Transition Basics:
Information for Families and Others Who Support Students with Disabilities

Goal

The goal of this training is to help families of students with disabilities, school district personnel and other community partners, understand the secondary transition process and how to actively and effectively participate.

Objectives

After this training, participants will be able to describe:

- Transition services
- Individual Educational Plan (IEP) components
- Self-advocacy and self-determination
- Responsibilities of schools, families and students
- Required and potential IEP team members
- Resources supporting family involvement in transition planning

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Research on the Importance of Family Involvement

"At all major transition points, communications of parents and educators in feeder and receiver schools help more students adjust to and achieve in their new school."

(Greenfeld, Epstein & Sheldon, 2013, p. 2)

"The evidence is consistent, positive and convincing: families have a major influence on their children's achievement in school and through life."
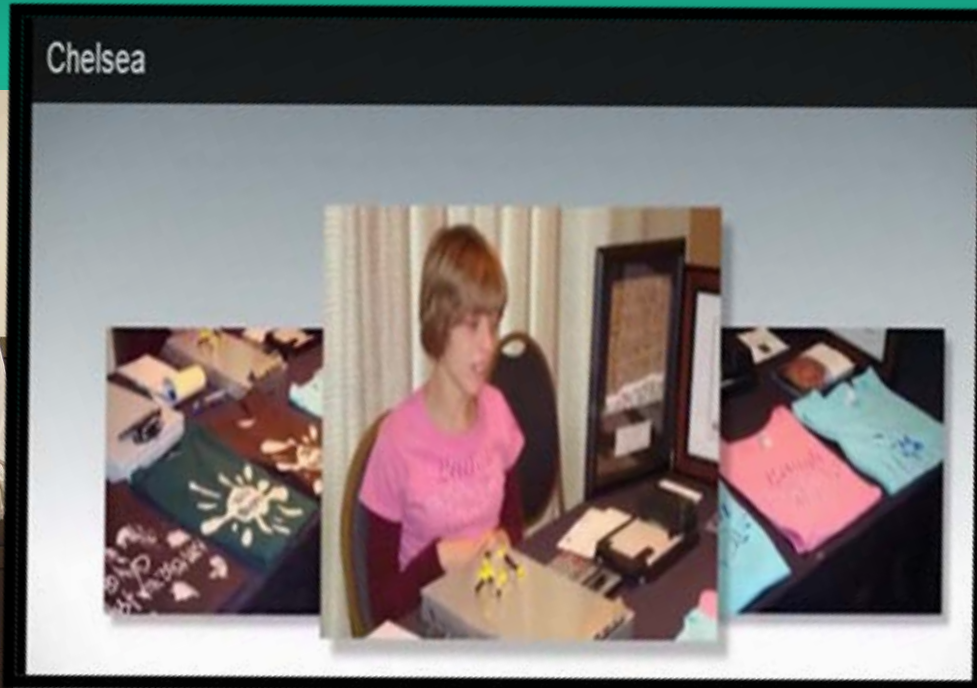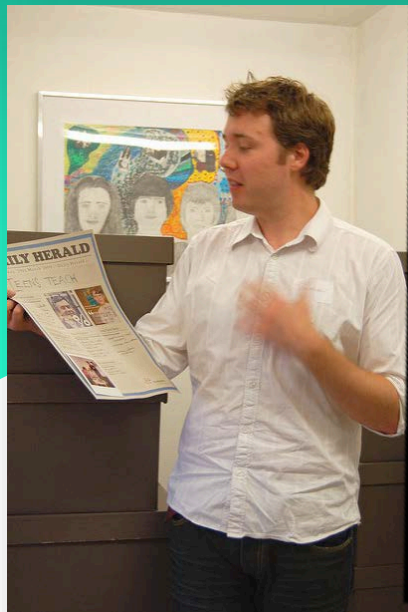
(Henderson & Mapp, 2002, p.7)

Research on the Importance of Family Involvement

Family involvement in middle and high school has positive results in areas such as "higher grades, school success, higher standardized test scores, higher self-esteem, social competence, reduction in substance abuse, aspiration for college, enrollment in college and participation in out-of-school time programs."

