Life Beyond High School:

Tips to Create a Successful Future for Transitioning Students

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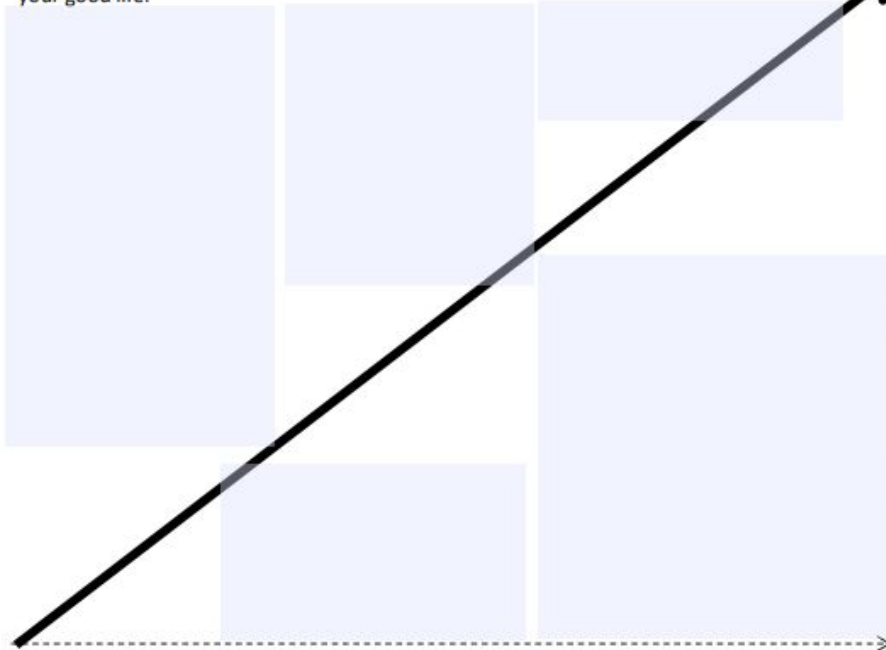
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A vision for the future...

CHARTING the LifeCourse

Life Trajectory Worksheet: Individual

Everyone wants a good life. The bubbles on the right will help you think about what a good life means for you or your family member, and identifying what you know you don't want. You can use the space around the arrows to think about current or needed life experiences that help point you in the direction of your good life.

VISION for a GOOD LIFE

What I DON'T Want

Developed by the UMKC Institute for Human Development, UCEDD. More materials at lifecoursetools.com

May 2016

When thinking about the future, consider the Life Domains....

Daily Life & Employment

Social & Spirituality

Supports for Family

Safety & Security

Citizenship & Advocacy

Community Living

Services & Supports

Healthy Living

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Maddie L.

VISION for a GOOD LIFE

- live in an apartment near mom & dad. Have a corgi
- work full-time as a para in an elementary school, maybe be a teacher
- have my own car
- be able to go to comic cons
- time for diamond art and my hobbies
- have a relationship
- have some friends
- live in a LGBTQIA+ friendly area
- maybe go to college

What I DON'T Want

- Problems with my mental health
- Bullying
- Being lonely
- Being sick
- No money
- No say in my decisions

(arrow annotations, bottom to top along trajectory)

- Inclusion since elementary
- Get a high school diploma
- Get drivers license
- Take self-advocacy training
- Get part-time job experience
- Attend YLF
- Setup a bank account
- Set up a budget
- job shadow/intern
- make a plan & invite people to fun stuff
- counseling & medicating

(descending annotations)

- Stopping counseling, not taking medications
- isolating myself
- not getting enough rest
- not advocating for myself when being bullied
- not having access to the general curriculum
- low expectations

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May 2016

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Want to know more about Person Centered Planning and Charting the Lifecourse to help your students in their transition journey? Check out these links:

https://www.lifecoursetools.com/

https://dhs.sd.gov/developmentaldisabilities/docs/LifeCourseGuide.pdf

https://supportstofamilies.org/teams/south-dakota/

Things to Consider / Tips and Goal Ideas

Post-Secondary Education

Employment

Independent Living

Choosing a Post-Secondary Option

1. Matriculating students to public or private universities, collages, technical schools or diploma/certificate programs.

