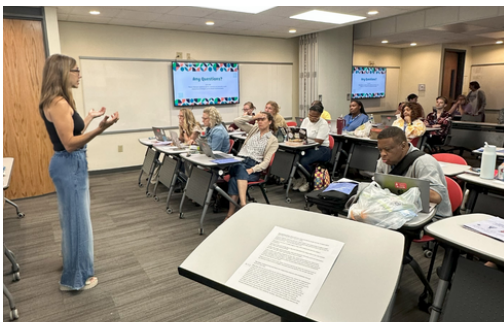
To inquire about our organization or our community council providing training for professional development days, please contact:

Amy Ballinger

Independence, Inc. Kansas Youth Transition Network Program Manager

aballinger@independenceinc.org

785-371-1646





STARTING SERVICES IS A SHORT AND EASY PROCESS!

We're glad you're here and interested in starting services whether that's for yourself, your student/child or you're making a referral. Just a few simple steps and you're in! Whether you still have questions or are ready to jump in:

1. **Contact us!** Elle Jennings, Youth Transition Specialist,
rjennings@independenceinc.org or 785-913-354-6882 ext. 109 OR
Amy Ballinger, KYTN Program Manager
aballinger@independenceinc.org or 785-913-6882 ext. 119
2. **Do a quick intake with us** to start services- we can either email the short form or you can come by our office and fill it out in person
3. **Fill out this quick "survey" link** to enroll our KYTN program
https://kusurvey.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cSChW9kthUeJwMu
4. We will contact you to set up an initial meeting where we will get to know you/your child, talk about goals and needs and begin services!



Under the Kansas Youth Transition Network (KYTN) Grant, partner organizations are encouraged to create councils across the state, involving the required partners: Federally Funded Centers for Independent Living (CILs), State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies (SVRAs), and Local Education Agencies (LEAs), State Educational Agencies (SEAs). Independence, Inc. is the Federally-funded Center for Independent Living in our local council - the Youth Transition Alliance of Wyandotte County.

The purpose of local youth transition councils is to

- encourage collaboration, innovative and out-of-the-box thinking among service providers
- build innovative, robust services and service delivery systems
- create networks of service providers, families, youth, school staff and educators, and community members interested in youth transition
- raise awareness about youth transition services and programs
- engage our communities in the work we do
- recruit youth and student advocates

We do all of the above by meeting as a cohesive team every month, attending local events, connecting with the community, hosting informational booths and tables, providing referrals to member organizations and community providers, providing Professional Development Days to school districts, and collaborating on new and innovative programs and services.

We are always recruiting additional members to join our council! We are especially interested in youth and young adults with disabilities, community members and other stake holders. Visit our FB Page and follow our activities and please contact us with any questions, interest in Professional Development Days or any interest in joining our council!

Contact:

Amy Ballinger, Independence, Inc. Kansas Youth Transition Network Program Manager
aballinger@independenceinc.org
785-371-1646

Follow us on FB: <https://www.facebook.com/ytawc/>



IN-CLASS TRANSITION SKILLS TRAINING

through the Kansas Youth Transition Network Program at Independence, Inc.



ADAPTABLE CURRICULUM

training modules can be adapted to various ages, learning levels and learning styles and include a wide-range of transition and independent living skills



[DOWNLOAD
YOUTH
TRANSITION
CURRICULUM
MODULES
OVERVIEW](#)

RELEVANT CONTENT

as disability services providers we know all about barriers and how to break them, disability rights and how to advocate for them, and training that will help youth achieve their independent living and transition goals



[DOWNLOAD THE
INDEPENDENCE,
INC. STATEWIDE
TRANSITION
CURRICULUM
PLAN](#)

ALL TYPES OF DISABILITIES

students don't have to have a formal diagnosis nor an IEP for us to work with them, whether one-on-one or through in-class training. If they identify as having a disability, we can help! Our training is not limited to special education classrooms.



[DOWNLOAD
"SETTING MYSELF
UP FOR SUCCESS"
8-WEEK
CURRICULUM FOR
SPECIAL
EDUCATION
CLASSROOMS](#)

Let's Talk Transition!

Through the Independence, Inc. Kansas Youth Transition Network Program

Youth Transition is...

✓ for youth and young adults age 10-24 with any type of disability (including mental/emotional)

✓ One-on-one, group, and/or in-class support and training

✓ meeting youth and families where they are - no matter what that looks like

✓ assisting youth and families with filling out paperwork and applications of all kinds - school, work, volunteer, program assistance, etc.

