• **I am a person first.**
  - I am not a disability and I am not an eternal child.
  - I have a unique identity and it’s my own.
• **I can make my own decisions.**
  - Parents and professionals should not decide where and how I live; I should.
  - I should be listened to and allowed to make mistakes.
• **I am equal to all other people.**
  - We as self-advocates must help those who have higher support needs so that their decisions can be understood and respected.
  - I do not believe in stereotypes that say that people with disabilities are less than fully human.
• **I deserve to be treated as an equal in my community. I believe in self-empowerment.**
  - Supports should empower me to make my own decisions, regardless of the degree of my disability.
• **I should be allowed to take risks.**
  - It should be up to me to ask for help from those whom I trust.
  - I should have equal opportunities without regard to race, gender, culture or sexual identity.
  - I must be able to live and learn together with others. I must not be labeled.
  - I must be able to participate fully in my community.
  - Segregation is not acceptable.
• **I have a right to be recognized as the person I am.**
  - Any true understanding of who I am will include knowledge of disability, but I must never be identified as a disability label.
  - Institutions are bad for people.
  - Institutions destroy everything that makes life worth living.
  - We must close down every institution and liberate every one of our sisters and brothers who are wasting away.
• **We hold these truths to be self-evident and it seems like common sense to me.**

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**Fostering Independence**

Supporting teaching,
and
discouraging learned helplessness

Bob Braun
Director of Teaching and Learning
Southwest/West Central Service Cooperatives
1. The Importance of Self Advocacy.
2. Start the Transition Process Early.
3. Graduation From High School Means the “END” of FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education)
4. Fostering Independence
5. Understanding the Provisions for Transition in IDEIA 2004* Legislation, and the Rights and Responsibilities of ADA and Section 504
6. The importance of a Student Centered I.E.P and the need for parent participation.
7. The importance of Work Experiences (Job Shadowing, Volunteering, Work Experiences)
8. The Importance of Life-Skills Training
9. The Transfer of Rights (Age of Majority)*
10. What Resources are Available, Where to Find Them and When to Start Looking for them
Ruler Of My Domain

NOODLING
Why build independence?

• Develops self advocacy skills
• Provides bridge between school and adult world
• Motivates a personal desire to achieve
• Builds self esteem
• Shifts the responsibility/ownership for learning from adult to the student
• Increases social acceptance/opportunities
• Promotes a sense of purpose for family
• Allows student to focus on instruction
• Create a positive atmosphere for learning.

Think Positive!
What hinders independence?

- Overuse of adult assistance
- **Time (easier to do myself)**
- Family – guilt, denial, grief
- Lack of a systematic plan

Activity #1

In small groups, discuss what other obstacles stand in the way of independence?
Other possible obstacles

- Lack of ongoing communication
- Testing requirements
- Lack of staff training
- Lack of self esteem-motivation, confidence, understanding of disability
- Lack of experiences-sheltered environment, few opportunities to generalize in natural occurring environments
- Social isolation-pull out service

What enhances independence?

- Let students make mistakes and take risks
- Plan for fading support in the IEP
- Peer support
- Create a positive atmosphere
Taking Risks

Activity #2

In small groups, discuss what enhances independence?
Enhancing Independence

Enhancing independence

• Family
  1. parent involvement in the IEP process
  2. parent training
  3. acceptance and understanding of the disability

• School
  1. staff training
  2. shared goals/objectives for fostering independence

• Self esteem
  1. peer support
  2. self-determination skills

• Experiences
  1. job shadowing
  2. risk taking
  3. allowing to make mistakes

• Resources
  1. appropriate AT
  2. interagency involvement
  3. list of available resources
Without a systematic plan these are the three deadly accommodations:

1. Extended time
2. Adult support
3. Curriculum modifications

Without a systematic plan the things that enhance can become a hindrance!

A Systematic Plan
Tips for Educators

Supporting teaching, fostering independence and discouraging learned helplessness.

- Promote Peer Relationships
- School Culture
- Maintain Student Dignity
- Let Students Make Mistakes and Take Risks
- Give as Few Prompts as Possible
- Help Students Create Authentic Work
- Encourage Students to Make Choices
- Avoid Isolation
- Setting up Environment to Maximize Independence
- Maintain Ongoing Communication with Staff
- Watch Your Voice and Volume
- Multi-task in the Classroom

Tips for Educators

Supporting teaching, fostering independence and discouraging learned helplessness.

