

Levittown Schools Transition Fair



Preparing for Life After High School

**Navigating Post-Secondary
Options for Students with Disabilities**



The Essential Questions for Transition

Your Child - Today

What are their talents?
What are their interests?
What are their challenges?

Who Am I?

Your Child - The Journey

What classes / diploma /
credential do they need?
What will they need to learn?
What experiences should
they have?
Which agencies can help?

How Will I Get There?

Your Child - Future

How will they earn a living?
How will they continue their
education/training?
Where will they live?

Where Am I Going?



Age-Appropriate Transition Assessments

Why are they important?

Transition Assessments:

- Assess the child's strengths, interests, and needs
- Building blocks for goals, instruction, and services
- Provide suggestions for career paths and necessary credentials (e.g., diploma, certification)
- Inspire conversations for future opportunities between parent, school and child



It All Begins With Self-Awareness and Exploration



Microsoft Office Clip Art

- Understanding your own strengths, preferences, and interests.
- Many youth don't know what their disability is, or haven't practiced telling others about it.
- It is crucial that youth know how their disability affects them in school and on the job.
- Self-Awareness lends itself to more focused career exploration and planning activities.



Promoting Self-Determination in Youth with Disabilities: Tips for Families and Professionals

Promote Choice Making

- Identify strengths, interests, and learning styles;
- Provide choices about clothing, social activities, family events, and methods of learning new information;
- Hold high expectations for youth;
- Teach youth about their disability;
- Involve children and youth in self-determination/self-advocacy opportunities in school, home, and community;
- Prepare children and youth for school meetings;
- Speak directly to children and youth;
- Involve children and youth in educational, medical, and family decisions;
- Allow for mistakes and natural consequences;
- Listen often to children and youth.

Encourage Exploration of Possibilities

- Promote exploration of the world every day;
- Use personal, tactile, visual, and auditory methods for exploration;
- Identify young adult mentors with similar disabilities;
- Talk about future jobs, hobbies, and family lifestyles;
- Develop personal collages/scrap books based on interests and goals;
- Involve children and youth in service learning (4H, AmeriCorps, local volunteering).

Promote Reasonable Risk Taking

- Make choice maps listing risks, benefits, and consequences of choice;
- Build safety nets through family members, friends, schools, and others;
- Develop skills in problem solving;
- Develop skills in evaluating consequences.

Encourage Problem Solving

- Teach problem solving skills;
- Allow ownership of challenges and problems;
- Accept problems as part of healthy development;
- Hold family meetings to identify problems at home and in the community;
- Hold class meetings to identify problems in school;
- Allow children and youth to develop a list of self-identified consequences.

Promote Self Advocacy

- Encourage communication and self-representation;
- Praise all efforts of assertiveness and problem solving;
- Develop opportunities at home and in school for self-advocacy;
- Provide opportunities for leadership roles at home and in school;
- Encourage self-advocates to speak in class;
- Teach about appropriate accommodation needs;
- Practice ways to disclose disability and accommodation needs;
- Create opportunities to speak about the disability in school, home, church, business and community.

Facilitate Development of Self-Esteem

- Create a sense of belonging within schools and communities;
- Provide experiences for children and youth to use their talents;
- Provide opportunities to youth for contributing to their families, schools, and communities;
- Provide opportunities for individuality and independence;
- Identify caring adult mentors at home, school, church, or in the community;
- Model a sense of self-esteem and self-confidence.

Develop Goal Setting and Planning

- Teach children and youth family values, priorities, and goals;
- Make posters that reflect values and are age-appropriate;
- Define what a goal is and demonstrate the steps to reach a goal;
- Make a road map to mark the short-term identifiers as they work toward a goal;
- Support children and youth in developing values and goals;
- Discuss family history and culture—make a family tree;
- Be flexible in supporting youth to reach their goals; some days they may need much motivation and help; other days they may want to try alone.

Help Youth Understand Their Disabilities

- Develop a process that is directed by youth for self-identity: Who are you? What do you want? What are your challenges and barriers? What supports do you need?
- Direct children and youth to write an autobiography;
- Talk about the youth's disability;
- Talk about the youth's abilities;
- Involve children and youth in their IEP;
- Use good learning style inventories and transition assessments;
- Identify and utilize support systems for all people.

Self-Determination Tips Handout



Key Transition Planning Areas

Consider these topics when going to a transition planning meeting

Learning – Education and Training

Earning – Employment

Living – Independent Living Skills



Building a Shared Vision

- Think about your child. What words describe their vision for the future?
- Is this different from your vision?
- Describe YOUR vision for:
Education/Training, Employment,
Independent Living Skills
- Discuss with your child and, together,
you can begin to build a shared vision.



Building a Shared Vision

As you think about the future, what are your hopes and concerns for your child?

Hopes: _____

Concerns: _____

What is your vision for your child in the following areas:

Education/Training: _____

Employment: _____

Community Living: _____

How is your child's vision different from yours?

What are some ways you can work with your child to develop a shared vision?



How Else Can Families Help With Transition Planning?

- Support your child's active participation in transition planning
- Work collaboratively with your school toward achieving your child's annual goals
- Talk with your school and your child about meaningful ways to develop your child's unique talents



You Have Been Entitled... Now, Are You Eligible?

Community agencies can provide services to prepare your child for life after high school.

Examples:

- Social Security Benefits Advisement
- Finding and Keeping a Job
- Success in College
- Vocational Skill Development
- Safe and Affordable Housing



Note: An individual must be eligible for services.

