# Leveraging Assessment Methods for Quality Transition Planning and Implementation

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# Presenter

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# Background Information

Education Definitions

Purpose of Assessment

Collaboration is Key

Assessment Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Considerations

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# Purpose of Assessment….

- The most important reason for doing assessment is to empower a student to learn about themselves so they can take an active role in their career development and post-secondary goal planning process.

- Information from assessments can be gathered to help the student with a disability to understand and identify his or her current needs, preferences, and interests, as they relate to the demands of current and future working, educational, living, personal and school environment.

- Assessment results can also be used to assist educators and VR personnel in determining how best to support the student with a disability in their education, course selection, career development and achieving desired secondary and post-school outcomes.

➔ The assessment process addresses three questions:
  - Where is the student presently?
  - Where does the student want to go?
  - How does the student get there?

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# Assessment for education is…

→An ongoing *process* of gathering *relevant* information to plan, evaluate, or make decisions (academic assessment, transition assessment, career and vocational assessment, comprehensive rehabilitation assessment).

→Information gathered from multiple people and places over a period of time related to a student's preferences, interests, needs, and strengths

→Focused on current and future demands

→Different for every student, including those from culturally diverse backgrounds and experiences

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# From an education perspective, the results of assessment should:

→Provide the basis for course selection; making recommendations for instructional strategies; accommodations to instruction; equitable intervention strategies: and environments that address the student's needs, while capitalizing on their unique talents;

→Form the basis for the development of measurable annual goals (MAGS) in the IEP;

→Lead the student to better understand the connection between their individual academic program and post-school ambitions, often providing the key that motivates them to engage in learning and to stay in school;

→Provide the basis for identifying postsecondary goals in education or training, employment, and independent living as a part of transition planning in the IEP; and

→Assist in identifying transition services that will enable the student to reach their post-secondary goals.

# Cross Coordination and Collaboration Is Key

→ Assessment results should be gathered from multiple domains in order to identify where the student is currently functioning, as well as what is needed to reach their goals.

→ To effectively do this, coordinated education and cross-agency collaboration is needed, as is the development of a process to share results.

→ One initial strategy that can be used to begin this cross-planning process is to take a holistic approach when working with a student.

  → Then, as each agency is supporting the student, collective information can be shared and contribute to the assessment process.

  → As assessment information is shared, it can inform the development of plans (e.g., IEP, IPE, or ISP), as well as a coordinated approach to support a student in planning and achieving their next steps and post-secondary goals.

# Assessment Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Considerations

- ➢ **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI):**
  - Defines the values, beliefs, and practices surrounding when and how a student transitions to adulthood.

  - Defines the beliefs and practices surrounding transition for a student with disabilities and special health care needs as they progress from one stage to another in their lifecycle.

  - Influences the beliefs and practices of a family and student regarding transition from school to post-school activities within the contexts of health care, employment, postsecondary education, and independent living.

- ➢ Throughout the assessment process, DEI considerations should provide a structure for discussion and self-examination, as well as to facilitate discovery of unique skills and abilities that inform a student's postsecondary goals.

- ➢ It is important to identify assessments that would have minimal bias and/or consider the possible adherent bias in some assessment tools.

# Assessment Diversity, Equity and Inclusion be RESPECTIFUL

When considering appropriate assessment practices for a student transitioning from school to post-school activities, it is important to remember to be RESPECTFUL; that is to consider:

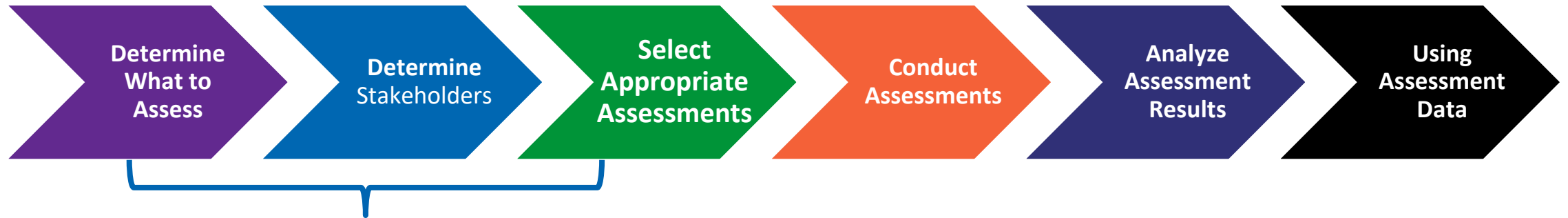**(R)** religion and spirituality

**(E)** economic class background

**(S)** sexual identity

**(P)** psychological maturity

**(E)** ethnic and racial identity

**(C)** chronological stage

**(T)** trauma

**(F)** family background

**(U)** unique physical characteristics

**(L)** geographical location

# The Big Picture

| Determine What to Assess | Determine Stakeholders | Select Appropriate Assessments | Conduct Assessments | Analyze Assessment Results | Using Assessment Data |

➔ The assessment process for secondary transition students consists of six separate but interconnected processes.

➔ The key characteristics of the assessments are:
- Individualized/person centered;
- Strength-based;
- Holistic;
- Culturally appropriate
- Is ongoing and drives the transition planning process;
- Interagency and interdisciplinary in nature;
- Uses multiple methods; and
- Consists of both formal and informal assessment.

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# Where have you been…Where are we going…

| Determine What to Assess | Determine Stakeholders | Select Appropriate Assessments | Conduct Assessments | Analyze Assessment Results | Using Assessment Data |

→ What do you already know about the student/youth?

→ What do you still need to learn?

→ Who can help?

→ What do you need to know about certain assessments?

# What is Our End Goal?

→ What do you consider to be a successful adult life for your students?

→ What information do you need about a student to support him/her and family to get there?

# Assessment Plan Characteristics

➢ Customized to specific types of information needed including asset-driven cultural considerations

➢ Appropriate to learning and response characteristics

➢ Use assistive technology & accommodations

➢ Include multiple ongoing activities to sample behaviors and skills

➢ Must be verified by multiple methods & persons

➢ Results stored in user-friendly way

➢ Occurs over time (multiple years)

# What to Assess: Skills AND Supports

→ General Transition Areas/ Skills

→ Life Skills

→ Career Interests, Awareness, Skills

→ Physical/Mobility

→ Preferences & Interests

→ Assistive Technology

→ Sensory Needs

→ Leisure & Social Skills

→ Communication

→ Medical & Health

→ Self-Determination

→ Special Skills/Interests

# What to Assess: Questions the Student & Others Can Answer

Who am I?

What are my unique talents & interests?

What do I want in life, now and future?

What are some of life demands that I can meet now?

What are my options for being supported?

NTACT (4th Ed.) Age Appropriate Transition Assessment Toolkit www.transitionta.org

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# Person-Driven Perspective

→ This perspective leads teams to engage in a process that embraces the spirit of intent from the both IDEA and WIOA.

→ It is designed to involve a diverse group of individuals who have an interest in the student and/or who can provide meaningful input for future adult roles.

→ It is culturally sensitive to student and family needs and preferences.

→ It allows for broad participation.

# Person-Driven Approaches...

→ Use a backward planning process.

→ Use visuals, graphics, photographs, and colors for collecting data.

→ Are facilitated by someone who knows the student and family well.

→ Always refer to the student to confirm and validate input.

→ Lead with student sharing information.

→ Should occur in a family-preference location and time.

→ Happen over a course of time.



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# Person Driven Planning Resources (1)

➢ [National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices & Systems](#)

➢ [The Institute for Person-Centered Practices](#)

➢ [PACER's National Parent Center on Transition & Employment](#)

# Person Driven Planning Resources (2)

- Personal Preference Indicators: A Guide for Planning

- Life Course Framework

- Person Centered Planning

- Employment Support Indicators

- I'm Determined.org

# Gather and Organize Assessment Info

**First things first** – We need a tool or a way to gather and organize the assessment information so it can be shared in a meaningful way!