2. Inclusive post-secondary education options specifically for students with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities.

3. 18-21 Transition Programing

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Option 1: Metriculation

Consider the following:

- require a high school diploma and, often, entrance exams and other requirements

- nearly 4,000 degree-granting institutions in the US - many options!

- ADA Accomodations allowabled - NO modifications (differs from high school); Self-discloure of disability required

- supports tend to be more limited

- requires a high degree of self-monitoring, organizing, and advocacy

- results in industry recognized credentials (Associates, Bachelors, certifications, diplomas, etc.)

- has funding options in the forms of scholarships, loans, etc

Option 2: Inclusive Post-Secondary Programs

Consider the following:

- typically require an ID/DD diagnosis

- usually has difference entrance requirements then degree programs

- typically allows modifications along with accomodations

- typically grants non-industry recognized certificates of completion

- only about 300 programs nation-wide

  LOTS MORE TO CONSIDER….

Consider Program Admission Requirements

» How many students apply each year? How many are accepted? How many students are you interviewing?

» Do you accept out of state students? Do you have any out of state students currently?

» What are your admission criteria? What testing is required, if any?

» Are students who are under guardianship accepted?

» What are the timelines/deadlines for the application process? When will students be notified of your admission decision?

» What do you suggest admitted students do over the summer to prepare for a successful transition to campus life in the fall?

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Consider Funding

» What is the total cost to attend your program, per year?

» Is your program an approved **CTP** and able to offer access to federal student aid for your students?

» How do students pay to attend? Do students use vocational rehabilitation funds, community agency funds, personal funds, federal financial aid, scholarships, or other resources?

» If a student is accepted, when will payment be due? Is there a payment plan available?

Consider Inclusion

» Aside from program faculty and staff, who is your program's biggest advocate on campus?

» What are some campus activities that your students have participated in? Are Greek life, intramural or club sports, and other student activities open to students in your program? Are there any campus services or activities that students in the program are not allowed to access?

» How, if at all, is your program included in the university's overall diversity and inclusion efforts?

» How important is full inclusion to your program?

» How do you support students to be fully included in college life?

» Do the students participate in a typical college graduation?

» Are students in your program considered enrolled students in the university? Do they have alumni benefits when they complete the certificate program?

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Consider Academics

- What is the program's philosophy on inclusive course work? Is there a "menu" of a limited amount of courses students can take, or is there a wide breadth and depth of options across several disciplines.
- Is there an academic advising structure similar to matriculated students?
- Do students follow the same registration process as matriculating students?
- Are there course options for credit and/or audit?
- What are the academic supports available to students in the program?
- Do they receive a transcript like matriculated students?

Consider Housing

» Where do students live? Is it all in one house or dorm, or all over campus? Are there different arrangements for first year students?

» How are roommates selected?

» Can students in the program choose a roommate?

» Do students with and without disabilities live together?

» What supports does the program provide students living on-campus?

» Is support always available? If not, is there a plan for emergencies?

» How are the RAs and other Resident Life staff trained and supported by the program?

» Are there special rules for students with ID that do not apply to other students, for example, a curfew?

» How is safety and security for the students in campus housing balanced with freedom?

» Are there rules that only apply to students in the program?

» Are there additional staff or residence hall assistants or just the same ones that work with all students in the dorm?

» Is there a summer orientation or other strategy to teach skills needed on campus to be safe?

» Are students held to the same Code of Conduct as other students on campus?

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Consider Supports

» What supports are provided to students to help them attend classes, take part in activities, and become more independent?

» Do you provide peer mentors? How are they trained and supervised?

» How are students matched with peer mentors and support staff?

» Can you provide examples of natural supports on campus available to students?

» Is there always access to support as needed, or are there times of the day/week when students do not have access to support?

