

Lesson Plan

Objective: To enable students to **assume a more meaningful role in the transition planning process.**

Settings and materials: Use “Whose Future Is It Anyway?”, a workbook that is student-directed in that the materials are written for students as end-users. There is a Coach’s Guide to assist teachers in providing adequate support, but the identification of the person to serve as coach is left to the student. The level of support needed by students to complete activities varies a great deal, and is usually driven by the degree to which students have, and believe they have, control over the process. Instruction takes place in the student’s classroom.

Content Taught

Whose Future Is It Anyway? A Student-Direction Transition Planning Program (available from the Arc of the United States). Program consists of 36 sessions introducing students to the concept of transition and transition planning and enabling students to self-direction instruction related to:

- Self and disability awareness
- Making decision about transition-related outcomes
- Identifying and securing community resources to support transition services
- Writing and evaluating transition goals and objectives
- Communicating effectively in small groups
- Developing skills to become an effective team member, leader, or self-advocate

Teaching Procedure

The first section is titled *Getting to Know You*. It introduces the concept of transition and educational planning, provides information about transition requirements in IDEA and enables students to identify who has attended past planning meetings, who is required to be present at such meetings, and who they want involved in their planning process.

- Students are introduced to four primary transition outcome areas (employment, community living, post-secondary education and recreation and leisure).
- Activities throughout the program focus on these transition outcome areas.

The second section (called *Making Decisions*) introduces a decision-making process that students then apply towards making decisions about the four transition outcome areas.

- This process involves the application of a simple problem-solving process represented by an acronym, “DO IT!” which stands for: 1) Define your problem, 2) Outline your options, 3) Identify the outcome of each option, 4) Take action, and 5) Get excited.
- Students learn the DO IT! Process by working through each step to make a decision about a potential living arrangement, and then apply the process to make decisions about the three other transition outcome areas.
- In the final session in this section, students learn to use the DO IT! Process to give informed consent and apply this specifically to the transition planning meeting.

The third section (called *How to Get What You Need*) enables students to locate community resources identified in previous planning meetings that are intended to provide supports in each of the transition outcome areas.

- Students identify such supports, if available, and then gather information about each community resource.
- They are encouraged to think about alternative community supports, including those available to all citizens and those specific to people with disabilities (ex: vocational rehabilitation, supported employment, etc.).

Section 4 (called *Goals, Objectives and the Future*) enables learners to apply a set of rules, called WIGOUT rules (Writing Instructional Goals and Objectives for Use In Transition) to identify transition-related goals and objectives that are currently on their IEP or transition planning form, evaluate these goals based on their own transition interests and abilities, and develop additional goals to take to their next planning meeting.

- Students learn what goal and objectives are, how they should be written, and ways to track progress on goals and objectives.

The fifth section (*Communication*) introduces effective communication strategies for small group situations, like the transition planning meetings.

- Students work through sessions that introduce different types of communication (verbal, body language, etc.) and how to interpret these communication behaviors, the differences between aggressive and assertive communications, how to effectively negotiate and compromise, when to use persuasion, and other skills that will enable them to be more effective communicators during transition planning meetings.

The final session (called *Thank You, Honorable Chairperson*) enables students to learn types and purposes of meetings, steps to holding effective meetings, and roles of the meeting chairperson and team members.

- Students are encouraged to work with school-district personnel to take a meaningful role in planning for and participating in the meeting, including eventually chairing a transition planning meeting.
- Students are encouraged to work on one session per week during the weeks between their previous transition planning meeting and the next scheduled meeting.
- The final two sessions review the previous sessions and provide a refresher for students as they head into their planning meeting.

Method of Evaluation

Use the Arc Self-Determination Scale (available from the Arc of the United States), a 72-item student self-report scale that measures four dimensions of self-determination.

Based on: Wehmeyer, M., & Lawrence, M. (1995). Whose Future is it Anyway? Promoting student involvement in transition planning. Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 18, 69-83.