# Transition Assessment Planning For Students with Significant Disabilities

| Transition Assessment Domains | Areas of Assessment to Consider | What do we already know about the student? | What do we need to learn about the student? | How will we gather this information? | Who will gather the information? | When will the information be gathered? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Current and Future Employment | Career Interests & Preferences | | | | | |
| | Work Experiences | | | | | |
| | Work Readiness (soft skills) | | | | | |
| | Assistive Technology for Work | | | | | |
| | Temperament/ Personality for Work | | | | | |
| | Physical Abilities & Mobility | | | | | |
| | Communication skills and support needs | | | | | |

Morningstar, M.E. (2009). Transition Assessment for Students with Significant Disabilities. Adapted from: Gaumer Erickson, A.S., Morningstar, M. E., Lattin, D.L., & Cantrell, L. (2008). *Transition Assessment Planning Form.* Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas, Transition Coalition.

# Transition Assessment Planning For Students with Significant Disabilities - 2

| Transition Assessment Domains | Areas of Assessment to Consider | What do we already know about the student? | What do you need about the student? | How will you learn this information? | Who will gather the information? | When will the information be gathered? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Education and/or Training | Functional Academics | | | | | |
| | Learning Styles & support needs | | | | | |
| | Communication Skills & Support Needs | | | | | |
| | Accommodations, Modifications & Assistive Technology | | | | | |
| Independent Living | Community Participation and Access | | | | | |
| | Supported Self-Determination/ Self-Advocacy | | | | | |
| | Financial literacy & support needs | | | | | |

# Transition Assessment Planning For Students with Significant Disabilities - 3

| Transition Assessment Domains | Areas of Assessment to Consider | What do we already know about the student? | What do we need to learn about the student? | How will we gather this information? | Who will gather the information? | When will the information be gathered? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Independent Living | Daily Living Skills & support needs | | | | | |
| | Recreation & Leisure skills and support needs | | | | | |
| | Assistive Technology needs and supports in the home | | | | | |
| | Personal Safety skills and support needs | | | | | |
| | Medical & Health needs | | | | | |
| | Communication skills and support needs | | | | | |
| | Adaptive Behavior skills | | | | | |
| | Interpersonal Relationships skills and supports | | | | | |
| | Other: | | | | | |

# Student Portfolios

→ Transition Portfolios are a tool to organize information about students in their transition years.

→ There is no single format or template that works for all individuals, although the use of photos and simple, clear text works best.

→ In general portfolios should be told in the first person from the student's point of view and should use friendly, non-clinical language.

→ Sections of portfolios should include whatever information is most important regarding a particular individual, and the sections will change according to each person.

The transition portfolio may include the following:

- Cover
- Table of Contents
- All About Me (family, community, hobbies, interests, etc.
- Communication
- Social Skills and Relationships
- Learning Styles – (attention , organization)
- Academic, Functional, Behavioral, Independent living
- Post-secondary Goals
- Career Exploration
- Health
- Mobility
- Needed accommodations and assistive technology
- Self-Care and Other Routines

# Places to Find Assessments

NTACT Transition Toolkit Provides information about conducting assessment as well as free assessment tools

Transition Assessment Matrix Indiana Secondary Transition Resource Center provides an easy way to sort a variety of assessment tools based on your need

NTACT:C Short Course Transition Assessment Review Padlet:

https://padlet.com/stoyler/wbrzd992pe08ezkv

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# Transition Assessment & Goal Generator (TAGG)

