Definition

**Self-Determination:** Life is really all about being able to handle yourself with strength and dignity in the toughest of situations. Help students practice being strong and overcoming adversity can have long lasting effects throughout their lives. Wehmeyer (2003a) defines self-determination as acting with intent to improve one’s quality of life. He states that these actions are identified by four essential characteristics 1. autonomous actions, 2. self-regulated behaviors, 3. empowered initiation and responses, 4. self-realizing actions.

Current Research:

Student Led IEPs Increase

- Student self-actualization, self-determination and self-confidence skills
- Active involvement in education planning and transition planning
- Post-secondary outcomes
- Quality of life

Kohler’s Taxonomy for Transition Programming & Evidence-Based Practices:
INTERVENTIONS:

- The ChoiceMaker Curriculum (with Self-Directed IEP materials)
  - Martin, Marshall, Maxson, & Jerman, 1993
- Next S.T.E.P. Curriculum
  - Halpern, Herr, Doren, & Wolf, 2000
- Self-Advocacy Strategy
  - Van Reusen, Bos, Schumaker, & Deshler, 2002
- Steps to Self-Determination (2nd Ed.)
  - Hoffman & Field, 2005
- Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction
  - Wehmeyer, Palmer, Agran, Mithaug, & Martin, 2000
- Whose Future is it Anyway? (2nd Ed.)
  - Wehmeyer, Lawrence, Kelchner, Palmer, Garner, & Soukup, 2004
- Take CHARGE for the Future
  - Powers et al., 2001

Essential Benefits of Student Led IEPs

- Increase Student’s self-determination and self-advocacy skills
- Facilitate positive collaborative climates for IEP meetings

Historical Views of Student Disabilities

- Based on medical model
- Deficit based
- Limited outcomes for the individual based on these perceptions
  - Choice/Decision making skills
  - Problem-solving skills
  - Goal-setting and attainment skills
  - Self-management skills
  - Self-advocacy skills
  - Self-awareness

Review of IDEA & Law

The IDEA Amendments of 1997 contain provisions that strengthen the involvement of students with disabilities in decisions regarding their own futures with the purpose of facilitating movement from school to post-school activities. The “transition services” requirements from the IDEA Amendments of 1990 require that a statement of needed transition services must be in the IEP beginning no later than
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Speech Language Pathologist & Education Consultant
team@smartersteps.com

IDEA definition of Transition Services (20 USC § 1401(34)): Activities for a disabled student that –

1. Is designed within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities (post-secondary ed, vocational training, integrated employment, adult ed, adult services, independent living, community participation)

2. Based on Student’s needs (must consider student preferences & interests) and lastly,

3. Includes instruction, related services, community experiences, employment/post-school living objectives and when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills & functional vocational evaluation

“Almost 30 years of research …has demonstrated that the education of students with disabilities can be made more effective by… ensuring their access to the general education curriculum.” (20 U.S.C. § 1400(c)(5)(A)

Federal regulations define “specially designed instruction” whose purpose is “to ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that he or she can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children (34 C.F.R. § 300.26(b)(3) (emphasis added)). (From COPAA 2014 Transition Webinar).

Soft Skill Development

• Communication

• Leadership

• Influence

• Interpersonal Skills

• Personal Skills

• Creativity

• Professional Skills
**Soft skills** = **Self-determination (Thinking—Doing—Adjusting)**

- Youth/adults with disabilities are less self-determined than nondisabled peers
- Self-Determination depends on Capacity—Opportunity—Supports

Capacity (knowledge, ability, perceptions)

Opportunity (Home & School, see below)

Supports (see below)
Anywhere from 600,000 to 1,000,000 Missourians live with a disability. (2010 Census Data; Governor’s Council on Disability) Jacquelyn M. Sample, DrOT, M.Ed., OTR/L 2017

Barriers to Self-Determination

- Beliefs about student’s abilities and whether the individual will benefit
- Changing roles
- Insufficient time
- Insufficient training and knowledge about promoting self-determination
- Lack of educator support
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- Student motivation
- Concerns about students being present for adversarial meetings

Case Studies:

Notes/Reflection:

Educator Training:

Notes:

Parent Education:

Notes:
Preparing students for self-advocacy is really based on these three principals.

1. Teaching the component elements of self-determined behavior (choice-making, problem solving, goal setting skills)
2. Providing opportunities to use and practice these skills
3. Providing supports and accommodations as needed

Student Training

- Strengths, Interests, Preferences
- Learning Styles & study skills
- Current Living Skills & Needs
- Disability Awareness
- IEP Laws & Process
- Setting Goals
- Accommodations & Modifications
- Self-Advocacy Skills

Modeling & Guided Practice

Once the student has gathered information about their strengths, limitations, learning styles, disability, and needs, you can begin putting all that information together.

- Portfolios keep student’s research and information they have gathered about their strengths, limitations, learning styles, disabilities, and learning needs.
- See samples of student IEP templates, Student-Led Agendas, self-determination portfolios
- Video/Mock Meetings
- Reflection/Video Self-Monitor
- Debriefing
- Practice some more!

Resources

Books:

*Autism & the Transition to Adulthood: Success Beyond the Classroom* by Paul Wehman, Marcia Datlow Smith & Carol Schall
Getting the Most out of IEPs: An Educator's Guide to the Student-Directed Approach by Colleen Thoma & Paul Wehner

SMARTER STEPS GUIDE to Creating SMARTER IEP Goals by Kelly Ott & Lara Wakefield


The Brookes Transition to Adulthood Series: (Brookes Publishing Co)

- The Essentials of Transition Planning by Paul Wehman
- Evidence-Based Instructional Strategies For Transition by David Test
- Teaching Transition Skills in Inclusive Schools by Teresa Grossi & Cassandra Cole
- Transition Planning for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Youth by Gary Greene
- Demystifying Transition Assessment by Colleen Thoma & Ronald Tamura

Transformational Leadership in Special Education: Leading the IEP Team by Kirby Lentz

Websites:

Movingstudentsforward.org

Imdetermined.org

Smartersteps.com

Links:


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https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/thinking_wisely_-_learning_styles_0.pdf Learning Style Activity
https://movingstudentsforward.org/my-iep-meeting-template-by-becky-wilson-hawbaker/ IEP Student Template

Intervention Programs:

- The ChoiceMaker Curriculum (with Self-Directed IEP materials
  o Martin, Marshall, Maxson, & Jerman, 1993
- Next S.T.E.P. Curriculum
  o Halpern, Herr, Doren, & Wolf, 2000
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Other References

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- [http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/confidence.html#ixzz4Udf2QTI7](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/confidence.html#ixzz4Udf2QTI7)
- [https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/241619](https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/241619) 15 tips for instilling leadership skills in Children
  John Rampton
- [http://escholarship.bc.edu/education/tecplus/vol3/iss5/art4](http://escholarship.bc.edu/education/tecplus/vol3/iss5/art4)
- [https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/](https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/)
- [http://www.transitionta.org/sites/default/files/Tax_Trans_Prog_0.pdf](http://www.transitionta.org/sites/default/files/Tax_Trans_Prog_0.pdf) The taxonomy for Transition Programming