

Assistive Technology & Transition from School to Adult Life

CEDDERS Lecture Series

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Every Transition is Difficult

- From early childhood to school
- From school to adult life
- From working life to retirement

- Especially hard for people with disabilities transitioning from school to adult life.
 - What do you do when the school bus stops coming?
 - Parents worry and with good reason.





Transition

- Also a time to dream about...
 - Careers
 - Post-secondary education
 - Career and Technical Education
 - Independent living
 - Community inclusion
 - Personal relationships



Enter...Assistive Technology

- A tool to support your dreams by possibly overcoming functional limitations associated with disability
- May aid in performing tasks that were difficult or impossible in the past
- Requires planning for future needs
 - Person, Task, Environment
 - Training Needs
 - Maintenance Plans
 - Warranty
 - Future growth of position and ability of the AT to adapt to that growth

BUT... Need to Know your AT needs, therefore...

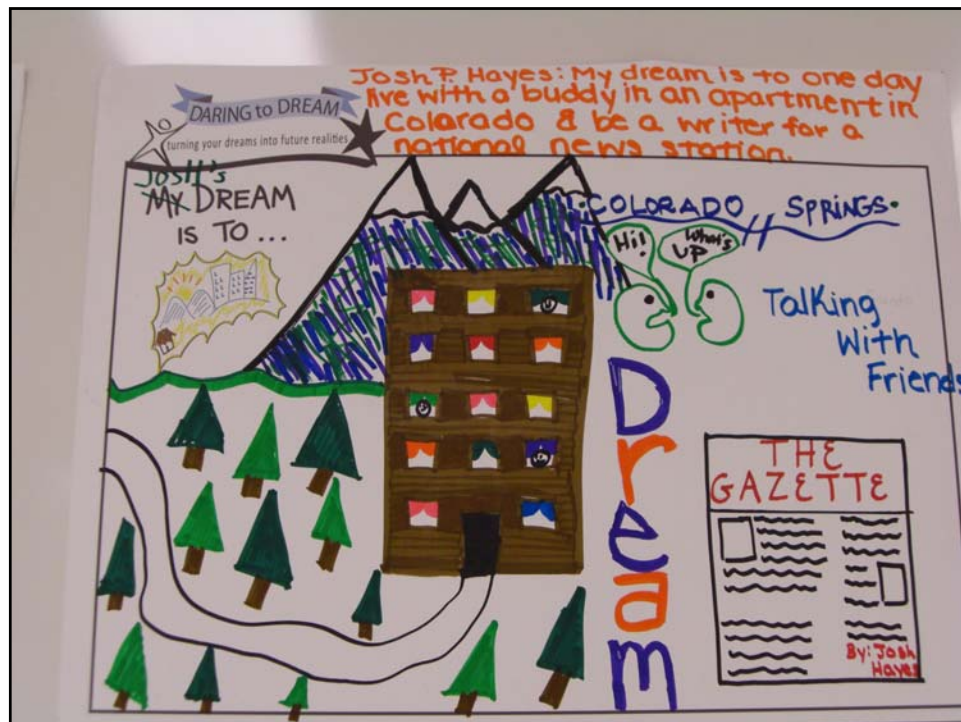
- Students should be included in discussion of AT and accommodation needs
- Ensure familiarity of which AT devices, services, and accommodations facilitate completion of class work and higher academic achievement; independent living, etc.
- Easier for the student to express those needs after they leave K-12 environment, only if they know about needed AT.

Meet Josh

18 years old
Lives with his grandmother
Attends high school in Chicago
Uses lots of AT
AAC device, powered wheelchair, computer adaptations
Relies on assistance for all daily routines
Has dreams for his future and support from his extended family

Until he came to ACES program at Temple University, limited transition planning and services as mandated by IDEA





Before graduation, Josh will need

- To learn
 - How to manage his AT and his generic technologies
 - How to manage personal assistance services (PAS)
 - How to manage transportation
 - How to manage his health care
 - How to manage his finances, including his cash and medical benefits
 - Live independently, with PAS
 - About his interests, employment goals, and/or post secondary opportunities
 - Sexual and relational roles and responsibilities
 - What supports and accommodations he will need, and
 - How to be his own self advocate!!
 - What services and benefits (cash & other) are available to him.



Where will Josh and his family learn all of this????



IDEA 2004 requires *transition planning* as early as age 14

- **Transition planning:**
 - begins at age 14 and continues until the student graduates or reaches age 21
 - prepares students for life after high school
 - helps students plan for and choose high school courses
 - helps students decide what skills they need to develop to live and work in their community after high school
 - gives students the opportunity to explore work and career options while still in high school
 - helps students and families make connections with education and training programs, colleges, agencies and support services for after high school to continue working toward goals
 - helps students and the entire IEP team learn about student interests, what works and doesn't work in their lifestyle, their skills and talents, and who can help in achieving specific student goals



IDEA 2004 requires that *transition services* start no later than age 16

Transition services are a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that:

- Is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education; vocational education; integrated employment (including supported employment); continuing and adult education; adult services; independent living or community participation; and [602(34)(A)]
- Is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences and interests. [602(34)(B)]

One State's Perspective on Transition Planning and Services




<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdA92E4ggzk>

None of this will happen without the IEP

Transition planning and services must be written into the IEP!!!

