Promoting Student Self-Determination, was developed to increase awareness of self-determination and to explore ways to facilitate self-determination in youth with disabilities. All transition stakeholders should have a thorough understanding of:

- The critical role self-determination plays in successful transitions from school to adult life, the process leading toward self-determination;
- The variety of roles families, teachers, administrators and service providers play in promoting self-determination; and,
- The knowledge of a variety of resources that support the development of students' self-determination.
Transition Outreach Training for Adult Living
Promoting Student Self-Determination

Objective

The purpose of this training to develop/increase awareness of self-determination and to explore ways to facilitate its exercise through: 1) materials that inform students of their legal rights and responsibilities; 2) materials that support student development of self-determination attitudes and beliefs; and, 3) materials that support the exploration and development of student self-determination skills.

Key Learning

At the end of the module, participants should be able to:
- Define self-determination and understand its importance for all youth and young adults.
- Explain the process leading toward self-determination.
- Understand the critical role of self-determination in successful transitions from school to adult life.
- Understand the variety of roles that families, teachers, administrators, and service providers play in promoting student self-determination.
- Understand the role and use of a variety of tools/materials that support the development of students’ self-determination knowledge, self-determination attitudes and beliefs, and self-determination skills.

Materials

- Instructor Reading
  - The Development of Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy Skills: Essential Keys for Students with Disabilities
  - Self-Determination: Supporting Successful Transition
- Overheads
- Instructor note pages with corresponding overheads
- Handouts for training participants
  - Overhead handout pages for note-taking
  - Handouts for activity participation
  - The IEP and Me
  - It's My Life Student Workbook
  - The Self-Directed IEP 10 Step Guide
  - Parent Brief: Age of Majority
  - Parent Brief: Parenting Post-Secondary Students with Disabilities: Becoming the mentor, advocate, and guide your young adult needs
  - Skills for Employment: The “Most-Wanted” List
  - Am I Ready to Live on My Own?
  - Self-Determination Bibliography
Instructor Preparation

1. Review instructor reading.
2. Review instructor note pages and overheads.
3. Duplicate handouts.

Training Guide

1. Introduce the training topic and learning objectives.
2. Present the training with corresponding activities by following the trainer note pages.
3. Conclude by disseminating and collecting workshop evaluation forms.

Curriculum Resources


94% of TOTAL funding comes from federal sources

Last saved by Sue Walter 6/19/03
Promoting Student Self-Determination

“Let me tell you the secret that led me to my goal. My strength lies solely in my tenacity.”

Louis Pasteur
The Importance of Self-Determination

“One of the key ways we define ourselves and develop a sense of identity is through choices we make while navigating the transitions in our lives. Fostering a sense of self-determination during the transition process is critical to promoting successful transitions for students both with and without disabilities.”

Definition of Self-Determination

- Self-determination refers to the natural desire of most people to be in personal control of their own thoughts, feelings, and behavior.
Definition of Self-Determination

- Begins shortly after birth and continues throughout life.

- Determined by the skills, beliefs and attitudes, and knowledge as well as opportunities to exercise personal control.

- All persons have the desire and are capable of some degree of self-determination.
Self-Determination: What Does the Law Say?

- The 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) clearly supports students’ independence, self-management, and self-determination.
Self-Determination: What Does the Law Say?

- Students are team members
- Active participation by students
- Student strengths, preferences and interests
Self-Determination is Important for Young Adults

- Increases motivation
- Encourages socially acceptable behavior
- Promotes self-awareness
- Increases responsibility
- Enhances learning
- Encourages a sense of personal control
Self-Determination is Important for Young Adults

- Enhances independence and interdependence
- Improves self-esteem
- Encourages individuals to create a vision
- Enhances quality of life
- Enhances inclusion
- Promotes self-advocacy
- Develops decision-making skills
Can Self-Determination Be Taught?

- Yes!
  - Skills and attitudes that lead to self-determination can be taught.
  - Skills to make arrangements in the atmosphere and environment of the school can be taught too.

- Parents, teachers, administrators, counselors, psychologists and other service providers all play important roles in developing or inhibiting self-determination during transition.
Can Self-Determination Be Taught?

