



transformability

A comprehensive ebook for
parents: Transition Planning
for Students with Disabilities.

Hello there!

Welcome to this comprehensive guide on transition planning for students with disabilities. As you embark on this journey with your child, I want to extend my heartfelt wishes for your success in navigating this crucial phase of their life. This ebook is designed to be a valuable resource, offering practical advice and actionable steps to help you and your child prepare for the transition from school to adulthood.

My philosophy centers on meeting each student where they are and recognizing the unique talents, abilities, and passions they possess. Every student has the potential to build a fulfilling and independent life, and it is our role to support and guide them in discovering their path. By exploring the world around them and identifying what excites and motivates them, we can help them create a life that truly works for them.

I believe in a team approach to transition planning, where parents, educators, service providers, and the students themselves work collaboratively to set and achieve meaningful goals. This ebook provides a structured framework to support these efforts, ensuring that every aspect of the transition is thoughtfully addressed.

Please know that I am here to support you throughout this process. If you have any questions or need further assistance, I am available to speak with you. You can reach out to me through the contact form on my website, where I am more than happy to provide personalized guidance and support.

Thank you for your dedication to your child's future. Together, we can make a significant impact and help them achieve their fullest potential.

Warmest regards,

Diane Dickson

Diane Dickson, Vocational Consultant
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Introduction

Transition planning is a critical process for students with disabilities as they prepare to move from high school to adulthood. This checklist is designed to support you, the parent, in guiding your child through this important journey. By working together as a team, we can ensure that your child develops the skills, knowledge, and connections needed to achieve their post-school goals.

Your Team

Your child's transition planning team plays a vital role in this process.

The team typically includes:



FAMILY

You, the Parent:

Your insight and advocacy are crucial for understanding your child's strengths, needs, and aspirations.

The Student:

Actively involving your child empowers them to take ownership of their future.



SERVICE PROVIDERS

Vocational Consultant:

Offers guidance on employment opportunities & vocational training.

Related Service Providers:

Includes speech therapists, occupational therapists, & other specialists who support skill development.

Community Agency Reps:

Collaborate on accessing adult services, housing, and community involvement.



EDUCATORS

Special Education Teacher:

Provides expertise in individualized education plans (IEPs) and transition strategies.

School Counselor:

Assists with academic planning, career exploration, and post-secondary options.



Together, we form a supportive network dedicated to helping your child navigate the transition from school to adulthood successfully. This checklist will serve as a roadmap, ensuring that all necessary steps are taken to provide your child with the best possible start in their adult life.

By working collaboratively and keeping open lines of communication, we can create a comprehensive and effective transition plan tailored to your child's unique needs and goals.

Let's embark on this journey together, empowering your child to achieve their fullest potential.

Transition Planning Checklist for Students with Disabilities

Ages 14-15



General

- ☐ Increase family and student involvement in transition planning.
- ☐ Help student understand and communicate their needs and accommodations.
- ☐ Learn informed decision-making skills.
- ☐ Ensure coursework aligns with postsecondary goals.
- ☐ List needed transitional services/activities.
- ☐ Identify possible future living arrangements.
- ☐ Explore career options and post-secondary requirements.



Home Living

- ☐ Discuss current and future living arrangements.
- ☐ Increase independence in personal health and medication management.
- ☐ Develop strategies to increase responsibilities at home.



Post-Secondary Education

- ☐ Begin career exploration activities.
- ☐ Discuss post-secondary options and requirements.



Jobs & Job Training

- ☐ Identify pre-employment skill needs.
- ☐ Determine availability of work-related documents (SSN card, birth certificate).
- ☐ Start career investigation activities.



Community Participation

- ☐ Engage in volunteer activities.
- ☐ Develop transportation strategies.
- ☐ Increase community experiences and friendships.



Recreation & Leisure

- ☐ Discuss current activities.
- ☐ Explore extracurricular and community options.



Medical & Health-Related

- ☐ Understand health conditions and medications.
- ☐ Guidance in human sexuality and healthy relationships.

Transition Planning Checklist for Students with Disabilities

Ages 16-17



General

- ☐ Review and clarify long-term goals.
- ☐ Increase disability awareness and self-advocacy.
- ☐ Investigate assistive technology tools.
- ☐ Learn appropriate interpersonal and social skills.



Home Living

- ☐ Review support services and future living arrangements.
- ☐ Develop independent living skills (budgeting, cooking, shopping).



Post-Secondary Education

- ☐ Continue researching post-secondary options.
- ☐ Discuss taking college entrance exams.



Jobs & Job Training

- ☐ Participate in work-based learning programs.
- ☐ Connect with Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS).
- ☐ Begin practicing job applications and resumes.



