

Purpose, Planning, and Possibility: Rethinking Transition in the IEP

Building Bridges to Possibility

Peyton Anderson and Michael Stoehr

Every student has a future



Transition planning isn't about leaving school.



It's about building a successful adult life.



Plan today. Build tomorrow. Empower for life.

A person with a backpack walking away from the viewer on a wooden bridge towards a city skyline at sunset. The word "FUTURE" is painted on the bridge deck with a large upward-pointing arrow above it.

FUTURE

Think of One Student

Think of a former student whose adult life makes you smile.

What helped?

Before Transition Planning

- Graduation often meant the end of services.
- Many students dropped out or returned home with few opportunities.
- Little planning for employment, education, or independent living.
- Schools and adult agencies worked in isolation.
- Students and families were left asking, "What's next?"



TRANSITION WAS CREATED TO IMPROVE LIVES



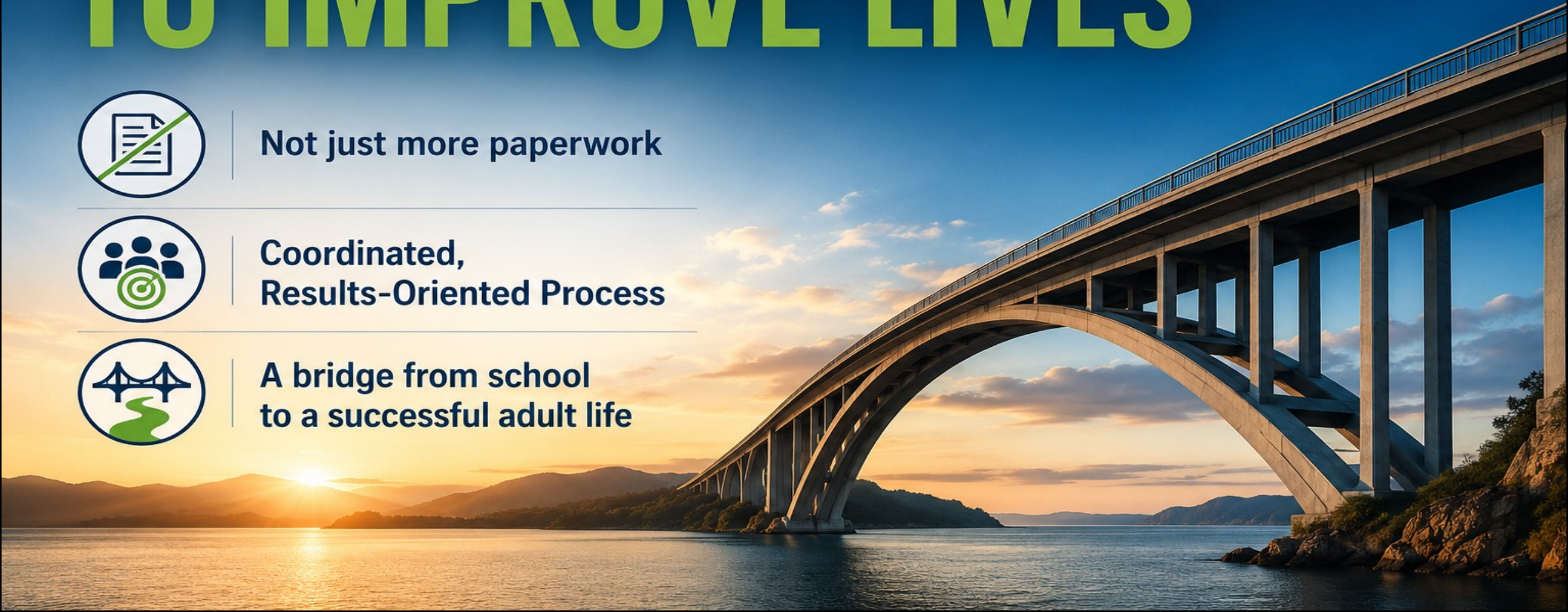
Not just more paperwork



Coordinated,
Results-Oriented Process



A bridge from school
to a successful adult life



Think of the work we do as *building that bridge* to adult life.

All of the activities, services, people, and supports
build that structure for a student.