Facilitate Peer Relationships

Give students the space and freedom to socialize and develop friendships.

1. Close proximity can have a negative social impact and reduce peer interaction
   Negative proximity:
   - Sitting directly next to student
   - Maintaining physical contact with student
   - Accompany student everywhere in the school setting
   - Allowing student to sit on lap
Positive proximity:
• Back away from student when at all possible
• Only sit with the student when absolutely necessary
• Encourage and allow them to sit with peers

2. Give students the opportunity to develop friendships and relationships
• Give students the space and freedom to socialize
• Remind others to communicate directly with student
• Let students choose their own seat or place in the classroom
• Allow peers to support or help students with disabilities
  (Interact with peers at recess or PE)
• Assist in getting the student to activities in the school setting
  (lunch room)
• Don’t interfere with work groups
  (Examples: Acting as a partner, dominating conversation)

3. Disability Awareness
   Peer education about disability
   Circle of friends
   Build bridges not barriers

Facilitate Peer Relations
School Culture

Set Expectations
1. "We don't do that here"
2. Create a safe zone
3. Don't ignore bullying
4. Model appropriate behaviors
5. Be an “accidental mentor” for tolerance, kindness and inclusiveness
6. Every adult is an “accidental mentor”
7. Promote respect for self and others

Keeping it Positive

• Focus on strengths and strategies
• Make sure to identify as many strengths as possible when developing a positive behavior plan, IEP, or simply as a communication tool for team members.
• Can be especially helpful when transitioning a student from teacher to teacher or school to school
Why focus on **Strengths** and **Strategies**?

- **Strengths List:**
  - Provides positive and useful information about the student regarding strengths, abilities, interests, gifts and talents

- **Strategies List:**
  - Answers the question of “What works for this student?”
  - Should contain strategies for motivating, supporting, encouraging, helping, teaching, and connecting with the student

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**Maintaining Dignity**
**Maintain Student Dignity**

Assume the student can do it! Be discreet about the student’s physical needs. Schedule tube feedings, splint adjustments, stretching exercises and toileting for in between classes.

1. Accommodations should avoid separating them from their peers in the instructional setting.
2. Accommodations should avoid drawing unusual attention to them.
3. Accommodations should avoid limiting their educational opportunities.
4. Accessible seating should not isolate or be located in inconvenient places – ADA.
5. Use an appropriate private setting to meet the medical needs of the student.
6. Do not talk about a student when he/she is present.

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**Empathy and Building Connections**

- Connection is our ability to forge meaningful, authentic relationships with other people.

- Connection is on a continuum – on one end is EMPATHY and on the other side is SHAME.
Empathy and Shame

- Empathy – what moves us toward deep meaningful relationships.
  - Empathy is about being with people in their vulnerabilities

- Shame – what unravels our relationships and connections with other people
  - Shame is an intensely painful feeling or belief that we are flawed and somehow inadequate and unworthy of connection

SHAME

They blame themselves and feel something is innately wrong with them

Shame breeds three things
  - FEAR
  - BLAME
  - DISCONNECTION

How do we practice courage in a culture where we are incredibly afraid of not fitting in?

Shame is likely to cause destructive behaviors
  - addiction, aggression, violence, bullying, depression.
Shame vs. Guilt

*Shame is “I am bad.”

*Guilt is “I did something bad.”

*Shame corrodes the part of us that believes we can change

*Guilt motivates change

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Let students make mistakes, take risks

Everyone learns from mistakes. Allow natural consequences to be part of the student’s classroom experience.

1. Do not rescue
2. Provide students with the necessary strategies and accommodations as designated on the IEP
3. Learn as much as you can about the student (types of accommodations/strategies the student needs)
4. Allow natural consequences to be part of the student’s classroom experience
   - Natural consequences are those things that happen in response to a student’s behavior without adult involvement. Example: refusal to eat = hungry
   - Refrain from repeating verbal demands
5. One of the best ways to learn is from your mistakes
6. When a student makes a mistake it should not be viewed as negative
7. Responsibility is learning from your mistakes
8. Self determination is learned by understanding that it is okay to take risks and make mistakes
9. The only way to not make mistakes is by doing nothing

