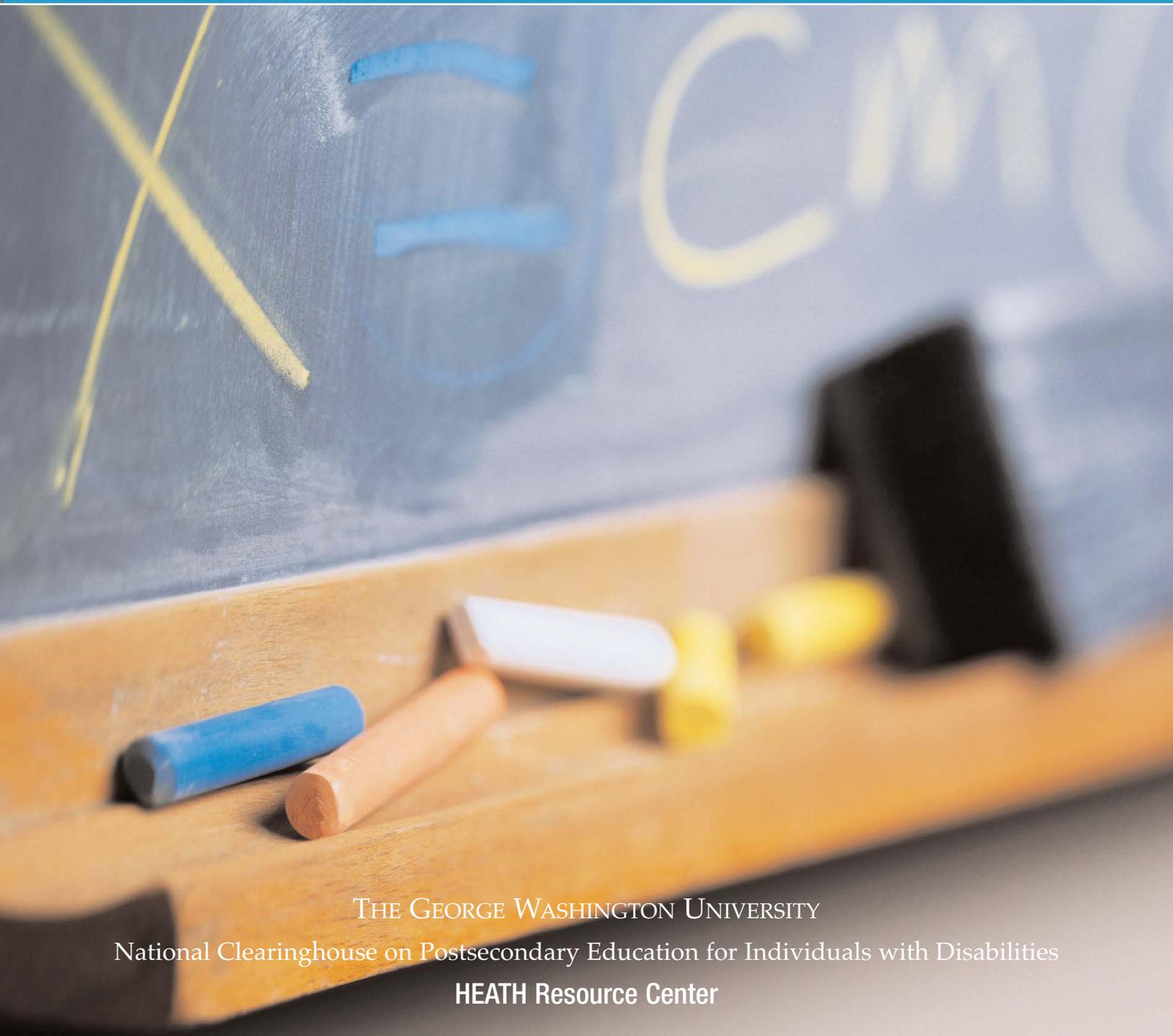# GUIDANCE AND CAREER COUNSELORS' TOOLKIT

Advising High School Students with Disabilities on Postsecondary Options

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

National Clearinghouse on Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Disabilities

HEATH Resource Center

GUIDANCE AND CAREER COUNSELORS' TOOLKIT:

Advising High School Students With Disabilities on Postsecondary Options

The George Washington University

HEATH Resource Center

National Clearinghouse on Postsecondary Education
for Individuals with Disabilities

2121 K Street, NW, Suite 220
Washington, DC 20037
Telephone: 1-800-544-3284 or 202-973-0904
Email: askheath@gwu.edu
Website: www.heath.gwu.edu

Dr. Lynda West, Principal Investigator
Dr. Pamela Ekpone, Director
Zavolia Willis, Associate Director
Daniel Gardner, Publications Manager/Senior Editor
Nasra Abdi, Research Associate/Webmaster
Dr. Michael Ward, Research/Publications

FEBRUARY 2006

IDEAs
that Work
U.S OFFICE OF SPECIAL
EDUCATION PROGRAMS

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART ONE
TOOLS FOR COUNSELING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

PART TWO
SERVICES AND STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

PART THREE
COLLEGE, CAREER, AND OTHER POSTSECONDARY OPTIONS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

INTRODUCTION

This Toolkit is intended to help guidance and career counselors to better assist high school students with disabilities in accomplishing transitions into postsecondary education and employment. Professionals working in the area of transition can inspire and encourage students with disabilities to strive for high standards of living, learning, and working; goals that are applicable for ALL students. As professionals working with students with disabilities, we must work to reduce the persistent gap in opportunities that separates these students from their peers without disabilities.

The 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that beginning no later than the first Individualized Education Program (IEP) to be in effect when the child is 16, and updated annually thereafter, the IEP include appropriate, measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills.

High school counselors are important allies and advocates of students with disabilities who are planning for these transitions. In developing this handbook, we reached out across the country to counselors, who generously shared with us their thoughts and concerns about the particular challenges confronting today's high school students with disabilities. In response to their input, we have assembled this Toolkit of information and resources.

The Toolkit is designed for easy reference and use. Each topic heading appears in the form of a question in the Table of Contents, and each corresponding section contains discussion that provides answers to the question posed. Each section concludes with a list of references and sources from which the discussion was drawn. Counselors should take particular note of these sources, as many are significant in the field of postsecondary education and disability. Concluding the Toolkit are the Appendices which consist of an extensive listing of related organizations and websites, and a packet of additional tools to further your work with students. The Toolkit is also available on CD-ROM and appears at the HEATH Website, www.heath.gwu.edu.

As a nation, we have affirmed our commitment to the education of ALL children. As guardians of the promise that "No Child is Left Behind" in the acquisition of a meaningful secondary education, let us be particularly vigilant of the hopes, aspirations, and abilities of our students with disabilities. We hope that the following Toolkit will become a trusted resource for you and your colleagues as you continue to support students with disabilities to achieve their goals for education, employment, and life.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-446) which amended the IDEA, was signed on December 3, 2004 and became effective July 1, 2005. The transition services provisions were changed in the new law.

Part One: Tools for Counseling Students with Disabilities

In giving advice, seek to help, not please, your friend. - Solon 638 BC - 559 BC

1

What are the most common disabilities that counselors may encounter?

In giving advice, seek to help, not please, your friend.
- Solon 638 BC - 559 BC

The U.S. Department of Education estimates that as many as 5.5 million students in elementary and secondary grades may have a disability (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2001). In order to provide all students the best possible guidance toward their postsecondary options, counselors need to be aware of the major disability categories that entitle students to special education or related services in elementary and secondary education or academic adjustments, including auxiliary aids and services, at the postsecondary level.

The following disability categories are defined in descending order of frequency of students served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), as reported in the federal regulations implementing the IDEA, 34-CFR-Code of Federal Regulations, Part 300, Subparts A-C (Federal Register, Vol. 64, No. 48, March 12, 1999). (Note: The section numbers for these regulatory definitions may change when final regulations for IDEA 2004 are implemented.)

LEARNING DISABILITIES

Students with specific learning disabilities are being served more frequently under IDEA than students with any other major disability. A specific learning disability is defined as:

> A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes
> involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written,
> that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak,
> read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including such
> conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain
> dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.
> (34 CFR, Section 300.7)

The Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities (ACALD) defines a specific learning disability as:

> A chronic condition of presumed neurological origin, which selectively interferes
> with the development, integration, and/or demonstration of verbal and/or nonverbal abilities.
> Specific learning disabilities exist as a distinct handicapping condition in the presence of average to
> superior intelligence, adequate sensory and motor systems, and adequate learning opportunities.
> (ACALD, 2003)

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENTS

Speech and language impairments ranked second in frequency of service under IDEA with approximately 1,087,000 students with speech and language impairments served in 2000 (NCES, 2001). The IDEA regulations define a speech and language impairment as:

> A communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation,
> language impairment, or a voice impairment, that adversely affects
> a child's educational performance.
> (34 CFR, Section 300.7)

MENTAL RETARDATION

Mental retardation ranked third in 2000 in the number of students served under IDEA. Approximately 614,000 students were identified as mentally retarded and received services under IDEA (NCES, 2001). The IDEA regulations define mental retardation as:

> …significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the development period, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.
> (34 CFR, Section 300.7)

EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE

In 2000, approximately 470,000 students were identified with emotional disturbance and served under IDEA (NCES, 2001). The IDEA regulations define emotional disturbance as:

> A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance: an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors; an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers; inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances; a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.
> (34 CFR, Section 300.7)

OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENTS

In 2000, approximately 254,000 students were served under IDEA with other health impairments (other than learning disabilities, speech and language impairments, mental retardation, emotional disturbance, multiple disabilities, autism, visual impairments, traumatic brain injury, orthopedic impairments, developmental delay, deaf-blindness) [NCES, 2001]. The IDEA regulations define other health impairments as:

> …limited strength, vitality, or alertness…due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, and sickle cell anemia that adversely affects a child's educational performance.
> (34 CFR, Section 300.7)

MULTIPLE DISABILITIES

Approximately 113,000 students with multiple disabilities were served under IDEA in 2000 (NCES, 2001). The IDEA regulations define multiple disabilities as:

> …concomitant impairments (such as mental retardation-blindness, mental retardation-orthopedic impairment, etc.), the combination of which causes such severe educational problems that the problems cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments.
> (34 CFR, Section 300.7)

Counselors should note that deaf-blindness is not regarded as a multiple disability since this condition is a separate category.

HEARING IMPAIRMENTS AND DEAFNESS

Over 71,000 students with hearing impairments were served under IDEA in 2000 (NCES, 2001). Hearing impairment, not to be confused with deaf-blindness, is a separate category that includes deafness. The IDEA regulations define hearing impairment as:

> An impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance but that is not included under the definition of deafness.
> (34 CFR, Section 300.7)

The IDEA regulations define deafness as:

> A hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic formation through hearing, with or without amplification, and that adversely affects a child's educational performance.
> (34 CFR, Section 300.7)

ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENTS

More than 71,000 students with orthopedic impairments were served under IDEA in 2000 (NCES, 2001). The IDEA regulations define orthopedic impairments as:

> A severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance [and] includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly (e.g., clubfoot, absence of some member, etc.), impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis, etc.), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures).
> (34 CFR, Section 300.7)

AUTISM

In 2000, more than 65,000 students with autism were served under IDEA (NCES, 2001). The IDEA regulations define autism as:

> A developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age 3, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences.
> (34 CFR, Section 300.7)

Autism is not to be confused with the category of emotional disturbance although students who are diagnosed with an emotional disturbance may exhibit some characteristics of autism. In the 1990 reauthorization of IDEA, autism was recognized as a distinct disability category.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS AND BLINDNESS

There were approximately 26,590 students with visual impairments, including partial sight and blindness, served under IDEA in 2000 (NCES, 2001). The IDEA regulations define visual impairment as:

> An impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance.
> (34 CFR, Section 300.7)

DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY

Developmental delay is an optional category used for serving students aged three through nine (34 CFR, Section 300.7). There were approximately 19,000 children served under IDEA in 2000 (NCES, 2001). This category refers to extensive delays in the development of one or more areas of functioning and gives "educators the option of planning and implementing programs for young children with disabilities without attaching a specific disability label" (Moller & Linehan, 2001).

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

Nearly 14,000 students with traumatic brain injury were served under IDEA in 2000 (NCES, 2001). The IDEA regulations definition is:

> An acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance [and] applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech.
> (34 CFR, Section 300.7)

Counselors should note that the traumatic brain injury disability category does not include brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or induced by birth trauma. Rather, to be regarded as a traumatic brain injury, the injury to the brain must be acquired (Heward, 2003).

DEAF-BLINDNESS

The category of deaf-blindness was the least frequently served under IDEA in 2000, with approximately 1,800 students served (NCES, 2001). The IDEA regulations definition is:

> …concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.
> (34 CFR, Section 300.7)

ADDITIONAL TOOL

A comprehensive listing of Weblinks appearsin the Appendices at the back of this Toolkit. Take time to familiarize yourself with the major organizations related to each disability category and to contact those organizations for additional information.

Counselors may also want to consult the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Text Revision, commonly referred to as DSM-IV-TR (American Psychiatric Association, 2000), for further specific information regarding disabilities.

References:

Culatta, R. A., Tompkins, J. R., & Werts, M. G. (2003). *Fundamentals of special education*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice-Hall.

Heward, W. L. (2003). Exceptional children: *An introduction to special education*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice-Hall.

Moller, E., & Linehan, P. (2001). *Federal disability terms: A review of state use*. QTA Project Forum Publication. Alexandria, VA: National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE).

Newton, C. J. (1996). *Interactive glossary of mental health and disability terms*. Retrieved March 9, 2005 from the Mental Health Internet Resources, Inc. Website: www.therapistfinder.net/glossary/

Orto, A. E., & Marinelli, R. P. (Eds.) (1995). *Encyclopedia of disability and rehabilitation*. New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan.

Smith, T. E., Polloway, E. A., Patton, J. R., & Dowdy, C. A. (2001). *Teaching students with special needs in inclusive settings*. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.

Taymans, J. M., & West, L. L. (Eds.). (2000). *Unlocking potential: College and other choices for people with LD and AD/HD*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House, Inc.

2

What are the critical strategies for counseling students with disabilities?

In giving advice, seek to help, not please, your friend.
- Solon 638 BC - 559 BC

Counselors play an important role in the success of all students. Here are a few strategies to help counselors maintain a high level of success in counseling students with disabilities:

1) Review the individual transition needs of each student.

Transition is a term used to describe the preparation of students with disabilities for life beyond a K-12 general education and special curriculum or a K-12 school system. Effective transition planning is critical to the success of students with disabilities after high school and is a principal theme of this Toolkit. See the section called for more discussion of transition.

2) Carefully and periodically review the Individual Education Programs (IEPs) of students with disabilities.

Ensuring that IEPs include transition goals based on students' needs, taking into account students' strengths, preferences, and interests, and tracking students' progress toward these goals will enable you to plan and construct supportive bridges to postsecondary education and employment.

3) Identify ways to facilitate a smooth transition from high school to postsecondary education and employment.

Forethought about the following broad areas can help you anticipate and avoid potential obstacles to student transitions (many of these considerations are discussed in greater detail elsewhere in this guide):

Career/Vocational
· career or occupational goals
· ability assessments
· job shadowing
· work-based experiences
· work-site accommodations
· income requirements

Educational
· educational goals
· access/accommodation needs
· financial aid options

Independent Living
· student interests
· lifestyle choices
· community services support
· guardianship or conservatorship support
· family support
· medical and health care needs
· transportation needs
· independent living skills
· housing needs and options
· personal money management

Leisure
· volunteer services
· recreational activities
· hobbies

4) Focus assistance on individuals rather than programs.

Identify students' needs, interests, talents, and goals before identifying specific postsecondary education and employment programs.

5) Advocate for students with disabilities during the transition process.

Be encouraging, facilitative, and supportive as you assist students in transitioning from high school to postsecondary education, employment, and independent living.

6) Provide guidance directly to general educators and special subject teachers.

Participate in professional and staff development activities that promote positive attitudes toward teaching and learning, and encourage respect and understanding of ALL students, with or without disabilities. Facilitate and lead discussions, chair committees, and conduct in-service training on issues and topics surrounding transition to inform and advocate for students with disabilities.

7) Encourage students with disabilities throughout the counseling process to develop the following skill sets:

- · communication skills
- · technology skills
- · organization skills
- · career/employment awareness
- · interpersonal skills
- · problem solving/ decision making/ goal setting
- · conflict resolution
- · self-advocacy

While all students should be encouraged to develop these skills, their mastery is paramount for students with disabilities to achieve successful transitions into postsecondary schooling and employment.

References:

Heward, W. L. (2003). *Exceptional children: An introduction to special education*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice-Hall.

Herr, E. (1997). *Counseling employment–bound youth*. Greensboro, NC: ERIC/CASS Publications.

Kohler, M., & Kravets, M. (1998). *Counseling secondary students with learning disabilities: A ready-to-use guide to help students prepare for college and work*. New York: Center for Applied Research in Education.

Lewis, R. B., & Doorlag, D. H. (2003). *Teaching special students in general education classrooms*. Upper Saddle River, NJ : Merrill Prentice-Hall.

Mooney, J., & Cole, D. (2000). *Learning outside the lines*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Strichart, S., & Mangrum, C. (2001). *Teaching learning strategies and study skills to students with learning disabilities, attention deficit disorders and special needs*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

3

What is the counselor's role in the interdisciplinary planning process?

In giving advice, seek to help, not please, your friend.
- Solon 638 BC - 559 BC

Effective counseling of students with disabilities requires counselors to listen to students, communicate students' needs, collaborate with a variety of local or district level interdisciplinary teams (e.g. IEP/Transition teams, transition support teams, monitoring and evaluation teams), coordinate with service providers, and coordinate transition resources that match students' needs.

Counselors may facilitate the collaboration process with colleagues in other disciplines to effectively support high school students with disabilities. Counselors may find special education teachers to be particularly knowledgeable about student's true potential to achieve postsecondary goals.

Collectively, the various players supporting a student's transition form an interdisciplinary planning team. Team members may rely on your guidance and communication expertise to help students with disabilities access postsecondary education options.

Interdisciplinary planning team members may include:

· students
· parents and guardians
· special education teachers
· counselors
· vocational rehabilitation counselors or other adult service providers (e.g., case managers from devel opmental disabilities services)
· special education coordinators
· general education teachers (e.g. English, mathematics, science, history)
· special subject teachers (e.g., art, music, physical education)
· career technical education teachers
· administrators
· transition specialists (where available)

Counselors can highlight the following points to the interdisciplinary planning team members as they work toward stronger building-level support for students with disabilities:

1) Center all conversations on the individual student.

People (i.e. students and families), not programs, should be the major concern of the interdisciplinary team members. Students should be encouraged to identify their own needs, talents, preferences, interests, supports, and lifestyles. In addition, students should be encouraged to converse with team members about their academic, career, employment, living, or lifestyle goals beyond high school.

2) Include students and family members in all IEP meetings where transition planning occurs or takes place.

Student participation is essential in all meetings in which transition planning is discussed. In fact, students should be encouraged to lead their own meetings as much as possible. Students who actively participate in IEP and transition planning are generally better prepared to self-advocate after high school. The Council for Exceptional Children has prepared Student-Led IEPs: A Guide for Student Involvement, a useful guide to encouraging effective student participation in the IEP process. Student's Guide to the IEP, from the National Information Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY), is another helpful resource.

Parent involvement is also essential to effective transition planning. Parents know their children's strengths, preferences, learning styles, and goals better than anyone. Counselors can confirm that parents or other family members are engaged contributors to interdisciplinary planning.

3) Encourage students to be actively engaged in their own transition planning from high school to postsecondary education or employment.

Students should not be passive or silent as planning continues around them. Allow students frequent opportunities to provide input and feedback as important transition decisions are made. Ongoing student involvement with and feedback to the interdisciplinary planning team will increase student satisfaction with coursework, academic supports; career, community, and volunteer experiences; and related support services.

4) Identify students' strengths and needs.

The particular strengths and needs of each student with a disability must be the primary focus of interdisciplinary planning. Any barriers to meeting students' needs should be identified, addressed, and resolved as quickly as possible. The team should approach each set of needs with creativity, innovation, and a willingness to seek new resources and solutions rather than relying on the same resources used in the past.

5) Be organized, well informed, and goal-oriented in addressing needs, issues, and concerns of students with disabilities.

Stay informed about current trends and best practices in transition. Doing so facilitates the planning team's goal of identifying and pursuing postsecondary options that are consistent with student needs, talents, preferences, interests, finances, and lifestyle choices. Depending on the goals, strengths, and needs of an individual student, some of the following resources may be helpful:

- National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET)
  www.NCSET.org
- National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Educational Support (NCSPES)
  www.rrtc.hawaii.edu
- PACER Centers
  Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights
  www.pacer.org
- TransCen, Inc.
  www.transcen.org

6) Identify needed transition services for each student.

Transition services that are responsive to students' individual needs may incorporate and foster links to valuable resources for students with disabilities. Such resources might include:

- Postsecondary education institutions and names and phone numbers of contacts of persons responsible for providing services to students with disabilities. Refer to directories such as the *K&W Guide to Colleges for Students with Learning Disabilities* by Kravets & Wax and the Peterson's *Colleges with Programs for Students with Learning Disabilities or Attention Deficit Disorder* edited by Mangrum & Strichart.

- Employers and supervisors. Maintain a cumulative file of disability-supportive employers and supervisors located within the community.

- Businesses, companies, and corporations. The National Business and Disability Council (NBDC) and A Vision in Motion: Speaker's Bureau on Disability Issues (AVIM) are two such examples.

- Federal government agencies. These might include the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC), and the National Council on Disability (NCD).

- Consumer and advocacy groups, such as the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) and the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD).

- Professional and paraprofessional groups, such as Job Accommodation Network (JAN), Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTAC), and Disability Information and Research Centers (DIRC).

- Volunteer programs, such as National Library Services for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLSBPH) and Meals on Wheels.

- financial aid sources. HEATH's annually revised resource paper, *Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities,* the federal financial aid Website (http://studentaid.ed.gov), and other financial aid Websites (e.g. www.finaid.org) are good starting points.

- Independent and assisted living facilities and programs. The Independent Living Research Utilization (ILRU) program, www.ilru.org, is an excellent source of information.

Resources to support the IEP team in identifying the needed transition services include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Key Provisions on Transition: IDEA 1997 compared to IDEA 2004
http://ncset.org/publications/related/ideatransition.asp

- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Titles I and V
www.eeoc.gov/policy/ada.html

- Integrating Transition Planning into the IEP Process
www.dcdt.org/publications/dcdt_publications/integrating.html

- Transition Planning and IEPs: General Information
www.ri.net/sorico/TRANSLIB18.htm

Counselors may find it useful to create a chart identifying the specific steps necessary for successful transition. Prominently posting these steps or targets helps to remind both students and counselors as they collaborate in the transition process. Developing planning steps, strategies, tools, and discussion topics may give counselors and IEP team members some ideas to consider when determining the transition service needs of the student. Actual steps and topics will likely vary, depending upon the school district, the student, his or her disability, and geographic location. Some issues the IEP team may consider for an IEP transition planning meeting may include the following:

- Order and placement of planning steps
- Participation of counselors in meetings
- Length and timing of meetings
- Meeting agenda items
- Aspects of transition

These topics may vary according to the needs of the student and the requirements of the school district. The following are important issues and options that the IEP team, in collaboration with the school counselor, may wish to consider when determining a student's transition services needs:

- Plans discussed during student-counselor transition planning conferences
- Issues/obstacles/barriers/supports to consider
- Life goals/long- and short-range planning
- Career goals/objectives/plans/aspirations
- Employment and internship opportunities
- Directories of postsecondary institutions/colleges/ universities
- Whether Vocational Rehabilitation Services may be needed
- Transportation options (e.g., will the student learn to drive, does the student drive already, and is public transportation accessible and affordable?)
- Housing/shelter options
- Medical/aging/screening/health care issues
- Accessibility issues (not only physical accessibility, but also instructional and attitudinal)
- Family structure/issues/influences/support
- Community services and supports
- Independent and assisted living options
- Financial aid needs and resources
- Academic progress/grades/requirements
- Monitoring progress/student-counselor conferences/checklists
- Graduation/promotion requirements
- Exit high school/student-counselor conferences

7) Maintain a current resource file to assist students with disabilities.

Develop a general disabilities resource file containing the names of common disabilities, brief descriptions or definitions as they appear in 34 CFR 300.7, common characteristics, contact information of associations and organizations related to specific disabilities, accompanying Websites and email addresses, and names of printed and electronic publications (including reference guides, specialty books, academic textbooks, and videos).

References:

Greene, G., & Kochhar-Bryant, C. (2002). *Pathways to successful transition for youth with disabilities*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice-Hall.

Heward, W. L. (2003). *Exceptional children: an introduction to special education*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice-Hall.

Leicester, M. (1999). *Disability voice*. Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Mason, C., McGahee, M., Jones, B., & Wallace, T. (2001). *Student-led IEPs*: A guide for student involvement. Arlington, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.

Shapiro, J., & Rich, R. (1999). *Facing learning disabilities in the adult years*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Zunker, V.G. (2002). C*areer counseling: Applied concepts of life planning*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

4

How do counselors facilitate the acquisition of self-determination & self-advocacy skills?

In giving advice, seek to help, not please, your friend.
- Solon 638 BC - 559 BC

Students' self-determination and self-advocacy skills are critical to their success in postsecondary education, employment, and adult living. As a high school counselor, you influence and encourage students toward greater self-determination and self-advocacy as they transition to postsecondary education and independent living. There are many ways counselors and other secondary school professionals can encourage student self-determination. Here are a few suggestions:

1) Explain self-determination to the student.

Self-determination is the ability to identify and achieve goals based on a foundation of knowing and valuing oneself. As such, self-determination is a manifestation of self-knowledge and results in an increased ability to make choices, take control, believe in oneself, and ultimately take action to reach one's goals.

2) Encourage students to be proactive.

