Empowering Students for Successful Assistive Technology (AT) Transitions

BUILDING BRIDGES
EASTERN IOWA ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE
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HTTP://BIT.LY/ATTRANSITION
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Learner Objectives

• Planning for students with disabilities who transition into new settings
• Transition planning based on QIAT indicators
• Three components of AT Transitions
  • Discuss a few strategies for transitioning students from an educational setting into the community, higher education or workforce
• Transition resources
Why Focus on AT Transitions?

• Competent AT use does not necessarily transfer to new environments
• Specific skills can be learned to ensure continuity during AT transitions
Types of Transitions

• Early Intervention (EI) Services (Part C) to Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) (Part B)
• Early childhood to kindergarten/elementary
• Classroom to classroom
• School to school
• High school to community
• Community to community
MISSION:

TO GUIDE THE PROVISION OF QUALITY ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES TO IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.

www.qiat.org
QIAT as Guidelines

• Consistent, clearly understood descriptions of quality AT services
• A systematic way of planning, developing, and delivering AT devices and services
Transition Indicator
Roles/needs

1. Transition plans address AT needs of the student, including roles and training needs of team members, subsequent steps in AT use, and follow-up after transition takes place.
2. Transition planning empowers the student using AT to participate in the transition planning at a level appropriate to age and ability.
3. Advocacy related to AT use is recognized as critical and planned for by the teams involved in transition.
4. AT requirements in the receiving environment are identified during the transition planning process.
5. Transition planning for students using AT proceeds according to an individualized timeline.
6. Transition plans address specific equipment, training and funding issues such as transfer or acquisition of AT, manuals and support documents.
Three Components of Assistive Technology Transitions to Support Quality Services

1. AT Skills for Independence
2. AT Self-Determination Skills
3. AT Transition Planning in the IEP
The Student Has AT Skills for Independence

- Uses AT to complete everyday tasks and routines
- Is developing AT competencies
Independent Use of AT

- Operational competence
- Functional competence
- Strategic competence
- Social competence

Adapted from Janice Light (1989)
Operational Skills

• Mastery of technical skills required to operate the device or system

• Development of skills needed to use the access methods

• Turn device on/off
• Set-up the AT hardware or software
• Operate device with a minimum of help
• Trouble-shoot simple problems
• Obtain supplies needed for AT devices
Functional Skills

• Mastery of specific goals that have been identified in the IEP and the general curriculum

• Mastery of the specific knowledge, functional skills, and abilities for which the device was selected (e.g., writing, comprehension, expressive language)

• What will the student need to do in the new environment?

• What parts of the tasks in the new environment will require the use of AT?

• How will AT be included in everyday routines and activities?
Strategic Skills

• Ability to decide when and when not to use a device or strategy

• Ability to choose which tool (device or other strategy) to use for a specific activity

• Determine when to use low tech/no tech back up for AT

• Recognize when AT is malfunctioning

• Determine when new AT device may be needed

• Determine when usage of AT is not appropriate or needed
Social Skills

• Ability to use the device appropriately with people

• Ability to use the device appropriately in the environments in which it is needed

• Ability to help others understand the device

• Ask for help with the AT

• Choose appropriate settings for the environment (e.g., volume, speed)

• Request new features or set-ups,

• Identify environmental accommodations needed

• Apply for/request funding assistance
The Student is a Self-Determined AT User

Characteristics

• Acts autonomously
• Is self-regulated
• Is psychologically empowered
• Acts in a self-realizing manner

Adapted from Wehmeyer
Factors Affecting AT System Use

- individual needs and skills
- opportunities
- environmental demands
- attitudes of peers & partners
- support available

Variables That May Change at Transition

- individual needs and skills
- opportunities
- environmental demands
- attitudes of peers & partners
- support available
Self-Determination

The attitudes and abilities required to act as the primary causal agent in one’s life and to make choices regarding one’s quality of life free from undue external influence or interference.

Wehmeyer, 2005
Elements of Self-Determination

• Positive perceptions of control, efficacy and outcome expectations
• Self-awareness
• Self-knowledge

Wehmeyer 2007
Elements of Self-Determination

• Choice-making skills
• Decision-making skills
• Problem-solving skills
• Goal setting and attainment skills
• Self-regulation/self-management skills
• Self-advocacy and leadership skills

Wehmeyer 2007
Self-Determined AT Users Can...

.....*make their own choices about AT devices and services*

“I don’t wear my hearing aids to dances”

Gordon (13 years old)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Supported</strong></th>
<th><strong>Independent</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choice-Making about AT</td>
<td>Choice-Making about AT</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Choose a helper for AT use</td>
<td>• Choose when to use AT at home, in the community, or at work</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Choose AAC symbols for a device</td>
<td>• Choose to ask for help rather than use AT</td>
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Self-Determined AT Users Can...

.....make decisions about AT use

“For me, Morse Code is better than voice recognition.”

Jason (19 years old)
**Supported Decision-Making about AT**

- Decide to use a computer to write two paragraphs
- Decide not to do an assignment

**Independent Decision-Making about AT**

- Decide which AT device to request
- Decide to become a medical transcriptionist
Self-Determined AT Users Can…

...... solve AT problems

“I talk with my mom and friends about ideas, do research and pray in order to find the right thing to do.”

Janice (10 years old)
Supported Problem-Solving for AT

- Use voice when AAC is not working
- Ask someone to check the batteries
- Use picture cues to follow steps to find out why something is not working

Independent Problem-Solving for AT

- Have a plan for what to do when AT does not work
- Implement the plan when needed.
- Call the company to get technical assistance
Self-Determined AT Users Can...

...... set AT goals

“I learn about what I like and don’t like before setting my goals for after high school.”

Samuel (16 years old)
Your Student’s Self-determination for AT

Identify one new skill in each area:
• Choice-making
• Decision-making
• Problem-solving
• Goal-setting
• Self-management/self regulation
• Self-advocacy and leadership
AT Transition Planning in the IEP

- To meet IDEA requirements
- Helps to ensure on-going AT use
IEP Team Focus for Assistive Technology
Transition Planning

- To assist the student in gaining new AT skills for the new environment
- To increase or maintain student’s independence and functional AT use
AT Devices and Transition

- Device acquisition
- Transfer of technology
- Sources of funding

AT Services after Transition

- Provision of on-going AT services
- Funding for on-going AT services (if applicable)
Your Student’s Transition Plans

- Instruction
- Related services
- Community experiences
- Employment
- Post-school adult living
- Daily living skills
- Functional vocational evaluation.
Implications for Educators

• Competent AT implementation in school does not necessarily carry over to new environments.
• There are specific skills at every age that can be learned for AT transitions.
• Careful planning, quality AT services, and self-determination together maximize transitions.
Resources

• Hey! Can I Try That?
• Minnesota Department of Ed, AT Transition Planning Checklist
• WATI “Transition Packet”
• QIAT for Transition Matrix
Any Questions?

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