M - MISTAKES ARE PERMITTED HERE
Y - YOUR BEHAVIOR EQUALS A CHOICE
S - PEAK FOR YOURSELF
E - VERY PROBLEM IS AN OPPORTUNITY
L - LEVEL OF RISK IS YOUR CHOICE
F - FINDING SOLUTIONS IS THE FOCUS

Possible activities to help student remember MYSELF

• Develop a PowerPoint presentation
• Develop a portfolio
• Create a poster
Give as Few Prompts as Possible

Foster independence. Fade out hand-over-hand assistance and use it to teach a task, not to complete a task. Resist the temptation to give verbal

**Cues** – an initial/natural request made by an adult to the student to follow a direction or begin/complete a task.

**Prompt** – refers to additional information, assistance, or guidance given to a student following a cue.

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**Levels of Prompts**

**Full Physical Assistance (FPA):** Hand-over-hand assistance to complete the task (respond correctly). This level of prompt is usually used to teach a motor response; for example, when teaching how to purposely use a new toy or object; how to complete a task and put in a finished box, etc…

**Partial Physical Assistance (PPA):** This is a less intrusive physical prompt. Partial physical assistance may involve touching the student's hand to initiate the response and providing minimal physical guidance to get the desired response.

**Modeling (M):** Showing the student what you want him/her to do without physically touching. This type of prompt requires that the student have good imitation skills, typically not true of students with autism.

**Gesturing (G):** Pointing, facial expression, mouthing words silently or indicating the physical movement you want the student to do.

**Verbal Prompt (V):** There are two types of verbal prompts: 1-is a direct statement of what to do or say. For example, “Come here.” “Put it in the trash.” Use of this level of prompt requires that the student understand the direction. 2-is an indirect statement that tells the student something about what is expected, but not exactly. For example, “What next?” “Where does it go?”

**Independent (I):** The student is able to perform the task on his/her own, with no prompts or assistance. **THIS IS THE GOAL!**
Effective Prompting
Providing information, assistance, or guidance following a natural cue

- Allow students an opportunity to follow a “natural cue” before giving an additional prompt.
- Provide reinforcement for a correct response.
- Reinforce generously and with sincerity.
- Provide verbal praise.
- Use positive “I” statements: “I like the way you got started quickly.”
- Do not prompt for a skill that can be performed independently.
- Gain the student’s attention before the prompt.
- Use the least intrusive, effective prompt.
- Prompt a desired response initially.
- Prompt from behind when using physical prompts.
- Use nonverbal prompts when possible.
- Avoid unplanned prompts (facial expressions, eye contact)
- Prompt in conjunction with reinforcement.
- Fade prompts over time and as quickly as possible to avoid prompt dependency.
- Prompt, then back away, to allow independent time.
- Use familiar vocabulary when giving verbal prompts.
- Allow sufficient time for a response – consider student’s rate of processing.

2. Fading – the process of gradually and systematically reducing the amount of assistance
A. Fading allows the student to move from responding to additional instructional prompts to responding to natural cues
B. Fading is the reduction of intensity of prompts over time while maintaining the reinforcement
C. Prompts can be faded in intensity, location and frequency
   1. Intensity: verbal, visual and physical
   2. Location: full physical and proximity
   3. Frequency: fewer prompts and more time between prompts
D. A fade plan should be based on
   1. Students strengths and area of need
   2. Expectations of environment
   3. Current levels of support
   4. Capitalizing on strengths and minimizing weaknesses
E. Fading Plan (handout 2)

   1. Continuous support
   2. Partial support
   3. Decreased supervision
   4. Independence

Don’t Forget!
## Fading Plan

### Continuous Support
- The paraprofessional is with the student during class time.
- The paraprofessional is in close proximity to the student throughout the class period.
- Prompts are delivered by the paraprofessional as needed and immediately.

### Partial Support
- The paraprofessional is with the student during class time.
- The paraprofessional is within 10-15 feet of the student.
- If a prompt is needed, the paraprofessional delivers the prompt only after the student has been allowed sufficient time and opportunity to respond independently.
- If necessary, the paraprofessional re-teaches the targeted skill.
- The classroom teacher begins to provide the necessary prompts.

### Decreased Support
- The distance between the student and paraprofessional is increased. The paraprofessional may wait near the door of the classroom or may provide assistance to the classroom teacher or other students.
- Any prompts are delivered after an increased time delay, allowing the student sufficient time and opportunity to respond independently.
- If the student does not respond independently, the paraprofessional delivers the prompt and/or re-teaches the targeted skill.
- The classroom teacher continues to provide prompts.

