



# Transition Planning

Written by Emily Iland, M.A.  
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 Autism Society of Los Angeles  
 September 2012  
[www.AutismLA.org](http://www.AutismLA.org)

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## Our topics

- Transition Planning
- Outcomes: Creating a Good Adult Life!

## Transition planning is federally mandated in IDEA

- The Individual Transition Plan is “a coordinated set of activities based on individual needs and designed to focus on improving academic and functional achievement to facilitate success in post-school activities.”
- The state of California is currently working on legislation to improve transition plans and services because...

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## Desired Outcomes Vs. Reality

Many students with ASD are unprepared for life

“People with ASD leave school programs ill-equipped with the social and communication skills needed for life success”

Muller, Schuler, Burton & Yates, 2003.  
 p.271

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Post-secondary outcomes for students with ASD are NOT as good as expected:

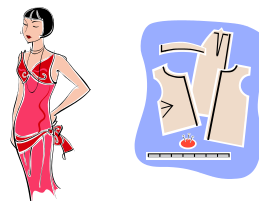
Underemployment		
Unemployment		
Social & emotional difficulties	Practical problems	Academic difficulties

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## Create an outcome-oriented plan

Start with the end result in mind



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**Step 1: Start with the end result in mind**  
Create the **outcome-oriented** vision  
AIM HIGH & DREAM BIG

- You have to imagine a great future to make it happen
- Have high expectations
- Hoping for more helps everyone work harder
- You might get what you aim for or something close

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Answer 5 important questions  
**consider individual preferences**  
**& social skills needed**

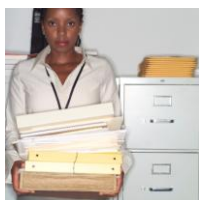


**Where will he or she live?**

A safe, comfortable place she would  
like to live would be...

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**How will he or she make a living?**  
The perfect job would be....

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**Who will be the**  
**important people in his or her life?**



I would be happy knowing that  
these people will be involved in his life...

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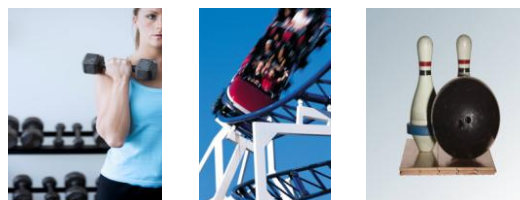
**How will he or she contribute to the**  
**well-being of others?**



The perfect way for her to shine and  
give back would be....

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**How does he or she like to have fun?**

I can picture him going out to enjoy...

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Don't just hope for the best...  
help make it happen!



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Once you know what you want,  
What does it take to get there?



What skills & knowledge does the person need  
to be prepared for adult life?

**Broad-based skill building**

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## TEMPLATE

A well-designed transition plan includes

1. Assessment
2. Statement of individual preferences
3. Specific steps, methods and resources needed to meet goals
4. Instruction in academic, vocational and independent living skills
5. Community experiences and skills
6. Exploration of service/provider organizations
7. Methods to evaluate the success of the plan

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## Transition Plan

is **Outcome-Oriented, Broad-Based & Student-Centered**

Have relationships & belong	Be valued by others	Participate in a variety of activities
Have choices & input	Speak up & self-advocate	Have mental and physical health
Have a good standard of living	Have a safe place to live	Be able to get where you need to go

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What skills are needed  
to achieve the most independent  
and successful life possible?



Consider the skills required or expected for  
the workforce in general



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Skills for the Future Workforce From **Teaching the New Basic Skills**, Murnane and Levy, 1996

- Reading and math at grade 9 or higher
- Work in groups with diverse people
- Communicate, orally and in writing
- Use computers for simple tasks like word processing
- Solve semi-structured problems where a hypothesis must be formed and tested

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## Teaching the New Basic Skills

- Found in **Transition to Adult Living: A Guide for Secondary Education**
- Available California Dept of Education, 2001 from 515 L. Street Suite 270, Sacramento CA95814
- Phone 916-445-4643
- [www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/sed](http://www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/sed)

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### Step 2:

Assessment is the Foundation of the Plan



From *Autism Spectrum Disorders from A to Z* by Barbara T. Doyle & Emily Doyle Iland

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“Appropriate, measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to...”

