TRANSITIONING FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO ADULTHOOD: CHALLENGES, NEEDS, AND RESOURCES

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Objectives

- Discuss barriers and challenges that exist during the transition process
- Identify best practices for supporting adolescents with ASD during the transition from high school to adulthood
- Locate local and web-based resources for navigating the transition process

What is the “transition process?”

- The transition process refers to a student’s movement from high school to adulthood.
- Transition is often defined to include:
  - Education
  - Employment
  - Community living
  - Community Integration

Hendricks & Wehman, 2009

What are “transition services?”

- “A coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability
- That is designed to be 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;
- Is based on the individual child’s needs, taking into account the child’s strengths, preferences, and interests”

Individual with Disabilities Education Act, 2004

Why do we need transition services?

- 36% of young adults with ASD attended post-secondary education
- 58% of young adults with ASD worked for pay outside their homes
- 20% of young adults with ASD lived independently
- 25% of young adults with ASD were socially isolated
- 33% had no community participation

National Autism Indicators Report, 2015

WHAT BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES EXIST DURING THE TRANSITION PROCESS?
A Capital Region perspective

- 19 parents
- 11 school professionals
- 12 community professionals

Systems-level challenges

- Service availability & access
- Knowledge about ASD
- Awareness of existing services
- Collaboration
- Competing priorities
- Setting appropriate goals

Person-level needs

- Social challenges
- Mental health
- Independent living skills
- Self-determination
- Restricted, repetitive behaviors
- Executive functioning
- Employability skills

A state-wide perspective

- 323 participants
  - 112 parents
  - 155 school professionals
  - 56 community professionals
- From 55 NY counties

Systems-level challenges
WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT BEST PRACTICES?

**Person-level needs**

Choose your top three ...

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

**Taxonomy for Transition Planning**

- Interagency collaboration
- Family involvement
- Student-focused planning
- Student development
- Program structure

**CSESAB**

- Peer and social competence
- Literacy skills
- Independence and self-management skills
- Collaboration with family and community resources

**The “3 Rs”**

- Rigor
- Relevance
- Relationships

Kohler, 1996

Odom et al., 2014

Tew, Smith, & Carter, 2014
Putting it together ...

1. Start early
2. Make a plan
3. Build connections

WHAT RESOURCES CAN SUPPORT BEST PRACTICES?

Books

- Preparing for Life
- Steps to Independence

Online Resources

- CSESA Student Planning Menu
- Secondary School Success Checklist
- Community & School Resource Mapping
- Transition Planning Manual

Online Resources

- Age-appropriate transition assessment
- Developing a high-quality transition plan
- Pathways to employment
- Pathways to self-determination
Local Resources

Office for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)
https://opwdd.ny.gov/opwdd/services-supports/children/transition-students-developmental-disabilities

NYS Department of Education

Healthcare Transition

Transition to Adulthood: A Health Care Guide for Youth and Families


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References


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<tr>
<th>Online Resources</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Autism Speaks Transition Toolkit: <a href="https://www.autismspeaks.org/toolkit/transition-toolkit">https://www.autismspeaks.org/toolkit/transition-toolkit</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Center on Secondary Education for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders: <a href="https://csesa.fpg.unc.edu/">https://csesa.fpg.unc.edu/</a></td>
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<td>- Transition Tennessee: <a href="https://transitiontn.org/">https://transitiontn.org/</a></td>
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<th>Other Resources: Books</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Developing Workplace Skills for Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder: The BASICS College Curriculum, by Michelle Rigler &amp; Amy Rutherford</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Guiding Your Teenager with Special Needs through the Transition from School to Adult Life, by Mary Karp</td>
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<td>- Helping Adults with Asperger’s Syndrome Get &amp; Stay Hired: Career Coaching Strategies for Professionals and Parents, by Barbara Bissonnette</td>
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<td>- High School Transition that Works: Lessons Learned from Project SEARCH, by Maryellen Daston, Erin Riehle, Susie Rutkowski, &amp; Paul Wehman</td>
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<td>- Independence, Social, and Study Strategies for Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder: The BASICS College Curriculum, by Amy Rutherford &amp; Michelle Rigler</td>
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<td>- Living Independently on the Autism Spectrum, by Lynne Soraya</td>
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<td>- Navigating College: A Handbook on Self Advocacy Written for Autistic Students from Autistic Adults, by Autistic Self Advocacy Network &amp; Melody Latimer</td>
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<td>- Parenting a Teen or Young Adult with Asperger Syndrome, by Brenda Boyd</td>
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<td>- Parties, Dorms, and Social Norms: A Crash Course in Safe Living for Young Adults on the Autism Spectrum, by Lisa Meeks &amp; Tracy Loie Masterson</td>
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<td>- Social Behavior and Self-Management: 5-Point Scales for Adolescents and Adults, by Kari Dunn Buron &amp; Jane Thierfeld Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Social Skills for Teenagers and Adults with Asperger Syndrome: A Practical Guide to Day to Day Life, by Nancy Patrick</td>
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<td>- The Loving Push: How Parents and Professionals Can Help Spectrum Kids Become Successful Adults, by Debra Moore &amp; Temple Grandin</td>
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<td>- Turning Skills and Strengths into Careers for Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder: The BASICS College Curriculum, by Michelle Rigler &amp; Amy Rutherford</td>
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