

7. Cross Agency Collaboration



Agencies
in
Schools



Transition
Coordinating
Councils



Community
Agency Nights
about
Employment



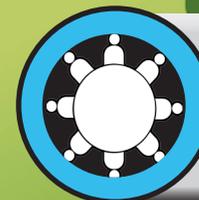
Transition
Staffings



Employment
Expos



Transition
Fairs



Transition
Conferences



7. Cross Agency Collaboration

7.1 Agencies in Schools

What are agencies in schools?

...Organizations and individuals that are part of your transition team and support your goals for life after high school.

7.2 Transition Coordinating Councils

What are transition coordinating councils?

...Local groups focused on helping you plan for life after high school by meeting regularly, sharing information and resources, and developing post-school opportunities.

7.3 Community Agency Nights about Employment

What are community agency nights about employment?

...Events where school personnel and multiple agencies reach out to you and your family to share information and resources that can help you plan for life after high school.

7.4 Transition Staffings

What are transition staffings?

...Meetings where your school and agency team help you plan for supports and connections to help you achieve your goals in life.

7.5 Employment Expos

What are employment expos?

...Events where local schools, community-based businesses, and agencies reach out to you and your family to share employment information, resources, and opportunities to help you get ready for work.

7.6 Transition Fairs

What are transition fairs?

...Regional events where transition councils and/or schools invite you and your family to learn about agency information and resources to help you plan and achieve your goals for life after high school.

7.7 Transition Conferences

What are transition conferences?

...Conferences at the local, regional, state, or national level that are planned by schools, agencies, communities, youth and families to share information and resources with transition-age youth, families, and professionals to help you successfully transition from school to adult life.



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7.1 Agencies in Schools



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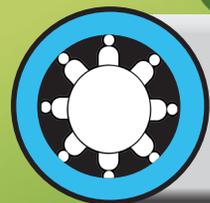
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Cross Agency Collaboration 7.1 Agencies in Schools



What are agencies in schools?

...Organizations and individuals that are part of your transition team and support your goals for life after high school.

Ideally agency personnel in schools provide...

- An inviting and welcoming atmosphere at your school
- A place for you to work and meet at your school
- Trusting and good relationships, focused on YOU, to meet you where you are in life
- Support during your IEP meetings and other transition planning meetings
- Opportunities to help you learn and grow

Agencies in schools result in...

- Good relationships between you, your family, school, and agencies that can help you transition to life after high school
- A team focusing on YOU and your goals
- Helping you explore work, education, and goals after high school
- Offering classes and workshops to help you prepare for life after high school
- Getting supports to help you plan for your future while you're still in school



"We go out to work—we go out to work with Ms. Bernadette, my vocational rehabilitation counselor. She is part of my team and comes to my school. We do job skills. We do our travel training; we do our listening skills. We know how to get to work sites. We work. We do our job. We do our hours. We do everything."

Transition-age youth



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Transition Discoveries was funded by a grant from the PA Developmental Disabilities Council.

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7.2 Transition Coordinating Councils



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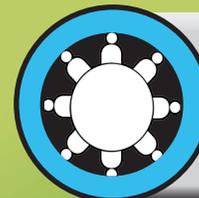
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What are transition coordinating councils?

...Local groups focused on helping you plan for life after high school by meeting regularly, sharing information and resources, and developing post-school opportunities.

Ideally, transition coordinating councils...

- Engage youth and families to participate
- Focus on supporting youth and families to transition to adult life
- Hold meetings regularly
- Are co-led by many different people: people with disabilities, families, and professionals
- Feature guest speakers to help everyone learn
- Facilitate networking so that people can build trusting relationships
- Hold meetings that focus on youth
- Identify potential supports and services for transition

Transition coordinating councils result in...

- Identifying the needs of youth in a geographic area
- Learning from one another to improve transition services
- Developing effective transition practices to meet you and your family's wants and needs
- Building awareness and partnerships with employers and the community



"An area that we've really focused on this year is cross agency collaboration and the work that we've been doing with our transition council, and bringing agencies in to do presentations about their job, their services and the supports to kids. Where anybody who's in the field, including parents and kids with disabilities, are invited to attend. And the networking that has occurred because of that. So I think that's really helpful."

Transition professional

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7.3 Community Agency Nights About Employment



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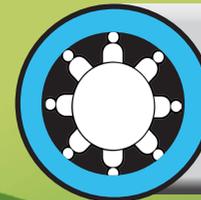
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7.3 Community Agency Nights About Employment



What are community agency nights about employment?

...Events where school personnel and multiple agencies reach out to you and your family to share information and resources that can help you plan for life after high school.

Ideally, community agency nights about employment...

- Feature youth, who have transitioned from high school to work or post-secondary education, as speakers and mentors
- Have many agencies present to share resources with you and your family
- Provide time for you and your family to get to know about services and supports

Community agency nights about employment result in...

- You and your family learning about planning for life after school, along with supports that are available to help you
- Learning about topics of interest to you and your family
- Hearing other youth success stories
- Getting resources for you and your family
- Giving you a chance to practice skills to help you get a job (such as interviewing with business people)
- Connecting with agencies and business people who can help you find work



“One thing that I know a lot of school districts are doing is ‘Dine and Discuss’ where they get families to understand the concept of transition and what to expect for their children. They come for dinner and then have all the social service agencies there. And so, it’s sort of like a job fair for the families and their kids. They get a lot of employers to donate gift cards and free meals at some of the restaurants and so forth. So they have a raffle. One thing we found was that when we had our transition meetings, it was all just professionals at the table. And as they started this ‘Dine and Discuss’, they started to get more parents coming to the Transition Council meetings. And because they started to become educated, now they’re more vocal and active. We’re seeing some of the spin-offs from the career fairs or job fairs; now they’re doing the social service fairs where the agencies will have booths and folks who provide residential support services are there. A lot of the parents were saying we have younger children, so we can’t come. So now, they have set it up where they have a daycare that donates the time.”