### Independence
- The paraprofessional does not enter the classroom.
- The student is independent.

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## Authentic Work

![Image of a person working on a snow-covered car]

The task of authentic work demonstrates the individual's ability to perform tasks independently in real-world settings, even during challenging conditions like snowy weather.
Help Students Create Authentic work

Students learn when they actively participate in assignments. Avoid completing assignments, taking tests, or answering questions for students. Show caregivers their child's genuine work and progress.

1. Watch before assisting
2. Allow extra processing response time before assisting
3. Provide less and less assistance – this allows the student to gain more confidence and take more risks
4. Use assistive technology when appropriate

Making Choices
Encourage Students to Make Choices

Give students the ability to control their lives and interact with the environment. Offer choices to the student no matter how insignificant they may seem.

1. Let activities flow naturally
2. Give students the opportunity to control their lives and to interact with their environment
3. Offer choices to the student no matter how insignificant they may seem
4. Relinquish control!!! Give control to the student!!
5. Allow students to fail
6. Bombard students with choices
7. Be flexible – realize that all students learn, study and work differently, based on their sensory needs and learning styles

Avoid Isolation
**Avoid Isolation**

Avoid removing the student from the natural environment for instruction. Encourage participation with peers.

1. Allow students to be in a rich social environment – they can learn from watching their peers
2. Keep students in close proximity of their peers
3. What activities are others doing?
4. How might the activities be modified to accommodate the students special needs?
Setting up environment to maximize independence

A. Classroom Arrangement
   Are there special concerns?
   What materials/equipment are available?
   Make materials/equipment available to student. Example: Cue Cards- to ask for help or to help meet needs.

B. Prepare materials ahead of time – look at daily schedule

C. Know the teachers routine and how they operate

D. How are the attitudes and expectations of the people in the environment likely to affect the student.

E. Organize work area. Examples:
   1. PortaBook
   2. Mess-B-Gone
   3. Pen Grip

PortaBook

Compact lightweight bookstand that opens to 5 different angles, holds books open & stores flat to carry easily. Can also be used to carry papers, pens, and pencils when closed.

$19.95
**Mess B Gone**

An exciting new in-desk dividing and organization system. The two interlocking arms adjust to match desk size and separate the student’s desk into four areas. Labels for each area can be placed on the inside surface of the desk top, so students remember what items go in each space.

$29.99

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**Pen Grip**

The answer to misplaced "runaway" pens. The Pen Grip can be attached to the side of a desk or locker and it easily holds in place up to 7 pens, pencils or scissors, ready for immediate removal and use. Available in a variety of colors.

$6.50
German Coast Guard

Maintaining good communication

Maintain Ongoing Communication with Staff

You are not alone. Ask for direction in the classroom. Request assistance with content decisions and curriculum modifications and accommodations.

1. Ask for help when needed
2. Develop good rapport with teacher
3. Schedule time to talk daily/weekly
4. Use communication log
5. Ask for a list of daily activities
6. Write down key information as it occurs to help facilitate discussion
   Ask for a list of items the student will need throughout the day
   (put together a Para-Pack)
ASKING FOR DIRECTIONS

Watch your voice and volume

Discussion with other adults or students during instruction can be disruptive to the class. Save important discussions for after class.

1. Discussions with other adults or students during instruction time can be disruptive to the class
   • Save important discussion for after class
   • Realize that if a student does not understand the verbal instruction of the teacher, additional verbal instruction may only make things worse. It will not allow them to hear the next part of the information (word overload)
   • Use alternative methods to words (visuals-write the instructions down)
   • Gestures (point to page numbers, problems, reading assignments)
Watch Your Voice and Volume

Multi-task in the Classroom

Time away from the student’s side promotes independence. Use class lectures as an opportunity to program a communication device, plan accommodations or modifications, and develop curriculum materials.

Multitasking in classroom
1. Time away from student promotes independence
2. Beware of proximity
3. Use lecture time as an opportunity to set up environment
4. Use lecture time to do alternate task (programming communication devices, planning accommodations, preparing materials)
The World Series

Multi-tasking!