- **Teachers can:**
  - Infuse skills training into their curriculum.
  - Promote a school and classroom environment that encourages self-determination.

- **Families can:**
  - Provide opportunities and support for their adolescents to exercise self-determination.
  - Work with the school to encourage curriculum efforts and provide real-life experiences for practicing self-determination.
Can Self-Determination Be Taught?

- Counselors, psychologists, social workers, and other support services staff can:
  - Support a school climate that promotes self-determination.
  - Team with classroom teachers.
  - Incorporate instruction through their own departments.

- Administrators can:
  - Establish self-determination as an important element of the school climate.
  - Support teachers through in-service opportunities.
Supporting and Encouraging Self-Determination

- Characteristics of environments that support and encourage self-determination include:
  - Availability of self-determined role models
  - Curriculum variables
  - Opportunities for choice
  - Patterns of response to student behaviors
  - Availability of student supports
Transcendence

Children have never been very Good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them.

James Baldwin

“Nobody Knows My Name” (1961)
The IEP and Me: Infusing Self-Determination Knowledge

- Teaching students about:
  - laws and rights
  - responsibilities

- Creating awareness of:
  - the system and its resources
  - one’s needs, preferences and interests
Building Self-Determination
Attitudes and Beliefs

- “It’s My Life”
  - Student workbook – where I’m going and how I’m going to get there
  - Building self-confidence, internal locus of control and determination
It’s My Life

- Things that work for me
  - Things I want to spend more time doing
  - Things that make me happy
  - Things I like

- Things that don’t work for me
  - Things I want to avoid
  - Things that make me mad
  - Things I don’t like
It’s My Life

- What I want to do when I finish high school
  - Living
  - Working
  - Continuing education
  - Having fun
It’s My Life

What I want to do in school this year
- Classes
- Instruction
- Community experience
I t’s My Life

- Objectives I want to accomplish in school this year
  - Employment
  - Adult living
  - Daily living
  - Vocational abilities
It’s My Life

- What I need to be more successful in school this year
  - Teachers
  - Tests
  - Family
  - Other things
It’s My Life

- People I want to invite to participate in my IEP/transition planning meeting
  - Family
  - School people
  - Agency people
The Self-Directed IEP
10 Step Guide

What I Need to Do to
Self-Direct My IEP/Transition Planning Meeting

10 Easy Steps

Adapted from Martin, et al., 1998
What Does a Self-Directed IEP Involve?

- Greeting and Purpose Statement
- Introductions
- Review of Performance
- Team Input
- Future Goals (for adult life)
- Annual Goals
- Supports Needed
- Goals Summary
- Review and Finalize Program
- Conclude Meeting

Adapted from Martin, et al., 1998
1. Begin By Greeting Everyone and Stating the Purpose of the Meeting.

“Welcome to my meeting. Today we are going to plan for my program for the next year.”

Adapted from Martin, et al., 1998
2. Introduce yourself and others.

“My name is ________________ and I am a student at ________________.

“I’d like to introduce ________________.”

OR

“Please introduce yourselves.”

Adapted from Martin, et al., 1998
3. Review how you have been doing in school.

“Things that have worked well for me this year are ________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________.”

“Things that haven’t work very well for me are ________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________.”

Adapted from Martin, et al., 1998
4. Request input from other participants in the meeting.

“Does anyone want to comment on how my school program has been going?”

-- NOTE TO STUDENT:
Ask questions if you don’t understand something that is said.

Adapted from Martin, et al., 1998
5. Identify your post-school goals.

“When I finish high school, I want to
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
“Any questions or comments?”

Adapted from Martin, et al., 1998
6. Identify your goals for this year.

“This year in school I want to ____________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
“Any questions or comments?”

Adapted from Martin, et al., 1998
7. Identify the supports you need to be successful.

“For me to be successful in school this year I need ________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________.”

“Any questions or comments?”

Adapted from Martin, et al., 1998
8. Summarize your goals.

“In summary, my future plans are to ____
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________.”

“For me to make progress toward these goals, I will do these things this year ___
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________.”

Adapted from Martin, et al., 1998
9. Review support needs and finalize program.

“The things that need to be in my program to help me succeed are __________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________.”