Encouraging student self-determination is a key component of quality transition programming. Student self-determination is important during the transition process for several reasons. First, students' transition plans will be more relevant if they reflect students' needs, interests, and preferences. In addition, research indicates that students are more likely to achieve goals when they have participated in the goal setting process (Field, n.d.). Finally, the quest for self-determination is important throughout one's lifetime. When students acquire and practice skills that foster self-determination during their transition years, they develop skills that will benefit them throughout their lives.

3) Understand the laws as they pertain to self-determination.

The importance of self-determination is underscored in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. IDEA requires that beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when students with disabilities are 16, and updated annually thereafter, they have IEPs that include a statement of the students' transition services based on students' need, taking into account the students' strengths, preferences, and interests. IDEA also requires that the student be invited to participate in IEP team meetings when transition services are discussed. If a student does not attend the IEP meeting, the school or district shall take other steps to ensure that the student's strengths, preferences, and interests are considered. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, affirms that persons with disabilities have a right to self-determination, requires that individuals with disabilities be included as participants in the development of their Individual Plans for Employment, and empowers consumers with choices about which services to select.

Students who learn early on how to state their accommodation needs in functional, real-world terms will be better positioned to take advantage of the protections afforded by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). They will also be better able to help postsecondary institutions and employers effectively accommodate their needs.

4) Provide instruction for students in the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to be more self-determined.

Characteristics that have been linked to increased self-determination include:

- Awareness of secondary education options (i.e. vocational-technical education, academic college pre requisites, general business curriculum)
- Knowledge of postsecondary options and environments (e.g. requirements for working, occupational characteristics, college or technical school requirements)
- Awareness of personal preferences, interests, strengths, and limitations
- Ability to differentiate between wants and needs
- Ability to make choices based on preferences, interests, wants, and needs
- Ability to consider multiple options and to anticipate consequences for decisions
- Ability to initiate and take action when needed
- Ability to evaluate the outcomes of previous decisions and to revise future decisions accordingly
- Ability to set goals and solve problems
- Ability to strive for independence while recognizing interdependence with others
- Awareness of self-advocacy and self-evaluation skills
- Ability to self-regulate behavior
- Ability to work independently
- Ability to use communication skills such as negotiation, compromise, and persuasion to reach goals
- Ability to assume responsibility for actions and decisions
- Awareness of qualities of self-confidence, self-esteem, creativity, and persistence

Many schools already provide instruction about these characteristics. Schools can maximize student self-determination by carefully examining course offerings to assure that these skills are taught and that students have opportunities to practice and apply them. Instructional packages designed to guide teachers and counselors in the instruction of these skills are readily available. Visit www.postitt.org, a comprehensive Website of transition resources.

5) Provide opportunities for students to practice self-determination.

Providing students with frequent opportunities for choice, encouraging appropriate risk taking, and supporting exploratory activities, such as career exploration, all help to encourage student self-determination. Pairing students with mentors also will help them explore their communities and "adult world" options.

6) Create an environment that encourages and supports self-determination throughout the school and on a system-wide basis.

Encouraging student, parent, and staff self-determination provides students with role models and a setting that is conducive to self-determination.

7) Encourage student self-advocacy.

Self-advocacy skills, which go hand-in-hand with self-determination, are important for anyone, but especially for those with disabilities. When discussing self-advocacy with students, guide them to strategies that will help them:

• Have self-knowledge of strengths, preferences, and needs
• Be assertive, but not aggressive
• Know their rights
• Make appropriate decisions
• Communicate effectively in one-on-one, small-group, and large-group situations
• Negotiate
• Compromise
• Use persuasion
• Be careful, active listeners
• Navigate through systems and bureaucracies

Counselors, teachers, and families can teach these strategies. By practicing these strategies with you, the counselor, students can become more confident and successful in achieving their goals.

Helpful Links:

• National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY) Website: www.nichcy.org

• Post-ITT Website: www.postitt.org/frame/index.htm

References:

Cobb, J. (2002). *Learning how to learn: Getting into and surviving college when you have a learning disability (2nd ed.)*. Annapolis, MD: Child Welfare League of America.

Field, S. (n.d.). *Self-determination fact sheet (Article TF 00-3)*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University.

Field, S., Martin, J., Miller, R., Ward, M., & Wehmeyer, M. (1999). *A practical guide to teaching self-determination*. Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.

Greene, G., & Kochhar-Bryant, C. A. (2003). *Pathways to successful transition for youth with disabilities*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice-Hall.

Taymans, J.M., & West, L.L. (Eds.). (2000). *Unlocking potential: College and other choices for people with LD and AD/HD*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

U. S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. (1998). *Auxiliary Aids and Services for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities: Higher Education's Obligations under Section 504 and Title II of the ADA*. Retrieved March 1, 2005, from www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/auxaids.html

U. S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. (2004). *Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities*. Retrieved March 1, 2005, from http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html

Wehmeyer, M., Agran, M., & Hughes, C. (1997). *Teaching self-determination to students with disabilities: Basic skills for successful transition*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

5

What laws and legal resources do counselors need to know?

In giving advice, seek to help, not please, your friend.
- Solon 638 BC - 559 BC

Familiarity with the laws and legal resources that support the independence, opportunities, aspirations, and freedoms of individuals with disabilities throughout all aspects of American life will help to make you a more informed and effective counselor.

Significant laws pertaining to educational services and vocational access for individuals with disabilities include:

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (as amended by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004)
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended
- Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998
- No Child Left Behind Act

ADDITIONAL TOOLS

Counselors will want to bookmark the following Websites, which contain information and resources about laws that protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in educational and employment settings.

U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights
www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html

ADA Technical Assistance Program
www.adata.org

U.S. General Services Administration Section 508 Website
www.section508.gov

U.S. Department of Justice ADA Information
www.ada.gov/adahom1.htm

U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs IDEA Website
www.ed.gov/policy/speced/leg/idea/history.html

U.S. Department of Education No Child Left Behind Website
www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml?src=ln

Cornell University's Disability Law Web Pages
www.law.cornell.edu/topics/disability.html

Knowing the laws that protect the rights of individuals with disabilities is an important step in the process of becoming self-determined. However, counselors should advise their students with disabilities that a legal solution to disagreements and perceived injustices are often the most costly and time consuming, and therefore the least desirable alternative to resolve them. Encourage students to self-advocate in a reasoned manner and to pursue access to programs and services in an informed but non-confrontational way.

6

How can career assessment benefit student transition?

In giving advice, seek to help, not please, your friend.
- Solon 638 BC - 559 BC

Career assessment can be a valuable tool for all students, especially those with educational or employment challenges. Discovering one's abilities, talents, and skills, as well as more detailed notions about career and postsecondary education options, motivates and empowers students. Further, career assessment frequently helps to underscore the relevance of what students are learning in school with future career goals and occupational demands.

Career assessment can help students identify:

- dreams and aspirations
- goals
- interests
- learning style preferences
- skills
- work values and traits
- aptitudes
- possible barriers to success in postsecondary education and/or employment

However, meaningful career assessment is time consuming, both for the counselor and the student. Because counselors have so many demands on their time, a simple framework for career assessment may help them decide which students require more or less time and attention. Such a framework is based on the intensity of student need and should include:

- screening
- exploratory assessment
- vocational evaluation

SCREENING: LEVEL ONE ASSESSMENT

Screening for most students simply involves an interview with the counselor, identifying dreams and goals, and taking one of many commercially developed interest inventories or aptitude tests. Many such assessments can be found on the Internet, however some require a fee and most are not standardized (i.e., no validity or reliability). Therefore, carefully research web-based assessments prior to using them. The Website of the National Career Development Association at www.ncda.org is a good place to begin a search for interest and aptitude tests.

Commercially available exploration systems (e.g., GIS, CHOICES, bridges.com) are useful screening tools, as is O*NET, the U.S. Department of Labor's assessment and occupational information system. Counselors and students who are unable to select a career direction or who need more information to make career-related decisions should proceed to the exploratory phase of career assessment.

EXPLORATORY ASSESSMENT: LEVEL TWO ASSESSMENT

Exploratory career assessment, sometimes called vocational assessment, can include:

- career information searches,
- informational interviews with professionals from particular careers,
- temperament surveys,
- additional aptitude or interest assessments, and
- identifying career (or transition needs) and potential barriers.

If correlating a student's interests and abilities with an identifiable career or transition plan remains difficult, counselors can refer the student for vocational evaluation.

VOCATIONAL EVALUATION: LEVEL THREE ASSESSMENT

Also known as comprehensive career assessment, these evaluations use real or simulated work (actual hands-on experiences with simulated work samples) as a major part of the assessment. Some school systems employ vocational evaluators or assessment specialists who are trained to provide these services, but many do not. In such cases, counselors may want to refer students (either via the vocational rehabilitation system or through local transition services) to programs that employ vocational evaluators (and preferably ones who are certified by the Commission on Certification of Work Adjustment and Vocational Evaluation Specialists, www.ccwaves.org). These professionals, Certified in Vocational Evaluation (CVE), are qualified to provide all three levels of assessment services.

COUNSELOR ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Professional counselors may already have training and experience conducting career assessments with high school students. All career assessments are individualized since each student brings different goals, interests, abilities, and needs to the process. However, due to the many demands on their time and the number of students they serve, counselors often must rely on:

- group informational sessions,
- short fact sheets or newsletters,
- career technology orientations from career tech programs,
- college questionnaires, and
- group administered aptitude or interest inventories.

At the very least, these tools allow counselors to meet school system guidelines or to quickly identify baseline information for those students who do not have clear and realistic career goals or appropriate academic programs to meet them.

ACCESS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Be aware that many commercially available instruments used in career assessment are designed with the general population in mind (and standardized using segments of the general population), and may not be accessible or appropriate for some students with disabilities. The following are just a few examples of instruments that have been designed specifically for assessing career directions for individuals with certain types of disabilities:

1. Brigance Life Skills/ Employability Skills Inventories (1995) by Albert   Brigance. Curriculum Associates, Inc, North Billerica, MA.

2. Career Thoughts Inventory (1996) by James Sampson et al. Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc. Adel, IA.

3. Reading-Free Vocational Interest Inventory:2 (2002) by Ralph Becker. Elbem Publications, Columbus, OH.

COLLABORATING WITH TRANSITION SPECIALISTS

Some school systems employ special education transition specialists who can assist you with career assessments. Special education teachers who work with students with more severe disabilities, especially those who provide community-based instruction and assessments, may also be knowledgeable about specially designed assessments. School systems may also have teachers or transition specialists who are trained as job coaches. They, too, can conduct assessments in the community including functional skills assessments.

OTHER CAREER ASSESSMENT ASSISTANCE

Many sources are available to supplement or provide guidelines for career assessments.

• Many state departments of education have developed their own guides with user-friendly transition assessment questionnaires for students, teachers, and parents.

• The Council for Exceptional Children's publication Assess for Success: Handbook on Transition Assessment is a good starting point.

• The Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Association (www.vewaa.org)

• Many colleges and universities have career centers and accompanying Websites. Many of these sites contain simple, self-administered and self-reporting instruments that may be useful for students or for counselors seeking quick, on-line information.

 • State online career networks (e.g., Virginia View, www.vaview.vt.edu)
   provide quick assessments, career curricula, and instructional strategies.

The local military recruitment office can arrange to administer the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) for students with sufficient reading ability. This is a service frequently provided to schools that don't traditionally direct students toward military service.

References:

Kapes, J.T., & Whitfield, E.A. (2002). *A counselor's guide to career assessment instruments (4th ed.*). Tulsa, OK: National Career Development Association.

Leconte, P.J. (1999). *Vocational evaluation. In S.H. deFur & J.R. Patton (Eds.)*, Transition and School-based Services for Enhancing the Transition Process (pp. 387-417). Austin, TX: PRO-ED.

Leconte, P.J., & Neubert, D.A. (1997). *Vocational assessment: The kick-off point for transition. Alliance, The Newsletter of the National Transition Alliance,* 2(2), 1, 3-4, 8.

Rothenbacher, C., & Leconte, P. (1990). Vocational assessment: A guide for parents and professionals. *Transition Summary,* 6, 1-15. Washington, DC: National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY).

Sitlington, P.L., Neubert, D.A., Begun, W., Lombard, R.C., & Leconte, P.J. ((1996). *Assess for Success: Handbook on Transition Assessment*. Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.

Smith, F., Lombard, R., Neubert, D., Leconte, P., Rothenbacher, C., & Sitlington, P. (1995). Position paper of the interdisciplinary council on vocational evaluation and assessment. *Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education*, 17, 41-42.

7

What are career pathways and how can they help?

In giving advice, seek to help, not please, your friend.
- Solon 638 BC - 559 BC

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that there are more than 12,000 career options for students to choose. Career pathways or clusters are broad groups of careers that share similar characteristics and whose employment requirements call for many common interests, strengths, and competencies. Such pathways are one of the most effective ways to help students navigate among thousands of different occupations. The groupings encompass the entire spectrum of career options, providing opportunities for all students and all ability levels.

Choosing a career requires student planning and forethought. In many cases, counselors will need to guide the student through the process of identifying a career. The first step requires exposing students to various career options. Students then must identify interests, abilities, talents, strengths, and weaknesses. Ideally, students will research and explore various paths; those who have a variety of experiences are better equipped to make plans for the future.

Exploring career pathways prepares students for their futures and offers several benefits:

- Opportunities for students to see how the skills and knowledge they are developing in school relate to a range of career options.

- Opportunities for students to learn about various career options and not to focus too specifically too soon on any one training path.

- Opportunities to develop career development plans for all students, regardless of interests, abilities, talents, or desired levels of education.

- Numerous occupations from which to choose, each requiring a different level of education and training.

- Maximum flexibility in the career decision-making process, allowing students to move between pathways at any time without a gap or penalty.

- Opportunities for students to assess their own academic performances, make improvements where necessary, and attain personal and career goals.

Introducing students to career pathways allows them to consider and experiment with numerous options for education and employment while providing focus and structure to the process of identifying their educational and career goals.

The U.S. Department of Labor has created clusters of careers to help schools to provide instruction and monitor student experience. The following 16 broad categories encompass virtually all occupations from entry through professional levels, including those that require varying degrees of education and training, as exemplified by the sample careers within each cluster:

Agricultural & Natural Resources
Food Scientist
Environmental Engineer
Agriculture Teacher
Animal Scientist
Biochemist
Veterinarian Assistant

Business and Administration
Human Resource Administrator
Administrative Specialist
Financial Analyst
International Trade Manager
Entrepreneur
Accountant

Education and Training
Teacher
Principal
School Counselor
College Professor
Corporate Trainer
Coach

Health Science
Pediatrician
Physical Therapist
Radiological Technologist
Occupational Therapist
Medical Assistant

Human Services
Social Worker
Psychologist
Child Care Worker
Substance Abuse Specialist
Employment Specialist
Psychotherapist

Law and Public Safety
Attorney
Fire Fighter/Police Officer
Judge
Paramedic
Paralegal

Government and Public Administration
Legislator
City Manager
Policy/Budget Analyst
Recreation/Parks Director
State/Federal Agency Director
Urban/Regional Planner

Scientific Research/ Engineering
Chemical Engineer
Mathematician
Bio Technologist
Electrical Engineer
Biologist
Oceanographer

Arts, A/V Technology & Communications
Actor
Video Producer
Journalist
Audio Engineer
Telecommunications Technologist
Printing/Graphics Technologist

Architecture and Construction
Contractor
Architect
Electrician
Heavy Equipment Operator
Carpenter
Plumber

Finance
Stock Broker
Banker
Insurance Agent
Financial Planner
Loan Officer
Tax Examiner

Hospitality and Tourism
Lodging Manager
Chef
Travel and Tourism Manager
Food Service Manager
Restaurant Manager
Leisure and Entertainment Manager

Information Technology
Software Engineer
Network Administrator
Web Designer/Developer
Database Manager
Technical Writer
Multimedia Producer

Manufacturing
Machinist
Manufacturing Engineer
Automated Process Technician
Production Engineer/Technician
Welding Technician
Quality Technician

Retail/Wholesale Sales and Service
Sales Associate
Interior Designer
Marketing Director
Buyer
Real Estate Broker
Customer Service Representative

Transportation, Distribution & Logistics
Pilot
Automotive Technician
Logistics Manager
Flight Attendant
Warehouse Manager
Truck Driver

Helpful Links:

• Career Voyages: www.careervoyages.gov/index.cfm

• Educational Resources Information Center on Adult, Career and Vocational Education (ERIC/ACVE) Website: www.ericacve.org

• Kalamazoo Valley Community College Website: www.kvcc.edu/counsel/career/services.htm

• State of Michigan Department of Career Development Website: www.michigan.gov/mdcd

References:

Texas Education Agency. (1996, August). *Career pathways toolbook* (p.4). Austin, TX: Author.

8

How can counselors assist parents to become affective advocates?

In giving advice, seek to help, not please, your friend.
- Solon 638 BC - 559 BC

Many parents look to counselors for guidance and support in the college search, application, and admissions process. Some parents of students with disabilities may be particularly reliant on any information and resources counselors provide while others, through years of research and advocacy, have become quite adept in addressing and meeting the educational needs of their children. Counselors should recognize these parent experts as another resource from which to learn about disabilities, learning strategies, adaptive technology, self-advocacy, and more.

There are a number of areas where you can be particularly helpful in orienting parents to the challenges confronting their young adult students with disabilities as they embark on learning, living, and working beyond high school. Here are several:

Different legal requirements apply. Parents will need to familiarize themselves with The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and with the ADA, to understand the ways they differ from the IDEA. Parents may have grown accustomed to the IDEA, Section 504, and Title II of the ADA, under which elementary and secondary schools are responsible for identifying and serving eligible students with disabilities. Upon completing secondary education or reaching the age of 22 years, students become responsible for self-identifying and seeking services and protections under Section 504 and the ADA.

Know the age of majority in your jurisdiction. In many states, individuals assume the rights of adults upon reaching the so-called "age of majority." In most jurisdictions, the age of majority is 18 years. The IDEA requires that, beginning not later than one year before the student reaches the age of majority under State law, the IEP include a statement that the student has been informed of his or her rights, if any, that will transfer to the student upon reaching the age of majority.

Self-advocacy is crucial. Ideally, students with disabilities will have learned a few things about advocacy from their parents throughout their secondary schooling. Yet, as should have been stressed throughout transition planning, the student's success in achieving education and employment goals after high school in no small part depends on his/her self-advocacy skills. Parents are important allies in supporting the development of their childrens' abilities to advocate for themselves.

Parent groups can help. There are numerous support groups designed to inform and assist the parents of students with disabilities:

- Parent Training and Information Centers (PTIs). A national network of parent training centers provides training and information to parents of infants, toddlers, school aged children, and young adults with disabilities and the professionals who work with their families. To access this network and to connect parents with services in your state, contact The Technical Assistance Alliance for Parent Centers at 1.888.248.0822 or go to www.taalliance.org

- Parent-to-Parent Programs. Many parents find that support received from another parent who has a child with a similar disability is especially helpful. Parent-to-Parent programs match a trained Support Parent in a one-to-one relationship with a parent seeking support from another parent who has been there. There are over 600 local Parent-to-Parent programs that offer community-based information and support to parents of children with disabilities, chronic illnesses, or other special health care needs. Refer parents to local programs in your area by going to www.p2pusa.org.

By guiding parents to support and resource groups like those described here, and encouraging them to become familiar with crucial differences in the laws that govern access at the secondary and postsecondary levels, counselors play an important role in supporting not only student transitions, but parents as well.

Helpful Links:

Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights Center Website: www.pacer.org

Parent-to-Parent of the United States Website: www.p2pusa.org

Technical Assistance Alliance for Parents Website: www.taalliance.org

References:

National Center on Education and Secondary Transition, & the Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights (PACER) Center. (March 2002) *Parenting postsecondary students with disabilities: Becoming the mentor, advocate, and guide your young adult needs. Parent Brief*. Retrieved March 9, 2005 from www.ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=208.

Taymans, J.M., & West, L.L. (Eds.). (2000). *Unlocking potential: College and other choices for people with LD and AD/HD*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

Part Two: Services and Strategies for Students with Disabilities

Never discourage anyone...who continually makes progress, no matter how slow.. - Plato

9

What are transition services for students with disabilities?

Never discourage anyone...who continually makes progress, no matter how slow.

- Plato

The term transition refers to a vast, dynamic field about which much has been written. As amended in 2004, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, in part, defines transition services to be:

> A coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.
>
> Section 602 (34)(A)

The IDEA requires parents to be invited to participate in the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) and the student must be invited if the purpose of the meeting will be consideration of transition services.

A good working definition of transition that recognizes current thinking about its practice and implementation was prepared by the Council for Exceptional Children and, in part, states:

> Transition refers to a change in status from behaving primarily as a student to assuming emergent adult roles in the community. These roles include employment, participating in postsecondary education, maintaining a home, becoming appropriately involved in the community.
>
> CEC, 1999

Thus, transition planning for your students with disabilities who are looking at their education and employment options beyond high school is very likely underway. Effective transition requires a collaborative effort on the part of teachers, administrators, related services providers, special education personnel, vocational assessment personnel, students, and others. In fact, the students themselves are invited to be active participants in conceptualizing and implementing their own transition into postsecondary education and employment.

The 2004 reauthorization of IDEA requires that beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child is 16, and updated annually thereafter, the IEP include appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills. This requirement supports students' self-determination or direct involvement in their own education planning.

Counseling services are identified in the IDEA as a related service that may be necessary to assist students with disabilities to benefit from special education. As such you may be asked to play a role in the transition planning of students with disabilities. Any counseling you provide to students with disabilities should be mindful of and sensitive to their transition planning and any stated transition goals that have been incorporated into their IEPs. For example, counselors can provide students with career and personal development information, such as much of the material covered in this Toolkit, and monitor the requirements for graduation.

The following checklist was prepared by the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition. Keep these points in mind to ensure that students' transition services optimally reflect the content of their IEPs.

- Students are involved in developing their IEP and in transition planning.

- Students are given opportunities to develop self-determination, self-advocacy, communication, and independent living skills.

• Efforts are made to ensure students' interests, goals, and strengths guide the planning process.

• Interagency collaboration happens. Individuals involved in the transition planning process may include: students, parents, teachers, college personnel, school-to-career personnel, guidance counselors, Association of Retarded Citizens (ARC) service coordinators, Vocational Rehabilitation counselors, Independent Living Center counselors, and service provider personnel.

• Obtaining assessment and disability documentation that is acceptable to postsecondary institutions is important. Many postsecondary institutions will not provide services to students who do not have "documented" disabilities.

• Information about the requirements for entering postsecondary institutions is obtained and used to plan students' secondary coursework. The classes that secondary students take should not only meet requirements for graduation from secondary school, but also for entering postsecondary school.

• The team may wish to identify and explore the types of supports and accommodations that students will need in postsecondary environments and plan for ways to prepare students to transition to the post secondary environment. For example, students may need documentation of his or her disability that is different from the documentation that is required at the secondary level. The kinds of supports that will be available to students and/or the kinds of supports that are appropriate for postsecondary environments will likely be quite different than they are at the secondary school level.

Thus, effective transition planning is a coordinated process that takes the particular needs of each student into careful consideration. To maximize the benefit of students' transitions to post-high school activities, counselors must be vigilant that the designated goals and prescribed paths toward those goals are reflective of the individual student's needs, expressed desires, and capabilities.

Helpful Links:

Disability Access Information and Support (DAIS) Website: Transition Topics, www.janejarrow.com/public_library/dsshetopics/transition.html

National Center on Secondary Education and Transition Website: www.ncset.org.

References:

Boyer-Stephens, A., Corbey, S., Jones, B., Miller, R., Sarkees-Winceski, M, & West, L. (1999). *Integrating transition planning into the IEP process (2nd ed).* Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.

Brinkerhoff, L.C., McGuire, J.M., & Shaw, S.F. (2002). *Postsecondary education and transition for students with learning disabilities (2nd ed.).* Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

De Fur, S.H. (1999). *Transition planning: A team effort.* Washington, DC: Academy for Educational Development.

Greene, G., & Kochhar-Bryant, C. (2003). *Pathways to successful transition for youth with disabilities.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice-Hall.

10

What are transition strategies for student advocates?

Never discourage anyone...who continually makes progress, no matter how slow.

- Plato

Students should start considering their postsecondary education and career options early, and their choices should be based on current information and well-devised plans that incorporate individual interests and aptitudes. To that end, there are numerous strategies that counselors, parents, educators, and employers can use to help students to envision, identify, and pursue their goals. The following suggestions and strategies were compiled from the resource guides and Websites referenced at the end of this section, and are offered to help counselors understand their roles and those of various players in ensuring successful transitions for students with disabilities:

FOR COUNSELORS

- Encourage students with disabilities to take the coursework required to achieve their postsecondary goals.

- Help students understand their abilities, interests, talents, and personality characteristics so that the student can develop realistic academic and career options.

- Review the financial aid opportunities available specifically for students with disabilities.

- Advise students with disabilities of the availability of accommodations during standardized testing (ACT, PSAT, SAT, etc). Provide facilities for non-standardized administration of comprehensive/qualifying examinations.

- Advise students of college majors, admission requirements, entrance exams, financial aid, and training opportunities. Provide this information early on so that students can get a head start.

- Assist students in developing a comprehensive transition portfolio or file to share with college admissions personnel and college service providers.

- Help students to access vocational rehabilitation (VR) services, when necessary.

- Help to keep students' future options open.

- Include students with disabilities in ALL college related activities, such as college fairs, college tours, or career fairs, etc.

- Promote the development of student responsibility by increasing opportunities for students to advocate for themselves and their needs.

FOR PARENTS

- Talk with your children about their interests, abilities, and talents.

- Make sure your children go to school every day, on time, with good attitudes. They will need these habits for successful employment.

- Give your children responsibility for jobs around the house.

- Find out what your children are learning in school.

- Encourage your children to participate in service-orientated activities in the community.

- Talk about how your children's interests can be applied to careers that they might enjoy and explore with them as many of these careers as possible.

- Discuss and explore postsecondary education and training options with your children.

- Talk about your own job and career in a positive manner.

- Encourage your children's school district to offer career pathways instruction.

FOR EDUCATORS

- Use real-world examples to illustrate the connection between the skills and knowledge students are developing in school and their future employment.

- Implement career pathways exploration (see section on career pathways).

- Help students discover their talents, strengths, and career interests by attending college fairs, career fairs, job shadowing, and career exploration activities.

