



Transition Across the Lifespan

Early Childhood **BEYOND THE DIAGNOSIS:** **Employment**

Transition

Behavioral Supports **Social Skills**
Community Living

High Functioning Autism Aspergers Syndrome

- Post School Outcomes for HFA/Aspergers
 - Employment -47%
 - Post Secondary Enrollment
 - 2 year college-38%
 - Vocational/Business- 27%
 - 4 yr. College- 22%
 - Living on their own-11%

Newman, L., Wagner, M., Cameto, R., & Knokey, A.-M. (2009)
www.nits2.org/reports/2009_4/nits_report_2009_04_complete.pdf

So what does it all mean...



Employment outcomes of Individuals with Asperger Syndrome

- On an Average 33% of individuals with Aspergers are Employed (Howlin- 2000)
- Adults with Aspergers Syndrome identified that their lack of employment was due to:
 - Social Communication
 - Goal Setting

A time of change....

- Transition is a time of significant change for both the youth with ASD and the family.
- Leaving high school often means losing services from valued teachers and specialists who have been actively involved with the student and family for several years.
- Departure from high school also means loss of contact with classmates, many of whom have been friends for a long time.
- In addition, youth with ASD are also leaving a routine to which they have become accustomed. The school environment has become a place where students with ASD have a sense of safety and familiarity.

Transitions

- Transition to adulthood may be especially difficult for people with ASD because, by nature of their disability, many do not cope well with change - especially change in routine.
- A variety of changes generally take place during transition, such as leaving school, exploring work opportunities, and moving away from home.
- In attempt to cope with these changes, youth with ASD may exhibit stereotypical and peculiar behaviors that could interfere with forming new friendships.
- Finally, because people with ASD tend to be less likely to identify themselves as having a disability, there is a low likelihood that they will disclose their disability to obtain useful accommodations

What should be the Goal of Transition....

- Social programs for youth with ASD are:
 - social skill development
 - community involvement/inclusion
 - emotional support
 - friendship building (often with other people who are on the autism spectrum)
 - linkage to helpful resources

What is Needed...

- Youth with ASD may need help acquiring the following skills that are important for adult life and independent living:
 - Activities of daily living
 - Communication
 - Social behavior
 - Safety
 - Self-advocacy, and self-determination.
- Departing school for youth with ASD represents a challenge because they are leaving an environment where people often are familiar with (and sometimes accepting of) their unique social and behavioral features. Transition is also a time of increased vulnerability at work and in the community.

What's Happening in Our Area



Taft College



Began in August 1995

- Post-secondary educational experience on a community college campus
- Curriculum and training that promotes acquisition of the functional, social, and career skills necessary for students to live a productive and normalized lifestyle
- Classes Monday through Friday. Weekend Support Staff are present from 7:30 a.m.–6 p.m.
- Participate in the program an average of 22 months
- Assists graduates in transitioning into an independent living situation in their home community. The TIL program tracks graduates for a 10 year period to assess student outcomes

Transition to TAFT

- Start at 16 with IEP- send in pre application packet
- 17- visit campus
- Diploma
- Certificate



<http://www.taftcollege.edu/tcwp/tli/>



Fresno State
WAYFINDERS PROGRAM



- **Leadership:** safety awareness, self-determination and self advocacy in areas of government, relationships, and sexuality
- **Academic Life Skills:** practical, independent, living activities in the apartment and community
- **Vocational:** exploring interests with internships at various job sites on/ off campus
- **University Inclusion:** exploring educational opportunities of interest to the student in classes available on campus
- **Community Pathways:** managing the campus and community with transition activities when returning to home community
- **Academic Lab School:** "Homework" for individualized goals and practical learning experiences, emphasizing personalized academics and use of technology
- Students in the Wayfinders Program enroll general university courses as well as specialized Wayfinders classes which support them in academics and independent living skills
- Live in the Palazzo Apartments at Campus Pointe
- Preparing them for transition into an independent living arrangement of their choice after graduation
- Residential Living Coordinator supports students in their life skills at the apartments along with Student Coaches who work with students in their apartments.

<http://www.csufresno.edu/kremen/wayfinders/>


