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## Age Appropriate Transition Assessment Toolkit

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### What is Transition Assessment?

The Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT) of the Council for Exceptional Children defines transition assessment as an "...ongoing process of collecting data on the individual's needs, preferences, and interests as they relate to the demands of current and future working, educational, living, and personal and social environments. Assessment data serve as the common thread in the transition process and form the basis for defining goals and services to be included in the Individualized Education Program (IEP)" (Sitlington, Neubert, & LeConte, 1997; p. 70-71). Federal law requires "appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills" (§300.320[b][1]). Although states are still developing policy and guidance documents relative to transition assessment (Morningstar & Liss, 2008), it seems most appropriate to use some combination of the following types: Paper and pencil tests, structured student and family interviews, community or work-based assessments (situational) and curriculum-based assessments. These assessments or procedures come in two general formats – formal and informal. Informal measures may include interviews or questionnaires, direct observations, anecdotal records, environmental or situational analysis, curriculum-based assessments, interest inventories, preference assessments, and transition planning inventories. Formal measures include adaptive behavior and independent living assessments, aptitude tests, interest assessments, intelligence tests, achievement tests, personality or preference tests, career development measures, on the job or training evaluations, and measures of self-determination.

Formal assessments are standardized instruments that include descriptions of their norming process, reliability and validity, and recommended uses. Generally, these instruments have independent reviews in texts (e.g., *A Counselor's Guide to Career Assessment Instruments – 5th Edition*) or on-line at <http://www.unl.edu/buros/>. These assessments tend to be limited to recommended use by a professional with a requisite qualifications, identified as Level A (no

special qualifications required), Level B (a four-year degree in psychology or related field along with coursework in testing or a license or certification from an agency that requires appropriate training and experience in the use of psychological tests) or Level C (all Level B qualifications plus an advanced degree that requires training in psychological testing). The vast majority of transition assessments used by educators require a Level A or B qualification. Notable exceptions include intelligence tests and some personality assessments that require a Level C qualification with specialized advanced training.

Examples of the more popular formal assessments include the Meyers Briggs Type Indicator Form M (Meyers & Briggs, 1988.), Self-Directed Search Forms CE (Holland & Powell, 1994), R (Holland, 1994), and E (Holland, 1996), and Occupational Aptitude Survey and Interest Schedule 3rd Edition (Parker, 2002). In contrast, informal assessments generally lack a formal norming process and reliability or validity information. They seldom have professional qualifications for their use and tend to be inexpensive and often times free. These assessments require more subjectivity to complete and yield the best data when used on an ongoing basis and by more than one person to improve their validity. Examples of some popular paper/pencil informal assessments include the Transition Planning Inventory (Clark & Patton, 2009), O'Net Career Interest Inventory (U.S. Department of Labor, 2002), and Life Centered Career Education (LCCE) Performance and Knowledge Battery (Bucher & Brodin, 1987). Other examples of informal assessments include situational or observational learning styles assessments (cite example), curriculum-based assessment from courses, observational reports, situational assessments, structured interviews, personal-future planning activities, and functional skill inventories.

The transition assessment process can be viewed within a framework. One useful framework is by Sitlington, Neubert, Begun, Lombard, and Leconte (1996). Their framework incorporates a variety of methods for assessing the student and potential work or training environment. Analyses of results help educators make decisions about how best to match a student with their potential training or job environment. The purpose of the framework is to identify training and post school options that match the students' interests, preferences, and needs using the Assess, Plan, Instruct, and Evaluate (APIE) model. In the first step (assess), educators assess the students' interests, preferences, and needs related to desired post school outcomes using formal and informal assessments. The second step (plan) involves interpreting the results from these assessments and incorporating them into the students' IEP. In the third step (instruct), students learn the skills they will need to reach their post school goals. In the last step (evaluate), evaluate whether progress has been made toward achieving the transition activities and corresponding IEP goals and objectives.

Rojewski (2002) outlines another useful framework inclusive of three levels of transition assessment. Level one is for most students and might include a review of existing information (e.g., intelligence and achievement data from the student's most current Psychological Report along with performance data from school-wide testing, course grades, and attendance), student interview, interest assessment, personality or preference assessment, and, if indicated (e.g., a student shows promise in a given aptitude), aptitude testing. A level two assessment targets students having difficulty making a career choice, clarifying their interests, or preparing to exit high school. This level would build on a level one assessment by generating additional information as to one's work-related behaviors, general career maturity, and job readiness. A level three assessment would be reserved for students needing additional assistance with identifying long term career goals, when earlier transition assessments were inconclusive or for those with more significant disabilities. This level generally takes several days, involves a vocational assessment specialist (Sarkees-Wircenski & Scott, 1995), and is in cooperation with a local adult service provider. A level three evaluation would include a combination of assessing job-related behaviors (e.g., Becker Work Adjustment Scale - Revised) and on the job and community situational assessments.