- Collaborate with local businesses to provide work-based experiences, such as tours, mentoring, and job shadowing.

- Develop class projects where students research and learn about different careers.

- Help students understand the need for advanced skills and education for future work.

- Involve business people in curriculum design to make courses more relevant to the world of work.

- Encourage student participation in their IEP meetings.

- Offer instruction in workplace readiness, such as teamwork and problem solving.

FOR EMPLOYERS

- Collaborate with educators to develop an integrated curriculum based on academic standards and real-work experiences.

- Offer schools and students as many work-based learning opportunities as possible, such as tours, mentoring, job shadowing, and non-paid work experiences.

- Serve on a school improvement team.

- Visit a school as a speaker or mock interviewer.

- Partner with a school by donating equipment and sharing training.

- Serve on a committee to evaluate curricula.

- Offer teacher/counselor internships.

- Recruit other businesses to work closely with schools.

FOR STUDENTS

- Decide whether to self-disclose one's disability prior to admission to college or employment.

- Keep a listing of names, phone numbers, and addresses of postsecondary contact people.

- Role-play the college or employment interview with counselor or special education teachers.

- Formulate a realistic career plan.

- Expand academic interests through electives and extracurricular activities.

- Develop self-determination and self-advocacy skills.

- Consider working at a part-time summer job, career related work experiences, or volunteer position.

- Develop a resume.

- Contact the Disability Support Services office at selected colleges and universities regarding necessary documentation required for accommodations.

- Conduct Website searches regarding financial aid, summer orientation programs, college reviews, and disability specific information.

- Become involved in the transition planning at your IEP meetings.

- Try out accommodations and auxiliary aids in high school classes that your IEP team deems are appropriate (e.g. taped textbooks from RFB&D, note takers, laptop computers, extra time on exams).

- Learn about technological aids such as talking calculators, spell checkers, voice-activated software, and electronic day planners, etc.

- Know how, when, and where to discuss and request needed accommodations.

Preparing students for postsecondary education and careers requires considerable planning. The choice and placement level of courses should reflect the students' needs, academic abilities, talents, and career interests. The more students know about themselves, the more successful they will be in defining personal, educational, and career goals.

Helpful Link:

Mapping Your Future Website: www.mapping-your-future.org

References:

Brinckerhoff, L.C., McQuire, J.M., & Shaw, S.F. (2002). *Postsecondary education and transition for students with learning disabilities (2nd ed.)*. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

Gadvow, N., & DuBois, D. (1998). *Adult learners with special needs: Strategies and resources for postsecondary education and workplace training*. Malabar, Fl: Krieger Publishing Company.

Greene, G., & Kochhar-Bryant, C. (2003). *Pathways to successful transition for youth with disabilities*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice-Hall.

Virginia Department of Education. (2002). *Virginia's college guide for students with disabilities*. Richmond, VA: Author.

11

What contributes to effective postsecondary and career planning for students?

Never discourage anyone...who continually makes progress, no matter how slow.

- Plato

Many high school students with disabilities will be looking toward transition with traditional four-year programs as their primary focus. With the passage of The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, an increasing number of students with disabilities have successfully sought and accessed college and university programs (Henderson, 2001).

To effectively plan for and achieve any kind of postsecondary success requires students to meet numerous challenges, including:

- researching and obtaining financial resources,
- selecting and applying to programs,
- gathering the necessary documentation to ensure eligibility for services, and
- exploring the spectrum of programs and possibilities.

Counselors provide students with an invaluable service when introducing them to the myriad of options for education and training that await them. Today's workforce is expected to be more technologically savvy and technically skilled than ever before. Transition choices, such as community and junior colleges, career and technical programs, and military training, can provide students with these valued skills and a host of future employment options.

Effective transition planning incorporates students' vocational interests, financial needs, and values. Encouraging all of your students to consider their employment goals will pay dividends in the choices they make for postsecondary learning, but is especially important for your students with disabilities. The following suggestions will help you guide students in a thoughtful and constructive process where they carefully consider their aspirations and goals for future employment.

1) Develop a career plan.

Students need to consider their career goals and learn more about the training, education, and skills needed to achieve them. Developing a career plan requires a student to think about his/her skills and interests and evaluate how they relate to his/her career goals. Encourage students to research various career options, benefits, and training programs to assist in devising an action plan.

2) Assess skills and interests.

There are numerous career interest inventories and aptitude tests available to students. These may be administered in groups or individually and can help students learn more about themselves and make appropriate career decisions.

- Interest inventories match an individual's interests with those of workers in specific careers.

- Aptitude tests help gauge an individual's natural propensity to learn the skills needed for different careers.

- Work value inventories match values to those of workers in specific careers.

3) Research occupations.

Learn more about the type and nature of jobs that might interest students, such as educational requirements, salary, working conditions, future outlook, and anything else that can help them to direct their focus. The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics Website (www.bls.gov) contains helpful references, including the Occupational Outlook Handbook, a nationally recognized source of career information.

4) Compare skills and interests with selected occupations.

The career that matches a student's skills, interests, and personality may also be rewarding. Proper planning requires students to make informed choices based in self-knowledge. Careers that require similar academic or vocational preparation and involve related tasks are grouped into career pathways or clusters (refer to the section on Career Pathways) to guide the search.

5) Identify student career goals.

Once the student has matched his interests and aptitudes with a career path, he must develop a plan to reach his goal. Goals can include selecting the appropriate courses to take, what major to pursue, which vocational school to attend, or what job to take after high school. Career goals help students take practical steps that ultimately lead toward an intended destination.

6) Choose a postsecondary program.

Maintain your own reference library of college guides or handbooks that list postsecondary programs with academic or training programs in various fields.

Encourage students to select schools that offer the curriculum or training that best meets career goals and financial needs. More than half of all recent high school graduates in the United States pursue some type of postsecondary education. There are many higher education options in the United States:

Four-year colleges and universities

- Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degrees are offered.
- Graduate and professional degree may be offered.
- Four-year colleges and universities offer a wide variety of courses and resources to choose from and lay the foundation for more advanced studies and professional work.

Community colleges

- The community college serves people from nearby communities and offer academic, technical, and continuing education courses.
- The programs often lead to a license, a certificate, or an Associate of Arts, an Associate of Science, or an Associate of Applied Science degree. Community colleges often operate under an "open admissions" policy, although admissions requirements may vary from school to school: be certain to check into schools and programs individually.

Technical colleges

- Associate degree programs prepare students for technical occupations (e.g., accounting, dental hygienist, computer programmer).
- Technical diploma programs meet the needs of businesses and industry and provide employees with required certification for employment (e.g., automotive maintenance, accounting assistant, pharmacy technician).
- Apprenticeships are geared toward those interested in working in industrial or service trades (e.g., carpentry, plumbing, machining, and milling).

Vocational training schools

- Privately owned and operated schools that offer a wide variety of training options in areas such as cosmetology, mechanical repair, court reporting, paralegal services, and medical assistance.

Military service

- Learn more about your potential for success in the military by taking the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVB), which may be administered at local schools at no charge.

- Local military recruiters can give complete information about military options. Note: Students with disabilities should be advised that the military branches are not required to accommodate individuals on the basis of disability.

As you can see, there are many higher education options. Most of these are discussed in greater detail elsewhere in this guide.

7) Seek financial aid information.

Identify financial aid sources to help students achieve their educational and career goals. In general there are four types of financial aid:

- scholarships,
- grants,
- work-study, and
- loans.

Scholarships are typically awarded on the basis of financial need and some form of merit (e.g., academic, athletic, or artistic). Generally, federal financial aid, including grants and some loans, is awarded to students on the basis of financial need and/or merit. Grant monies do not have to be repaid, but loans do. Work-study provides jobs for students with financial need to help pay for education expenses. The HEATH Resource Center publication Creating Options: A Resource on Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities provides a thorough overview of public and private funding to pay for postsecondary education. The publication can be viewed at www.heath.gwu.edu/pdfs/creating%20options%202006.pdf

8) Help students prepare resumes.

Student resumes are a critical part of the job search. A well-constructed resume should include the following items:

- job objective (which states what type of position one is seeking)
- education and work experience
- list of skills
- awards and honors one has received
- names and contact information for references

A good resume and cover letter will generate interest and lead to interviews with prospective employers. The cover letter serves several purposes: to convince an employer that the job seeker is the perfect person for the job and to explain how the position meets the current career objectives of the job seeker. A well-constructed cover letter should include the following items:

- heading and greeting (including the date and the job seeker's name)
- opening and introduction (in which the job seeker states his name and purpose for writing)
- body (in which the job seeker build the case for why he is the perfect candidate)
- closing (in which the job seeker proposes further contact to discuss the opportunity and suggests a means, such as telephone call, for such contact)

9) Identify opportunities for employment.

Once a resume is prepared one can start looking for a job in earnest. There are essentially five ways to find a job:

- advertised vacancies,
- recruitment agencies,
- job fairs,
- letters of inquiry; and
- networking (using personal contacts/making new contacts).

Time should be devoted to each of these various methods. How much time devoted to each method is a personal choice based on trial-and-error. You and your students may discover that one method seems to work better in terms of obtaining interviews than another.

10) Practice job-interviewing techniques.

Preparation is necessary to maximize the opportunity of a job interview. Students should know their accomplishments and not be too shy or modest to verbalize them during the interview. Research the company or organization prior to the interview to become familiar with its work and scope. The following are helpful tips for students for handling the interview:

- Dress appropriately for the interview.
- Bring extra copies of your resume.

• Treat everyone in the company with courtesy.
• Don't be nervous about being nervous.
• Be yourself.

The job interview is probably the toughest part of a job search, but it also gives the greatest opportunity to get the job. During the interview applicants may be asked a variety of questions regarding their training, education, and work experiences. The following is a list of possible questions that students might be asked at a job interview:

• Why do you want to work here?
• Why should we hire you?
• What are your goals?
• What work experience do you have that relates to this position?
• What salary are you seeking?

Following the interview, students should send thank-you letters to the interviewer, expressing thanks for the opportunity to meet, restating their interest in the position, and reminding the interviewer of their qualifications.

11) Provide additional help and information for career planning and searching the Internet for career planning resources.

Students should be encouraged to visit with their counselors for additional resources such as college guidebooks, information about financial aid and admission procedures, and literature on schools. Hosting college fairs provides a convenient way for students to view prospective colleges and universities. Students may also want to peruse the following Websites for additional information on transitioning to postsecondary educational programs:

The George Washington University HEATH Resource Center, National Clearinghouse on Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Disabilities, www.heath.gwu.edu

Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), www.ahead.org

National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Education Supports, www.rrtc.hawaii.edu

National Center on Secondary Education and Transition, www.ncset.org

University of Washington's Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology (DO-IT) Program, www.washington.edu/doit/

The better informed students are about the full range of options awaiting them beyond high school, and the more consideration they have afforded those options, the more likely they are to succeed in their endeavors for career, vocational and academic training, and future employment.

Helpful Links:

Career Voyages: www.careervoyages.gov/index.cfm

Fairfax County Public Schools Website: www.fcps.k12.va.us/DSSSE/CareerConnections/

Mapping Your Future Website: www.mapping-your-future.org

State of Michigan Department of Career Development Website: www.michigan.gov/mdcd/

Wiredscholar Website: www.wiredscholar.com

References:

Henderson, C. (1999). *College freshmen with disabilities: A biennial statistical profile.* Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

Langelier, J., Schwallie-Giddis, P., & Valier, C. (2003). *Counseling activities for life skills and career development.* Torrance, CA: Innerchoice Publishing.

Virginia Department of Education. (2002). *Virginia's college guide for students with disabilities.* Richmond, VA: Author.

12

What are academic adjustments and auxilary aids and services?

Never discourage anyone...who continually makes progress, no matter how slow.

- Plato

Self-identification of a disability and self-advocacy are paramount to effectively presenting the need for academic adjustments at the postsecondary level. If a student with a disability has practiced self-advocacy skills while still in high school, he or she will be more likely to carry these skills over to college. Although not exclusively the counselor's responsibility, you play a role in fostering the development of students' self-advocacy skills (see the section titled What Are Self-Advocacy and Self-Determination?). With the growing number of students with disabilities attending college, the need for coordinated training of these students in self-advocacy skills is more pronounced than ever before.

The responsibility for initiating a request for an academic adjustment and providing documentation of a disability (and need for an academic adjustment) rests on the shoulders of the student with a disability. Many students are unprepared for this role. High school faculty and parents may unknowingly hinder students with disabilities when they do not allow them to speak and act for themselves. Most students know from experience what works best for them and what they may need from the Disability Support Services (DSS) office in order to succeed at the postsecondary level.

In academic settings, academic adjustments can generally be thought of as the removal of barriers to participation. Postsecondary education institutions may be required to provide such academic adjustments to individuals with disabilities, including auxiliary aids and services, on a case-by-case basis. Such academic adjustments need not be made if the institution can demonstrate that the academic adjustment would impose an undue burden or result in a fundamental alteration of the program. The institution need not waive or lower academic requirements that it can demonstrate are essential to a program of instruction. In collaboration with the student, professor, and DSS personnel, it is important to determine what academic adjustments the student needs that will allow him or her equal opportunity to participate in the colleges' programs and activities.

To constructively discuss academic adjustments with professors and DSS personnel, students may need effective communication skills, such as:

- Expressing thoughts and feelings, honestly and directly;
- Making eye contact that is firm, but not glaring;
- Speaking appropriately in an audible voice;
- Using a speech pattern that is clear;
- Emphasizing key words;
- Using "I" language and not "you" language;
- Making appointments to discuss issues and concerns further;
- Knowing about their disability and how it is likely to impact their educational experience; and
- Being aware of non-verbal presentation using body cues and postures.

Laws protecting the civil rights of students with disabilities do not provide specific recommendations of academic adjustments. Instead, these laws rely on a case-by-case assessment of functional limitation, student need, and whether the accommodation constitutes an undue burden or fundamental alteration. The following suggestions are provided as a resource of possible academic adjustments:

- Assistance with registration/financial aid,
- Note-takers for classes,
- Tape record classes,
- Large print books and enlarged handouts,
- Extended time for exams,

- Change of location for exams,
- Priority parking/elevator key,
- Seating arrangement modification,
- Textbooks on tape,
- Extended time limits for exams/projects/assignments,
- Alternative forms for students to demonstrate course mastery,
- Use of computer software programs or other assistive technology, and
- Reduction in course load.

Remember that specific academic adjustments should be arranged in consultation with the student, the instructor, and DSS personnel. The request for specific academic adjustments should be made in a timely manner, preferably at the beginning of the quarter or semester-or earlier, if possible, so that staff have time to arrange appropriate academic adjustments for the student. Procrastination can lead to academic difficulties. Students, faculty members, and DSS personnel should follow school procedures in order to ensure that effective academic adjustments are provided, as appropriate. As always, students must remember to act as their own advocates.

Under the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, individuals with disabilities are protected from discrimination and entitled to equal access to programs and services. Proper and complete documentation must indicate that a specific disability exists and that the identified disability substantially impacts one or more major life activities. Simply being diagnosed as having a disorder/condition/syndrome does not automatically qualify an individual for academic adjustments under the ADA. Documentation should also support the request for academic adjustments. It is imperative that students provide appropriate documentation in order for the institution to determine if he or she is entitled to academic adjustments.

Helpful Links:

Association on Higher Education and Disability Website: www.ahead.org

Learning Disabilities Online Website: www.ldonline.org

References:

Block, L. (2000). Documentation, transition and other things that worry service providers. *Disability Compliance for Higher Education*, 5(11), 3.

Brinckerhoff, L.C., McGuire, J. M., & Shaw, S. F. (2002). *Postsecondary education and transition for students with learning disabilities* (2nd ed.). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

Ekpone, P.M., & Bogucki, R. (2003). *Students with psychiatric disabilities in postsecondary education.* Washington, DC: The George Washington University HEATH Resource Center.

Gadbow, N., & DuBois, D. (1998). *Adult learners with special needs: Strategies and resources for postsecondary education and workplace training*. Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company.

Quality of documentation can determine if accommodations given. (2002, August). *Disability Compliance for Higher Education,* 8(1)

13

What are the most frequently asked questions regarding academic adjustments?

Never discourage anyone...who continually makes progress, no matter how slow.

- Plato

1) What is an academic adjustment?

"Academic adjustment" refers to modifications to academic requirements, auxiliary aids and services, or reasonable modifications to policies, practices, or procedures that may need to be provided for a person with a disability to ensure that the person has an equal opportunity to participate in, and benefit from, the programs or activities of the college or university. A college or university is not required to provide an academic adjustment that causes an undue burden or constitutes a fundamental alteration of the program or activity. Academic adjustments might include classroom adjustments, exam modifications, or administrative accommodations.

2) Will a student be eligible to use academic adjustments in college if he/she has a disability?

Maybe. The decision to provide a specific academic adjustment will be individualized. For example, a student who is paralyzed from the waist down has a disability and needs a physically accessible classroom, will receive this accommodation. However, the same student probably would not be eligible to receive notetaking services or be provided with books on tape where the disability does not interfere with seeing or writing.

3) Who is responsible for determining appropriate academic adjustments?

The office of Disability Support Services, generally, determines all appropriate academic adjustments, in consultation with the student, appropriate faculty, and, as needed, professionals with the expertise to evaluate the student's disability and need for academic adjustments, or other related staff at the institution. The DSS office bases its decision upon documentation collected from a student with a disability and the student's learning problems.

4) What are some examples of academic adjustments that an institution might provide to a student with a disability?

Academic adjustments are provided to ensure that a student with a disability receives an equal opportunity to participate in the institution's programs and activities. Higher education institutions are not required to lower essential academic standards or fundamentally alter their programs. Examples of academic adjustments that a student with a documented disability might be provided include:

- Additional time to complete tests, coursework, or graduation;
- Substitution of nonessential courses;
- Adaptation of course instruction;
- Permission to tape record classes; and
- Modification of test taking/performance evaluations so as not to discriminate against students with sensory, manual or speaking impairments.

5) Can students receive a failing grade for a college class in which they are receiving academic adjustments?

Yes. Academic adjustments ensure access, not necessarily success.

6) Do students have to pay for academic adjustments?

No. It is the college's responsibility to pay for required academic adjustments (although a college need not provide an academic adjustment when to do so would constitute an undue financial or administrative burden).

7) Do colleges and universities provide testing to identify a learning disability?

Colleges and universities are not required to provide testing services. Referrals may be made to appropriate professionals for students to obtain testing services at the student's expense. Colleges and universities also may voluntarily conduct their own evaluation at no cost to the student.

8) What are the roles of the student, faculty, and DSS in the process for determining an appropriate academic adjustment?

As a best practice, it is important for the student, the faculty member, and DSS to be clear about their roles in the accommodation process. The following is an outline of the roles of the key participants in the accommodation process:

Student Role

- Notify the faculty or DSS office of your need for academic adjustments.
- Provide medical, psychological, and/or educational documentation to the DSS office.
- Participate in the process of determining and implementing appropriate academic adjustments.
- Inform the DSS office when academic adjustments are not working or need to be modified.

Faculty Role

- Refer student to DSS Office.
- Participate in the process of determining and implementing appropriate academic adjustments.
- Identify course components for academic adjustments to be determined.
- Request assistance from the DSS office with respect to implementation of academic adjustments.

DSS Role

- Maintain medical, education, and/or psychological documentation in a confidential manner.
- Determine if condition(s) are a disability in accordance with state and federal laws.
- Identify and assist with implementation of appropriate academic adjustments.
- Request updated documentation as needed to determine if academic adjustments need to be modified.
- Provide information and referral to campus and community resources to resolve disability related issues.

9) Where can students go for help with all the questions they have?

If students have questions about academic adjustments or disability services, they should go to the office on campus that provides support for students with disabilities. This may be the Disabilities Support Services office, a counseling office, or it may be the Section 504 officer at their school (See Chapter 20 for a detailed discussion of the topic).

10) How should students be prepared to use the disability support services office?

Resources and disability service organizations in your community or region can provide additional information. Also, national organizations such as The George Washington University HEATH Resource Center (www.heath.gwu.edu), the Association for Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) (www.ahead.org), the National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Educational Supports (www.rrtc.hawaii.edu), and the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (www.ncset.org) are designed in part to inform consumers with disabilities about postsecondary options and opportunities. (Contact information for each of these organizations appears in the Resources section at the back of this Toolkit.)

References:

The proceeding composite list of questions was compiled from the following sources:

Grossman, P.D. (November-December 2001). Making Accommodations: The Legal World of Students with Disabilities. *87 Academe: Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors,* 41-46. Retrieved March 8, 2005 from
www.ahead.org/resources/Grossman_Making_Accommodations.doc

Boston University, Office of Disability Services. (2005), *Frequently Asked Questions.* Retrieved March 8, 2005 from www.bu.edu/disability/faq.htm

The George Washington University, Office of Disability Support Services. (n.d.). *Faculty FAQs.* Retrieved March 8, 2005 from   http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/InformationforFaculty/

Izzo, M.. & Yurcisin, A. (n.d.). *Most frequently asked questions: Educational access for students with disabilities: Fast facts for faculty.* Retrieved March 9, 2005 from The Ohio State University Partnership Grant Website: http://telr.osu.edu/dpg/faq.html

North Dakota State College of Science, Academic Services Center. (2002). *Frequently Asked Questions.* Retrieved March 8, 2005 from www.ndscs.nodak.edu/student/asc/faq.html

14

What role may state offices of vocational rehabilitation services play for students with disabilities?

Never discourage anyone...who continually makes progress, no matter how slow.

- Plato

Vocational rehabilitation (VR) is a term counselors are likely to encounter frequently in reference to students with disabilities. VR services enable a person to achieve employment. The VR needs of students with disabilities will vary depending on the challenges their particular disabilities present and the services they will need to accomplish their agreed-upon employment outcome. VR services can include career counseling, medical and psychiatric treatments, and appropriate forms of vocational and academic education and training.

As a counselor of students with disabilities who are considering their educational and career options after high school, you will need to be aware of VR services that support the vocational aspirations of adults with disabilities. Under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (the Rehabilitation Act), States receive Federal grants to operate a comprehensive VR services program. This state-operated program is designed to assess, plan, develop, and provide VR services to eligible individuals with disabilities to assist them in securing employment consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, interests, and informed choice. Each state has a unique name for their VR services program and in some states there is a separate program for individuals who are blind.

Participation in the VR services program is based on eligibility. To be eligible, a person must:

- have a disability that constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment; and
- require VR services to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment.

VR services are designed to help individuals with disabilities obtain the skills they need to gain and maintain employment. Eligible individuals with disabilities and VR counselors work together to devise a plan, called an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), that identifies the agreed upon employment outcome and describes the VR services needed to achieve that employment outcome.

In certain instances, the VR counselor and the eligible individual with a disability will determine that postsecondary education is necessary for the individual to achieve his or her career objective. In this case, the VR services program might be able to provide some assistance for the student's tuition, books and supplies, adaptive technologies, or other employment-related services. However, VR agencies and students are required to use maximum efforts to obtain other financial assistance.

Unfortunately, not all eligible individuals can be provided VR services. When a state is unable to serve all eligible individuals with disabilities, the Rehabilitation Act, the legislation that established the VR program, requires states to implement an order of selection to determine which individuals to serve first. When the state implements an order of selection, priority is given to individuals with the most significant disabilities.

A VR counselor and the placement office of a postsecondary program should work together to help students with disabilities to find employment that is consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. Typically, VR services continue until a client is successfully employed for a period of at least 90 days and the individual and VR counselor agree that the employment outcome is satisfactory and that the individual is performing well on the job. VR services can also be terminated if an individual is determined no longer eligible to receive services.

In some areas of the country, VR counselors are assigned to specific high schools and regularly visit to provide students information about VR services and to assist with transition planning by attending students' IEP meetings. They can assist in planning and providing transition services, some of which may be provided by the VR agency before students finish high school.

VR counselors may be willing to visit your school to meet with potential student clients. To identify the nearest VR office in your area, refer to the Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services' Website at www.ed.gov/about /offices/list/osers/rsa/index.htm.

VR services may also be available at local employment agencies called One Stop Workforce Development Centers. Administered through the U.S. Department of Labor, One Stop Centers seek to coordinate educational, employment, and training services into one coherent network. For additional information about One-Stop Centers and for a state-by-state directory of offices, go to www.doleta.gov/usworkforce/onestop.

References:

Brown, D.S. (2000). *Learning a living: A guide to planning your career and finding a job for people with learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, and dyslexia*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

Colley, D., & Gingerich, J. (1996). *Vocational rehabilitation services: A consumer guide for postsecondary students*. Washington, DC: The George Washington University HEATH Resource Center.

Kupper, L. (2000). *Resources for adults with disabilities*. Washington, DC: National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities.

Taymans, J.M., & West, L.L. (Eds.). (2000). *Unlocking potential: College and other choices for people with LD and AD/HD*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

15

What are the most frequestly asked questions about vocational rehabilitation Services?

Never discourage anyone...who continually makes progress, no matter how slow.

- Plato

The following list of frequently asked questions regarding vocational rehabilitation services may be a handy reference for your students with disabilities.

1) Who is eligible for services from Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)?

In order to be eligible for VR services, the federal law requires that a student must be an "individual with a disability," meaning a person who:
- Has a physical or mental impairment that constitutes or results in a substantial barrier to employment, and
- Requires VR services to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment.

If students receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits, they are presumed to be eligible for VR services, unless there is clear and convincing evidence that they are too significantly disabled to benefit from these services.

Unfortunately, sometime a State is unable to serve all eligible individuals with disabilities. When this occurs, Federal law requires States to implement an order of selection to determine which individuals to serve first. When a State implements an order of selection, priority is given to individuals with the most significant disabilities.

2) How do students apply for services?

To apply for services, students must submit an application to begin the process. They should contact their local VR agency to obtain a copy of the application or to apply by telephone. Once they complete and sign the application, a VR counselor who serves the area in which they live and/or who specializes in their disability will be selected to work with them. To the fullest extent possible, the VR counselors will use existing information to determine their eligibility and begin planning for services. Pertinent information such as school records and transcripts, records of transition services provided through an Individualized Education Program (IEP), medical records about your disability, work history, military records, and perhaps Social Security data will be useful to your counselor. If students have this information, including it with their application will help expedite the application process. Students may be asked to sign a release so that some information can be requested directly from the source. Eligibility is to be determined within 60 days of application unless the VR counselor and student agree to an extension.

