Transition Planning: Independent Living
Independent Living

• **PA 098-0517**, effective upon becoming law, amends the school code by changing Section 14-8.03 to remove the phrase “where appropriate” that precedes “independent living skills”.
  
  – In other words independent living is no long optional and must be considered as are Employment and Education/Training.

• In practice, this means that a post-school goal based on age-appropriate transition assessment is required for students who have an IEP in effect when they turn 14 ½.
  
  – Course of study, transition services and annual goals should be considered and planned for to assist the student in progressing toward the post-school goal.
  
  – An Independent Living PS goal should spur the IEP team to consider what the student needs to learn and do while in secondary school in order to progress toward the post-school goal, e.g., using transportation, managing finances, managing health care and medications, advocating for one’s self, etc.
Independent Living

• A common barrier in thinking about Independent Living goals: equating Independent Living to Daily Living Skills. Daily Living Skills is one component of Independent Living.

• Independent Living can also encompass health/safety, financial/income, transportation/mobility, social relationships, recreation/leisure, and/or self-advocacy/future planning.

• In reality, young adults with disabilities run a high risk of failure in their education/training and employment goals if relevant independent living goals are not considered.
  – Addressing Independent Living for transition-aged youth who have IEP’s will ensure that being college and career ready can be a reality for these students too.
Independent Living – Implementation Questions

• Do we have to go back and reconvene IEPs that are currently in effect?
  – No districts do not need to reconvene IEP’s that are currently in effect. Independent Living can be addressed as IEP meetings are conducted during the 2013 – 2014 school year.

• How should we go about starting to do this for every transition-aged student?
  – Using age-appropriate transition assessments to determine needs, strengths, preferences and interests is the first step. After assessment data has been gathered, develop the post-school goal and address any needs in course of study, transition services and annual goals.
Resources for Transition Assessment and Developing Independent Living Goals

- **Casey Life Skills** is a free practice tool and framework to assess independent living skills and provides results instantly. Casey Life Skills was originally created for working with youth in foster care, however, the tools work with all young adults. [http://lifeskills.casey.org/](http://lifeskills.casey.org/)

- **Critical Thinking and Applied Knowledge** *(from Iowa Transition Assessment)*  Critical thinking/application skills for postsecondary expectations: how can you assess it and how can you access the suggested data collection or assessment resources:
  - Independent Living Assessment Instrument
  - Self-Determination/Self Advocacy Checklist
  - School and Community Social Skills Rating Checklist
Resources for Transition Assessment and Developing Independent Living Goals

• **Information Assessments for Transition: Independent Living and Community Participation.** K.O. Synatschk, G.M. Clark, and J.R. Patton (Book available for purchase)

• **Self-Determination Assessment Tools** On this webpage: links to the AIR Self-Determination Assessment (free), The ARC Self-Determination Scale, The ChoiceMaker Self-Determination Assessment, and the Field Hoffman Self-Determination Assessment Battery.
  http://www.ou.edu/content/education/centers-and-partnerships/zarrow/self-determination-assessment-tools.html

• **Illinois’ Social and Emotional Learning Standards**
  http://www.isbe.net/ils/social_emotional/standards.htm
Illinois Transition Planning Flow Chart

**Age-Appropriate Transition Assessments**
"...ongoing process of collecting data on the individual’s needs, preferences, and interests as they relate to the demands of current and future working, educational, living, and personal and social environments. Assessment data serve as the common thread in the transition process and form the basis for defining goals and services."

- Needs
- Strengths
- Preferences
- Interests

**Develop Measurable Postsecondary Goals**
Based on a synthesis of the age-appropriate assessment data/information

- Education/Training
- Employment
- Independent Living
  Required per IL PA 059-0517, August 2013

**Identify Transition Services**

- Instruction
- Related Services
- Community Experiences
- Employment & Adult Living
  If appropriate, daily living & vocational evaluation

**Develop the Course of Study**
1) Aligned with Post-Secondary Goals, e.g., minimum requirements to enter college, trade school, etc.
2) Specific high school courses required by or benefitting Post-Secondary Goals.

**Develop Annual IEP Goals**
Annual goals operationalize activities planned in transition services

**Coordinate Services with Adult Agencies**
Invite outside agencies to the IEP meeting with consent of parents or student who has reached the age of majority.

Adapted from “Transition Services Flow Chart”, Seattle University, 2008.
Coming Soon...Additional Information, Examples and Resources

Examples and additional information will be posted to the Indicator 13 web page.

Questions?

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