Transition to Independence Process (TIP) Model

TIP Definition and Guidelines

Revised Handout: November 5, 2011

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The Transition Handbook is Now Available


- The Operations Manual describes the entire Transition to Independence Process (TIP) model.
- Navigating the Obstacle Course: An Evidence-Supported Community Transition System (Chapter 2) -- Hewitt B. “Rusty” Clark & Karen Hart

The Transition Handbook:

- Brookes Publishing Company web site: www.brookespublishing.com/clark or through Amazon.com
- For more information regarding the Transition Handbook or the TIP system, visit our TIP website.
  - www.TIPstars.org

NNYT is the Purveyor of the TIP Model

The mission of the National Network on Youth Transition for Behavioral Health (NNYT) is to improve the progress and outcomes of youth and young adults (14-29 years of age) with emotional/behavioral difficulties (EBD) and the responsiveness of transition systems to their families.

This mission is accomplished by:

- NNYT embracing the ideas, cultures, passions, and voices of youth and young adults as it partners with them in the development and evaluation of improved service systems for them and their families.
- NNYT conducting program implementation, system development, research, and dissemination in collaboration with provider agencies, community collaboratives, states, and national/federal entities.

Operationally NNYT serves the following major functions:

- Implementation of the Transition to Independence Process (TIP) model which is an evidence-supported practice for youth and young adults with EBD.
  - Under the guidance of NNYT leadership, the Stars Behavioral Health Group (SBHG) Stars Training Academy serves as the official NNYT Purveyor to assist agencies and communities in the implementation of the TIP model for improving the outcomes of youth and young adults.
- The NNYT Certification Board oversees the certification of NNYT TIP Model Consultants, TIP Model Sites, and NNYT TIP Model Site-Based Trainers.
- NNYT Certified TIP Model Consultants are also assisting communities, states, and national/federal entities regarding policy and system reforms that enable agencies and community collaboratives to implement effective transition programs.
- Several of the NNYT Faculty and Consultants are involved in research, evaluation, and continuing quality improvement efforts related to transition to adulthood issues. NNYT has an extensive array of Fidelity and Continuing Quality Improvement tools that it makes available to its sites to support implementation and sustainability of effective transition systems.

The home-base for NNYT is with Hewitt B. “Rusty” Clark in Tampa Florida and at the Stars Behavioral Health Group (SBHG) in Long Beach California.

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FILE: Conf 2011 Alternatives TIP Define Guidelines HANDOUT 110511
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Definition of the TIP Model

TIP Model Definition

The Transition to Independence Process (TIP) model was developed for working with youth and young adults (14-29 years old) with emotional/behavioral difficulties (EBD) to: a) engage them in their own futures planning process; b) provide them with developmentally-appropriate, non-stigmatizing, culturally-competent, and appealing services and supports; and c) involve them and their families and other informal key players in a process that prepares and facilitates them in their movement toward greater self-sufficiency and successful achievement of their goals related to relevant transition domains (i.e., employment/career, educational opportunities, living situation, personal effectiveness/wellbeing, and community-life functioning. The TIP system is operationalized through seven guidelines and their associated practices that drive the work with young people and provide the framework for the program and community system to support these functions.

TIP System Guidelines

1. Engage young people through relationship development, person-centered planning, and a focus on their futures.

2. Tailor services and supports to be accessible, coordinated, appealing, non-stigmatizing, and developmentally-appropriate -- and building on strengths to enable the young people to pursue their goals across relevant transition domains.

3. Acknowledge and develop personal choice and social responsibility with young people.

4. Ensure a safety net of support by involving a young person's parents, family members, and other informal and formal key players.

5. Enhance young persons’ competencies to assist them in achieving greater self-sufficiency and confidence.

6. Maintain an outcome focus in the TIP system at the young person, program, and community levels.

7. Involve young people, parents, and other community partners in the TIP system at the practice, program, and community levels.
Theory and Research Underpinnings for the TIP Model

The TIP model is considered to be an evidence-supported practice based on six published studies that demonstrate improvement in real-life outcomes for youth and young adults with emotional/behavioral difficulties (EBD). If you want to learn more regarding these research findings, please download the document entitled, *Theory and Research Summary of the TIP Model* -- available through the TIP website: [http://NNYT.TIPstars.org](http://NNYT.TIPstars.org)

Other Aspects of the TIP Model

Transition Facilitators

To ensure the continuity of planning, services, and supports, the TIP system is implemented directly by *transition facilitators* who work with the young people, their parents, and other informal and formal support people.

- The term *transition facilitator* is used to emphasize the function of *facilitating* the young person’s future, not directing it.
- Different sites and service systems use similar terms such as transition specialist, resource coordinator, mentor, transition coach, TIP facilitator, service coordinator, or life coach.
- The role of transition facilitators with young people, their parents, and other informal and formal key players will be described in detail throughout this manual.