3) What type of services does VR provide?

VR services include but are not limited to:
- an assessment for determining eligibility and VR needs;
- vocational counseling, guidance, and referral services;
- services to assist students with disabilities to transition from school to work;
- vocational and other training, including postsecondary education and on-the-job training;
- medical rehabilitation services;
- rehabilitation technology;
- maintenance for additional costs incurred while the individual is receiving certain VR services;
- transportation;
- interpreter services for individuals who are deaf;

- reader services for individuals who are blind;
- orientation and mobility training for persons who are blind or visually impaired;
- personal assistance services (including training in managing, supervising, and directing personal assistance services) while an individual is receiving VR services;
- supported employment services, including job coaching or tutoring; and
- job-related services, including job search and placement services, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services.

4) Will students have to pay for VR services?

There is no cost to apply for VR services and to find out if they are eligible. Depending upon the students' and their families' financial resources, they may be asked to help pay for some VR services. However, the following services are available at no cost to eligible individuals who need them regardless of their financial situation:

- Assessments to determine VR needs,
- Vocational counseling and guidance, and
- Referral for other services necessary to secure services from other agencies.

5) If students are eligible for services, what will happen next?

Students and their VR counselors will work together to figure out what services they need to reach the students' employment goals. Typically, they will:

- Explore the students' interests, skills, experiences, and support needs;
- Decide on their employment goals; and
- Develop an Individualized Plan for Employment to help reach these goals.

6) What is an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)?

Each person is unique and therefore requires an individualized approach to reach their employment goal. Each student and their counselor will work together to an IPE to specify the employment goal and the services that will be provided to help them reach their goal. Postsecondary education students eligible for and receiving VR services should meet with their VR counselor regularly to ensure that their IPE is proceeding as planned.

7) How does the VR process apply to postsecondary education?

If the postsecondary education program is necessary for students to obtain their employment goal, and they qualify to meet the postsecondary program admission requirements, VR services may be necessary for them to participate in and complete their program. The VR counselor can help students develop an IPE that considers not only the type of college training needed, but also the expected employment outcome, consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. Together, they will consider many factors, including referral to the on-campus services for students with disabilities, the students' abilities and needs, availability of needed support services from college, the feasibility of the length and type of training required to reach their employment goal, and financial resources.

8) Are there grants or scholarships available for people with disabilities who want to go to college?

Policies for providing financial assistance to persons with disabilities who are attending school vary among state VR agencies, depending in part on the resources available to the state VR agency. In many cases, even the most generous of financial assistance provided by VR agencies will not cover all of a student's expected expenses, leaving a need for additional family contributions or loans (though VR agencies cannot require students to obtain loans). The VR counselor can assist in coordinating and accessing needed services, some of which may be available through a postsecondary institution's disability services program, other agencies or community programs, or directly through VR. Not every state can provide services to all individuals who meet the eligibility criteria. The Rehabilitation Act requires that priority is given to individuals with the most significant disabilities.

Federal law requires that students access other financial aid funding (i.e., Pell Grants, local and state grants) to meet education costs before VR financial assistance can be considered. Students should be encouraged to contact the financial aid office or the office of disability support services at the institution they are interested in attending. They can also ask your VR counselor for guidance. In some cases, Social Security Work Incentives may be available to support their employment goal.

9) Is it the postsecondary institution or VR responsibility to pay for auxiliary aids and services?

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), it is the responsibility of the postsecondary institution to ensure that its programs are accessible to persons with disabilities. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the institution to provide auxiliary aids and services, including interpreters, if a student with a disability requires an accommodation to access campus programs. Only in instances of extreme hardship can an institution not be required to provide those services. In a number of instances, state VR agencies and postsecondary institutions have cooperative agreements that specify roles and responsibilities in this and other areas of collaboration. However, if universities or colleges do not provide students engaged in VR programs with the necessary auxiliary aids and services, the VR programs with which the students are working are required to provide these services. The institution is not required to provide aids or services for personal use or study (e.g. an attendant, tutoring).

10) What if the student wants a program in another state?

Generally, VR agencies have a written policy covering this situation. In many instances, VR agencies can assist with out-of-state postsecondary education, but financial assistance through the agencies is limited to rates equal to that of in-state tuition and fees unless there is a unique circumstance for the selection of a particular out-of-state institution.

11) What if the student is planning to get a graduate degree or a second bachelor degree?

The federal law governing the VR program establishes one of the eligibility criteria as requiring VR services to prepare for, enter, engage in, or retain employment. Therefore, eligibility and services are provided when required for an employment outcome. If a graduate degree or second bachelor degree is necessary to achieve the student's identified employment outcome, VR services may be provided. However, if a student is seeking a graduate degree or second bachelor degree for career development purposes, the VR agency will not be able to assist financially.

12) How do I and/or my students contact the vocational rehabilitation agency in my state?

This link will provide you with a list of state vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies nationwide. Contact the one in your state of residence for more information.

13) If students are not satisfied with their experience with the vocational rehabilitation program, what can they do?

They should begin by discuss their concerns with their counselor and ask for suggestions. If they are still not satisfied, they may ask to speak with their counselor's supervisor or the office director. They can also request a new counselor if they cannot work things out with the current one. If difficulties with the provision of services persist, students may seek to resolve these difficulties through due process procedures established in the Rehabilitation Act which include the right to mediation and formal administrative hearings. For assistance in revolving disputes, students can contact the local Client Assistance Program (CAP). The CAP provides advocacy, legal representation, and information for individuals applying for or being served by VR. If students are having problems with VR that have not been resolved with the staff in your local VR office, the CAP may be helpful. Students can contact the CAP for further advice and assistance regarding their rights to appeal through their local VR office. They should receive information about CAP during their orientation to VR.

14) When will students stop receiving the rehabilitation services?

Students will receive services and assistance until they are successfully working, or until a determination is made that they cannot achieve their employment goal. Their counselor will work with them and the placement office at their college or university to assist them in finding suitable employment. When it is determined that students have been satisfactorily employed for at least 90 days, the counselor will begin the closure process. The process takes into consideration the need for any post-employment services. If it appears that they are successfully working and their job situation is stable, the student's file will be closed.

References:

The proceeding composite list of questions was compiled from the following sources:

Colley, D., & Gingerich, J. (1996). *Vocational rehabilitation services: A consumer guide for postsecondary students.* Washington, DC: The George Washington University HEATH Resource Center.

Condon, C., Gandolfo, C., Brugnaro, L., Thomas, C. & Donnelly, P. (2004). *Getting the most from the public vocational rehabilitation system.* Retrieved June 8, 2005 from University of Minnesota, Institute for Community Inclusion Website:
www.communityinclusion.org/publications/pdf/to19.pdf

U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) About RSA.* Retrieved June 8, 2005 from
www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/faq.html

16

What is job shadowing?

Never discourage anyone...who continually makes progress, no matter how slow.

- Plato

One of the most beneficial transition strategies for all students who are exiting secondary education and considering various postsecondary options is job shadowing. Job shadowing allows students to observe adults in a work-place environment and thus exposes them to options for future careers. Parents of students in your school might be an excellent and ready resource for arranging a job shadowing experience.

Some characteristics of job shadowing include:

> • Providing learners with realistic views of a specific job,
> • Allowing learners to observe employees on the job,
> • Allowing learners time to ask questions, and
> • Requiring learners to complete related class assignments (journal, focused questions, etc.).

A job shadowing experience, which may be listed as part of a student's IEP, allows students to explore the world of work in a practical, hands-on way. However, job shadowing hosts should not overwhelm students with too many details of the job they are observing.

If your school does not have a job-shadowing program in place, enlist the help of your students to create one. Encourage students to ask the adults in their lives, such as parents, parents of friends, and spouses of teachers and coaches, if they would allow students to shadow them at their workplace.

Arranging a successful job shadowing requires a thorough informational interview with the student to determine his interests, skills, and abilities. Below are some questions to guide students through the informational interview (Sarkees-Wircenski & Scott, 2003):

Questions Students Should Ask During Job Shadow Experiences

Introduction
> • What is your occupation and job title?
> • How did you become interested in this type of work?
> • Why did you choose this career?
> • How did you get your job with this company?

Qualifications
> • What types of education and/or training are required for this job?
> • What classes did you take in high school and/or college that prepared you for your job?
> • Did you have to interview, take any tests, or complete an internship or apprenticeship for this position?
> • What kind of experience is required for this job?
> • What personality traits are important for this job?
> • What kind of technical knowledge is required for this job?
> • How are technology demands increasing or changing for this job?

Duties
- How many hours do you work in a typical week?
- Are certain times of the month or year busier than other times?
- What kinds of things are you required to do?
- Are you required to supervise other employees as part of your job?
- Do you have to depend on others in order to perform your job?
- Do you take work home?
- Do you work a shift? What choices do you have in making your work schedule?
- Can you telecommute from home?

Salary and Benefits
- What are the salary ranges for different levels in this field?
- What types of fringe benefits are offered to you for this job?
- How are raises earned?
- What is the opportunity for advancement in this area?

Personal Satisfaction
- What do you like best about your job?
- What don't you like about your job?
- How has your company kept up with technology and progressive business management techniques?
- How does your job affect your time away from work?
- What are the job opportunities for this area of work?
- What kind of personal satisfaction do you get from your job?

Miscellaneous
- What advice would you give a learner interested in this career?
- What changes do you see in this area within the next 5 years?

Helpful Links:

American Association of People with Disabilities Website: www.aapd.com

Job Shadowing Day 2005 Website: www.jobshadow.org

National Centers for Career and Technical Education Website: http://nccte.org/

References:

Brown, D.S. (2000). *Learning a living: A guide to planning your career and finding a job for people with learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, and dyslexia*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

Sarkees-Wircenski, M., & Scott, J.L. (2003). *Special populations in career and technical education*. Homewood, IL: American Technical Publishers, Inc.

17

What is mentoring?

Never discourage anyone...who continually makes progress, no matter how slow.

- Plato

Mentoring relationships can be a key factor in the retention of students in any educational program. Mentoring is a supportive relationship between a youth or young adult and someone more senior in age and experience who offers support, guidance, and assistance as the younger partner goes through a difficult period, enters a new area of experience, takes on an important task, or corrects an earlier problem (Sarkees-Wircenski & Scott, 2003).

Counselors can assist students by developing mentoring programs. Mentoring relationships can keep students from special populations in school, contribute to a positive self-esteem, and identify realistic career and academic goals. Sarkees-Wircenski and Scott (2003)recommend the following strategies for implementing an effective mentoring program:

- Inform students about the possibilities afforded by mentoring,
- Encourage students to pursue mentors,
- Help students identify and initiate contact with potential mentors, and
- Become members of their local chambers of commerce in order to network with people who can serve as mentors.

Mentoring can take the following forms:

- One-on-one,
- Small group,
- Community-based, and
- E-mentoring (online).

Mentors can:

- Assist in identifying learner's interests,
- Show learners that they are taken seriously by an adult,
- Regularly offer reassurance,
- Help learners to define who they are,
- Foster possibilities for career and personnel development,
- Provide guidance in solving everyday problems, and
- Help learners to develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

People from all walks of life can be mentors, including:

- Business and industry volunteers,
- College students,
- Parents,
- Community volunteers,
- Representatives from business and industry,
- Representatives from service organizations and clubs,
- Chamber of Commerce volunteers,
- Postsecondary educational institution volunteers, and
- Community education program volunteers.

When helping students identify potential mentors, the following questions should be considered:

- •Is the prospective mentor flexible?
- •Does the potential mentor have good people skills? Is this individual people-oriented and enthusiastic?
- •Is the potential mentor comfortable with teenagers and/or young adults, especially those with disabilities?
- •Is the potential mentor willing and able to help identify potential problems and find solutions with learners?
- •Can the potential mentor provide constructive evaluation and feedback to nurture learner growth?
- •Does the potential mentor perceive possible benefits of the mentoring experience to the learners, business, and community?

Once identified, mentors may be asked to:

- • Shape the circumstances of the learning environment when they are with the learner;
- • Shape the environment, both physical and emotional, that the learner will interact with them;
- • Encourage dialogue and focus on appropriate details of feelings and perceptions of a situation;
- • Generate problems for the learner to ponder and suggest original solutions;
- • Provide regular feedback on all aspects of the mentor relationship (e.g., clarify the learner's questions and their responses, select the appropriate moment for feedback);
- • Provide role modeling (e.g., share their educational and work backgrounds, model a path for an eager learner to pursue, model personal traits such as a positive attitude and work ethic);
- • Establish connections between other professionals and the learners they are mentoring (e.g., intro ducing the learner to other staff, accompanying the learner to a professional conference, allowing the learner to sit in on a meeting, or requesting an appointment with a colleague who might further develop the learner's knowledge or an area of mutual interest); and
- • Advocate for the learners (e.g., give advice, guide them in their learning process) (Sarkees-Wircenski & Scott, 2003).

By following these guidelines, counselors can help students to engage in the mentoring process. When developing mentoring programs, counselors help implement the student-mentor relationship, thus providing students with disabilities increased opportunities for future success.

Helpful Links:

American Association of People with Disabilities Website: National mentoring day: www.dmd-aapd.org/

Connecting to Success Website: http://ici.umn.edu/ementoring/

National Centers for Career and Technical Education Website: www.nccte.org

U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy Website: Mentoring, www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/ek00/mentoring.htm

References:

Sarkees-Wircenski, M., & Scott, J.L. (2003). *Special populations in career and technical education*. Homewood, IL: American Technical Publishers, Inc.

Sword, C., & Hill, K. (2002). Creating mentoring opportunities for youth with disabilities: issues and suggested strategies [Electronic version]. *Issue Brief*, 1(4). Retrieved March 4, 2005, from www.ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=704

18

What is assistive technology?

Never discourage anyone...who continually makes progress, no matter how slow.

- Plato

It is likely that many of your students with disabilities already rely on or benefit from some type of technology that increases function, capacity, or comprehension. Such a device or tool is commonly referred to as assistive technology (AT).

The IDEA defines an assistive technology device to be:

> Any item, piece of equipment, or product, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that will increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities (602(1)(A)). However, the IDEA 2004 Amendments add the following exception: "(assistive technology) does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, or the replacement of such device." (602 (1)(B)).

Individuals may use assistive technology to facilitate travel or movement, to communicate with others, or for recreation, learning, and working. Assistive technology allows individuals to control their environments, and increases their ability to live and function independently.

Assistive technology can be low-tech or high-tech. For example, it might be as simple as a rubber grip for a pen or a specially designed door handle or as advanced as computer software that recognizes speech and converts it to text or a computer screen that is operated by the movement of the user's eye. Other examples of assistive technology include:

- highly touch-sensitive electric switches,
- motorized lifts for a bed or bathtub,
- automated doors,
- ramps, rails, and grab bars,
- positioning equipment,
- hearing devices,
- Text Telephone (TTY),
- magnifiers,
- books on tape,
- Braille readers,
- Velcro closures on clothing,
- adaptable keyboards,
- computer software programs,
- automatic page turners,
- adapted pencils,
- wheelchairs,
- scooters, and
- hand controls on automobiles.

THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT

In 1988, Congress passed the Technology-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act, otherwise known as the Tech Act (P.L. 100-407). The Tech Act supported efforts by states in establishing consumer-responsive programs for providing technology-related assistance to individuals with disabilities. Since passage of the Tech Act, each State has established an office to facilitate the timely delivery of AT devices and services. In 1998, the Tech Act was superceded by the Assistive Technology Act.

Counselors should contact the office for technology related services in their State and familiarize themselves with the services and programs offered. In addition to training on AT and technical information about AT sources and functions, the State tech office may also have information about grant or loan programs to support a student's purchase of AT.

RESNA

The Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA) maintains a State-by-State listing of offices for technology related assistance, available at their Website at www.resna.org/taproject/at/statecontacts.html. The site also features important links and additional information about AT applications for education, working, and independent living.

ABLEDATA

Another excellent information resource to pass on to students is the organization ABLEDATA, which operates a comprehensive database of AT equipment and devices. ABLEDATA's trained information specialists can provide product and ordering information for thousands of low- and high- tech AT solutions. To contact ABLE-DATA, go to their Website at www.abledata.com or call toll-free at 1(800)227-0216.

AT solutions are revolutionizing the learning, working, and living of people with disabilities. Encourage students to access and experiment with technology solutions to any challenges and barriers they encounter as the result of disability, and remind them that a low-tech solution is frequently the most effective and least expensive as well.

Helpful Link:

Family Center on Technology and Disability Website: www.fctd.info

References:

Brinkerhoff, L.C., McGuire, J.M., & Shaw, S.F. (2002). *Postsecondary education and transition for students with learn-ing disabilities* (2nd ed.). Austin TX: Pro-Ed.

Burgstahler, S. (2002). *Bridging the digital divide in postsecondary education: Technology access for youth with disabilities.* Minneapolis, MN: National Center on Secondary Education and Transition.

Greene, G., & Kochhar-Bryant, C. (2003). *Pathways to successful transition for youth with disabilities.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice-Hall.

King, T.W. (1999). *Assistive technology; Essential human factors.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Part Three: College, Career and Other Options Beyond High School

To find out what one is fitted to do, and to secure an opportunity to do it, is the key to happiness. - John Dewey

19

What should students with disabilities consider regarding four-year colleges and universities?

To find out what one is fitted to do, and to secure an opportunity to do it, is the key to happiness.

- John Dewey

Four-year colleges and universities are the likely postsecondary option of choice for many of your students. In most instances, this option will be the first choice of your students with disabilities as well. Undoubtedly, the chance to live away from home and encounter new people and new experiences will be enticing to many students with disabilities.

As counselors in high school settings, you are familiar with the numerous benefits of college and university study. The majority of students with disabilities can succeed in a four-year program and earn a bachelors degree. In fact, many students, regardless of disability, adapt to college living and learning more readily than to the demands of high school. Here are just a few reasons why your students with disabilities should consider pursuing a four-year degree:

1) Disability services are widely available.
Colleges and universities are required by law to provide academic adjustments to those students who request them and who have the appropriate documentation to substantiate their disabilities. An increasing number of four-year programs have Disability Support Services (DSS) offices whose primary function is to administer accommodations for students with disabilities.

2) Ther are many courses of study from which to choose.
Over 450 majors are offered at American colleges and universities. Students with disabilities should certainly discover subjects in their areas of interest.

3) There are opportunities for personal growth.
Residential four-year programs offer students significant opportunities to develop critical social and independent living skills. Living away from home in a dormitory or off-campus housing are formative experiences for all students. The money- and time-management skills that students acquire in residential postsecondary programs are invaluable to leading functional, independent lives beyond college.

4) A choice of instructors is usually available.
Students enrolled in four-year programs generally enjoy a choice of teachers, thus allowing them to select instructors whose teaching best matches their learning styles and needs.

5) There is flexible course scheduling.
Students enrolled in four-year programs frequently have more control over their course schedules. In high school, students' course loads are largely predetermined; in college, students have more freedom to choose courses and arrange schedules that cater to individual needs. For example, each semester or term, students can balance their schedules by pairing more challenging classes with those that they are likely to find less demanding.

Students in four-year programs also enjoy greater freedom to plan their daily schedules. Because many college classes are offered at various times of day, students can choose class sections that meet at a time of day when they tend to be most alert and effective.

6) There is a choice of major.

Once a program's general requirements are met, students can focus their energies on subjects they like most. By selecting majors that are of personal interest and contain subject matter that they excel in, students can achieve greater academic success and satisfaction than ever before.

7) Visit the schools

Of course, any choice of a postsecondary program must be well informed. Before selecting an appropriate program, students with disabilities will need to gather the most information they can. Once they have narrowed their list of possible colleges and universities to which they will actually apply, encourage your students with disabilities to visit the schools they are considering most seriously.

Particularly for students with disabilities, choosing a college requires making judgments about one's personal level of independence. How far from home will they be comfortable while adjusting to the increased personal and academic demands of college? Are they willing to spend considerable time and expense going home on breaks? Visiting a campus affords a more accurate sense of its location and available travel options.

Visiting the school also allows students with vision and mobility impairments to evaluate the layout, terrain, and geography of a campus and to assess first hand the physical accommodations of the institution's buildings and physical plant.

Prior to the campus visit, students should make arrangements to meet with Disability Support Service office personnel. Doing so establishes the student's ability to self-advocate. Such a meeting is also a great chance to inquire directly about the types of academic adjustments available to students with disability-related needs. Campus visits also provide opportunities to speak with students who are currently enrolled.

The following are helpful questions for college-seekers to inquire about, either from admissions officers, DSS personnel, and students who are currently enrolled:

- How many students are enrolled? Is the school a comfortable size and will the student get as much individual attention as they require?
- Is the trip between campus and home manageable or overly difficult?
- Are standardized test scores required for admission? For programs that require such testing, what is the target range of scores required for admission?
- What are other admissions requirements? Are requirements for particular courses or grade point averages set in stone, or are modifications allowed for students with appropriate documentation?
- Are students with similar disabilities or needs currently being served within the program? If so, how many?
- Are the particular academic adjustments that a student will need readily available?
- Are course waivers or substitutions allowed?
- Are tutorial services available, and if so, who administers them: peers or professionals? Are tutors trained to work with students with particular disabilities?
- Are policies and procedures in place to protect the confidentiality of student's records?
- Are academic adjustments, including auxiliary aids and services for students with disabilities included in the overall tuition, or do some services require additional fees?

Four-year colleges and universities are a reasonable postsecondary objective for students with disabilities, yet, selecting and preparing to attend such a program can be stressful and time-consuming. Counselors, who know the questions and issues to address, and the best available resources, can greatly facilitate the college search, and help students to realize their postsecondary goals.

References:

Cobb, J. (2001). *Learning how to learn: Getting into and surviving college when you have a learning disability.* Washington, DC: CWLA Press.

Kravets, M., & Wax F. (Eds.). (2001). *The K & W guide to colleges for students with learning disabilities.* Cambridge, MA: Educators Publishing Service.

Mangrum II, C., & Strichart, S.S. (Eds.). (2000). *Colleges with programs for students with learning disabilities or attention deficit disorders* (6th ed.). Princeton, NJ: Peterson's.

Taymans, J.M., & West, L.L. (Eds.). (2000). *Unlocking potential: College and other choices for people with LD and AD/HD.* Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

20

What should students with disabilities consider regarding two-year postsecondary programs?

To find out what one is fitted to do, and to secure an opportunity to do it, is the key to happiness.

\- John Dewey

It's likely that many of your students are excited at the prospect of moving away from home, making new friends, living in a new place, and all of the other changes that come with a residential college or university experience. Such excitement understandable, and there is no reason why most students with disabilities cannot anticipate many of these same great experiences. But for some, adjusting to so many changes along with the demands of arranging for academic adjustments, managing a social schedule, and perfecting the skills of effective self-advocacy may be too much to take on at one time.

Community college options may seem unglamorous to students when many of their peers are bound for four-year residential programs. Yet there are many compelling reasons to at least mention the two-year college option to your college-bound students with disabilities whom you think might benefit from such a program. Here are just a few reasons to consider a 2-year program:

1) Community colleges are institutions where an emphasis is placed on teaching rather than research and publishing. In other words, many community college faculty are there because they like to teach. This can be a real benefit to students who require academic adjustments.

2) Admissions procedures at some community colleges are open. This means that they require no high school diploma and no standardized test scores for admission. (However, many community colleges have instituted admissions requirements in order to manage an increasing number of applicants. Check with the admissions office to determine admissions requirements at a particular community college.)

3) Community colleges tend to be familiar with the needs of students with disabilities. More than 80 percent of community colleges today have a designated office for disability services (U.S. Department of Education, 2002).

4) Students who attend community colleges can master their academic and learning needs while living at home. Later, if they choose to transfer to a four-year program, they will be accomplished self-advocates and knowledgeable consumers of academic adjustments or accommodations.

5) Community colleges generally offer opportunities for remediation in subject matter not previously mastered.

6) By taking classes at a community college, students are able to establish a record of success doing college-level work, increasing their desirability as candidates for transfer to the four-year college or university of their choice.

7) Community college tuition is typically significantly lower than rates at four-year colleges and universities. Students working toward a bachelor's degree can earn nearly half of their credits at a fraction of the cost.

The idea of staying at home and attending a nearby community college may not inspire an eighteen year old when most of his/her classmates are heading away to college. Yet, for many, even just a semester in community college helps create a foundation on which to build a successful life of learning. If you know a student who is eager to go on to postsecondary learning but who you feel may not be ready for all of the demands of a residential experience, discuss the community college option with them. Familiarize yourself with   the programs in your area and with the disability support services that they offer. It might also be helpful to point out that nearly 60 percent of students currently enrolled in postsecondary programs attend two-year schools (U.S.Department of Education, 2002).

When counseling students about their plans for postsecondary education, keep in mind recent data suggesting that the majority of students who enroll in two-year programs with the intention of transferring to four-year institutions do not transfer. Because of the relatively high enrollment rates in two-year programs, this barrier to a four-year degree disproportionately affects students with disabilities (Horn and Berktold, 1999). Therefore, for some students with disabilities, starting out at a two-year program is a great idea; yet, students with disabilities who are ready for the challenges of a residential experience and college-level work should be encouraged to pursue a four-year degree at the outset.

References:

Barnett, L. (Ed.). (1996). *Directory of Disability Support Services in Community Colleges*. Washington, DC: American Association of Community Colleges.

Brown, D.S. (2000). *Learning a living: A guide to planning your career and finding a job for people with learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, and dyslexia*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

Cobb, J. (2001). *Learning how to learn: Getting into and surviving college when you have a learning disability*. Washington, DC: CWLA Press.

Horn, L., & Berktold, J. (1999). *Students with disabilities in postsecondary education: A profile of preparation, participation, and outcomes*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Savukinas, R. (2002). *Community colleges and students with disabilities: options and opportunities*. Information from HEATH, 1.

Taymans, J.M., & West, L.L. (Eds.). (2000). *Unlocking potential: College and other choices for people with LD and AD/HD*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

U.S. Department of Education (2002). *National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey*. Retrieved March 2, 2005 from www.nces.ed.gov/surveys/npsas/ .