SCHOOL

ADULT LIFE

Every piece matters.
Together, we build
possibility.

Student Voice, Engagement & Leadership is the First Foundation *Nothing Without Me*



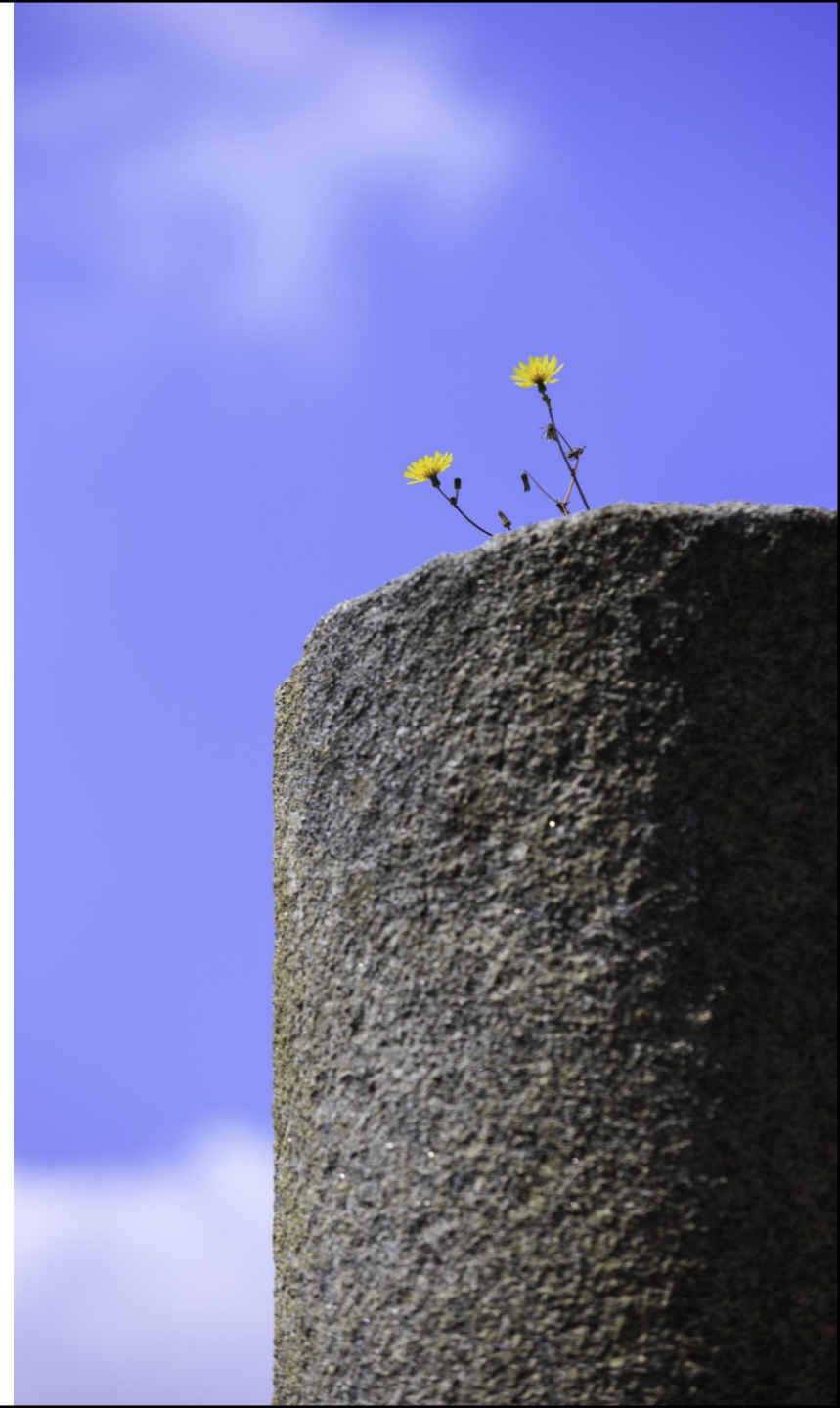
STUDENT VOICE,
ENGAGEMENT &
LEADERSHIP

From My Side of the Bridge

Every bridge begins with understanding
where you're going

When I First Heard the Word “Transition”

- **I thought transition meant more work**
- **My IEP meetings helped my teachers help me**
- **That's when everything changed**
- **We were planning my future**



How Do We Build the Bridge?