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7.4 Transition Staffings



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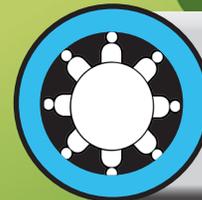
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What are transition staffings?

...Meetings where your school and agency team help you plan for supports and connections to help you achieve your goals in life.

Ideally, transition staffings...

- Are organized regularly by your school team
- Include agencies and connections that might have good ideas and resources to support your plans
- Are focused on you and your goals, dreams, and strengths
- Are typically held separate from your IEP meetings

Transition staffings result in...

- Trusting and helpful relationships
- A great team that focuses on you
- An agreement on a plan that helps achieve your goals with supports you need for life after high school



“Our transition council has been having transition staffings for years! They are held regularly, where we have a schedule way ahead of time to make sure agencies can come. We organize the schedule to make sure the agencies can be there to match the goals of the youth. Sometimes we have these meetings and discuss youth anonymously by brainstorming. Other times we include youth and families. We always believe the sky is the limit, which helps us think outside the box. We think about all of the agencies and community resources that might be of help to youth and families as they plan for adult life. We make sure they make solid connections.”

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7.5 Employment Expos



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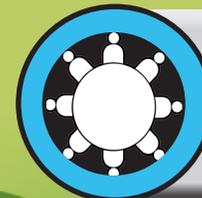
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Cross Agency Collaboration 7.5 Employment Expos



What are employment expos?

...Events where local schools, community-based businesses, and agencies reach out to you and your family to share employment information, resources, and opportunities to help you get ready for work.

Ideally, employment expos include...

- Planning by school and agency personnel focused on what youth want and need
- Business people
- Student presentations where you can learn from one another
- Young adults talking about their work experience since leaving high school
- Practicing job interviewing skills with business people
- Chances to learn about what bosses expect
- Learning about what jobs are available

Employment expos result in...

- Good partnerships with schools, agencies, and businesses
- Helping you to explore the business world
- Connecting you with businesses
- Giving you a chance to apply for and get a job



"Every year we sponsor a mock interview and employment fair. So we have some activities along with the information we're sharing."

Transition professional



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7.6 Transition Fairs



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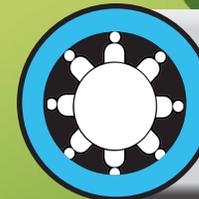
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What are transition fairs?

...Regional, state, and national events where transition councils and/or schools invite you and your family to learn about agency information and resources to help you plan and achieve your goals for life after high school.

Ideally, transition fairs include...

- A team of school and agency personnel planning the event to meet the interest and needs of youth
- Inviting many different agencies, community groups, and colleges to share information
- A chance for you and your family to learn about work, continuing education, and planning for life after high school
- Resources you and your family can take home and study
- A chance to talk directly and make connections with school and agency personnel

Transition fairs result in...

- Trusting relationships between schools and agencies
- Helping schools and agencies use funding to support more transition events
- Learning about agency information and resources to support your plans for your future



“Having symposiums like my state representative just did. We had a huge symposium in March. He’s had it 2 years now, and he has pretty much every human service agency that can help youth with disabilities under one roof with exhibitor tables. There were panelists, people from agencies, people from OVR. You could walk through the exhibit hall and pretty much it was as if you looked from A to Z in the Allegheny County area of who provides human services, they were under that roof. They ran the gamut and then there were various presentations. There were some about Transition, there were some from OVR, there were some from Early Reach, there were some about bullying. They ran the gamut and it was really an opportunity for people to come and learn. There were parents and youth, there were professionals, there were teachers.”

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7.7 Transition Conferences



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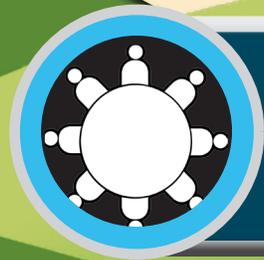
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What are transition conferences?

...Conferences at the local, regional, state, or national level that are planned by schools, agencies, communities, youth and families to share information and resources with

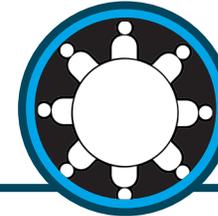
transition-age youth, families, and professionals to help you successfully transition from school to adult life.

Ideally, transition conferences...

- Promote partnerships between youth, families, agencies, and schools
- Include youth and families as presenters
- Invite people to share what is working in transition

Transition conferences results in...

- Giving attendees information, resources, and program ideas that they can use to support successful practices in transition
- Participants learning about current research in transition to improve transition practices



"At the transition conference, there's a youth strand, so your son can be with the young people, and they do a youth fair and they talk about what they want, they develop plans, they have specific things catered towards what their needs are. And then there's an adult strand, so you can hear about what works. And there's a couple of young men there that are...I've seen them speak a couple times. And they really, really speak to the youth and they say things like, 'If you don't speak up for yourself, nobody's going to. You're leaving your mom at home, you're a grown up, you have to tell them, I need a ramp, I need this, I need a break every 5 minutes, this is my disability.' You know, so they really stress to the kids to—you've got to be your own advocate, or you're not going to get anywhere in the world. They don't listen to us, but they'll listen to them, because they're funny. They respect them, I think. I've watched the kids in the room listen to them, and they really connect with the youth, so if you can get them to go with you, that's good."

Family of transition-age youth