Summary of Performance

(SOP)

Individuals With Disabilities Education Act 2004
The Summary of Performance (SOP) is required under the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004. The language as stated in IDEA 2004 regarding the SOP is as follows:

For a child whose eligibility under special education terminates due to graduation with a regular diploma, or due to exceeding the age of eligibility, the local education agency "shall provide the child with a summary of the child’s academic achievement and functional performance, which shall include recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child’s postsecondary goals" 20 USC 1414(c) (5) (B) (ii).

The Summary of Performance must be completed during the final year of a student’s high school education. The timing of completion of the SOP may vary depending on the student’s postsecondary goals. If a student is transitioning to higher education, the SOP, with additional documentation, may be necessary as the student applies to a college or university. Likewise, this information may be necessary as a student applies for services from state agencies such as vocational rehabilitation and/or developmental disabilities.

The Summary of Performance is most useful when linked with the IEP process and the student has the opportunity to actively participate in the development of this document.

Student Information:
Student Name: _______________________________
Final Case manager: __________________________
Date of Birth _________   Age: ________
Primary Disability: __________________________
Address:
________________________________________
________________________________________
Street: ______________________________ (City, State) (Zipcode)
Phone Number: ___________________________ E-mail address: _______________________
Attending School/District: __________________________
Year of Graduation/exit: __________________________

Students Post-secondary Goals – This section should be completed with the student using information from the present IEP/IIIP. Unless plans have changed since the development of the most recent IEP/IIIP, the post secondary goals may be transferred here.

Employment:
Education:
Home/Independent Living:
Community/Recreation and Leisure:
Academic Achievements:
BST/MCA Scores
Writing: ________   Math: ________   Reading: ________
Effective Accommodations: (a support or service that is provided to help a student fully access the general education curriculum or subject matter, does NOT change the content of what is being taught or the expectations that the student meet a performance standard applied for all students)

Assistive Technology: (any device that helps a student with a disability function in a given environment)

Adult/Community Contacts: (coordination with outside agencies/personnel)

Agency: Status: Name/Position: Phone: Agency: Status: Name/Position: Phone: Agency: Status: Name/Position: Phone: Agency: Status: Name/Position: Phone:

Student's Self Advocacy Statement: (to be completed by student)

1. My disability is:

2. I need these accommodations:

3. My learning style is:

4. I know I can succeed when:

5. I would like people to know that:

Date completed: ____________________ Completed by:________________

Ways to Step Back: Classroom Collaboration

(Adapted from Hudson 1997)

1. Acknowledge your impulse to make student’s days go smoothly. There is a reason you chose the helping profession.

2. Pause before answering or helping.

3. Schedule in advance a brief task or time period when you commit to no intervention no matter what (unless safety is compromised.) See what happens. Reintroduce assistance only as needed.

4. Sit further away. If you have been within arm’s reach, sit just within earshot. If you have been sitting just within earshot, sit across the room.

5. Take data instead. Keep a tally of the number of times in a lesson students appropriately attend.

6. Unless you are the classroom teacher, catch yourself before you correct students’ work. Remember, this is about the student’s learning skills, not yours.

7. Teach students to decline assistance by saying, “Thanks, but please let me try it by myself.”

8. Phase out cues.
9. Have students discreetly ask their classmates for information (what page are they on, what are the school lunch choices, to whom is the teacher referring).

10. Remind yourself that you are stepping back so that students can become independent. It’s harmful when you cover for them. Don’t be responsible for holding them back.

11. Make sure that team members (especially the teacher and the principal) know your reasons for stepping back so it doesn’t seem like you are shirking your responsibilities.

12. Clock how long it takes for students to do things independently. The extra time to start zippers, pick up dropped papers, or find page numbers may seem eternal but actually last only a few seconds.

13. Tell other adults in the classroom that you’re going to step back and ask them to remind you when you should do this if you forget.

14. With the classroom teacher, write a plan for how to build independence. What is the time frame for stepping back? What specific skills are you working on? When will you know when the student is independent in the task?

15. Let classroom teachers serve as a clearinghouse for all questions or needs. Students ask their classroom teachers. The classroom teachers then decide to a) respond themselves b) delegate to other adults or students to help, or c) ask the students to try to work it out alone.

16. Let your students make mistakes and get into trouble. Further, allow them to take responsibility for their actions/behaviors. It is part of the human experience.

17. Post a sign. “Could I be doing less?” to remind you to step back
How Men Screw Up Romance

Questions?

• Contact:

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