



## **Transition Planning: Getting Ready For Life Beyond School** **Karine Gleason**

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Any transition can be difficult but none more than the transition from adolescence to adulthood. This is the time when parents, teachers, and students must face the major task of planning for life after school. Where will my child live? Where will my child work? Will my child have opportunities for social interactions in the community? In order to answer these questions and achieve the best possible post-school outcome, great care must be taken to assess the student's strengths, interests, and needs and utilize that information to develop a comprehensive transition plan.

Transition planning can be thought of as a linear process, beginning with assessment that leads to goals and services. According to the Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT) of the Council for Exceptional Children, transition assessment is defined as an "...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". State and Federal law requires that an assessment of the student's transition needs be conducted and an educational plan be put into place by age 14. It is recommended that a transition assessment use a combination of both formal and informal measures such as paper and pencil tests, structured student and family interviews, observational community or work-based assessments (situational), and curriculum-based assessments (Clark, 1998). The

culmination of results gathered from a variety of assessments provide a clearer picture of instructional strategies needed, accommodations necessary for successful instruction, and environments suited to the student's strengths, interests, and needs.

As with the transition assessment, an effective transition plan uses a comprehensive approach. Research has identified a number of "best practices" for transition planning (Cobb & Alwell, 2009; Kohler & Field, 2003; Test, Fowler et al., 2009). These include:

- Active student and family involvement in all aspects of the transition planning process including assessment and goal development;
- Vocational training;
- Strategies and activities that increase career awareness and maturity;
- Paid employment or work experiences while still in high school;
- Interagency collaboration;
- Identification of skills (vocational, academic, social, etc.) that the student will need and instruction in those skills;
- Specific instruction in self-determination and self-advocacy skills;
- Inclusion in regular classrooms;
- Identification of assistive technology that can be used as the student transitions to employment or postsecondary education.

As educational practices improve, so does the number of individuals that do not require placement in a sheltered environment. Many can contribute to their own communities in a variety of ways, including meaningful employment. It's important to realize that these individuals have many strengths but may require supports to be successful. Schools must use the transition process to not only identify and create these supports but also provide education and training to those who will work with these students as they become adults. Needless to say, the planning and instruction that is provided while the individual is in school, will directly and profoundly impact the success of post-school outcomes.

Direct link to our website:

[www.KansasASD.com](http://www.KansasASD.com)

[www.TASNBehaviorSupports.com](http://www.TASNBehaviorSupports.com)

### **TIPS FROM THE CORNER:**

Second semester demands of test-taking should be addressed with sound strategies for reducing student anxiety and improving performance.

- Get a good night's rest. Sleeping only six hours instead of eight increases levels of the stress hormone cortisol by 50%, and sleep-deprived people score 30% lower on memory tests.
- Eat the right breakfast. Students who eat breakfast score higher on tests and report less test-related anxiety. Eggs for brain-boosting choline and oatmeal for a calming increase in serotonin levels.
- After breakfast, try some dark chocolate. It boosts memory, alertness, and concentration, and its special chemicals can decrease anxiety.
- Along with a pencil, have students bring a bottle of water with them to the test. Even the slightest dip in hydration levels can lead to stress, memory loss, and a drop in mental functioning.
- Immediately before testing, have students write about their worries.

### **February Trainings**

**February 4, 3:00-3:45; 4:00-4:45**

Tri-State ASD Webinar Series: Transitions: Class to Class and Building to Building

Link to Register: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/N73T3T2>

**February 11, 3:00-3:45; 4:00-4:45**

Tri-State ASD Webinar Series: Transition Assessment Tools

Link to Register: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/N7339GF>

**February 20, 8:30 am- 10:00 am**

ADOS-2 Module 3 Practice Webinar

Link to Register: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZFCYRPF>

Students who are prone to test anxiety have improved their test scores by nearly one grade point after they were given 10 minutes to write about what was causing them fear.

- Try chewing some gum. In one study, the act of chewing was found to activate the hippocampus, the brain area responsible for memory, improving recall by 35%.
- Have students write affirmations, such as:
  - I will get enough sleep before the test.
  - I will eat a good breakfast on the day of the test.
  - I will hydrate my body so I do well on the test.

Communicate the importance of these strategies with students and their families for best results.

For additional ideas, visit Dr. Laura Riffel  
<http://behaviordoctor.org/material-download/>

Click on "School-wide Behavior Ideas!"

