

Transitioning is a Collaborative Process

People go through many stages of development throughout their lifespan. For most, transitioning from one period of life to another is a seamless and natural process. However, when someone has a disability, the process requires careful thought and planning.

The New Jersey Administrative Code, acting in concert with Federal guidelines, requires transition planning for students receiving special education services. Individualized transition planning, which begins by age 16, should be viewed as an opportunity to focus attention on what it will take for the student to achieve success and independence as an adult.

In addition to considering a student's instructional needs, other aspects of adult life must be taken into consideration. One of the very important factors is **employment**. To help a student realize his full potential, the plan should include things like **job sampling**, and a **vocational assessment**.

The acquisition of **daily living skills** is also vital to the plan. A student should be learning how to care for himself. This training may include teaching the student how to cook, access public transportation or handle an emergency situation. Additionally, aspects of **post school adult life** also come into play. A student needs to learn about the agencies which provide services to the disabled and how to access those services and supports.

Once a student's goals are incorporated into his IEP and his needs, interests and preferences are identified, the transition process begins.

So, quite literally, when we talk about transition planning, a student's future is at stake. It's up to the student's case

manager to orchestrate things and make sure everyone involved in the process is kept up-to-date and informed. Working together, with the student and with one another, an effective transitioning can take place. For more information on transition planning, call Dawn Roxas at (888) 322-1918, ext. 524.

*This article is the first in a series Educating for Success is running on Transitioning. The next issue will focus on **Transitioning with Assistive Technology**.*

Filling a much needed gap in services, Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey will be providing evaluations and training on



Augmentative Communication In Southern New Jersey

augmentative communication for students with limited speech.

This continues our growth of the service that started in northern New Jersey, making it statewide. Services are provided to students with any disability, and done on-site at the school, so that parents, teachers, and local professionals can be an integral part of the evaluation process.

Speech pathologists are also available for individualized workshops on encouraging communication through the use of picture symbols, low-tech and high-tech devices, and most importantly, how to integrate device use into every-day life.

For more information about augmentative communication or to schedule an evaluation or training call CP of New Jersey toll-free at 888-322-1918, ext. 527.



Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey
is accredited in
Community Employment Services

Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey has been recognized by the New Jersey Department of Education as a "Registered New Jersey Professional Development Provider."

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**CALL US TODAY AT
(888) 322-1918
OR EMAIL US AT
INFO@CPOFNJ.ORG. WE CAN
HELP YOU EDUCATE STUDENTS
WITH DISABILITIES.**

Q: My child will be transitioning to a new school next year. His speech is extremely limited and he is difficult to understand. He uses an augmentative communication aid. How can I make sure this transition is successful?

A: By thinking about this issue NOW, you've already taken an important first step to insuring a successful transition for next year. If at all possible, try to work with the administration of the new school so that you will know who will be your child's speech-language pathologist, teacher and aide before the end of this school year. Find out if these staff members are familiar with augmentative communication in general and with your child's specific device. If they are not familiar, they may need some preliminary IN-SERVICES to help them feel more comfortable. Preferably, in-services should be held before school begins next year. Work with the staff in the current school to help get your son's communication aid programmed with preliminary vocabulary and messages for the new school.

To learn more, contact Beth E. Breakstone by phone at (888) 322-1918, ext 527 or by email at bbreakstone@cpofnj.org.

Q. My child seems to have regressed during the summer months. Is there any way to prevent this from happening next year?

A. One way might be to have an Extended School Year included in your child's IEP. To make a case for having this included in the IEP, begin now by identifying your child's benchmarks and the progress he's making toward his goals. Record the effects that holidays and days off have on that progress. Document how long it takes your child to "get back on track" after a break from school. If you present this information to the child study team in the spring, your request for an Extended School Year will be stronger.

To learn more, contact Michelle Ragunan by phone at (888) 322-1918, ext. 543 or by email at mragunan@cpofnj.org.

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