Presenters

**Michael Scanlon**, Youth Advocate and Outreach Specialist, CT STRONG, Advanced Behavioral Health, Inc. and Youth Advisory Board CORE Team Member, mscanlon@abhct.com

**Emily Ball**, Youth Speaker, Disability Specialist, and Youth Advisory Board CORE Team Member, emily317@gmail.com

**Denver Jones**, Youth Advocate, Public Speaker, Youth Advisory Board Member, jonesdenver18@gmail.com

**Jake Shumbo**, Youth Speaker, Youth Advisory Board Member, Youth Advisory Council Member, State Advisory Council Member, jakeshumbo15@gmail.com

**Beth Reel**, Transition Coordinator, Youth Advisory Board Coordinator, REACH Grant Director, CT Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC), breel@cpacinc.org

**Missy Wrigley**, Transition Consultant, State Education Resource Center (SERC), wrigley@ctserc.org

**Alycia Trakas**, Education Consultant, CT State Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education, Alycia.Trakas@ct.gov
History

- 2011 - CPAC collaborated on an RSA Grant with VR, CSDE, SERC, and RESCs to improve post school outcomes for students with disabilities

- Increased focus on student/youth driven planning at the federal and state levels and awareness of youth voice missing at planning tables at all levels

- YAB grew from the belief that every voice on the planning team for youth with disabilities matters, and the most important voice is that of youth

  “Nothing about us without us!”
History (continued)

- 2014 - CPAC invited to collaborate on US DOE OSERS RSA grant with seven Parent Centers (PTI) to assist youth/young adults with disabilities and their families as they navigate through the transition process, access adult services, and become collaborative leaders with transition professionals to help youth impacted by disability achieve their goals.

- 2014 - Student Voice and Youth Leadership and Development became a practice group within the CT Secondary Transition Community of Practice

- 2017 - Youth Advisory Board as a result of NTACT CBI planning
NTACT State Plan 2018

Focus Area: Student-Focused Planning Benchmarks

Goal: We will increase districts’ knowledge of practices to increase student involvement in the transition planning process.

Increase % of students participating in/facilitating PPT (IEP) meetings.
NTACT State Plan 2018

Focus Area: Student Development Benchmarks

Goal: We will increase opportunities across the state for students with disabilities to participate in co-curricular, extracurricular, and community activities by creating a youth advisory board.
CT Secondary Transition Community of Practice
CORE Team Supporters

Past Members:
Dr. Patricia Anderson
Patti Clay
Khampasong Khantivong
Scott Kupis
Lisa Paragone
Jessica Monahan
Robin Tousey-Ayers

Current Members:
Alycia Trakas
Missy Wrigley
Karin McMahon
Amy Norton
Nicholas Gelbar
Lois Eldridge
Emily Ball
Karen Hensley
Tanya Lawrence
Jake Shumbo
Michael Scanlon
Allison Kopie
Beth Reel
Tanya Lawrence
Myra Scott
Andrew Arboe

Supporters:
Bryan Klimkiewicz
John Flanders
Resources


Trauma-Informed Method of Engagement (TIME) Model for Youth Advocacy

CT Secondary Transition Youth Advisory Board (YAB)

Secondary Transition Youth Advisory Board is a practice group within the CT Secondary Transition Community of Practice (CoP).

Provides a place for students and youth with disabilities ages 14 to 26 to have their voices heard by the people who plan for and support students.

The YAB serves as a resource to any school district, agency, organization, or provider who serve young people with disabilities.

YAB works to improve services and ensure supports provided are truly meeting the needs of the youth with disabilities.

Participation in YAB activities builds the personal advocacy and leadership skills of participants, provides a forum for students to network with each other and professionals in the field, and is a great activity for resumes and portfolios.
YAB Membership

Members include Connecticut students and youth with disabilities ages 14 to 26 years old and YAB mentors over the age of 26.

Members have an interest in learning leadership skills and taking on leadership roles in the state.

Currently we have 25 active participants and over 150 students and youth on our e-mail list.
When and where does the YAB meet?

- The YAB meets four times a year in conjunction with the COP meetings to plan activities for the year.
- Additionally, several meetings are held throughout the year via phone or web-based conference calls to discuss current trends in secondary transition.
- Physical attendance is not mandatory as members can participate in a variety of ways including review of documents and offering opinions via e-mail or social media.
Michael Scanlon - Working with Youth

Ladder of Young Adult voice

8 - Young Adults & Adults equal partners
7 - Young Adult lead
6 - Adult Initiated, shared with Young Adults
5 - Young Adult Consulted
4 - Young Adult Informed
3 - Tokenism
2 - Decoration
1 - Manipulation