(Kreider, Caspe, Kennedy, & Weiss, 2007, p.2)

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Transition Services

Chelsea

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Definition of Transition Services

- Coordinated set of activities

- Results-oriented process

- Focused on improving academic and functional achievement

Definition of Transition Services

- Facilitates school to post-school activities, including the following:
  - Education
  - Vocational education
  - Integrated employment
  - Continuing adult education and services
  - Independent living
  - Community participation

- Based on individual student's needs

- Accounts for the student's strengths, preferences and interests

Transition Services

Transition Services Include:

- Instruction, including how a student will earn a standard diploma
- Related services
- Community experiences
- Development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives
- If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and the provision of a functional vocational evaluation

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Transition Services: Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(nn)(4), F.A.C.
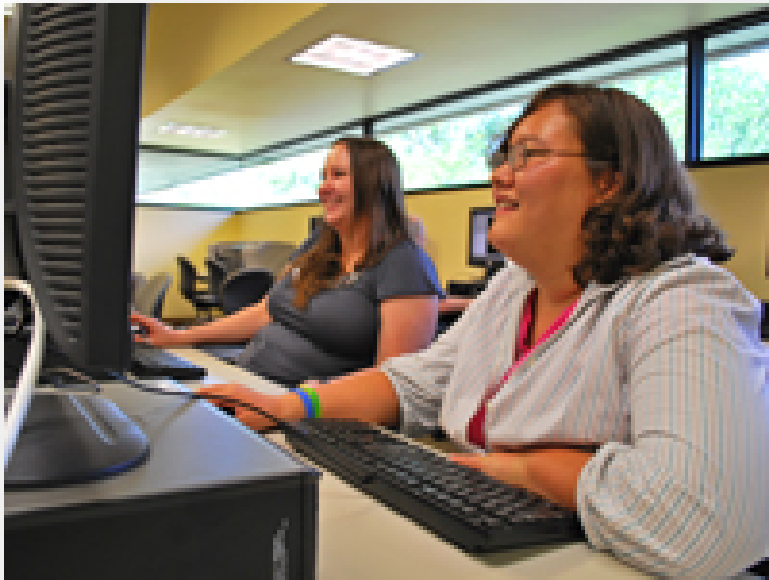
Transition services for students with disabilities may be special education, if provided as specially designed instruction, or a related service, if required, to assist a student with a disability to benefit from special education.

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2014 Legislative Changes

Special Diploma
Section 1003.438, F.S.

- The Special Diploma was repealed as of July 1, 2015.

- Students who began 9th grade in 2013-14 or earlier and whose IEPs already documented special diploma may continue to work toward a special diploma.

- Students who began 9th grade in 2014-15 or later **MAY NOT** work toward a special diploma.

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What does this mean for Students with Disabilities?

- Students now have the **opportunity** to earn a standard diploma, even if they have a significant cognitive disability

- It does **not** mean that students will be placed in general education courses without support

Class	Course
• The ideal situation is for all students to be educated together	• For students now in the 9th grade and below there are only two course choices for core subjects, general education courses and access courses
• The **class**room a student sits in does NOT dictate the type of **courses** they take	• Both are based on the same standards, but the level of complexity is very different
• Students in a general education classroom may be enrolled in access courses and students in a separate environment may be enrolled in general education courses	• Only students on access points can take access courses
• If a separate classroom environment is suggested for a student, their parent(s) should understand why	• Access points are only for students with a significant cognitive disability and parental consent is required

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2014 Transition Statute
S. 1003.5716, F.S.

Legislative Update 2014

The following slides will discuss some of the changes that were included in the 2014 Transition Statute.

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Transition Requirements

- Begin transition planning **before** age 14 and include:
  - Discussion of postsecondary goals and **career goals**
  - Consideration of the student's need for instruction in self-determination and **self-advocacy**
    - The goal is that students – as much as possible - will conduct their own IEP meetings
- Discussion of diploma designations in the IEP meeting and determination if the student will work toward one
  - Scholar and Merit designations are additions to the standard diploma; they are not types of diplomas
  - Decision is determined by the parent, or the student if rights have transferred

Transition Requirements Continued

- Beginning no later than the IEP in effect when the student attains age 16 (or younger, if appropriate)
  - A statement of intent to pursue a standard high school diploma and **Scholar or Merit designation, as determined by the parent**
  - A **statement of intent** to receive a standard diploma before age 22 and how the student will meet requirements
  - Inclusion of **outcomes and additional benefits expected by the parent and the IEP team** at time of graduation
  - A statement of measurable postsecondary goals and **career goals**