Sitlington and Payne (2004) continued to suggest that transition assessment information is gathered regarding a student's current needs, preferences, and interests as they relate to the demands of current and future working, educational, living, personal, and social environments. The goal of transition assessment is to assist students, families, and professionals as they make transition planning decisions for student success in postsecondary environments (Sitlington & Clark, 2007; Sitlington & Payne). Finally, Sitlington and Clark suggest that transition assessment should answer three basic questions:

- Where is the student presently?
- Where is the student going?
- How does the student get there?

### **Why Conduct Transition Assessments?**

Transition assessments may be undertaken for several reasons. These reasons include: (a) to develop postsecondary goals, and related transition services and annual goals and objectives for the transition component of the IEP, (b) to make instructional programming decisions, and (c) to include information in the present level of performance related to a student's interests, preferences, and needs in the IEP. In addition, transition assessment is an excellent way to learn about individual students, especially their strengths outside of academics and career ambitions (Kortering, Sitlington, & Braziel, in press). Likewise, Zunker and Osborn (2006) remind us that the most important reason for doing transition assessments is to help students learn about themselves so as to better prepare them for taking an active role in their career development. It is suggested that transition assessment information be gathered in the following four categories: (a) academic, (b) self-determination, (c) vocational interest and exploration, and (d) adaptive behavior/ independent living. These are four broad areas for assessment. Individual students may require additional assessment in other areas, depending on their needs.

The results of transition assessments should also be the basis for making recommendations for instructional strategies and accommodations in instruction and environments to meet the student's needs, while capitalizing on their unique talents. Finally, the results should lead the student to better understand the connection between their individual academic program and post-school ambitions, the likely key to their motivation to engage in learning and stay in school (Kortering & Braziel, 2008). The transition assessment information should be the basis for identifying postsecondary goals in education or training, employment, and independent living (as appropriate) for a student who's IEP is being developed for the purpose transition planning. As noted in the federal law regarding the education of students with disabilities, "appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments" must be included in the IEPs of students who will turn 16 during that year (p.118, 2709, viii, aa).

### **How do I select Instruments and Methods?**

First, become familiar with the different types of transition assessments and their characteristics, including reading their respective manuals, seeking independent information (e.g., test reviews, professional articles) and talk with local adult service providers and employers. Again, it is recommended that you use multiple evaluations on an ongoing basis.

Second, select assessment instruments and methods that help the student to answer the following questions:

- Who am I?
- What are my unique talents and interests?
- What do I want in life, now and in the future?
- What are some of life's demands that I can meet now?
- What are the main barriers to getting what I want from school and my community? and
- What are my options in the school and community for preparing me for what I want to do, now and in the future?

Third, select instruments and methods that are appropriate for your students. Key considerations include the nature of their disability (e.g., reading level and general intelligence), their post-school ambitions (e.g., college versus other training options or immediate employment), and community opportunities (e.g., local training options, employers and adult service providers). As an example, students with more severe or complex disabilities would be best served by a person centered planning approach (see Condon & Callahan, 2008). The nature of their disability may preclude the relevancy of many standardized assessments, notable exceptions might include interest inventories that do not require reading (e.g., *Becker's Reading Free Interest Inventory - Revised*, *Wide Range Interest and Opinion Test - Revised*) and other instruments that require minimal reading levels (e.g., *Career Decision Making System*, *Self-Directed Search Form E*). Similarly, some students may need special accommodations during the assessment process. Informal and formal measures may be used to assess the four suggested categories: (a) academic, (b) self-determination, (c) vocational interest and exploration, and (d) adaptive behavior/ independent living.

By considering the aforementioned concerns, you will be able to better select informative and useful transition assessment tools.

### How do I conduct an Age Appropriate Transition Assessment?

Transition assessments will vary depending on the actual instrument(s) and procedures being used and various student characteristics. However, Sitlington, Neubert, and Leconte (1997) suggest that the following guidelines when developing your transition assessment process:

1. "Assessment methods must incorporate assistive technology or accommodations that will allow an individual to demonstrate his or her abilities and potential.
2. Assessment methods must occur in environments that resemble actual vocational training, employment, independent living, or community environments.
3. Assessment methods must produce outcomes that contribute to ongoing development, planning, and implementation of "next steps" in the individual's transition process.
4. Assessment methods must be varied and include a sequence of activities that sample an individual's behavior and skills over time.
5. Assessment data must be verified by more than one method and by more than one person.
6. Assessment data must be synthesized and interpreted to individuals with disabilities, their families, and transition team members.
7. Assessment data and the results of the assessment process must be documented in a format that can be used to facilitate transition planning (p. 75)."

