Teaching Transition Skills to Students

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Objectives:

• Participants will be able to list specific transition skills

• Participants will be able to explain why we teach transition skills

• Participants will be able to integrate the teaching of transition skills into their daily schedule or curriculum
How are you teaching students the skills needed to prepare for college/career and to become as independent as possible?
Skills to Teach Students to Prepare for Life After High School

• Soft Skills

• Specific Job Skills/Employability Skills

• Independent Living Skills

• Self-Determination Skills
Why Teach These Skills?
Why Teach These Skills?

• To prepare students for college/career

• To help students become as independent as possible
Soft Skills

• Attitude at work

• Completion of duties

• Interaction with coworkers

• Independence on the job
Soft Skills...continued

• Pride in work (Quality)

• Initiative/Motivation

• Following Directions

• Attitude with customers
Soft Skills...continued

• Speed on the job
• Willingness to ask questions, seek help
• Attendance
• Promptness
• Following company rules
Specific Job Skills/
Employability Skills

• Via CTAE Classes/CTI

• Examples:
  Computer Skills
  Healthcare Skills
  Automotive Technology Skills
Independent Living Skills

• Skills for self-determination, interpersonal interactions, communication, health/fitness and the knowledge needed to successfully participate in adult lifestyles and other post school activities (e.g. skills needed to manage a household, maintain a budget and other responsibilities of an adult)
Independent Living Skills

- Skills/adaptive behaviors related to personal care and wellbeing to decrease dependence on others
What is Self-Determination?
What is Self-Determination?

• A combination of skills, knowledge, and beliefs that enable a person to engage in goal-directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior.

Field, Martin, Miller, Ward, and Wehmeyer (19
What is Self-Determination?

• An understanding of one’s strengths and limitations, together with a belief of oneself as capable and effective, are essential to self-determination.

Field, Martin, Miller, Ward, and Wehmeyer (19...
What is Self-Determination?

In plain English, self-determination is …

- Knowing and believing in yourself
- Knowing what you want in the future AND making plans to achieve those goals
- Knowing and asking for the supports you need to achieve your goals
Components of Self-Determination

**Choice making:** appropriately choosing between a finite number of choices

**Problem-solving:** weigh pros & cons of potential actions, identify barriers to success

**Decision making:** involves choosing between unlimited options
Components of Self-Determination
...continued

• **Goal setting and attainment**: ability to set appropriate goals for self and achieve the goals with actions

• **Self-regulation**: self-monitoring, self-evaluation, self-instruction, self-management (controlling own behavior by being aware of one’s actions and providing feedback)
Components of Self-Determination
...continued

Self-advocacy: have knowledge of self, knowledge of rights, communication skills, and leadership ability.

Self-awareness: awareness of own individuality, strengths, and areas for improvement

Self-efficacy: understanding that own actions have an impact – you are a causal agency in your life
Knowledge of Rights
Sample sub-components include

- Personal rights
- Community rights
- Human service rights
- Consumer rights
- Educational rights
- Steps to redress violations
- Steps to advocate for change
- Knowledge of resources

Self-awareness
Sample sub-components include

- Strengths
- Preferences
- Goals
- Dreams
- Interests
- Learning style
- Support needs
- Accommodation needs
- Characteristics of one’s disability
- Responsibilities

Leadership
Sample sub-components include

- Knowledge of group’s rights
- Advocating for others or for causes
- Political action
- Knowledge of resources
- Organizational participation
- Team dynamics and roles

Communication
Sample sub-components include

- Assertiveness
- Negotiation
- Articulation
- Body Language
- Use of assistive technology
- Listening
- Persuasion
- Compromise

Self-Awareness
Sample sub-components include

- Strengths
- Preferences
- Goals
- Dreams
- Interests
- Learning style
- Support needs
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- Characteristics of one’s disability
- Responsibilities

Knowledge of Resources
Sample sub-components include
Why the Emphasis on Self-Determination?
Why the Emphasis on Self-Determination?

Individuals who score higher on measures of SD have more positive adult outcomes (e.g., better employment, better living situations)

Wehmeyer & Schwartz (1997)
Why the Emphasis on Self-Determination?

Research is emerging regarding the relationship between SD and positive school experiences (e.g., higher grades, attendance, fewer behavior problems).

Wehmeyer & Schwartz (1997)
The Birthday Party

Taken from Jamie L van Dycke, James E. Martin, David L. Lovett, *Teaching Exceptional Children*. Reston Jan/Feb 2006 Vol. 38, Iss.3 Pg. 42, 6pgs Self-Determination Constructs
School and Family –Based Interventions

• Provide opportunities for students to make decisions
• Help students relate personal goals with daily decisions they make
• Provide guidance in dividing students’ long-term goals into manageable short-term objectives

School and Family –Based Interventions

- Assist the student in realistically recognizing and accepting weaknesses in key skills
- Assist students in requesting academic and social supports from the teachers

Approaches for Promoting Self-Determination in Students

• Directly teaching skills or enhancing knowledge

• Embedding instruction into the general curriculum
  – EX) including goals for writing (goal-setting) into writing class