“Does anyone have anything they want to say about my program?”

NOTE TO STUDENT: Discuss differences and agree on final program.

Adapted from Martin, et al., 1998

“Thank you all for coming to my meeting.”

“This year I am going to work hard to accomplish my goals.”

“I appreciate your help!”

Adapted from Martin, et al., 1998
Certificate of Completion

is hereby granted to:

_____________________________

to certify successful training

in Self-Directed IEP Transition Planning

___________________________________

(Name, Title, Date)
Curriculum Resources


Description:

1. Explain that the purpose of this activity is to explore those feelings associated with personal control.

2. Ask groups to designate a recorder or spokesperson.

3. Ask participants to think of at least one experience in which they were not in control of a situation and others had control over outcomes that were important to them.
   - Invite them to remember how it felt to lack control and to share their experiences and feelings with the group members.
   - Instruct the recorder or spokesperson to record how group members felt about not being in control.

4. Allow 10 minutes for groups to complete this task.

5. After completing this task ask groups to repeat this exercise but to think of an experience when they had personal control over outcomes that were of importance.
   - Request that group members remember how it felt to be in control, and share their experiences and feelings with the group.
   - Instruct the recorder to write down group members’ feelings about being in control.

6. Allow 10 minutes for groups to complete this task.

7. Use the flipchart to record Not in Control and In Control. Have each group share a couple of their responses.

8. Ask participants to discuss how a lack of personal control might affect most persons. Provide one or more of the following suggestions as needed:
   - Doing socially inappropriate behaviors as a result of frustration.
   - Loss of potential for skill development.
   - Limited options for satisfying employment.
   - Lack of interest in recreational and leisure activities.
   - Unsatisfactory living arrangements.
   - Apathy or lack of motivation

Conclude this activity by emphasizing how critically important it is for all people, including people with disabilities, to have the opportunity to build self-determination skills and exercise some degree of personal control.
Self-Determination Jeopardy

Directions

1. Pass out the Jeopardy sheets which define self-determination skills, attitudes and beliefs, and knowledge.

2. Give participants 10 – 15 minutes to read over. Inform them that they can work in groups or as individuals, and can have the definitions read aloud if they need/feel more comfortable. Encourage everyone to use their creativity to win the game.

3. After participants have had time to read over and study the definitions and decide on their game strategy, inform participants that the game will proceed with the instructor naming the category and then providing the definition or “answer.” You (the instructor) may choose to provide buzzers, clappers, bells, etc for participants to use or they can just alert you with their own “buzzer” noise.

4. The participant called on should answer in the form of a question with the appropriate self-determination skill, attitude/belief, or knowledge area.

Example:
Instructor might say, “The category is self-determination skills. The answer is – through looking at a situation, identifying options, and choosing among available alternatives, individuals are able to exercise control over the environment rather than letting it control them.” The first person “buzzing” in would answer, “What are Decision Making Skills?”

5. Participants are allowed to keep their definitions and refer to them.

6. Mix up the categories and continue the game so that all of the skills, attitudes/beliefs, and knowledge areas have been covered.

7. Use your imagination and resources at hand to take this game back home – use paper money (“Self-Determination Skills for $10) and have prizes.

Goal of Self-Determination Jeopardy: to have fun gaining important foundational knowledge about self-determination without using a lecture format.
Self-Determination Skills

Goal Setting Skills:
- Self-determined individuals know what they want out of life and have personal visions for their futures.
- Setting and working toward achieving personal goals is one of the most fundamental ways in which people exercise personal control.
- Having a personal vision or set of goals helps us direct our lives.

Decision Making Skills:
- Throughout life, we are faced with decisions - whether to study or go partying, take a particular course, take a particular job, save our money or spend it, etc.
- Making informed choices is one of the most fundamental ways in which people exercise self-determination.
- Through looking at a situation, identifying options, and choosing among available alternatives individuals are able to exercise control over the environment rather than letting it control them.

Problem-solving skills:
- Encountering roadblocks or problems that prevent us from achieving our desires is pretty typical of the human condition. A person with disabilities who wants to experience greater inclusion in the community may run into problems such as a lack of transportation or negative attitudes from others.
- Having the skills to problem-solve in a way that leads to minimizing and/or overcoming roadblocks increases the ability of individuals to achieve what they desire and direct their lives in a way that they choose.