Community Participation

- ☐ Increase knowledge of community services.
- ☐ Consider driver's training or state ID card.
- ☐ Broaden community activities and friendships.



Recreation & Leisure

- ☐ Connect with the Center for Independent Living.
- ☐ Pursue activity options (peer mentorship, community offerings).



Medical & Health-Related

- ☐ Manage and administer medications.
- ☐ Discuss healthcare providers and insurance needs.
- ☐ Apply for Social Security benefits if appropriate.

Transition Planning Checklist for Students with Disabilities

Ages 18-21



General

- Engage family and student in IEP meetings.
- ☐ Include outside service providers in transition planning.
- ☐ Explore post-secondary educational options.
- ☐ Apply for housing and county services if needed.
- ☐ Confirm day programming and employment providers.
- ☐ Increase community participation.



Home Living

- ☐ Review current support and future living situations.
- ☐ Arrange tours with county if appropriate.
- ☐ Identify remaining needs in home living skills.



Post-Secondary Education

- ☐ Apply for post-secondary programs and take entrance exams.
- ☐ Contact college disability coordinators if applicable.



Jobs & Job Training

- ☐ Participate in work-based learning and VRS programs.
- ☐ Develop employment resumes/portfolios.
- ☐ Explore apprenticeship programs.



Community Participation

- ☐ Increase community service knowledge.
- ☐ Register to vote and for Selective Service.
- ☐ Develop transportation strategies and community involvement.



Recreation & Leisure

- ☐ Connect with the Center for Independent Living.
- ☐ Explore day programming and waiting lists with social worker.



Medical & Health-Related

- ☐ Manage health rights upon turning 18.
- ☐ Complete Transition Readiness Assessment.
- ☐ Discuss healthcare providers and insurance changes.
- ☐ Consider guardianship vs. supported decision making and other options

Guide for Evaluating Transition Programs

Program Structure

Clear Objectives: A high-quality transition program will have specific, clearly defined goals. These objectives outline what the program aims to achieve, such as helping youth develop essential life skills, preparing them for post-secondary education or employment, and fostering independence. Clear objectives ensure that everyone involved understands the program's purpose and can work towards the same goals.



Comprehensive Curriculum:

The curriculum should cover a wide range of skills necessary for successful adulthood. This includes:

- **Social Skills:** Interacting effectively with others in various settings.
- **Financial Literacy:** Managing money, budgeting, and understanding financial concepts.
- **Time Management:** Prioritizing tasks and managing time efficiently.
- **Self-Regulation:** Controlling emotions and behaviors, especially in challenging situations.
- **Motivation:** Setting and working towards personal goals.
- **Self-Awareness:** Understanding one's strengths, weaknesses, and interests.
- **Career Knowledge:** Exploring different career paths and understanding job requirements.
- **Post-Secondary Options:** Learning about opportunities for further education or training.

Schedule: A flexible schedule is crucial as it allows the program to accommodate the varied needs of participants. For instance, programs might be scheduled during school hours for homeschool students and in the evenings or weekends for those attending public school.

Project-Based Learning: This approach involves students working on projects over an extended period, which allows them to apply what they've learned to real-world situations. It's a hands-on method that helps students develop problem-solving skills, teamwork, and independent thinking.



Staff and Support

Ensuring effective support for students with disabilities involves three key elements:

1

Qualified Staff:

The staff should be experienced in working with youth with disabilities.

They should be trained in special education, vocational training, or related fields to provide effective support and guidance.

2

Staff-to-Participant Ratio:

A low staff-to-participant ratio ensures that each student receives adequate individual attention and support, which is critical for personalized learning and development.

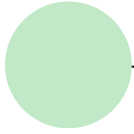
3

Support Services:

Additional services such as counseling, mentoring, and career guidance provide comprehensive support to participants.

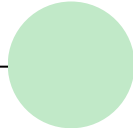
These services help address personal challenges, guide career exploration, and support overall well-being.

Participant Engagement



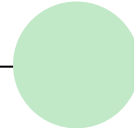
Individualized Plans:

Programs should create personalized transition plans tailored to each participant's unique needs, strengths, and goals. This ensures that the program is relevant and beneficial to each individual.



Skill Development:

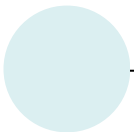
Participants should have opportunities to practice new skills in real-world settings. This could involve community-based instruction, where students engage in activities outside the classroom, such as job shadowing or volunteer work, to gain practical experience.



Feedback Mechanism:

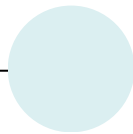
Regular feedback and assessment help track participants' progress and make necessary adjustments to their learning plans. This ensures continuous improvement and goal achievement.