Transition Requirements Continued

- If there are changes to postsecondary or career goals included in an IEP, the parent **must approve** the changes

- If a parent does not attend the meeting, the IEP will be sent home and will include contact information in case the parent does not approve

- If the parent does not approve they should discuss their concern(s) with the rest of the IEP team, including the student

- Parents may choose an independent reviewer to help decide if the change is appropriate

Rule 6A-1.09963, Florida Administrative Code

- The statute required a rule, which became effective December 23, 2014

- Describes two high school graduation options available only to students with disabilities

- The majority of students with disabilities will continue to earn a standard diploma by meeting **the same graduation requirements as all students**

Graduation Requirements, including Academic Advising Flyers, http://www.fldoe.org/academics/graduation-requirements

Standard Diploma via Access Courses

- Must meet the same 24 course requirements as all students, but will use access courses
  - Access Algebra 1 instead of Algebra 1, etc.
  - Other ESE courses and core courses may be used in certain circumstances

NOTE: There has been no change in who can take access courses and the alternate assessment. Students must have a significant cognitive disability and you must consent.

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Standard Diploma via Access Courses - Continued

- May substitute a Career and Technical Education (CTE) course with content related for access English IV, one access math, one access science and one access social studies
  - Not access Algebra, Geometry, Biology or US History
  - FDOE must approve "content related"
  - CTE courses may be modified

Standard Diploma via Access Courses - Continued

- Must take Florida Standards Alternate Assessment (FSAA)***
  - If results are waived, demonstrate achievement with a portfolio (best practice is to collect this information for all students).
  - The state will release information on minimum scores when they are determined.

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Standard Diploma via Academic and Employment-Based Courses

- Must meet the same 24 course requirements as all students

- Must earn at least one-half credit in an employment-based course

  o Must be paid employment

  o Documented achievement of components on employment transition plan, which the student, parent and employer will sign

Employment Transition Plan Template:
http://www.fldoe.org/academics/exceptional-student-edu/secondary-transition.stml

Standard Diploma via Academic and Employment-Based Courses Continued

- May substitute a CTE course with content related for English IV, one math, science and one social studies
  - Not Algebra, Geometry, Biology or US History

- FDOE must approve "content related"

- May get a waiver of statewide standardized test results

Deferring Receipt of the Standard Diploma

Deferring receipt of the standard diploma is

- Supported by legislation
- Described in detail in the following slides

Deferment Information

- The right to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) ends when a student obtains a standard diploma.

- Rule 6A-1.09963(6)(a)2., High School Graduation Requirements for Students with Disabilities

- In the year in which the student is expected to meet graduation requirements
  - School districts must inform the parent and the student in writing by January 30.
  - The parent/guardian must sign a document telling the school district that the student will defer by May 15.

Deferment Information Continued

A student with a disability may only defer receipt of a standard diploma if:

- IEP team prescribes transition planning, transition services or related services through age 21 **and**
- Student will be enrolled in one of the following:
  - Accelerated College Credit instruction
  - Industry Certification—college credit
  - Collegiate High School program (IB, AICE)
  - Courses for scholar designation
  - Structured work-study, internship, or pre-apprenticeship program

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Deferment Information Continued

- As mentioned previously, not attending the graduation ceremony is **not** deferring.

- Students who earn a standard diploma and do not defer are **not** eligible for further services.

- Students may request their high school diploma at any time after they defer (it is expected they will request the diploma when they complete the program they deferred to attend).

Helping Students Achieve their Greatest Potential

"Whether you think you can, or think you can't... you're right!"
Henry Ford

"No one rises to low expectations."

\- Les Brown

"Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time."

\- Thomas Edison

Supports for Students to Promote Successful Learning

- Students can be active learners when they have:
  - **Instructional supports** that promote their engagement
  - **Instructional accommodations** that change materials and procedure, but not the standards
  - **Assistive technology** that ensures access to the standards and the curriculum

IEP Requirements for Ages 14 through 21

IEP: To Be in Effect Before Age 14

Primary Purpose:

- To identify transition services needs

- Notice must be provided to the parent and the student must be invited to attend

IEP: To Be in Effect Before Age 14 Continued

The IEP team must:

- Identify the need for transition services

- Invite the student to the IEP meeting and consider the need for instruction in self-determination and self-advocacy so the student actively and effectively participates in the IEP process

- Prepare for the student to graduate with a standard high school diploma

[s. 1003.5716(1)(a-b), F.S.]

