

## Self-Advocacy

**Goal:** Student will demonstrate self-advocacy skills in order to communicate learning style, academic and behavioral needs.

### Objectives:

- \_\_\_ Student will complete his learning style inventory and be able to describe learning style.
- \_\_\_ Student will communicate to others the strengths and weaknesses of learning style.
- \_\_\_ Student will review the accommodations/modifications page of his/her IEP.
- \_\_\_ Student will communicate with teachers to seek help, clarify instructions or requirements of academic tasks, and make them aware of accommodations.
- \_\_\_ Student will learn skills to begin to facilitate his/her PPT.
- \_\_\_ Student will identify impact of behaviors on self and others and how it affects learning.
- \_\_\_ Student will assess correctness of assignments and tests by reviewing for errors and making necessary revisions.
- \_\_\_ Student will accept the consequences of being unprepared for class by discussing such consequences and developing a strategy to avoid such problems in the future.
- \_\_\_ Student will demonstrate the skill of obtaining information from teachers regarding tests, quizzes, projects, etc.
- \_\_\_ Student will develop and carry out a plan for making up work missed due to absence.
- \_\_\_ Student will accept responsibility for utilizing resource period services to meet classroom objectives.
- \_\_\_ Student will discuss specific topic behaviors (positive and negative) and their effect on academic classes and/or social performance of self.
- \_\_\_ Student will seek guidance/direction when facing new or difficult situations.
- \_\_\_ Student will appropriately confront topics/issues, which are uncomfortable with teacher/para support.
- \_\_\_ Student will plan and implement alternative solutions for school problems as they occur with adult guidance.
- \_\_\_ Student will face academic and social situations positively and appropriately and discuss feelings regarding these situations.
- \_\_\_ Student will accept praise and/or criticism from peers or adults and utilize this to change social and behavioral outcomes.

# Self-Determination: A Toolkit for Teachers

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# Pre-test

## True/False Questions

1. One of the primary goals of education is to help students plan and prepare for the rest of their lives.
2. This planning and preparation is especially important for students with disabilities.

# Pre-test

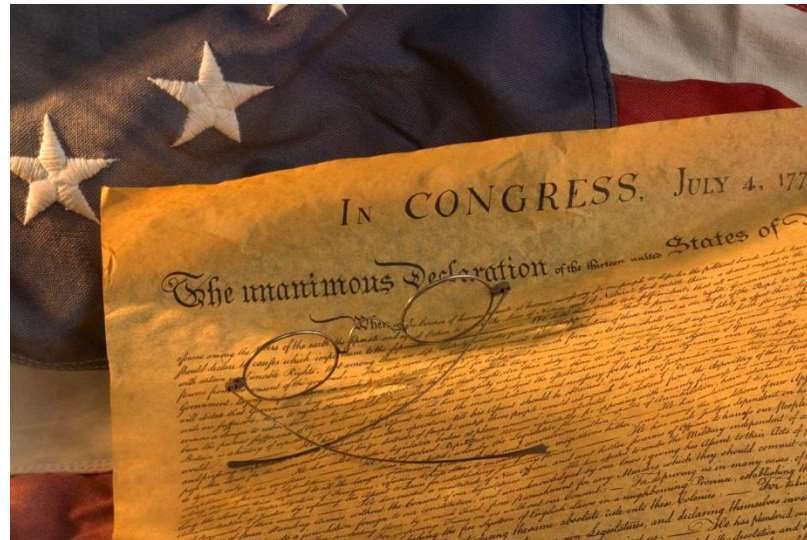
## Yes/No Questions

1. Do I encourage my students to make choices and decisions on a day-to-day basis?
2. Do I honor the choices and decisions that my students make?
3. Do I actively involve my students in their own case conferences?
4. Do I include self-determination goals in my students' IEPs?
5. Do I know how to measure progress on self-determination goals?