**34 items across 8 constructs:**
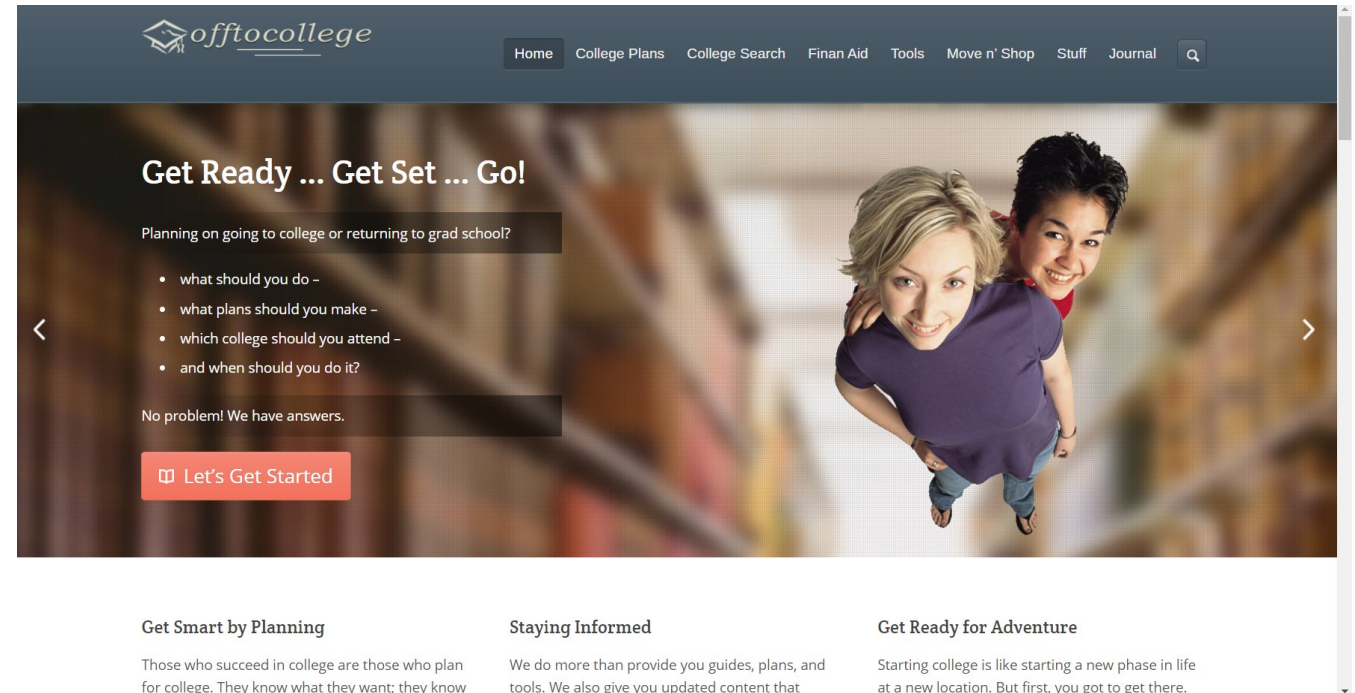
1. Strengths and Limits
2. Disability Awareness
3. Persistence
4. Interacting with Others
5. Goal Setting and Attainment
6. Employment
7. Student Involvement in IEP
8. Support Community

https://tagg.ou.edu/tagg/

# Off to College
## https://www.offtocollege.com

- Planning
- College Search
- Financial Aid
- Life on Campus

# CareerOneStop Website

## Assess Interests and Explore Careers

[https://www.careeronestop.org/Videos/CareerVideos/career-videos.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/Videos/CareerVideos/career-videos.aspx)
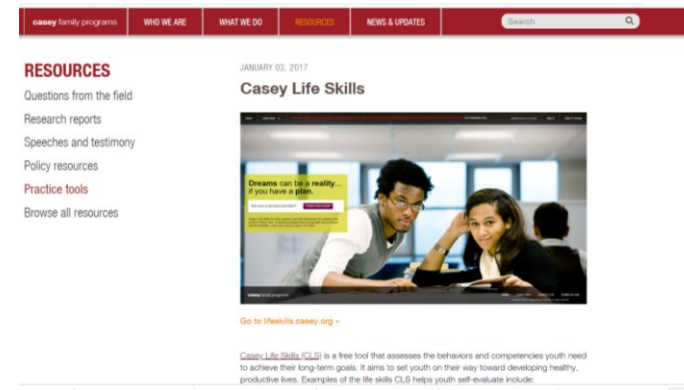
# O*NET Online
[Career exploration and job analysis](#)

# Independent Living

Independent Living Checklist – Asses
[Independent Living Checklist](#)



