



Creating Transition Portfolios for Middle School Students with Disabilities

A teleconference training sponsored by the Montana Council on Developmental Disabilities, the University of Montana Rural Institute's Transition Projects and PLUK (Parents Let's Unite for Kids)

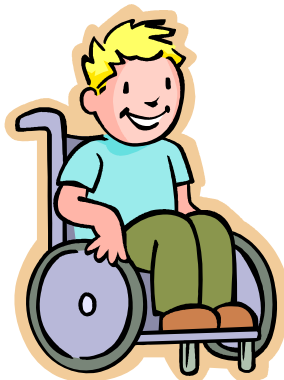
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The Transition Portfolio

- **Uses pictures and words to present a positive picture of the student and share information about who they are.**



Mark volunteers at the local humane society every Thursday. He washes pet food dishes, cleans the dog yard, and helps socialize cats.

Discovery

The process of gathering information about a middle school student for the purposes of:

- Planning a vision for post high school
- Identifying necessary skills to be taught to prepare the student for adult life
- Developing IEP goals
- Gathering information for service learning opportunities, ideas for school jobs, chores at home...

Strategies for Discovery

- **Interview people who know the student well**
- **Visit the student at home**
- **Step back and observe the student in daily activities. In terms of environment, supports, tasks, etc., what works for her/him? What doesn't work for her/him?**
- **Find out what motivates the student**
- **Look for skills and interests**

Another Strategy for Discovery

- Ask the student to journal after volunteer experiences, special events, work opportunities, etc.
 - What was expected of the student?
 - What did he or she actually do?
 - How did it go?
 - Did the student enjoy it? Would he or she want to do it again?
 - What assistance or support was or would have been helpful for the student to receive?
 - Did the student make any new connections through the experience?

Creating a Transition Portfolio

- **During Discovery, gather photographs that show the student at his or her best**
 - **School picture or professional portrait**
 - **At home and in the community**
 - **With family and friends**
 - **In class, clubs, sports, family outings...**

Creating a Transition Portfolio

- **During Discovery, gather photographs that show the student at his or her best**
 - **At school jobs or volunteer sites**
 - **Using assistive technology**
 - **Participating in hobbies, sports, the arts, etc.**
 - **Navigating life activities with supports, accommodations, and modifications**

Creating a Transition Portfolio

- **Include text to highlight the student's:**
 - **Interests**
 - **Experiences**
 - **Connections**
 - **Ideal environments**
 - **Personality attributes**
 - **Positive qualities**
 - **Skills**
 - **Abilities**

Todd is well known in Missoula for his involvement in sports, music, theatre and volunteer projects.

His activities include cross country, wrestling, track, Flagship, and Parks and Recreation Programs.



Transition Portfolios...

Allow IEP team members to share the deep, rich information gathered through Discovery.

Using the Transition Portfolio

- Developing IEP goals
 - Student can present Portfolio to the IEP team (allows for student participation and builds self-advocacy skills)
 - By identifying student strengths, interests and support needs, functional and relevant goals tied to long-term outcomes can be written

Using the Transition Portfolio

- Developing relevant curriculum
 - Based on what is learned about the student in Discovery and captured in the Portfolio, curricular content can be modified to build upon strengths and interests...
 - While taking into account successful support strategies
 - Tying coursework directly to what is “discovered” increases relevance

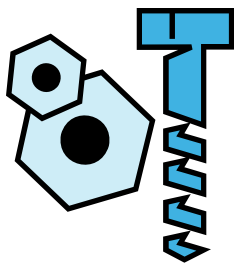
Using the Transition Portfolio

- Identifying necessary skills to be taught
 - As relevant goals and curricular content are developed, applicable (and thus functional) skills are identified and can be taught
 - Students are more invested in learning when they see their efforts tied to interests and long-term goals

Using the Transition Portfolio

- Gathering information for service learning opportunities, chores at home, summer work experiences, in-school jobs and plans for after high school...
- Portfolios share a vision of the student at their best - this might be a different perspective than team members currently have
- Portfolios can introduce the student to new high school teachers and peers
- Portfolios can introduce students to agencies such as DD, WIA, and potential volunteer sites

Creating a Portfolio



Nuts and Bolts



Supplies:


- Digital camera (3.0 megapixels minimum)
- Floppy disk, USB connector, or other means of saving and transferring from camera to computer
- Charged batteries
- MS PowerPoint or other presentation program
- Color printer
- Presentation binder with clear sheet protectors

Presentation Binder




Portfolio Wording

- Portray competence
- Minimize verbiage
- Make sure text matches photos
- Use action-oriented language (descriptive verbs)



Sarah sends email to friends and uses word processing programs on the computer for reports and assignments.



Jeff manages his diabetes.

Checking blood sugar level

Eating a healthy snack



Daisy completed a work experience serving condiments in the school cafeteria.



Portfolio Photography 101




General Suggestions:

- Take your time; gently and smoothly push button
- Use flash as needed
- Get close to the subject/action
- Remember – digital photos can be erased!
- Turn off the date/time stamp

Other Suggestions

- Don't repeat photographs
- Try to use only one picture per page
- Consider covering the entire page with a photograph and using a text box for the verbiage

Start with a portrait-quality photo to introduce the student...first impressions are important.



Taryn is a student in Anytown School. She would like to graduate from high school and attend college.



Include action photos
(may be staged)



Versus non-action photos

Capture competence and performance

Use photos from Discovery activities

Completing chores at home...



Studying...





Relaxing...





Or creating.



Working at home...



Working at school...





And working in the community.

Volunteering...



Capture known community figures interacting with the person, team uniforms, or other ways of connecting him or her to the community.




Avoid photos that don't show the person at his or her best.



Pay attention to details...

- **Quality of photo**
- **Background**
- **Is person wearing same clothes in multiple photos?**
- **What does the picture portray?**



**Taryn enjoys
working with
young children.
At Head Start,
she reads
books,
supervises
learning
stations, and
helps kids
color or use the
computer.**



**Side shots or
facing person
from an angle**



Questions and Answers?