• Person-centered Planning
Approaches for Promoting Self-Determination in Students

• Student-driven IEP and transition planning.
  • Making sure the student attends and is PREPARED for participating in their IEP meetings
  • Important step in transferring decision-making power to students
  • Teaching students about the IEP and its use in guiding their future
  • Remember that ALL students are capable of participating
IEP Development/Student Participation Strategies

• Involving students in the IEP process includes instruction on:
  • Participating in IEP meetings
  • Participating in transition planning
  • Leading IEP meetings
  • Self-determination skills
  • Transition awareness
  • Empowerment
IEP Development/Student Participation Strategies

- **Involving Students in the IEP Process**
- **Research-to-Practice Lesson Plan Starters**
  - For using the Self-Directed IEP with students with cognitive disabilities
    [http://www.nsttac.org/LessonPlanLibrary/1_and_8.pdf](http://www.nsttac.org/LessonPlanLibrary/1_and_8.pdf)
  - For using person centered planning to increase student and family involvement in the IEP process
  - For using the TAKE CHARGE: For the Future! curriculum
    [http://www.nsttac.org/LessonPlanLibrary/3_29_33.pdf](http://www.nsttac.org/LessonPlanLibrary/3_29_33.pdf)
  - For using the Self-Advocacy Strategy
    [http://www.nsttac.org/LessonPlanLibrary/1_and_8.pdf](http://www.nsttac.org/LessonPlanLibrary/1_and_8.pdf)
Student-Led IEP meeting vs. Traditional IEP meeting

Differences?

• More focused on student

• IEP more relevant to student needs

• Meeting maintains positive focus and interactions
Who benefits from student-led IEP meetings?
Student Benefits

Better understanding and awareness of:

• Disability

• IEP process and relevance

• Self-determination skills
Parent Benefits

• Increased parent involvement and voice

• Improved communication with teacher

• More self-determined youth

• Positive interaction with school personnel
Teacher Benefits

• Positive relationships with student/parent

• IEP meeting centered on student needs

• The IEP process makes sense to everybody involved . . . “It’s not just paperwork anymore”
Administrator Benefits

• Increase in graduation rates

• Increase % of students who transition to desired postsecondary goal

• Decrease in drop out rates

• Decrease in inappropriate behavior
ASPIRE

What’s In A Name?

Active
Student
Participation
Inspires
Real
Engagement
ASPIRE

Active Student Participation
Inspires Real Engagement

ASPIRE provides training and follow-up activities to enable students to actively participate in the development and implementation of their IEP. This process is referred to as:

- Self-Directed IEP
- Student-Led IEP
Contact Information
Georgia Department of Education
Division for Special Education Services and Support
Professional Learning Unit
404-656-3963

For information and materials for ASPIRE visit the SPDG's website (www.gaspg.org).

ASPIRE Student Led IEP initiative is funded by the Georgia State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG), Georgia Department of Education through a grant from the Office of Special Education Programs, United States Department of Education and is a collaboration with the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities.
Published Researched-Based Self-Determination Curricula

• Next S.T.E.P. (Student Transition & Educational Planning)
• ChoiceMaker
• Whose Future Is It Anyway?
• My Future Plan
20 Ways to Promote Self-Determination in Students

1. Find out what motivates your student
2. Prioritize student preferences and interests.
3. Make it meaningful and real.
4. Allow your students to be “causal agents” (Wehmeyer1996)

20 Ways to Promote Self-Determination in Students

5. Instruct your students in how to make effective choices.

6. Embed choice into every part of the school day.

7. Give students an active role in deciding what they will learn.

8. Process emotions associated with the decision-making process

20 Ways to Promote Self-Determination in Students

9. Enable students to emotionally self-regulate.

10. Allow your students to participate in goal setting.

11. Teach your students to self-monitor towards their goals.

12. Resist the temptation to make students earn a reward; make it available no matter what.

20 Ways to Promote Self-Determination in Students

......continued

13. Build strategies into interventions to promote self-determination

14. Learn with your students

15. To be co-learners, listen actively to your students.

16. Remember that behavior is communicative, no matter how unconventional it may seem.

20 Ways to Promote Self-Determination in Students …continued

17. Build on pre-existing skills rather than targeting deficits.

18. Enlist peers to help support student in becoming self-determined.

19. Accept and value every student.

20. Finally, if you work on any of these suggestions, students will learn the knowledge and skills they need to become self-determined.

When and where can transition skills be taught?
When/Where to Teach Transition Skills

Determine the “best fit” for your school or system

Some suggestions for classroom placement:

• CTAE/CTI
• Health Class
• Collaborative Class
• Exploratory Class
When/Where to Teach Transition Skills

Determine the “best fit” for your school or system

Some suggestions for classroom placement:

• Classes for students identified as at risk
• Advisement
• Career Preparatory Program
• Study Skills Class
When/Where to Teach Transition Skills

Determine the “best fit” for your school or system

Some suggestions for classroom placement:

• Family & Consumer Science Class
• Embed in General Curriculum
• “Pull Out” Model
• Create an Elective Class
What is one new way you will implement teaching transition skills to your students?
Presenters

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