## Casey Life Skills

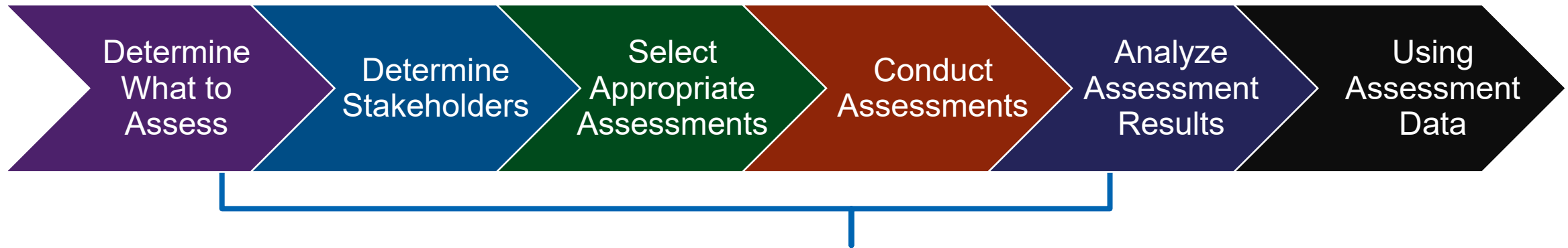https://www.casey.org/casey-life-skills-resources

# Digging Deeper!

- Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI)  Transition Guidelines (including one on Age Appropriate Transition Assessment): https://www.ocali.org/project/transition_to_adulthood_guidelines

# Think About

Determine What to Assess → Determine Stakeholders → Select Appropriate Assessments → Conduct Assessments → Analyze Assessment Results → Using Assessment Data

→ Now that appropriate assessments are identified, determine which team members are best suited to conduct each assessment?

→ Which approaches are asset-driven and can provide the most comprehensive information about the student, based on interests, preferences, skills, and needs over time?

→ Once complete, how will findings be conveyed in a way that allows for meaningful and relevant transition planning?
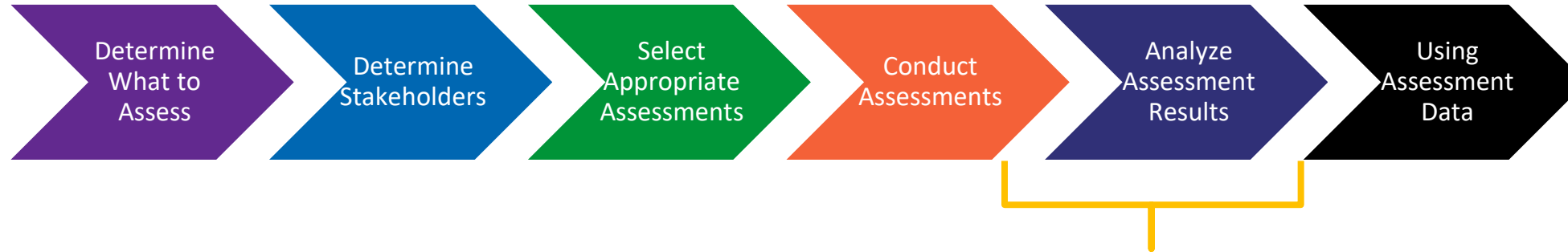
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# Who Will Assess and What Will They Assess?

| Team Member | Assessment |
|---|---|
| Education Professionals | Student work samples, , observations, behavior rating scales, preference surveys, learning preferences, community-based assessments, functional assessments, achievement assessments, academic performance, postsecondary education options, situational assessments, assistive technology |
| Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor | Careers interest inventories, work-simulations, job analyses, work aptitude, situational assessments, soft skills |
| Parents/Family Members | Behavior rating scales, interest inventories, interviews |
| Community Resources | Interest inventories, communication preferences |
| Student | Self-assessments, interest interviews |
| Peers | Peer-mediated assessments, social interactions, ecological inventories |
| Agency Professionals | Independent living skills, assistive technology |

# Effective Assessment Procedures

→ Review assessment procedures

- Know how to record responses, allowable prompting,

- modifications (if any), response materials

- Use alternate communication techniques and materials

  o Velcro charts, hand signals (thumbs up, thumbs down), pointers, interpreters cue cards, assistive devices (buttons), errorless responses

  o Review the handout – Transition and AT Considerations

- Cross check for understanding, accuracy, and verification of responses

# Analyze Assessment Results

Determine What to Assess → Determine Stakeholders → Select Appropriate Assessments → Conduct Assessments → Analyze Assessment Results → Using Assessment Data

**A general process that can be used as you conduct and begin to review results includes the following:**

➢ Gather and organize;

➢ Review;

➢ Translate into recommendations that are meaningful to the student's post-secondary goals;

➢ Summarize;

➢ Interpret in everyday, culturally aware, functional language;

➢ Consider how the assessment results match or conflict with other information that is known about the student. *[A lot of circumstances can impact a student's performance and individual assessment so results of an individual assessment should be used in combination with other assessment information that is known about the student.]*

# Analyze, and Summarize Assessment Information

→ **Analyze**
- Identify the evidence obtained from each assessment
  - Each team member who gathered assessment information per the plan shares their results in response to this question.

