Establishing a Blueprint for an Effective Transition

**Goals and Objectives**

1. Collaboration
   1. Comprehensive whole, not silos
      1. Everyone at the table
         1. First High School IEP meeting will include all players: Every service sector, every system partner involved with the child, and as a future adult.
         2. High School IEP meetings will have an evolving membership reflecting changes in the person’s life.
         3. All children’s case managers working with transition-age youth will become familiar with and somewhat fluent in their understanding of the adult service system.
         4. Transition-age youth will have overlapping children’s case management and adult case management for a period of at least nine months to facilitate a warm handoff.
         5. All people will be encouraged to fully transition to an adult case manager at least nine months before exiting High School.
      2. All parties fully participate
         1. Establish annual global participation permission by parents, or individual where appropriate, so all can be easily present at IEP meetings.
         2. Establish required participation by every service provider and every system partner involved with the child.
         3. Schools and departments will ensure meetings will be held at times that work for parents/families.
         4. All unmet needs will be documented and there will be collaboration to meet each need.
         5. For eligible individuals for PCP’s, IEP meetings will inform and overlap PCP meetings after the age of 18.
   2. Relationship building and information sharing
      1. Establish annual statewide joint adult and children’s case managers meeting. Include representation from school-based case managers.
      2. Re-establish a Children’s Cabinet to improve or increase collaboration between State departments.
      3. School personnel will convene at least quarterly client-specific transition meetings to include VR counselors, children’s case managers, adult case managers, and any other important players.
   3. Training
      1. Quality, not compliance
      2. The State develops a statewide training for school-based and children’s case managers to learn about the adult system.
         1. Have an online training be developed for easy access
      3. State develops a general transition guide; things to consider when facing any transition. See attached Rhode Island template.
   4. Allowing room for creativity
      1. Build on strengths
         1. Prioritize people’s strengths so they are not lost.
            1. Don’t just focus on needs.
         2. Ensure strengths are documented as part of the plan and shared with the team.
         3. Have system fund strengths, not just needs.
         4. Consider strengths related to familiarity with environment, as well as strengths portable to any environment.
            1. You have to have the skill and consideration of the environment in which one thrives.
            2. Ensure goodness of fit between environment and skill.
            3. Everything has to be a good fit.
            4. Have ongoing assessment of continued good fit.
      2. Plans should be geared so people experience a sense of purpose in their lives.
      3. Do what works for each individual
         1. Discern what will make a person happy and fulfilled, and build on that with case plans.
         2. Allow for appropriate risk-taking
            1. Push the envelope; provide opportunities for further growth.
            2. Build on success and failures.
         3. Plans should not be limited to what is currently available; special orders must be ok.
         4. Don’t let a person’s current capacity limit what we plan for concerning future opportunities.
      4. Build communities that allow and support people with disabilities to do anything and everything.
         1. Support teams should encourage each person to be an active participant in the community.
         2. Exploit existing community resources and create new ones as needed.
2. Family System Support, Individual Support

*Family System Support*

* 1. Establish reasonable schedule for informal meetings with all players on transition
     1. Informal can mean phone check in or other means of communication.
     2. Allow parents to determine frequency of meetings.
     3. Aim for monthly meetings in last year of high school.
     4. Aim for quarterly meetings in second to last year of high school.
     5. Have all schools in Maine allow extended participation until an age out year of 26.
  2. Awareness of all options
     1. Direct all options toward the planning.
     2. Seriously: All options. Explain these to every family.
  3. Address caregiver strain
     1. Provide adequate information and support to the caregiver.
     2. Provide adequate training to the caregiver when needed/requested.
        1. Help families learn how to let go and allow independence.
     3. Recognize and respect that families know the individual best.
     4. Provide adequate equipment, technology, and resources to the caregiver.

*Individual Support*

1. Ensure individual is an active participant in all aspects of planning for their life.
2. Self-Determination
   1. Self-advocacy skills
      1. Teaching about agendas, rehearsals, and otherwise planning for meetings where one would be an active participant.
      2. Establish concrete opportunities for self-advocacy at home, school, community, etc. throughout each day.
      3. Learn how to actively access the community in a way that incorporates one’s own preferences and goals.
   2. Dignity of risk, dignity of choice
      1. Understanding what constitutes dignity and risk.
      2. Establish and practice safe behaviors at home and in the community.
      3. Understand fixed rules vs. flexible guidelines for success in negotiating the world.
      4. Teaching parents and caregivers to let go and allow for appropriate risk taking and decision making by the individual. (Work their way out of a job).
      5. Establish proactive neighborhood planning so people surrounding the individual are empowered to take an active supporting role as needed.
      6. Help the individual and support network plan for emergencies including recognizing what constitutes an emergency, and when it is appropriate to ask for/access help.
      7. Teaching strategies for decision making and the understanding of consequences.
      8. Learn how to be a good customer, asserting self to meet one’s own needs and to achieve one’s own preferences in the context of others.
   3. Opportunity to learn from mistakes
      1. Ensure opportunities for the individual to debrief experiences, positive and negative.
3. Employment and Career
   1. Focus on employment first, and other community supports second.
      1. Start early and often on developing employment skills and employment practice.
      2. School-based exposure, jobs at home, pre and post-secondary training, job experiences, career preparation, pursuit of career, internships, and volunteer opportunities.
      3. Built around people’s interests.
      4. Leave high school with resume.
   2. Be a good employee
      1. Learn how to be a good employee including learning how to follow rules and norms of employment setting.
      2. Both employer and employee learn how to build skills, knowledge base, and aspirations, to allow for further growth and career opportunities.
      3. Learn how to adapt to changes in job descriptions.

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1. Quality of life
   1. Happy, healthy, satisfied with life
   2. Community inclusion and participation
   3. Communities that embrace all individuals
   4. Natural supports
   5. Relationships, intimacy, and love
   6. Home
   7. Personal health and safety

[Understanding what constitutes: Kindness, respect, community.]