



EMPOWERING STUDENT VOICE: PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR TRANSITION IEPs

RESOURCE GUIDE



About NTCN

The Northeast Transition Collaborative Network (NTCN) was created in response to gaps in communication and collaboration between school districts, agencies/providers, young adults, parents/caregivers, and community groups. NTCN hosts monthly virtual sessions about adult services and opportunities in the community as well as quarterly professional development opportunities for educators on topics related to person-centered transition, and workshops for families/caretakers around the person-centered planning process.

About This Guide

This guide was created by the Community Resource Center at Northeast Arc. We recognize that not every program on this topic may have been highlighted here. Services and programs are constantly changing. This is meant as an overview of services available to people in Northeastern Massachusetts. We may update these resource guides periodically; if you know of a resource that can be highlighted here, please reach out to us at CommunityResourceCenter@ne-arc.org.

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Assessments

Age-Appropriate Transition Assessments and Resources

<https://witig.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Age-Appropriate-Assessment-Guide.pdf>

A guide providing information regarding transition assessment compliance, definition, examples, and resources.

AIR Self-Determination Assessment

<https://www.ou.edu/education/zarrow/resources/assessments>

The AIR scale assesses the self-determination strengths and weaknesses of adolescents with disabilities, facilitates student involvement in educational planning, and instruction to promote self-determination as an educational outcome. The results assist in the development of self-determination goals and objectives.

Autonomy Checklist

<https://autismhousingpathways.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/02-Modified-Adolescent-Autonomy-Checklist.pdf>

The Autonomy Checklist is a tool that can be helpful in assessing skills related to home and the community settings. Skills are split into domains and assessed as skills that have been achieved, currently worked on, coming up, and skills that the individuals will need continuous support on.

Collaborative Assessment Guide for Transition Planning Services

<https://transitionta.org/transition-assessment-guide/>

A toolkit of information on transition assessments, sample assessments, and tools that can be used to support all parties involved in the transition planning process including students, family members, educators, vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselors, human services and health agency staff, and many others.



Tools for Educators

IRIS Center (Vanderbilt Peabody College)

<https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/>

IRIS offers modules, case study units, activities, and information for educators across topics. IRIS also offers free Professional Development certificates for educators a-la-carte as well as through a School & District Platform for a nominal fee.

IRIS Center- Secondary Transition: Student-Centered Transition Planning Module

<https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/tran-scp/>

The module is designed to help users to better understand the benefits of student-centered transition planning, identify ways to involve students in collecting assessment information, developing goals, and prepare students to actively participate in their own IEP meetings.

Predictor Implementation School/District Self-Assessment (PISA)

<https://transitionta.org/pisa-self-assessment/>

The Predictor Implementation School/ District Self-Assessment (PISA) is intended to provide schools, districts, or other stakeholders in secondary transition with a framework for determining the degree to which their program is implementing practices that are likely to lead to more positive post-school outcomes for students with disabilities.

Student-led IEPs and the Importance of Active Participation

<https://www.perkins.org/resource/student-led-ieps-and-the-importance-of-active-participation/>

Perkins School for the Blind shares strategies for including students in their own IEP process, including active and ongoing participation in transition activities and accommodations to support the student during IEP meetings.

The Roles of Students & Families of All Ages in IEP Development

<https://www.perkins.org/resource/the-roles-of-students-amp-families-of-all-ages-in-iep-development/>

A presentation hosted by Perkins School for the Blind providing examples on how to write student visions, evaluating academic achievement, functional performance, and including family perspectives in a whole-team approach for creating the IEP.



Tools for Students

Goal Plan Visual Organizer

<https://imdetermined.org/tool/goal-plan/>

The Goal Plan is a simple tool to help youth set and attain goals by providing a visual organizer in the steps to reach their goal(s). There are videos to provide instructions and visuals to the student using the visual organizer and provide an understanding of the importance.

Identity and Self-Awareness Worksheet

<https://imdetermined.org/tool/one-pager/>

A tool to help students focus on key details that will help educators, support personnel, and family get to know the student better. The worksheet has an accompanying video to support student understanding of the tool.

Student Rubric for IEP Participation

<https://imdetermined.org/tool/student-rubric-for-iep-participation/>

This rubric helps students reflect on their current level of participation in their IEP process, and plan for the next level.

Family & Educator Resources

The Arc of Massachusetts: Position Statement on Self-Determination

<https://thearc.org/position-statements/self-determination/>

The statement from the Arc of Massachusetts regarding the value of self-determination for individuals with Intellectual Disabilities and what it means to support individuals in their self-determination efforts.

Federation of Children with Special Needs

<https://fcsn.org/transition/>

The Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN) offers resources across the agespan and on a wide range of topics related to youth with disabilities including information sheets, workshops, and support to caregivers/families related to transition.

I'm Determined

<http://www.imdetermined.org/>

A comprehensive website with numerous resources for educators, parents, and youth. The I'm Determined project focuses on providing direct instruction, models, and opportunities to practice skills associated with self-determined behavior. This project facilitates youth, especially those with disabilities, to undertake a measure of control in their lives, helping to set and steer the course rather than remaining the silent passenger.

Ready to Make My Own Decisions: How Families can Support Student Self-Determination

https://raisecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/RAISE_Brief_for_Families-formatted-draft-033123.pdf

The brieflet created by TransCen and I'm Determined to help families learn the value in self-determination and how they and professionals can support students to build confidence and take charge of their futures.



Presenters

**Kelley Challen, Transition Specialist, Speaker & Consultant, & Founder
Challen Education & Transition Services**

<https://www.challentransitions.com>

Kelley Challen, Ed.M., CAS, is an expert transition specialist and the founder of Challen Education & Transition Services. For more than 21 years, she has worked alongside families, educators, and professionals to support teens, college students, and young adults with a wide range of learning and developmental profiles as they plan for meaningful, individualized futures.

She specializes in transition assessment, planning, and consultation that leads to real-world progress. Whether she is evaluating college readiness, identifying life skill gaps, consulting on transition or self-direction program design, or helping a young adult clarify their goals and next steps, her mission remains the same: to make the future feel clearer and more possible for every individual she works with.

**Leslie Leslie, Project Director
Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN)**

<https://fcsn.org/>

Leslie is the Project Director for the Federation's MassPAC and APPLE projects. As an attorney and founder of her local SEPAC, Leslie has the background and experience to develop and present workshops on special education and parent leadership for parents and professionals. Leslie also supports the postsecondary transition project work at FCSN. Leslie and her husband are the parents of two adult sons who attended public school on IEPs.

**Rich Plouffe, Director of Transition Services
SEEM Collaborative**

<https://www.seemcollaborative.org/>

Rich Plouffe, MS.Ed., is the Director of Transition Services at SEEM Collaborative, where he has spent over fifteen years supporting young adults and their families through the transition process. His professional experience spans private, public, and collaborative school settings and includes roles in group home management, transportation oversight, and administration. This diverse background informs his practical approach to complex educational and transitional planning.

**Kate Small, Consultant
empowerED Solutions**

<https://www.empoweredschool.org/>

As an instructional leader grounded in the "how" of inclusive education, Ms. Kate Small is a change agent dedicated to accessibility for all learners. Having served as a general educator, special educator, inclusion facilitator and instructional coach, she values the importance of collaboration and the impact it has on creating meaningful educational opportunities.

Prior to joining the team at empowerED, Ms. Small taught in both urban and suburban settings. As an educational consultant, Ms. Small has supported systems change at the school, district, and state levels. She is a skilled professional developer who connects with audiences.