Self-regulation skills:
- To have personal control, individuals must be able to regulate their own behavior.
- Self-regulation involves learning to monitor the progress that is being made toward reaching goals, and modifying one's behavior when necessary.

Self-Advocacy skills:
- In order to be self-determined, individuals need to be able to express their likes and dislikes, speak out for themselves, and take responsibility for making sure that their rights are respected.
- Advocating for oneself is one of the most critical aspects of self-determination for no one knows better what an individual desires than the individual him/herself.
- Whether we are parents or professionals who care about a people who have a disability, we need to respect that we cannot and will not be available forever so teaching them the skills to advocate for themselves is the best gift or service we can give.

TOTAL Project, Module 3, Activity 2
Self-Determination Skills

Independent Living Skills:
• The ability to take care of oneself and provide for one’s basic needs is an aspect of self-determination that plays a critical role in life as an individual approaches adulthood.
• If basic independent living skills are not acquired, individuals are likely to lose control over some aspects of their lives.
• For some people with disabilities, independent living skills may mean learning to hire and manage a personal assistant in order to have choices and independence.

Social Skills:
• People who have the social skills necessary to get along well with others are likely to find themselves with considerably more opportunities to exercise self-determination than their peers who are not socially skilled.
• Well-liked individuals who are viewed as friends, for example, receive social support, information, and physical assistance from peers, all of which are likely to help in the exercise of personal control.
• Likewise, individuals who have good social skills are likely to have more options to get a keep jobs that they choose.

Communication Skills:
• The ability communicate what one likes and doesn’t like, the amount and type of support that is needed, and one’s desires and wishes is one of the most basic skills necessary for self-determination.
• Developing the ability to communicate to others even simple desires dramatically increases the personal control one is able to exercise.
• Knowing how to appropriately communicate desires and frustrations, how to negotiate, how to initiate conversations etc. can dramatically increase opportunities for friendships and jobs.
Self-Determination Attitudes and Beliefs

Self-Confidence:
• Self-determination involves taking some risks. A self-confident individual is likely to do this without much hesitation.
• Persons lacking confidence often allow others to make decisions for them and as a result are less likely to get what they want out of life situations.

Internal Locus of Control:
• Persons with an internal locus of control believe that they have the ability to control their environment and lives. They are therefore motivated to take the action that is necessary to make this come true.
• Persons who believe that their lives are controlled mostly by forces and people outside them are likely to be unmotivated to take the necessary steps to exercise control over their lives.

Determination:
• It is rare that any of us would be able to exercise control over our lives without encountering some barriers and failure. The determined individual keeps going/working and, in the end, is likely to achieve what they desire.
• People who have low levels of determination typically give up quickly when they encounter difficulty.

Self-Esteem:
• Viewing and evaluating oneself in a positive manner and feeling good about oneself and one’s accomplishments is often referred to as self-esteem. Moderate to high levels of self-esteem are necessary for and are a by-product of high levels of self-determination.
• Students with at least moderate levels of self-esteem are more likely to take charge of their lives and take the risks associated with these behaviors.
Self-Determination Knowledge

Laws and Rights:
• One important aspect of self-determination is standing up for oneself and protecting one’s rights as a person. In order to effectively do this, however, one needs to have an awareness of one’s rights and the laws that protect them.
• Young adults who are aware that they have specific rights with respect to their education and that there are laws and procedures that need to be followed to protect these rights can address problems that develop.

The System and Its Resources:
• An understanding of how an organization operates and who within the organization holds power allows individuals to change things they believe are not right and get the support to which they are entitled.
• In the absence of knowledge, bringing about change is a hit or miss process that involves unnecessary work and could damage important relationships in the process.

Self-Awareness:
• A knowledge of one’s personal preferences, strengths and challenges, and vision for the future are all necessary for persons to exercise control over their lives.
• A lack of awareness of one’s personal challenges, for example, makes it difficult to obtain the supports needed to live a preferred lifestyle.
• When individuals understand what they want (and the fact that this may change over time), what types of supports they need, and when they need them, desired levels of self-determination are much easier to achieve.

