Preparing for a Successful Transition from High School
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Monica & Marisa

Challenges
- Accommodations are very different in Secondary Education
- Independent Skills
- Agencies involved in transition
- Your involvement is crucial
- Never too early to start thinking about transition
- Resources
Marisa

Monica

Things I learned

- Remember they are adults
- Let them be a big part in the decision making
- Identifying their strengths
- What works for one doesn’t work for the other one
The term “transition services” means a coordinated set of activities that:

Is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic & functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment); continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;

Is based on the individual child’s needs, taking into account the child’s strengths, preferences, and interests.

Adam’s experiences

“One Size Fits All”

Very basic (IEP goals were vague)

Employment opportunities were

• Limited to stereotypical jobs (carts, cleaning)
• Not based on strengths, interests or preferences
• School district said they had met Adam’s employability goal because he had a job at Giant

The Reality

Young adults on the autism spectrum were less likely to have ever lived independently since leaving high school, compared to their peers with other disabilities.

• Study in Autism Journal

Only half (53%) of young adults with an ASD had ever worked for pay outside the home in the first 8 years following high school, the lowest rate among disability groups even when controlling for impairment severity, household income and social demographics. Only 34% were employed at the time of the survey interview.

• 2013 Journal of American Academy Child/Adolescent Psychiatry
Where is Adam now?

- Attending certificate program at Arcadia University
- Employed at local Giant (for 3 years)
- Lives at home with us

Mary’s Journey
Launching Into Adult Life

University
Internships
Work
Social life
Travel

West Chester University

Some Of The Courses Mary Took
• Acting 1
• Acting 2
• Creative Drama
• Introduction To Jazz
• Women’s Chorus
• Body Politics
• History Of The Women’s Movement
• Dimensions Of Wellness
• Personal Defense
Full Social Life

Challenges

Negative and narrow mindsets e.g., low expectations

One path solution e.g., return to school after 4 years of attendance

Bureaucratic systems

Reticent to do anything new
Resources

A vision of full, meaningful, inclusive life for Mary

Other families

Professionals who understood and embraced the vision e.g.,
Principal and teachers in high school
Lawyer
Director of support agency
Director of transition in support agency

More Resources

The PEAl Center
www.pealcenter.org
PA Secondary Transition Guide
www.secondarytransition.org
Healthcare Checklist
PACER, Center, transition documents
http://www.pacer.org/publications/transition.asp