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IEP: To Be in Effect at Age 15

Primary Purpose:

Review and update transition services needs for the student

The IEP process:

Must include all of the requirements from age 14 to review, update and if needed, revise IEP components

IEP: To Be in Effect by Age 16

Primary Purposes:

Development of measurable postsecondary goals and transition services for the student and course of study leading to a standard diploma.

The student must be invited to the IEP meeting and the transition IEP process must include:

- All of the requirements for ages 14–15
- All of the requirements for age 16, as detailed in slides that follow

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IEP: To Be in Effect by Age 16 Continued

Beginning no later than age 16, the IEP must include:

- A statement of intent to pursue an (optional) Scholar or Merit designation

- A statement of intent to receive a standard high school diploma before age 22 and how the student will meet requirements

[s.1003.5716 (2)(a-b), F.S.]

IEP: To Be in Effect by Age 16 Continued

Beginning no later than age 16,

the IEP must include:

- Measurable long-term postsecondary education and career goals based on age-appropriate transition assessments related to:
  - Training
  - Education
  - Employment
  - Independent living skills, if appropriate
  - Transition services
  - Courses of study

IEP: To Be in Effect by Age 16 Continued

The IEP must also include identification of transition services that will help the student reach his/her measurable postsecondary goals:

- Instruction
- Related services
- Community experiences
- Employment
- Post-school adult living
- Daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation (if appropriate)

IEP: To Be in Effect by Age 16 Continued

The IEP process must also include:

- Invitations to any agency likely to provide or pay for transition services (consent is required)

- It is recommended that the team begin discussing legal rights and responsibilities that will transfer at age 18
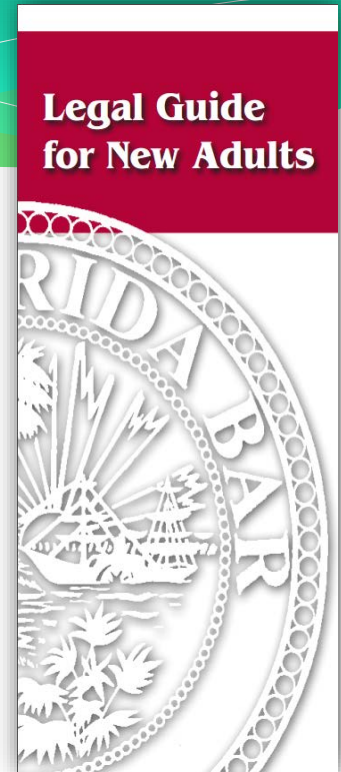
IEP: To Be in Effect by Age 17

Primary Purposes:

Update measurable postsecondary goals and transition services and inform the parent and student of the transfer of rights

The IEP process must include:

- All of the requirements from ages 14-16
- Informing the student of the rights that will transfer, at least one year prior to the student's 18th birthday (must be documented)

Legal Guide for New Adults

IEP: To Be in Effect by Age 18

Primary Purposes:

Update measurable postsecondary goals and transition services and provide parent and student a notice regarding the transfer of rights when the student reaches age 18

The IEP process must include:

- All of the requirements from ages 14-17
- Notice of the transfer of rights to the student and parent when the student attains his or her 18th birthday

IEP: To Be in Effect at Ages 19-21

Primary Purpose:

Update measurable postsecondary goals and transition services

The IEP process must include:

- All of the requirements from ages 14-18
- Students who have reached the age of majority and to whom rights have transferred can now provide the consent to invite agencies

IEP: To Be in Effect at Ages 19-21 Continued

The IEP process must also include:

- Provision of all notices to the student's parent, as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

- Prior written notice of change of placement for students graduating with a standard diploma

- A Summary of Performance (SOP) for students exiting with a standard diploma or no longer eligible for FAPE

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Responsibilities of Students, Families and Schools

Responsibility

A duty or obligation upon one moral, or legal accountability in to behave correctly in respect o ability or authority to act or dec take decisions independently.