Emily Ball

https://youtu.be/qa-zOXmqhg
Youth advisory groups are important because they give youth a chance to showcase their skills and experiences. For example, one of the questions we’ve been asked was are you comfortable attending your own IEP meeting. This question if posed in front of youth, would normalize their feelings. They are also a crucial tool to educate teachers and other professionals working with disabled youth. For example, other youth like to know they aren’t alone in their experiences such as being nervous to attend IEP meetings. YAB are very beneficial to those working with disabled youth because we can give them insight they never would’ve had. For example, the way that students are treated such as not babying and instead treating them age appropriately.
For instance, one of my IEP goals as ridiculous it sounds was to say hi to every third person I passed in the hallway, whether I wanted to or not. My aid would mentally track this and I hated it. Youth advisory boards are also empowering for the person because they can have their experience help someone else. YAB can also enhance one’s leadership abilities. For instance, being on YAB gave me the confidence to apply to be on the National Kids as Self-Advocates board. Much to my shock, I am now a board member. A couple of reasons I joined was because I thought it would be a good leadership opportunity and to connect with other youth and young adults in a similar situation. Lastly, I joined so my experiences could reach and I could empathize with a larger audience. I am grateful for the opportunity.
Denver Jones
Why do I think youth advisory boards are important?

Why should professionals work with youth?

Why do I do presentations?
Jake Shumbo
Hello, my name is Jake Shumbo and I AM a YOUTH in transition…

- I AM the reason my team meets annually for my PPT
- I AM the reason my IEP is written
- I AM the focus of my transition goals and planning

WE are the reason why you gather annually at conventions like this.

A youth in transition is the integral piece of transition planning.

So, doesn’t it make sense to have a youth advisory board to provide a perspective that can’t be filled by any other member of the team?
I’d like to share what being a member of the CT Youth Advisory Board means to me...

It provides an opportunity for me to be a voice for youth with disabilities.

It is empowering to share my experiences, to provide insight from a student point of view.

It is empowering to influence the educational outcomes on the state level.

I cannot express how important youth advisory boards are.
It builds:

- Self Confidence
- Leadership
- Creates Impact
- Networking
- Peer to peer support
- Advocacy….and so on

As a member of the CT Youth Advisory Board, I’ve been given life changing opportunities.
I am a student representative for the State of Connecticut Special Advisory Committee for Special Education.

- I **became** a leader.
- I became a **voice**.

Thank you
Supporting Youth

Christopher McCray
Christopher McCray is from New Haven, Connecticut and currently takes online classes at Bellevue University in Nebraska with a major in Communication Arts and a minor in Information Technology. He previously attended Landmark College in Vermont, High Roads Learning Center in Connecticut, and New Haven Public Schools. Christopher struggled in school and was discouraged from attending college. However, with the support of his family, Christopher learned to believe in himself and began to dream about going to college. Christopher advocated for himself and attended Landmark College, even though others didn’t believe he could be successful.

Christopher has begun sharing his experience of being a student with a disability with students and families through self-advocacy presentations throughout Connecticut. He hopes to help and inspire other students learn to believe in themselves and achieve their dreams.

Christopher is available for speaking engagements and panel presentations related to self-advocacy and the perspective of a student with a disability. For more information about bringing Christopher to speak to your group of students, parents or educators, contact him at 203-903-7760 or christophermccray14@gmail.com.

Check out this great article written by Youth Advisory Board member, Andrew Arboe. Andrew has participated on some of our panels and is an amazing advocate for the Autism community.

Andrew Arboe
November 13, 2018

Finding my place in this Divisive Autism Community

I think I figured out my stance in regards of autism. I searched for an answer of my question “What is autism?” for years now. I noticed the divisive issues within the autism community right away. The fight between Neurodiversity and the treatments group. The fight between seeing the disability as a natural human variation and treating autism itself. Given my nature of being an outsider, it was hard to come up with an answer. Especially being someone with ASD myself and for a while now, had conflicting thoughts on the matter.

I am a type that thinks very differently, than anyone else in my commu...

See More
CT Secondary Transition Youth Advisory Board
Informational Flyer & Sign-Up Sheet

What is the CT Secondary Transition Youth Advisory Board (YAB)?
As an initiative within the CT Secondary Transition Community of Practice, a Secondary Transition Youth Advisory Board was created to provide a voice for students and youth with disabilities ages 14 to 26 to have their voices heard by the people who plan for students and provide them support.

What is the purpose of the YAB?
The YAB serves a resource to any school district, agency, organization, or provider who serve young people with disabilities. YAB works to improve services and ensure that services and supports provided are truly meeting the needs of youth with disabilities as they transition from district services to adult life. Participation in YAB activities builds the personal advocacy and leadership skills of participants, provides a forum for students to network with each other and professionals in the field, and is a great activity for resumes and portfolios.

Who are the members of the YAB?
YAB members include Connecticut students and youth with disabilities ages 14 to 26 years old who have an interest in learning leadership skills and taking on leadership roles in the state. Currently we have 25 active participants and over 150 students and youth on our e-mail list.

