



Session 1: Agencies and Anxiety Overview of Transition

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Resources Link

https://bit.ly/agencies-yr2

File name: August - Overview Recording will be added once it has processed.

Objectives

This session is an overview of transition. It is a general session meant to introduce topics that will be covered more in depth in later sessions. Introduction to the beginning phases of transition will be covered.

- What is Transition
- SPIN, Assessment & PSGs
- Advocacy
- Agency Introduction
- Questions

What is Transition?

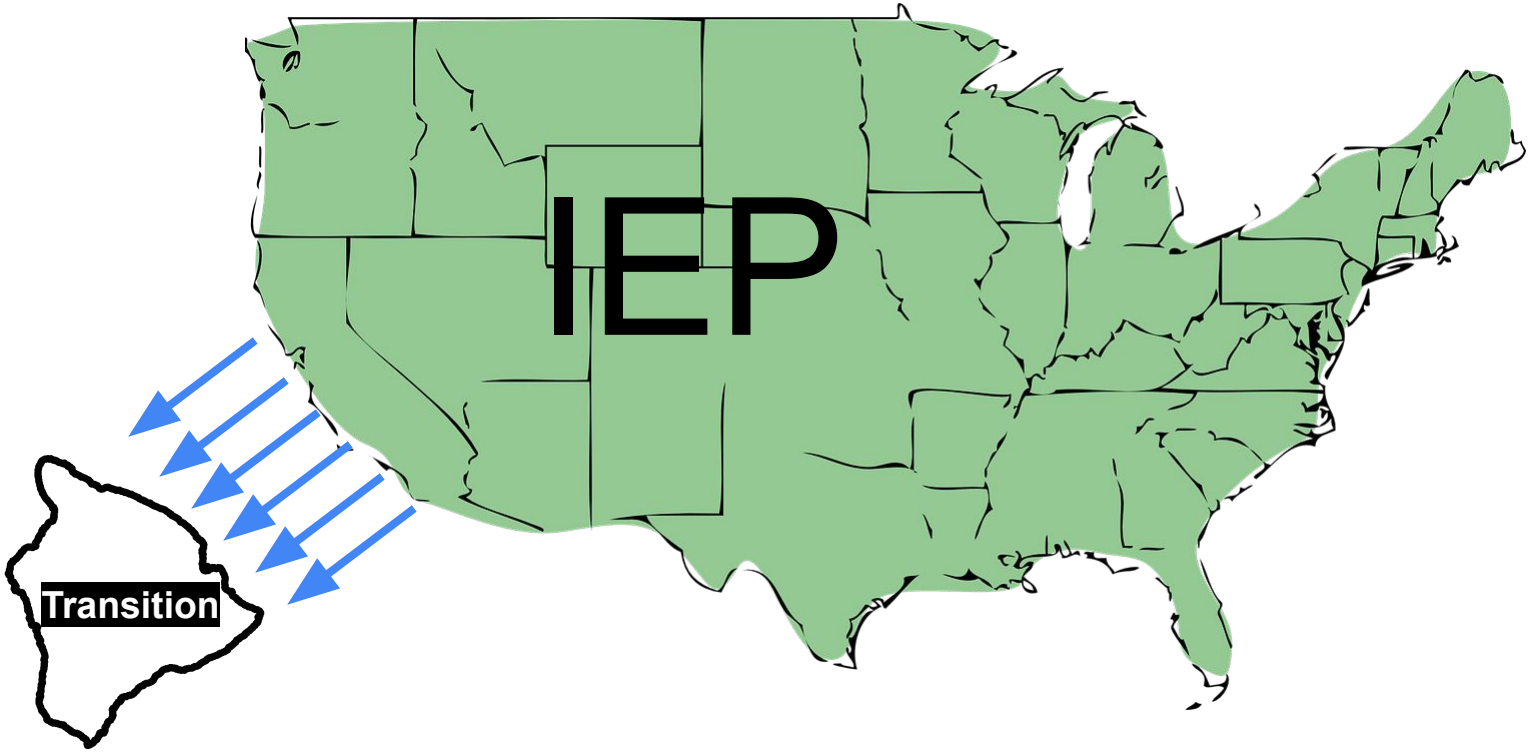
Transition is a process that legally starts at age 14. Transition helps prepare your child for life after school (graduation). This process addresses **three** critical areas:

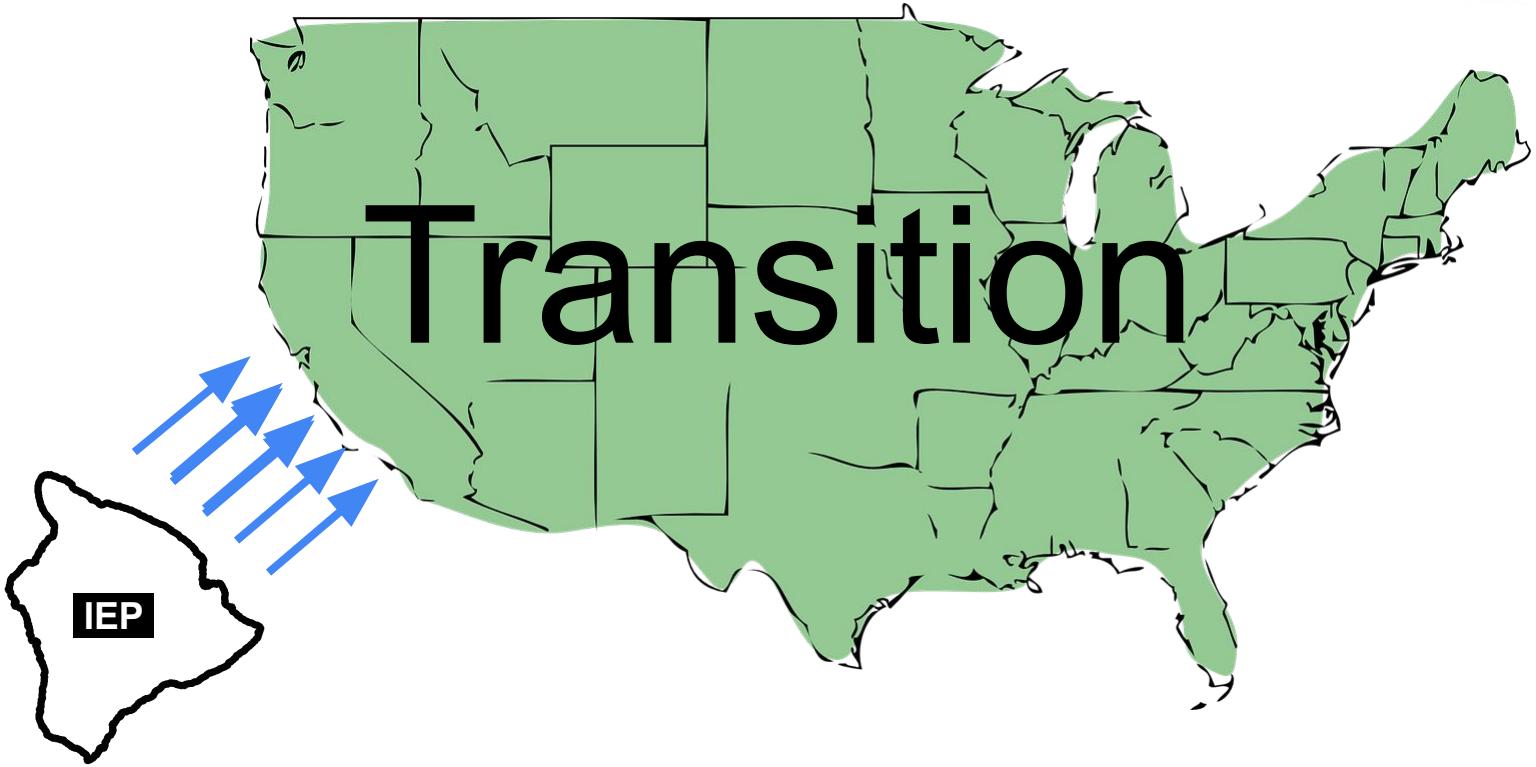
1. Employment (what will the student work to earn or contribute). This can be a paid or volunteer, part time or full time situation.
2. Education/Training (where and/or how will the student continue to learn). This can be formal or informal, school, on the job or in the home/community.
3. Independent Living (where will the student live, play and interact with others). This is the place or situation and possibly, the supports needed to live there.

