

Parent as Partners in the Transition Planning Process

Parents are *important* in planning for their child's future. They help professionals learn about youths' strengths and needs and are active and knowledgeable participants in transition planning. Parents assist youth in exploring interests related to living and work questions, are part of discussions, and help develop postsecondary and employment goals.

Parents have a positive impact on a youth's work readiness, career exploration, and workplace success. They help youth complete transition related activities, learn about what questions to ask when looking at employment options and postsecondary agencies and services. Parents can assist by engaging their own networks for experience opportunities, mentors, job leads and other supports. *Parents are significant partners in their child's transition to adulthood.*

Did you know that parent and family involvement is a predictor of postsecondary success?

The most accurate predictor of a student's school achievement is the extent to which a family encourages learning. Parent and family involvement is a predictor of postsecondary success. The most accurate predictor of a student's school achievement is the extent to which a family encourages learning.

Family involvement predicts:

- Increased postsecondary success
- Meaningful employment

Transition-age youth whose families are more involved in their schools are more likely to have had regular paid jobs while in school (National Transition Longitudinal Study/NTLS). Families are often the first, most knowledgeable, and most consistent "case manager" youth with disabilities have.

[\(InfoBrief NCWD Issue 27 April 2011\)](#)

Parents:

- Who have high expectations build upon the young person's strengths, interests, and needs and fosters their ability to achieve independence and self-sufficiency.
- Are involved in lives and assisting them toward adulthood.

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- Have access to information about employment, further education, and community resources.
- Take an active role in transition planning with schools and community partners.
- Have access to medical, professional, and peer support networks.
- Are valuable members of the team having the most fundamental information about their youth with disabilities.
- Are motivated and encourage their children to become self-advocates and directors of their own futures.

Parents tap into their own personal and professional networks, expanding the opportunities for learning and employment. Until the youth with disabilities learns how to take the lead, families *are* the experts on their youth with disabilities. Their active involvement can make the difference between success and failure.

Why are they important?

- Help professionals learn about youth's strengths and needs
- Assist in exploring interests related to living and work
- Learn about what questions to ask when looking at postsecondary agencies and services
- Parents can assist by engaging their own networks for experience opportunities, job leads and other supports
- Provide insight to cultural beliefs that may shape their vision for the youth's transition to adulthood
- Learn about what questions to ask when looking at postsecondary agencies and services
- Build work skills at home
- Help youth interact appropriately with others and learn importance of maintaining appropriate personal appearance for work and practice soft skills necessary for successful employment
- Play a role in career exploration
- Support success in the workplace

How can parents be involved?

There are many ways parents can be involved in transition planning. The first place to start may be in helping them identify their needs by participating in a [Parent Transition Needs Survey](#) and having parents participate with their child's team some

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person-centered planning processes to help identify the family and youth's vision for the future.

They can:

- Start a [Family Transition Planning Folder](#)
- Have conversations with your child's team
- Maintain high expectations
- Attend transition fairs
- Become familiar with the agencies your child may work with as a young adult
- Learn about employment and postsecondary opportunities
- Have conversations with your child about their future
- Connect with [Vermont Family Network](#) to learn more about the transition process

Resources

Briefs

- [Parent Tips in Transition Planning \(PACER\)](#)

Video

- [Rachel Magario on the Role of Parents \(PACER\)](#)