21

How should students be prepared to use the disability support services office?

To find out what one is fitted to do, and to secure an opportunity to do it, is the key to happiness.

\- John Dewey

In preparing students to pursue education at two- and four-year colleges and universities, be sure to acquaint them with the Office for Disability Support Services (DSS) within the institutions they are considering. Offices of Disability Support Services, which typically administer academic adjustments, were established on college and university campuses to assist in assuring compliance with federal guidelines requiring access for students with disabilities.

It is important to note that NOT all postsecondary institutions use the term DSS. Offices of Disability Services (ODS) and Office of Special Services (OSS), among others, are often used as well. Also, the level of services available through such offices varies from institution to institution, with some providing adequate modifications, adjustments, aids, and services to satisfy federal requirements, while others may elect to exceed such requirements. Students should be encouraged to familiarize themselves with these offices at each institution and to understand the services they provide. (Throughout this Toolkit, DSS will be used to denote those offices within postsecondary institutions that cater to students with disabilities.)

Transitioning students must understand that the procedures for obtaining special education services in primary and secondary school are entirely different from those governing services at the postsecondary level. Postsecondary services and academic adjustments for students with disabilities are not a continuation of special education services, nor is it the postsecondary institution's responsibility to seek out students with disabilities on their campuses. After high school, the responsibility to seek and acquire the services and academic adjustments they need falls squarely on the shoulders of the students themselves. This is a significant change and requires students to become effective self-advocates.

Choosing to connect to campus resources is perhaps the best indicator of self-advocacy and demonstrates a student assuming responsibility for his or her educational experience. As there is no automatic referral from Admissions or other campus offices, students are encouraged to contact DSS directly prior to or upon admission. Registering with DSS will ensure that students receive appropriate services, including any services necessary for orientation programs or required placement exams. To be eligible for services, generally students must establish a file by providing current and comprehensive documentation of a disability and the need for academic adjustments. If a new evaluation or assessment is needed, it is the student's responsibility to obtain and pay for the evaluation or assessment. Some DSS offices may provide assessment services but most do not. The student should contact DSS to determine what testing services, if any, are provided. Students often may obtain a copy of the eligibility guidelines from the campus DSS office.

Services offered by DSS might include:

- determination of eligibility for a range of academic adjustments (e.g., program adjustments, flexibility in determining full time status);
- coordination of academic adjustments with faculty members (e.g., extended time for exams or assignments, large print books and enlarged handouts, and priority seating);
- consultation to faculty and staff (e.g., conduct staff development programs, provide resource materials describing various disabilities and academic adjustments);
- referral to other campus programs or professionals within the community (e.g., support groups, counseling programs, and study skill training);
- referral to outside agencies when appropriate (e.g., state offices of Vocational Rehabilitation);
- referral for disability related housing needs;self-sufficiency;

- maps or lists of accessible facilities;
- computer adaptive equipment/ assistive technology;
- parking permits;
- provide liaison for students with faculty and staff;
- career planning;
- tutors;
- learning center lab;
- emergency evacuation information;
- independent living/social skills training;
- support groups; and
- other academic adjustments (see section on Academic Adjustments).

In general, support services are designed to ensure an equal opportunity to access and benefit from the academic program while preserving its academic integrity. DSS personnel generally maintain an active presence within the university community by providing presentations, consultation, and written material to educate faculty and staff on disabilities, functional limitations, and appropriate academic accommodations.

Helpful Links

American Association of Community Colleges Website: www.aacc.nche.edu

Bellingham Technical College Website:
www.beltc.ctc.edu/StuServices/DisabledSupport/disabledservices.html

Learning Disabilities Online Website: www.ldonline.org

North Dakota State College of Science Disability Support Services Website:
www.ndscs.nodak.edu/student/asc/dss.html

St. Louis Community College Website: www.stlcc.edu/access/

References:

Brinckerhoff, L. C., McGuire, J. M., & Shaw, S. F. (2002). *Postsecondary education and transition for students with learning disabilities* (2nd ed.). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

Ekpone, P.M., & Bogucki. R. (2003). *Students with psychiatric disabilities in postsecondary education.* Washington, DC: The George Washington University HEATH Resource Center.

Gadbow, N., & DuBois, D. (1998). *Adult learners with special needs: Strategies and resources for postsecondary education and workplace training.* Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company.

22

What are the most frequently asked questions about disability support services for postsecondary students?

To find out what one is fitted to do, and to secure an opportunity to do it, is the key to happiness.

\- John Dewey

The following list of frequently asked questions regarding student, faculty, and DSS roles and responsibilities in requesting and obtaining supports and services may be a handy reference for your students with disabilities.

1) What is the role of Disability Support Services office?

Generally, the DSS office helps students with disabilities in accessing the programs and activities offered by the educational institution. DSS staff members typically assist students with a wide variety of disabilities and may also elect to assist those with a temporary disability resulting from injury or illness. Services are designed to ensure equal access and participation.

2) How do students receive disability services at college?

Students need to contact the DSS or similar office on campus to start the process for requesting academic adjustments. (See the previous chapter, How Should Students Be Prepared to Use the DSS Office? for discussion and clarification about how these offices are designated from campus to campus.)

3) When do students need to contact the Disability Support Services office?

It is a good idea to start the process at the DSS office as soon as students are admitted into college so that any academic adjustments they may need can be arranged.

4) Are all students with disabilities registered with the DSS office?

No, it is likely that many students with disabilities have chosen not to self-identify with the DSS office or they may not have met the eligibility criteria for services. In some instances, students may not be aware that they have a disability. Whatever the case, students who do not disclose their disability and have not requested accommodations generally are not entitled to academic adjustments on the basis of disability.

Note also that DSS offices are not required to be provided by the institution; nondiscrimination is. The purpose of "registering" is to provide notice to the institution that you are a qualified person with a disability and you are requesting academic adjustments. This can also be done through a written notice to the institution where no DSS office exists.

5) Can a 504 Plan or IEP be used for documentation of a disability?

If the student's 504 Plan or IEP contains the necessary information, it may be accepted as documentation. In most cases, the 504 Plan or IEP will be insufficient. Check with the DSS office regarding guidelines for disability documentation.

6) Is the college required to follow the student's 504 Plan or IEP?

No. Generally, the 504 Plan or IEP developed by the student's high school will not be followed by your college, but the rights and protections of Section 504, as applicable to the postsecondary setting, apply. Section 504 is civil rights legislation requiring nondiscrimination on the basis of disability. The requirement to provide a free appropriate public education to students with disabilities is found in IDEA, Section 504, and Title II of the ADA, and applies only to public elementary and secondary school programs.

7) Will students receive the same services as in high school?

Maybe. High schools are required to provide students specific regular or special education and related aids and services as set out in their IEPs or 504 Plans. Colleges are required by law to provide qualified individuals with disabilities equal access to their programs and activities. Such access might include academic adjustments, auxiliary aids, and services that do not constitute an undue burden or fundamental alteration of the program or activity.

For example, an academic adjustment such as reduced assignments probably would not be provided because postsecondary schools do not need to provide academic adjustments that would fundamentally change the educational standards of coursework, or alter the course requirements.

8) What are the laws that protect college and university students with disabilities?

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, provides that:

> No qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance or any program or activity conducted by any Executive agency or by the United States Postal Service.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 upholds and extends the nondiscrimination mandates set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to include both public and private colleges and universities regardless of their receipt of federal financial assistance, but does contain exceptions for private clubs and religious entities.

9) Who is an individual with a disability?

A person who:

1. Has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities;
2. Has a record of such an impairment; or
3. Is regarded as having such an impairment.
   (Section 7 (20)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended)

10) What are the responsibilities of the student with a disability?

In order to receive academic adjustments as a student with a disability, the student must identify himself or herself as having a disability and needing academic adjustments. To ensure the provision of appropriate services, a student must present current and comprehensive documentation to DSS or similar administrative office. It is also important for students to be aware of and understand the privacy or confidentiality policies of the college. Generally, these records are covered under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the federal law that protects the privacy of student education records.

11) What are the obligations of the institution?

The college or university may not discriminate against an individual solely on the basis of the disability. This means that the college or university may not subject the student to different treatment on the basis of the disability. Also, the college or university must provide academic adjustments, including auxiliary aids and services, for the student's known disability in order to afford the student equal opportunity to participate in the institution's program, activities, and services, including extracurricular activities.

12) Is financial assistance available through the DSS office for students with disabilities?

Generally, no, but students are encouraged to check with the financial aid office at the school they will be attending. Some agencies that may provide support are State Vocational Rehabilitation, Workers Compensation, and the Veterans Administration.

13) How does the DSS office determine and communicate a student's academic adjustment needs to faculty?

Determining academic adjustments is an interactive, and highly individual, process. As a best practice, the following questions need to be asked and answered to identify academic adjustments that are appropriate in a particular instance:

- Is the student a "person with a disability"?
- Is the student "otherwise qualified"?
- What barriers result from the interaction between the documented disability and the campus environment?
- What are possible academic adjustments, including auxiliary aids and services, that might remove the barriers?
- What academic adjustments would the student prefer?
- Would the proposed academic adjustments fundamentally alter the nature of the program, service, or activity?
- Would the proposed academic adjustments result in undue financial and administrative burdens on the institution?
- Are there other possible academic adjustments that would not constitute a fundamental alteration or undue burden?

Although schools may have differing procedures for arranging academic adjustments, the following are general guidelines. Generally, the DSS office communicates a student's academic adjustment needs in writing to the faculty. It is preferable for the student in question to deliver an academic adjustment letter directly to the faculty member at the beginning of the semester, or as soon as the academic adjustments have been determined. This letter serves as a catalyst for discussion of how the academic adjustments will be provided and informs faculty about the functional limitations of the student. The letter also notifies the faculty member of whom to contact if the faculty member needs help providing the academic adjustments or if there is a question about the academic adjustments decision.

Some classes require more creative academic adjustments due to the nature of the course or the complexity of a student's functional limitations. When this occurs, the DSS provider should facilitate a dialog with the student and the faculty member to clarify the essential elements of the course and identify academic adjustments, considering the functional limitations of the student.

14) How is a student's documentation protected from public disclosure?

Colleges and universities have policies and procedures for protecting certain types of information. Disability related information about a student must be treated and handled as confidential information and protected accordingly under the school's guidelines and federal laws. Generally, the information is not to be shared with other people outside the school without the student's consent.

15) Will the DSS office provide personal services like assistants to help students get dressed for the school day or to push a wheelchair?

No. Services or equipment needed to assist an individual with activities that are personal in nature, such as assistance for daily living, are the responsibility of the individual, not the college. For example, helping with dressing or reminding someone to take their medication is a personal service that an individual needs in order to function on a daily basis, whether or not he or she is in college. If a service or equipment is needed solely for the purpose of participating in a college program or activity, it is the college's responsibility to provide it consistent with legal requirements. For example, the college might provide a writer or scribe for essay tests if the student's disability prevented her or him from writing the answers. The college, however, is not obligated to provide a writer so that same student can write personal letters.

References:

The proceeding composite list of questions was compiled from the following sources:

Grossman, P.D. (November-December 2001). Making Accommodations: The Legal World of Students with Disabilities. *87 Academe: Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors*, 41-46. Retrieved March 8, 2005 from
www.ahead.org/resources/Grossman_Making_Accommodations.doc

Boston University, Office of Disability Services. (2005), *Frequently Asked Questions*. Retrieved March 8, 2005 from www.bu.edu/disability/faq.htm

The George Washington University, Office of Disability Support Services. (n.d.). *Faculty FAQs*. Retrieved March 8, 2005 from   http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/InformationforFaculty/

Izzo, M.. & Yurcisin, A. (n.d.). Most frequently asked questions: *Educational access for students with disabilities: Fast Facts for faculty*. Retrieved March 9, 2005 from The Ohio State University Partnership Grant Website: http://telr.osu.edu/dpg/faq.html

North Dakota State College of Science, Academic Services Center. (2002). *Frequently Asked Questions*. Retrieved March 8, 2005 from www.ndscs.nodak.edu/student/asc/faq.html

What is career and technical education?

To find out what one is fitted to do, and to secure an opportunity to do it, is the key to happiness.

\- John Dewey

After high school, many options and opportunities await the graduate. Some may choose to go into a formal postsecondary program right away while others may want to take some time to explore alternative paths. One option for students to consider is a program that provides career and technical (vocational) training. For the right individuals, such training might open the doors to careers in agriculture, health, business, trade, industry or marketing - to name only a few. Students pursuing such vocational or technical training must decide upon a discipline that suits their interests, needs, abilities and goals.

Career and technical education programs prepare individuals for employment that requires specialized education, but not a bachelor's degree. These programs can equip the individual with the skills in a particular field to make them competitive in the job market. Also, they are offered both at a public (technical institutes, community colleges, and area vocational-technical centers) and private (trade, technical, and business schools) level. Upon deciding that this path is the one that a high-school graduate with a disability would like to take, it is suggested that they follow the guide below (Taymans & West, 2000).

STEPS TO A CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

1) *Choose an occupational area.*

2) *Locate an appropriate school.*

3) *Investigate its quality.*

4) *Inquire about:*

   a. the time involved in completing course work,
   b. what degree or certificate is offered,
   c. availability of accommodations for students with disabilities,
   d. the experience of instructors accommodating students with disabilities, and
   e. the availability of job placement services.

5) *Select the appropriate program.*

Ask about vocational-technical options at state and local chapters of disability and community service organizations.

• Ask the state employment agency about available options.

• Call the vocational-technical education state office and ask for the individual familiar with support services throughout the state. Each state has a specialist who is usually located within in the division of vocational education in the state department of education. You can locate the contact information for your state's Tech Prep program at: http://bcol02.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_cd=TPC.

• Live chats, Q & A's, and additional information on professional development speakers, publications, and conferences are available at www.nccte.org, the Website of the National Centers for Career and Technical Education.

6) Consider the advantages of attending public 2-year technical schools.

- No admissions requirements other than age (usually eighteen years or older) and graduation from high school or successful completion of the GED exam, with some exceptions. Entrance exams may be required for certain technical courses of study, such as nursing and engineering.

- Availability of DSS office on many campuses. In addition, a vocational support team may be avail able to help students master specific tasks or skills that present difficulties.

- An opportunity for intensive and highly specialized training in an occupational area.

- Preparation for transfer to four-year college or professional school.

- Enhanced opportunities for job placement. Programs are usually geared to employment opportunities in the community.

- More hands-on work than in a college program, advantageous for students with certain disabilities.

Career and technical education today emphasizes a broad preparation for learners that includes developing academic, vocational, and technical skills. Current career and technical education practice encourages high school learners to pursue postsecondary education through tech-prep arrangements. Tech-prep programs represent a cooperative effort between school systems and participating colleges and universities to offer integrated academic and vocational training that emphasizes all aspects of an industry. The National Career Development Training Institute has immediate plans to actively incorporate the high school guidance counselor's role in future tech-prep programs (Sarkees-Wircenski & Scott, 2003).

Where occupational preparation once focused on a relatively small number of occupations, today it emphasizes preparation for a wider range of career choices. Career and technical education programs now place greater emphasis on critical thinking, personal responsibility, social skills, and leadership/follower skills to better prepare learners for modern workplace realities.

Helpful Links:

Association for Career and Technical Education Website: www.acteonline.org

National Centers for Career and Technical Education Website: www.nccte.org

References:

Sarkees-Wircenski, M., & Scott, J.L. (2003). *Special populations in career and technical education*. Homewood, IL: American Technical Publishers, Inc.

Taymans, J.M., & West, L.L. (Eds.). (2000). *Unlocking potential: College and other choices for people with LD and AD/HD*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

Zunker, V.G. (2002). *Career counseling: Applied concepts of life planning*. (6th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

24

What should counselors keep in mind when guiding students with disabilities toward employment?

To find out what one is fitted to do, and to secure an opportunity to do it, is the key to happiness.

- John Dewey

The National Organization on Disability (NOD) reports that of all working age people in 2000, only three out of 10 people with disabilities (aged 18-64) were employed full or part-time, compared to eight out of 10 working-age people without disabilities. According to the same survey, two out of every three people with disabilities who were unemployed indicated a preference to work. This comparison signals a gap of 49 percentage points in favor of people without disabilities being employed (NOD, 2004).

Postsecondary education or training for individuals with disabilities increases their access to and success in employment. Because today's work environments are competitive, people with disabilities seek supportive resources and services to assist them achieve and maintain quality, enriching employment.

Before seeking and accepting employment, individuals with disabilities are advised to become familiar with the law governing and supporting their entry into the world of work. The following is a summary of the provisions under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for individuals with disabilities to review before accessing employment opportunities (Taymans & West, 2000).

- Employers who have 15 or more employees are prohibited from discriminating against workers with disabilities.

- Employers may not discriminate against qualified individuals with a disability when hiring and promoting employees.

- Employers can ask you about your skills to perform a job, but they cannot ask you whether you have a disability or test you to see if you have a disability.

- Employers need to offer reasonable accommodations if employees with disabilities request them and if doing so presents the employer with no undue hardship.

To effectively guide students with disabilities toward employment, counselors should keep desk copies of organizational directories and other references on hand to quicken the dissemination of information to students. Consult the listing of Resources, Links, and Publications at the end of this guide for titles of recommended resources. Many publishers provide free desk copies to counselors or other educators who submit a letter on school stationary requesting a particular resource and specifying the author, edition, publisher, and ISBN. In addition, it may be helpful for counselors to request placement on mailing lists or email listservs for notification of newly published books related to postsecondary education and employment for students or individuals with disabilities.

References:

Moore, M. (1998). *Researching disability issues: Disability, human rights and society.* London: Open University Press.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2001). *Digest of education statistics.* Washington, DC: Author.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2000). *The condition of education 2000: Services for disabled postsecondary students.* Washington, DC: Author.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2000). *Undergraduate diversity.* Washington, DC: Author.

National Organization on Disability. (2005). Retrieved March 22, 2005 from:
www.nod.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=12.

Unger, D., Wehman, P., Yasudo, S., Campbell, L. & Green, H. (2000). *Human resource professionals and the employment of persons with disabilities: A business perspective.* Richmond, VA: Virginia Commonwealth University.

Westbrook, J. D. (2002). *Survey report 2002.* Austin, TX: National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research.

25

Is military servicea postsecondary option for students with disabilities?

To find out what one is fitted to do, and to secure an opportunity to do it, is the key to happiness.

- John Dewey

A career or period of service in the military is another postsecondary option for students to consider. The military currently provides training and work experience in many areas for the 1.5 million people actively serving in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard, their Reserve components, and the Air and Army National Guard. Military training can provide technical skills and increased self-discipline and often leads to immediate job offers after leaving the service. In exchange for service, the armed forces also offer financial assistance to pay for higher education. Such tuition benefits are an important factor for many who choose military service.

Prior to enlisting in any branch of the armed forces an individual must take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). This series of tests measures reading, spelling, math, and general and mechanical knowledge. The exam results determine qualification for various specialties. The workbook Practice for the Armed Forces Test can help students prepare for the exam. (To learn more about the test battery and to view sample questions, refer students to the following United States Department of Defense Website: www.todaysmilitary.com/app/tm/nextsteps/asvab).

Prospective service men and women should know that passing the ASVAB test is not a guarantee that a particular branch or program will provide needed or appropriate accommodations. Also, unlike scholastic aptitude tests frequently used in college admissions (e.g., SAT, ACT), no disability-related accommodations are made to students on the ASVAB.

The requirements for each branch of the military are somewhat different. In general, one should know the following:

- Acceptance into the military is based heavily on the score the student earns on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB).

- The military requires a high school diploma for admission. A standard diploma is preferred, but a diploma earned by passing the GED test may be accepted. However, a student with a GED diploma may be required to meet additional requirements.

- Special diplomas may or may not be accepted by military recruiters.

- Officers in the Armed Forces require a bachelor's or advanced degree.

Further, according to military regulations, academic skills deficits that interfere with school or work after the age of 12 may be a cause for exclusion from service in the Armed Forces. These regulations also state that current use of medication to improve cognitive function or increase attention, such as Ritalin or Dexedrine, disqualifies one for military service.

Unlike in college and university settings, neither Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act nor the ADA applies to uniformed personnel branches of the military. Accommodations for a disability are not made for individuals in the military, with the exception of civilian employees.

Therefore, students with disabilities who are considering military service should know that protections, accommodations, and services provided under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the ADA in other postsecondary settings are not provided in military contexts. Students with disabilities who are considering military service must candidly and frankly assess their disability-related needs. If they do not feel able to meet the challenges and perform the duties of service, they may be better off selecting a different postsecondary path.

Whenever counseling students about opportunities in the military, consult local recruiters for the most up-to-date information; admission standards may change periodically depending on the current need for recruits. Visit the following Websites to learn more about the training opportunities, requirements, and education benefits available from the various military branches:

United States Army
www.army.com

United States Navy
www.navy.com

United States Air Force
www.airforce.com

United Stated Marine Corps
www.marines.com

United States Coast Guard
www.gocoastguard.com

The National Guard
www.1800goguard.com

Today's Military
www.todaysmilitary.com

Students with disabilities who are not deterred by the absence of accommodations and support should schedule an appointment with a recruiter from the applicable military branch to ask specific questions if they want to learn more about opportunities in that branch of the service. Counselors may want to establish contacts with local recruiting agencies and to host occasional promotional and informational visits from military recruiters.

Your students considering the military option might also be interested in the personal account of Taylor V. Beattie, a Green Beret in the Special Forces. Beattie's story, which describes his experiences growing up with Dyslexia and his struggle to become a Special Forces officer, can be found at:
www.dyslexia-adults.com/a29.html.

Helpful Links:

ASVAB Program for Exploring Careers Website:
www.asvabprogram.com/

For Kids Only Learning Disabilities Website, The Armed Forces:
http://ruby.fgcu.edu/courses/eex6015/military.htm

Learning Disabilities Online Website: www.ldonline.org

References:

Taymans, J.M., & West, L.L. (Eds.). (2000). *Unlocking potential: College and other choices for people with LD and AD/HD.* Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2005) *Job Opportunities in the Armed Forces.* Retrieved March 4, 2005, from www.bls.gov/oco/ocos249.htm

PART 4

PartFour: Procedural Concerns for Succesful Transitions

In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity. - Albert Einstein

26

What constitutes proper and complete documentation of a disability?

In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.
- Albert Einstein

To establish that an individual has a disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), documentation should:

1. Establish that a physical or mental impairment exists, and

2. Demonstrate that the physical or mental impairment substantially limits one or more major life activities such as seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, breathing, performing manual tasks, learning, caring for oneself, and working.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 both require institutions of higher education to provide equal access to educational opportunities to "persons with disabilities." Proper documentation from a qualified professional is required to establish that a student is, in fact, an individual with a disability. A qualified professional is one who has comprehensive training and pertinent licensure or certification to diagnose or evaluate the disability and its effect on the student in the program and perhaps provide information to assist in determining appropriate academic adjustments.

Documentation might also include a report from an educator who is qualified to address the instructional needs that arise from the diagnosis or symptoms. The documentation should establish the student as having a disability and allow the student and school, together, to determine the needed academic adjustments.

By law, a student who meets a college or university's essential admissions requirements cannot be denied admission on the basis of disability.

The provision of all academic adjustments is based upon assessment of the impact of the student's disabilities on his or her performance at a given time in the student's life. Therefore, it is in the student's best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation relevant to the student's learning environment. Documentation should validate the need for services based on the individual's current level of functioning in the educational setting. A school plan such as an IEP or a 504 plan is generally insufficient documentation on its own, but can be included as part of a more comprehensive assessment battery.

Counselors should be advised that the quality of documentation could be a factor in determining whether or not academic adjustments are provided by the institution. The following are important considerations for ensuring quality written reports:

Legible, official, and timely documentation. Documentation should be legible (either typed or printed), on letterhead, dated and signed, and include the name, title, and professional credentials (i.e. license) of the evaluator. Counselors should plan accordingly as this process is time consuming. Allow sufficient time for the evaluator to complete the evaluation, share the results with the student, write the report, and for DSS personnel to review the documentation.

Current documentation. Documentation should be current, completed in the last three years.

Reason for referral. The documentation should include a statement from the evaluator indicating the reason for conducting the evaluation.

Testing information. All tests used to confirm a disability and to support the need for academic adjustments should be included as well as a description of the diagnostic tests. The evaluation process used for the assessment battery should be valid and age appropriate.

Student background. The documentation should include the original diagnosis and relevant developmental, medical, and educational history.

Clarification of the disability. The documentation should include a clear statement of the disability and its impact on the individual's major life activities. It should include description of how the individual's disability interferes with or impacts his/her ability to participate in the educational process. This should be clearly spelled out and backed up by the documentation's narrative.

Rule-out statement. The evaluator's report should include a "rule-out statement" that describes what academic and other functions the disability does not affect.

Measures of achievement. The documentation should describe the student's academic accomplishments.

Test and subtest results clearly stated. Testing services and colleges may require subtest scores in order to render a decision.

Summary recap. A summary statement provides an opportunity for the evaluator to get the testing service's and the college's attention. This should be thoughtfully prepared and not simply a matter of repeating what's been stated elsewhere in the documentation.

Identify cause and effect. The rationale for requested academic adjustments should be tied to specific test results.

Recommendations. The document should recommend academic adjustments in the postsecondary environment. The evaluator should also specifically address the need for extended time.

Increasingly, institutions of higher education are following documentation guidelines. Information on such guidelines is available at: www.janejarrow.com/public_library/samplepolicy/index.html. The Educational Testing Services (ETS) prepared a similar policy statement on documentation of learning disabilities, as well as guidelines for documentation of other hidden disabilities such as attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder and psychiatric disabilities: www.ets.org/disability/index.html. Counselors, parents, teachers, administrators, and students may want to view the following resources regarding appropriate documentation of specific disabilities:

- ETS Policy Statement for Documentation of a Learning Disability in Adolescents and Adults:
  www.ets.org/disability/ldpolicy.html

- ETS Policy Statement for Documentation of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and Adults:
  www.ets.org/disability/adhdplcy.html

- ETS Guidelines for Documentation of Psychiatric Disabilities in Adolescents and Adults:
  www.ets.org/disability/psyplcy.html.