Independence and Interdependence

The TIP system promotes independence. However, the concept of “interdependence” is central to working effectively with young people. This concept nests the focus of independent functioning (e.g., budgeting money, maintaining a job) within the framework of young people learning that there is a healthy, reciprocal role of supporting others and receiving support from others (i.e., social support network for emotional, spiritual, and physical support).

Self-Determination

The concept of *self-determination* is one that the fields of education and psychology are attempting to define (Field & Hoffman, 1996; Martin & Marshall, 1995; Rusch & Chadsey, 1998). In order to operationalize this concept as much as possible, it can be defined as the ability to: 1) set goals that are likely to improve one’s quality of life; 2) formulate alternative strategies; 3) choose among the strategies to find the most viable ones for achieving each goal; 4) implement the selected strategies; and 5) evaluate one’s progress in achieving the goals.

Some of the personal skills associated with self-determination are: choice clarification, decision-making, goal setting, creativity, delayed gratification, self-advocacy, assertiveness, self-monitoring, self-evaluation, and self-reinforcement.
Table 1. TIP System Guidelines

1. Engage young people through relationship development, person-centered planning, and a focus on their futures.
   ♦ Use a strength-based approach with young people, their families, and other informal and formal key players.
   ♦ Build relationships and respect young persons’ relationships with family members and other informal and formal key players.
   ♦ Facilitate futures planning and goal setting.
   ♦ Include prevention planning for high-risk behaviors and situations, as necessary.
   ♦ Engage young people in positive activities of interest.
   ♦ Respect cultural and familial values and young persons’ perspectives.

2. Tailor services and supports to be accessible, coordinated, appealing, non-stigmatizing, and developmentally-appropriate -- and building on strengths to enable the young people to pursue their goals across relevant transition domains.
   ♦ Facilitate young persons’ goal achievement across relevant transition domains (Refer to Figure 1 & Table 3).
     • Employment and Career
     • Educational Opportunities
     • Living Situation
     • Personal Effectiveness & Wellbeing
     • Community-Life Functioning
   ♦ Tailor services and supports to be developmentally-appropriate; addressing the needs and building on the strengths of young people, their families, and other informal key players.
   ♦ Ensure that services and supports are accessible, coordinated, appealing, and non-stigmatizing.
   ♦ Balance the transition facilitators’ role with that of the young person, their parents, and other informal and formal key players.

3. Acknowledge and develop personal choice and social responsibility with young people.
   ♦ Encourage problem-solving methods, decision making, and evaluation of impact on self and others.
   ♦ Balance one’s work with young people between two axioms:
     • Maximize the likelihood of the success of young people.
     • Allow young people to encounter natural consequences through life experience.
4. Ensure a safety-net of support by involving a young person’s parents, family members, and other informal and formal key players.
- Involve parents, family members, and other informal and formal key players.
- Parents, family members, or other informal key players may need assistance in understanding this transition period or may need services/supports for themselves.
- Assist in mediating differences in the perspectives of young people, parents, and other informal and formal key players.
- Facilitate an unconditional commitment to the young person among his/her key players.
- Create an atmosphere of hopefulness, fun, and a future focus.

5. Enhance young persons’ competencies to assist them in achieving greater self-sufficiency and confidence.
- Utilize information and data from strength discovery and functional assessment methods.
- Teach meaningful skills relevant to the young people across transition domains.
- Use in-vivo teaching strategies in relevant community settings.
- Develop skills related to self-management, problem-solving, self-advocacy, and self-evaluation of the impact of one’s choices and actions on self and others.

6. Maintain an outcome focus in the TIP system at the young person, program, and community levels.
- Focus on a young person’s goals and the tracking of his/her progress.
- Evaluate the responsiveness and effectiveness of the TIP system.
- Use process and outcome measures for continuous TIP system improvement.

7. Involve young people, parents, and other community partners in the TIP system at the practice, program, and community levels.
- Maximize the involvement of young people, family members, and other informal and formal key players, and relevant community representatives.
- Tap the talents of peers and mentors:
  - Hire young adults as peer associates to work with transition facilitators and young people (with possible functions such as mentoring, counseling, public education, and/or youth leadership development).
  - Assist young people in creating peer support groups and youth leadership opportunities.
  - Use paid and unpaid mentors (e.g., co-worker mentors, college mentors, apartment roommate mentors).
- Partner with young people, parents, and others in the TIP system governance and stewardship.
- Advocate for system development, expansion, and evaluation -- and for reform of funding and policy to facilitate implementation of responsive, effective community transition systems for youth and young adults and their families.

