

**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.



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## 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?

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## 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...

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## 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

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## Creating a Transition Portfolio

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

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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.

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## Transition Portfolios...

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

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## 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

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## 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

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## 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

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## 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

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## Creating a Portfolio



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## 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

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## Presentation Binder



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## Portfolio Wording

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

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

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Jeff manages his diabetes.

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Checking blood sugar level      Eating a healthy snack

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

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Portfolio Photography 101



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## 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

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## 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

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

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

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Include action photos  
(may be staged)

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Versus non-action photos

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Capture competence and performance

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Use photos from Discovery activities

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Completing chores at home...

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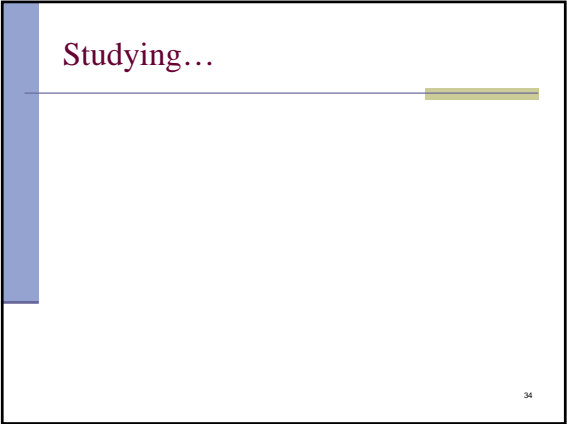
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Studying...

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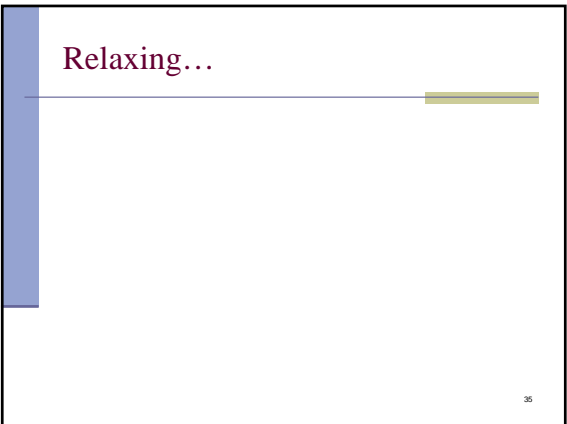
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Relaxing...

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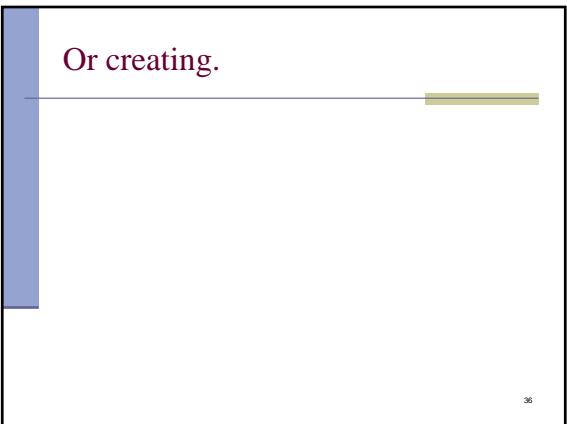
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Or creating.

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Working at home...

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Working at school...

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And working in the community.

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Volunteering...

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

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

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## Pay attention to details...

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

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

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Side shots or facing person from an angle

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## Questions and Answers?



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