Resources and Facilities



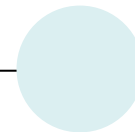
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Accessibility:

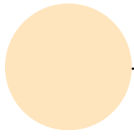
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Safety:

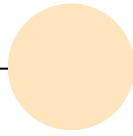
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Outcomes and Success Rates



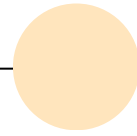
Track Record:

A program's success can be measured by its track record. Look for programs that have a history of helping participants achieve their goals, whether that's gaining employment, enrolling in post-secondary education, or developing independent living skills.



Post-Program Support:

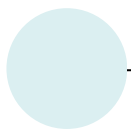
High-quality programs offer continued support even after participants complete the program. This could include follow-up services, alumni networks, or ongoing counseling to help participants navigate their next steps.



Participant Feedback:

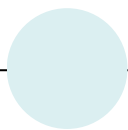
Positive testimonials and feedback from past participants and their families can provide valuable insights into the program's effectiveness and impact.

Additional Considerations



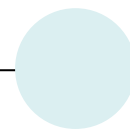
Cost:

Consider whether the program is affordable and if financial assistance is available. It's important to find a program that fits within your budget without compromising on quality.



Parental Involvement:

Good programs encourage parents to be involved in planning and implementing the program. This collaboration ensures that the program aligns with the family's goals and supports the participant's development effectively.



Community Partnerships:

Regular feedback and assessment help track participants' progress and make necessary adjustments to their learning plans. This ensures continuous improvement and goal achievement.

Partnering for your child's success



How Working with a Vocational Consultant Supports Your Child's Success:

Navigating the transition from adolescence to adulthood can be particularly challenging for youth with disabilities. Recognizing this, we developed the Transformability Transition Toolkit, a comprehensive resource designed to support parents and their children through this critical period. This toolkit is aimed at helping students aged 14 to 22 acquire essential skills and knowledge to successfully transition from school to adulthood, whether that includes higher education, vocational training, or entering the workforce.

Discover confidence,
independence, and success !

THE ROLE OF A VOCATIONAL CONSULTANT:

Provide individualized support that helps students navigate educational and career pathways while also fostering confidence and independence. For parents, partnering with a vocational consultant offers invaluable guidance and reassurance, knowing their children are receiving expert assistance in preparing for a fulfilling and successful life.

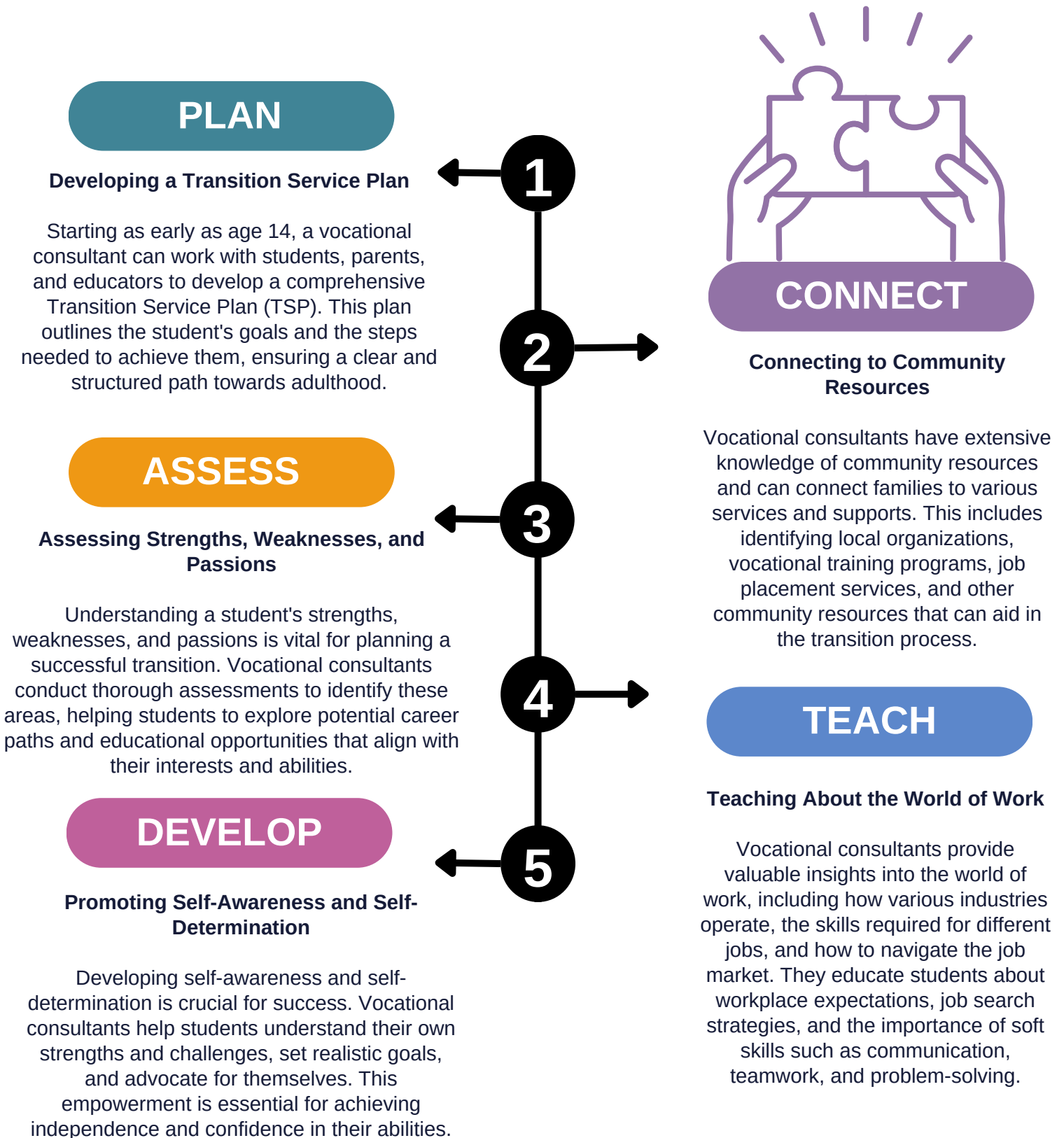
Understanding Transition : Transition refers to the process of moving from the school environment into post-school activities, which can include further education, employment, independent living, and community participation