Why these three areas?

These three areas were chosen to reflect areas that students with disabilities typically struggle with in adulthood. Planning ahead for these areas, specifically any that connect or requires outside agency support is essential to build successful outcomes.

The school will start to talk to you about life after school anytime between late elementary and early high school. **The minimum age for these conversations is 14 years old**. Each approach is individualized and must give consideration of individualized student needs.


IEP
Transition


Transition
IEP

Why is a transition IEP different?

An IEP that is built with Transition is different because

1. It's future oriented (looks at 1-5 years past graduation)
2. It considers the future goals connected to present performance and needs
3. It connects multiple sources of information (child, parent, teachers, support staff) to gather information.
4. It works in concrete terms with your child to look towards the future.
    a. Activities to support their understanding and exploration of goals
    b. Long term goals (Postsecondary Goals)
    c. Short term goals connected to long term goals. (Annual Goals)

Does every student need a transition plan?

YES!

1. All students with disabilities that are between the ages of 14-21 must have individualized transition plans in their IEP.
2. Individualized planning is needed so students can acquire the skills and experiences necessary for them to achieve their goals for life after high school.
3. Transition planning must begin by age 14 to give your teen time to explore their postsecondary goal choices and modify or change them based on transition experiences and acquired knowledge.

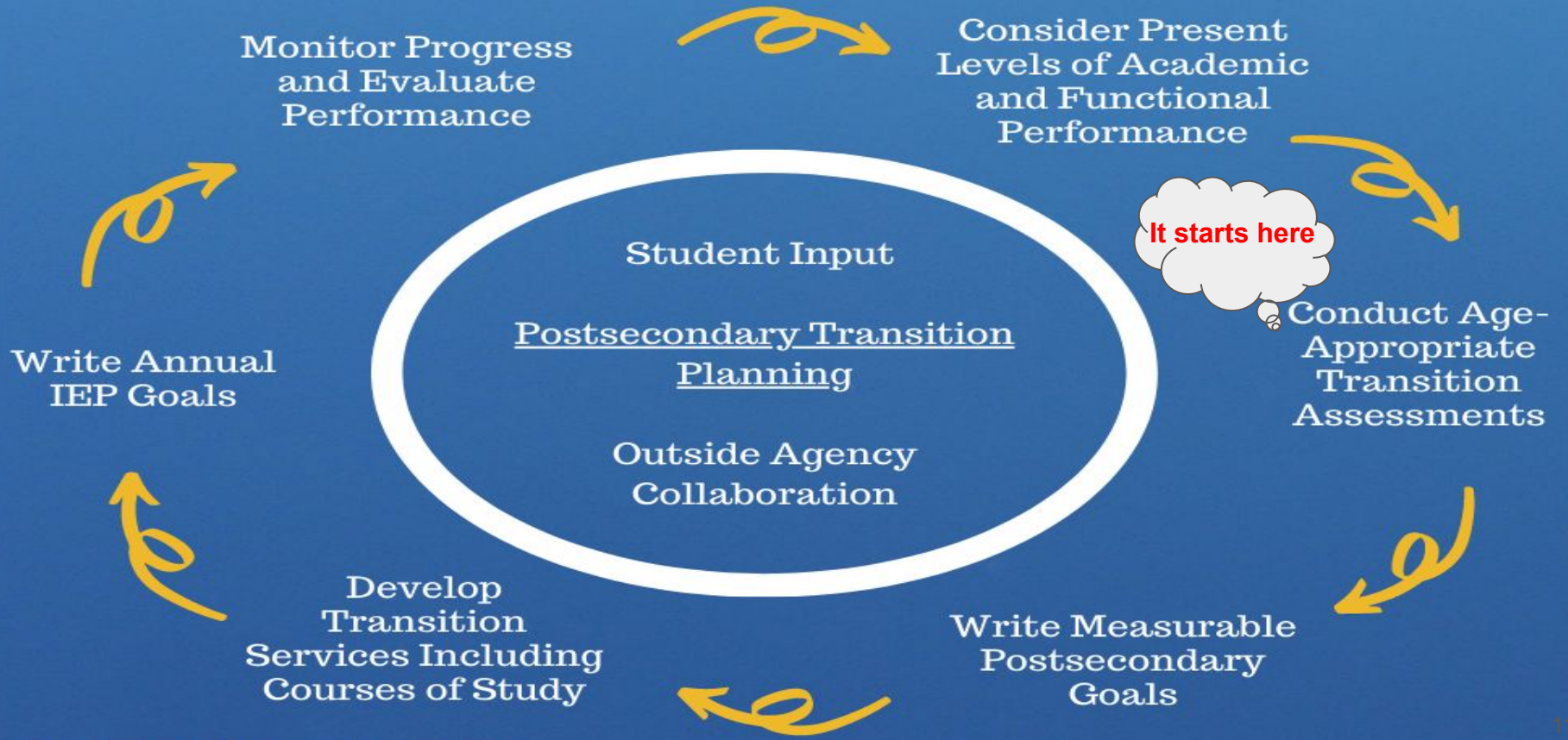
Who is involved in the transition planning process?

