



# Transition Newsletter

Dec 2023



## You and Your IEP

Do you know the purpose of an IEP? IEP stands for Individualized Education Program which maps out special education instruction, supports, and services you need to thrive in school. IEPs are covered by a special education law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).



The process begins with an evaluation that will show your strengths and challenges. The results of that evaluation will help your family and school create an effective program which includes transition services and supports tailored to meet your needs. Typically these evaluations take place every three years to see if there have been any changes that need to be considered.

### RESOURCE TO CONSIDER



iTransition SD

Disability Rights SD has developed a website that can assist you with leading your IEP meeting. You just answer the questions they have and it will assist you with producing a “draft transition plan” that can be used to develop transition goals. This plan is your road map to transitioning into adult life after high school!

[www.itransitionsd.org](http://www.itransitionsd.org)

Disability Rights SD also helps with advocating for rights and inclusion of South Dakotans with disabilities. Go to their website to learn more!

[www.drSDLaw.org](http://www.drSDLaw.org)

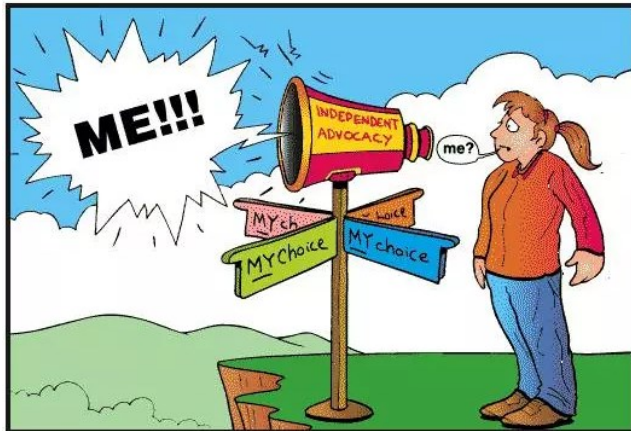
*This is informational only. DHS is neither supporting or endorsing the app. Please determine for yourself if you wish to use it and proceed accordingly.*

Every year, members of your IEP team meet to discuss your progress and revise the official IEP document. Who is part of the IEP team? This includes family members, teachers you work with, transition specialists, and others. But the most important team member is YOU, the student!

Do you attend your IEP meeting? Are you an active participant in your IEP meeting? If the answer to either of these questions are no, what are you waiting for?!

**Your IEP is about YOU and you should understand the purpose of it to make your voice heard when important decisions are being made about YOUR future!**

Participation in your IEP meetings will help build your self-advocacy skills, develop an understanding about your strengths and challenges, awareness of accommodations and supports that are most useful to helping you be successful at school that could potentially help you as an adult too!



## Be More Involved in Your IEP

There are many things you can consider doing at your upcoming IEP to take a more active role since it's all about YOU and YOUR goals!

### Make the Introductions

You can take the lead at the beginning of the meeting to introduce your family members and explain your relationship to the others that are present in the room that you know and ask others to introduce themselves. Don't forget to thank everyone for taking part of this important meeting!

### Share Your Best Work

Consider making a PowerPoint or putting together a portfolio of your best work from the past year. You could share classroom assignments and activities you did over the past year to show your successes. Talk about why you feel you were successful when you are showing the team your great work.

### Discuss Beneficial Accommodations and Supports

Review the list of accommodations and supports on your previous IEP, talk about whether the supports were used and if they were helpful to you in the classroom. The team wants to make sure that you are getting supports that are helpful and if they aren't helpful, let them know so further discussions can take place about other supports that might be better for you.