SAFE HANDLING OF DOCUMENTATION

Advise your students that their disability-related, personally identifiable information, maintained by an educational agency or institution that receives federal education funding, is considered to be an education record that is subject to the protections of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which generally requires that:

- A student has the right to inspect and review his or her education records.

- An institution may not have a policy or practice of disclosing education records and personally identifiable information from education records without the signed, written consent of the student.

- An institution may not disclose personally identifiable information from education records to other school officials, including teachers who have a legitimate educational interest as determined by the school, without obtaining the written consent of the student.

Although FERPA permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from education records without the prior, written consent of the student in several other limited circumstances, great caution should be used to ensure that any disclosure that is made without the student's written consent is permissible under FERPA and the Department of Education's regulations (34 CFR 99). Additionally, the Department of Education's Family Policy Compliance Office is available to provide assistance in answering any questions concerning the proper handling of education records.

References:

Brinckerhoff, L.C., McGuire, J.M., Shaw, S.F. (2002). *Postsecondary education and transition for students with learning disabilities* (2nd ed.). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

Ekpone, P.M., & Bogucki. R. (2003). *Students with psychiatric disabilities in postsecondary education.* Washington, DC: The George Washington University HEATH Resource Center.

Quality of documentation can determine if accommodations given. (2002, August). *Disability Compliance for Higher Education*, 8,1.

Virginia Department of Education. (2002). *Virginia's college guide for students with disabilities.* Richmond, VA: Author

27

What factors should students consider when deciding to disclose their disabilities?

In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.
- Albert Einstein

National Clearinghouse on Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Disabilities
HEATH Resource Center

Students with disabilities and their parents frequently believe that it is their responsibility to notify an institution of their disability during the application process. It is not. In fact, under Section 504 and the ADA, students with disabilities are NOT required to disclose that they have a disability, nor can any institution make pre-admission inquiries to determine whether an individual has a disability, except under limited circumstances. A student CAN be asked to volunteer information about his or her disability for affirmative or remedial purposes, provided that the institution meets certain other applicable requirements. Students can also decide to disclose this information on their own.

Your students must also understand that an institution is only required to provide academic adjustments for the known disabilities of a student. In other words, any student who has been admitted to a college or university and who requires academic adjustments for a disability must disclose his or her disability and request the necessary academic adjustments through the institution's office for Disability Support Services.

If the institution has no such office, the student must determine the appropriate administrator to whom such a request should be made; this individual may have as part of his or her title "504 Coordinator" or "ADA Coordinator". Students who request academic adjustments for a disability must also provide current documentation of the disability (see the section titled "What Constitutes Proper and Complete Documentation of a Disability?" for more details about documentation).

Therefore, while it is the student's choice whether or not to disclose the disability, institutions are only bound to consider requests for academic adjustments from those students who self-identify and whose documentation is complete. Colleges and universities are not held accountable for not providing academic adjustments to students who have made no such requests.

Individuals with disabilities who are embarking on postsecondary education should know:

1. The type of disability they have (and have written documentation of their disability).

2. Which laws entitle them to protection.

3. The types of protections they qualify for under the laws.

4. Which academic adjustments they may need.

Federal laws protect the rights of all students to an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from all school programs and activities, including any academic, research, occupational training, housing, health insurance, counseling, financial aid, physical education, athletics, recreation, transportation, and campus-based employment.

In short, the student determines whether, and if so, when to disclose a disability. Keep in mind however, that some academic adjustments take time to coordinate and that the DSS office will need ample time to arrange them.

The following scenarios illustrate two students' approaches to deciding whether or not to disclose:

Scenario A

A student with mobility impairment has visited a campus, determined that the terrain is manageable, and generally liked the feel of the campus and the curriculum offered. When completing the application materials for admission, this student makes no mention, as is his right, of having a disability. Then, once admitted, this student notifies the DSS office, identifies himself as having a disability, presents documentation, requests advanced registration for classes he wants, and a guarantee that all classes will be held in accessible facilities.

Scenario B

A student with language-based learning disabilities (LD) is applying to several selective schools. Her class rank and standardized test scores have suffered as a result of her LD. This student feels uncomfortable allowing her transcript to "speak for itself", choosing instead to address her learning disabilities directly. In her student essay she talks about her experiences as a student with LD and how difficult it was to learn before she was diagnosed. Her essay goes on to describe her increased understanding of her disability and her gradual mastery of strategies and techniques that enable her to manage the challenges presented by her LD.

Specifically, she relates how her reading comprehension increases when she is able to listen to a tape of what she is studying while reading the written text at the same time. By framing her transcript in the context of her disability and her increasing grasp of the simple accommodations she requires to get equal footing in the classroom, this student demonstrates her determination to succeed and serious attitude toward learning.

Perhaps the most important question an individual with a disability must ask is "What are the consequences of not disclosing?" Can the person with a disability benefit from a postsecondary program without academic adjustments? If the answer is no, the individual needs to consider the following:

1. How significant is the disability?

2. How much does the nature or manifestation of the disability conflict with the needs of the educational program?

3. How open is the educational program to recognizing and accommodating individuals with disabilities?

If you are preparing your students for employment, the same issues regarding disclosure apply.

Helpful Links:

Association on Higher Education and Disability Website: www.ahead.org

Learning Disabilities Online Website: www.ldonline.org

Professional Development Academy Website: www.students.vcu.edu/pda

References:

Brinckerhoff, L. C., McGuire, J. M., & Shaw, S. F. (2002). *Postsecondary education and transition for students with learning disabilities* (2nd ed.). Austin, TX: Pro-ed.

Ekpone, P.M., & Bogucki. R. (2003). *Students with psychiatric disabilities in postsecondary education*. Washington, DC: The George Washington University HEATH Resource Center.

Gadbow, N., & DuBois, D. (1998). *Adult learners with special needs: Strategies and resources for postsecondary education and workplace training*. Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company.

Grand Valley State University, Disability Support Services. (n.d.). *Requirements for documentation*. Retrieved March 7, 2005 from http://www.gvsu.edu/dss/index.cfm?id=6BE2ED8A-E798-D664-C8BEE3BA6DB1422C.

Taymans, J.M., & West, L.L. (Eds.). (2000). *Unlocking potential: College and other choices for people with LD and AD/HD*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

28

Are educational evaluations required to substantiate students' learning disabilities?

In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.
- Albert Einstein

Under IDEA, educational evaluations and reevaluations are conducted to determine whether a child is a child with a disability and the educational needs of the child. While the results of such an evaluation may, in some cases, be sufficient to establish the need for accommodations at the postsecondary level, IDEA does not require secondary schools to perform such evaluations in order for students to obtain services in a postsecondary program.

Students with cognitive, visual, or auditory based learning disabilities who are requesting services in a post-secondary program usually will be required to have current educational evaluations to substantiate the need for services or identify appropriate academic adjustments or auxiliary aids. Generally, most programs desire diagnostic testing to have been completed while the student is in high school. Given the time consuming and technical nature of arranging for and completing diagnostic testing, it is important that students contact the DSS offices within prospective postsecondary programs early to find out the exact requirements for educational evaluations in order to obtain accommodations.

Typically, an evaluation will include cognitive and achievement testing. It may be preferable to have an evaluator who is knowledgeable about postsecondary programs conduct the evaluation. Wechsler Intelligence Scales and Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery (WJ-III) are two commonly administered cognitive instruments. These measures provide information that can assist in identifying, addressing, and providing viable recommendations to resolve the learning problems experienced by the student. The Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement, when used in conjunction with the cognitive battery, can provide valuable information about the cognitive and academic strengths and weaknesses of the individual.

The following list, though not exhaustive, names many commonly used instruments for assessing learning disabilities of varying modes and severity in students:

COGNITIVE

- Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS-III)
- Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery (WJ-III)
- Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test
- Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale (4th ed.)

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

- Scholastic Abilities Tests for Adults (SATA)
- Stanford Test of Academic Skills
- Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery (WJ-III)
- Weschler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)
- Nelson-Denny Reading Skills Test
- Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test
- Test of Written Language-3 (TOWL-3)
- Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests-Revised, Normative Update (WRMT-R-NU)

Evaluation reports should include recommendations that are applicable to the postsecondary program. (See the chapter, What Constitutes Proper and Complete Documentation of a Disability? for a discussion on evaluation reports.)

The following suggestions will help counselors better serve the evaluation needs of their students with disabilities:

1. Develop a list of educational diagnosticians that are familiar with postsecondary programs (colleges and technical schools).

2. Ensure that educational diagnosticians on your list are qualified to evaluate the specific disabilities of the students you are referring.

3. Encourage evaluators to write a convincing report and to justify the recommendations without being antagonizing.

4. Encourage students and families to contact prospective programs to obtain specific information related to needed educational evaluations and the process for obtaining academic adjustments.

5. Work with the student's IEP team to ensure that the appropriate evaluations and testing are considered during transition planning.

Schools may establish their own reasonable standards for documentation. As a result, some schools may require more documentation than others. Although an IEP or Section 504 plan may identify services that have been effective for students and recommendations for meeting postsecondary goals, they may not be considered sufficient documentation. Remember, the academic demands of postsecondary education differ from those in high school. Complete documentation enables the institutions to better anticipate what each student will need in order to meet these new demands.

References:

Brinkerhoff, L.C., McGuire, J.M., & Shaw, S.F. (2002). *Postsecondary education and transition for students with learning disabilities* (2nd ed.). Austin: Pro-Ed.

College Board. (n.d.). *SSD: Documentation Guidelines*. Retrieved March 7, 2005 from http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/article/0,3045,149-0-0-21306,00.html

Crabtree, R.K. (n.d.). *What you should know about evaluations*. Retrieved March 6, 2005 from the Family Education Network Website: www.familyeducation.com/article/0,1120,1-634-0-3,00.html.

King, S. (2003). *Educational evaluations for students with disabilities*. The George Washington University, Washington, DC.

Ross-Kidder, K. (n.d.). *Assessment for adults with LD*. Retrieved March 6, 2005 from the LD Online Website: www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/assessment/ld_adhd_adult_assessment.html.

US Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. (2004). *Students with disabilities preparing for postsecondary education: Know your rights and responsibilities*. Retrieve March 6, 2005 from www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html.

29

Is financial aid available for students with disabilities?

In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.

- Albert Einstein

High school counselors frequently receive requests from students and their parents for information about financial aid and scholarships to help defray the rising costs of postsecondary education. Students with disabilities are often under the impression that a documented disability guarantees access to a wealth of funds for college level education. Unfortunately, in most instances, you will have to inform these students that, in fact, there are relatively few disability-specific grants and scholarships awarded; and most of these are highly selective, and usually awarded to the highest achieving students.

Similarly, there is no separately administered pool of federal student financial aid for students with disabilities. Federal financial aid, a combination of student loans and grants, is the primary source to help all students finance their postsecondary studies. Some Federal financial aid programs are need-based (i.e., it is awarded to those demonstrating the greatest financial need) and do not directly incorporate disability into its eligibility formulas. That said, students with disabilities should be strongly encouraged to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (www.fafsa.ed.gov) in a comprehensive and timely manner. By doing so, they will be considered for eligibility for this enormous assistance program. And, many colleges and universities as well as private foundations require the results of the FAFSA application for consideration for additional funding.

Your students with disabilities should also be encouraged to look around for state, local, and private grants and scholarships for which they might be eligible. Caution them first not to spend an inordinate amount of time focusing on disability-specific grants. The HEATH paper Creating Options: A Resource on Financial Aid for Students With Disabilities-2005 edition contains helpful resources, lists disability related grants, and recommends a host of Websites and free online search engines to facilitate a comprehensive funding search.

Students should also be made aware of their State Office for Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), a federal-state partnership. The VR program may be able to provide eligible individuals with some financial assistance to help pay for tuition, books, some needed adaptive technology, or other support services the school is not required by law to provide. All such services provided by VR must be necessary to achieve an employment outcome. HEATH's financial aid paper (see link above) discusses services and assistance available from Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Also, the National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities posts contact information for each OVR headquarters at its Website at www.nichcy.org.

Finally, counselors should explore the TRIO federal funding programs, through which aid is awarded to particular colleges and universities in order to increase educational opportunities for minorities, individuals with low-income, and students with disabilities. To learn more about TRIO programs, go to www.trioprograms.org.

Regardless of which opportunities for financial aid that they explore, students with disabilities should be prepared for the fact that applying for numerous award programs is a challenging, time-consuming, and complex task.

A successful search requires a systematic, methodic, and organized approach, and involves researching and applying to various organizations and agencies. Each source to which a student applies is likely to have its own requirements for consideration and its own application deadlines.

References:

Gardner, D., & Ward. M. (Eds.) (2006). *Creating options: Financial aid for students with disabilities*. Washington, DC: The George Washington University HEATH Resource Center.

Leider, A., & Leider, R. (2002). *Don't miss out: The ambitious student's guide to financial aid.* Alexandria, VA: Octameron Press.

Salvia, J., & Ysseldyke, J. (2001). *Assessment.* (8th ed). New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Schlachter, G., & Weber, R.D. (2002). *Financial aid for the disabled and their families; 2002-2004*. El Dorado Hills, CA: Reference Service Press.

Taymans, J.M., & West, L.L. (Eds.). (2000). *Unlocking potential: College and other choices for people with LD and AD/HD*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

U.S. Department of Education Website: *Funding your education: 2004-2005*, http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/FYE/index.html.

30

Do special concerns or procedures affect the admissions process for students with disabilities?

In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.
- Albert Einstein

When selecting a college, students with disabilities should be encouraged to consider a wide range of criteria including size, location, and range of courses, rather than focusing exclusively on accommodations and services provided. Once a student has decided where to apply, there are a few basic points related to the application and admissions process that any counselor providing guidance to college bound students with disabilities should know.

If at all possible, the student should apply to at least three schools in order to have as many postsecondary options as possible. Once these schools have been chosen, the student should contact the Admissions Office, as they will be a vital source of information regarding specific requirements for admission.

Below are some typical requirements for admission to a college or university:

ENTRANCE EXAMS

The two most common college entrance exams are the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT®) and the American College Testing (ACT®) exam. Because these exams are difficult and often cause anxiety, students are encouraged to take these exams as many times as possible. Each set of scores does not have to be sent to the colleges to which the student is applying.

Accommodations on these standardized exams may be available to students with documented disabilities. (This documentation is similar to what is required by most colleges and universities for accommodations; see Chapter 21.) In the past, the scores from exams taken with accommodations were flagged, indicating to admissions officials that the tests were administered under special circumstances. You should check with the exam administrator to determine current practice for noting the provision of accommodations.

Some examples of testing accommodations are:

- individual administration of the test
- use of an audiocassette tape or large print test editions
- special answer sheets
- use of an aide to mark the answers
- extended testing time

In addition to the SAT and ACT exams, admissions requirements for most four-year colleges and universities include either a high school diploma or GED. A complete transcript of the high school education including courses completed, grade point average, and class rank are also commonly required for admissions.

APPLICATION FORMS

College application forms are often detailed and lengthy. It is important to make sure students fill out the forms accurately and legibly. If a student has difficulty with spelling or handwriting, the application should be typed or the student should find someone to dictate the responses to. Some schools have on-line applications as well. No matter how the student chooses to fill out an application, it is important that someone proofreads it before it is sent to the school.

INTERVIEWS

Not all schools require student interviews, but those that do may schedule the interview either before or after a formal application is submitted. The interview can be an excellent opportunity for students with disabilities to convey their strengths, enthusiasm and determination for succeeding in postsecondary education. Therefore, students with disabilities may want to initiate a request for an interview, if possible. To prepare for interviews, students should:

- Be Ready. Students should be prepared to describe their positive characteristics as well as successful experiences.

- Know the School. Although an interview presents a good opportunity to gather information about the school, the student should come equipped with some knowledge about the school's services, size, programs, etc. This information can be used to explain why the student is a good match for the school.

- Role Play. Many students report that practicing for an interview by role-playing helps them feel more confident. They can ask a counselor, parent, or friend to "interview" them and practice answering the questions. This approach can help students hone their interpersonal skills.

- Advance Planning. Students should arrange appointments for interviews as far in advance as possible through the dean of admissions, the DSS office, a university learning specialist, or the director of admissions. With advance planning, residential colleges may be able to arrange for students to sleep in a dorm and attend classes. Students applying to vocational education programs or local community colleges may want to spend a day touring the campuses and speaking with students and instructors.

References:

Barr, V., Hartman, R.C., & Spillane, S.A. (1995). *Getting ready for college: Advising high school students with disabilities.* Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

College Board. (n.d.). *Apply to college.* Retrieved March 7, 2005 from www.collegeboard.com/apply.

Greene, G., & Kochhar-Bryant, C. A. (2003). *Pathways to Successful Transition for Youth with Disabilities.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice-Hall.

Kravets, M., & Wax F. (Eds.). (2001). *The K & W guide to colleges for students with learning disabilities.* Cambridge, MA: Educators Publishing Service.

Shill, K. (2000). *Eric digests; Precollege guidance and counseling*. Ann Arbor, MI: ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Personnel Services.

Taymans, J.M., & West, L.L. (Eds.). (2001). *Unlocking potential: College and other choices for people with LD and AD/HD*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

31

Should students with disabilities consider applying for early admission?

In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.
- Albert Einstein

Colleges and universities have increasingly encouraged students to commit to their programs earlier in their senior year of high school than ever before. This practice generally takes the form of early admissions, programs through which students apply to colleges late in the fall of their senior year, and in so doing agree to attend a school if accepted on an accelerated schedule. While early admissions may be advantageous to some students, those with disabilities should carefully consider the ramifications of the early decision option. Lately, as early admissions programs have proliferated and gained in popularity, they have received increasing negative attention for the undue strain they cause and perceived bias toward higher achieving and more affluent students.

EARLY DECISION VS. EARLY ACTION

While counselors are knowledgeable about the various admissions options, students with disabilities will need to clearly understand the implications of these options in regard to applying to a program via early admissions. They must clearly understand the following implications:

In one type of early admissions program, called early decision, a student applies in the fall of senior year to a single college or university, and in so doing agrees to attend that school if admitted. Generally, the agreement to attend a program through early decision is binding.

Early action refers to another early admissions program. Typically, early action programs are not binding. In other words, students are free to apply to numerous schools on an accelerated schedule.

FINANCIAL AID

For many students with and without disabilities, committing to a school by December or January of their senior year may mean making a commitment to a program prior to receipt of their federal financial aid package or before they have completed gathering other funding sources. Also, by waiting and applying along a regular admissions calendar, students will have the benefit of comparing the various financial aid packages awarded from various schools. Many students may simply not have the means to agree to attend a college without knowing how much federal aid they can expect to receive.

KNOW THE SCHOOL

Also, for all students, but particularly those with disabilities, a visit to a school to which they are seriously considering attending is imperative. Students with disabilities should allow time to visit the school, meet with admissions staff, meet with DSS personnel, and talk to students, perhaps even students with disabilities, prior to making a final and irreversible decision about what college or university.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SENIOR YEAR

There may be other disadvantages to early admissions as well for some students with disabilities. Many students who have weaknesses in their transcripts may want to continue demonstrating their abilities throughout their senior year. This is particularly true for students with LD or students who are still adjusting to the impact of a recent disability. Students for whom high school has been difficult should take extra care when weighing their options and making postsecondary and career choices. For them, early decision programs may not be advisable.

CAUTION: The increasing practice of early admissions is a controversial topic in the postsecondary community. Counselors are advised to keep abreast of changes and trends in early admissions programs offered by colleges and universities. Whenever weighing the benefits of an early decision application always consider the particular needs of the student with a disability.

References:

College Board. (n.d.). *Early decision & early action: what are they and are they right for you?* Retrieved March 6, 2005 from www.collegeboard.com/article/0,3868,5-25-0-104,00.html.

Greene, G., & Kochhar-Bryant, C. A. (2003). *Pathways to Successful Transition for Youth with Disabilities.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice-Hall.

Princeton Review. (n.d.). *Applying early.* Retrieved March 6, 2005 from www.princetonreview.com/college/apply/articles/types/applyearly.asp.

Tasker, F. (2002, November 26). Early admissions programs are drawing criticism. *The Miami Herald.* Retrieved January 22, 2003, from www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/4605699.htm.

The George Washington University. (2001). *Application for undergraduate admission* (Part 2) [Brochure]. Washington, DC: Author.

APPENDICES

WEBLINKS

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Alliance for Technology Access
www.ataccess.org

Family Center on Technology and Disability
www.fctd.info

Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America
www.resna.org

AUTISM

Autism Society of America
www.autism-society.org

Center for the Study of Autism
www.autism.org

Families of Adults Afflicted with Asperger Syndrome (FAAAS)
www.faaas.org

Online Asperger Syndrome Information and Support (O.A.S.I.S.)
www.udel.edu/bkirby/asperger

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Association for Career and Technical Education
www.acteonline.org

National Career Development Association
www.ncda.org

National Centers for Career and Technical Education
www.nccte.org/

National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth
www.ncwd-youth.info

National Institute for Work and Learning
www.niwl.org

Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Association
www.vewaa.org

COLLEGE READINESS

Back to College
www.back2college.com

The College Board
www.collegeboard.com

Degrees & Colleges-Search Online
www.colleges-degrees-searches-online.org

Educational Testing Service
www.ets.org

Go College: the Collegiate Websource
www.gocollege.com

Guidance Resources Homepage
www.wisemantech.com/guidance/

How to Help Your Child Prepare for Education Beyond High School
studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/parents.jsp

National Association for College Admissions Counseling
www.nacacnet.org

Post-ITT
www.postitt.org

Professional Development Academy (Virginia Commonwealth University)
www.students.vcu.edu/pda/

Think College Early
www.ed.gov/thinkcollege/early

DEAF-BLINDNESS

American Association of the Deaf-Blind
www.aadb.org

DB-Link, National Information Clearinghouse on Children Who Are Deaf-Blind
www.tr.wou.edu/dblink

DeafBlind International
www.deafblindinternational.org

DEAF-BLINDNESS (cont'd)

Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youth and Adults
www.helenkeller.org/national

National Family Association for Deaf-Blind
www.nfadb.org

National Federation of the Blind Deaf-Blind Division
www.nfb-db.org

EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE

American Psychiatric Association
www.psych.org

Bazelon Center for Mental Health
www.bazelon.org

Center for Mental Health Services
www.mentalhealth.org

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance
www.dbsalliance.org

Family First Aid: Help for Troubled Teens
www.familyfirstaid.org

Kolob Canyon Residential Treatment Center for Girls with Special Needs
www.kolobcanyonrtc.com

Moonridge Academy for Boys with Special Needs
www.moonridgeacademy.com

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
www.nami.org

National Mental Health Association
www.nmha.org

EMPLOYMENT

Able to Work Consortium/ Business & Disability Council
www.ncds.org

ADA Technical Assistance Program
www.adata.org

America's Job Bank
www.ajb.dni.us

Career Opportunities for Students with Disabilities (COSD)
www.cosdonline.org

Careers in Vocational Rehabilitation
www.rehabjobs.org

Developmental Disabilities Resource Center (DDRC)
www.ddrcco.com

Disabled Businesspersons Association
www.disabledbusiness.com

Employer Assistance Referral Network
www.earnworks.com

Employment Support Institute (ESI)
www.WorkWORLD.org

Equal Opportunity Publications, Inc.
www.eop.com

GLADNET
www.gladnet.org

Goodwill Industries International, Inc.
www.goodwill.org

Institute for Work and Health
www.iwh.on.ca

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)
www.jan.wvu.edu

JobAccess
www.jobaccess.org

EMPLOYMENT (cont'd)

Just One Break, Inc.
www.justonebreak.com

National Business & Disability Council
www.business-disability.com

Project HIRED
www.projecthired.org

Project SEARCH
www.cincinnatichildrens.org/ps

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Workplace Supports
www.worksupport.com

Small Business and Self-Employment Services (SBSES)
www.jan.wvu.edu/SBSES

TransAccess
www.transaccess.org

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

Access Board
www.access-board.gov

ERIC Clearinghouse
www.eric.ed.gov/

High School/High Tech Programs
www.dol.gov/odep/programs/high.htm

National Council on Disability
www.ncd.gov

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR)
www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/nidrr/index.html?src=mr

Office of Disability Employment Policy, Department.of Labor
www.dol.gov/odep

USAJOBS
www.usajobs.opm.gov OR www.Federaljobs.net

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RESOURCES (cont'd)

U.S. Department of Education
www.ed.gov

U.S. Department of Justice ADA Information
www.usdoj.gov/disabilities.htm

U.S. Department of Justice ADA Website
www.ada.gov

U.S. General Services Administration Section 508 Website
www.section508.gov

HEARING IMPAIRMENTS/DEAFNESS

Auditory-Verbal International
www.auditory-verbal.org

Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
www.agbell.org

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
www.asha.org

Deaf-REACH
www.deaf-reach.org

Gallaudet Research Institute
gri.gallaudet.edu

Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center
clerccenter.gallaudet.edu

National Association of the Deaf
www.nad.org

National Association of the Deaf, Captioned Media Program
www.cfv.org

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders
www.nidcd.nih.gov

HEARING IMPAIRMENTS/DEAFNESS (cont'd)

National Technical Institute for the Deaf
www.ntid.rit.edu

Registry of Interpreters of the Deaf
www.rid.org

Self Help for Hard of Hearing People
www.shhh.org

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

Council for Exceptional Children
www.cec.sped.org

Family & Advocates Partnership for Education
www.fape.org

Federal Resource Center for Special Education
http://www.dssc.org/frc

IDEA Partnership
www.ideapartnership.org

IDEA 2004 Resources
www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/idea2004.html

Least Restrictive Environment Coalition
www.lrecoalition.org

National Center on Secondary Education and Transition
www.ncset.org

Office of Special Education Programs' IDEA 2004 Fact Sheets
www.pacer.org/idea/factSheets.htm

Parent Information Centers
www.taalliance.org/PTIs.htm

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES AND DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY

American Association on Mental Retardation (AAMR)
www.aamr.org

Association for Children with Down Syndrome
www.acds.org

Association of University Centers on Disabilities
www.aucd.org

Institute for Community Inclusion
www.communityinclusion.org

National Association for Down Syndrome
www.nads.org

National Association of Councils of Developmental Disabilities (NACDD)
www.nacdd.org

National Down Syndrome Society: Education, Research, Advocacy
www.ndss.org

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Aging with Developmental Disabilities
www.uic.edu/orgs/rrtcamr/aboutus.htm

Research and Training Center on Community Living
rtc.umn.edu/main/index.html

TASH (formerly Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps)
www.tash.org

The Arc
www.thearc.org

LEARNING DISABILITIES

Coordinated Campaign for Learning Disabilities
www.aboutld.org

Council for Learning Disabilities
www.cldinternational.org

International Dyslexia Association
www.interdys.org

LEARNING DISABILITIES (cont'd)

LD Online
www.ldonline.org

LD InfoZone
www.ld.org/ldinfozone/index.cfm

Learning Disabilities Association
www.ldaamerica.org

Literacy & Learning Disabilities
ldlink.coe.utk.edu

National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD)
www.ncld.org

National Association for Adults with Learning Difficulties (NAALD)
www.naald.org

Roads to Learning
www.ala.org/ala/olos/outreachresource/roadstolearning/roadslearninglearning.htm

Schwab Learning
www.schwablearning.org

ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENTS

American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons
www.aaos.org

Amputee Coalition of America
www.amputee-coalition.org

March of Dimes
www.marchofdimes.com

Muscular Dystrophy Association, Inc.
www.mdausa.org

National Multiple Sclerosis Society
www.nationalmssociety.org

ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENTS (cont'd)

National Spinal Cord Injury Association
www.spinalcord.org

Spina Bifida Association of America
www.sbaa.org

Spinal Cord Injury Network International
www.spinalcordinjury.org

United Cerebral Palsy Association, Inc.
www.ucp.org

United States Cerebral Palsy Athletic Association
www.uscpaa.org

OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENTS

American Cancer Society
www.cancer.org

American Diabetes Association
www.diabetes.org

American Institute for Cancer Research
www.aicr.org

American Sickle Cell Anemia Association
www.ascaa.org

Arthritis Foundation
www.arthritisfoundation.org

Attention Deficit Information Network (AD-IN)
www.addinfonetwork.com

Attention Deficit Disorder Association
www.add.org

Bone Marrow Foundation
www.bonemarrow.org

OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENTS (cont'd)

Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)
www.chadd.org

Corporate Angel Network for Cancer Patients
www.corpangelnetwork.org

Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
www.cff.org

Easter Seals
www.easter-seals.org

Epilepsy Foundation of America
www.epilepsyfoundation.org

Hemophilia Galaxy
www.hemophiliagalaxy.com

Hereditary Nephritis Foundation (HNF)
www.cc.utah.edu/~cla6202/HNF.htm

Immune Deficiency Foundation (IDF)
www.primaryimmune.org

Joint Center for Sickle Cell and Thalassemic Disorders
sickle.bwh.harvard.edu

Little People of America, Inc.
www.lpaonline.org

Lupus Foundation of America
www.lupus.org

Metrolina AIDS Project
www.metrolinaaidsproject.org

National Association for Rare Disorders (NORD)
www.rarediseases.org

National Cancer Institute
www.cancer.gov

National Hemophilia Foundation
www.hemophilia.org

VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS AND BLINDNESS

There were approximately 26,590 students with visual impairments, including partial sight and blindness, served under IDEA in 2000 (NCES, 2001). The IDEA regulations define visual impairment as:

An impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance.
(34 CFR, Section 300.7)

DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY

Developmental delay is an optional category used for serving students aged three through 9 (34 CFR, Section 300.7). There were approximately 19,000 children served under IDEA in 2000 (NCES, 2001). This category refers to extensive delays in the development of one or more areas of functioning and gives "educators the option of planning and implementing programs for young children with disabilities without attaching a specific disability label" (Moller & Linehan, 2001).