→ **Summarize**
- Succinctly describe how the new data informs the student's SPIN (strengths, preferences, interests, needs,)
  - Each team member provides input about how the new data has deepened the team's understanding of the student's PINS

→ **Draw Conclusions**
- Based on new understanding, document the actions that will be taken to assist in successful adult outcomes, including refining goals, services and supports, new connections and/or additional assessment.
  - Each team member provides perspective on meaningful next steps and identifies a potential role in each step when appropriate.
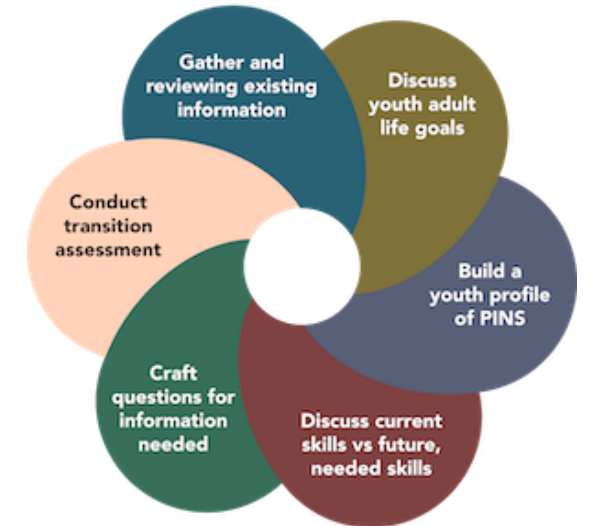
# Consider the Student's Post-Secondary Goals

✓ What supports will the student need to be successful in post-school environments – what were the results of the AT Protocol for Transition Planning, if applicable?

✓ What work does the student want to do beyond high school (e.g., employment, self-employed, etc.)?

✓ What does the student want to study after high school (e.g., community college, technical school, apprenticeship, continuing education, etc.)?

✓ Where is the student going to live, and what supports will be needed?

✓ How is the student going to access adult services?
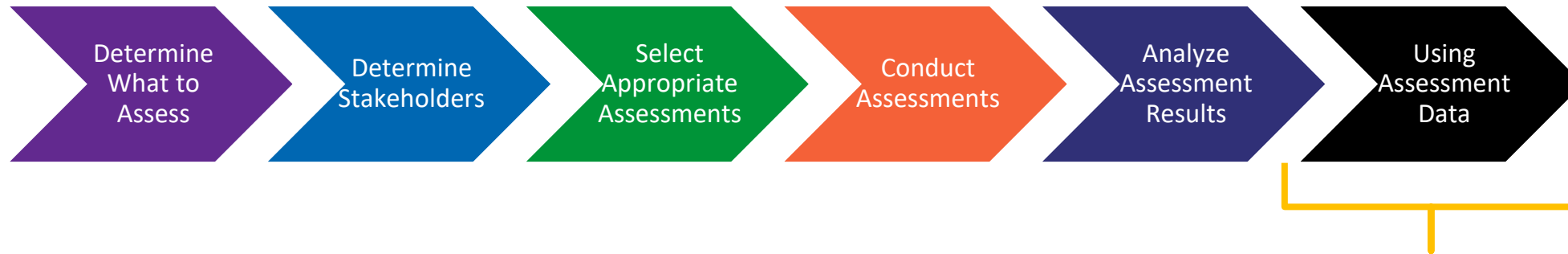
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# Additional Post-Secondary Goal Considerations

✓ How will the student develop his/her social network?

✓ How will the student participate in community activities?

✓ What will the student do for leisure and recreation?

✓ What will be the student's primary mode of transportation?

✓ How will the student meet his/her health/medical needs?

✓ What type of financial support will the student need?