Student Responsibilities

- Actively participate on the IEP team
- Understand the transition process
- Share insight regarding potential services
- Communicate postsecondary goals
- Develop and use self-determination and self-advocacy skills

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Family Responsibilities

- Maintain records
- Review IEP goals
- Help students develop postsecondary goals
- Review graduation requirements and assist with diploma decisions
- Approve any changes in the IEP regarding postsecondary goals and diploma decision

Family Responsibilities Continued

- Assist in preparing student for active participation in IEP meetings
- Support the student to develop a representational portfolio
- Guide student in decision-making and match support needs related to transfer of rights at age 18

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School Responsibilities

- Ensure that the student's IEP includes the required components for transition for students 14 and older

- Help students and agencies link with one another

- Schedule and conduct IEP meetings following IDEA requirements

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Possible IEP Team Members and Resources

- Student (must be invited)
- Members of the student's circle of support (e.g., providers, family, friends, employer)
- School representatives (e.g., counselors, transition specialists)
- Career assessment personnel
- Employment specialists

Possible IEP Team Members and Resources Continued

Agency Representatives

- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)
- Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD)
- Centers for Independent Living (CIL)
- Department of Children and Families (DCF)
- Children's Medical Services (CMS)
- Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)
- Career Source Florida (previously known as Workforce Development Boards)

Possible IEP Team Members and Resources Continued

Postsecondary Program Representatives

- Colleges and universities (e.g., advising, disabilities services)
- Career and Technical (Vocational) Centers/Colleges
- Adult Education
- JobCorp
- Americorps

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Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy

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Self-Determination

What is self-determination?

- Taking control and making decisions that affect one's own life

- Gaining these skills helps students
  - Make choices
  - Set goals
  - Manage their lives

(Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities: A Guide for Families , 2011)

Standing Up For Me!

Strategies for Teaching
Self-Determination Skills
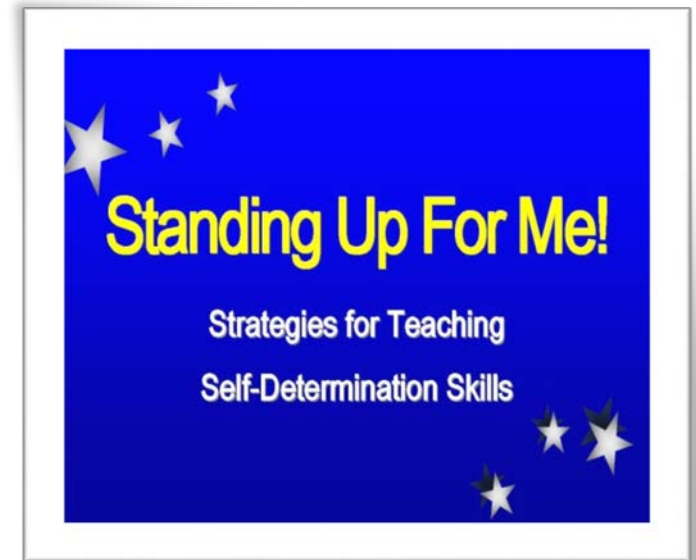
Components of Self-Determination

- Choice-making
- Decision-making
- Problem-solving
- Goal setting and attainment
- Self-regulation and self-management

- ***Self-advocacy*** and leadership skills
- Positive perceptions of control, efficacy, and outcome expectations
- Self-awareness and self-knowledge

(Wehmeyer & Field, 2007, p. 6)

Self-Advocacy

Self-advocacy refers to advocating on one's own behalf. To advocate means to speak up or defend a cause or person, and self-advocacy skills including being assertive, knowing your rights, speaking up, and negotiating.

Both self-advocacy skills and self-determination skills lead to empowerment!

(Field, Martin, Miller, Ward, & Wehmeyer, 1998; p. 10)

Self-Advocacy Skills

To be an effective self-advocate, students need to learn

- **_How to Advocate_**
  - Assertiveness
  - Effective communication (verbal, written, pictures)
  - Negotiation
  - Compromise in real-world situations

- **_What to Advocate_**
  - Rights and responsibilities under
    - Individual's with Disabilities Act (IDEA)
    - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
    - Rights available to all citizens

(Wehmeyer & Shogren, 2013, p. 54)

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Self-Advocacy Skills Continued

Opportunities for students to advocate

- IEP meetings (postsecondary goals, annual goals, etc.)