» Are students required to have a support person or mentor with them at all times?

Consider …

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

» **What types of part-time work do students in the program have?**

» **What are the qualifications of the staff working with students on career development?**

» **What supports do you have to help students find a paid job while attending college?**

» **What certificate or credential do students earn when they graduate from the program? Has it been approved by your college or university?**

» **What are the graduation rates?**

» **What types of careers have your graduates gone on to?**

» **What are employment rates for your graduates?**

» **Where do your graduates typically live after they graduate?**

Data show that paid work in college leads to better employment outcomes after college.

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Option 3: 18-21 Programs

Consider the following:

- linked to IDEA school district funding

- generally center on working on all areas of transition to adulthood, but especially employment

- often involves job experiences (career exploration, job shadows, internships)

- Includes things like Project Search, Wesleyan Quest, STRIVE

- Options vary from state to state

No matter what post-secondary option you chose....consider the following characteristics that are important for your student to develop:

- Maintains schedules
- Is aware of available supports
- Uses tutoring, coaching, mentoring, etc.
- Checks for understanding
- Communicates / advocates for self with teachers, staff
- Organizes classwork, materials
- Changes behavior as a result of feedback
- Follows classroom / email etiquette
- Maintains social media appropriately
- Plans ahead to manage assignments
- Adheres to college/school social rules and expectations
- Manages conflict, frustration, or disappointment appropriately

- Participates fully in academic tasks or project from beginning to end
- Problem solves when there are barriers
- Creates/follows a daily or weekly schedule
- Contributes to group assignments
- Demonstrates initiative in learning / getting involved
- Anticpation of problems / challenges
- Engages in self-reflection
- Demonstrates increased independence in electronic communications
- Make course selections based on personal goals/ interests
- Asks questions / looks for new information
- Seeks new experiences
- Encourage moderation strategies around food and money

Choosing Employment

Options: Competitive or Supported?

1. Paid Competative Employment - typical route

2. Supported Employment - Receiving training at the job site and having available the necessary supports one requires to keep the employment

Strategies / Tips for Fostering Successful Employment - Moving Beyond Resume Building and Interest Inventories

- Teach appropriate ways to approach a supervisor
- Teach students appropriate ways to deal with positive and constructive feedback
- Demonstrate understanding of what can lead to job dismissal
- Utilizng a variety of methods to explore career options: job shadows, internships, Project Skills, supported employment
- Completing on-boarding paperwork
- Utilize time and resources appropriately
- Work on communicating information clearly
- Remembering manners (please and thank you)

- Understand why some jobs pay more than others; understand entry level versus experienced workers
- Understand how employment is necessary for economic independence
- Respond appropriately to negative behavior of others
- Respond to relevant social cues and understand workplace culture
- Consider transportation needs
- Help students understand how they learn the culture of the work environment
- Understanding the benefits / drawbacks to making friends with co-workers

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Fostering Independence: Tips / Strategies

- Start fostering the notion of independence young - encourage overnight, sleep way camps, etc.
- Strategize a system for independent medication management
- Support choice making
- Teach students to how to deal with "down-time"; be self-directed in activities
- Utlize public transportation
- Dignify a students desires by setting high expectations
- Allow the opportunity to experiences failure. There is dignity to be found there.
- Teach students to manage conflict in appropriate ways to match the setting
- Increase money literacy
- Discuss personal and financial safety
- Provide opportunities for connection and ensure students are learning the social skills to be a valued member of a group
- Talk about the different roles people have in life (for instance, I am a wife, mother, friend, teacher, pet owners, person of faith, etc) and how they are interrelated and important to creating a vision of a "good life".

Final Thoughts....

In any area of transition, stop placing concern on whether or not the student's desires and goals are realistic - like Emily Dickenson, let's "DWELL IN POSSIBILITY".

Start asking yourself if your providing the correct experiences, opportunities, and the right avenues to obtain correct knowledge so the student can decide for themselves if that is an option that is realistic for them!

HIGH EXPECTATIONS MATTER!

Questions? Comments?

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