Early
Planning



Assessment



Career Awareness,
Exposure,
Change of Mind,
and Practice.

SCHOOL

KNOWLEDGE
OF SELF

EXPLORE
OPTIONS

TRY
EXPERIENCES

BUILD
SKILLS

MAKE
DECISIONS

PLAN FOR THE
FUTURE

ADULT LIFE

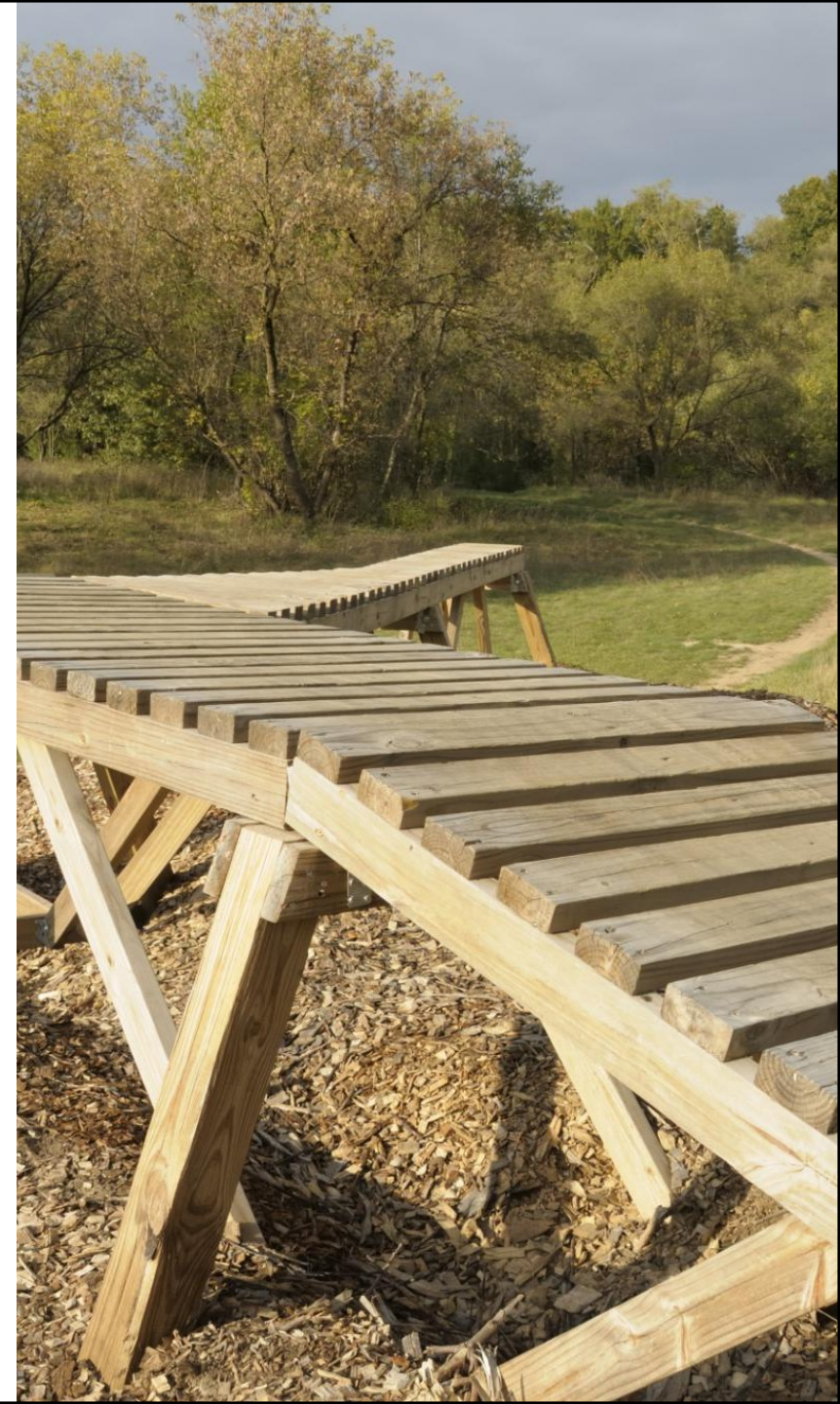
*Build it early. Build it together.
Build it for their future.*

From My Side of the Bridge

Every opportunity became another plank in my bridge.

