

**Teens and Troubleshooting and  
Transitions...Oh My!  
Lessons Learned on Transition Plans that  
Will Make a Difference for Your Young Adult**

**Workshop with  
Dr. Jacqui Kelleher, Vermont's State  
Director of Special Education and  
Parent of Four Children with  
Disabilities**

## Our Purpose Today

- Jacqui Kelleher is the parent of adult twin sons with disabilities and she will share her experiences, lessons learned, and pitfalls to be avoided as she and her boys navigated transitioning to adulthood in the special education process.
- Please use chat!

# Our Story



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## IDEA and Transition

### 300.320 *Definition of individualized education program.*

- *This section, focused on transition services, is a part of a much larger set of IEP requirements. Beginning at age 16 (or before if appropriate), an annual IEP must have appropriate measurable postsecondary goals, include transition services and courses of study, and include a statement that the child has been informed of the child's rights transferring at the age of majority.*

## IDEA and Transition

- (b) *Transition services*. Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually, thereafter, the IEP must include—
- Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and
- The transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals.



## IDEA and Transition

- (c) *Transfer of rights at age of majority.* Beginning not later than one year before the child reaches the age of majority under State law, the IEP must include a statement that the child has been informed of the child's rights under Part B of the Act, if any, that will transfer to the child on reaching the age of majority under §300.520.

## IDEA and Transition

*Transfer of rights at age of majority.* Beginning not later than one year before the child reaches the age of majority under State law, the IEP must include a statement that the child has been informed of the child's rights under Part B of the Act, if any, that will transfer to the child on reaching the age of majority under §300.520.

# IDEA and Transition

**300.43** *Transition services.* This section provides IDEA's definition for "transition services."

(a) *Transition services* means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that-

(1) Is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, and/or community participation;

# IDEA and Transition

- (2) Is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and includes-
  - Instruction;
  - Related services;
  - Community experiences;
  - The development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives; and
  - If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.
- (b) *Transition services* for children with disabilities may be special education, if provided as specially designed instruction, or a related service, if required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education.

# Transition Considerations

What will your son or daughter need to learn to move from “here” to “there”? Parents of children with disabilities want to help their children achieve their own dreams. This requires early planning and the active involvement of your child as much as is possible in the process. As parents, your involvement in the transition process includes:

- becoming aware of options
- inviting new people into your child’s life
- staying flexible
- asking questions
- sharing what you know about your child
- advocating for your child’s needs

As you plan and help define clear goals and dreams with your child, you will increase his or her chances of achieving those goals and dreams.



# Transition Considerations

## Student Involvement

### Assessments as Tools

#### Be able to have conversations with your IEP Team:

What does the young person want to do with his or her life? What are his or her dreams, aspirations, or goals?

What are the young person's needs, abilities, and skills?

Will the young person attend the transition IEP conference?

How do young people develop self-advocacy skills?

What are the programs, services, accommodations, or modifications the young person wants or needs?

What kinds of accommodations will students need when they go on to higher education or employment?

Who will be responsible for what part of the transition plan in the IEP?

Should the educational and transition programs emphasize practical or academic goals?

If a student plans on going to college, is he or she taking the courses needed to meet college entrance requirements?

Are work experience classes appropriate to reach employment goals?

Who will attend the IEP meeting? What community agencies might be present (vocational rehabilitation, etc.)? Parents may request that a specific community agency be invited to the IEP meeting if the youth is or may be using services from that agency. Becoming familiar with adult service systems or agencies now can be helpful in making future decisions

# IEP and Self-Advocacy

- Students who participate in their own IEP meetings often know more about their disability, rights, goals, and accommodations/modifications than those students that choose not to participate. We encourage all students to be a part of their IEP meetings.
  - What Teagen and Tyler did
  - Practice or role-play participation in your IEP meeting. Through this participation, you have the opportunity to practice many skills that will help facilitate independence, ability to overcome obstacles, and ability to lead more self-determined lives.