When and where does the YAB meet?
The YAB formally meets four times a year in conjunction with the CT Transition Community of Practice meetings to plan activities for the year. Additionally, several meetings are held throughout the year via phone or web-based conference calls to discuss current trends in secondary transition. Physical attendance is not mandatory as members can participate in a variety of ways including review of documents and offering opinions via e-mail or social media.

Have questions?
Please contact Beth Reed, CT Parent Advocacy Center, at breed@cpac.org or 860-739-3089 for more information.

Yes, I would like to know how I can stay involved as a Youth Advisory Board member. Please contact me:
Name:
Address:
Telephone/Cell Number:
E-Mail Address:

I would be interested in (circle all that apply):
Writing or recording my success story,
Attending training for students/youth adults,
Reviewing information and offering suggestions and opinions,
Participate in state and local meetings to allow youth voice to be heard,
Telling my story to students, parents, teachers, and professionals alone or on a panel,
Meet others from the disability community,
Attend national presentations,
Train other students and young adults
Other:

Please return to Beth Reed
Transition Coordinator
CT Parent Advocacy Center
555 Main Street
Narbic, CT 06297
beed@cpac.org
860-739-3089
Welcome Students!

Thinking about what you want to do after high school?

This website has been designed to answer the variety of questions that you may have. Select one of the frequently asked questions below and click on the corresponding picture. It will provide a resource that may help.

You can also check out the other resources provided under the Resource button at the top of the page.

If there are other questions, about Secondary Transition, that you may have, you may contact us by using the 'Contact Us' button on the Home page.
YAB Student Voice and Youth Leadership

- CT Community of Practice (COP)
- CT COP CORE Team
  - CT COP CORE Team Retreat
- CT Secondary Transition Symposium Planning Committee
- NTACT State Leadership Team
- CT Secondary Transition Task Force (TTF)
- CT State Advisory Council on Special Education (SAC)
- Feedback on IEP revision and state department guidance documents
CT Secondary Transition Youth Advisory Board

CSDE Bureau of Special Education

Back-to-School Meeting

Transition Youth Advisory Board

What is the CT Secondary Transition Youth Advisory Board (YAB)?

As an initiative within the CT Secondary Transition Community of Practice (COP), a Secondary Transition Youth Advisory Board was created to provide a voice for students and youth with disabilities ages 14 to 26 to have their voices heard by the people who plan for and support students.

What is the purpose of the YAB?

The YAB serves as a resource to any school district, agency, organization, or provider who serve youth with disabilities. YAB works to improve services and ensure that services and supports provided meet the needs of the youth with disabilities as they transition from district services to adult life.

Participation in YAB activities builds the personal advocacy and leadership skills of participants, provides a forum for students to network with each other and professionals in the field, and is a great networking for seniors and professionals.

Who are the members of the YAB?

YAB members include Connecticut students and youth with disabilities ages 14 to 26 years old who have an interest in learning leadership skills and taking on leadership roles in the state. Currently, we have 26 active participants and 125 student and youth on our e-mail list.

Where and when does the YAB meet?

The YAB meets four times a year in conjunction with the COP meetings to plan activities for the year. Additionally, several meetings are held throughout the year via phone or web-based conference calls to discuss current trends in secondary transition. Physical presence is not mandatory as members can participate in a variety of ways including review of documents and offering opinions via e-mail or social media.

How is the YAB different from the Special Education Youth Advocacy Council (SEYAC)?

- The YAB work focuses on secondary transition and beyond; the SEYAC work focuses on special education expectations for students in middle and high school.
- YAB students and youth can serve on SEYAC in school district board.
- SEYAC holds two of the meetings on site at the school in district, and one conference off site.
- School district students come to all three sessions.

How can I get involved?

Anyone can refer a student or youth to the YAB. Please contact Beth Red, CT Parent Advocacy Center, at bred@parentcenter.org or 800-379-5089 for more information.
The Future of the YAB

- Current leadership at the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education
- Strengthen connection between Special Education Youth Advisory Council (YAC) and Secondary Transition Youth Advisory Board (YAB)
- Collaboration between CSDE, CPAC, SERC, and other agencies/groups
- Regular web-based and in person meetings
- Training by YAB for professionals (e.g., to increase student involvement in the transition planning process; to improve services and supports provided to youth with disabilities as they transition from school to adult life)
- Training by YAB for youth (e.g., to increase opportunities to develop independence, self-advocacy, and leadership skills; to be empowered to take on leadership roles in order to make positive changes for youth with disabilities)
How do we connect with students and youth?

Anyone can refer a student or youth to the YAB. Please contact Beth Reel, CT Parent Advocacy Center, at breel@cpacinc.org or 860-739-3089 for more information.

Referrals from:

- School Staff
- Youth Leadership Forum
- Members of the YAB
- Special Education Youth Advisory Council (14-18)
- Agency Staff
- Family Members
- Members of the CT CoP
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<tr>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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<tbody>
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