Building a Transition Assessment Toolkit

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What is a Transition Assessment Toolkit?

- Who is it for?
- What kind of information is needed?
- What resources should be in it?
- How should information & resources be presented?

Table of Contents

Rationale

- Defining Transition Assessment
  - Definitions
  - What it is… what it is not
  - Purpose and Importance of Transition Assessment
    - Why assess?
- IDEA and Transition Assessment
  - Plus state/district policies
- How to Assess during Transition
  - Transition Assessment Timelines/Checklists: When to assess, what to assess, who will assess…
  - Considerations for assessment
  - Guiding Questions
- Family and Student Involvement

Types of Assessments & Methods

- Formal vs Informal Assessments
  - Definition
  - Types
  - Pros and Cons
- Assessments by Domain
  - Career Development & Employment
  - Postsecondary Education & Training
  - Independent Living & Community Involvement
- Summarizing and Sharing Results
  - Summary of Performance
  - Outside Agencies
  - Family/student
**Toolkit Example:**

**Defining Transition Assessment**

**What it is:**
- Ongoing and cumulative
- Individualized
- Based on student’s strengths, needs, interests and goals
- A PROCESS whereby the student self-aware
- Used to develop appropriate postsecondary goals

**What it is not:**
- Done once a year
- The same assessment for every student
- Only completed before the IEP to fill out the transition forms
- Only the special educator’s responsibility

Adapted from: B. Charton (2007). Arkansas Dept of Ed Transition Assessment Toolkit

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**Example from Toolkit:**

**Goals of Transition Assessment**

- Students make informed choices
  - learn more about themselves
- Students take charge of the transition process
  - Use information from assessments to become self-determined and achieve outcomes
- Students understand skills needed for postschool environments
  - Compare future skills to current level of functional & academic performance
- Students develop postsecondary goals
  - Education/training; employment; independent living
- Student continue to define and refine goals
  - Ongoing !!

Adapted from: DeFauw & Roalson (nd) Building a Toolkit of Transition Assessments. Illinois

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**Purpose of Transition Assessment**

Facilitating a self-awareness…

through informing, discussing, and providing transition services by…

- Identifying students’ strengths, interests and preferences
- Determining post-secondary goals
- Developing relevant learning experiences (instruction) & transition services
- Identifying supports (linkages) needed to accomplish post-secondary goals
- Evaluating instruction and supports.


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**Example from Toolkit:**

**State Regulations & District Policies/Procedures**

**District Policy:**
NAME School District has determined that all entering freshman’s IEPs must include all transition components. This encompasses the following requirements and components of the IEP:
- Student must be invited to attend the IEP meeting
- Measurable postsecondary goals in 3 out of the 4 areas (employment, education, training, and when appropriate independent living)
- The measurable postsecondary goals must be derived from age appropriate transition assessments
- Transition supports and activities must directly align to postsecondary goals
- completion of the transition plan, which includes current transition activities, coordinated transition activities, and multi-year course of study
- Completion of age of majority section at the appropriate time (one year prior to 17th birthday)
- Completion of Summary of Performance at the appropriate time

NAME SD’s broad district policy on transition assessment is that it needs to involve more than just the student. Information should be gathered from a variety of people who have knowledge of the individual student like parents, teachers, community partners, employers, post-secondary institutions, etc. This should be individualized based on the student. Transition assessments can either be formal or informal. The process needs to be: ongoing, have a clear purpose, be individualized, and integrate into the transition plan.
How to Assess during Transition

- Transition Assessment Timelines/Checklists:
- Considerations for Assessment
- Guiding Questions for Assessment
  - When to assess
  - What to assess
  - Who will assess...

Example Checklists & Timelines...


Transition Timeline

Identify interests, learning styles, begin career exploration; practice self-awareness, self-advocacy, self-advocacy, and skills needed; identify expected graduation year

Review interests, aptitude, perspectives, a & p goal; attend to appropriate courses; job & career exploration; agencies & organizations; complete graduation status; credit or diploma

Graduate, employment, independent living, fully employed, work readiness skills, housing options, life skills, summary of performance


Transition Assessment Implementation Timeline

Suggestions for Assessment

- Who am I?
- What are my interests and abilities?
- What is my goal for work?
- What are my strengths and weaknesses?
- What are my barriers to employment?
- What is my plan for employment?
- What are my skills for success?
- How will I make sure I am on track?
- What is my next step?
- What is my next goal?
- What is my next action?

