Transition Matters
Promoting Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships for Children and Youth with Disabilities
Erik Carter | Vanderbilt University

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

...to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living...

Our Charge
“Improving educational results for children with disabilities is an essential element of our national policy of ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities.”

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

Transition is a “coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities, including...

• post-secondary education
• vocational education
• integrated employment (including supported employment)
• continuing and adult education
• adult services
• independent living
• or community participation”

We All Work in Tandem to Promote Successful Transitions

Age
Early Childhood
Elementary School
Middle School
High School
Postsecondary Programs

Opportunities for Postsecondary Education
Autistic Kids Learn To Survive, And Thrive, In College
Autistic college students navigate ‘the hidden curriculum’

Autism spectrum students get welcome at more colleges

http://www.npr.org/2011/04/13/135345982/colleges-address-autistic-students-struggles
Opportunities for **Community Living**

### Indicator 14

Indicator 14 requires states to report the “percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and were:

A. Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school.
B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.
C. Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school”. (20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B)).

To Learn More Visit: [www.psocenter.org](http://www.psocenter.org)

### What Makes the Difference?

1. **Rigor**
2. **Relevance**
3. **Relationships**

**A Sampling of Important Educational Practices**

1. Access to the General Education Curriculum
2. High Expectations for Students
3. Youth Leadership in Educational and Transition Planning
4. Self-Determination Skills and Opportunities
5. Early Career Development and Work Experiences
6. Extracurricular Involvement
7. Friendships and Supportive Peer Relationships
8. Collaboration and Systems Linkages
9. Parent and Family Involvement
10. Caring Teachers and Mentors
11. Natural Supports and Partners in the Community

### Residential Independence After High School (up to 4 years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impairment</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Disability</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Disturbance</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Health Impairment</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech/Language</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Impairment</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impairment</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traumatic Brain Injury</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Disability</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf-blindness</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthopedic Impairment</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autism</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Disabilities</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NLTS2 Wave 3 Parent and Youth Interviews
(5) Almost 30 years of research and experience has demonstrated that the education of children with disabilities can be made more effective by—
(A) having high expectations for such children and ensuring their access to the general education curriculum in the regular classroom, to the maximum extent possible, in order to—
(i) meet developmental goals and, to the maximum extent possible, the challenging expectations that have been established for all children; and
(ii) be prepared to lead productive and independent adult lives, to the maximum extent possible;

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

Rigor

Trends in Educational Settings: Intellectual Disability

Where Do Students with Disabilities Spend Their School Day in Tennessee?

Delivering Evidence-Based Instruction
IDEA (2004) and the Transition Mandates

The coordinated set of [transition] activities must:

(a) be based on the individual child’s needs;

(b) take into account the child’s strengths, preferences, and interests; and

(c) includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

Involving Students in Educational Planning

Involvement in Transition Planning

Percentage of Students Who...

- Do Not Attend Meetings
- Are Present But Participate Little
- Are Moderately Active
- Are Leaders in Planning

Self-Determination Skills and Opportunities

- Choice-making
- Decision-making
- Problem-solving
- Goal-setting
- Self-management strategies
- Self-advocacy and leadership
- Self-awareness & self-knowledge

The Power of Early Work Experiences

2.5 times more likely

Sources: Carter, Austin, & Trainor (2011, 2012)
Providing Career Exploration Experiences

Start early...

- Career awareness activities
- Vocational education courses, clubs, and programs
- Volunteer activities or service-learning
- Community-based instruction
- Internships or apprenticeships
- On-campus work experiences (school-sponsored)
- Off-campus work experiences (school-sponsored)

Sources: Brock & Carter (in preparation); Kleinert et al. (2007); Wagner et al. (2004)

Summer Employment and Community Opportunities...

Indicators of Friendships and Peer Relationships During Adolescence

- Frequently sees friends outside of school:
  - Intellectual Disability: 22%
  - Multiple Disabilities: 14%
  - Autism: 6%
- Never or rarely receives phone calls from friends:
  - Intellectual Disability: 42%
  - Multiple Disabilities: 63%
  - Autism: 84%
- Have NOT been invited to other youth’s social activities during the past year:
  - Intellectual Disability: 25%
  - Multiple Disabilities: 43%
  - Autism: 50%

www.nlts2.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability category</th>
<th>Never visits with friends</th>
<th>Rarely or never receive telephone calls from friends</th>
<th>Not invited to other youth's social activities during the past year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>44%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf-blindness</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional disturbance</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>17%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hearing impairment</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual disability</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning disabilities</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple disabilities</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthopedic impairment</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>47%</td>
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Where Can You Learn More? (for free)


Relationships | Beyond the Classroom

Improving Collaboration and System Linkages

- Adult Services
- School Services
- Transition Services

With Adult Services and Community Agencies

- 3.4 times more likely

With Parents and Families
• Where are the *rigorous* and *relevant* learning opportunities in your schools or community?

• What opportunities do students have to develop valued *relationships* with their peers and caring teachers?

• What *instruction* and *supports* do students with disabilities need access these same opportunities?

• What (and who) does your team *need to know* to put these priorities into practice?