The goal of a well-planned transition is to equip students with the necessary skills, resources, and support systems to achieve their personal and professional goals. This process should begin as early as age 14 to ensure adequate time for preparation and adjustment.



The Role of a Vocational Consultant


A vocational consultant plays a crucial role in facilitating a successful transition for youth with disabilities. Here's how a vocational consultant can help:



Supporting Parents for Successful Outcomes



Parents play a vital role in their child's transition journey...

- 
- **Information and Training:** Providing parents with information about the transition process, legal rights, and available resources.
 - **Collaboration:** Encouraging active collaboration between parents, students, and professionals to ensure a cohesive approach.
 - **Emotional Support:** Offering emotional support and practical advice to help parents manage the challenges of the transition period.
 - **Advocacy:** Assisting parents in advocating for their child's needs and ensuring they receive appropriate services and accommodations.

Conclusion:

The Transformability Transition Toolkit, coupled with the expertise of a vocational consultant, provides a powerful combination to set youth with disabilities on a path to success. By starting early, assessing strengths and interests, connecting to resources, and promoting self-awareness, vocational consultants can help students navigate the complexities of transition with confidence. For parents, this partnership offers valuable support and guidance, ensuring that their children are well-prepared to achieve their goals and lead fulfilling lives. For more information about the Transformability Transition Toolkit or to connect with a vocational consultant, please visit our website or contact us directly.

Together, we can ensure a brighter future for your child.



ABOUT

DIANE DICKSON

I'm Diane Dickson, the Founder of Agency for Life Transformations (ALT) and Transformability. My entrepreneurial journey began in my early 20s when I started a specialized haircut service catering to children with sensory issues and disabilities. This experience ignited my passion for empowering individuals with disabilities to live their ideal lives.

Throughout my career, I've been deeply committed to advocating for special education, organizing community initiatives, and coordinating volunteer efforts.

Since making Brevard County my home in 2010, I've served as an employment specialist, job coach, and Certified Business and Technical Assistance Consultant through vocational rehabilitation (CBTAC). My role extends to supporting families as a healthy lifestyle coach, with a focus on targeted nutrition to optimize brain function

*"I've always
believed that there's
genius in everyone.
I look for success
stories and I see
what's possible for
people."*

Agency for Life Transformations (ALT) was founded with the vision of creating transformative opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Transformability was formed as a guide to help students with disabilities transition successfully into adulthood.

We aim to address the evolving challenges faced by the differently abled community, taking a leading role in our community to innovate solutions that enhance the lives and opportunities of those we serve. I believe passionately in helping individuals live purposefully and passionately, encouraging them to achieve their highest aspirations.

Through ALT and Transformability, I am committed to fostering a supportive environment where individuals with disabilities can thrive, contributing positively to our community and beyond.

I am passionate about helping individuals live purposefully and encouraging them to achieve their highest aspirations. If you or someone you know could benefit from our services, please feel free to contact me. I am here to provide support and am happy to help