### Contribute to the Goals Discussions

An important part of the IEP goal is discussing and determining goals to work on. **Annual goals** explain what you will be expected to do or learn over the next year. The annual goals are based on your current level of performance and describe a skill, behavior, or knowledge that you will work on the upcoming year. Make sure you voice what you want to work on so everyone understands your priorities.

contact me

Name:

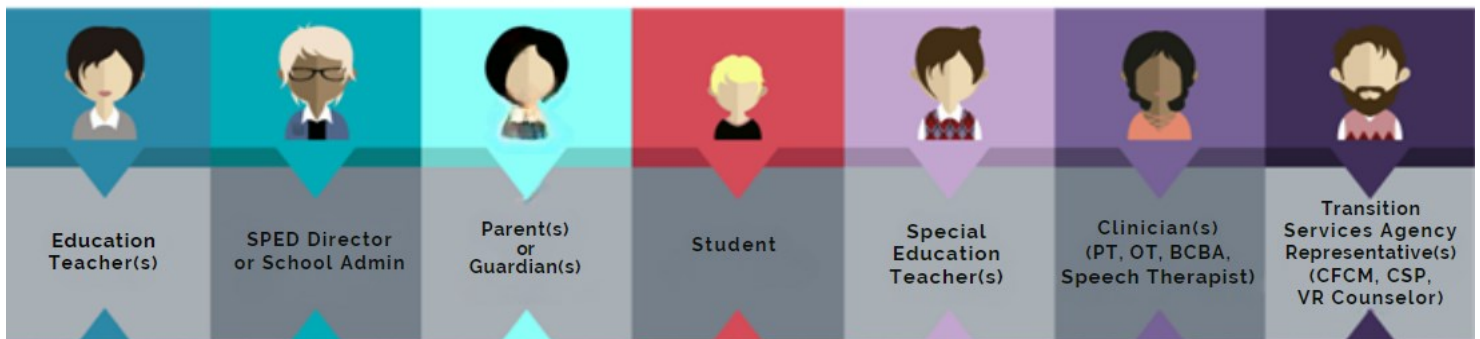
Phone:

Email:

DHS.SD.GOV



## Student's IEP Team



Another important discussion during the meeting will be about transition goals. **Transition goals** are long-term goals about what you want your life to look like after you leave high school. These goals include planning for future education/training opportunities, the type of career you want, and where you want to live to ensure you are receiving the supports and services needed to help you accomplish those goals. During the discussion of transition goals, local agencies outside the school that can assist you with these goals are typically discussed. Hopefully those agencies are invited to your meeting so they can explain to you and your family how they can support you as you prepare to leave high school.

**Always remember, the IEP meeting is about YOU! Be sure to listen, learn, and participate so YOUR voice is heard!**

# YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM

Applications are due **December 23, 2023** — [tslp.org/events](https://tslp.org/events)

## What is YLF?

Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) is a five-day leadership training and career awareness program for high school students with disabilities. It provides training in leadership, self-advocacy skills and career awareness. About 45 students throughout South Dakota are selected each year.

## How much does it cost?

Nothing! All costs, including transportation and food, are paid for through public funding and private donations.

## When and where is YLF?

June 2-6, 2024 at Northern State University in Aberdeen SD. Selected students will stay in the dorms at NSU with security and 24-hour nursing care available!

## What does a typical day look like?

Starts with breakfast at 8am in the college cafe. Large group presentations, hands-on activities, educational games, & small group activities fill the day. Every evening a special event is planned like a picnic, dance, park activity, etc.!

## Who can apply?

Any youth with a disability wanting to learn from others about their own and others' disabilities, learn how to analyze your strengths and weaknesses, learn about different leadership styles and disability laws, how to influence others, and much more!



I never knew what the [disability] meant on my IEP, because of an activity at YLF, I understand more about my diagnosis and how it impacts me. I can now advocate more for myself to voice my needs moving forward!

Thank you for giving (my child) the opportunity to attend YLF... It was a really good experience for her to be surrounded by a positive group of her peers and to interact with all of you and feel supported and involved. What a wonderful program!

I'm so glad that I came because it gave me the opportunity to meet others in similar situations and I no longer feel alone and better understand what I need to do to be successful!



**APPLY TODAY AT: [TSLP.ORG/EVENTS](https://tslp.org/events)**