I Wish We Had Started Earlier

- **I wish I had understood what transition really was**
- **It helped me discover what I wanted to do**
- **My VR counselor helped me find the right job**
- **I've been there for three years**



Assessment *Is a Process*

- ✓ Information gathered across people, places, and time
- ✓ Interests, Preferences, Strengths, Needs
- ✓ The person behind the plan.

Good assessment leads to a good plan.

Experiences

Build Confidence



Real experiences
*turn ideas into
informed choices.*



Confidence
Grows from Doing.

*Ways to
Build Confidence:*



Paid Work



Job Shadowing



College Visits



Community



Leadership

Your Turn



Think about one student.



**What experience changed
their future?**



**Turn to someone next to you
and share the story.**

Every one of your stories have something in common

It wasn't a worksheet.

It wasn't another meeting.

It was an experience...

**...that gave a young person the confidence to see a different
future.**

Relationships and Communication Matter

A bridge is never built by one person.

✓ **Share information.**

✓ **Coordinate supports.**

✓ **Communicate consistently.**

The student is the architect. We help build the bridge.

Families Carry *the Long View*



Families know
the young person
across years and settings.



Families dream too.
Family expectations
and partnership.



Families are *essential partners* in building
strong transition bridges that last.



Coordinated Connections

Create Opportunity

Working together across systems opens doors
and builds stronger futures for students.



Schools



VR



Agencies



Employers



Postsecondary
Partners



Community

Better together. When we connect systems and
share resources, students gain more opportunities.

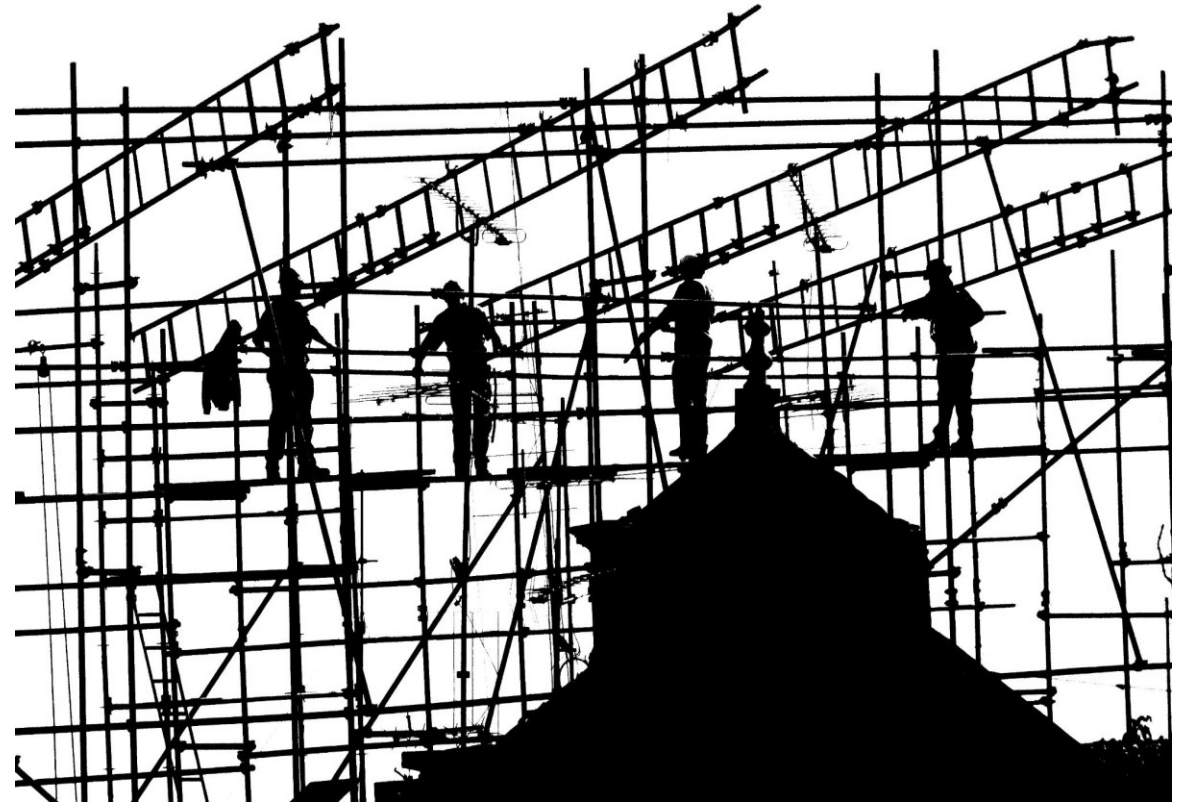
**More connections.
More possibilities.**