# IEP and Self-Advocacy: Advice from the Twins

- It is important to advocate and speak up for yourself and for things that are important to you
- If decisions are made at your planning meetings that you disagree with, you might be able to appeal the decision.
- You do have rights as a student, but that you also have to be reasonable about what you want.
- If you want to be taken seriously, you have to be prepared when you go into your meeting.
- Difference between being assertive and being aggressive - you don't get anywhere by being aggressive.

# IEP and Self-Advocacy: Advice from the Twins

- Other tips
  - listening
  - be a good team player
  - a team is a group of people who work together for a common goal
  - the goal of the team is to write an educational program that will be the best possible program to prepare you to become an adult
  - each member of the team has different skills and that having all those people with different skills on your team is a good thing!

# Postsecondary School Challenges

- Professors and staff are not prepared/faculty attitudes - University lacks professional development
- Peer attitudes
- Accommodations/Modifications
- Student lacks “college” Behaviors/Skills (including Social)
- Student Support Services/lack of social support within the university environment



# Postsecondary School Challenges

- Campus Climate

- Disclosure of hidden disabilities, such as learning disabilities, other health impairments like ADHD or psychiatric disabilities pose unique implications for students with disabilities, often involving labels which carry significant stereotypes and societal stigmatization.
- Self-advocacy related to disability documentation and disclosure is often a major issue for many students.
- Negative attitudes from others, physical barriers on campus, a lack of appropriate services and programs, and funding to improve those services and programs

# Transition Planning and Preparation

- Considerations...let's focus on Student Behaviors/Skills
  - Communication skills
  - Social skills and class participation
    - Identify and address social needs and navigate challenging situations
  - Sensory Differences
  - Motor Skills: gross and fine motor
  - Learning style
  - Coping skills
  - Physical appearance: etiquette, networking, attire, etc.

# Transition Planning and Preparation

- Considerations...let's focus on Student Behaviors/Skills
  - Develop strategies for self-advocacy, organization, time management, planning and prioritizing, studying, goal-setting, problem-solving, self-monitoring, decision-making, negotiation, stress management, and self-awareness.
  - Identify tools and strategies to address obstacles in facilities
  - Provide strategies for becoming active members of the campus community (club involvement, inter-murals, service learning placements, etc.)

# Commentary on Employment – For Students

When or before you turn 14:

- Talk with your parents and teachers about what kind of job you want.
- Understand the State's graduation programs.
- Work with your school and parents to make sure that you take the classes you need for the job you want.
- Complete interest and career inventories.
- Talk about your career interests and skills or any jobs that you have already had.
- Find out about career options.
- Ask about developing a graduation plan.
- Talk about your needs for assistive technology when working.
- Request a functional vocational assessment if you need it.

# Commentary on Employment – For Students

When you are 14-16:

- Find out about education or training requirements for a job that you want.
- Talk with your IEP Team to write your work goals for after graduation.
- Review classes that you need for your job interest, including career and technical education programs.
- Learn how to apply for a job.
- Learn how to interview for a job and practice.
- Talk about supports you will need to get and keep a job.
- Learn about any agencies that might help you with training and getting a job, and invite those agencies to your IEP Team meetings.
- Find out what you will need to help you get to a job, including taking the bus or the train.
- Keep a list of your job experiences or volunteer work or clubs, sports, and activities.
- Begin a résumé and update, as needed.
- Complete a functional vocational assessment if you need it.
- Build social communication skills and learn time management.



# Commentary on Employment – For Students

When or before you turn 18:

- Participate in your IEP meeting to review and update your work goals.
- Contact agencies that might help you with training and getting a job.
- Invite any people from agencies that might help you with training/getting a job to your IEP meeting.
- Work with your transition coordinators to develop your Summary of Performance.
- Find sources for job listings.
- Learn about the cost for job training and additional education.
- Develop a list of references.
- Finalize your résumé.
- Apply for jobs.

# Lessons Learned from a Mama



# Conclusion



# Conclusion



# Parting Reflection





# Reference

- Mom's Card image: [C5588BDG Funny Birthday Card: Vintage Mother Was Right - Greeting Cards 745469186734 | eBay](#)