NOTE: Adapted from Clark & Foster-Johnson (1996), Clark, Unger, & Stewart (1993), and Clark et al. (2000).
Table 2: Personnel Competencies for Working Effectively

**TIP Model Core Practices:**
- Strength Discovery and Needs Assessment
- Futures Planning
- Rationales
- In vivo Teaching
- SODAS: Social-Problem Solving
- WHAT’S UP?: Prevention Planning on High Risk Behaviors & Situations
- SCORA: Mediation with Young People and Other Key Players

**Qualitative Features of Interactions:**
- Was the quality of the interaction appropriate to the situation?
  - Solicit youth’s input throughout interactions.
  - Acknowledge youth’s input (active listening).
  - Remain non-judgmental
  - Pleasant & steady voice tone (avoid lecturing).
  - Express enthusiasm where appropriate.
  - Facial expressions/Eye contact/Body language to match.
  - Express empathy, concern, care, &/or encouragement.
  - Offer assistance, as appropriate.
  - Set limits and expectations, as necessary.
  - Use positive descriptive praise.

**Futures Planning Process with youth and young adults involves a youth-driven planning process.**
- **Planning Partners**
  - Planning partners are selected by young person
  - He/she might choose different key players to serve as planning partners for different topics, needs, or goals
  - Often a young person may want to only involve him/herself and one or two key players (e.g., transition facilitator, parent, friend) to serve as planning partner(s)
- **Necessary Connections**
  - Young person’s topic/need/goal determines who is a “necessary connection(s)” (e.g., probation officer, vocational rehabilitation counselor, community college instructor) for him/her to make progress on this topic, need, or goal
  - Young person and transition facilitator or other planning partner would contact, plan, and/or negotiate with the necessary connection(s) regarding any actions or issues that have evolved from the planning process.
Figure 1. The Five Transition Domains: The three setting domains of Employment/Career, Educational, and Living Situation -- and the Personal Effectiveness/Wellbeing and the Community-Life Functioning domains shown in this figure are useful in capturing young people's attention and their focus on their futures. The last two domains encompass several sub-domains that are relevant to success in each of the other domains. (See Table 3 for a complete listing of the domains and sub-domains).
Table 3: Transition Domains

Employment & Career

- Competitive employment site.
- Work experience, paid or unpaid, at competitive or entrepreneurial worksite (e.g., apprenticeship with employee serving as coworker mentor).
- Supported employment (e.g., paid placement at competitive worksite with formal support, like a job coach).
- Transitional employment opportunities, paid or unpaid, at a noncompetitive worksite placement.

Educational Opportunities (Career-Track Training)

- Bachelor’s degree or beyond.
- Associate’s degree.
- Vocational or technical certification.
- High school completion or GED certificate.
- Work place educational programs where placement is related to school/college enrollment.

Living Situation

- Independent residence (e.g., living in an apartment with a roommate).
- Residing with natural, adoptive, or foster family.
- Other family situation (e.g., girlfriend’s family, extended family).
- Semi-independent living (e.g., service coordinator assists but does not live on-site).
- Supported living (e.g., supervised apartment with live-in mentor or on-site support staff at apartment complex).
- Group home or boarding home.
- Restrictive setting (e.g., crisis unit, residential TX center, detention center).
Personal Effectiveness & Wellbeing (Table 2 Continued)

**Interpersonal Relationships: Family, Friends, & Mentors**
- Relationship development & maintenance of friendships.
- Balance of independence & interdependency with family members.
- Dating skills & development/maintenance of intimate relationships.
- Maintenance of relationships with mentors & informal key players.

**Emotional & Behavioral Wellbeing**
- Create reciprocal relationships with others.
- Expression of care & concern for others.
- Social skills (e.g., positive feedback to others, acceptance of negative feedback, self monitoring, self-evaluation).
- Assertiveness skills & conflict resolution skills.
- Coping with stress & ability to relax.
- Management of anger & moods.
- Spiritual wellbeing
- Self-management of psychotropic medications & side-effects.
- Manage use of alcohol & drugs.
- Avoid physical confrontations & criminal activities.
- Avoid danger to self & others.

**Self-Determination**
- Social problem solving (e.g., generate alternative options, make informed decisions).
- Set goals & develop plans for achieving such.
- Evaluate one’s progress in achieving goals.
- Accept one’s strengths & limitations.
- Advocate for one’s rights & positions.

**Communication**
- Express one’s ideas & feelings through speaking & listening.
- Reading & writing skills for learning, fun, & communication.
- Knowledge of information sources (e.g., use of library, authorities, Internet communications, & other resources).
- Study & learning skills for gaining & applying new information.
- Cyberspace safety (e.g., revealing personal information, meeting contacts in person, use of credit cards on-line).