From My Side of the Bridge

No one builds a bridge alone

The People Who Helped Build My Bridge

- My family believed in me
- My IEP teacher helped me understand my future
- She gave me tools instead of answers
- That's how I became more independent



What becomes possible when the bridge is strong?

Success Is Measured *After Graduation*



Employment

Meaningful work. Financial independence.



Further Education

Degrees, credentials, and lifelong learning.



Independent Living

Choice, control, and self-determination.



Community and Belonging

Connections, contributions, and a place to belong.

Possibility



Strong bridges today lead to stronger futures tomorrow.

Every connection we build now creates possibility for a lifetime.

Research Gives Us *Construction Materials*

Predictors of post-school success

— Predictors Become Bridge Supports —



Paid Work

Hands-on experience and competitive employment.



Self-Determination

Students lead their goals and make informed choices.



Family Expectations

High hopes and strong support lead to higher outcomes.



Inclusive Settings

Learning and participation in community settings opens doors.



Career Awareness

Exploring options early builds knowledge and confidence.



Interagency Collaboration

Working together aligns resources and removes barriers.



Research gives us the materials.
Together, we build the bridge to lifelong success.





A ***predictor*** is defined as an in-school experience, typically a program (e.g., a work-based learning experience) that correlated with improved post-school outcomes.

Mazzotti, V. L., Rowe, D. A., Kwiatek, S. M., Voggt, A., Chang, W. H., Fowler, C. H., Poppen, M., Sinclair, J., & Test, D. W. (2021). Secondary transition predictors of post-school success: An update for the field. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals*, 44(1), 47-64.

23 Predictors

organized alphabetically



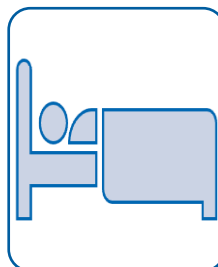
EDUCATION

- 8 Research-based
- 9 Promising



EMPLOYMENT

- 1 Evidence-based
- 11 Research-based
- 10 Promising



INDEPENDENT LIVING

- 3 Research-based
- 6 Promising

Turn *and* Talk



Purpose:

Take a moment to reflect and share your perspective.



Which support is strongest in your setting?



Which support needs reinforcement?



You have 2—3 minutes.

Listen to learn. Share your ideas.

We'll reconvene to hear from a few.

