

Transition from Secondary School to Work

Young People with an Autism Spectrum Disorder

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Working in the West***

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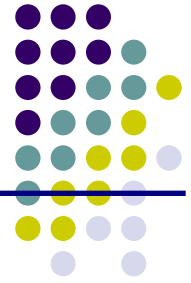


Transition

- A coordinated set of activities promoting movement from school to post school activities including:
Post Secondary education, Vocational training, Employment, Independent Living, Adult Services, Community Participation; successful personal and social relationships.
- The means to attaining goals for the student with **Autism**
- Student Participation in planning and coordination of school programs, adult agencies and community supports
- The individual's needs, interests, strengths, preferences are taken into account
- This should begin no later than age 14

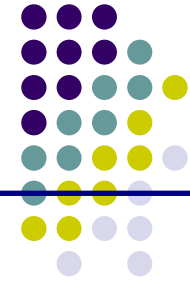


Autism Spectrum Disorder



- **Pervasive Developmental Disorders**
- **meaning:** affects all areas of a person's life
Disordered development rather than a delay in development.
- **Autistic disorder**
- **PDD-NOS:** atypical autism
- **Asperger syndrome:** lack delay in language or cognitive development

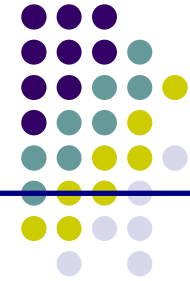
The Student with an ASD



- ***Impairment in social interaction***
 - manifested by impaired non verbal behaviour, lack of spontaneous sharing, lack of socio emotional reciprocity and /or failure to develop peer relationships.
- ***Impairment in communication***
 - delay or lack of development of spoken language and gestures; impaired ability to initiate or maintain conversation; repetitive and idiosyncratic use of language and /or lack of pretend play.
- ***Restrictive repertoire of activities and interests***
 - preoccupation with restricted patterns of interest, inflexible adherence to routines, repetitive movements, and/ or preoccupation with parts of objects.
- **A Spectrum**



Cognitive Processing Peculiarities of Autism



- **Weak Central Coherence** Difficulty with:
 - Drawing together diverse information to construct higher level meaning; making sense of situations and events; understanding change; sequencing information; focussing on details ;applying knowledge
- **Impaired Executive Function** The ability to maintain an appropriate problem solving set to attain a goal.
 - (e.g.Can be impulsive, will not think through the steps unassisted)
- **Theory of Mind**
 - **Understanding** : The mental state, intentions, needs, beliefs, feelings of another person. Realising that others may think differently to ourselves. Can be very intraspective.



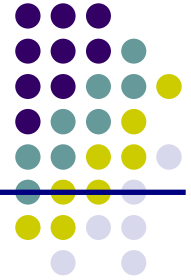
Why Educators Plan for Transition early for Students with an ASD

To assist the student with Autism (and their family) to:

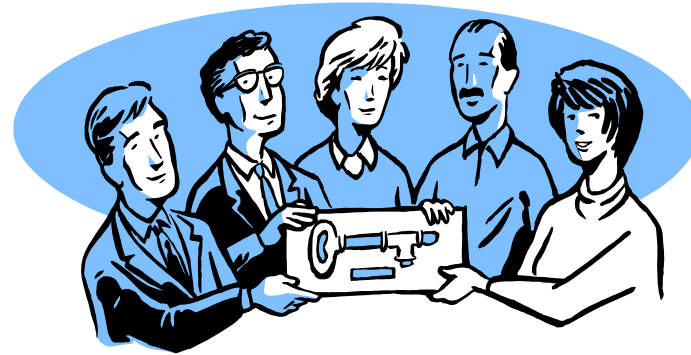
- Set post school goals
- Improve post school outcomes
- Prepare for Employment
- Enhance their resilience and self determination
- Organize client centered services
- Engage practical supports
- Plan for post school education/ training
- Allow for more job trials
- Engagement with Specific Employment services
- Prepare for a high quality adult life



Who should be involved?



- The students and their family
- Secondary school teachers and assistants
- Specialist teaching staff
- Career Advisor/VET coordinator
- Job providers
- Post School Options (DSC)
- Post school education providers
- Employers and/or trainers
- Disability Employment Services



ITP Planning Timeline

- **11 – 14 yrs:** IEP includes: social and communication skills, self help, functional academic skills
- **By 14 yrs:** **Begin a Transition Plan as part of the IEP process. Look at exit options to assist goal attainment.**
- **No later than 16:** Identify job interests and abilities. Job sampling and training. Identify community services that provide job training and placement. Applications to adult service agencies. Connect with Disability Employment Services
- **16 to 17 yrs** **Contact adult service programs including: colleges, universities, technical schools, TAFE, Centrelink, residential or independent living services, recreation and leisure groups, medical services**
- **17 to 18 yrs** Visit post secondary education providers, disability services officers, job providers

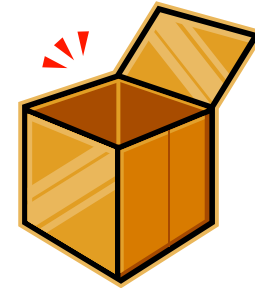
Ref: Test, Aspel and Everson 2006

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Student: Active involvement in ITP process**
- Understanding of ASD and how it may affect their learning, employment options and daily living needs
- Know interests and abilities
- Establish realistic goals : prepared for post school experience
- Continued development of social skills;
- Learn where and how to gain support;
- Be aware of rights and responsibilities;
- Engage in planning, self advocate.
- **Parent:**
- Involvement in planning,
- Assist son/daughter with interest and abilities development and to develop realistic goals;
- Maintain ongoing personal file;
- Encourage independence;
- Collaborate with secondary and post secondary providers.



Roles and Responsibilities



- **School:** drive the transition process including
- Appropriate course selection, resources, services;
- Assist the student to develop appropriate social, interpersonal, academic and self advocacy skills;
- Foster independence; organization;
- Encourage the student to develop extra curricular interests and participate in community activities;
- Organize work placement, liaise with job agencies
- Collaborate with parents and post secondary agencies
- **Agencies/ service providers:** inform and link parents and schools to post secondary options and services and employment opportunities.
- Interagency collaboration

Interagency Collaboration

- **There should be a bridge from school to post school options.**
- Interagency and school collaboration is required to build the bridge.
- Critical teaching staff: Special needs teacher, curriculum deputy
- Agency support staff
- Community based service providers
- VET coordinators
- Guidance counsellors
- Potential Employers
- TAFE or University disability service coordinators
- Disability Employment Service staff
- Disability Service agency



What is Best Practice ?



- Develop a Transition plan Early
- Collaborative Consultation (student, parent, school, agencies)
- **Connections with Local and Federal transition initiatives**
- Career and Vocational guidance, planning, training
- **Social Skills and Interpersonal skills training**
- Resiliency, self confidence, disclosure, self advocacy
- **Community adjustment and participation program**
- Recreation and leisure program including social skills
- Independent living skills program
- **Time management and travel**
- Self management and independence instruction
- **Job related functional academic program**
- Links to post secondary education and/ or employment
- **Referral to adult agencies before school completion**
- **Work experience, SWL, traineeships, apprenticeships**

Goal Setting for the person with ASD

- What do I want to do when I finish school?
 - What are my career interests?
 - Are there areas that need work in order to achieve this goal?
 - Do I need further education?
 - What are my strengths and abilities which may assist me to achieve my goals?
 - What are my social goals?
 - The leisure activities I wish to participate in are...?
 - Where will I live?
 - What supports do I already have?
 - What supports do I need to organize?
 - Are there Resources available?
 - Who can assist with employment and training?
 - How do I access financial assistance?
-
- **Post school vision must be understood for planning to be appropriate**



Recommended Curriculum for Transitioning Students with an ASD to better prepare them for employment

- **Life Skills/ Daily Living skills:**

Managing money, maintaining a living environment, personal health, hygiene and dress, personal safety, buying preparing and consuming food.

Career Education:

Exploring occupational possibilities, seeking, maintaining employment, alternatives to employment, numeracy and literacy at work, work experience, appropriate work habits, socialization and behaviour

- **Leisure and recreation:**

Mobility and travel, access information, time management, develop social network, identify rules and regulations; teams, others and the environment, vacation planning

- **Self Determination:** strengths, abilities, talents, self advocacy, aspirations

- **Personal/ Social skills:** interpersonal skills, friends, relationships, self confidence



Thoughts on Career Education

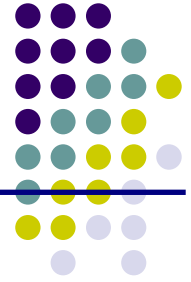
- **Disability Discrimination ACT 1992** meant great change for people with a disability.
- **However there are still a large number of people with a disability who are unemployed or under employed. (HREOC 2006)**
- **Employment means: earning money, sense of accomplishment, self worth, developing an identity, gaining a social network. (ETTE 2002)**
- **Young people with Autism should have a fulfilling and inclusive life in the community**
- **Schools must work intelligently and collaboratively with possible employers and employment services prior to the students graduating to ensure successful transition from School to Work**



Examples of School based and Community based employment preparation strategies relevant for students with an ASD:

- **Career education curricula**
 - **Integration of employment and academic skills**
 - **Transition assessment and planning**
 - **School based enterprise**
 - **On-campus jobs**
 - **Job Clubs**
 - **Vocational Education**
 - **Work Place Learning**
 - **Job Shadowing**
 - **Traineeships and apprenticeships**
 - **Volunteering**
 - **Community based work**
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- REF: TEST et al 2006. Brolin D.E. and Lloyd R.J. 2004 ED Support Post Compulsory Schooling DETWA 1995

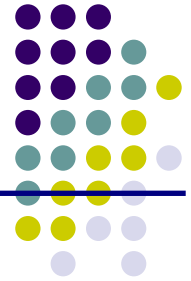
Finding Work for the student with an ASD



- Conduct functional vocational assessment
- Identifying interests, preferences, abilities and aptitudes
- Written, visual and hands on skills
- Attend career expos and job tours
- Community asset mapping
- Job shadowing
- Supported work experience/ job coach
- Understand the employer



Success in the work place for the person with ASD



- Scripts
- Role play/ practice
- Video of self
- Work Rules
- Step by Step Instructions
- Cues: verbal, touch, visual
- Scaling: 1 to 10, thermometer,
- Compliments: third party
- Mirroring: voice, body, task
- Reflection: getting feedback



Suitable employment for the person with Autism

LOW risk of FAILURE

- Accountant, statistician
- Musician
- Town planner
- Gardener, farmer, labourer
- Navigator and route planner
- Artist, photographer
- Appliance engineer
- Cleaner
- Academic researcher
- Tradesperson
- Librarian
- Cook
- Information technology
- Laboratory technician
- Recycling plant

HIGH risk of FAILURE

- Customer facing roles
- Armed forces
- Police
- Salesperson
- Secondary school teacher
- Waiter or waitress
- Nightclub or bar worker
- Pilot
- Ambulance driver
- Nurse
- Manager
- Receptionist
- Counsellor
- Cashier
- Short order cook

- REF: Edmonds G. and Beardon L. Eds Asperger Syndrome and Employment 2008
- Preparing for Life Dr Jed Baker Future Horizons Inc 2005

Specific Life Skill Development for employment

- **Personal Management:** Examples: making informed choices; accessing information; hygiene; protective behaviours, financial management, health, diet
- **Social or Community Competence:** Examples: rules and regulations, work behaviour, travel and behaviour on public transport, social networks, care of the environment, relationships with work colleagues
- **Independent Living Skills:** Examples: use of work facilities, telephone or mobile phone use, time management at work
- **Maintaining links with service providers:** Examples; Centre Link, DSC, community support agencies, possible employers, TAFE, Uni, keeping links with friends while working.
- **Specific Employment skills:** Examples: personal presentation, safety at work; time management; industry awareness; social behaviour at work vs behaviour at home, making informed choices, working in a team...

Conclusion



- **What should good transition methods do for the person with an ASD?**
- Prepare them for a high quality adult life
- Organise person centred and support services
- Up-skill education providers to promote transition
- Employ best practice models
- Improve post school outcomes
- Give the young person an understanding of their talents and interests
- Assist the young person to develop interpersonal skills
- Assist the young person to manage anxiety and stress
- Foster independence and good personal management
- Enhance community participation and independent living
- Improve self determination

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