**Physical Health & Wellbeing**
- Health care & fitness (e.g., balance diet, physical activity).
- Recognizing when to see a physician.
- Self-management of over-the-counter & prescription medications & possible side effects.
- Knowledge of sexual functioning & birth control (e.g., prevention of sexually-transmitted diseases & unwanted pregnancies).
- Ability to access medical & dental services.
Parenting
- Health of mother for the prenatal fetus (e.g., balance diet, physical activity, adequate sleep, no smoking).
- Recognizing when to see a physician for prenatal & postnatal care.
- Young adult male supports girl friend/spouse in promoting the health of the mother & baby.
- Young adult male & female assuming responsibility for rearing the children (e.g., care & discipline, behavioral parenting practices, providing home setting, finances).

Community-Life Functioning

Daily Living
- Self care.
- Maintenance of living space & personal possessions.
- Money management.
- Cooking & nutrition.
- Maintenance & security of personal & financial documents.
- Safety skills (e.g., avoid dangerous situations, prevent victimization).

Leisure Activities
- Entertaining one’s self.
- Activities with others.
- Creating indoor & outdoor activities of interest & fun.
- Places of entertainment & fun.
- Safe & healthy activities (e.g., Cyberspace safety precautions, safe routes for walking, biking, & driving at different times of the day, choice of friends).

Community Participation
- Mobility around the community.
- Access & use of relevant community agencies & resources.
- Citizenship responsibilities, knowledge of basic rights & responsibilities.
- Community social support (e.g., peer groups, community organizations).
- Access to legal services.
- Cultural & spiritual resources.
Implementation of the TIP Model

- Community agencies or a community collaborative interested in the implementation of the TIP model in their community would work with the National Network on Youth Transition for Behavioral Health (NNYT).
  - The NNYT Stars Training Academy serves as the TIP Purveyor organization.
  - The mission of NNYT is to improve the progress and outcomes of youth and young adults (14-29 years of age) with emotional/behavioral difficulties (EBD) and the responsiveness of transition systems to their families.
  - The Transition to Independence Process (TIP) model is an evidence-supported practice for youth and young adults with EBD with numerous published studies demonstrating improvements in real-life functioning and outcomes.

- TIP Model Site: (Site seeking fidelity to the TIP model).
  - Adopt the entire TIP model to ensure the effectiveness of its services.
  - Maintain training and technical assistance from the TIP Purveyor organization.
    - The NNYT Stars Training Academy will arrange for a TIP Model Consultant(s) to come in for three site visits per year for the first two years with teleconferencing designed to facilitate adherence to the model (e.g., Case-Based Reviews).
    - Subsequent years typically involve at least one site visit per year with teleconference supports.
  - NNYT Faculty Consultants are focused on assisting sites in building site-capacity to ensure sustainability over time.
  - Transition System Fidelity Assessment for Continuing System Improvement is typically conducted in Years 2 or 3 to ensure fidelity to the model and effectiveness of services – and then conducted every three years subsequently.

- TIP Informed Site:
  - Adopt or adapt the TIP guidelines and associated practices.
  - Will ensure that frontline and supervisory personnel maintain competencies in the TIP guidelines and associated practices.
Competency Enhancement Training for Working with Transition-Age Young People

The **NNYT Faculty Consultants** provide competency training to personnel who work with transition-age youth and young adults (14-29 years of age).

Personnel competency enhancement focuses on:

- **Personnel competency enhancement.**
  - Training on the TIP model principles & applications.
  - Competency training on TIP model core practices.
    - Strength Discovery and Needs Assessment
    - Futures Planning
    - Rationales
    - In vivo Teaching
    - Social-Problem Solving (SODAS)
    - Prevention Planning on High Risk Behaviors
    - Mediation with Young People and Other Key Players (SCORA)
  - Orientation to strategies for integrating within TIP, other agency established practices for targeted clinical needs (e.g., SPARCS, Behavior Analysis Functional Assessment & Treatment, ART, WRAP).¹

- **Describe applications** of the TIP model in other community settings and agency consortiums -- and explore means of incorporating the TIP model and practices at your site.

- **Provide practice opportunities** for transition personnel to apply the TIP system practices.

- **Assist supervisors** in the use of office-based, team-based, and field-based coaching of personnel.

- **Provide your site with technical assistance** on the use of quality assurance systems and evaluation tools (e.g., Fidelity Probes, TAPIS Progress Tracker) for continuing quality system improvement.

- **Creation of a “TIP Community of Practice”** at your site.
TIP Orientation Training Modules:

Transition personnel can become oriented to the TIP model, its principles, and its core practices through our on-line Orientation Training Modules. Please visit our TIP website for an overview of our training tiers.

Capacity Building Available:

Competency-based training and training-of-trainer workshops can be arranged to strengthen an organization’s transition program capacity.

Please Visit Our Website:

TIP website -- www.TIPstars.org

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Wrap-up & Look to the Future

Think about your work with youth/young adults/families:
Your own youth/young adults
Those you work with professionally

What will you do different tomorrow than you did yesterday -- based on what you learned?

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Making a difference in the lives of youth and young adults!
Thank you!