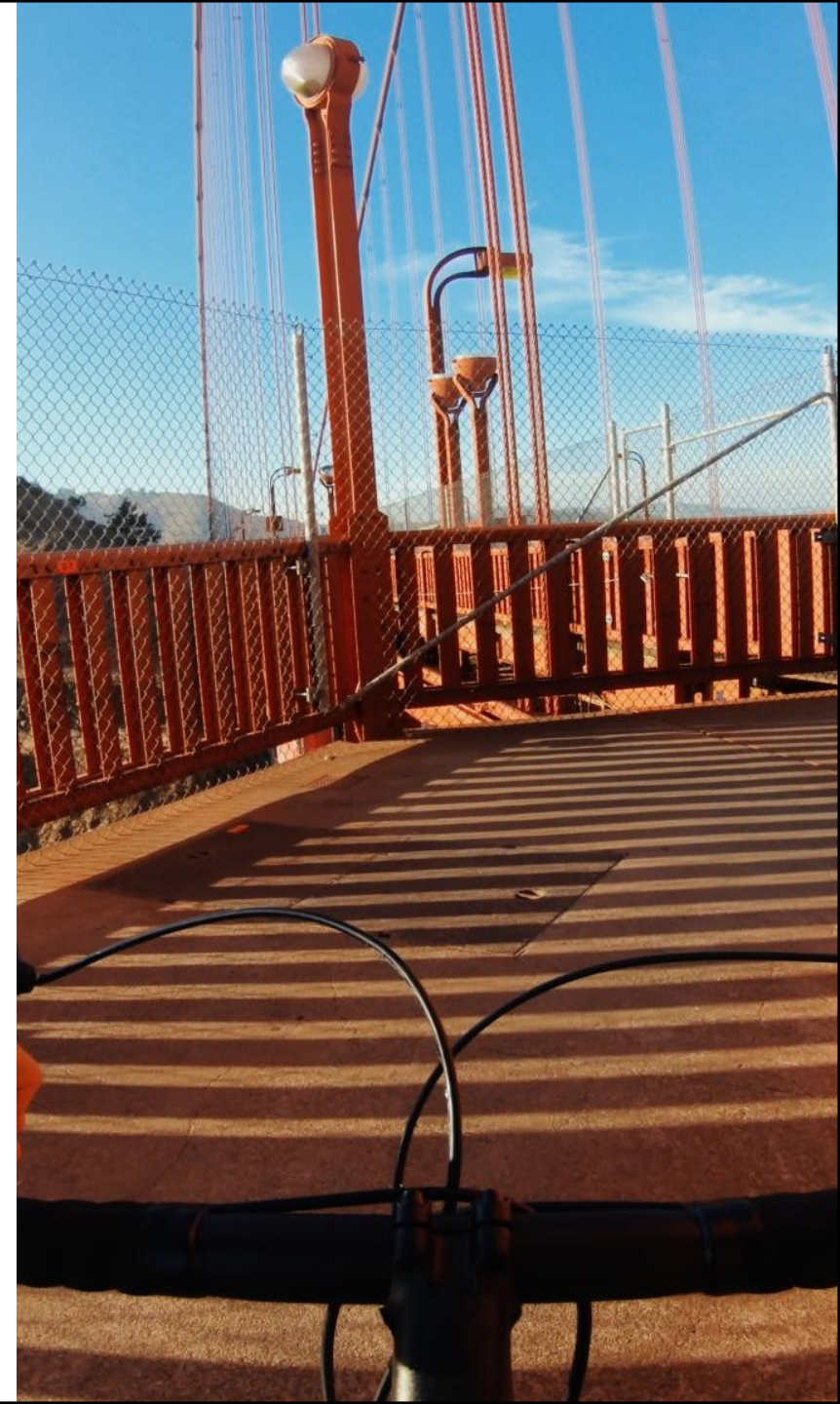


From My Side of the Bridge

Every experience made my bridge stronger

What Actually Helped Me

- My transition plan helped me see the path ahead
- Finding my job changed everything
- My IEP meetings helped me find my voice
- I kept adding tools to my toolbox



The Framework Behind *the Bridge*

INDICATOR

13

Indicator 13

Our national standard for measuring effective transition planning.



The Blueprint

Plans for Transition.



Compliance is required.
Commitment is chosen.



It's more than paperwork.
It's a plan for someone's life.



The Paperwork Matters *Because* the Person Matters.

Every Bridge *Is Built*



One conversation



One experience



One opportunity



One relationship



One student at a time.