# A Foundational Belief

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

(Jefferson, 1776)



# Self-Determination is...

... a concept reflecting the belief that all individuals have the right to direct their own lives

...acting as the primary causal agent in one's life free from undue external influence or interference

(Wehmeyer, 1996)

# Self-Determination Skills

- Choice-making
- Decision-making
- Problem-solving
- Goal setting and attainment
- Self-regulation
- Self-advocacy
- Self awareness
- Self-efficacy

# A Closer Look.....

Self-Determination Skill	Definition
Choice-making	Involves the indication of a preference from a group of two or more options
Decision-making	Selecting which of a set of potential solutions is best
Problem-solving	Identifying and defining a problem, then generating potential solutions to the problem
Goal setting	Identifying a goal, developing an action plan, and evaluating one's progress toward achieving the goal



# A Closer Look.....

Self-Determination Skill	Definition
Self-regulation	Examining one's possible responses to a situation and revising one's response as necessary
Self-advocacy	Having the knowledge and skills to speak on one's own behalf
Self-awareness	Knowing one's strengths and limitations
Self-efficacy	Believing in one's ability to engage in a specific behavior or task

# An Example from the Field

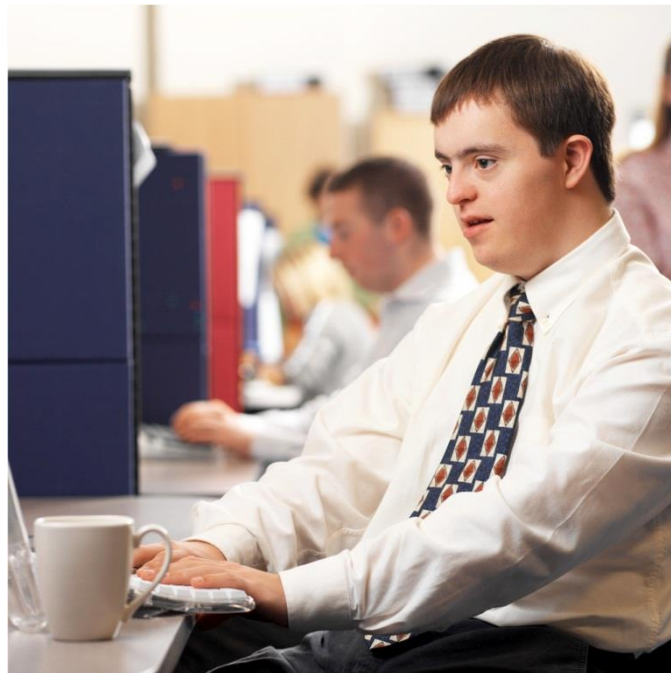
“I talk with my students about areas that are difficult, what we have discovered together, through time and trial and error, that helps them....and then talk about situations when they need to go to the teacher and share this information. I have asked their input on accommodations they feel have been helpful...what do they see helping in addition to the ones we’ve already used...and then, when they come to me with complaints about a grade or a teacher, we brainstorm...then practice going to the teacher for clarification, etc.”

(Lisa Schmidt, Middle School Mild Intervention Teacher)

# Why are these skills so important?

Students who have self-determination skills have a stronger chance of being successful in making the transition to adulthood, including education, training, employment and independent living outcomes

(Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1997)



# Self-Determination is...

...the ultimate goal of education

(Halloran, 1993)



# Research says...

- Students with disabilities who are more self-determined are twice as likely to be employed one year after high school.
- Three years after graduation, these students are more likely to have employment that includes benefits and are more likely to be living somewhere other than the family home.

(Wehmeyer, 2002)

# IDEA

- Starting with the 1990 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (P.L. 101-476), transition services must be based on student needs and take into account student interests and preferences.
- To accomplish this goal, students must be prepared to participate in planning for their future.

**Self-  
Determination  
Instruction**

**Self-  
Determination  
Goals**

**Student Led  
IEP Process**

# Self-Determination Instruction



# Teaching Self-Determination Skills

- Self-determination needs to be seen as a developmental process from early childhood through adulthood.
- Self-determination skills need to be taught at the elementary as well as secondary grade levels.
- By working collaboratively, teachers can build sequentially on skills taught at previous grade levels.

