

Transition

The Goal of any Transition Planning must be:

- **Know yourself**
- **Believe in yourself**
- **Advocate effectively for yourself**

Successful Transition Involves:

- 1. Know the specific Learning Disability**
- 2. Foster Independence**
- 3. Plan towards HS course selection**
- 4. Plan towards post-secondary education**
- 5. Definitions/Resources**

1. Know your son/daughter's Learning Disability

- ◆ Revisit the psycho-educational assessment; if none was ever done, ask the school for one. Psycho-educational assessments show: area of strengths and area of need.
- ◆ Go over the assessment with your son/daughter & help with “jargon” - encourage questions
- ◆ Show how areas of strength and areas of need determine the accommodations given and recorded on the IEP
- ◆ Show how the student's strength is used to help choose accommodations for the area of need.
- ◆ Define Accommodations versus modifications
- ◆ Familiarize yourself with often used accommodations & ask your child to match them with his needs
- ◆ Experiment with accommodations asking the question “what helps your child to be successful?”
- ◆ Discuss what role does assistive technology play in quest for success
- ◆ Coach him to articulate his LD and the reason for specific accommodations using the psycho-educational assessment
- ◆ Coach IEP participation; explain educational jargon & stress importance of his presence as a strong team member

2. Foster Independence

- ◆ Remember how knowledge empowers and pass it on!
 - ◆ You know your child's Learning Disability
 - ◆ You know their strengths & weaknesses
 - ◆ You know what learning strategies, accommodations & assistive technologies your child needs to be successful
 - ◆ You know the above has to be reflected in the IEP
 - ◆ You teach your child to be part of the process

- ◆ Share the binder, containing all the important documentation, with your child. If you don't have a binder, create one together and call it "Transition Binder"
 - ◆ file by school year: assessments (psycho-educational , in school assessments, tutor assessment etc.), IEPs, report cards, team meeting summaries, medical reports (hearing, vision), lists of strategies that have worked in the past.

- ◆ Validate feelings of "different ness", but point out the good things about that
 - ◆ Know that risk taking can be positive
 - ◆ Point out the child's strengths and weaknesses, interests
 - ◆ Make sure your child is aware of them
 - ◆ Point out creativity (artistic, thinks outside the box)

- ◆ Discuss the learning disability, areas of strength and need
 - ◆ Review last psycho-educational report for areas of academic strengths & weaknesses
 - ◆ Point out connection between area of strength and learning styles, accommodations & strategies

 - ◆ Talk about learning styles: oral, visual, auditory, tactile & kinesthetic

- ◆ Talk about interests they have outside school and which extra-curricular activities they can participate in
 - ◆ Talk about topics they are most interested in school
 - ◆ Speak about what has worked in the past
 - ◆ Stress ability – not disability

- ◆ Problem solve with your son/daughter to determine what helps them learn: find appropriate accommodations, Strategies:
 - ◆ Use resources like the “LD /resource Guide” by the College Committee on Disability Issues.
 - ◆ See Resource Appendix

- ◆ Explain the legal rights in the Education Act pertaining to the IPRC process and the IEP
 - ◆ Learn about the process
 - ◆ Learn the ministry language & terms

- ◆ Encourage participation at the IEP Meeting and give them the tools to do so.
 - ◆ It may mean to prep the student by role playing
 - ◆ Make sure to pass on what you know
 - ◆ Teach to articulate the reason for the accommodations
 - ◆ Teach how and when to discuss them with teachers

- ◆ Stress importance of increasing skill levels in weaker areas: time management, study skills, test taking skills
 - ◆ Direct teaching shows the best results:
 - ◆ Within the setting of a LS class in Grade 9, 10 English & Math
 - ◆ By parent or tutor
 - ◆ Use of Resource room at school

- ◆ Involve him/her in decision making at home & in school
 - ◆ Involvement in the decision making will create ownership
 - ◆ Discuss what courses to take & when, this will create ownership

- ◆ Encourage goal setting: school, home & future
 - ◆ Providing structure and expectations begins at home
 - ◆ Increase responsibilities at home and at school
 - ◆ Help in developing routines & habits
 - ◆ Help to increase skills for managing time
 - ◆ Apply goal setting to planning for future

- ◆ Encourage participation in extra curricular activities to learn new skills while having fun

- ◆ Show confidence in his abilities

- ◆ Share some of your experiences where you learned through mistakes

- ◆ If you have an LD yourself – share your experiences

- ◆ Find famous/successful people with LD and talk about them

3. Plan for HS course selection

- ◆ Encourage thinking about careers where you can use your strengths
 - ◆ Help choose electives accordingly
- ◆ Insist on attending IEP Meetings – practice self-advocacy with child
- ◆ Encourage choosing interest courses – this may help finding career choices
- ◆ Learning Strategy Class?
 - ◆ Check HS website for information on LS classes outline
- ◆ Insist on covering the basics (English, Math etc) if undecided
- ◆ Explain academic versus Applied courses/ Transfer courses/ locally designed courses
- ◆ Explain importance of “accommodated only” versus “partially modified”
- ◆ Make sure all courses are credit courses
- ◆ Encourage taking reduced workload; perhaps suggest to take more than four years to complete diploma
- ◆ Encourage balancing workload each semester
 - ◆ Make sure HS knows that a balanced work load is needed for success
 - ◆ Make sure that this is settled at first meeting with HS

- ◆ Learn what academic prerequisite are needed for career choice
 - ◆ Encourage checking university and College Web sites for pre-requisites
 - ◆ Encourage using “Pathways to Student Success”, DDSB & DCDSB

- ◆ Take part in pre-entrance week at your high school if it is offered
 - ◆ Encourage to check the board web site for dates
 - ◆ Encourage to check if School board has a Transition for students conference (invitation may be required for students)

- ◆ Discourage closing any doors

Encourage student to be realistic, but to recognize their potential and to dare to dream

4. Plan towards post-secondary education with son/daughter

Student's list

- ◆ Challenge yourself
- ◆ Access Student Support Room regularly to apply self-advocacy skills
- ◆ Confirm all your courses are credit courses
 - ◆ Some modification may be allowed but principal has last word if the credit is given
- ◆ Schedule Transition Meetings with SERT/Program Support, Guidance Teacher and Co-op Teacher
- ◆ Consider Co-op courses
- ◆ Check OYAP (Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program), Universities & Colleges Website: check expectations etc.
- ◆ Check all requirements to enter the program of your choice whether it is college, Universities or apprenticeship

- ◆ Check documentation required for student with LD at post secondary institutions
 - Psycho-educational should not be older than 3 – 5 years – check university/College web site for details
 - Ensure that your psycho-educational assessment includes all the tests & recommendations required by the various institution

- ◆ Check accommodations/Services offered at institutions your apply to
 - Contact college/university for details early on

- ◆ Check if institutions are offering Transition Courses for students with LD during summer time
 - Make sure to register early on

- ◆ Make appointment with student services/ LD strategist at the institution you are enrolled in
 - All universities & Colleges have funding from the Ontario Government for a Learning Strategist and an Assistive Technology Strategist

- ◆ Check OSAP – bursaries for assistive technology available

- ◆ Check Bursaries/Scholarships offered for students with LD

Be realistic - recognize your potential – dare to dream

5. Definitions/Resources

Definitions

Learned Helplessness: “student has no confidence in his/her ability as well as a sense of not having any control over their own life”

Self-efficacy: “Judgment of capability to perform a task or engage in an activity”

Self-advocacy: “Ability to articulate one’s strength, challenges and necessary support and to fight to receive those necessary supports.”

Accommodation: “Are differentiated or alternative approaches to receiving information, assignment completion and/or evaluation”. Essential requirements of the course have to be accomplished. Work is done at Grade level.

Modification: Curriculum requirements are changed. Work may be done at a different grade level. At High School – credit may not be given. Modifications are not allowed at post-secondary level.

Web sites

- ◆ **The following web sites are designed for Youth:**

www.youth2youth.ca

The Learning Disabilities Association of Canada designed this web site for youth with learning disabilities to help them transition from the school to the workplace and post-secondary education. It is a friendly meeting place for youth to share experiences and learn best practices for dealing with life at the post-secondary institution or workplace. It is full valuable resource

www.neads.ca National Educational Association of Disabled Students encourages the self-empowerment of post-secondary students with disabilities and advocates for increased accessibility at all levels and equal access to college or university education. The Association provides information on services and programs for students with disabilities nationwide publishes a regular newsletter.

Google CCDI--College Committee on Disability Issues. Important documents created by CCDI:

- ◆ “Guidelines to Learning Disability Documentation and Services Provided”; May 2005
 - ◆ “LD Resource Guide: Accommodations, Learning Strategies, Assistive Technology and Universal Design for Instruction”; July 2008
 - ◆ List of College transition program with contact information
- ◆ **The following web sites are valuable for students, teachers and parents alike:**

www.coe.jmu.edu/learningtoolbox

web site designed by the James Madison University by the authors of “Academic Success Strategies for Adolescents with LD & ADHD”. It is the online presentation of the strategies discussed in the book. They designed the “Active Learner Approach”

www.ldao.ca

The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario has transition information for High School students on their web site

www.SchwabLearning.org great resource

www.edu.gov.on.ca

Ministry of Education web site with lots of information about your rights, IEPs, special education and transition

www.ocup.org

Ontario Curriculum Unit Planner Site. Click on Resources, click on Teacher Companion and finally click on Special Education Planner. Note of caution: Accommodations and Modifications are not listed separately.

Books/ DVDs

Minskoff, Esther & Allsopp, David “Academic Success Strategies for Adolescents with Learning Disabilities & ADHD” published by Brookes Publishing
The book is based on the “Active Learner Approach”. The web site www.coe.jmu.edu/learningtoolbox gives on line presentations of the strategies introduced in the book

Richards, Regina G. “The Source for Learning and Memory Strategies” published by Lingui Systems, Memory and Learning strategies

Rose, David H. & Meyer, Anne “Teaching Every Student in the Digital Age – Universal Design for Learning” published by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Clayton, Jeff “SOAR, Some Assembly Required”, 3 book about self advocacy

Ministry of Education and Training:

“IEP Guide” 2006

“Transition Guide” 2002

Howard Eaton & Leslie Coull “Transition to High School for Students with Learning Disabilities” DVD

Howard Eaton & Leslie Coull “Transition to Post Secondary for Students with Learning Disabilities”. DVD