Small actions connect today to a *better tomorrow.*

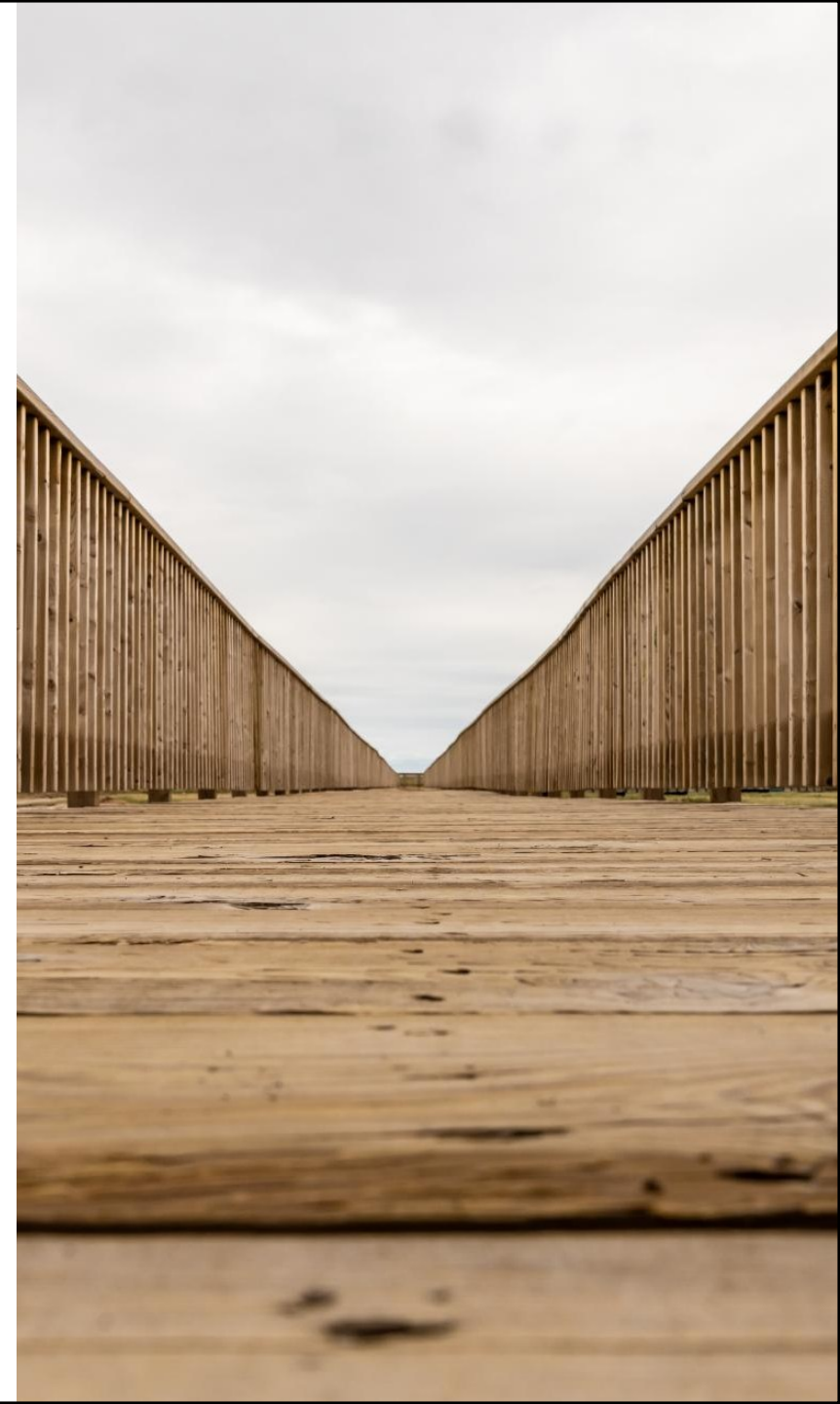


From My Side of the Bridge

Now it's my turn to help build bridges for others

My take away message

- **Don't just give me the answers**
- **Give me the tools so I can solve the next problem on my own**
- **Let us learn by doing**
- **Believe in us**



Are You *ready* to Be a Bridge Builder? ♡



NEXT UP IS OUR
GENERAL SESSION

*Together, we build
bridges to possibility.*



BACK TO THE BASICS –
Transition Edition



This keynote explored
why the bridge matters.



The workshop will
examine **how** the
IEP builds it.



Thank You *for Participating!*



Together, we build **bridges**
to possibility.



Your presence, ideas,
and commitment **matter**.



Every connection **strengthens**
the path forward.



Thank you for being part of
the bridge to a **better tomorrow**.



 *Bridges* aren't built alone. Thank you for *building a better future* together.



Stay Connected



<https://transitionta.org>

Add Bookmark |



Description

In this first Life Hack for Transition, you will learn to define the various types of work-based learning experiences and describe the value of work-based learning experience for students.

Related Resources

Download the Life Hacks E3 – Work Experience Plan (PDF)

Download the Life Hacks E2 – Asset Based Inventory Interview Form (PDF)



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