✓ helping youth discover and develop their goals, interests, potential and vision for the future

✓ Professional Development for teaching staff, paras and support staff

✓ an essential part of independent living skill-building for youth and young adults with disabilities

✓ curriculum and training that is adaptable and shareable

✓ resume writing and interview skill-building

✓ connecting youth with their communities, volunteer opportunities and peer groups

✓ TEAMWORK! And the team can include families, caregivers, teachers, other service providers etc.

CONTACT:

Amy Ballinger, Program Manager -
Kansas Youth Transition Network
913-354-6882 ext. 119
aballinger@independenceinc.org

✓ A critical building block along the path to a secure, accessible, bright and thriving future.



YOUTH TRANSITION

for youth and young adults age 10-24 with any type of disability (including mental/emotional)

Executive Function Skill Building

Talent and Interest Exploration

Personal Goal Setting

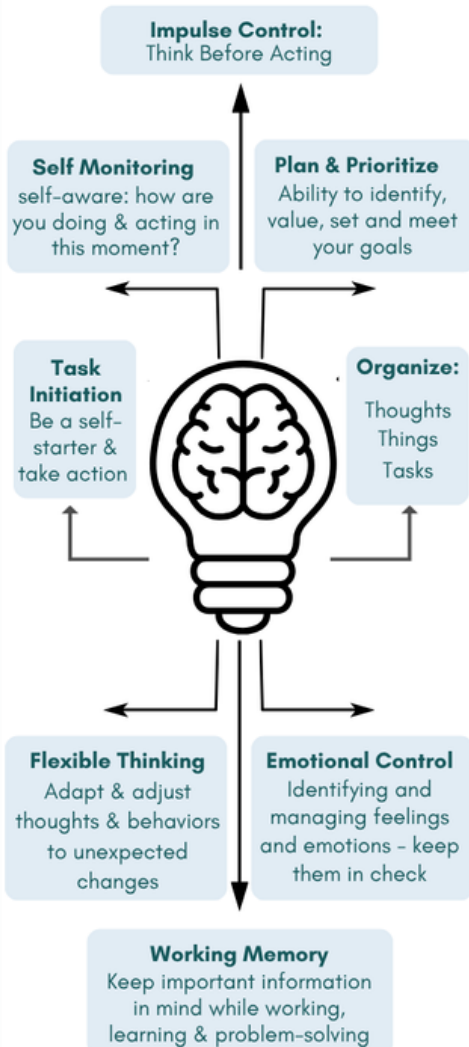
Resume Writing & Interview Skill Building

Job Search & Application Assistance

GED Prep/Higher Education Planning and Help

NOTE: The contents of this brochure were developed under a grant number H421E230030 from the Department of Education. However, these contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. (Authority: 20 U.S.C. §§ 1221e-3 and 3474)

Executive Function



ONE-ON-ONE INDIVIDUALIZED TRAINING

Whether you're in elementary, middle or high school - or not in school at all - we will create an individualized training plan just for YOU! Together, will identify needs, strengths, hopes and goals and figure out how to get you there - whether that's a job, higher education, preparing for the next grade or just working on life skills. **We work with all systems-involved youth!**

GROUP AND IN-CLASS TRAINING

We have transition-focused curriculum adaptable to different age groups and learning styles, to bring into the classroom and train students on building executive function skills, job-readiness and independent living skills.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We provide formalized training and presentations for certified and para educators on transition services, transition training best practices and how disability organizations like ours can support you and your students.

PEER GROUPS

We are forming peer groups for youth and young adults to gather around shared experiences, hobbies and interests, as a pathway to meet other youth with disabilities, foster relationships and explore life's ups and downs together.

IEP PODCAST AND IEP SUPPORT

Join our podcast and let us hear about your experiences, your goals and your thoughts as we get to know YOU and create a MP4 file to share with your IEP team!

SO MUCH MORE!

Give us a call and let's figure out what we can do for you!

KANSAS CITY, KS

IEP

odcast



DO YOU HAVE AN IEP?
DO YOU HAVE **IDEAS**
GOALS **HOPES**
THOUGHTS

about your education and your future that
you would like to share but aren't sure how?



Share your voice
through the
Independence Inc.



IEP

odcast



- join us in a comfortable, relaxed studio/office environment in Wyandotte Co.
- we get to know you through casual questions and conversation - no preparation needed!
- we press play and record our fun, entertaining, upbeat, real and open conversations
- you get to talk about yourself - whatever you want to share!
- we give you access to the audio file to share with parents, school staff and the IEP team!
- IEP team gets to know you through your podcast, helping to shape your education!

LEARN

MORE



Contact Amy Ballinger, Independence, Inc., Kansas Youth Transition Network Program Manager for more information, to schedule a visit, or to sign up for a podcast!

aballinger@independenceinc.org - 785-371-1646

<https://independenceinc.org/kansas-youth-transition-network/>



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THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS!