

Plotting Your Course:

A Guide to Using the MAPS Process for Planning Inclusive Opportunities and Facilitating Transitions



It is our desire to provide individuals with disabilities and their families the tools necessary to achieve greater independence and interdependence while at the same time respecting their rights and preferences. The following MAPS toolkit is intended to serve both as a reference for individuals already acquainted with Person centered Planning (PCP), and as a starting point for individuals new to Person centered Planning. This toolkit has been designed to be used by individuals with disabilities, families, school staff and agency personnel.

This manual may be reproduced by non-profit or government agencies and free electronic copies are available on the website of the New Jersey Coalition for Inclusive Education (NJCIE) at www.NJCIE.org. For those who wish to reproduce for other than photocopy costs or training purposes, please seek permission from NJCIE. For more information, please contact NJCIE at 732-613-0400 or via email at NJCIE@NJCIE.net

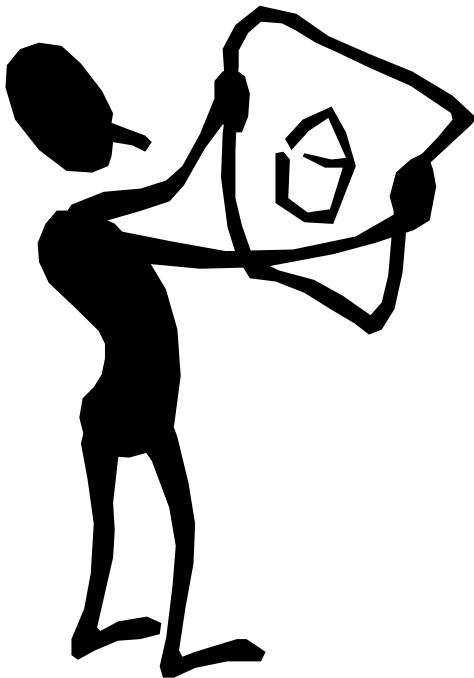
Developed as part of the *Inclusion Works!* project funded in part by a grant to NJCIE under Contract # 10ML3C from the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities, PO Box 700, Trenton, NJ 08625-0700.

Table of Contents

	Page
Section One: <i>Where to Begin with Person Centered Planning</i>	
Person Centered Planning Introduction and Background.....	5
Popular Person Centered Planning Tools.....	6
Section Two: <i>Using the MAPS Person Centered Planning Process</i>	
MAPS Overview.....	10
The MAPS Questions.....	11
Section Three: <i>Addressing Barriers to the MAPS Process</i>	
Tips for MAPS Facilitators.....	13
Establishing MAPS Ground Rules and Dealing with Challenging Participants.....	14
Person Centered Planning: Myths, Misconceptions and Misunderstandings.....	15
Section Four: <i>From MAPS to IEPs and Transition Plans</i>	
The Role of MAPS in IEP Development.....	19
Using MAPS in Transition Planning.....	20
Section Five: <i>MAPS Development Tools</i>	
MAPS Person Centered Planning Action Steps Handout for Families.....	22
MAPping the Way to Success Timeline Development Worksheet.....	24
MAPS Pre-Meeting Family Worksheet.....	25
Preparing for Your MAPS: MAPS Planning Worksheet for Students.....	29
MAPS Student Interview.....	33
Positive Student Profile Input Sheet for Staff.....	35
Ideas for Supporting Goals and Dreams—Staff Worksheet.....	36
Appendix A: Examples of Person Centered Plans Created Using MAPS.....	37
Appendix B: Helpful Websites.....	49
Appendix C: Additional Resources Organized by Subject.....	52
Appendix D: References.....	67

Section One:

Where to Begin with Person Centered Planning



Where to Begin with Person Centered Planning: Introduction and Background

As families, schools, and other organizations have taken more steps to fully integrate individuals with disabilities into the community, families and educators have worked to find ways to streamline this process. Person centered planning is a strength-based technique that serves as a mechanism for securing the commitment of a collaborative team of individuals in supporting a focus person and his/her family through this process. In general, person centered planning uses graphic recordings (usually words, pictures, symbols on chart paper) and group facilitation techniques to guide the team. A facilitator is responsible for setting the agenda, assessing equal opportunities for all to participate, handling conflict when necessary, and maintaining the group's focus.

Person centered planning was initially developed as a way of enabling people with disabilities to move out of segregated places (schools, hospitals, institutions) into neighborhood schools and their community. Part of the idea behind person centered planning was to move away from a “*systems*-centered” way of planning for the future (often based on stereotypes about persons with disabilities that may offer a limited number of segregated program options) in favor of a “*person centered*” approach that crafts an individualized plan emphasizing dreams and meaningful experiences.

Today the term “person centered planning” is used to refer to a number of different styles of planning that share fundamental values. Each person centered planning method/style has its own unique strategies for gathering information, but all share a set of common steps that include:

- Assembling a group of people,
- Developing a personal profile,
- Developing a vision for the future,
- Solving problems and creating an action plan, and
- Creating connections.

Some of the leaders in the development of person centered planning include Beth Mount, John O'Brien, and Connie O'Brien. Other leaders include Michael Smull and Susan Burke-Harrison, who developed a particular style of person centered planning called Essential Lifestyle Planning (ELP). ELP was initially designed for people with challenging behavior, but has been used in many applications. Marsha Forest and Jack Pearpoint were central in developing MAPS, which was initially used with planning for inclusion for students within a school setting. They have also developed a style of planning called Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (PATH). A list and additional information about where to find these and other popular person centered planning tools can be found in the next section of this manual.

Popular Person Centered Planning Tools

The selection of the person centered planning tool or method which might work best depends on the individuals and families involved. Brief descriptions of several popular methods follow, accompanied by additional resources for finding out more about that particular method.

McGill Action Planning Systems also known as Making Action Plans (MAPS):

Through a series of questions, individuals and organizations using MAPS help the focus person construct a personal history or life story based on personal milestones. After getting to know the focus person better and exploring his dreams for the future, the team begins to build a plan to move in the direction of the individual's dreams. In addition, Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (PATH) (Pearpoint, O'Brien, & Forest, 1993) and Circle of Friends (Perske, 1988) are tools that can enhance the effectiveness and versatility of MAPS.

MAPS Resources

Common Sense Tools: MAPS and CIRCLES for Inclusive Education by Marsha Forest & Jack Pearpoint. <http://www.inclusion.com/artcommonsensetools.html>

Making Action Plans: Student Centered Action Transition Planning, Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities, Rhode Island College (2001). <http://www.ric.edu/sherlockcenter/publications/MAPS.pdf>

Use of the MAPS Process, University of Kansas, Circle of Inclusion Project (2002). <http://www.circleofinclusion.org/english/pim/seven/maps.html>

MAPS: Making Action Plans or McGill Action Planning Systems by David Beukelman Augmentative and Alternative Communication Centers, University of Nebraska. http://aac.unl.edu/dr/b/AAC_Assessment/tsld009.htm

Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (PATH): PATH is a planning tool that has team members start by imagining and then detailing the future to which the focus person aspires. The team then works backward to what they consider should be the first steps towards achieving the future envisioned. This is a results oriented process that has been used to mediate conflicts.

PATH Resources

P.A.T.H. (Planning Alternative Tomorrows of Hope), Adult Transition Planning Provincial Integration Support Program British Columbia. <http://www.pisp.ca/strategies/strategies61.pdf>

Experiencing PATH: Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope by Ontario Adult Autism Research and Support Network. <http://www.ont-autism.uoguelph.ca/PATH-jan05.pdf>

Path: Planning Possible Positive Futures by Jack Pearpoint, John O'Brien, & Marsha Forest Inclusion Network, Inclusion Press. <http://www.inclusion.com/bkpathworkbook.html>

PATH: A Workbook for Planning Positive Possible Futures by Jack Pearpoint, John O'Brien & Marsha Forest, Inclusion Press, 24 Thome Cres., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6H 2S5.

Circle of Friends: Circle of Friends is an activity completed with students to discuss the importance of friendships and relationships in their lives and generate ideas for ways in which they

can be friends with peers who have disabilities. It was developed to serve as a peer-building process for students with disabilities, but circles also can be developed for students without disabilities who are having difficulty making friends and students who are new to the school or community. Circle activities can even be performed for an entire class to build a classroom community and to facilitate understanding of how friendships impact people.

Circle of Friends Resources

The Friendship Circle Blog contains resources on this topic for educators and parents:

<http://www.friendshipcircle.org/blog/2012/01/11/circle-of-friends-a-type-of-person-centered-planning/>

Forest, M. & Lusthaus, E. (1989). *Promoting educational equality for all students: Circles and Maps*.

Perske, R. (1988) *Circles of Friends*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Essential Lifestyle Planning (ELP): ELP is a guided process designed to help an individual discover and attain what matters most to them and identify what supports might be needed. Discussions related to health and safety are an integral part of this process. The discoveries made during this guided process are described so that they are understood by all participants including the focus person and his or her family.

ELP Resources

The Learning Community for Person Centered Planning is an organization that helps individuals develop person centered plans and trains interested people in how to write plans and develop the skills needed to implement them. They also have programs designed to support organizations that want to use person centered practices. Their website has links to resources, a trainers' network, and a reading room with resources and more information, including information on ELP.

<http://www.learningcommunity.us>

Essential Lifestyle Planning Forms, available from Delaware Health and Social Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities Services. <http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/ddds/elpforms.html>

Listen to Me! USARC/PACE, 410 Mason Suite 105, Vacaville, CA 95688.

Personal Futures Planning (PFP): PFP employs an on-going process in which planning teams replace system-centered methods with person centered methods. This process is meant to encourage the focus person and those working with them to become aware of the potential for the focus person to become an integral, contributing member of the community.

PFP Resources

A Brief Guide to Personal Futures Planning: Organizing Your Community to Envision and Build a Desirable Future with You by Kate Moss and David Wiley, Texas Deafblind Outreach, Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (2003). <http://www.tsbvi.edu/attachments/other/pcp-manual.pdf>

Personal Futures Planning: A Student Driven Process by Jonathan Drake, University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability.

http://www.iod.unh.edu/pdf/TransitionSeries2_PersonalFuturesPlan_JDrake.pdf

Self-Advocacy and Personal Futures Planning, Connecticut State, Department of Education/Bureau of Special Education Transition Task Force/Transition Training Manual.

<http://www.ct.gov/brs/lib/brs/pdfs/guidepostdocs/SELFAdvocacyAndPersonalFuturePlanning.pdf>

Person Centered Planning: Finding Directions for Change Using Personal Futures Planning, by Beth Mount, Graphic Futures, Inc., 25 W. 81st St. #16-B, New York, NY 10024.

Capacity Works: Finding Windows for Change Using Personal Futures Planning, by Beth Mount Communitas, Inc., The Community Place, 730 Main St., Manchester, CT 06040.

A Workbook for Your Personal Passport. Allen, Shea & Associates, 1040 Main St., Suite 200B, Napa, CA 94559.

Section Two:

Using the MAPS Person Centered Planning Process



McGill Action Planning System (MAPS) Overview

One example of a person centered planning tool that has emerged as particularly effective in planning inclusive opportunities is the McGill Action Planning System (MAPS). MAPS is a strategy that was developed by Marsha Forest, Jack Pearpoint, Judith Snow, Evelyn Lusthaus, and the staff at the Center for Integrated Education in Canada. In recent years, researchers at various universities across the country have been encouraging school districts to try MAPS.

MAPS is a person centered planning process that brings together the key players in a focus person's life to identify a "roadmap" for working toward and achieving the dreams and goals of this focus person and his/her family (Forest & Lusthaus, 1989; Vandercook et al., 1989). The MAPS process is called person centered planning because the emphasis is on understanding and supporting the focus person being "mapped". However, this person doesn't just participate in person centered planning, he or she controls it.

The MAPS process does not ignore disability; it simply shifts the emphasis to a search for capacity in the person, among friends and family, in the community, and among service workers. This process encourages the focus person to set their own future goals and dreams while simultaneously encouraging family, friends and other team members to support him or her in achieving those goals and dreams. MAPS also adheres to the following central tenets:

- Quality education is a right, not a privilege.
- All students belong in the general education classroom of their neighborhood school.
- General education teachers can teach all children, including those with disabilities and/or more complex needs.
- Necessary supports will be provided when needed and creative alternatives will be made available for populations who do not succeed in typical ways.

MAPS has an established framework of questions that address the focus person's history, identity, strengths, gifts, and the nightmares and dreams of the focus person and his/her family. The MAPS process identifies where that focus person currently is, what the person's goals are, and how the team will work together to help this person reach the goals. This information is then used to develop action steps for achieving the dreams and avoiding the nightmares. MAPS is different from some other planning tools because participants must highlight what the focus person *can* do, instead of dwelling on his or her weakness.

To use the MAPS process, a team of key people in the focus student's life gather and talk in one, two, or three sessions. In total, the sessions may take about three hours and it is preferable to split that time up if the planning is for a very young child. Among the people participating are the student, the student's parents, the classroom teachers (both regular and special education), and other school professionals such as counselors, therapists, or the school principal. Another person acts as the group's leader or facilitator, and keeps the group on task. The group is completed with a couple of the student's peers, who may be the most important component in the student's full participation at school, and other members of the student's family such as siblings or grandparents.

Persons attending the MAPS session(s) should come with the understanding that they are committing to assisting the focus person in the planning of their life. Participants should be committed to the process and be willing to step outside their current role to truly participate.

The MAPS Session(s): Questions Posed

First, the family members present answer the question **"What is the individual's history?"** Then, each of the people present at the MAPS session will focus on the remaining questions that are included in the MAPS process:

➤ **What are the focus person's dreams and goals for the future?**

As participants answer this question, they are encouraged to think about what they think the focus person wants. This is a question of "vision," so the people answering it shouldn't be bogged down with present-day realities. The team members should do some dreaming here and verbalize those dreams. If enough people share their dreams, they can work toward making those dreams a reality.

➤ **What are the nightmares?**

Parents sometimes find this particularly hard to answer, for no parent likes to think of their child facing difficulties. But if the members of the group can verbalize their nightmares and fears, they will have taken an important step in becoming committed to making sure this nightmare never occurs.

➤ **Who is the focus person?**

Everyone talks about what comes to their mind when they think of the focus person and they express this in a few words. Everyone takes a turn at the description; then, the people continue taking this idea around the circle until no one has anything else to add. People in the group can pass on their turn if they can't think of anything, but they are encouraged to try when it is their turn again. Then, when the list is completed, particular people in the group, such as family members, are asked to identify what they believe are three especially important descriptors.

➤ **What are the focus person's gifts?**

The people in the circle might look back on the ways they have described the student in answering the previous question. The participants are asked to focus on what they believe the focus person can do, instead of, as happens so often, what he/she cannot do.

➤ **What are the focus person's needs?**

The parents' answers to this question might vary considerably from those of the focus person's peers or teachers. When the list has been completed, the group then decides which of the needs are "top priority" or demand immediate attention.

➤ **What would an ideal day at school be like for the focus person? (optional question for focus persons who are also students)**

Some MAPS groups find it helpful to answer this question by outlining a typical school day for other children the student's age who do not have disabilities. The team might think about how the needs outlined before could be met at school. After that, the team thinks about the kinds of help a student would need to truly achieve inclusion at school.

➤ **What is the Plan of Action (to achieve the dreams and avoid the nightmares)?**

The participants then use the answers to the previous questions to craft a plan of action. This plan will include the steps necessary to achieve the dreams/goals and also to avoid the nightmares/fears. Action plans also should identify the circle of support that will help implement this plan. The circle of support refers to a group of people who are close to the focus individual, are committed to assisting this person in the planning of his/her life and are invested in helping carry out that plan.

Section Three:

Addressing Barriers to the MAPS Process

Tips for MAPS Facilitators

A MAPS facilitator is a person who has been trained to help organize and facilitate the person centered planning process. Ideally, the facilitator should be a person *other than* the focus person's case manager or support coordinator. The facilitator could be a family member, school staff member, a service provider or a consultant. The important thing is that the individual chosen should be a good listener willing to work diligently and creatively to help the focus person give shape to his or her dreams and discover capacities that he or she has.

MAPS facilitators are responsible for making sure that all participants are heard. However, this does *not* mean that the facilitator should be making decisions for the focus person or any other participant. The role of the facilitator is to coordinate the discussion during the MAPS sessions. This involves not only keeping the process on track, but also insuring that all information is graphically recorded. This usually involves using markers to record notes on chart paper. Facilitators should also plan to establish a focal point where all participants can see the MAPS being created.

Because the MAPS process is quite time intensive, some teams may be hesitant about investing the time that this process requires. Facilitators can make the process as effective and efficient as possible by preparing certain items in advance. Often, the facilitator, focus person and caregivers have an introductory meeting to become familiar with one another and make decisions about things like who should be invited and what planning method might work best (i.e., MAPS, PATH, ELP, etc.). for the individual and his or her family. To save actual meeting time, when meeting with families prior to the actual MAPS session(s) facilitators can also help them begin to develop a personal profile with the focus person. The positive profile can be started before the actual MAPS meeting, then reviewed and refined at the meeting. A blank template for a positive profile as well as an example of a student's positive profile can be found later in this manual.

Although chart paper and markers will most likely be used during the MAPS session to record both words and graphics that represent the focus student and their story, it may also be helpful to review information from the focus student's personal profile by putting this information into power point slides that can be projected on a wall or screen. To save time transcribing information charts recorded in real time during the meeting can be photographed with these digital photos e-mailed to participants so that all members have copies of the original meeting notes.

It is important to note that while some facilitators stay involved, families are ultimately responsible for making sure plans move forward and are implemented. Therefore, it is important that facilitators be able to enlist participants to provide an adequate and ongoing circle of support around the focus person.

Establishing MAPS Ground Rules and Dealing with Challenging Participants

The facilitator is responsible for setting “ground rules” and making sure they are followed so that all feel comfortable in participating. These ground rules are used to frame the process so that people contribute positively and productively. They also give power to the facilitator and student to keep the process moving forward and keep the “logistics” in order (i.e.. starting/ ending on time).

MAPS ground rules should be formed with the focus person and family ahead of time. Examples of ground rules might include the following:

- The focus person has the first opportunity to respond at each step of the MAP, followed by parents and other family members. Then other team members can respond in any order.
- All team members’ ideas are important and will be written down. Participants can ask the recorder to add or change wording or delete information if they prefer that it not be recorded.
- Team members have the right to pass or not discuss something.
- MAPS are meant to be built on strengths, so potentially negative comments must be reframed to focus on what is most positive.
- Team members will wait until the final step of the MAP to begin to evaluate the merit of specific ideas. It is acceptable to record ideas that appear to be in conflict with one another. To discuss the merits of any one idea will rob the MAP of its forward momentum and student focus.

Proactively establishing ground rules can assist the facilitator in successfully dealing with challenging participants. At the beginning of each meeting, it is important for the facilitator to review the ground rules with the participants. Facilitators may also find it helpful to do a process check at the end of the meeting to review the team’s adherence to these ground rules. It is also okay to take a “time out” during a MAPS session to discuss group problems and reestablish ground rules or guidelines.

If a participant is disrupting the process, attempt to deal directly with the offending member in a way that does not disrupt the meeting, i.e., before or after the meeting. Only when other strategies have failed should a facilitator deal directly with the seriously offending member in the presence of the rest of the team.

Person Centered Planning: Myths, Misconceptions and Misunderstandings

By Angela Novak Amado, Ph.D.; printed in the *Arc-Minnesota Newsletter*, 1998

As part of the Performance-Based Contracting demonstration project, the University of Minnesota's Institute on Community Integration is conducting training about Person centered Planning, a family of approaches used instead of or in addition to more traditional interdisciplinary planning. Person centered Planning focuses on a person's gifts, capacities, and personal dreams, and utilizes a circle of committed friends, family, and community members to help realize those dreams and assist people with disabilities in moving toward full citizenship.

As facilitators are strengthening their skills through participation in the training program, we are learning with each other, with those who developed these approaches, and with communities in other states where such approaches are used. In this article, some of the typical misconceptions about Person centered Planning are described. These misconceptions and misunderstandings are barriers to the full power of the process for organizational and community change.

Misconception 1: "We're already doing it."

Since 1985, there has been training in Minnesota on Person centered Planning, with several projects funded by the Minnesota Governor's Planning Council as well as other initiatives. Many people have attended anything from one-hour sessions to year-long facilitator training programs.

Several different concepts have become incorporated into both formal planning processes and other meetings. Persons who have used ideas based upon these approaches and principles, as well as people who have attended little or no training, sometimes say, "We're already doing Person centered Planning," or "We've been doing it for years." Almost everyone these days claim they're doing it. These beliefs can interfere with expansion of the quality and depth of the process, as well as interfering with more significant change for persons with disabilities, the organizations, which support them, and the communities in which they live.

Part of the difficulty is that people use the term "Person centered Planning" to refer to a large range of different planning practices. When someone says, "We're doing Person centered Planning," it's hard to say exactly what is happening. In addition, this term is used when people are implementing some but not all of the processes that make Person centered Planning unique. Some people have said they do "Person centered Planning" if the person with disabilities attends the meeting. Other people think it means asking the person what they want, and then trying to fulfill on their desires. Still others think it means listing the person's strengths, or talking about positive things. The scope of this type of planning, as envisioned by the people who designed it in the early 1980's, is much larger. In addition, all Person centered Planning approaches are characterized by five elements that have been identified as common and fundamental to all approaches:

- The person at the focus of the planning and those who love the person are the primary authorities on the person's life direction. The essential questions are "Who is this person?" and "What community opportunities will enable this person to pursue his or her interests in a positive way?"
- Person centered Planning aims to change common patterns of community life. It stimulates community hospitality and enlists community members in assisting focus people to define and work toward a desirable future. It helps create positive community roles for people with disabilities.
- Person centered Planning requires learning through shared, collaborative action, and fundamentally challenges practices that separate people and perpetuate controlling relationships.
- Honest Person centered Planning can only come from respect for the dignity and completeness of the focus person (as he/she is).
- Assisting people to define and pursue a desirable future tests one's clarity, commitment and courage.

Instead of stating "we're already doing it," people who have worked most closely with person centered processes are more likely to say, "This is what we're seeing...", "This is what we're learning right now...", "What we're currently struggling with is..." Being person centered is not a destination or

a final state that one can achieve; it is not similar to being male, a brunette, or licensed. As Marsha Forest, Pearpoint and Snow have noted, “When people say to us ‘we tried it and it didn’t work,’ we know they missed the point. It is like saying “I did life and it didn’t work.”

Misconception 2: Being “person centered” means asking the person “What do you want?”

“Listening to a person” means much more than paying attention to the words given in response to the question “What do you want?” Developers of the Person centered Planning methods have called this expanded listening: “listening beneath the surface,” listening to the unsaid,” and “listening with a third ear.” Responses to the question “What do you want?” from a person labeled as having a developmental disability, who has lived much of his/her life with decisions made by others, can be shaped by many things that are unrelated to what the individual really desires. These include: lack of experience, lack of trust, communication limitations, pleasing people in authority, fear, and complacency.

Person centered Planning methods are based on a group of thoughtful, committed people working together to craft ideas that will create a life of meaning, a life of community contribution, a life that makes sense, and a life as a full citizen of the community. Such crafting goes far beyond “what do you want?,” and is just as critical for someone who does not use words to communicate as one who does. It means asking very different questions to assist a group in figuring out what a desirable lifestyle would be, and envisioning what an individual’s life might become.

Misconception 3: Person centered Planning methods are a new and different way to have interdisciplinary team meetings or annuals.

A Person centered Planning approach means that meetings do not look like business as usual, with one agency after another presenting their information and “plans” for the focus person. At a Person Centered Planning gathering, people who love and care about the person work together to design a vision for the individual’s life. Each person who attends speaks as an individual who cares about the person, not as a representative of an agency, and expresses what they can personally do to make the focus individual’s vision a reality.

Very few “Person centered Planning” meetings taking place in Minnesota include anyone other than the focus person, their paid staff, and family. If our goal is to not only create a vision with the focus person, but also effectively support them in making that dream come true, we will need to focus on doing a better job at inviting non-paid community members into the lives of people with disabilities. This includes finding and nurturing the caring of ordinary citizens, inviting them to come to a person’s gatherings and to assist in moving the person’s life forward.

Misconception 4: “Person Centered Planning” is a different kind of planning process that can be undertaken in a vacuum without significant organizational change.

Many, but not all Person centered Planning methods, use colorful wall posters and drawings to help group members stimulate creative thinking, draw upon powerful imagery, promote the generation of ideas outside of traditional service system answers, and assist the understanding of all circle participants. While many facilitators use these approaches in the initial planning, there are hundreds of rolled-up posters sitting unused in closets, car trunks, and basements.

For many individuals, Person centered Planning has to come to mean the substitution of more fun, relaxed, positive meetings for more formal ones. Such meetings have often led to positive outcomes for persons with disabilities—more control and choice in their everyday life, greater participation in the community, and more acquaintances and friends who are not disabled. At the same time, however, the outcome has often looked like nothing more than an improved life inside a typical group home, waiver-funded home, or day training program, with perhaps more brief forays into community life. “Person centered Planning” meetings which have gone on for a number of years look

like more discussions of activities the person might like, rather than examining the larger issues of a person controlling their own life and having a home, housemates, and job best suited to them.

Many features of people's lives still look much the same. People's lives are still controlled by an agency that is supposed to be supporting them to lead the lives they desire. People still live in a "client world" rather than a "citizen's world." Although more people now live in 4-bed homes than 15-bed homes, they still live in buildings owned by others, in places that are not their own, and with roommates they had no choice in selecting. "Going home" means visiting family on weekends or holidays, rather than having a sense of one's own home (indeed, some group home residents have openly indicated they live in the house of the agency director, that the "home" isn't "theirs"). Although more people participate in supported employment, the majority still work in segregated programs, making little money doing work not suited to their interests. Most people in their life, whether called "friends" or not, are people who are paid to be there.

As Beth Mount (1994), one of the developers of Personal Futures Planning, describes the process: "Personal futures planning is much more than a meeting; it is an ongoing process of social change. The effectiveness of a plan depends on a support group of concerned people who make a dream time. The focus of change is moved away from the person with a disability toward change in social roles, responses, and existing organizational structures...Personal futures planning can be a helpful tool when it is used selectively to support long-range change in organizational cultures...However, it can easily become another empty ritual if used as a quick fix without appreciation for the complex tasks of changing environments and creating a context for friendships." (p.97). "Organizational change is an integral part of personal futures planning. *Almost every personal futures plan that is true to the person challenges the existing organizational process and structure in some way.*" (p.100). "The most common breakdown in the futures planning process occurs when people place too much emphasis on the initial meetings and do not value, plan and invest in the ongoing process of follow-up...The first several meetings are powerful...but then comes the hard work of making the ideas a reality and slogging through the details, obstacles, and frustrations of implementation...The most common problem of personal futures planning occurs when the individual planning process is detached from the effort to change existing organizational structures, processes, and cultures." (pp. 102-103).

The process itself can only go so far, and then becomes frustrating if more significant organizational changes are not undertaken. Many Minnesota agencies have or are "bumping up against" these limits, and have the opportunity to undertake resolving these barriers, including inviting the community into people's lives. As this project continues for another year, we'll be working together on addressing possible resolutions.

References

- Forest, M. Pearpoint, J. & Snow, J. (1996). Support Circles: The Heart of the Matter. *Inclusion News*.
- Mount, B. (1994). Benefits and limitations of Personal Futures Planning. In V.H. Bradley, J.W. Ashbaugh, & B.C. Blaney (Eds.), *Creating Individual Supports for People with Developmental Disabilities: a Mandate for Change at Many Levels*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- O'Brien, J. & Lovett, H. (1996). What is Person centered Planning? *Inclusion News*.

Section Four:

From MAPS to IEPs and Transition Plans

From MAPS to IEPs and Transition Plans: The Role of MAPS in IEP Development

Over the years, a number of changes have taken place in the manner in which a student's Individualized Educational Program (IEP) can be developed. Advocates of MAPS believe that the MAPS process and a student's IEP are very much interrelated. While MAPS is not intended to take the place of an IEP, it can be a powerful way of personalizing an IEP so that it sets in motion a process for fully including a student in his or her school or community.

The MAPS process can empower persons with disabilities and their families to assume a greater role in the educational programming and planning process. In traditional, system-centered meetings, the input of the person with a disability is often overshadowed and becomes secondary to the opinions set forth by instructors, counselors, psychologists, and other professionals attending the meeting. However, using MAPS in schools can help students learn to make decisions and take greater responsibility for their education.

The MAPS process can help families, professionals, and peers find ways to fully include the student in their neighborhood school in a classroom with classmates who are the same age. This process can help ensure that the student and his or her peers will have positive learning experiences in that classroom. IEP teams can and should use the information gained from MAPS, along with other assessment information, to develop IEP goals and objectives and to plan students' daily schedules.

The MAPS process is quite time intensive. The team may not want to use this for every IEP meeting, but rather at key transition times such as from infant/toddler services to preschool services, preschool to kindergarten, elementary to middle school, middle school to high school, and/or when transitioning out of high school into post-secondary options. The MAPS process can also provide a structured format that helps with the task of gathering information for a transition plan that is an integral part of the IEP for students age 14 and older.

When using MAPS to facilitate transitions, teams are encouraged to schedule a second planning meeting as the focused intervention phase concludes and a transition is anticipated. When scheduling this follow up meeting, the team should consider new people to invite into the child's circle of support. If the new intervention team has been identified, it may be fruitful to invite them to participate in the meeting.

Using MAPS in Transition Planning: Steps for Making the Vision a Reality

The following steps highlight how the MAPS process can be used to plan a student's transition from school to school, level to level, grade to grade, or other transition.

- Hold MAPS session(s).
- Schedule follow up IEP meeting to review MAPS information.
- Summarize and organize information from the MAPS:
 - Transcribe MAPS charts and Plan of Action.
 - Identify outcomes (long-term vision) and activities (what can go into an IEP to achieve the long-term outcomes/goals?)
- Iron out the details:
 - What will be worked on this year, next, etc.?
 - What types of transition services will be needed?
 - What outside agencies will be needed?
- Transfer information to Transition IEP:
 - Present level of educational performance,
 - Statement of Transition Service Needs,
 - Courses of Study,
 - Statement of Needed Transition Services,
 - Interagency Linkages and Services.

Section Five:

MAPS Development Tools

This section contains forms, templates and other helpful information which a facilitator can use when conducting the MAPS process. These items are provided so that a facilitator can reproduce them and then walk participants through their use.

The section includes the following items:

- *MAPS Person centered Planning Action Steps Handout for Families*
- *MAPping the Way to Success Timeline Development Worksheet*
- *MAPS Pre-Meeting Family Worksheet*
- *Preparing for Your MAPS: MAPS Planning Worksheet for Students*
- *MAPS Student Interview*
- *Positive Student Profile Input Sheet for Staff*
- *Ideas for Supporting Goals and Dreams—Staff Worksheet*

MAPS Person Centered Planning Action Steps (page 1)

As families, schools, and other organizations have taken more steps to fully integrate individuals with disabilities into the community, families and educators have worked to find ways to streamline this process. Person centered planning is a strength-based technique that serves as a mechanism for securing the commitment of a collaborative team of individuals in supporting a focus person and his/her family through this process. One example of a person centered planning tool that has emerged as particularly effective is the McGill Action Planning System (MAPS). MAPS is a strategy that brings together key players in a focus individual's life to create a "roadmap" for collaboratively working toward and achieving dreams and goals of the focus person. MAPS is different from some other planning tools because participants focus on what the student can do instead of dwelling on weakness. MAPS has an established framework of questions that are used to identify where that person currently is, what the goals are, and how the team will work together to help this person reach those goals. This information is then used to develop action steps for achieving the dreams and avoiding the nightmares.

Step One: Identify the Facilitator

MAPS involves the use of graphic recordings (words, pictures, symbols on chart paper) and group facilitation techniques in which a facilitator guides the group through the MAPS process. This facilitator is responsible for setting the agenda, assessing equal opportunities for all to participate, handling conflict when necessary, and maintaining the group's focus. Facilitators must have previous experience and/or training on conducting person centered planning. Facilitator training is offered in many states through school districts or other publicly funded programs. A facilitator also needs to be a good listener who can work creatively to help the group clarify the dreams of the individual and discover the capacities within the individual and within the community that will enable the dream to become a reality. Your facilitator can be a school staff member, service provider, or consultant.

Step Two: Design the Planning Process

An initial meeting to develop the focus child's personal profile usually occurs several days before the actual person centered planning meeting so the participants have time to reflect on what is shared. This meeting usually takes 1-2 hours. Parents/families and the focus child/person will:

- Develop a list of people they want to invite to their person centered planning meeting based on:
 - Knowledge of the focus child and family;
 - Ability to make this process happen;
 - Connection with the family and community; and
 - Connection with school-based service providers, i.e., adult service providers, if appropriate.
- Identify a date, time and location for the initial person centered planning session that will be the most convenient for *everyone* involved, but especially for the focus child and his/her family.
- Discuss any strategies that will increase the participation of the focus child during the session.
- Begin to create the **Positive Profile** for the focus child:
 - Develop a history or personal life story of the focus child by sharing past events in the child's life including critical events, medical issues, major developments, important relationships, etc.
 - The focus child's parents and family will share the largest amount of this information.
 - Describe the quality of the focus child's life by exploring opportunities for social interactions, community participation, opportunities for choice making, etc.
 - Identify the focus child's personal preferences, including interests, likes and dislikes.
 - Include information about areas of strength of the focus child.
- Send all invitees this positive profile of the focus child developed during the planning meeting prior to the person centered planning session.

MAPS Person Centered Planning Action Steps (page 2)

Step Three: Hold the Person Centered Planning Session

First, the personal profile developed by the family (see *step one above*) will be reviewed and participants can make additional comments/observations to be added. Then, each of the participants will focus on the remaining questions that are included in the person centered planning process selected.

The remaining questions for MAPS (McGill Action Planning System) are:

- ***Who is the focus child?*** Everyone talks about what comes to their mind when they think of the focus child, and they express this in a few words. All participants should take a turn offering a positive description. Then, when the list is completed, the focus child's family members are asked to identify what they believe are three especially important descriptors.
- ***What are the focus child's gifts?*** The participants are asked to focus on what they believe the focus child can do, instead of (as happens so often) what he/she cannot do. They might look back on the ways they have described the child in answering the previous question for ideas.
- ***What are the focus child's dreams and goals for the future?*** As participants answer this question, they are encouraged to think about what they think the *focus child* wants. This is a question of not only short term goals but also of dreams and a long term vision. If enough people share the dreams/vision, they can work together toward making them a reality.
- ***What are the nightmares?*** Parents sometimes find this particularly hard to answer, for no parent likes to think of their child facing difficulties. But if the members of the group can verbalize their nightmares and fears, they will have taken an important step in becoming committed to making sure the nightmares never occur.
- ***What are the focus child's needs?*** The parents' answers to this question might vary considerably from those of the focus child's teachers. When the list is completed, the group then decides which of the needs are top priorities in need of immediate attention.
- ***(Optional Question) What would an ideal day at school be like for the focus child?*** Some find it helpful to answer this question by outlining an average school day for a typical child within the classroom, school or placement into which the focus child will be transitioning. After that, the team would think about the kinds of help that the focus child would need to truly achieve this "ideal day" in the receiving school/classroom.
- ***What is the Plan of Action (to achieve the dreams and avoid the nightmares)?*** The participants then use the answers to the previous questions to craft a plan of action. This plan will include the steps necessary to achieve the dreams/goals and also to avoid the nightmares/ fears. Action plans should identify specific strategies and action steps for implementing the vision as well as the circle of support that will help implement this plan. Be sure to include some action steps that can be completed within a short time to keep the momentum going.

Step Four: Identify Follow-up Meetings/Activities

Implementing the action plan can require persistence, problem solving, and creativity, so it will be important to periodically come together again to discuss what parts of the plan are working and what parts are not. Once more, identify what is to be done, who will do it, when the action will happen, and when you will meet again. Make sure that at each follow-up meeting the team:

- Establishes the list of participants with family and student input;
- Lists activities that have occurred as well as the barriers/challenges encountered;
- Brainstorms new ideas and strategies for the future;
- Sets priorities for the next agreed upon time period (6 months/12 months);
- Lists several concrete steps for each person to follow;
- Establishes the next meeting time; and
- ***Always celebrates the successes!***

MAPping the Way to Success: MAPS Timeline Development Worksheet

MAPS or “McGill Action Planning System” (sometimes also referred to as “Making Action Plans”) is a strategy developed by Marsha Forest, Jack Pearpoint, Judith Snow, and Evelyn Lusthaus that uses person centered planning techniques to gather information and then to develop a plan of action for a focus person with a disability. MAPS brings together the key players in this person’s life to identify a “roadmap” for working toward and achieving goals with this focus child. MAPS has an established framework of questions that address the child’s history, strengths, gifts, and nightmares and dreams of the child and his/her family. This information is then used to develop action steps for achieving the dreams and avoiding the nightmares.

MAPS Team Activities	Additional Notes	Person(s) Responsible	Deadline
1. Identify the focus student. – <i>What kind of transition is this student going to be making?</i>			
2. Discuss the process with the student’s parent(s) and get parent “buy in”. – <i>Who will speak with parent(s)?</i> – <i>What information needs to be shared with the parent?</i>			
3. Conduct observations of the focus student and interview current staff. – <i>Who needs to observe?</i> – <i>Who will set up observations?</i> – <i>Who will be interviewed?</i> – <i>Will the setting that will receive the focus student be observed also?</i>			
4. Set up the MAPS meeting. – <i>Who will be invited?</i> – <i>Will the focus student make invitations?</i> – <i>Where will meeting(s) occur?</i> – <i>Will you hold the meeting in 1, 2 (or more) sessions?</i>			
5. Conduct the MAPS meeting. – <i>Will snacks be provided?</i> – <i>Who will help chart information at the meeting?</i>			
6. Generate the plan of action. – <i>Who will transcribe the plan of action (from meeting charts)?</i>			
7. Implement the plan of action. – <i>Who will need a copy of the plan?</i> – <i>Who will distribute the plan?</i> – <i>When will follow up occur?</i>			

Worksheet for Preparing for Person Centered Planning (page 1)

1. List people you want to invite and their relationship to your child, then identify who will invite them:

<i>Proposed Invitee</i>	<i>Relationship to Focus Child</i>	<i>Who Will Invite Them</i>

2. Do you want your child to create invitations? **YES NO**

3. Begin to create the Positive Profile for your child. You can use this form, create your own, or use another method for displaying the positive profile information (i.e., develop a power point presentation, slide show, etc).

Relevant Information from Your Child's History or Personal Life Story:

Your Child's Personal Preferences, Interests and Favorite Activities:

Worksheet for Preparing for Person Centered Planning (page 2)

Your Child's Areas of Strength:

Current Opportunities for Community Involvement and Social Interactions:

4. Record your ideas and answers for the remaining MAPS questions below:

What are your child's dreams and goals for the future (both near and far)?

What would an ideal day at school be like for your child?

Worksheet for Preparing for Person Centered Planning (page 3)

What are the nightmares?

What are your child's needs?

What should be included in the Plan of Action (to achieve the dreams and avoid the nightmares)?

5. Are there any questions or discussion topics for which you would **NOT** like your child to be present during the person centered planning session?

6. What strategies would you recommend to help increase the participation of your child during the person centered planning session?

MAPS Planning Worksheet for Students (page 1)

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1. My Likes and Dislikes

Put an **X beside the things you like:**

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> taking walks | <input type="checkbox"/> computer games | <input type="checkbox"/> camping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> jogging | <input type="checkbox"/> basketball | <input type="checkbox"/> fishing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> playing catch | <input type="checkbox"/> baseball | <input type="checkbox"/> archery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> flying a kite | <input type="checkbox"/> football | <input type="checkbox"/> hunting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> taking pictures | <input type="checkbox"/> hockey | <input type="checkbox"/> horseback riding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> swimming | <input type="checkbox"/> soccer | <input type="checkbox"/> mountain climbing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> boating | <input type="checkbox"/> volleyball | <input type="checkbox"/> skiing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> bicycling | <input type="checkbox"/> racquetball | <input type="checkbox"/> bowling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> skateboarding | <input type="checkbox"/> tennis | <input type="checkbox"/> skating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> rollerblading | <input type="checkbox"/> lacrosse | <input type="checkbox"/> talking on the telephone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> drawing | <input type="checkbox"/> golf | <input type="checkbox"/> visiting friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> painting | <input type="checkbox"/> reading | <input type="checkbox"/> going to church |
| <input type="checkbox"/> puzzles | <input type="checkbox"/> listening to music | <input type="checkbox"/> shopping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> needlecrafts | <input type="checkbox"/> watching TV, movies | <input type="checkbox"/> going out to eat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> woodworking | <input type="checkbox"/> creating poems, songs | <input type="checkbox"/> using the library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> collecting things | <input type="checkbox"/> playing an instrument | <input type="checkbox"/> belonging to a club |
| <input type="checkbox"/> card games | <input type="checkbox"/> cooking | <input type="checkbox"/> dancing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> table games | <input type="checkbox"/> housekeeping | <input type="checkbox"/> baby-sitting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> video games | <input type="checkbox"/> pets | |

Other things: _____

Now go back and circle your three favorite things.

2. More of My Favorites

Who are some of your favorite people to spend time with at school?

Who are some of your favorite people to spend time with at home?

What is your favorite subject in school and why?

What is your most difficult subject in school and why?

MAPS Planning Worksheet for Students (page 2)

3. My Personal Strengths

Put an X beside the things that you think describe you:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm reliable | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm cooperative | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm good with computers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm honest | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm neat and organized | <input type="checkbox"/> I like doing things on my own |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm respectful | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm a good team member | <input type="checkbox"/> I can work out my problems on my own |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm polite | <input type="checkbox"/> I try to follow directions | <input type="checkbox"/> I ask others for help when I need it |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm patient | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm willing to learn | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm fun to be with |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm generous | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm usually on time | <input type="checkbox"/> I can help others work out their problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm thoughtful | <input type="checkbox"/> I complete what I start | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm a good friend |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm kind | <input type="checkbox"/> I have a good sense of humor | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm friendly | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm good with words | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm a good listener | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm good with my hands | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I don't brag too much | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm good with mechanical things | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm hard working | | |

Other things:

Can you think of a place where you can use a personal strength from above to accomplish something or help someone?

4. My Accomplishments

What are your strong points (things that you are proud of)?

What are some things that you are good at doing in school?

What are some things that you are good at doing at home and in your community?

What accomplishment or success has made you feel great?

MAPS Planning Worksheet for Students (page 3)

5. My Activities After School

Do you take lessons after school? If yes, what kind of lessons?

In what after-school clubs or sports do you participate?

Which after-school clubs or sports would you like to explore (that you do *not* do right now)?

What activities you like to do in your free time outside of school?

6. My Responsibilities at Home

Do you have chores that you do at home?

What else are you responsible for at home (trash, dishes, lawn, help with siblings, etc.)?

MAPS Planning Worksheet for Students (page 4)

7. My Goals and Future

Name two things that interest you that you haven't been able to do yet.

List at least two *short-term* goals you have set...

...for school:

...for your life:

List at least two *long-term* goals you have set...

...for school:

...for your life:

What do you hope to do right after you graduate from high school?

If you picture yourself ten years from now, what type of work would you be doing?

If you picture yourself ten years from now, where will you be living?

If you picture yourself ten years from now, what will you be doing with your free time?

MAPS Planning Worksheet for Students (page 5)

8. What I Need

What type of help do you need to be successful in school?

Who can you go to for help at school?

What type of help do you need to be successful at home?

Who can you go to for help at home and in your community?

What are you afraid of or what do you worry about?

Thinking of where you see yourself ten years from now, what can we do during this school year to help you reach that goal?

Preparing for Your MAPS: MAPS Student Interview (page 1)

1. What is your favorite subject in school and why?

2. What is your most difficult subject in school and why?

3. What has been your favorite school experience (activity or event) so far?

4. List the type of help you need to be successful in school.

5. Do you take lessons after school? If yes, what kind of lessons?

6. In what after-school clubs or sports do you participate?

7. Which after-school clubs or sports would you like to explore?

8. In what type of activities do you participate outside of school?

Preparing for Your MAPS: MAPS Student Interview (page 2)

9. What is your favorite free time activity at home?

10. What are you responsible for at home (trash, dishes, lawn, help with child care)?

11. What are things you're good at, including home, school and in the community?

12. What accomplishment or success has made you feel great?

13. List some things at which you have been successful, no matter how small.

14. What are you afraid of or what do you worry about?

15. If you picture yourself ten years from now, what type of work would you be doing, where will you be living, and what will you be doing with your free time?

16. Thinking of where you see yourself ten years from now, what do you plan to do in this year to help yourself reach that goal?

Positive Student Profile Input Sheet for Staff

A positive student profile is used to provide information about the student's preferences, strengths, challenges and successes. The idea is to help people who do not know the student to see the strengths and positive attributes that he/she brings. The student may also use this type of information in developing a personal resume as he/she applies to colleges and jobs. It is also important that these preferences are reflected in transition planning.

Please provide below any information that you have about the student's personal preferences, including his/her interests, likes and dislikes. Be sure to include information about areas of academic and social strength, personal gifts and capacities of the student.

In addition, to maximize his/her potential and gain accommodations needed to be successful in a post secondary career, the student will also need to understand his disability and resulting needs as well as be able to assertively and appropriately advocate for himself/herself, when necessary.

Please provide any thoughts below on the support strategies and other things that you have found to be helpful when working with this student to assist him/her in better understanding what supports will work for him/her.

Ideas for Supporting Goals and Dreams—Staff Worksheet

Goals/Vision Statements	Assets/ Opportunities	Obstacles	Ideas for School Use and Commitments

Appendix A:

Examples of Person Centered Plans Created Using MAPS

Example of MAPS in Action #1: “John’s” MAPS

The following example shows how the MAPS process was used to facilitate a successful elementary school to middle school transition for a student with a disability.

Background and Road Blocks in John’s MAPS Example

“John” is a student on the autism spectrum who was transitioning from elementary to middle school. John’s Mom wanted him to be fully included in middle school, as he was in elementary school. John’s potential middle school had never included a student with John’s learning profile before and was very concerned about this. The middle school personnel had started expressing their concerns to the parent about being able to meet John’s needs in the least restrictive educational environment.

John also had some behavioral issues, including low frustration tolerance which would cause him to have very loud, disruptive emotional “meltdowns”. When these would occur, John would need to leave the classroom to go to a quiet area where he could regain emotional control. The middle school personnel were concerned about the level of disruption that John’s behavior might cause to peers. The middle school principal was unsure of what location might be suitable for this quiet place.

Designing the Process for John’s MAPS

The facilitator scheduled 2 sessions for the MAPS. Session one was held at the elementary school, so that several of John’s peers could be present for some parts of the session and participate. Middle school staff were also able to observe John in classes during this time. Session two was held at the middle school, so that other general education teachers from the middle school could participate. The district secured substitutes for several participants to be available for the full day, so that they could attend the MAPS session during half of the day and then observe during the other half of the day.

Because of the sensitive nature of the information that would be shared at the MAPS session, several steps were taken. The first involved the facilitator previewing the MAPS questions with John’s Mom ahead of time so that she could help prepare John for the process. The facilitator also met with John to discuss the process and to help him create his invitations to the MAPS for participants (*handouts used for these activities can be found in section five of this manual*).

John created invitations to be given to people he wanted to attend. His parent, case manager and the facilitator made sure invitations got delivered. Participants included John, the focus student being “mapped”; members of John’s Family, such as his Dad, Mom, Sister, Grandmother; three of John’s peers (i.e., students in John’s class that he invited); John’s Elementary School Special Educator, General Educator, and Case Manager; John’s Elementary School Principal; John’s prospective Middle School Principal; the Middle School Special Educator, General Educator, and Speech Language Pathologist who would be involved with him after the transition; and the facilitator. The facilitator also made sure to obtain a signed release from his parents for the information to be shared in front of these intended participants.

The facilitator provided written information about the process (*see section five for handouts*) to all of the invitees (other than the peers) prior to the session. Because of her prior relationship with the families, John’s Mom spoke with the parents of the peers who were invited, so that they were aware of what was going to occur and could give their permission for their children to participate.

At the beginning of the first MAPS session, the facilitator discussed the process and established “ground rules” with the team. Periodically throughout the two sessions the facilitator reminded the team of these ground rules and to be sensitive to the serious issues and fears that may be shared during the meeting. During the sessions, the facilitator was able to make sure that ground rules were followed by participants with assistance from the principals who attended. Both of John’s MAPS sessions proved to be successful, resulting in the information that follows.

Transcribed Notes from John's MAPS—page 1

John's History

John's Mom shared information with the participants about his history and what had happened up to this point. Elementary school participants also shared some of the following information:

- John had slowed speech when young which was thought to be due to hearing issues and was coded for speech/ language services in the school system before he was school-aged.
- At a very young age John showed trouble processing verbal language.
- At a young age sensory sensitivity was noted by his parents when washing John's hair.
- John also exhibited trouble with motor control of his tongue when he was younger and his speech can still be difficult to understand at times.
- John was held back during his kindergarten year.
- Later that year, John was diagnosed with PDD-NOS as well as Speech/Language Disorder.
- John was placed initially in a regional, self-contained program within the county in which his family lived.
- Due to their difficulties meetings John's needs, he was later moved to a non-public (segregated) school for children with disabilities.
- Members of the IEP team observed him at the segregated setting and determined that this was not an appropriately challenging educational environment for John.
- He then was placed in an inclusive setting for his 3rd grade year in his neighborhood elementary school.
- He thrived in this inclusive setting academically and was also able to learn more socially-appropriate behaviors from his typically-developing peer role models.
- Due to the higher expectations for John academically in the inclusive setting, his skills greatly improved.
- John is now in 5th grade and has done well academically, though he still exhibits some interfering behaviors, especially when frustrated with his difficulties communication due to apraxia.

Positive Student Profile for John

The group was presented with the questions of "Who is John?" and "What are John's Strengths, Talents and Interests?" During this time, peer participants were also in attendance. Everyone took turns sharing what came to their minds when thinking of John. The facilitator encouraged participants to share, one at a time, and continued the sharing around the circle until no one had anything else to add. The answers shared by participants were:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ➤ Loves to play sports | ➤ Great sense of humor |
| ➤ Loves soccer and participates in Special Olympics soccer | ➤ Lots of energy |
| ➤ Loves building with legos | ➤ Helpful and caring |
| ➤ Likes to draw, read, and to use the computer | ➤ Very curious |
| ➤ Likes dogs, giraffes, cats, turtles, fish, and other animals | ➤ Talkative and conversational |
| ➤ Likes cooking | ➤ Likes to sing and creatively change words to songs |
| ➤ Good at remembering things and accessing prior knowledge | ➤ Enjoys being a helper and taking care of his family members |
| ➤ Lots of background knowledge | ➤ Very empathetic, concerned about others feelings |
| ➤ Good at drawing | ➤ Uses many ways to communicate his point |
| ➤ Fun and friendly | ➤ Very brave |

Transcribed Notes from John's MAPS—page 2

John's Dreams

As participants answered this question, they were encouraged (and reminded) to think about what *John* wants, not what they want *for* John. John also shared his dreams in his own words. Since this is a question of “vision,” participants were reminded *not* be discouraging and to keep their opinions/judgment about the feasibility of something to themselves. The idea is that if enough people share John's dreams, they all can work together toward making those dreams become a reality. The dreams and goals shared included:

- *For the rest of the year (Feb.-Summer):*
 - Learn multiplication tables
 - Have a great visit to Middle School
- *By the end of the first 3 weeks of Middle School:*
 - Meet new friends at Middle School
 - Open his locker by himself
 - Know where cafeteria, gym, healthroom, bathroom, and other areas at Middle School
- *By the end of Middle School:*
 - Have friends and be accepted
 - Continue being exposed to academic opportunities
- *For the Future:*
 - Have friends and be accepted
 - Become a police man or a fireman or work at a place where he can take care of older people like assisted living (because he wants to help people); or become a chef
 - Have pets (one cat and one dog)
 - Drive a car or a van with a TV inside it
 - Have a wife and two children
 - Cook with his wife and create his own recipes
 - Live as independently as possible, but *interdependently* with his friends and his own family

John's Nightmares and the Nightmares of his Family

Parents sometimes find this particularly hard to answer because no parent likes to think of their child facing difficulties. The idea is that if the members of the group can verbalize the nightmares and fears, they will have taken an important step in becoming committed to making sure these nightmares never occur. The following fears and nightmares were verbalized by John, as well as by his family and staff who know him:

- Peers fight with him and beat him up in middle school
- John does not make any friends, gets picked on, and other students call John names
- John has to sit alone at lunch
- Peers won't want John to sit next to them on the bus
- Nobody wants to come to John's birthday party or to come over to his house
- Middle school gets “too loud” for John (sensory sensitivities) and he shuts down
- He becomes confused and doesn't have a “safe spot” and people to help him problem solve
- Not getting on the right bus at dismissal
- Not adapting to the changing schedule in middle school/ too much trouble with transitions
- Teachers see only his behavior and don't get to appreciate his positive qualities
- To not be able to communicate his ideas, thoughts, and needs
- If John had a skill but wasn't given the opportunity to exercise that skill
- John won't have the skills to live out in society as independently as possible

Transcribed Notes from John's MAPS—page 3

John's Needs and How We Can Help

Before creating the plan of action to achieve the dreams and avoid the nightmares, the group discussed some general ideas about what John might need to be successful as well as what roles participants could play. The following information was shared:

- Help John recognize when noise is problematic and acknowledge it so he can prepare.
- Help John learn middle school appropriate ways of making friends--coaching is needed.
- Help John with navigating new building/finding his way--personal schedule/map needed.
- Help John with opening his locker and provide time to practice when no peers are around.
- Help John develop a system for organizing his locker and materials, including knowing how to follow the rotating schedule and organize his materials according to A/B days.
- Middle school teachers need help familiarizing themselves with John's needs and IEP—his academic accommodations and modifications will need to be in place, especially for his reading and his comprehension level; he may also need some parallel activities.

The Plan of Action

The participants then used the answers to the previous questions to craft a plan of action. The plan includes the steps necessary to achieve the dreams/goals and also to avoid the nightmares/fears. Action plans also should identify the circle of support that will help implement this plan and a timeline for implementation. The plan created with John and his team follows:

Activities	Commitments	Start Date
Transitioning to Middle School: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Visits to middle school (with class; with parents in summer) ➤ Practice opening his locker ➤ Middle School staff observe John at Elementary 	Parents, SE case manager, Elementary Gen. Ed. teacher	Spring of 5 th grade; Summer; August
Facilitating Friendships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Share info with John's parents about clubs ➤ Lunchtime friendship group with staff supervision ➤ "Circle of Friends" to facilitate peer relationships 	Middle School SE case manager, guidance, parents	By October
Fostering Independence at Middle School: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Peer to transition with John to classes with adult shadow ➤ Assistance with organization of materials ➤ Create visual schedule; remind John to review schedule daily 	Middle School SE case manager	2 nd Week of School
Addressing Behavioral Concerns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Revise FBA/BIP and let Middle School staff know who to contact with questions ➤ Review BIP and plan implementation with Middle School ➤ Identify quiet area for John to remove self if agitated ➤ Help John practice how to tell staff he needs the quiet area ➤ Help John practice taking quiet time, using self calming strategies; create flow chart for quiet time process 	IEP team, parents, school psychologist	By Spring
Coordination of John's Academic Program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Establish home/school communication system ➤ Add goal to IEP re teaching him to use quiet time ➤ Share profile/IEP snapshot with staff who work with John 	Middle School SE case manager and gen ed staff, parents	August, Sept.

Example of MAPS in Action # 2: Jane's MAPS

The following example shows how the MAPS process was used to facilitate a successful start to sophomore year in high school for a student with a disability, as well as to begin developing a more student-centered transition plan.

Background and Road Blocks in Jane's MAPS Example

"Jane" is a student on the autism spectrum who was starting her sophomore year in her neighborhood high school. Jane's Dad and Mom had been unhappy with the high school's support of their daughter during her freshman year. The family wanted Jane to be more included in high school and had very high expectations for Jane academically. Many of Jane's high school teachers and guidance counselor had a very different idea about what Jane could accomplish academically and were also concerned about her social skills. These high school personnel had started expressing their concerns to the parent very bluntly during several IEP meetings last school year. This caused Jane's parents to become further alienated from the high school staff. The MAPS was used to address the communication breakdowns that had been occurring and to forge a more collaborative plan for the rest of Jane's high school career.

Designing the Process for Jane's MAPS

Because school staff members were unable to devote 2-3 hours for each MAPS session, the facilitator scheduled 3 shorter sessions for Jane's MAPS. Each of the three sessions lasted approximately 1.5 hours and all sessions were held at Jane's high school.

Because of the communication breakdowns which had occurred and the sensitive nature of the information that would be shared at the MAPS session, several steps were taken. The first involved the facilitator previewing the MAPS questions with Jane and her parents ahead of time so that they could prepare for the process. The facilitator used this time to interview Jane and her family and start to develop the positive profile (*handouts used for these activities can be found in section five of this manual*). The facilitator also provided written information about the process to all of the invitees prior to the session. Staff members and family friends who wanted to share information to be included in the positive profile, but who were unable to attend the MAPS sessions, provided their input in writing prior to the first MAPS session. The initial draft of the positive profile was shared with all participants prior to the first MAPS meeting.

At the beginning of the first MAPS session, the facilitator discussed the process and established "ground rules" with the team. Periodically throughout the 3 sessions the facilitator reminded the team of these ground rules. Some participants needed to be reminded about the "non-judgment of dreams expressed" ground rule several times. Despite this initial barrier, the rest of the MAPS sessions proved to be successful, resulting in the information that follows.

MAPS EXAMPLE TWO:

Person Centered Planning Information for "Jane" ***(Example Document, Page 1)***

First Person centered Meeting Date: February 11, 2013

Update(s) to this Document: March 4, 2013, March 20, 2013

People Who Contributed to this Document:

- Jane, Focus Person for this process
- Mrs. Student, Jane's Mother
- Mr. Student, Jane's Father
- CST Case Manager at High School
- Speech Language Pathologist for High School
- Jane's Teachers at High School
- Assistant at High School, who supports Jane in Math, History and Study Hall
- Soccer Coach for High School
- Facilitator for meetings who transcribed notes

Purpose of this Document:

- To share ideas and strategies for assisting Jane in her current school setting while increasing her independence.
- To provide information to staff members who may not know Jane, so that they can more easily get to know her in order to be able to provide support.
- To begin planning for Jane's future by creating an individualized plan that emphasizes Jane's dreams and meaningful experiences, while also focusing on her quality of life.
- To help provide attendees with a framework for implementing these techniques with other students.

Tips for Using this Document:

- Use this to help Jane determine how to share information from this document to assist her in being able to discuss and describe her disability, strengths and needs (to teachers, college personnel, job supervisors, etc) and support self-advocacy skills.
- View this as a "fluid" document in which to record updated information at regular intervals (i.e., every 6 to 12 months).
- Schedule regular "follow-up" meetings--implementing ideas from this requires persistence, problem solving, and creativity, so it is important to periodically bring the team together again to discuss what parts of the plan are working and what parts are not.
- At follow-up meetings the team can list all of the barriers/challenges that have occurred since the last meeting then brainstorm new ideas and strategies for the future.
- The team can also break things down by using the plan of action to identify and set priorities for the next agreed upon time period (6 months, 12 months, etc.).
- Consider meeting at the end of this year and again in September 2013 to review progress and update this document.

Positive Student Profile for Jane—page 2

Jane's Unique Personality Characteristics Include:

- Jane is a very positive person.
- Her work ethic is one of her most endearing qualities.
- She is polite, caring and sweet.
- Jane is very honest.

Jane's Social Strengths Include:

- Jane enjoys talking to peers.
- She will help her peers in any way she can.
- She likes to listen to others in order to help them solve a problem.

Jane's Academic Strengths Include:

- She works very hard, especially when she's really interested in something.
- Good with technology.
- Open to having adults assist her.
- Embraces change and can adapt well to changes.
- Follows the rules.
- Doesn't seem to get discouraged by much.
- Has the ability to forgive her own mistakes and isn't too hard on herself.
- Better organized now than she was at the beginning of the year (improving).

Some Other Great Things about Jane:

- Jane appears to have a great deal of respect and adoration for her sister.
- She is very enthusiastic—others have found themselves being uplifted by her enthusiasm (her Soccer Coach).
- The Athletic Director says she has never met someone who is so positive and can be very inspiring.
- Because she is so motivating, she was asked by her congregation to present.

Jane's Preferences	Jane's Dislikes
➤ Likes One Direction and created a powerpoint presentation with information about this music group (as a hobby, not a school assignment).	➤ If peers would laugh at her if she expresses that she doesn't understand something.
➤ Loves Michael Jackson	➤ Being made fun of by others
➤ Loves music and singing along—memorizes song lyrics	
➤ Likes to draw while listening to music	
➤ Participates in Karate (black belt)	
➤ Enjoys reading	
➤ Loves soccer	
➤ Enjoys running track and being part of a team	
➤ Likes being part of the choir	

A Vision for the Future for Jane's Future—page 3

Some People that are Important to Jane:

- Jane's Mom and Dad
- Jane's Sister
- Some of Jane's sister's friends
- Friends at school including Sally and Sammy

Some Things that are Important to Jane Right Now:

- Jane wants to make her high school team (the varsity soccer team).
- Being able to attend a summer soccer camp.

Jane's Dreams for the Very Near Future and Right Now:

- Develop friendships with peers based on areas of mutual interest.
- Increase her confidence in her answers and develop self-questioning strategies to help facilitate her understanding and learning.
- Arrive to class more organized and with correct materials.
- Improve her independence at school and at home.

Jane's Hopes and Dreams for the Rest of High School ("The Near Future"):

- Jane's Parents' goals for her involve inclusion, but also building friendships.
- She will enjoy what she's learning at school so that she can become a more independent learner.
- She will learn to be more of a self-advocate.
- Since she is interested in computers, works hard at the basics and has the ability to learn and improve her skills, a future goal might be for Jane to continue taking progressively more difficult and interesting computer classes in an effort to solidify workplace skills that she can capitalize on immediately, once she is ready to enter the workforce.

Jane's Future Aspirations and Dreams ("The Far Future"):

- Some of her Teachers can see her doing clerical work in the future with no problems at all, if she is interested in this.
- Jane's Parents see her starting college at the end of high school.
- Jane does not know what job she wants yet.
- She sees herself learning to drive a car and living with friends in the future.
- She wants to live near parents, but not right next to them (maybe a couple towns away).

Plan for Supporting Jane's Goals and Dreams—page 4-7

Goals/Dreams	Possible Barriers	Ideas for School	Ideas for Home	Commitments
1. Jane would like to be able to attend soccer camp and maybe make high school soccer team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Making the team is very difficult and competitive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Speak with Jane's current soccer coach and future coach. ➤ If Jane does not make the team, coach says she will still have a role with the team (e.g., management position or participating in practices with team). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Look into being a Referee at younger children's soccer games. ➤ Look into summer coaching sessions to help identify the position she is best suited for. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mrs. Student, Jane—ask rec. league soccer coach for info on refereeing.
2. Arrive to class on time and more organized with the correct materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Trouble getting organized for her next class impacts arriving on time. ➤ This is a problem going to Science class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Determine ways to make better use of her locker (too much schoolwork in backpack contributes to burden)—checklists, etc. ➤ Create a checklist of when to go to her locker (locker before school, at lunch, before Science ends, end of the day) and what items to take during each locker visit. ➤ Provide extra time at the end of class to get materials together. ➤ Use transition warnings to teach time management. ➤ Arrive on time for Study Hall (7:18-8:00) so this time for can be used for teaching organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Consider getting a watch that vibrates that can be set to remind Jane to pack up early in class or investigate setting a silent alarm on her phone/ iPad. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mrs. Student & Jane—look into watch. ➤ Jane & Assistant—create locker/ materials checklist. ➤ Jane & Assistant—post locker checklist in her locker and also keep a copy with her.
3. Be more organized and independent while in class.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ May rely on Staff Assistant to take notes for her in class. ➤ Does not record homework correctly. ➤ Rushing through assignments to get done results in not always doing them correctly and having to redo assignments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Investigate technology (iPad, laptop, etc.) for note-taking, so Jane is taking her own notes. ➤ Use a larger planner to record assignments. ➤ Keep planner out from beginning of class so it is available to write homework as soon as assigned. ➤ Consider having teachers/ staff assistant checking planner for accuracy at first, then fade. ➤ Work with Ms. Smith in Study Hall to highlight tests in planner, so easier to see when at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Jane—take her own notes in class (possibly with laptop/iPad). ➤ Assistant & Jane—highlight tests/ quizzes in planner during Study Hall.

Goals/Dreams	Possible Barriers	Ideas for School	Ideas for Home	Commitments
4. Be more organized and independent with homework completion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Does not always have homework—because she forgets to look for them, leaves assignments at home or turns them done incorrectly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with Ms. Smith to prioritize assignments written in planner (which to complete first). ➤ Help Jane identify peers she could ask about homework if unsure. ➤ Teachers will try to always give at least 2 days notice prior to a test. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If sick/not sure about homework, ask a peer. ➤ Teach long ranging planning at home by having Jane keep a monthly calendar to track test dates and when assignments are due so she can task analysis and then plan head to complete tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ms. Smith & Jane—identify peer to ask about homework. ➤ Mrs. Student & Jane—work on calendar at home to track assignments.
5. Enjoy what she's learning at school so Jane can become a more <i>independent</i> learner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Short term memory issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teach mnemonics during Study Hall time. ➤ Since memorization of lyrics is a strength, investigate use of this as a study support. ➤ Teach list making and other organizational skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Investigate technology for studying/homework (example—flash card app for iPad). ➤ Review each subject for 10 min/day, so studying for tests is easier. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Jane—review each subject at home every day (10 minutes).
6. Increase the accuracy Jane's answers during class in order to increase her confidence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Has trouble staying on topic when giving an answer. ➤ May speak very loudly when answering/talking in class. ➤ Trouble keeping pace during group work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Generate ideas to help her stay engaged/focused (so questions will be more on-target). ➤ Adults can use on/off topic nonverbal cues to remind her during class (thumbs down if she is becoming off topic). ➤ Have self-monitoring discussion on these (staying on topic, pertinent details only, voice volume, etc.) when working with SLP. ➤ In future, perform self-monitoring w/o help. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use on/off topic cues at home to remind Jane (thumbs down if off topic). ➤ Discuss self monitoring info at home for generalization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ SLP & Jane—discuss, practice on/off topic and voice volume modulation.
7. Develop self-questioning strategies to help facilitate learning and increase Jane's confidence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Does not ask for help regularly and worries that peers will laugh at her if she shows she doesn't understand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Adults can remind her to try calling teacher over to discuss question <i>quietly</i> and individually, instead of asking in front of class. ➤ Help Jane develop a decision tree for finding info (where to start to look for info, what's next). ➤ Add IEP goal for thinking skills/problem solving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review planner with Jane & ask leading question to think ahead. Write study plan into planner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parents, Jane & Ms. Smith write in planner study plan for tests. Chunk projects before due date

Goals/Dreams	Possible Barriers	Ideas for School	Ideas for Home	Commitments
8. Jane's goals involve inclusion and building friendships with peers based on areas of mutual interest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Interacts more with adults than peers in some classes. ➤ Trouble initiating and maintaining conversation with peers. ➤ Needs opportunities/help to work on social skills in context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Generate ideas for lunchroom conversation topics and other times. ➤ Practice and role play conversations with peers (including on/off topic and voice volume modulation) during time with SLP. ➤ Investigate Peer Leadership Program. ➤ Find out what the Peer Leadership interview questions might be, then practice how to answer them during her interview. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Share conversation cues with parents for home generalization. ➤ Work on interview attire. ➤ Investigate having Jane join after school chorus or other after school group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ SLP & Jane—work on interview questions. ➤ Ms. Smith—recommend her for Peer Leadership. ➤ Mrs. Student, Jane—get interview clothing.
9. Jane's Parents see her starting college at the end of high school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will need to request accommodations at college and self-advocate. ➤ Jane is not sure what she wants to do yet for her career. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Consider adding self-advocacy in transition planning in IEP so Jane can advocate for what she needs (accommodations, etc.). ➤ Consider having Jane update her own student profile to include her learning style/ accommodations, then use to self-advocate. ➤ Complete career interest inventory with Ms. Smith to help Jane identify areas of interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify strategies for increasing independence with homework (i.e., lists for breaking down projects, calendar for due dates, etc.). ➤ Interest inventory information will be shared with parents for further discussion. 	Ms. Smith—work on interest inventory with Jane.
10. Jane sees herself learning to drive a car and living with friends in the future and near parents (but not right next to them).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Independent living skills ➤ Socialization requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work on choice-making. ➤ Jane will take Driver's Ed next year at school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work on choice-making at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Facilitator—share ideas for choice making at home.

Appendix B: Helpful Websites

For Person- Centered Planning:

Inclusion Press

<http://www.inclusion.com/PI-PERSON.C.PLANNING.html>

Person Centered Practices

[http://www.reachoflouisville.com/person centered/whatisperson.htm](http://www.reachoflouisville.com/person%20centered/whatisperson.htm)

The Person Centered Planning Education Site

<http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/ped/tsal/Enable/>

Pacer Center on Person Centered Planning

<http://www.pacer.org/tatra/resources/personal.asp>

Kansas Institute for Positive Behavior Support's Person +Centered Planning Resources

http://www.kipbs.org/new_kipbs/fsi/pcp.html#pcpkansas

Person Centered Planning: MAPS and PATHS to the Future

<http://www.ttac.odu.edu/Articles/person.html>

Illinois Home School Community Tool

http://www.kipbsmodules.org/Word-PDF-PPT/FY07_HST.pdf

Self-Advocacy Links for Students with Disabilities:

<http://www.fvkasa.org/index.php>

Kids As Self-Advocates (KASA) offers materials to help with self-advocacy and communication skills.

<http://www.sabeusa.org/>

Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) is the self-advocacy organization of the United States committed to full inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in the community throughout the 50 states and the world.

www.selfadvocacy.org

Advocating Change Together (ACT) is a grassroots disability rights organization run by and for people with developmental and other disabilities. ACT's mission is to help people across disabilities to see themselves as part of a larger disability rights movement and make connections to other civil and human rights struggles.

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>

Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities - guide from the Office for Civil Rights.

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/rights/guid/ocr/disability.html>

Additional information on discrimination, on Section 504 and rights and responsibilities in college from the US Department of Education.

To Assist Students with Disabilities and Families in Determining Options:

<http://www.heath.gwu.edu/assets/33/toolkit.pdf>

The Online Clearinghouse On Postsecondary Education For Individuals With Disabilities offers a toolkit for professionals on advising high school students with disabilities on postsecondary education and career options (downloadable pdf document).

Helpful Websites and Internet Resources (page 2)

<http://www.heath.gwu.edu/modules/awareness-of-postsecondary-options/>

The HEATH center at George Washington University is a helpful resource for information on transition and provides this on a variety of post-secondary options for students. It also includes a list of questions students can ask themselves to get them thinking about what they really want to do.

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure>

The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability offers a guide to help students make decisions about when/how to disclose disability information as they move into life after high school.

<http://www.osepideasthatwork.org/toolkit/index.asp>

Supported by the U.S. Department of Education, this site offers a free downloadable "tool kits" including: "on Teaching and Assessing Students with Disabilities" and materials for parents on Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

<http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/pdf/tranopndrs.pdf>

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction offers a planning guide (downloadable pdf) for life after high school.

For Students with Disabilities Considering College:

<http://www.navigatingcollege.org/index.php>

This is the site for the Autistic Self Advocacy Network. On the upper right side of the homepage is a link students can use to download a guidebook especially for them about transitioning to college. Each chapter is written by a different individual with autism who has graduated from college. Topics include how to manage dorm life and sensory regulation.

My Future My Plan: A Transition Planning Resource for Life After High School

My Future My Plan is a transition planning resource that can be used to engage groups of students with disabilities, their families, and professionals in transition planning and includes a video with discussion guide, a planning resource book for students with user's guide for family/professionals. This award-winning resource was developed in collaboration with the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition at the Institute on Community Integration and is available with captions, in Spanish and English versions, with audio descriptions, and in large print and Braille editions.

<http://www.going-to-college.org/index.html>

This is a great new website for students funded by a grant with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. There are helpful tips and videos for students featuring actual college students with disabilities and a college planning timeline.

<http://www.ncld.org/college-aamp-work/post-high-school-options/transitioning-to-college>

The National Center for Learning Disabilities site offers helpful information about testing, IEPs, and a timeline for college planning that begins in 7th grade.

<http://www.ccac.edu/default.aspx?id=149708>

From the Community College of Allegheny, this chart covers the difference between high school and college in areas such as testing, professors and accommodations. It could assist discussion among child study team members, parents, and students during a freshman-year IEP meeting.

<http://www.temple.edu/studentaffairs/disability/videos/introducing.html>

This video from Temple University features students offering advice on how and when to speak to professors about their disability and needs.

Helpful Websites and Internet Resources (page 3)

http://apps.educationquest.org/pdfs/CP_Disability.pdf

This printable guide from the EducationQuest Foundation provides an overview of steps students should take in their college search and application process.

<http://myweb.wit.edu/counselingcenter/NCLD%20-%20Know%20the%20Differences.pdf>

The National Center for Learning Disabilities offers a document on college transition written by Colleen Lewis, the Director of the Office of Disability Services at Columbia University. The document describes the differences between high school and college and offers steps and suggestions to help students prepare for a successful transition.

http://www.csd.uconn.edu/docs/20_ways_2008.pdf

This is a concise article from the University of Connecticut suggesting 20 ways to help students with disabilities make a smooth transition to college.

<http://www.vacollegequest.org/charting/transitiontimeline.shtml>

The Virginia Department of Education Training and Technical Assistance Center has a great site on transition. On this page, they offer a timeline that provides year-by-year activities to help students make a successful transition to college.

http://tucollaborative.org/pdfs/education/College_Guide.pdf

This guide from the Temple University Collaborative on Community Inclusion of Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities provides a great overview of the postsecondary education options available to students and offers some helpful tips for how to manage themselves at college.

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/story/2011-10-17/college-and-learning-disabilities/50807620/1>

This brief article covers some of the difficulties students with disabilities encounter in the transition to college. The article also mentions short, introductory "boot camps" held by Landmark College during the summer to help acclimate students to college.

http://www.ahead.org/affiliates/kentucky/letter_to_parents

This open letter to parents was written by Jane Jarrow, the parent of a student with cerebral palsy, who also is the Executive Director of the Association of Higher Education and Disability in the 1990's. From her perspective as a professional and a mother, she offers advice and information for concerned parents who are facing their student's transition to college.

<http://www.learningally.org/>

Learning Ally offers books in alternative formats for students with print disabilities that can be used on computers, MP3 players, or special players available through the organization. Students may be able to get a membership through their school district or college and they have an option to purchase special players through RFB&D that make searching through books very easy.

<http://www.ldonline.org/indepth/college>

LD Online is a great web resource which offers a variety of articles on transition to college, as well as recommendations for books and helpful links.

<http://www.ed.gov/print/about/offices/list/ocr/transitionguide.html>

Transition of Students with Disabilities To Postsecondary Education: A Guide for High School Educators is a pamphlet from the U.S. Department of Education.

Appendix C: Additional Resources Organized by Subject

This section contains the following items:

- *What is a Circle of Support?*
- *Person centered Planning Action Steps Handout*
- *How Person centered Are Your Planning Meetings?*
- *Tips for Making IEP Meetings More Person centered*
- *Choice Making Strategies for Families*
- *An Inclusion Planning Process for Schools*
- *Checklist for Fostering Inclusion and Student Independence*
- *Tips for Facilitating Independence*

What is a Circle of Support?

Adapted from "One Candle Power: Building Bridges into Community Life for People with Disabilities", Beeman, Ducharme, Mount, 1989

A Circle of Support is a group of people who agree to meet on a regular basis to help a person with a disability accomplish certain personal visions or goals. When the focus person is unable to reach these goals working alone, he asks a number of people to work with him to overcome obstacles and to open doors to new opportunities. The circle members provide support to the focus person and they take action on his behalf.

The members of a circle of friends or support are usually friends, family members, co-workers, neighbors, church members and sometimes service providers or school staff members. The majority of people in a circle are *not* paid to be there. They are involved because they care about the focus person and they have made a commitment to work together on behalf of the person. Circles in no way exclude paid service providers. Paid providers can be an essential resource to a circle. However, the majority of circle members are non-paid, typical community members. When the majority of people in a circle are paid human service workers or school staff members, then we prefer to call this group a "person centered team." These teams often work for a positive future for the focus person as well, but the characteristics of a human service team are different.

FOUR STEPS TO BUILDING A CIRCLE

1) FOCUS on an individual -- GENERATE a vision

A Vision of what the individual desires will help set guidelines and plan strategies. Starting small and insuring positive results will allow movement towards more difficult steps with confidence, especially if there seem to be more barriers to tackle. Knowing the vision will help everyone stay centered when barriers get in the way. Prepare a road map: "know where you are starting, where you are going, how you can get there, when and with whom." Some hints for creating vision:

- Instead of knowing ideas, listen to the desires and wants of the individual. Build on the things they say. Listen to their feelings. Feelings are neither right nor wrong. They just are.
- Let each person share his/her gifts. Each person has his/her own unique contribution to make. The gifts are as various and as numerous as those who possess them.
- Look at the person's gifts and contributions to make the vision come alive for them.
- Investigate ways the community can become part of removing barriers and making the vision real.

2) EMPOWER the focus individual/family about what they see as a vision and work with them to achieve it

- Don't tell them what is right for their child or themselves.
- Help them see their capacities and work toward the goal with them.
- Get them as close to the dream as possible.
- Self empowerment starts from the inside--it does not work from outside in. People short-circuit the process for others by trying to do the task of self -empowerment for them. We tend automatically to think of doing something for them. We do not reflect that they can do something with and for us.
- Don't give the impression that professionals have all the answers.

3) WORK WITH interested friends, family and individuals who care

- Have the focus person/family invite family members, friends, and neighbors to become part of the circle.
- Identify particular networks of people within your group.
- Look for the "gifts" of the people within the circle.
- View different ideas as ways to discover more and see new solutions to a problem.
- Develop strategies to overcome the obstacles and bring the vision to life with the individual.
- Find ways that certain people in the circle can be a "bridge" for the person with a disability, into particular associations and activities in the community.

4) FIND CONNECTIONS within existing resources (family, friends, neighbors, community) for getting more involved in community

- Where do relatives, friends work? What clubs do they belong to? What churches do they go to? How might they get you in the door to begin there?
- Who are they? Who are their families? What are their particular needs and interests?
- Look through local community newspapers and newsletters to find resources to meet the challenges of each person's vision.

Person Centered Planning Action Steps

Step 1: Identify the Facilitator

Begin the process by choosing a facilitator. A facilitator needs to be a good listener, work creatively to shape the dreams of the individual, discover the capacities within the individual and within the community. A facilitator can be a school staff member, service provider, or consultant. It is helpful if facilitators have previous experience or training on conducting person centered planning. Facilitator training is offered in many states through school districts or other publicly funded programs.

Step 2: Design the Planning Process

An initial meeting to develop the personal profile usually occurs several days before the planning meeting so the participants have time to reflect on what is shared. The meeting takes about two hours. Parents/families and the person with a disability will:

- Develop a list of people they want to invite based on their 1.) knowledge of the person and family; 2.) ability to make this process happen; 3.) connections with the family and community; and 4.) connections with school-based service providers (and/or adult service providers, if applicable).
- Identify a date and time for the initial meeting and other follow-up meetings.
- Determine the place that will be the most convenient for everyone, especially the focus person.
- Discuss strategies that will increase the participation of the focus person.
- Decide what person centered process will be used (MAPS, PATH, Essential Life Planning, etc.).
- Develop a history or personal life story or profile of the focus person by everyone sharing past events in the person's life. The focus person's family shares the largest amount of this information, including critical events, medical issues, major developments and important relationships.
- Describe the quality of the focus person's life by exploring the following: community participation, community presence, choices/rights, respect, and competence.
- Describe personal preferences of the focus person (include likes/dislikes to get a fuller picture).
- Send invitees the transcribed personal profile.

Step 3: Hold the Meeting

- Review the personal profile and make additional comments and observations.
- Identify ongoing events that are likely to affect the focus person's life such as conditions that promote or threaten health.
- Share visions for the future. Through brainstorming, imagine ways to increase opportunities.
- Identify obstacles and opportunities that give the vision a real life context.
- Identify strategies and action steps for implementing the vision.
- Create an action plan to identify what is to be done, who will do it, when the action will happen, and when you will meet again. Identify action steps that can be completed within a short time.

Step 4: Incorporate Follow-up Meetings/Activities

Implementing the plan can require persistence, problem solving, and creativity, so it is important to periodically bring the team together again to discuss what parts of the plan are working and what parts are not. Make sure that at each follow-up meeting the team:

- Establishes the time and place of the follow-up meeting as well as the list of participants;
- Lists all activities that occurred in the past;
- Lists all of the barriers/challenges that occurred;
- Brainstorms new ideas and strategies for the future;
- Sets priorities for the next agreed upon time period (6 months/12 months);
- Establishes renewed commitment by those participating;
- Lists five to ten concrete steps for each person to follow;
- Establishes the next meeting time.

How Person Centered Are Your Planning Meetings?

The scope of person centered planning, as envisioned by the people who designed it in the early 1980's, is much larger than most imagine. All Person centered Planning approaches are characterized by five elements that have been identified as common and fundamental:

- The person at the focus of the planning and those who love that person are the primary authorities on the person's life direction.
- Person centered Planning aims to change common patterns of community life. It helps create positive community roles for people with disabilities.
- Person centered Planning requires learning through collaborative action, and fundamentally challenges practices that separate people and perpetuate controlling relationships.
- Honest Person centered Planning can only come from respect for the dignity and completeness of the focus person as he/she is.
- Assisting people to define and pursue a desirable future tests one's clarity, commitment and courage.

Consider following questions to determine the person centeredness of your planning:

- Did the individual choose this person centered process to assist in their planning (was an array of options presented in a clear and understandable fashion)?
- Did the individual select who they wanted to assist in their planning?
- Did the individual select who they wanted to facilitate their planning?
- Did the individual make the session invitations?
- Is the individual participating in all phases of the process?
- Does the planning group include community members?
- Did the individual choose when and where to have the planning/meetings?
- Did the individual determine in what life areas planning would occur?
- Did the dreams and desires of the individual form the foundation for the process?
- Did the individual and the people who know him/her the best and love him/her the most contribute the most?
- Was/is the process positive and respectful?
- Were the strategies used to gain the individual's perspective respectful?
- Did the process identify and build upon the individual's gifts and talents?
- Were ideas for an ideal job or community contribution for this individual generated?
- Were other images of a desirable future identified?
- Does the vision/plan identify ways to assist the individual:
 - expand and deepen their network of relationships?
 - contribute to community life?
 - expand the number and type of valued social roles they experience?
 - increase their experience of choice, control, and self-determination?

Tips for Making IEP Meetings More Person Centered

The following may be used to incorporate person centered planning into the IEP process in order to increase parent and student involvement IEP meetings and in transition planning.

Create a Positive Student Profile

- A positive student profile is used to provide information about the student's preferences, strengths, challenges and successes. Parents can use this to provide valuable insight for teachers into their child from the perspective of a parent. The idea is to help people who do not know the student to see the strengths and positive attributes that he/she brings to school.
- This document can also provide anyone working with the student with a "snapshot" of who he/she is and what he/she needs to be successful.
- Start the profile by developing a *brief* history or personal life story of the focus student by sharing past events in the child's life including critical events, medical issues, major developments, etc.
- Identify the focus child's personal preferences, including interests, likes and dislikes. It is important that these preferences are reflected in transition planning.
- Be sure to include information about areas of strength, gifts and capacities of the focus child.
- The next step is to list student preferences of things that work and don't work.
- The final section of the profile should outline the student's and family's *vision* for a desirable future (including future living situations, community participation, employment, and recreation/leisure). In completing this activity, all key stakeholders in the student's life are encouraged to create a vision based on the student's desired future rather than on the limits of a student's disability.
- The profile should be updated regularly (i.e., each year) as the student grows and changes.

Identify the Circle of Support and Community Presence

- The next activity involves the development of a circle of support, represented by a diagram with four concentric circles used to record names of individuals who are supportive of the student.
- Inside the inner circle is the student's name. The people closest and most important to the student are written around this *inner* circle.
- The names of individuals who are close to the student, but not quite as close as those in the inner circle, are written on the diagram around the *second* circle.
- Next, the student and family name people in the student's life, such as those associated with church, sports teams, or clubs. These names are written around the *third* circle from the center.
- Finally, the student and family identify the people who are paid to be in the student's life (i.e., teachers, bus drivers, doctors, etc). These names are written around the *outer* circle.
- This activity is summarized by pointing out that the focus in future planning must shift from preparation of individuals to the identification of needed supports for community participation.
- Next the family constructs a "community presence map" by listing the community settings that the student uses daily, weekly, or occasionally.
- This map becomes a frame of reference for discussion regarding ways in which the student might be assisted in developing greater choice and autonomy in community participation.

Draft a Plan of Action

- The participants then use the information previously generated to craft the plan of action. This plan will include steps necessary to achieve the vision generated.
- Action plans should identify specific strategies and action steps for implementing the vision as well as the circle of support that will help implement this plan. To do this, the group discusses activities, supports, and responsible parties for attaining the future goals.
- Participants should identify three to five activities that should be undertaken to provide immediate movement toward the student's desired future. It is important to include some action steps that can be completed within a short time to keep the momentum going.

Choice Making Strategies for Families (page 1)

Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice

By the time lunch arrives, you have made countless choices. For example, you chose when to wake up, what to wear to work or school, whether to shower or brush your teeth first, what to have for breakfast, how to get to work or school, and whether to pack a lunch. All people, regardless of disability, should participate to the greatest extent possible, in decisions that enable increased control over their lives.

In essence, children and adults prefer to be able to make choices. Choice-making opportunities occur when an adult gives another person two or more specific options from which to select. Providing opportunities to make choices is an appropriate strategy to use with people of all ages in a variety of contexts (home, school, community). The research literature confirms that choice making can be effective with persons with a variety of disabilities in improving desirable behaviors while decreasing and eliminating undesirable behaviors.

Effects of Choice-Making Strategies

Improvements in Desirable Behaviors:

- On-task/task engagement
- Number of task initiations
- Accurate performance
- Work productivity
- Affect
- Food acceptance

Decreases in Undesirable Behaviors:

- Number of verbal/nonverbal protests
- Noncompliance/resistance
- Problem/disruptive behavior
- Aggression
- Screaming/tantrums
- Food rejection

Why Providing Choices is Important

Bannerman and colleagues and others give many reasons for presenting individuals who display inappropriate behaviors with opportunities to make choices during daily routines:

- Allowing a child to make a choice can promote independence. This is particularly helpful for children with disabilities who may over-depend on adults to help them complete daily functions and activities.
- Giving a child choices may alert him or her to begin to self-monitor appropriate behaviors. Often, children who display problematic behaviors hear over and over how “bad” they behave instead of what they are doing well.
- Making choices can give a child a sense of control over his or her daily activities. Children often resist activities or situations that they do not like and for which they have no control over the outcome. In contrast, an opportunity to make a choice may promote compliance in the specific activity, with the child influencing certain aspects of the activity.
- With the sense of control that choices may provide, the child may be more likely to actively participate in activities where choices are consistently offered. Active participation is critical to a child’s development both academically and socially.
- In situations where choices are present, children may experience improved performance. Improvements in either social or academic situations are typically a goal for most children who display behavioral problems.
- Repeated opportunities to make choices during daily routines can provide a child with a positive, general sense of well-being, both psychological and physical. Thus, choice making can take on an intrinsic value for a child.
- Presenting children with a choice promotes behavior and values linked to responsibility. When children have a sense of responsibility, they can then be held more accountable for their actions.
- Research data demonstrate that when children with behavioral problems or other disabilities are given opportunities to make choices, their inappropriate behaviors decrease.

Choice Making Strategies for Families (page 2)

Implementing Different Types of Choices

Giving a child opportunities to make choices is simple—you are just manipulating situations, tasks, or items already available in your home and community. Thus, providing choices is both practical and cost effective. Any child can benefit from having choices; however, choices for children who display problem behaviors can be a very powerful strategy that promotes appropriate communication and actions. The child who used to display problem behaviors when interacting with the environment may use appropriate behaviors when given choices. Children can be given many different types of choices throughout their day to varying degrees—from basic to complex.

Ten types of choices are listed in the research on choice making by Sigafoos, Shevin and Klein, and Jolivet and colleagues:

1. Where – choice of the location where the child is going to play or work

Jamie has a history of not completing his homework, which has resulted in many battles at home. One evening, Jamie's father asked as they prepared to begin the night's homework, "Do you want to do your homework at the kitchen table or at your desk?" Jamie replied, "Oh, my desk will work." They gathered around the desk with Jamie working while his father read.

2. When – choice of the time when the child is going to begin to play or work

Lisa likes to take baths but does not like to brush her teeth and will often tantrum when told to do so. Her mother decided to give her a choice: "Would you like to brush your teeth before or after you take your bath?" Lisa replied, "After." She took her bath, and her mother reminded her about when she chose to brush her teeth.

3. Within – choice of the specific materials the child needs to complete the play or work

On Saturdays, the family usually has a "picnic" lunch in the family room or in the backyard. Family members catch up on everyone's activities. During these lunches, Cory repeatedly leaves the area and goes to the kitchen to retrieve a "different" spoon, fork, knife, plate, bowl, or cup, stating, "I need a different one." Recently, his mother and father have begun nagging Cory to stay with the family and to make do with the items provided. But this approach has made his behavior worse, and now his siblings do not want to participate in the family lunches. As a result, Cory's father decides to provide Cory with a choice of items and says, "We are having soup, crackers, and a drink for lunch. Which of these three bowls [pointing to three choices] do you want your soup in?" Cory selected the green bowl, his soup was poured, and he was prompted to take his soup to the picnic area. (In this case, it may be appropriate for Cory to select all his items and then to carry the selected items on a tray to the area.)

4. Who – choice of with whom the child is going to play or work

At bedtime, Sally often delays going to bed by spending a lot of time in the bathroom brushing her hair. Sally's sister, whose job it is to remind Sally to go to bed, decides to give Sally a choice: "Would you like me, Dad, or Mom to read you a story in bed?" Whomever Sally selects then quickly reads the story.

5. Between/among (order) – choice of what the child is going to play or work on

When the family goes to the park, Lana seems to want to play on whatever piece of equipment her sister is currently on. She typically runs to the equipment and pushes her sister off the equipment, yells at her sister to move, hits her sister until she moves, or pulls at the equipment. On the way to the park, Lana's mother gives her a choice: "This park has swings, slides, scooters, and rings. Lana, which of these do you want to play on first?" Lana replies, "The swings." Her mother then states, "Good, you can play on the swings first. Betsy, which will you play on?" As they leave the car, her mother reminds Lana that she has selected the swings to use first.

Choice Making Strategies for Families (page 3)

6. Terminate – choice of the time the child is going to stop playing or working

John does not like to clean his room. When asked to do so, he pushes or hits his mother until she concedes and says that he can do it later (later never comes). Relatives are coming to visit, and John's mother knows that she needs to prompt him to clean his room. This time she gives Jesus a choice embedded in the prompt: "John, because Grandma is coming to visit, we both need to clean the house. While you clean your bedroom, I will clean the bathroom, but I thought it would be fun if you told us a time we should stop cleaning and take a break. I bought us ice cream sandwiches to reward our hard work. Let's see, it is 10 o'clock – what time after 10:30 should we take a break?" At the time selected by John, his mother comes into his room with the ice cream sandwich and praises his hard work.

7. Future – choice of what the child is going to play or work on in the future

Steve has difficulties seeing tasks to completion. For example, he often begins a game with his brother, but before the game finishes, he will walk away and begin another game by himself or will ask his brother to change games. His brother will no longer play with Steve, and when he refuses, Steve yells and throws toys at him. Steve's mother suggests that his brother provide Steve with a choice, so he says, "Steve, if you agree to play a game of UNO with me for the next five minutes, then you can choose the next game we play for five minutes." Steve replies, "OK, but then I want us to build a fort with Legos." At the end of the five minutes (regardless of whether or not the UNO game is finished), they begin playing with Legos.

8. Tangible – choice of specific items the child needs before, during, or after playing or working

Janice has been told to stop watching television and to sit at the kitchen table to write her birthday thank-you cards. She turns the television off and sits at the kitchen table. Her mother walks by five minutes later and sees Janice still sitting there, twirling her pencil. Janice has not begun her task. Her mother then gives Janice a choice: "Would you like to use a blue pen, a purple gel pen, or a green felt tip pen to write your thank-you cards?" Janice selects the purple gel pen and then quickly finishes the task.

9. Refusal – choice of whether or not to begin or finish playing or working

At Jim's birthday party, a two-team game called "drop the clothespin in the jar" begins while Jim is in the bathroom. When he returns to the party, Jim yells, "I don't want anyone playing that game in my house!" His father tells Jim that the game has already started and that he has the choice of either joining one of the teams or sitting and watching. Jim states that he will sit and watch and ends up cheering both teams on.

10. Alternative – choice of the method (how) the child is going to complete the playing or working

It's Joe's week to set the table, a family chore he neither likes nor does accurately. In fact, the family jokes about what items Joe will place on the table; they have had soup with tea saucers, not bowls, and salad with spoons, not forks. As his sister prepares dinner, his mother models (by placing the items on a mat in a specific order while saying what items are needed for tonight's meal) a completed dinner setting for Joe. She tells that he can set the table by following her example or can decide how he will set the table as long as each place has the correct items. His mother walks away and Joe says, "I'm going to do it my way." He begins setting the table by giving everyone a cup, then a plate, then silverware and a napkin. Joe completes the task accurately but does so by placing the items in the opposite order as was modeled by his mother.

Choice Making Strategies for Families (page 4)

By providing your child with opportunities to make choices during situations where inappropriate behavior is or is not displayed, you are giving your child a lifelong skill. Being able to make a choice, recognize opportunities provided by others to make choices, and initiate choice-making opportunities lays the foundation for independent and successful living. In addition to teaching choice making, you are giving your child logical examples of the consequences of his or her actions.

For example, Jacob and his mother are at a restaurant where the children's lunch options are macaroni and cheese and a hot dog. Jacob does not like hot dogs but chooses to order one for lunch. When the hot dog arrives, he says he does not want it and begins to pout. His mother explains to him that he had two choices (macaroni and cheese or a hot dog) and that he selected the hot dog. Jacob sits with his arms folded, refuses to eat his hot dog, and will not speak to his mother. His mother finishes her meal, and they leave the restaurant. In this situation, the natural consequence for Jacob's choice was made clear – you receive what you choose.

To reinforce choice-making skills in children who display inappropriate behaviors, the family may want to consider the following:

- Be consistent on the number of choices.
- Provide a variety of types of choices.
- Offer multiple choices throughout the day.
- Provide basic (white milk or chocolate milk) to more complex (which video to rent) choices, depending on the child's ability.
- Reinforce the child's choice by providing the item selected.
- Reinforce choice-making opportunities initiated by child ("Can I choose which task to do first?").

Giving a child opportunities to make choices can teach the child more appropriate behaviors to use during less preferred situations and can promote more independent behaviors. Choice making has a long history of being an effective and efficient strategy for teaching children how to become lifelong decision makers.

References

Bannerman, D. J., Sheldon, J. B., Sherman, J. A., & Harchick, A. E. (1990). Balancing the right to habilitation with the right to personal liberties: The rights of people with developmental disabilities to eat too many doughnuts and take a nap. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 23, 79–89.

Jolivet, K., Stichter, J., & McCormick, K. M. (2001). Strategies to promote classroom-based choice making opportunities for students with emotional and behavioral disorders. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Shevin, M., & Klein, N. K. (1984). The importance of choice-making skills for students with severe disabilities. *Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps*, 9, 159–166.

Sigafoos, J. (1998). Choice making and personal selection strategies. In J. K. Luiselli, & M. J. Cameron (Eds.). *Antecedent control: Innovative approaches to behavioral support*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brooks.

An Inclusion Planning Process for Schools (page 1)

The follow describes an Inclusion Support Planning Meeting process. The concept and sequence is based upon a similar process developed by Dr. Kathy Gee and used for more than a decade by the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities at Rhode Island College for its Inclusion Institutes.

STEP 1—Identify the Participants.

First, to be successful, the group discussing the inclusion of students must include a general education teacher at the students' chronological grade level and a special education teacher. Other helpful participants include more than one general or special education teacher, child study team members, related services professionals, technology resource people, paraprofessionals, etc. When planning for one student, that student's *parent* (or parents) is the expert on the child and may also have very helpful information to share. They have in-depth information about their child's interests, strengths, skills already acquired, challenges, communication methods, etc.

The *general education teacher* is the expert on the curriculum and the instructional activities which take place routinely at a student's grade level. The process of brainstorming the appropriate supports, accommodations and/or modifications is tied to the curriculum content and activities described by the general education teacher. Note that, if the discussion is about a student's placement for the following school year, it is most effective to have both the present teacher(s) (for input as to what works and does not work) and teacher(s) who teach at the next grade level and are familiar with the curriculum.

The *special education teacher* is the strategies expert. He/she should have the ability to explain how a disability impacts instruction and the instructional strategies and supports (e.g., adaptations/curricular modifications, personal supports, assistive technology, etc.) that can help students access the curriculum.

STEP 2—Outline the Daily Schedule in the General Education Classroom.

Next, the general education teacher is asked to describe her schedule and the activities that happen routinely on a typical day in her classroom; "What happens from 8:00-9:00 a.m.? 9:00-10:00 a.m.?" etc. The curriculum is the common frame-of reference for this discussion, because it drives the schedule, teacher planning, and classroom activities. It is something that the general education teacher understands well, so this part of the Process involves her meaningfully in the conversation via something she knows well, as well as forms the basis for the discussion about supports. As the teacher speaks, the information is written into a chart (see *Example Chart, Columns 1 and 2*).

Example Chart:

Column 1: Time	Column 2: Class Routine/Activity	Column 3: Adaptations
8:15-8:45: Arrival at School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Students arrive and put away coats, backpacks.➤ They sit at their desks and check the board for daily "Do Now."➤ They write an answer in their journal.➤ A short whole-class discussion follows.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Create a visual checklist to clarify arrival routine steps.➤ Use the checklist to cue students, rather than verbally prompting each step.➤ Adapted journal format on iPad.
8:45-10:30: Language Arts Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Guided reading in groups led by one teacher.➤ The rest of students go through 3 centers, one supervised by a teacher; one supervised by a paraprofessional, the last one is independent.➤ After centers end, students line up to go to Art.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Activities at 3 centers are differentiated.➤ Poster describing appropriate line up and hallway behavior is used to pre-correct line and hall behavior.
10:30-11:30: Art Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Students enter, sit down in groups at tables, and listen to explanation of project.➤ They gather art materials for project and begin.➤ 4 minutes before end, they are told to clean up.➤ Students clean up, then exit the room.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Steps for project visually outlined in a checklist with corresponding picture cues.➤ Areas where materials are stored are clearly labeled.

An Inclusion Planning Process for Schools (page 2)

STEP 3—Brainstorm Student Adaptations and Supports.

Review the schedule of routines and activities from the beginning of the day to the end in order to identify necessary supports, adaptations, and/or modifications to curriculum which could support inclusion in the general education classroom hour by hour. For children with more significant needs, the time segments in the schedule may need to be broken into smaller segments, e.g., 15-30 minutes.

The result should be a list of integrated supports and global adaptations that the teachers can use any time that routine activity is repeated (*see Example Chart, Column 3*). For example, if a child has difficulty taking notes due to a visual or auditory processing problem, there may be several different options a teacher can consider whenever the classroom activity involves note taking: making a copy of the teacher's notes; using a copy of another student's notes; providing a slot note format where the student fills in key words, etc.

Over supporting a student can be as much of a barrier to a student's progress as under supporting them. Use the following analysis to ensure that the supports are no more than necessary:

1. First, does the child require any supports for this activity? Even students with the most complex needs may not need supports every minute of the day. For example, a student who has an aide assigned to her might be capable of participating in teacher selected, heterogeneous group, hanging up her coat, writing in her journal, listening to a read-aloud, etc. without any help from an adult, particularly if peers are encouraged to support each other in the classroom.

2. During the times that the child will requires some kind of support, what is the least intrusive support we can provide? Making class wide adaptations; providing lessons which are differentiated; and ensuring student naturally assist one-another are less intrusive supports than retrofitting accommodations, curricular modifications, and one-to-one aides into the classroom for individual students. For example, establishing class wide behavior expectations and management systems can reduce behavioral challenges making individual behavior intervention plans unnecessary. If the teacher redesigns a test form to make it less confusing for the whole class, it may not be necessary to modify tests for one or more students. Brainstorming ways to take the students' individual supports class wide saves everyone work and confusion while making the student's inclusion more effective.

If it is not possible to come up with a class wide option, consider accommodations which might give the student access, rather than going straight to modifying the curriculum. For example, rather than giving a teacher-made outline to student with learning disabilities who has some difficulty organizing information he has read in the textbook, show him how to use a graphic organizer and text headings to organize his thoughts.

3. If a modification to the curriculum is needed, what will that be? A student with a low incidence disability (e.g., Down syndrome or other developmental disability) may require modifications to the curriculum and modified materials, i.e., be responsible for mastering less than content than the rest of the class and receive modified activities, homework and tests. During the discussion, figure out the process that will be used for making modifications on an ongoing basis. Generally, the general education teacher identifies the most important content concepts for the student to learn/be responsible for. Then the special educator, with input from the general educator, develops modified assignments, homework and tests, finds resources on the child's independent reading level, etc. The paraprofessional can assist in this process, but should never be the one in charge of the child's modifications. Teams should keep these modified materials for future use/ refinement for other students who may require modified materials. Note that the necessity to modify curriculum is *not* a justification for pulling a child out of the general education classroom. N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.2(a)(9).

An Inclusion Planning Process for Schools (page 3)

STEP 4—Identify Times to Address IEP Goals and Plan for Generalization.

Next, the group considers where the student's goals will be addressed. Goals in the area of organization, getting help appropriately, interacting appropriately with peers, self-managing behaviors, reading, writing and math are perfect for addressing in the general education classroom. The discussion focuses on times during the student's day when the student's IEP goals and the classroom activities might intersect (*see figure below*).

Class: Science				
Goals/ Objectives for Student	Class Routine/Activity			
	Entering the class	Short lecture to review previous concept	Directions for lab given	Students work in groups on lab
<i>Initiate communication independently</i>	X			X
<i>Engage with peers in group activity</i>				X
<i>Raise hand to respond to question posed by classroom teacher question</i>		X	X	

Discussion about how the student's progress in their goals will be documented is also useful. For example, a rubric which a teacher uses to grade group work skills (e.g., listening; contributing to the discussion; assisting other group members, etc.) can be used to monitor the progress of a student's social interaction goals in the IEP.

STEP 5—Establish Follow Up Activities and Secure Commitments from Participants.

After the information has been charted, then it must be transcribed and then disseminated to appropriate personnel. The information and chart generated can serve as a valuable form of communication among Child Study Team members, general and special education teachers, specials teachers, and related service providers, to assist with planning, documentation, and program refinement. It is important that the staff in each class be alerted to the specific goals to be addressed and ideas for supporting students' progress during their time together. Staff may also benefit from receiving a *short* student profile for each student that also highlights strengths, interests and the specific goals to be addressed during their time. This profile can be something developed with the input of the student and his family. A positive student profile can also be used to introduce the student to new teachers after transitions occur.

Checklist for Fostering Inclusion and Student Independence

Adapted from the "Inclusion Checklist" published by the Institute on Community Integration (UAP)
<http://www.usd.edu/cd/systemschange/primer/inclusion%20checklist.htm>

The IEP decision making process dictates that selection of student supports be made for each student on an individual, subject-by-subject basis in order to effectively address the student's needs and goals outlined in the IEP. The following questions can be a catalyst for further discussion and support planning:

- Does this student enter the classroom at the same time as typical peers?
- Does this student make transitions within the classroom at the same time as typical peers?
- Does this student exit the classroom at the same time as typical peers?
- Is this student actively involved in class activities and at the same time as typical peers?
- Is this student expected to follow the same classroom and social rules as typical peers?
- Is this student sitting so that they can see and participate in what is going on and easily interact with others?
- Are peers, and not just teachers, encouraged to provide assistance to this student?
- Does this student socialize with peers?
- Do assisting/supervising adults facilitate social interactions by encouraging others to communicate directly with this student?
- Does this student have a way to communicate with others throughout the day?
- Do peers know how to communicate with this student?
- If this student uses an alternative communication system, does everyone understand it?
- Do assisting/ supervising adults provide the least intrusive and least audible supports possible to this student?
- Do assisting/supervising adults encourage this student to notice and respond to natural cues in the environment, instead of providing excessive individual prompts/cues?
- Do assisting/supervising adults replace some of their verbal prompts with teaching this student to use visual cues to remind him-/herself of expectations and procedures (what to do, what comes next, etc.)?
- Is this student actively encouraged by the assisting/ supervising adult to interact with as many other adults as possible to reduce overdependence on one staff member?
- Do assisting/supervising adults circulate throughout the class and work with other students in addition to this student?
- Is this student's independence facilitated by fading direct adult assistance as soon as possible?
- Does this student have frequent opportunities to make choices throughout the day?

Tips for Increasing Student Independence Across School/Class Routines (page 1)

School Routine (When the student...)	Idea for Facilitating Student Independence
<i>Enters the Classroom</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If seats are not assigned, then allow him to choose where to sit and do <i>not</i> pick a seat for him. ➤ Do <i>not</i> sit directly next to him throughout the <i>entire</i> class period (i.e., circulate in the classroom when appropriate).
<i>Is Beginning the Class</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Do <i>not</i> take out his materials (pen, homework, etc.) or open his books for him. ➤ Remind him of what to do to begin class by pointing out what his peers are doing. ➤ Use a task checklist or “to do list” to clarify the work expected of him and exactly how much work is required within a given block of time (i.e., to clarify “when the work will end”). ➤ When appropriate offer choices within tasks (which item to do first, where to work, choice of work partner, etc.). ➤ Remember to give choices <i>prior</i> to interfering behaviors, <i>not</i> in response to them.
<i>Is Given Directions by an Adult Verbally</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Replace some of the <i>verbal</i> prompts with teaching the student to use visual cues to remind himself of what to do, what step comes next, etc. ➤ If you have asked the direction more than once, consider writing it down on a post it note and then using the post it to redirect him (rather than repeating the direction verbally).
<i>Reviews Homework</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Do <i>not</i> get the student’s homework out for him. ➤ Consider organizing his subjects by color (i.e., each subject has its own color), then using this color coding to help him find his homework (i.e., “Math homework is in which color folder?”).
<i>Takes Notes in Class</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have the student highlight key words/phrases in his own copy of powerpoint slides (if powerpoint is used); do not highlight for him. ➤ If possible, make a copy of a reliable peer’s notes for the student.
<i>Listens to a Whole Class Discussion or Lecture</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If he has trouble focusing on the materials, consider getting a list of vocabulary to be discussed from the teacher, then writing the words down. Have the student listen for these target vocabulary words during the discussion/lecture and then check them off or tally when he hears them.
<i>Is Working on an Individual Task or Seat Work</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If the student is working independently, the adult can “check in” with him then move away. ➤ Do <i>not</i> sit directly next to him throughout the <i>entire</i> class period, but circulate in the classroom when appropriate.
<i>Needs to Take a Brief Break</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Facilitate the <i>self-directed</i> implementation of movement breaks (instead of <i>adult-directed</i>) by helping the student recognize his level of attentiveness, then determine what he should do to adjust his attention. ➤ If an adult notices that the student is in need of a movement break, use least intrusive prompting to remind him to self-regulate (i.e., “You look like you’re having trouble concentrating. What do you think you should do?”, etc.).

Tips for Increasing Student Independence Across School/Class Routines (page 2)

<i>Is Participating a Small Group Activity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Allow the student to choose his partner (if appropriate). ➤ Seat the student with the group, <i>not</i> separately with an adult. ➤ The adult should <i>not</i> sit directly next to the student for the duration of the activity. ➤ Give the student a specific role in the group (such as time keeper, note taker, facilitator, etc.). ➤ The student can practice group roles in advance, so that he is better prepared for them. ➤ Prepare the student to participate by having him ask questions of other group members. ➤ Provide the student with a specific question to ask such as “Ask someone a question about _____.”, “What is the most interesting thing you just learned?”, etc.
<i>Is Approaching the End of a Class/Period</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Give the student transition warnings when it is almost time to transition to help him gauge how much time he has left. ➤ Remind the student to check his schedule to see what comes next/where he is going, instead of telling him what is next.
<i>Packs Up to Leave the Class</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ You can assist him, but do <i>not</i> pack up <i>all</i> of his materials for him (he must help with this). ➤ Do <i>not</i> close his books for him. ➤ Remind him of what to do by pointing out what his peers are doing. ➤ If not done earlier, remind the student to check his own schedule to see what comes next and where he is going, instead of <i>telling</i> him what is next.
<i>Is Walking in the Halls (to/from Class)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fade <i>close</i> adult supervision as appropriate. ➤ Encourage the student to “walk ahead” of you and then maintain line of sight supervision, instead of walking directly next to him. ➤ Usually, if a student is moving a short distance for a class, an adult does not need to walk directly next to him during the transition. ➤ If the student is traveling a greater distance, try to partner him with a peer (i.e., “transition buddy”) to accompany him to the destination. ➤ Have him carry his own materials (books, laptop, etc.). If he is not able to do so, ask his teacher or CST how to address the issue—he may need to store certain items in a classroom or stop at his locker more often.
<i>Eats Lunch or Snack/ Is in the Cafeteria</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Do <i>not</i> open packages for him, unless he has a physical disability that prevents him from doing this by himself. ➤ Do <i>not</i> wipe his face for him if he is a messy eater; use a subtle gesture/cue to remind him to clean his own face or have him go to the restroom to clean himself up. If he returns without properly cleaning himself, then remind him to go back to try it again. ➤ If he does have a physical disability, then remind him that he needs to ask for your help in opening something, instead of helping him before he has asked. ➤ Do not “mind read” his wants and/or needs; he must learn to express these himself (verbally, with a gesture or using an augmentative communication device).

Appendix D: References

Checklist for Inclusion published by the Institute on Community Integration (UAP), Retrieved 11/29/12 from <http://www.usd.edu/cd/systemschange/primer/inclusion%20checklist.htm>

Falvey, M., Forest, M., Pearpoint, J., Rosenberg, R. (1994). *All my life's a circle: Using the tools: Circles, Maps, and Path*. Toronto: Inclusion Press.

Forest, M. and Lusthaus, E. (1989). *Promoting educational equality for all students: Circles and Maps*. In S. Stainback, W. Stainback, & M. Forest (Eds.), *Educating all students in the mainstream of regular education* (pp. 43-57). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Holburn, S. and Vietze, P. (1992). *Person centered planning: Research, practice, and future directions*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Kincaid, D. and Fox, L. (2002). *Person centered planning and positive behavior support*. In S. Holburn & P. Vietze (Eds.), *Person centered planning: Research, practice, and future directions* (pp. 29-49). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Mount, B. and Zwernik, K. (1994). *Making futures happen: A manual for facilitators of personal futures planning*. Minnesota Governors Council on Developmental Disabilities.

One Candle Power: Building Bridges into Community Life for People with Disabilities; Beeman, Ducharme, Mount, 1989.

Person Centered Planning: Myths, Misconceptions and Misunderstandings; Angela Novak Amado; printed in the *Arc-Minnesota Newsletter*, 1998.

Speak Up for Yourself and Your Future, K.S. Furney et al. Burlington, VT: Department of Special Education, University of Vermont;1993.

Transition to Adulthood. National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities. Retrieved 11/29/12 from http://www.nichcy.org/EducateChildren/transition_adulthood/Pages/Default.aspx