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

Nearly 14,000 students with traumatic brain injury were served under IDEA in 2000 (NCES, 2001). The IDEA regulations definition is:

An acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance [and] applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech.
(34 CFR, Section 300.7)

Counselors should note that the traumatic brain injury disability category does not include brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or induced by birth trauma. Rather, to be regarded as a traumatic brain injury, the injury to the brain must be acquired (Heward, 2003).

DEAF-BLINDNESS

The category of deaf-blindness was the least frequently served under IDEA in 2000, with approximately 1,800 students served (NCES, 2001). The IDEA regulations definition is:

…concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.
(34 CFR, Section 300.7)

ADDITIONAL TOOL

Information and Resources About Disabilities Served Under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) is a comprehensive listing of resources arranged by disability category that appears in the Resources, Links, and Publications section in the back of the Toolkit. Take time to familiarize yourself with the major organizations related to each disability category and to contact those organizations for additional information.

OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENTS (cont'd)

National Institute of Diabetes & Digestive & Kidney Diseases
www.niddk.nih.gov

National Institutes of Health Osteoporosis and Related Bone Diseases
www.osteo.org

National Kidney and Urologic Diseases Information Clearinghouse (NIDDK)
www.kidney.niddk.nih.gov

Sickle Cell Disease Association of America
www.sicklecelldisease.org

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)
www.ahead.org

Council for Opportunity in Education
www.trioprograms.org

Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology
www.washington.edu/doit

Disabilities Studies and Services Center
www.dssc.org

Disability Access Information and Support
www.janejarrow.com

Disabled Student Services in Higher Education Listserv (DSSHE-L)
listserv.acsu.buffalo.edu/archives/dsshe-l.html

National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Educational Supports, Rehabilitation Research & Training Center (RRTC)
www.rrtc.hawaii.edu

Project Tech Link
www.vcu.edu/rrtcweb/techlink

SPEECH AND HEARING IMPAIRMENTS

Academy of Private Practice in Speech Pathology and Audiology
www.aappspa.org

American Speech Language Hearing Association
www.asha.org

Apraxia Kids
www.apraxia-kids.org

National Aphasia Association
www.aphasia.org

National Student Speech Language Hearing Association
www.nsslha.org

TRAUMATIC ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY

Brain Aneurysm Foundation
www.bafound.org

Brain Injury Association of America
www.biausa.org

Brain Injury Society
www.bisociety.org

Brain Rehab Center
www.brainrehabcenter.com

Center for Education and Human Services in Acquired Brain Injury
www.gwu.edu/~abictr

Jason Foundation
www.jasonfoundation.org

Learning Services
www.learningservices.com

National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
www.nashia.org

Neurological Disabilities Support Project
www.ksndsp.org

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

Neuro-Optometric Rehabilitation Association (NORA)
www.nora.cc

Research and Training Center on Community Integration of
Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury
www.mssm.edu/tbinet

Success Rehabilitation, Inc.
www.successrehab.com

Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems (Kessler Institute)
www.depts.washington.edu/rehab/tbi

Traumatic Brain Injury Project
www.ksndsp.org/tbip

Traumatic Brain Injury Collaboration Space
www.tbitac.nashia.org/tbics/

VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

American Council of the Blind
www.acb.org

American Foundation for the Blind
www.afb.org

American Printing House for the Blind
www.aph.org

Braille Institute of America
www.brailleinstitute.org

National Alliance for Blind Students
www.blindstudents.org

National Association for Visually Handicapped
www.navh.org

National Braille Press
www.nbp.org

VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

National Eye Institute of the National Institutes of Health
www.nei.nih.gov

National Federation of the Blind
www.nfb.org

National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
www.loc.gov/nls

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision
www.blind.msstate.edu

OTHER HELPFUL LINKS FOR GENERAL INFORMATION

ABLEDATA
www.abledata.com

Cornell University's Disability Law Website
www.law.cornell.edu/topics/disability.html

Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities
www.c-c-d.org

disABLEDperson, Inc.
www.disabledperson.com

Disabled Sports USA
www.dsusa.org

Healthy and Ready to Work National Center
www.hrtw.org

Independent Living Institute
www.sindependentliving.org

Independent Living Research and Utilization Project
www.ilru.org

National Council on Independent Living
www.ncil.org

OTHER HELPFUL LINKS FOR GENERAL INFORMATION (cont'd)

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities
www.nichcy.org

National Organization on Disability
www.nod.org

National Rehabilitation Information Center (NARIC)
www.naric.com

Very Special Arts
www.vsarts.org

Virtual Children's Hospital
www.vh.org/pediatric

ADDITIONAL TOOL

ABOUT THE TOOLS

The following tools will further support your work with students. Many of these tools are helpful questionnaires and forms; other tools include information for discussion topics, such as job seeking and interviewing, and resources to supplement the content in this Toolkit.

Although the questionnaires and forms are designed for your students, you should become familiar with them so you can assist in their completion. Be prepared to help some students more than others. You will also need to interpret their responses. For example, after they complete the *Student Questionnaire*, you can use the key to help students deal with identified areas of concern. This is also true for the *Career Planning Quiz*.

Many of these questionnaires and forms are to be used with students in specific grades. This also includes students who are beginning a postsecondary program. Therefore, you should introduce them to the material sometime during their senior year so they can use the form when they are in college.

Although some of the questionnaires and forms are duplicative, we have included the content in a variety of styles and formats. You are encouraged to you the tools most appropriate for you and your students. You can also feel free to design and adapt your own tools from the resources provided in these appendices.

10TH GRADE LEARNING PROFILE

Read each question carefully and respond to the following questions.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

What was your favorite subject last year?

Why did you like the class/subject?

What was your least favorite subject last year?

Thinking back, why did you dislike this class/subject?

IDENTIFYING YOUR GOALS

What would you like to be doing 10 years from now (Three years past college graduation)?

What would you like to be doing 5 years from now (sophomore year in college)?

What would you like to accomplish during the next three years (senior year of high school)?

11TH GRADE LEARNING PROFILE

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Review your learning profile responses for grades 9 & 10. Read each question carefully and write your response in the space provided.

Identify your weaknesses.

What strategies or interventions have worked best for you academically?

What high school support services have you received?

FUTURE PLANS

Read your future goals identified last year and identify how they have changed.

What extracurricular activities were you involved in during 9th and 10th grade?

What are your career goals? What do you want to do for a job or profession when you graduate?

Briefly describe your high school experience (one paragraph).

What was your greatest accomplishment in school?

What was your biggest disappointment in school?

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Review your learning profile responses for grades 9, 10 and 11. Read each question carefully and write your responses in the space provided.

How have your strengths changed over the last three years?

How have your weaknesses changed over the last three years?

Explain in detail how you learn best in school.

CAREER INVESTIGATION WORKSHEET

Complete the following information for each career field you listed on the Career Identification Sheet.

NAME OF CAREER FIELD: _____

1.   What are the basic job duties?

_____

_____

_____

2.   What is the average income (beginning & future)?

_____

3.   What kind of training is usually required?

_____

How long is it? _____

Where is it available? _____

How much does it cost? _____

Are you willing to complete it and capable of doing so? _____

4.   What is the job demand/employment outlook?

	Faster than		Slower than		
Rapid Increase	Average Increase	Average Increase	Average Increase	Stable	Decrease

5. What are some related occupations?

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. How interested are you in this occupation?

      HIGH   MEDIUM   LOW

7. If you are interested, what do you need to do next?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please list next steps below. These may include exploring the career field further, selecting courses that will help you succeed in this career field, and contacting schools and other programs for information.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

CAREER PLANNING QUIZ

TRUE OR FALSE: *Circle the correct answer*

1. Most people have the ability to do well at any jobs they choose.   TRUE FALSE
2. Except for the income it provides, your job has little to do with your way of life.   TRUE FALSE
3. There is only one job that is right for you in terms of your abilities.   TRUE FALSE
4. The typical worker will work in several occupations during his or her lifetime.   TRUE FALSE
5. Apprentices are paid while they learn their craft.   TRUE FALSE
6. More than two-thirds of all existing jobs do not require a college degree.   TRUE FALSE
7. Programs at a two-year community college are limited to students who want to   TRUE FALSE
    transfer to a four-year college.
8. Working in an occupation is the only way you can find out whether you like it or not. TRUE FALSE
9. Generally, the earlier you choose your life's work, the better.   TRUE FALSE
10. The higher a skill level you attain, the more likely you are to find a job.   TRUE FALSE
11. Most jobs in high tech electronics and with computer companies require an   TRUE FALSE
      electrical engineering background.
12. Most people find their jobs through newspaper ads.   TRUE FALSE
13. Mailing resumes is the BEST way to contact a large number of employers.   TRUE FALSE
14. The job interview is not the most important part of the job hunt.   TRUE FALSE
15. Generally speaking, the more education you have, the more likely you are to   TRUE FALSE
      find a job.
16. The best way to get a job is to wait until the right opportunity comes along.   TRUE FALSE

MULTIPLE CHOICE: *Circle the correct answer (or answers)*

17. Which is the best way to begin planning your career?
     A.   Decide what you think is the most important in life.
     B.   Look at what is available on the job market.
     C.   Take tests to find out what you should do.
     D.   Have your palm read.

18. If you are interested in so many occupations that you cannot make up your mind, you should first:
     A.   Try out as many jobs as you like.
     B.   Find out which one you could do in Hawaii.
     C.   Find out more about each occupation.
     D.   Try one and stick with it if you like it.

19. You have been accepted by two colleges. One costs more than the other. You can't decide which to
    attend. The first thing to do is:
     A.   Make a list of what you expect to get out of college and compare the list to what the colleges
           offer.
     B.   Choose the least expensive one.
     C.   Find out who else is going to each of the colleges.
     D.   Choose the more expensive one and write to the financial aid office there.

20. Which will probably best describe job opportunities ten years from now?
    A.   Most jobs will require four or more years of college.
         Career Planning Quiz (cont'd)
    B.   There will be a greater number of jobs for unskilled workers.
    C.   The demand for rock musicians will be at an all time high.
    D.   There will be a greater number of jobs for those with technical skills beyond high school.

CAREER PLANNING QUIZ ANSWERS

TRUE/FALSE

1.   FALSE~Many jobs require a mastery of specific skills. This stops many people who may never be able to learn the skills necessary for success on a particular job.

2.   FALSE~People's jobs may influence where they live, who their friends are, and what they do for fun.

3.   FALSE~Your abilities may qualify you for several different types of jobs. These jobs may or may not be similar.

4.   TRUE~People frequently change jobs in which they basically do the same thing for different employers. More often than not, your interests and skills will change as you grow and mature, and your jobs will change with them.

5.   TRUE~Apprentices in many trades are paid a percentage of current journey worker's wages until they have completed their training.

6.   TRUE~The employment trend in 1987 showed only 22% of all current job openings nationally required a college degree. However, projections to the year 2000 are that 30% of all future jobs will require a college degree. Further, 52% of all jobs by the year 2000 will require at least one year of college or vocational training.

7.   FALSE~Community colleges offer a variety of courses, including vocational training, in addition to academic offerings.

8.   FALSE~There are many ways to experience an occupation you might be interested in: work study programs, volunteering, job shadowing, reading about it, and talking to people in the field.

9.   FALSE~This might have been true a generation or two back, but new technologies are changing today's work world rapidly. New fields of study such as bioengineering and microelectronics present fresh opportunities for exciting careers.

10. TRUE~Employers prefer to hire a person with a high skill level. The higher the skill level that you have, the more creativity you probably will be allowed on the job.

11.   FALSE~Many of the jobs in these firms are technical positions. However, about 15% are clerical and only 20-45% are jobs that require machine operation or assembly skills.

12.   FALSE~Most jobs are filled by walk-in applicants who hear about an opening by word of mouth, or they are filled by applicants who make frequent follow-up visits or phone calls.

13.   FALSE~Most employers and successful job seekers say direct contact by phone or in person is the best method for making first contact.

14.   FALSE~The person-to person job interview is the most important factor in getting the job. You can really sell yourself in a job interview if you are well prepared. You can also ruin your chances-even though you have all the right credentials- by making a bad impression. Preparation for the job inter view is vital.

15.   TRUE~While education doesn't guarantee employment, the fact is that the unemployment rate for those who have not graduated from high school is a lot higher than the unemployment rate for high school graduates. College and vocational school graduates have the lowest unemployment rate of all.

16.   FALSE~Often, accepting a part-time position that is not your first choice will at least get your foot in the door. Later, you may be able to change jobs within the company and move up to a position that better meets your career goals.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

17.   (A) - Determining your desires should be the starting point. Next, B and C will add direction for you.

18.   (C) - Good decision-making is based on having a broad range of knowledge. It is not always possi ble to have on-the-job work experience. For example, it would be impractical to spend a day working as a miner in a commercial mine. When you have many interests, reading can provide much of the information you will need to narrow your choices. Also, talk to the people in the field you are inter ested in.

19.   (A) - No two colleges are exactly alike; some will meet your needs better than others. An across-the-board comparison of curricula, composition of student body, faculty, and living conditions will pro vide the base of information leading to a more satisfying decision.

20.   (D) - The skill requirements for jobs are rising each year due to advancing technology. While there will be numerical growth in most occupational categories, the proportion of greatest growth will occur in professional and technical occupations. Your chances of success are far better if you have a needed vocational skill or college degree.

CAREER PREPARATION ACTIVITIES

TO PREPARE FOR MY CAREER, I NEED TO:

1. Enroll in a magnet program or Career Center.
Area of Interest:_____

2. Learn how to market experience and abilities. (Resume writing, letter of application, writing, thank you letter writing, interviews)

3. Pursue an on-the-job training program: (Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training, job fair, job placement counselor, cooperative education teacher)
Training desired:_____

4. Enlist in the military service. (ASVAB, ROTC, recruiter visit)
Area of Interest:_____

5. Attend a trade, technical or vocational school. (Technical college fair, school visits, financial aid)
Area of Study:_____
Schools Considered:_____

6. Go to work full-time. (Job fair, shadowing, job placement counselor)
Type of Work:_____

7. Attend a two-year college and transfer to a four-year college. (Technical college fair, school visits, college workshops)
Area of Study:_____
Schools Considered:_____

8. Enroll in a four-year college. (PSAT, ACT, SAT, achievement tests, financial aid application, college fairs)
Area of Study:_____
Schools Considered:_____

CAREER TRAINING COURSES WITHIN CAREER PATHWAYS:

Agricultural and Natural Resources Career
Pathways:_____

Architecture and Construction Career
Pathways:_____

Arts, A/V Technology & Communications Career
Pathways:_____

Business and Administration Career
Pathways:_____

Education and Training Careers
Pathways:_____

Finance Career
Pathways:_____

Government and Public Administration Career
Pathways:_____

Health Science Careers
Pathways:_____

Hospitality and Tourism Career
Pathways:_____

Human Services Career
Pathways:_____

Information Technology Career
Pathways:_____

Law and Public Safety Career
Pathways_____

Manufacturing Career
Pathways:_____

Retail/Wholesale Sales and Service Career
Pathways:_____

Scientific Research/Engineering Career
Pathways:_____

Transportation, Distribution and Logistics Career
Pathways:_____

CHECKLIST AT HIGH SCHOOL: BEFORE TRANSITIONING TO COLLEGE

- ☐ I am taking high school courses that will get me into college.

- ☐ I am attending my Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings.

- ☐ I have discussed my psychoeducational assessment with my school psychologist, counselor, special education teacher and my parents. I know my academic strengths and weaknesses.

- ☐ I can describe my disability in detail.

- ☐ I know the kinds of accommodations that will provide me with an equal opportunity to succeed at college.

- ☐ I have had meetings with a high school special education staff member and discussed what I need to do to prepare for college.

- ☐ At the time I apply to college, my psychoeducational assessment will be less than three years old.

- ☐ I have taken the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Testing Program (ACT).

- ☐ My reading and writing skills are at qualifying levels.

- ☐ I have improved my study skills.

- ☐ I am taking on more difficult tasks without the help of my teachers or parents.

- ☐ I have located colleges that have Disability Resource Centers and programs for students with disabilities.

- ☐ I have talked to the different Disability Resource Offices to make sure they offer the kinds of services I might need at college.

- ☐ I have visited the colleges I would like to attend.

CHECKLIST AT HIGH SCHOOL:

- ☐ I have met with the Disability Resource Office staff to discuss my courses and whether I will need accommodations.
- ☐ I am taking the advice of the disability resource office staff, and I am following through with their recommendations.
- ☐ Where recommended, I have asked the Disability Resource Office to write letters to my professors describing my disability and requesting specific accommodations.
- ☐ I have talked to my professors about my disability and the accommodations I need for their courses.
- ☐ I have developed a strong network of friends with whom I can share my successes and frustrations.
- ☐ I am using a daily/weekly/monthly planner to keep well-organized.
- ☐ I have a place to study that is suitable to my learning style and I am using this location on a consistent basis.

CHECKLIST AT HIGH SCHOOL:

☐ I have met with the Disability Resource Office staff to discuss my courses and whether I will need accommodations.

☐ I am taking the advice of the disability resource office staff, and I am following through with their recommendations.

☐ Where recommended, I have asked the Disability Resource Office to write letters to my professors describing my disability and requesting specific accommodations.

☐ I have talked to my professors about my disability and the accommodations I need for their courses.

☐ I have developed a strong network of friends with whom I can share my successes and frustrations.

☐ I am using a daily/weekly/monthly planner to keep well-organized.

☐ I have a place to study that is suitable to my learning style and I am using this location on a consistent basis.

☐ I have learned how to use my college library.

☐ (If available) I have located a free tutoring service on campus.

☐ (If available) I have arranged for a private tutoring service on campus.

☐ I am studying, on average, for two to four hours daily.

☐ I am watching my progress closely. If my course load overwhelms me, I am prepared to take fewer courses.

☐ During each college year, I am trying to reduce my need for accommodations.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ORGANIZATION

COLLEGE #1

Application Deadline

Essay Required for Admissions Packet?   YES   NO

Telephone Number of Admissions Office

Date of Campus Visit

Telephone Number

Academic Support/Office of Students with Disabilities/Disabled Support Services

Time of Interview

With Academic Support/Office of Students with Disabilities/Disabled Student Services

COLLEGE #2

Application Deadline

Essay Required for Admissions Packet?   YES   NO

Telephone Number of Admissions Office

Date of Campus Visit

Telephone Number

Academic Support/Office of Students with Disabilities/Disabled Support Services

Time of Interview

With Academic Support/Office of Students with Disabilities/Disabled Student Services

COLLEGE #3

Application Deadline

Essay Required for Admissions Packet?   YES   NO

Telephone Number of Admissions Office

Date of Campus Visit

Telephone Number

Academic Support/Office of Students with Disabilities/Disabled Support Services

Time of Interview

With Academic Support/Office of Students with Disabilities/Disabled Student Services

COLLEGE INTERVIEW PREPARATION FORM

Name_____

Date_____Counselor_____

Case Manager_____

Strengths_____
_____

Weaknesses_____
_____

How I learn best_____

When did you first obtain special education services? For
what?_____

_____

High School Support Services

Support services received during high
school_____

_____

LD Resource Center   Private Tutoring   Speech Therapy

Individualized classes_____

TESTING INFORMATION:

GPA   Score: As of:
SAT (verbal)   Score: Date taken: Timed or untimed:
SAT (math)   Score: Date taken: Timed or untimed:
ACT   Score: Date taken: Timed or untimed:
Date of last psych. evaluation (intelligence testing, etc.):
Date of last educational evaluation:
Information Processing
Comment on your abilities in the following areas:
Memory
Attention span
Goal setting
Organizational skills
Study skills
Time management

INDIVIDUALIZED COMPENSATORY STRATEGIES

List the strategies you have learned to use to compensate for your learning disability:
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

ACADEMIC RATING SCALE: *Rate your skills in the following areas: circle one*
Excellent = (E)   Good = (G)   Satisfactory = (S)   Unsatisfactory = (U)

Skill:	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Reading comprehension :	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Reading rate:	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Written language ideation:	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Written language mechanics:	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Spelling:	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Math concepts and computation:	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Math problem solving (story problems):	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Test taking:	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Note taking:	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Motivation for learning:	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)

STUDENT EVALUATION:

What was your favorite subject? Why?

What was your least favorite subject? Why?

What extracurricular subjects were you involved in?

Why do you want to go to college?

What are you long-term goals at this time?

Check the services that you believe you will need to maximize your academic performance in college:

☐ Specific LD programs within a college/university
☐ Support services on an "as needed basis"
☐ Tutoring for selected academic courses
☐ Remediation and help developing compensatory strategies
☐ Notetakers
☐ Permission to tape record lectures
☐ Books on tape
☐ Time management strategies
☐ Study skills classes/seminars
☐ Group study lessons
☐ Reduced course load
☐ Teacher advocacy
☐ Untimed testing
☐ Alternative setting for testing
☐ Test readers
☐ Academic counseling
☐ Career counseling
☐ Personal counseling
☐ Other (list services or modifications required):

DISCLOSURE DO'S AND DON'TS FOR ADVOCATES

DO'S

- Link discussion of disclosure to self-determination and self-advocacy.

- Engage the youth/young adult in a discussion regarding thoughts and feelings on disclosing personal information.

- Determine the reason for needing to disclose.

- Weigh benefits and risks of disclosure or not disclosing.

- Plan and, if necessary, practice with the youth how to disclose personal information.

- Determine who needs to have this personal information and why; limit information sharing to essential persons.

- Assure the youth that the both written and verbal information will be maintained in a confidential manner.

- Get the permission of the youth and parents/guardians to share personal information.

- Relate disclosure comments to current situation.

- Be aware of accommodation needs; be prepared to provide appropriate documentation.

- Discuss private information in a private setting.

DON'TS

- Share personal information about the youth/young adult without his/her consent and involvement, or the consent of parents/guardians.

- Discuss personal information regarding the youth/young adults with persons who are not involved in their service delivery.

- Ask personal or specific questions in a group or public settings.

- Leave written information in an area that may be read by others not involved in the delivery of services to the youth.

- Use confidential information for any reason(s) other than the purpose for which it was collected, disclosed and indicated to youth and parents/guardians.

FUTURE ACADEMIC SERVICES

Place a check mark next to the services that you think you may need in order to be successful in college.