# Teaching Self-Determination Skills

Self-determination skills can be taught in two ways:

1. Infused throughout existing curricula
2. Taught as a specific self-determination curriculum

Examples of self-determination curricula include:

ChoiceMaker

Steps to Self-Determination

Whose Future Is It Anyway?

A summary of available self-determination curricula can be found at:

<http://sdsp.uncc.edu/home.asp>

# Setting the Stage

The environment plays a critical role in how well a student achieves self-determination. The people in a student's life must:

- encourage generalization of self-determination skills
- honor the choices and decisions the student makes
- support the goals that the student sets

You will need to provide training to parents and school staff members regarding self-determination.

# Setting the Stage

As part of this training, you must indicate the need for a supportive environment that will allow your students the opportunity to practice these skills.

Examples of Parent Training Materials:

[www.pacer.org/tatra/resources/self.asp](http://www.pacer.org/tatra/resources/self.asp)

[www.indetermined.org/modules/module three](http://www.indetermined.org/modules/module_three)

[www.selfdeterminationak.org](http://www.selfdeterminationak.org)

# Assessing Self-Determination Skills

In order to determine which self-determination skills to teach, you will need to assess your students' knowledge and skills related to self-determination.

Possible assessment options:

- Checklists
- Interviewing the student and others
- Observing/recording the student
- Using norm-referenced or criterion referenced tests
- Using curriculum-based assessment
- Creating a portfolio of skills

# Assessing Self-Determination Skills

Examples of Published Assessments:

- Arc's Self-Determination Scale
- ChoiceMaker Self-Determination Transition Assessment
- Self-Determination Assessment Battery
- AIR Self-Determination Scale
- Minnesota Self-Determination Scales

# Assessing Self-Determination Skills

Indiana Secondary Transition Resource Center, Transition Assessment Resource Guide

<http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/index.php?pageId=3468>

University of Oklahoma Reviews:

<http://www.ou.edu/content/education/centers-and-partnerships/zarrow/self-determination-assessment-tools>

# Self-Determination Goals



# Writing Self-Determination Goals

- IEP goals/objectives related to self-determination can be written to:
  1. Target content to be learned
  2. Target application of self-determination skills the student has learned
- Utilize “I statements” when writing IEP goals and objectives to indicate the student’s involvement in the planning and decision-making process pertaining to his/her IEP.
- As a student’s goal-setting skills develop, assist the student in the development of his/her own goals and objectives for the IEP.

# Self-Determination Goals

## **Skill:** Choice-making

**Sample Goal:** Given the school lunch menu, I will select between the two options available that day in 4 out of 5 trials.

**Data Collection:** cafeteria records

**Sample Goal:** Given five elective class options, I will select one class per semester for my schedule.

**Data Collection:** student schedule for first and second semesters

# Self-Determination Goals

## **Skill:** Problem-solving

**Sample Goal:** Given simulations of challenging situations, I will define the problem and come up with at least two possible solutions to the problem in four out of five trials.

**Data Collection:** work samples

**Sample Goal:** Given a challenging situation to solve, I will define the problem and come up with at least two possible solutions to the problem in four out of five trials.

**Data Collection:** work samples

# Self-Determination Goals

## **Skill:** Decision-making

**Sample Goal:** Give exposure to four different job shadowing experiences, I will select which type of work experiences I want to participate in this year.

**Data Collection:** work experience preference form

**Sample Goal:** Given information about vocational school options in my field of interest, I will select two vocational courses that I want to learn more about on my visit to the career center.

**Data Collection:** vocational school visit form

# Self-Determination Goals

**Skill:** Goal setting and attainment

**Sample Goal:** Given my classes for the semester, I will develop a goal and action plan to obtain the grade that I want to achieve in each class.

**Data Collection:** goal setting/action plan sheet

**Sample Goal:** Given my career choice, I will develop action steps to achieve my employment goal.

**Data Collection:** transition planning sheet

# Self-Determination Goals

## **Skill:** Self-regulation

**Sample Goal:** Given my tendency to procrastinate on long assignments, I will create a weekly schedule for working on my term paper.

