

# TRANSITION SERVICES

HELPING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES  
TRANSITION FROM HIGH SCHOOL

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## Presentation Outline

- What are transition services?
- IDEA before and after 2004
- California law
- WorkAbility
- The role of school psychologists
- Questions

## What are transition services?

- Transition services provide:
  - Recruitment
  - Job Assessment
  - Counseling
  - Pre-employment skills training
  - Vocational training

## True or False?

- IDEA requires that transition planning start by the time the student reaches age 16.
- School psychologists should serve as team members on transition teams starting in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Specific learning disability (SLD) is the fastest growing category of disabilities seen in college.
- California has a state mandated program for transition services out of high school.

## Transition Statistics

- Only 35% of people with disabilities report being employed full-time or part-time
- High drop-out rate for students with disabilities (up to 50%)
- High unemployment rate (70%)
- 3 times as many people with disabilities live in poverty than those without disabilities
- From 1988 to 2000, 6% to 8% of college students had a disability

## What is IDEA?

- A federal law
- Mandates that all students with disabilities have access to free and appropriate public education (FAPE)
- Services designed to meet students needs
- Emphasis on special education
- Preparation of student for gainful employment

## IDEA 2004

- The child's strengths were taken into account
- The focus shifts to what the child CAN do instead of what the child CAN'T do
- Results-Oriented instead of Outcome-Oriented

## IDEA 2004 cont.

- From §300.320(b):
- (b) *Transition services*. Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually, thereafter, the IEP must include—
  - (1) Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and
  - (2) The transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals.

## Examples

- Federal laws aimed at transition
  - School-to-Work Opportunity Act
    - Signed into law 1994
    - Required schools to combine school-based learning and work-based learning
    - Students have equal access to work-based and school-based learning
    - Relationships were forged between secondary, postsecondary and employers
    - Legislation sunset in 2002

## Examples Cont.

- Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1990, 1998
  - Assist students to enter vocational educational programs
  - Assess the needs of students to assist with the successful completion of the vocational educational program
  - Provide supplementary services to students that have disabilities
  - Provide guidance, counseling, and career development
  - Provide counseling and instructional services that facilitate the transition from school to employment

## California Law

- California Education Code Sections 56460-56463
- 56460 – Shortcomings of Transition Services
- 56462 – Components of Transition Services
- Consistent with 2 year study ending in 1981 that showed students with disabilities were not adequately prepared to be integrated into the work force.

## Project WorkAbility

- Initiated in November 1981
- Operated/Funded through the California Department of Education
- 300 LEA's implementing Project WorkAbility in all 58 counties.
- CDE sites WorkAbility as one of the ten best transition programs in the U.S.
- National recognition

## Project WorkAbility

- **Section 56470** – The legislature finds and declares all of the following:
  - (a) That an essential component of transition services developed and supported by the CDE is project WorkAbility. (b) That the WorkAbility program provides instruction and experiences that reinforce core curriculum concepts and skills leading to gainful employment. (c) That since project WorkAbility was established by the CDE in 1981, substantial number of individuals with exceptional needs have obtained full or part-time employment.

## Project WorkAbility

- **Section 56471 - (d)** WorkAbility project applications shall include, but are not limited to, the following elements: (1) recruitment, (2) assessment, (3) counseling, (4) pre-employment skills training (5) vocational training, (6) students wages for try-out employment, (7) placement in unsubsidized employment, (8) other assistance with transition to a quality adult life and (9) utilization of an interdisciplinary advisory committee to enhance project goals.

## Project WorkAbility

- **Mission of WorkAbility**
- The mission of WorkAbility is to promote the involvement of key stakeholders including students, families, educators, employers and other agencies in planning and implementing an array of services that will culminate in successful student transition to employment, lifelong learning and quality of life.
- **Array of Services**
  - School-Based Component
  - Career Counseling and Guidance
  - Youth Development and Leadership

## Project WorkAbility

- **School-Based Component**
  - Career/Vocational Assessment
  - Career Counseling and Guidance
  - Youth Development and Leadership
  - Career/Transition Portfolio
  - Independent Living/Functional Skills

## Project WorkAbility

- **Connecting Activities**
  - Partnerships
    - Interdisciplinary
    - Interagency
    - Community
    - Business
  - Parent Participation

## Project WorkAbility

- **Work-Based Learning Component**
  - Career Awareness/Exploration Activities
    - Job Shadows
    - School-Based Project/Business
    - Service Learning
  - Career Preparation
    - Internship
    - Apprenticeship
    - Community Classroom

## Project WorkAbility

- Work-Based Learning Component (cont.)
  - Job Search
  - Job Retention
  - Mobility Training
  - Follow Up

## The Role of School Psychologists

- No mandatory responsibilities
- Best Practices recommends that school psychologists should be involved in transition services to:
  - Postsecondary education
  - Work
  - Other settings such as independent or assisted living

## Transitioning to College

- Help identify postsecondary classroom accommodations
- Consult with post secondary personnel
- Educate student and family about college life
- Promote skills and confidence of students

## Transitioning to the Work Force

- Become knowledgeable of transition resources
- Assess to identify student skills, interests, past performance – student involvement
- Collaborate with school and community based agencies and business leaders

## Current Practices

- In a 2006 survey of school psychologists conducted in Pennsylvania showed that...
- 50% indicated their skills were "underutilized" with regard to transition planning
- 54.4% reported they knew some but "needed more" in order to complete transition services
- Only 0.8% received their transition training in graduate school
- Only 10.4% reported being "well prepared", 25.6% reported being "adequately prepared", and 9.6% reported that they were "not prepared" for transition services planning
- 92% of school psychologists report that they "probably should" be involved in consultation for transition services

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