Responsibilities:
• Acknowledgment of one’s responsibilities and the acceptance of responsibility for one’s actions and behaviors are a major component of self-determination.
• In the absence of this knowledge, it is difficult for others to develop the trust necessary to allow a person to make their own decisions and choices.
IT’S MY LIFE
Student Workbook

What I Need to Get What I Want

Transition Planning and the Self-Directed IEP:
Where I’m Going - How I’m Going To Get There
THINGS THAT WORK FOR ME

I like to spend time __________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________

I like school best when ________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________

I like it when my teacher__________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
THINGS THAT WORK FOR ME
Continued:

I like it when other students ________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________

I do my best work when ________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

My favorite class is ______________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
Because ________________________________
________________________________________
THINGS THAT DON'T WORK FOR ME

Things I Want to Avoid
Things That Make Me Mad
Things I Don’t Like

I would rather not spend time ________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

I don’t like school when ________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

I don’t like it when my teacher ________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

TOTAL Project, Module 3, Handout 2
THINGS THAT DON’T WORK FOR ME
Continued:

I don’t like it when other students ________

__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________

I get in trouble when __________________

__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________

My least favorite class is _______________

__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
What I want to do when I finish high school.

I want to work _______________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
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__________________________________
__________________________________
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__________________________________

I want to live _______________________
__________________________________
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__________________________________
__________________________________
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TOTAL Project, Module 3, Handout 2
What I want to do when I finish high school.

I want to continue my education

I want to have fun doing
This year in school I want to:

I want to take these classes

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

I want instruction in how to

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

I want community experience doing

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
This year in school I want to accomplish these objectives:

Employment objectives: __________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Adult living objectives: __________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Daily living skills: __________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

I want to learn these things about my vocational /work abilities: __________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

TOTAL Project, Module 3, Handout 2
For me to be more successful in school this year I need:

My teachers to ______________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

My tests to be ______________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

My family to ______________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Other things I need are ______________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
I Want These People to Take Part in My IEP/Transition Planning Meeting:

Family _____________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________

School People _______________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________

Agency/Community People _____________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________

Others ____________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________
__________________________________

TOTAL Project, Module 3, Handout 2
The Self-Directed IEP
10 Step Guide

What I Need to Do to Self-Direct My IEP/Transition Planning Meeting

10 Easy Steps
What Does a Self-Directed IEP Involve?

- Greeting and Purpose Statement
- Introductions
- Review of Performance
- Team Input
- Future Goals (for adult life)
- Annual Goals
- Supports Needed
- Goals Summary
- Review and Finalize Program
- Conclude Meeting
1. Begin by greeting everyone and stating the purpose of the meeting.

“Welcome to my meeting. Today we are going to plan my program for the next year.”
2. Introduce yourself and others.

“My name is _________________ and I am a student at _________________.

“I’d like to introduce ___________ _________________.”

OR

“Please introduce yourselves.”
3. Review how you have been doing in school.

“Things that have worked well for me this year are ____________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________.

“Things that haven’t worked very well for me are ____________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________.

TOTAL Project, Module 3, Activity 4
4. Request input from other participants in the meeting.

“Does anyone want to comment on how my school program has been going?”

-- NOTE TO STUDENT:
Ask questions if you don’t understand something that is said.
5. Identify your post-school goals.

“When I finish high school, I want to

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

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“Any questions or comments?”
6. Identify your goals for this year.

“This year in school I want to ______
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

“Any questions or comments?”
7. Identify the supports you need to be successful.

“For me to be successful in school this year, I need ______________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

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_________________________________________________________________

“Any questions or comments?”
8. Summarize your goals.

“In summary, my future plans are to

________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________.

“For me to make progress toward these goals, I will do these things this year

____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________.

9. Review support needs and finalize program.

“The things that need to be in my program to help me succeed are

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________.”

“Does anyone have anything they want to say about my program?”

NOTE TO STUDENT: Discuss differences and agree on final program.
10. Conclude meeting.

“Thank you all for coming to my meeting.”

“This year I am going to work hard to accomplish my goals.”

“I appreciate your help!”