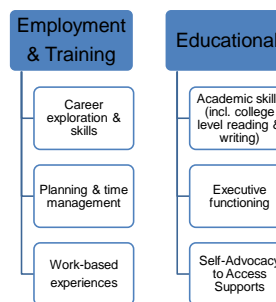


Focus on necessary skills for life roles

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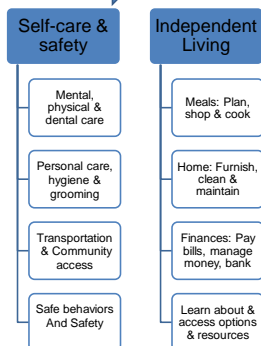
Step 2: Assessment is the Foundation of the Plan  
Skill Assessments Identify NEEDS in all Domains



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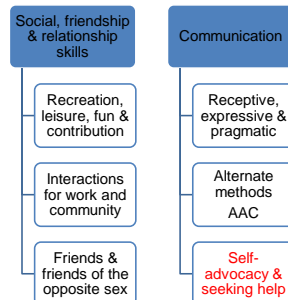
Step 2: Assessment is the Foundation of the Plan  
Skill Assessments → Identify NEEDS in all Domains



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Step 2: Assessment is the Foundation of the Plan  
For Students with ASD → Identify needs ACROSS Domains



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## Teach (at a minimum)



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## Adults with ASD Need

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Acceptance
- Self-Advocacy Skills

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## Direct Instruction is Critical to help the person with ASD:

- ◆ Know how ASD affects them.
- ◆ Be able to explain ASD to others.
- ◆ Ask for help when they need it.
- ◆ Accommodate their own needs.

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## To Access Adult Services People With Disabilities Must Self-Disclose

- To have protections of the ADA
- To document their disability
- To request accommodations in the workplace
- To be eligible for disabled student services and supports
- To receive accommodations at college
- To inform teachers, professors and counselors



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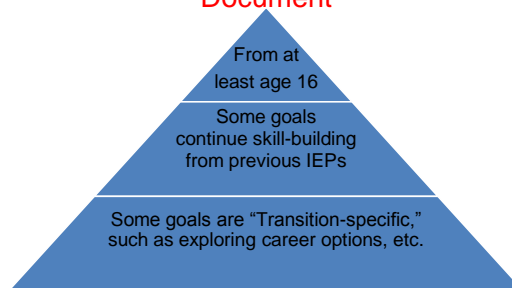
## Self-Esteem & Mental Health

- To understand and accept their strengths and weaknesses
- Be OK with who they are.
- Consider the need for AB3632 Mental Health Services and/or Cognitive Behavioral Intervention

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## Step 3: Create Transition Goals The ITP is a changing, Working Document



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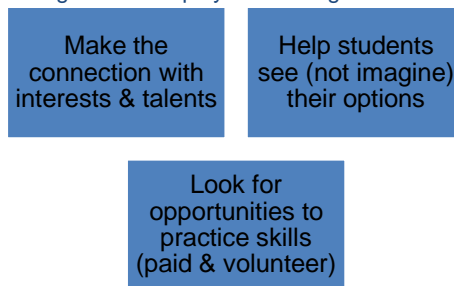
For students with ASD  
Don't Overlook Behavioral Needs & Goals



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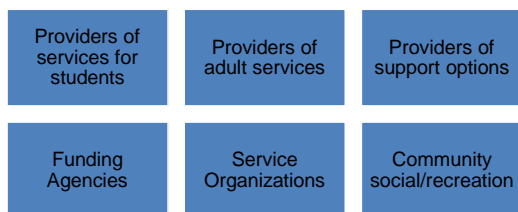
**Step 4:** Create connecting steps, activities & resources  
to meet goals for employment or higher education



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Connect with...



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Increase Job Placement Opportunities for students

- Plan on more time, practice and direct experience to develop skills
- **Engage and train employers**

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**The personal JOB MATCH** (p. 269)



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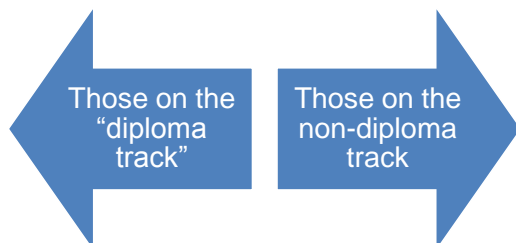
**Step 5** Customize Solutions

- Consider the needs of students with ASD individually
- Staff, parents and the student may need to customize the approach
- Find new solutions and do things that have not been done before in your district
  - Microenterprise
  - Support at the community college