Technology Needed for Transition must be written into the IEP!!!



Transition Checklist

- **Transition activities** to consider when preparing transition plans with the **IEP team**. Student's skills /interests will determine which items on the checklist are relevant.



Checklist:

4 to 5 Years Before Leaving School

- Identify personal learning styles and the necessary accommodations to be a successful learner and worker.
- Identify career interests and skills, complete interest and career inventories, and identify additional education or training requirements.
- Explore options for post-secondary education and admission criteria.
- Identify interests and options for future living arrangements, including supports.
- Learn to communicate effectively your interests, preferences, and needs .
- Be able to explain your disability and the accommodations you need.
- Learn and practice informed decision making skills.
- Investigate assistive technology tools that can increase community involvement and employment opportunities.
- Broaden your experiences with community activities and expand your friendships.
- Pursue and use local transportation options outside of family.
- Investigate money management and identify necessary skills.
- Acquire identification card and the ability to communicate personal information.
- Identify and begin learning skills necessary for independent living.
- Learn and practice personal health care



Two to Three Years Before Leaving the School

- Identify community support services and programs (Vocational Rehabilitation, County Services, Centers for Independent Living, etc.)
- Invite adult service providers, peers, and others to the IEP transition meeting.
- Match career interests and skills with vocational course work and community work experiences.
- Gather more information on post secondary programs and the support services offered; and make arrangements for accommodations to take college entrance exams.
- Identify health care providers and become informed about sexuality and family planning issues.
- Determine the need for financial support (Supplemental Security Income, state financial supplemental programs, Medicare).
- Learn and practice appropriate interpersonal, communication, and social skills for different settings (employment, school, recreation, with peers, etc.).
- Explore legal status with regards to decision making prior to age of majority.
- Begin a resume and update it as needed.
- Practice independent living skills, e.g., budgeting, shopping, cooking, and housekeeping.
- Identify needed personal assistant services, and if appropriate, learn to direct and manage these services.

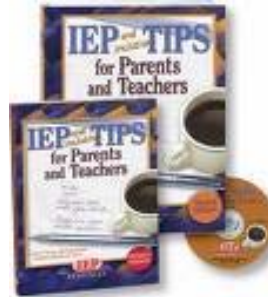


One Year Before Leaving the School

- Apply for financial support programs. (Supplemental Security Income, Independent Living Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Personal Assistant Services).
- Identify the post-secondary school you plan to attend and arrange for accommodations.
- Practice effective communication by developing interview skills, asking for help, and identifying necessary accommodations at post secondary and work environments.
- Specify desired job and obtain paid employment with supports as needed.
- Take responsibility for arriving on time to work, appointments, and social activities.
- Assume responsibility for health care needs (making appointments, filling and taking prescriptions etc.).
- Register to vote and for selective service.

Remember ...

- If transition services and assistive technology devices AND services are not written into the IEP, they will not be provided.
- Students must not be limited by limited knowledge and skills of their educators
- Especially critical for Guam



The Use of A.T. is not a Goal in itself!!

- A.T. can be included in IEP goals, Specially Designed Instruction (including as an accommodation for testing), Supports to School Personnel, and as a related service.
- A condition of **goal or objective** (e.g. "Using a voice output communication device, child will name....")
- Included in **Specially Designed Instruction**, (e.g. "Access to a computer for word processing writing tasks longer than one paragraph"); as an accommodation for testing
- **Related Services**: "Student and parents will be trained by A.T. consultant in use of A.T."
- **Supports for School Personnel** (e.g. "Teacher of child with hearing impairment will be trained in use and maintenance of FM system.")

Sample Transition Objectives for Josh

- Using his **communication device**, Josh will **direct his personal assistance** in how to charge his communication device.
- Using a **book holder and page turner**, Josh will **read selected text** in order to provide an oral response using his communication device demonstrating an ability to summarize essential details and to provide a conclusion with ___% accuracy ___/___ times.
- Using **his communication device**, Josh will pre-program his communication device with responses to **commonly asked job interview questions**.
- With the support of his **DVR counselor**, Josh will **learn how much earned income** he can make before losing his Medicaid health insurance.

Transition Services will

Make a difference for Josh

and for



Thousands of students in Guam who will eventually be transitioning from school to adult life!



Resources

- <http://www.ldonline.org/indepth/technology/at-iep.html>
 - Mostly focused on Learning Disabilities
- <http://natri.uky.edu/atPlannermenu.html>
 - The Assistive Technology Planner is designed to support teachers, families, and administrators as they work in collaboration with other IEP team members in planning and implementing assistive technology (AT) services. The planner consists of a separate booklet for teachers, families, and administrators.
- <http://www.tsbvi.edu/technology/tech-institute/at-iep.htm>
 - Simply written information about Assistive Technology and the IEP.
- <http://www.pluk.org/AT1.html>
 - This is a good parent's guide to Assistive Technology and the IEP.
- <http://www.abccadvocacy.net/Sample%20A.T.%20IEP%20Goals%20408.htm>
 - Sample IEP goals for literacy using Assistive Technology