From: http://www.nsttac.org/content/age-appropriate-transition-assessment-toolkit-0

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TC Self-Study: Building a Transition Assessment Toolkit
Family and Student Involvement: What is Their Role?

• Role that Families and Students should play
  – Sharing unique information
  – Provide information about strengths, needs, interests
  – Expectations for future aspirations
  – Cultural considerations

• Involving Families and Students
  – Providing information (letters, brochures, videos)
  – Determining assessment methods
  – Collecting relevant information
  – Sharing results
Family and Student Interviews & Checklists

From: http://www.transitioncoalition.org/transition/section.php?pageId=72

Who can assist with assessment?


Guiding Questions
Assessment Plan
Assessment Selection
Using Data

- What do we already know about the student’s strengths, preferences & needs in employment, education, living?
- What do we need to know about the student’s employment, education and living strengths, preferences & needs?
- What methods and sources will provide the information I need?
- Who will gather the information & What role will the student play in the assessment process?
- When will the assessment data be collected and used for transition planning?
- Is the student making progress toward his/her specific postsecondary goals (employment, education, living)?

### Guiding Questions

**Assessment Plan Characteristics:**
1. Customized to specific types of information needed
2. Appropriate to learning and response characteristics
3. Use assistive technology & accommodations
4. Include multiple ongoing activities to sample behaviors and skills
5. Must be verified by multiple methods & persons
6. Results stored in user-friendly way
7. Occurs over time (multiple years)

### Assessment Plan

#### Using Data

**Assessment Selection**
- Standardized
  - Major elements are consistent (test items, scoring, interpretation)
  - Has specific instructions for administration
  - Typically paper and pencil tests
  - Information is available on internal and external validity, norms and reliability
  - Norm-referenced or Criterion-referenced
  - Commercially available

- Informal
  - Analysis of background information
  - Interviews
  - Surveys
  - Checklists
  - Rating Scales
  - Work samples

### HOW to Assess

- **Standardized**
  - Analysis of background information
  - Interviews
  - Surveys
  - Checklists
  - Rating Scales
  - Work samples

- **Informal**
  - Curriculum-based assessments
  - Interest Inventories
  - Observations & situational assessments
  - Person-centered Planning
HOW to Assess

Assessing Environments
- E-Jam
- Vocational Integration Index
- Ecological Inventories
- Postsecondary Supports Survey


Summarizing and Sharing Results
- Summary of Performance
- Outside Agencies
- Family/student

Results of transition assessments in IEP:
- Included in present levels of academic and functional performance
- Used to identify postsecondary goals (outcomes)
- Used to identify needed transition services

Monitoring instruction, progress & decisions about changes

Coordinate assessment needs with adult agencies

Summarize and customize results to meet needs of outside agencies
- Summary of Performance

Resources

- Colorado Dept. of Ed Transition Toolkit  
  http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/TK.asp
- Transition Coalition materials and resources www.transitioncoalition.org  
  - Transition Assessment: The BIG Picture online module  
    - Resources and publications
- NSTTAC Transition Assessment Toolkit  
  http://www.nsttac.org/content/age-appropriate-transition-assessment-toolkit-0
- Building a Transition Assessment Toolkit  
  www.wsti.org/documents/topics/a/Assessment-Toolkit.ppt
- The Center for Change in Transition services  
  http://www.seattleu.edu/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=34092
- Iowa Transition Assessment webpage:  
  http://transitionassessment.northcentralrrc.org/
- http://www.wsti.org/transition_topics.php
- Quickbook of Assessment  
  http://www.tslp.org/docs/QuickbookIEPChecklistFinal091407.pdf

Overriding Theme

“A well planned and executed assessment that results in a well-balanced understanding of a student’s performance is one of the most important contributions to generating critical objectives, effective instruction, and meaningful outcomes.”

(Giles & Clark, 2001, pg. 80)