- Classes (accommodations)

- Work Experience/Employment (including interviewing)

- Campus and community experiences (e.g. participating in extracurricular activities)

- Planning family activities

Activities to Increase Self-Determination

Students should practice the following:

- Setting personal goals
- Solving problems that act as barriers to achieving these goals
- Making appropriate choices based on personal preferences and interests
- Participating in decisions that impact quality of life

(Powers et al., 1996)

Activities to Increase Self-Determination Continued

- Advocating for himself/herself

- Creating action plans to achieve goals

- Self-regulating and self-managing day-to-day actions

(Powers et al., 1996)
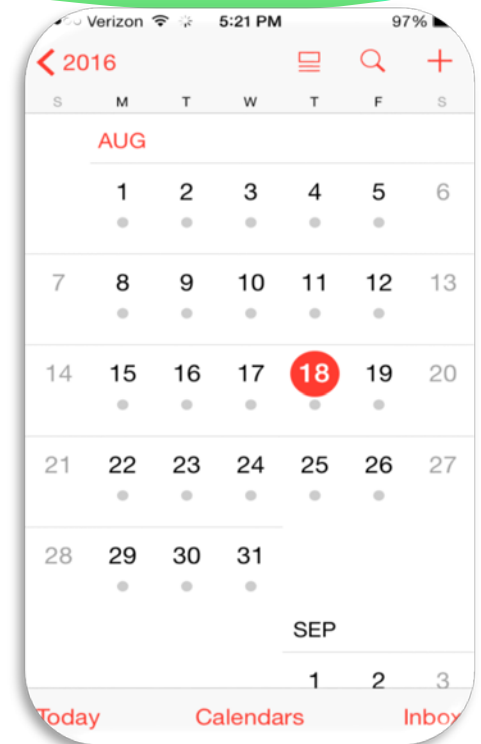
How Can Families Support Self-Determination?

- Maximizing personal expectations
- Promoting disability awareness
- Being aware of strengths, preferences and needs
- Fostering self-respect, self-esteem, self-determination and independence
- Supporting active involvement of the student in IEP meetings and transition planning
- Providing decision-making opportunities

(Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, FYI Transition, 2012; *Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities: A Guide for Families*, 2011)

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Family Support

Most importantly, families should prepare themselves to accept their child in his or her new adult role and allow their adult children to take an active role in the decisions that will determine their future - even if it means allowing them to make mistakes.

(PACER Center, 2014, p. 1)

Exploring Post-School Options

- Universities and colleges
- Employment
- Career technical centers
- Living arrangements
- Recreation and leisure
- Community service

(*Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities: A Guide for Families*, 2011)

How Can Families Promote Postsecondary Education?

- Understand a student's high school course of study and it's impact
- Research and visit colleges and universities
- Explore costs and financing options
- Develop awareness of strengths, support needs and strategies
- Discuss disclosure

Disclosing a Disability and Requesting Accommodations

- High school:
  - Students with disabilities are entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) under IDEA; the IEP states what is needed, e.g., accommodations, individual assistance

- College:
  - Students with disabilities' rights are protected under ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
  - Students must disclose their disability and meet eligibility requirements in order to receive appropriate accommodations

How Can Families Promote Employment?

Families can promote a student's employment by:

- Exploring career interests

- Encouraging work experiences

- Researching available supports and services

- Seeking assistance with benefits planning

- Helping students understand the implications of disclosing a disability (during the interview, once employed, etc.)

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Employment Initiatives

Employment First

- Florida is an *Employment First* state
  - Florida Abilities Work
    - Disability Web Portal for job seekers and employers
    - Helpdesk for employers
    - Community-based, integrated employment is the first option for employment services for youth and adults with significant disabilities
  - Visit www.fddc.org/Employment

Florida Abilities Work Website

https://abilitieswork.employflorida.com/vosnet/Default.aspx

Employment Enhancement Project (EEP)

Employment Enhancement Project (EEP)

- Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) initiative
- 2016-17 appropriation of $500,000 from the Florida legislature to provide employment opportunities statewide for individuals with disabilities (age 18 or older)
- Only available for individuals on the Medicaid Waiver wait list
- Contact your local APD office http://apdcares.org/customers/supported-employment/

Resources

Publications

- *Secondary Transition Roadmap for Families*
  http://project10.info/Publications.php