The IEP team consists of

- you
- your child
- school personnel
- agency representatives
- others working with your teen (SLP, OT, PT,etc.)
- agency members participate (with prior written parental consent)

Your child's attendance and participation in the transition planning process is essential.

Postsecondary Transition Planning Process



Adapted from NTACT: The Collaborative

What does this look like?

1. Your childs IEP manager or the school will notify you that age 14 is the official age of transition (the IEP year in which they turn 14)
2. The IEP manager (most likely) will explain the Transition Assessment process to you. This includes inventories, interviews and formal and informal assessments. Each of these tools will help identify your child's Strengths, Preferences, Interests and Needs
3. Use a timeline to look ahead and see what it will look like as a big picture.
   a. **Transition Timeline**
4. Start at the beginning and know that it's only a step at at time.

Why start so young?

In a nutshell:

1. Services take time to apply for and for funding to become available (sometimes up to 7 years!)
2. Schools have to provide assessment and IEP information that is appropriate to help your child meet these adult goals.
3. Thinking about these big life decisions can be emotionally taxing and take time to process.

Should I worry about this younger than 14?

It depends…

If your child has more complex needs and you anticipate that they may (not for sure) need more support as they age, the answer is definitely. It may be that you apply for agency supports or start to think about some other parts of school age transition services earlier.

If your child is not likely to need extensive supports, then you can wait until age 14.

Bottom line - start to have conversations about adulthood earlier rather than later. Planning and learning are always important.

The first component - Assessment

Assessment - Unlike the MDT, instead this is a combination of informal and formal surveys, interviews, inventories and assessments that focus on identifying the Strengths, Preferences, Interests and Needs (**SPIN**) of your Child. The MDT is done 1 time every 3 years. Transition Assessment is done yearly.

Strengths - what you child can do and/or is good at

Preferences - what they like to do or lean towards

Interests - what they want to learn more about

Needs - the areas where development is needed to achieve long term goals

Assessments include information from your **Child, Parents/Caregivers, Teachers or Support Staff**.

A **minimum of two per year** given in an on-going manner (over time).

Results are summarized and drive the entire IEP.

The second component - Postsecondary Goals

Transition assessments are used to develop your child's **postsecondary goals** in three areas:

- Employment - where will they work after high school?
- Postsecondary education or training - how/where will they receive training to work after high school?
- Independent living, when appropriate - where will they live after high school? (note - not every teen needs a postsecondary goal for independent living - transition assessment and data guides this decision)

**Postsecondary goals must be found using data from age-appropriate transition assessments. These PSGs take place after the diploma is officially delivered, NOT social graduation (the walk across the stage; official graduation is when services cease.)

An IEP team may determine that a student with an IEP can continue education through the year in which they turn 21. Meeting academic and IEP goals are a part of this conversation.

PSGs are meant to change and develop with the student

Post-secondary goals - more broad for 7th - 10th graders:

- After graduation, I will attend a community college.
- After graduation, I will work part time.
- After graduation, I will live with my parents.

PSGs - refined as students age - include location & activity

- After graduation, I will attend CCC-Columbus and obtain a degree to become a welder.
- After graduation, I will continue my part-time job at Wendy's.
- After graduation, I will live in the dorm at Central Community College - Columbus with a friend from high school.

MPG Examples for Students with Complex Support Needs

Education/Training Examples

- Following exit from 18-21 years transition services, Maxine will train/exercise in her home, with the support from a physical therapist and/or caregiver, to build physical strength and stamina in order to better assist with transfers while in the home and in her community (vehicle transfers).

Employment

- Following exit from 18-21 year old transition services, Maxine will work in her home by using her direct access switch on a timed setting to turn on the blender to prepare her meal that will be fed to her by her caregiver.

Independent Living Skills

- After completing school district services, I will live with family members and complete daily living skills as independently as possible, such as making choices about his leisure time activities, doing household chores, preparing small meals and snacks
- Following high school completion, Kevin will participate in 1- 2 age-appropriate community and individual community-based activities per week related to horticulture, socialization with young adults, animals, and music.
- After exiting 18-21 services, Kevin will effectively utilize an augmentative communication device at home and in the community that allows familiar and unfamiliar individuals to communicate his regarding needs, wants, and desires.

The third component - Annual Goals

Think about the reason your child needs specialized instruction from a special educator - in other words, why are they in special education?

- Goals will be related to your child's disability area (for example - reading comprehension)
  - Strategies or supports needed for your child to progress in learning
- Goals will be related to your child's development of skills needed to attain their PSGs
  - Academic, social, behavioral or physical skills (or other areas) needed to help progress towards PSGs

Are there annual IEP goals related to the student's postsecondary goals/transition services needs?

Check which postsecondary (PSG) this annual goal supports - it can be one, two, or all three PSGs.

Remember, not every student needs an independent living PSG, but ALL students need an employment PSG and an education/training PSG.

- Consider the minimum industry standards needed to move from high school toward their PSGs.
- Consider what skills your student is missing.

Example - employment PSG requires 4 year degree (think nursing or teaching) Do they have the academic and executive functioning skills necessary to be accepted into college and meet homework deadlines as well as job responsibilities?

Are there annual IEP goals related to the student's postsecondary goals/transition services needs?

Check which postsecondary (PSG) this annual goal supports - it can be one, two, or all three PSGs.

Remember, not every student needs an independent living PSG, but **ALL** students need an employment PSG and an education/training PSG. If they do not have a PSG for Independent Living, it must be supported by assessment and that you considered it with the team.

Let's Explore - **HERE**

What you need to know about Advocacy: Teach your child about their disability

Talk about thier disability and what it means. Use words they can understand and give them connections to further understand and see what it means.

Ask your child to attend and participate in IEP meetings.

Attend your child's meetings and expect them to help advocate for themselves.

Give them opportunities to advocate and ask questions with your support - this is the very beginning of advocacy.

Give your child choices - learning about this early sets them up to have better understanding and control as an adult. Use the words disability in a positive frame of conversation.

Discuss starting points and goals - dreams are important.

Expect work and progress towards goals. All individuals want to be successful and feel accomplishments.

Teach your child to say the words…

Knowing about their disability and what it means in the real world is essential to being a strong self-advocate.

Use the words in a helpful way; normalize advocating for themselves.

These can be need or strength based, but ideally, they are both.

Learn how to say the words from others who have been there. Find out preferred terms.

It is about sense of self and understanding who they are as a person and where they fit within the community.

Teach your child they have a place…

In the community. Get or stay involved in events and activities that are meaningful for your family.

With others who are already involved about events or activities that could work for your family.

In giving back to the community through volunteering and activism.

By being visible in all area of life.

By letting them try - and succeed or fail.

Agencies are an important step

Learning how and who to ask for help is extremely important. Here is a basic list of who you can call or email. Note - there is no such thing as a dumb question. Understanding what and why you are doing something is essential for your child. Some of these advocates can help you with the IEP and applying for services. They are there to help. (Look at chapter 6 in the Along the Way Guide for additional resources)

Agencies - These are typically thought of as adult services, but there are times when they start earlier. These services are not connected or managed by the school, but the school contributes information and facilitates interactions at times.