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# In Drawing Your Conclusions – Consider the 'Fit'

→ Was there a 'match' or 'fit'?

→ Was there a 'disconnect' or 'gap'?

- Overall, how do the post-secondary goals reflect the student's SPIN?

- How do the environments in which these goals will take place match with the student's preferences?

- How does the targeted work, adult learning, living situation, community participation reflect the student's interests?

- How are the student's needs able to be supported within these goals?

- How will the student's skills be utilized within the post-secondary goals?
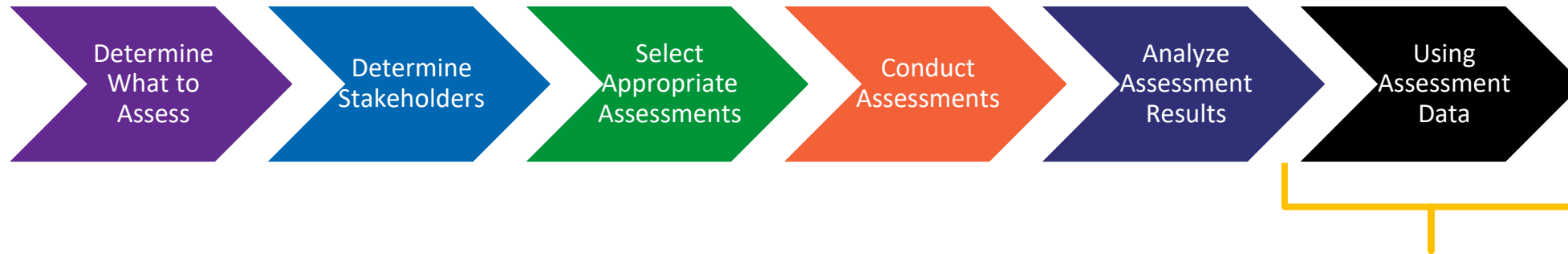
# What is Your Team's Plan for Sharing All The Information Learned About the Student?

| Determine What to Assess | Determine Stakeholders | Select Appropriate Assessments | Conduct Assessments | Analyze Assessment Results | Using Assessment Data |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

**What you are going to do with all of the information your team has gathered about the student?**

→ **Who** is going to share this information and with whom?

- Teacher, case manager, VR counselor, parents/family/guardian, other agencies, etc.

→ **What** information are you going to share?

- Results from every assessment, formal and informal results, a brief summary, etc.

→ **When** are you going to share the information?

→ Quarterly, annually at the IEP meeting, at the end of the school year, etc.

# What is Your Team's Plan for Sharing All The Information Learned About the Student? (cont.)

| Determine What to Assess | Determine Stakeholders | Select Appropriate Assessments | Conduct Assessments | Analyze Assessment Results | Using Assessment Data |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

**How** will these assessment results be used, and **why** are they important in the transition planning process?

→ In developing the student's post-school goals, and driving successful post-school outcomes;

→ For further academic and transition planning, and IEP development;

→ To help capture the student's story, and ensure transition planning is meaningful for that student.

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# Using Assessment Results/Data For Student Planning

**Once results are analyzed, they can be used to:**

→ Identify additional support needs (e.g. AT, PCA, etc.);

→ Develop and determine post-secondary goals;

→ Develop IEPs, and align IEPs with IPEs;

→ Foster person-driven planning;

→ Identify IDEA transition services that can support the student's chosen post-secondary goals;

→ Determine if the student needs VR Pre-Employment Transition Services to assist with early career exploration;

→ Identify VR Transition Services that can support the student's chosen post-secondary goals; and

→ Help guide academic instruction and community-based activities/services.

# Reflection Questions (1)

→After reviewing the six step assessment process for secondary transition students and related case studies, how will you implement this process in your work?

- What is your process for gathering and/or using different types of assessment information (e.g., interest inventories) for students/youth including those from culturally diverse backgrounds?

- What steps will you take to ensure a coordinated education and cross-systems assessment approach in working with your students?

# Reflection Questions (2)

- How will you Gather and Organize Assessment Info?

- Who is involved on your team? Who is missing that needs to be included? How can you support culturally diverse families and youth on the team?

- How are you ensuring that the student is engaged and driving the assessment process?

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