- *Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities: A Guide for Families*
  http://www.project10.info/Publications.php
  (currently under revision)

- *Tips for Transition*
  http://fndusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/PEN-POPIN-Tips-for-Transition.pdf

Graduation Resources

- Florida Department of Education (FDOE) Graduation Requirements
  https://www.fldoe.org/bii/studentpro/grad-require.asp
- Florida Shines
  https://www.floridashines.org/
  - My CareerShines
    https://www.floridashines.org/find-a-career

Youth Leadership Resources

- Boys State and Girls State
  http://www.boysandgirlsstate.org/
- The Family Care Council
  http://www.fccflorida.org/
- The Florida Youth Council (The Family Café)
  http://www.floridayouthcouncil.com/
- The Florida Youth Leadership Forum
  http://www.abletrust.org/youth-programs/florida-youth-leadership-forum
- Junior Achievement
  http://www.ja.org/

Legal Rights and Decision-Making Resources

- *Legal Guide for New Adults*

  http://www.floridabar.org/

- *Planning Ahead*

  http://www.fddc.org/sites/default/files/PA_Book_final_3-5-12-1.pdf

- *Lighting the Way to Guardianship and Other Decision-Making Alternatives: A Manual for Individuals and Families (2010)*

  http://www.fddc.org/sites/default/files/file/publications/Guardianship%20Family%20Manual.pdf

Benefits Planning Agencies and Resources

- Social Security Administration (SSA)

  http://www.ssa.gov

- SSA Benefits Planner

  http://www.ssa.gov/planners/

- SSA Area Work Incentive Coordinators for North and South Florida

  http://www.socialsecurity.gov/atlanta/southeast/awic/index.htm

- *The Red Book – A Guide to Work Incentives*

  http://www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook/

- Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA)

  http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work/WIPA.html

Florida's Federally Funded Parent Centers

- Family Network on Disabilities (FND)

  Statewide Parent Center, http://fndusa.org/
  - Parents of the Panhandle Information Network (POPIN)
  - Parent Support Network (PSN)
  - Parent Education Network (PEN)
  - VISIONS – Parent Training & Information (PTI) services for Native American, Native Hawaiian, and Alaskan Native families
  - Additional FND programs
  - http://fndusa.org/contact-us/programs/

Florida's Federally Funded Parent Centers Continued

- Parent to Parent of Miami, Community Parent Resource Center (CPRC), serving Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties http://www.ptopmiami.org/

Federally Funded Parent Centers
2016–17

Region 1
The Parents of the Panhandle Information Network (POPIN)
Family Network on Disabilities of Florida (FND)

Region 2
Parent Support Network (PSN)
Family Network on Disabilities of Florida (FND)

Region 3
Parent Education Network (PEN)
Family Network on Disabilities of Florida (FND)

○ Counties also covered by Parent to Parent of Miami

National Resources

- Beach Center on Disabilities website
  http://www.beachcenter.org/

- Center for Parent Information and Resources website
  http://www.parentcenterhub.org/

- U.S. Department of Education, Parents website
  http://www2.ed.gov/parents/landing.jhtml

- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs' (OSEP's) IDEA website
  https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html

Florida Resources

- The Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) http://apdcares.org/

- Career Source Florida http://careersourceflorida.com/

- Children's Medical Services (CMS) http://www.cms-kids.com/kids_teens/teens/transitions.html

- Disability Rights Florida http://www.disabilityrightsflorida.org/

- The Family Café http://www.familycafe.net/

- Florida Board of Governors, State University System, Services for Students with Disabilities http://www.flbog.org/forstudents/ati/disabilities.php

- Florida Colleges, Disability Support Services http://www.fldoe.org/fcs/educators/Disability/dss.asp

- Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services http://www.fldoe.org/ese/

- The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council http://www.fddc.org

- Florida Division of Blind Services http://dbs.myflorida.com/

- Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation http://www.rehabworks.org

- Florida Independent Living Council, Inc. http://www.floridasilc.org/

- FYI Transition http://www.fyitransition.org

- Project 10: Transition Education Network http://www.project10.info/

- Workforce Education, Career and Adult Education Programs http://www.fldoe.org/workforce/

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Questions and Thank You!

Questions, concerns, or recommendations?

Thank you for your attendance and input today!

Presenter
Contact Information

RTR
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