PTI-Nebraska - an organization that has parent/professionals who help families and individuals with disabilities understand the systems that serve them. Can help families apply for a wide range of services. Check out these resources - PTI Nebraska

ARC - The Arc offers a wide range of programs and services to meet the needs of those with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They help families by providing programs, information, and resources. The Arc focuses on issues such as: voting, employment, special education, Medicaid, and waiting lists. - The Arc of Nebraska

Disability Rights Nebraska - DRN uses a combination of legal advocacy, public policy advocacy, citizen advocacy, self-advocacy, and advocacy education to protect vulnerable people with disabilities, especially those who learn, live, or work in isolated, segregated, or congregated settings. - Disability Rights Nebraska

Easterseals of Nebraska - Through a variety of resources, Easterseals helps people with disabilities get access to quality health care, education and employment. - Easterseals Nebraska

ATP - Assistive Technology Partnership - ATP uses a variety of methods and technologies to help individuals with disabilities connect with technology.- Assistive Technology Partnership

DHHS - this agency coordinates services such as Developmental Disabilities or Aged and Disabled or Traumatic Brain Injury services. The parent must complete the application to have a child accepted and put on a waitlist for funding. This one is particularly important for children that will need supports for multiple areas of life as they age. These services can start at any age, but funding must become available. *****this one is particularly important to prepare and apply for as early as possible. Due to the fact that their is a wait list, if your adult child leaves school and funding is not secured, services may not be available and your child "sits and waits." Funding lists are approximately 4-7 years, depending on applications and funding.** (Apply at iServe Nebraska)

- Wait list - This refers the period of time that elapses between when the student is accepted and receives actual funding and services.
- Waivers - The general term for the programs and services that are offered by DHHS (either DD or A & D or TBI Waivers.) Tip sheet here - https://dhhs.ne.gov/DD%20Documents/Info%20Sheet%20for%20HCBS%20Waivers.pdf or Medicaid HCBS DD Waivers Quick Guide

Enable Plan - This is a savings plan for your child that DOES NOT count against programs that are income determined. Unlike a typical savings/checking plan (whose assets will count when determining financial need) these plans are specifically designed to support individuals with disabilities. Similar to a college 529 plan, the money can be used for certain items and can build up over time. (Apply at Enable Savings Plans)

NE Commission for Blind/Visually Impaired **and** Commission for Deaf/HOH - All about employment for students ages 14+

Medicaid - This is health insurance for your child. This can apply to any age child, based upon need, or will apply to those as they approach age 19 and adulthood. Income, need are considered. Talking with an organization such as PTI-Nebraska or Easterseals can help determine if and when this is right for your child. (Apply at iServe Nebraska)

Can be applied for at 14

Vocational Rehabilitation - This agency helps students develop skills as they relate to employment however, they also help connect to other agencies. They begin at age 14. They can share information about what they do prior to this but serving students begins at age 14 and parent permission must be granted. (Apply through the school with a parent permission form for Pre-ETS. Also available for home or private school students)

Can be applied for at 19 but….

SSA - Sometimes referred to as SSI or SSDI. *This is a service that may apply to younger children, based upon income, or can be something that is applied for as the child is 6 months out from age 19.* It is a monthly income. Talking with an organization such as PTI-Nebraska or Easterseals can help determine if and when this is right for your child. (Apply at Supplemental Security Income (SSI) | SSA)

Helpful Timelines and Resources

Transition Timeline

NDE Transition Website - https://transition.ne.gov/

Pacer Center Tip Sheet

Something to help you keep track

There are some great resources to help you get started and keep track of all there is to remember. A fantastic resource that can help birth til they are just exiting school is PTI-Nebraska. They are an organization that is staffed by individuals who are experiencing a family member with a disability and are a professional trained in advocating for individuals with disabilities. They are a positive presence that is a resource for families and schools. (Hint - they can help teachers and schools too!)

PTI-Nebraska - https://pti-nebraska.org/transitions/

Tip Sheet

Along the Way

Transition/Agency Terminology

Your teen's school may refer you to outside agencies as part of the transition plan.

It is the parent's responsibility to complete all agency applications, answer phone questionnaires, and respond to all mail from agencies from the date the application is filled out - until…forever.

Ask your school for help if you need assistance completing the agency applications.

Watch for deadlines - missing one can mean starting over!

School Questions?

Ask your child's IEP Manager

Agency Questions?

info@pti-nebraska.org

Looking for training or more opportunities to learn?

Southeast Region
ESU 4, 5, 6, 18
Michalla Schartz
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Central Region
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Blair Ryan
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Metro Region
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Whitney Fagan
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Western Region
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Megan Lantis
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Northeast Region
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Amy Slama
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