**Data Collection:** weekly schedule of activities

**Sample Goal:** Given the school setting, I will develop a plan for reducing the number of tardies I have to class.

**Data Collection:** behavior plan

# Self-Determination Goals

## **Skill:** Self-advocacy

**Sample Goal:** Given my IEP meeting, I will identify what types of accommodations work best for me.

**Data Collection:** IEP meeting notes

**Sample Goal:** Given my general education classes, I will communicate my accommodation needs to my teachers.

**Data Collection:** teacher meeting notes, information sheet prepared for teachers

# Self-Determination Goals

## **Skill:** Self-efficacy

**Sample Goal:** Given my transition portfolio, I will keep a list of my accomplishments for the year.

**Data Collection:** transition portfolio list

**Sample Goal:** Given my IEP meeting, I will state at least three accomplishments for this school year.

**Data Collection:** case conference notes



# Student-Led IEPs

# Student – Led IEPs

- Authentic and meaningful opportunity to utilize self-determination skills
- Allows student to practice skills in a safe, supportive environment
- Supports student growth, independence, and self-determination
- Increases student self-awareness
- Increases student understanding of disability, legal issues, rights, and responsibilities
- Students have ownership of IEP

# Planning for Implementation

It is best to gradually increase the student's role in leading his/her IEP meeting over time.

Whether planning for implementation across a school district, within a school, or within one classroom, you will need to determine what activities your particular students will take on at their IEP meetings.

By working collaboratively with other teachers, a progression of student involvement in the IEP meeting can be developed.

# Planning for Implementation

Student-Led IEP Training Materials:

[http://www.imdetermined.org/student\\_involvement/](http://www.imdetermined.org/student_involvement/)

<http://www.selfdeterminationak.org/index.html>

# Student Led IEP Activities

## Sample Progression of Student-LED IEP Activities:

- Review his/her IEP with teacher at start of school year
- Increase knowledge of his/her disability
- Increase knowledge of special education laws
- Be involved in preparation for his/her case conference
- Begin meeting by greeting everyone
- State purpose of meeting
- Introduce self
- Introduce others at meeting

# Student-Led IEP Activities

- Identify disability
- Review present level of performance – strengths/weaknesses, how he/she's been doing in classes
- Request input from others on present level of performance
- Summarize results of transition assessments
- State post-secondary goals (I will...statements)
- State accommodations needed
- State annual goals for this year

# Student-Led IEP Activities

- State transition services and activities for this year
- State special education/related services for this year
- Ask questions at meeting
- Conclude meeting
- Review new IEP with teacher following IEP meeting
- Plan for next steps

# Setting the Stage

- You will need to provide education and training to parents and school staff members regarding the student-led IEP process.
- Contact the parent(s) prior to the student-led IEP meeting to discuss any concerns that they may have regarding the process.
- If necessary, meet with the parent(s) prior to or after the student-led IEP meeting to discuss concerns.



# Setting the Stage

Students not only need to learn self-determination skills, but also need to:

- Learn effective communication skills
- Learn about their legal rights (IDEA, ADA, Rehab. Act)
- Learn to use technology, if applicable

Provide students with a template to utilize in preparation for the student-led IEP meeting (script, agenda, poster, PowerPoint)

Students need to participate in practice activities, including a mock conference, prior to the student-led IEP meeting

# At the Student-Led IEP Meeting

- Remind the student to relax
- Assure the student that you will help them as needed
- Act as the meeting facilitator, but refrain from taking over the lead

# After the Student-Led IEP Meeting

- Review the new IEP document with the student following the case conference meeting
- Work collaboratively with the student to develop a plan and materials to share with general education teachers regarding the outcome of the meeting
- Provide student with support as needed when they share this information with their general education teachers
- Work collaboratively with the student to collect data and assess progress toward IEP goals

# Questions?



- If you would like further information, please feel free to contact me at [lbates@uc.k12.in.us](mailto:lbates@uc.k12.in.us)