☐   Specific program for students with learning disabilities
☐   Support on an as needed basis
☐   Academic tutoring
☐   Remediation and help developing compensatory strategies
☐   Note taking assistance
☐   Permission to tape record lectures
☐   Books on tape
☐   Time management strategies
☐   Study skills class or seminar
☐   Study groups
☐   Reduced academic course load
☐   Untimed tests
☐   Alternative testing sites
☐   Test readers
☐   Academic counseling
☐   Career counseling
☐   Personal counseling
☐   Other:

FUTURE PLANS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

EMPLOYMENT
- Full-time Job
- Part-time Job
- Military

EDUCATION
- Career/Technical Training
- Apprenticeship
- On-the-job Training
- Community College/2-year
- University/4-year

REFERENCES

Name: Address: Telephone Number:

_____   _____   _____

_____   _____   _____

_____   _____   _____

_____   _____   _____

_____   _____   _____

Permanent Address for Follow-up Information

_____   _____   _____
First Name   Middle Initial Last Name

_____ Mailing Address

_____
City   State   Zip

Telephone Number:_____

INTERESTS

Grade School Activities   Community Activities   Interests/Hobbies

9th_____
10th_____
11th_____
12th_____

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Employer/Address

_____

_____

_____

Date Employed

_____

_____

_____

Type of Work/ Comments

_____

_____

_____

Responsibilities

_____

_____

_____

IDENTIFYING CAREERS TO EXPLORE

Based on the information that you have gained about career pathways and individual careers, identify five to ten career fields that you would like to learn more about.

1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

5._____

6._____

7._____

8._____

9._____

10._____

Now, fill out a copy of the Career Investigation Worksheet for each of these career fields.

IINDIVIDUAL 4-YEAR CAREER PLAN PATHWAY (UPDATE ANNUALLY)

Student's Name_____
Grade:_____
Date Updated:_____

1.   List career assessments taken/summary of results
PSAT/SAT/ATC_____ASVB
_____Other_____
_____

2.   Latest date completed Career Pathways Self-Inventory:
_____
_____

3.   Latest date completed Career Pathways Survey:
_____

4.   Career Pathway that best fits students:
_____
Occupational fields being considered (optional):_____

5.   Selected related courses:
_____

6.   Related activities/experiences:
_____

7.   Postsecondary career preparation plan:
_____
_____

8.   Additional Comments:
_____
_____
_____

POSTSECONDARY CAREER PREPARATION CHOICES:
• Directly to work
• Apprenticeship
• Military
• Vocational/Technical School
• Community College College/University

REALITY CHECK FOR POST GRADUATION PLANS

YOU HAVE APPROXIMATELY 30 DAYS OF HIGH SCHOOL LEFT. WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS?

1.   Have you applied to college? Which ones? Which schools have admitted you?

2.   After you graduate, are you going to work full-time? Will you need to have additional training prior to starting your new job?

3.   If you have not applied to college or have not decided upon a job, what are you thinking about doing?

LEARNER PROFILE SHEET-PARENT FORM

Child's Name_____   Date of Birth_____

School_____   Phone_____

Grade Level_____   Date Completed_____

1. What my child is interested in:

2. Things my child is ready to learn:

3. My child is best at:

4. My child needs most help with:

5. Help my child has received in the past:

6. Problems with my child's current program:

7. Possible alternatives and/or additions to my child's current program:

8. Services that my child needs:

9. Special concerns I have about my child:

10. Suggestions I have about working with my child:

11.   Strengths my child has in the area of:

Academics:

Speech:

Motor:

Social/behavior:

Vocational/prevocational:

Self-help:

Self-Advocacy skills:

12.   Concerns I have for my child in the following areas:

Academics:

Speech:

Motor:

Social/behavior:

Vocational/prevocational:

Self-help:

Self-Advocacy skills:

13.   When my child leaves high school as a young adult, I expect:

LEARNER PROFILE SHEET-STUDENT FORM

Name_____   Date of Birth_____

School_____   Phone_____

Grade Level_____   Date Completed_____

1.   I am interested in:

2.   Things I want to learn:

3.   I am best at:

4.   I need most help with:

5.   Help I have received in the past:

6.   Problems with my current program:

7.   Possible alternatives and/or additions to my current program:

8.   Services that I need:

9.   Special concerns that I have:

10.   Suggestions I have about working with me:

11.   My strengths in the area of:
Academics:
Speech:
Motor:
Social/behavior:
Vocational/prevocational:
Self-help:
Self-Advocacy skills:

12.   Concerns I have in the following areas:
Academics:
Speech:
Motor:
Social/behavior:
Vocational/prevocational:
Self-help:
Self-Advocacy skills:

13.   When I leave high school as a young adult, I expect:

NATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES:

STUDENT COMPETENCIES AND INDICATORS

Career development guidance content is defined by the competencies and indicators and is organized around three broad areas: self-knowledge, educational and occupational exploration and career planning. The competencies represent general goals and the indicators define specific knowledge and skills that individuals should master to cope effectively with lifelong career development tasks. They are consistent with the general developmental capabilities of individuals at the level. Competencies and indicators represent the basic skills and abilities that individuals should attain to prepare, obtain and advance in a satisfying career.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE

ELEMENTARY
- Knowledge of the importance of self-concept
- Skills to interact with others

MIDDLE/JUNIOR HIGH
- Knowledge of the influence of self-concept
- Skills to interact with others

HIGH SCHOOL
- Understanding the influence of self-concept
Skills to interact positively with others

ADULT
- Skills to maintain a positive self-concept
- Skills to maintain effective behaviors

EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL EXPLORATION

ELEMENTARY
- Awareness of the importance of growth and change
- Awareness of the benefits of educational achievements
- Skills to understand and use career information
- Awareness of the importance of personal responsibility and good work habits
- Awareness of how work relates to the needs and functions of society

MIDDLE/JUNIOR HIGH
- Knowledge of the benefits of educational achievement to career opportunities
- Understanding the relationship between work and learning
- Skills to locate, understand and use career information

- Knowledge of skills necessary to seek and obtain jobs
- Understanding how work relates to the needs and functions of the economy and society

HIGH SCHOOL
- Understanding the relationship between educational achievement and career planning
- Understanding need for positive attitudes toward work and learning
- Skills to locate, evaluate and interpret career information
- Skills to prepare to seek, obtain, maintain and change jobs
- Understanding how societal needs and functions influence the structure of work

ADULT
- Skills to enter and participate in education and training

- Skills to participate in work and life-long learning

- Skills to locate, evaluate and interpret career information

- Skills to prepare to seek, obtain, maintain and change jobs

- Understanding how societal needs and functions influence the structure of work

CAREER PLANNING

ELEMENTARY

- Understanding how to make decisions
- Awareness of the interrelationship of life roles
- Awareness of different occupations and changing male/female roles
- Awareness of the career planning process

MIDDLE/JUNIOR HIGH

- Skills to make decisions
- Knowledge of interrelationship of life roles

- Awareness of different occupations and changing male/female roles
- Understanding the career planning process

HIGH SCHOOL

- Skills to make decisions
- Understanding the interrelationship of life roles
- Understanding the continuous changes in male/female roles
- Skills in career planning

ADULT

- Skills to make decisions
- Understanding the impact of work in individual and family life
- Understanding the continuing changes in male/female roles
- Skills to make career transitions

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency. (1996, August). Career Pathways Toolbook (p. 58). Austin, TX. Reprinted with permission.

PRE-COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID CHECKLIST FOR STUDENTS

During the Junior Year of High School:

- Explore college profiles and programs. If possible, visit the colleges that most interest you.

- Investigate financial aid opportunities with your high school counselor.

- Write to the college(s) of your choice for applications and financial aid information.

- Begin the application process with Vocational Rehabilitation and/or Social Security.

- If you are involved in Special Education services at your high school, be sure that your Individual Transition Plan (ITP) includes your academic and vocational goals.

- Collect information and document expenses for completing the financial aid forms.

By the Senior Year of High School:

`

- Obtain the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) from your high school counselor. Using the most accurate income tax information possible, complete the form.

- Mail the financial aid form as soon as possible after January 1, since forms postmarked before then do not count. (Be sure to check the application deadline for each college to which you plan to apply.)

- Complete and return to the college(s) all application materials and any financial aid documents requested by the college by the date indicated by the institution (usually February/March).

- Keep track of the date on which you sent in each form. You should receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) within four weeks. If you have not received any response within four weeks, call the student aid center at the number listed on the FAFSA.

- When the SAR arrives, contact the financial aid offices of the colleges on your list to see if they need a copy of it.

- Keep in touch with the college financial aid offices during the course of the application process to verify that they have received your application data and that they are processing your aid package.

- If you are a VR client, be sure that your counselor is in touch with the financial aid offices at the colleges(s) on your list.

- Be on time and accurate in filling out the application forms. If possible, have a third party read them and check for accuracy.

- Keep at least one photocopy of each completed form for your own record in case problems arise.

PREP FOR THE TOP 10 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Too many job seekers stumble through interviews as if the questions are coming out of left field. But many interview questions are to be expected. So study this list, plan your answers ahead of time and you'll be ready to deliver them with confidence.

What Are Your Weaknesses?

This is the most dreaded question of all. Handle it by minimizing your weakness and emphasizing your strengths. Stay away from personal qualities and concentrate on professional traits: "I am always working on improving my communication skills to be a more effective presenter. I recently joined Toastmasters, which I find very helpful."

Why Should We Hire You?

Summarize your experiences: "With five years' experience working in the financial industry and my proven record of saving the company money, I could make a big difference in your company. I'm confident I would be a great addition to your team."

Why Do You Want to Work Here?

The interviewer is listening for an answer that indicates you've given this some thought and are not sending out resumes just because there is an opening. For example, "I've selected key companies whose mission statements are in line with my values, where I know I could be excited about what the company does, and this company is very high on my list of desirable choices."

What Are Your Goals?

Sometimes it's best to talk about short-term and intermediate goals rather than locking yourself into the distant future. For example, "My immediate goal is to get a job in a growth-oriented company. My long-term goal will depend on where the company goes. I hope to eventually grow into a position of responsibility."

Why Did You Leave (Are You Leaving) Your Job?

If you're unemployed, state your reason for leaving in a positive context: "I managed to survive two rounds of corporate downsizing, but the third round was a 20 percent reduction in the workforce, which included me." If you are employed, focus on what you want in your next job: "After two years, I made the decision to look for a company that is team-focused, where I can add my experience."

When Were You Most Satisfied in Your Job?

The interviewer wants to know what motivates you. If you can relate an example of a job or project when you were excited, the interviewer will get an idea of your preferences. "I was very satisfied in my last job, because I worked directly with the customers and their problems; that is an important part of the job for me."

What Can You Do for Us That Other Candidates Can't?

What makes you unique? This will take an assessment of your experiences, skills and traits. Summarize concisely: "I have a unique combination of strong technical skills, and the ability to build strong customer relationships. This allows me to use my knowledge and break down information to be more user-friendly."

What Are Three Positive Things Your Last Boss Would Say About You?

It's time to pull out your old performance appraisals and boss's quotes. This is a great way to brag about yourself through someone else's words: "My boss has told me that I am the best designer he has ever had. He knows he can rely on me, and he likes my sense of humor."

SOURCE: www.monster.com

What Salary Are You Seeking?

It is to your advantage if the employer tells you the range first. Prepare by knowing the going rate in your area, and your bottom line or walk-away point. One possible answer would be: "I am sure when the time comes, we can agree on a reasonable amount. In what range do you typically pay someone with my background?"

If You Were an Animal, Which One Would You Want to Be?

Interviewers use this type of psychological question to see if you can think quickly. If you answer "a bunny," you will make a soft, passive impression. If you answer "a lion," you will be seen as aggressive. What type of personality would it take to get the job done? What impression do you want to make?

QUESTIONS TO ASK A POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION: GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

1. What are the college's admissions requirements?

2. Are ACT and/or SAT scores required? If so, what minimum score is required for admission?

3. What grade point average is needed?

4. What class rank is needed?

5. Are letters of recommendation required?

6. Is an entrance exam offered with testing accommodations?

7. Are there any special admissions programs such as EOP/HEOP athletics, special talents, or a program for non-high school graduates?

8. Where is the Disabled Students Services office on campus?

9. How is the office staffed? Full-time? Part-time? Are there evening hours?

10. What kind of services are available through the Disabled Students Services Office?

11. How are services obtained?

12. How are faculty told about accommodations?

13. Are services limited to students with disabilities or for all students?

14. What paperwork or proof is required to prove a disability and to whom should it be given? Who has access to this paperwork?

15. Is there help available for choosing courses and making schedules?

16. Who does academic advisement?

17. Is there an orientation for new students?

18. Is there an orientation for new students with disabilities?

19. Who supervises accommodated tests? Student Disability Services office? Faculty member? Testing center?

20. Is there a summer preparation program? When is it?

21. Is there a disabled student group on campus? How do I get in touch with it?

QUESTIONS TO ASK A POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION (CONT'D)

22. Who is the college's 504 coordinator? What is the grievance process?
Questions to Ask a Postsecondary Institution (cont'd)

23. Is tutoring available? Who tutors? Professionals? Peer tutors? Is tutoring available in small groups? Specific subjects? General study skills for all students? Specifically for students with disabilities? Is there a charge for tutoring?

24. How are note takers and readers made available, selected, or arranged?

25. Are sign language interpreters available? How are they arranged?

26. Is there a TDD (telephone device for the deaf) on campus? What is the number? Where is it located?

27. Who arranges for taping of books or ordering of recorded books?

28. Who arranges for tape recording of classes?

29. What are the alternative testing arrangements?

30. How accessible are the classrooms, labs, buildings, etc.?

31. What is the college policy for waiving graduation requirements or arranging substitute courses?

32. What adaptive equipment is available for student use?

33. What is the extent of use of computers and where are they?

34. Are there any special adaptive features on the computers?

35. What word processing programs are available?

36. How does one make special room arrangements for resident students?

37. Are personal attendants available on campus? If yes, how are they contacted?

38. What are the rules about equipment and electrical use?

39. Are there physically accessible residence halls including toilet and bathing facilities?
40. Are buildings equipped with auditory fire alarms?

41. Where is the parking for those with disability permits?

42. Are there signs showing the accessible entrance to buildings and elevators? Is there a snow removal policy as it relates to mobility routes?

43. Is there personal counseling available?

44. Is there a written policy regarding disability services?

RATE YOURSELF

How would you rate your skills in the areas listed below?
Excellent = (E)   Good = (G)   Satisfactory = (S)   Unsatisfactory = (U)

Reading Comprehension:	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Written Language-Coming up with ideas:	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Written Language-Mechanics (Spelling, punctuation, grammar)	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Math concepts	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Math computation	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Math applied problem solving (story problems)	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Listening skills	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Test taking	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Note taking	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Motivation for learning	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Memory	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Organizational skills	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Study skills	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)
Time management	(E)	(G)	(S)	(U)

What are your academic strengths?

What subjects or academic tasks do you find difficult?

What have you or your teachers done in the past that has really helped you learn?

READINESS RESOURCES FOR FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

The following websites provide information and resources to help prospective college students embark on a successful search.

Back to College
www.back2college.com

College Board
www.gocollege.com

Degrees & Colleges-Search Online
www.colleges-degrees-searches-online.org

Kid Source: College Planning for Students with Learning Disabilities
www.kidsource.com

Preparing Your Child for College
www.ed.gov/pubs/prepare

Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education
www.ed.gov/transition

Think College Early
www.ed.gov/thinkcollege/early

Josh Michaels
14 Church Street · Jersey City, NJ 08888 · 555-555-5555 · josh@monster.com

April 4, 2005

Katherine Yu
HR Director
ABC Company
1530 State Street
Princeton, NJ 08999

Dear Ms. Yu:
Your advertisement for an HR assistant fits my qualifications perfectly, and I am writing to express my interest in and enthusiasm for the position.

After completing a business degree from Rutgers University in May, I enrolled in a human resource development program to further enhance my credentials in the field. Course highlights include: Leadership in an Organizational Setting, Performance & Task Analysis in Human Resource Development, and Technology in HR Settings.

Based on your description of the ideal candidate, I also offer:

- A solid educational foundation in organizational development, employee training and development skills and knowledge of how to use technology to improve individual/organizational performance.

- A proven ability to build rapport with individuals from all cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.

- A track record of excellent performance as a part-time/summer employee concurrent with full-time college enrollment.

- Technical proficiency in database programs (including Oracle) and MS Office Suite.

If you agree that my services would be valuable to ABC Company, I would very much like to meet in person to learn more about your HR support needs. Please feel free to call me at 555-555-5555 or email at josh@monster.com.

Thank you for your time and review of the enclosed resume, and I look forward to speaking with you.
Sincerely yours,
Josh Michaels
Enclosure

SAMPLE RESUME

Amy Matthews

Harvard University • Box C-23123 • Cambridge, MA 02138
617-555-0392 • amatthews@harvard.edu

OBJECTIVE

To contribute my education and health management skills in a position with a growing and dynamic firm.

EDUCATION

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE
Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, May 2003
Major: Health Sciences

RELEVANT COURSES

- Human Anatomy & Physiology I
- Human Anatomy & Physiology II
- Health Policy
- Organizational Analysis and Health Care
- Health Care Management
- Human Resource Management

Health Management Skills

- Served as Assistant to the Director of the Stacey G. Houndly Breast Cancer Foundation.
- Functioned as Public Health Representative for the Cambridge Area Public Health Administration.
- Coordinated, Harvard University Public Health Awareness Week, 1996, 1997.

Communications Skills

- Served as a phone-a-thon caller on several occasions, soliciting donations from Harvard alumni and parents for Harvard University.
- Volunteered for a political campaign, distributing literature door to door, fielding questions and making phone calls to local constituents.

Management Skills

- Handled all back-office management functions, including employee relations and accounting.
- Oversaw client relations, order processing and routine upkeep of the business.
- Coordinated efforts between customer needs and group personnel.
- Designed all market research analysis and projects for our client.
- Delegated suggestions and duties to other team members.
- Presented market research results to client with suggestions of implementation.

Leadership Skills

- Participated in Youth Leadership Boston, a group dedicated to developing leadership skills through diverse programming.
- Served as formal/social coordinator for my sorority program council.
- Elected Vice President of Risk Management for Panhellenic, a group that oversees and coordinates educational programming for Harvard's Greek system.

Systems Abilities

- Microsoft Office
- HTML/Web Publishing

7 Shawnee Road
Short Hills, NJ 07078
201-555-0303

Ms. Sentra Nessen
Dayton Sumner Memorial Art Museum
203 Harbor Street
Baltimore, MD

Dear Ms. Nessen:

I want to thank you for taking the time to interview me yesterday for the position of assistant director of the Dayton Sumner Memorial Art Museum. You, Mr. Dawson, and Dr. Acquino exuded warmth, and I know we could all have an excellent working relationship.

As I further studied the job description for the position, I grew even more confident that I could take the museum to new heights of success. With the resources I've gathered, I am ready to hit the ground running with grant-writing. The 15 percent bonus for grants brought in is an excellent incentive, and I would devote a significant portion of my time to this important venture. I also have a number of great ideas for community and media relations and am excited by your interest in bringing more schoolchildren to the museum.
As I mentioned when we met, I would like to use my fine arts degree and journalism minor to enhance the museum's identity while at the same time meeting the needs and expectations of the community. I believe I can make a significant contribution to the fundraising effort, and I am particularly interested in exploring a corporate donor program.

I am convinced I could bring a new degree of organization to the museum, including sinking my teeth into making the workspace far less chaotic and far more functional. More importantly, I'd like to get communications on track so that newsletters and invitations are sent out on a timely basis. I have some ideas for making the newsletter more user-friendly. I feel it is extremely important to maintain close communication between the board and director, and I am committed to doing so.

Ms. Nessen, I thank you again for considering me for this position. I look forward to the possibility of working with you.

Sincerely,

John Oakley

SAMPLE FORMAT OF INDIVIDUAL CAREER PLAN

PERSONAL DATA

Last Name_____ First Name_____ M.I._____ Date of Birth_____
Address_____Student ID_____
City_____ State_____ Zip_____ SSN_____
Projected Graduation Date_____

CAREER/EDUCATIONAL GOAL(S)

9th Grade
Career Goals_____
Educational Goals_____

10th Grade
Career Goals_____
Educational Goals_____

11th Grade
Career Goals_____
Educational Goals_____

12th Grade
Career Goals_____
Educational Goals_____

ASSESSMENT DATA

	Name of Test/Inventory	Date Administered	Results
Achievement	_____	_____	_____
Aptitudes	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
Learning Styles	_____	_____	_____
Career Interests	_____	_____	_____
Other Tests	_____	_____	_____

PSAT: V_____ M_____   ACT Composite Score_____ Date Taken_____

TENTATIVE HIGH SCHOOL COURSE PLAN

9th Grade		10th Grade		11th Grade		12th Grade	
Courses	Credit	Courses	Credit	Courses	Credit	Courses	Credit
_____	____	_____	____	_____	____	_____	____
_____	____	_____	____	_____	____	_____	____
_____	____	_____	____	_____	____	_____	____
_____	____	_____	____	_____	____	_____	____
_____	____	_____	____	_____	____	_____	____
_____	____	_____	____	_____	____	_____	____
_____	____	_____	____	_____	____	_____	____
_____	____			_____	____	_____	____

Total Credits_____   Total Credits_____   Total Credits_____   Total Credits_____

_____   _____   _____   _____
Student Signature   Student Signature   Student Signature   Student Signature

_____   _____   _____   _____
Date_____   Date_____   Date_____   Date_____
Comments_____   Comments_____   Comments_____   Comments_____

_____   _____   _____   _____
_____   _____   _____   _____
_____   _____   _____   _____
_____   _____   _____   _____
_____   _____   _____   _____
_____   _____   _____   _____
_____   _____   _____   _____
_____   _____   _____   _____
_____   _____   _____   _____
_____   _____   _____   _____

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____ Grade:_____ Date: _____

Directions: Please circle the correct response.

Y- Yes   N- No   NS- Not Sure   NA- Not Applicable

1. I want to continue my education after high school.	Y	N	NS	NA
2. I have taken the classes needed in high school to prepare me for postsecondary education.	Y	N	NS	NA
3. I know what type of employment I want after postsecondary education.	Y	N	NS	NA
4. I have reviewed information from different postsecondary institutions.	Y	N	NS	NA
5. I know how to use the phone book.	Y	N	NS	NA
6. I have met with or spoken to a representative from the postsecondary institution I would like to attend.	Y	N	NS	NA
7. I know how to budget money.	Y	N	NS	NA
8. I have access to regular transportation.	Y	N	NS	NA
9. My family is helping me make plans for postsecondary education.	Y	N	NS	NA
10. I know how to use a course catalog.	Y	N	NS	NA
11. I will be helping to pay for postsecondary education	Y	N	NS	NA
12. I know how to use an ATM.	Y	N	NS	NA
13. I need help making plans for postsecondary education.	Y	N	NS	NA
14. I will seek assistance at the Disability Resource Center at the institution I attend.	Y	N	NS	NA
15. I will be living at home while attending a postsecondary institution.	Y	N	NS	NA
16. I plan to have a job while attaining my postsecondary education.	Y	N	NS	NA
17. I have health/dental/vision insurance	Y	N	NS	NA

18. I know where I will be living during postsecondary education.   Y   N   NS   NA

19. I can manage a bank account.   Y   N   NS   NA

20. I know the resources/adaptations that will help me be successful in postsecondary education.   Y   N   NS   NA

21. I am aware that I, not my parents, need to initiate a request for services at the institution I attend.   Y   N   NS   NA

22. I know how to apply for financial aid to continue my education.   Y   N   NS   NA

23. I know how to obtain public assistance.   Y   N   NS   NA

24. I will need help filling out all necessary paperwork that is required to go to a postsecondary institution.   Y   N   NS   NA

25. I will be paying rent during my postsecondary education experience.   Y   N   NS   NA

26. I know all the differences between high school and postsecondary education.   Y   N   NS   NA

27. I know how to schedule an appointment.   Y   N   NS   NA

28. I am aware of how my disability will affect me during postsecondary education.   Y   N   NS   NA

29. I can identify the areas that I need to improve on to be successful in postsecondary education.   Y   N   NS   NA

30. I know how to use public transportation.   Y   N   NS   NA

31. I have a back-up plan in place if I find that postsecondary education is not for me.   Y   N   NS   NA

32. I have the skills to make new friends.   Y   N   NS   NA

33. I have the skills to live on my own.   Y   N   NS   NA

34. I will ask for help when I need it.   Y   N   NS   NA

35. I know how to advocate for myself.   Y   N   NS   NA

36. I know how to access the Disability Resource Center.   Y   N   NS   NA

37. My individualized education program (IEP) is written to help me prepare for postsecondary education.   Y   N   NS   NA

38. I know how to keep my personal information private.   Y   N   NS   NA

39. I know how to obtain medical assistance.   Y   N   NS   NA

40. I know where the post office is located.   Y   N   NS   NA

41. I am comfortable in groups.   Y   N   NS   NA

42. Being around new people will interfere with my learning.   Y   N   NS   NA

43. I have the skills to use a computer or word processor.   Y   N   NS   NA

44. I need specific tools for writing and reading.   Y   N   NS   NA

Indicate preferences here

_____   _____   _____

45. My computer requires technological modifications.   Y   N   NS   NA

Indicate preferences here

_____   _____   _____

46. My academic assignments are modified.   Y   N   NS   NA

Indicate preferences here

_____   _____   _____

47. Instructional methods have been modified to assist my learning.   Y   N   NS   NA

Indicate modifications here

_____   _____   _____

48. I know my academic strengths   Y   N   NS   NA

They are

_____   _____   _____

49. I know my academic weaknesses   Y   N   NS   NA

They are

_____   _____   _____

50. I need help in the following areas to be successful in postsecondary education.   Y   N   NS   NA

_____   _____   _____

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE KEY

Identified Areas of Concern	Related Questions
Social Skills	32, 41, 42
Self-awareness, self-advocacy	1, 3, 18, 28, 29, 35, 48, 49
Daily functional skills	5, 8, 10, 12, 19, 23, 27, 30, 33, 39, 40
Academic modifications, accommodations, and needs	20, 36, 37, 44, 45, 46, 47
Preparedness	2, 4, 6, 26, 31, 43
Support considerations	9, 13, 15, 17, 24, 50
Employment and financial concerns	7, 11, 16, 22, 25
Responsibility	14, 21, 34, 38