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Transition & assessment is often viewed in an “either-or” way



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Students on the “diploma track” can be at a disadvantage when it comes to transition

- Their assessment & transition plans tend to have only an academic focus
- Students may miss out on available transition activities & preparation for post-secondary work or education because of demanding academic schedules
- They are often not assessed in Works Skills or Independent Living Skills even though they need to develop skills in these areas

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Students on the “diploma track” can be at a disadvantage when it comes to transition

- The diploma is an **exit document** that ends special education services (at age 17 or 18), even when all transition needs have not been addressed
- In spite of excellent potential, many are arriving to work or higher education without the skills needed for success

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Plan for college experiences

- Consider the demands and prepare
- Can skip the SAT tests if they opt for a community college with a guaranteed transfer
- Select meaningful coursework for goals
- (Dept of Rehab may pay tuition, depending on the employment goal)

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Students on non-diploma track

- The tendency is to NOT assess in academic areas
- With no academic assessment or goals, there is limited academic growth during transition, even though education continues to age 22
- Students with ASD on the non-diploma track often end up with repetitive or low-skill jobs
- While studies are limited, employers tend to have low expectations for those without a diploma

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Shift the **Timeline** if needed-  
ASD is a developmental disability

- What do we know about the clock and the calendar in ASD?
- Plan to continue at their own pace and take the time they need
- Start the plan EARLY
- Consider options to stay in their educational program until the age of 22 years
- Focus on the full range of needed, useful skills



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## Customized timelines

- Some districts now have “five year plans” for diploma track students with ASD
- Another option is to earn but hold the diploma until needed transition services are completed (often/usually off the high school campus)

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## IDEA 2004

- (ii) **Summary of performance** – For a child who eligibility under this part terminates under circumstance described in clause(i), a local educational agency shall provide the child with summary of the child’s academic achievement and functional performance, which shall include recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child’s postsecondary goals. 1414(c)(5)(B)(ii)
- The requirements for the SOP are found in the Federal Regulations at 34 CFR §300.305(e)(3).

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## State Summary of Performance Requirements

- The information in the Summary of Performance should be based on your child’s unique needs and her goals after she graduates from high school, although IDEA does not spell out specifically what the SOP must contain.
- Since specific information that must be included in a student’s SOP will vary by state, parents should become familiar with their state’s requirements.
- <http://www.calstat.org/publications/pdfs/SOP.pdf>
- The Summary of Performance template is only available electronically.

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## Information and Resource to Adult Living: A Guide to Transition

<http://www.calstat.org/transitionGuide.html>

- This comprehensive handbook, revised in 2008 and including changes as related to the regulations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004), is written for students, parents, and teachers.
- It offers practical guidance and resources in support of transition efforts for students with disabilities as they move from their junior high and high school years into the world of adulthood and/or independent living.
- [http://www.calstat.org/publications/pdfs/Transition\\_final\\_08.pdf](http://www.calstat.org/publications/pdfs/Transition_final_08.pdf)
- To order Transition to Adult Living guide (50kb)
- [http://www.calstat.org/pdf/transition\\_guide\\_request.pdf](http://www.calstat.org/pdf/transition_guide_request.pdf)

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## Create a powerful Transition Plan

- Prioritize: Help everyone focus on the most important things
- Look for opportunities in the community to interact, practice and relate **socially**
- Widen the circle of support, information, and help
- Connect to appropriate adult programs

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## Create a powerful Transition Plan

- Include mental health services if needed
- Connect to agency services through the lifespan
- Stay in special education until age 22 if appropriate.
- Measure outcomes and progress; change intensity or services if progress is limited

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## Summary:

### A well-designed transition plan includes

1. Assessment
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7. Methods to evaluate the success of the plan

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## Planning Tools for the ITP

- Assessment: UCC-CL  
Underlying Characteristics Checklist
- Building Self-Awareness & Self-Determination
  - MAPS: Making Action Plans
  - PATHS: Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope

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## Resources

- *Transition to Adult Living: An Information and Resource Guide* California Department of Education  
<http://www.calstat.org/TransitionGuide.html>
- CLEAR Brochures for Safety and Behavior: Teach people with ASD how to be safe from a very early age  
[www.SCAAN.org](http://www.SCAAN.org)- Click on CLEAR
- Autism In Transition, Autism Society Los Angeles website dedicated to transition
- <http://autismintransition.blogspot.com/>

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