Another appropriate process approach follows the following sequence. Initially start off with a structured interview that solicits information on various family background features affecting one's career development while providing the student with an opportunity to express their thoughts (see Kortering & Braziel, 2008). As an example, you may wish to use the Employment-Related Questionnaire or Dream Sheet links in the following section. Next, have the student complete a basic interest inventory, preferably one that matches their post-secondary ambitions (e.g., career ambitions requiring college training or not), and then perhaps some assessment of their personality or preferences. Finally, if the student demonstrates potential talent in a given aptitude (e.g., shows an established interest in mechanical type jobs) conduct an assessment of this potential or related talent using one of the standard aptitude tests. As a reminder, selected methods should be appropriate for the learning characteristics of the individual, including cultural and linguistic differences.

## Sample Instruments

### Informal Transition Assessment Methods

**Interviews and questionnaires.** Interviews and questionnaires allow you to gather information to be used to determine a youth's needs, preferences, and interests relative to anticipated post-school outcomes. In other words, collected information helps you to better understand what is currently known about a youth, their perceptions of transition-related factors, and familial influences on the career development process. This information, in turn, helps you and the youth to develop post-school ambitions, plan a course-of-study and identify transition services and activities that will help them reach their ambitions. An important part of this data collection process involves gathering information about a student and their family's current and future resources. For example, if a student's future education choice is to enroll in a four-year college, it is helpful to know as soon as possible what financial resources a family might have or need. Another example might involve current and future transportation needs to get to work or to various activities/places in the community. Families also can often provide current and future resources in terms of employment options for their daughter or for other students in a high school program" (Test, Aspel, & Everson, 2006, pp. 74). Another aspect of this type of information is generating an understanding of family influences on a student's career development, including access to role models, world of work knowledge and general ambitions. Examples of a useful structured interview or questionnaire include:

- [Employment-Related Questions](#)
- [Dream Sheet](#)
- *Transition Planning Inventory – Updated Version* (Clark & Patton, 2009)

- *Enderle-Severson Transition Rating Scales – 3rd Ed.* (Enderle, & Severson, 2003).

**Direct Observation.** Direct observation of student performance should be conducted within the natural school, employment, education or training, or community setting (Sitlington, Neubert, & Leconte, 1997). Sometimes called "situational assessment" (Sitlington, Neubert, Begun, Lombard, & Leconte, 2007; Sitlington & Clark, 2001), direct observations are often done by a job coach, co-worker, recreation specialist, or vocational educator. However, in keeping with a self-determined philosophy, youths should learn to record their (performance) data. Direct observation data typically includes task analytic data of steps in completing required tasks (e.g., folding laundry, sorting mail), work behavior (e.g., staying on-task, following directions, getting along with co-workers), and affective information (e.g., is student happy, excited, frustrated, or bored?). For example, if (you are) observing at a worksite, and a student quickly and accurately completes her tasks, interacts well with co-workers, and appears happy, this data may suggest that the student is successful and enjoys this type. However, after visiting a community residential setting a student appears withdrawn, this may be an indication that the particular situation may not be suitable" (Test, Aspel, & Everson, 2006; pp. 74). Examples of direct observation formats include:

- [Example of Task Analysis 1](#)
- [Example of Task Analysis 2](#)

**Environmental or situational analysis.** Environmental analysis, sometimes referred to as ecological assessment, involves carefully examining environments where activities normally occur. For example, a youth may express an interest in attending karate classes at the local YMCA. In this case an environmental analysis might be conducted to look at transportation needs and the expectations for participates (e.g., being a member, using the locker room, taking a shower). In a second example, if a youth expressed interest in a specific type of job like attending to pets at a local veterinarian's office, an environmental job analysis could establish job requirements that match one's skills or potential to learn the skills (Griffin & Sherron, 1996). A critical part of a job analysis involves the identification of reasonable accommodations and modifications that could help them be successful (e.g., job restructuring, modifying equipment, acquiring an adaptive device, re-organizing the work space, hiring a personal assistant) (Griffin & Sherron, 1996; Test, Aspel, & Everson, 2006). An excellent source for further information for on the job accommodations and modifications is the Job Accommodation Network's website (<http://askjan.org/>). Another area of environmental analysis involves having a structured format for collecting on the job or job performance data. Some of the more popular formats in this area include Becker Work Adjustment Profile – Profile: 2 (Becker, 2005), Work Personality Profile (Neath & Bolton, 2008), and Job Observation and Behavior Scale (Stoelting Publishing, 2000). In addition, most local employers will have an evaluation form for their job site and positions that can be modified to meet your needs.

- Job Site Analysis Form

**Curriculum-based assessments.** "CBAs are typically designed by educators to gather information about a student's performance in a specific curriculum (McLoughlin & Lewis, 2005)... (and) to develop instructional plans for a specific student. To gather data an educator might use task analyses, work samples, portfolio assessments, or criterion-referenced tests" (Test, Aspel, & Everson, 2006, pp. 78). Examples of CBAs include:

- [Example of Data Sheet 1](#)
- [Example of Data Sheet 2](#)
- *Life Centered Career Education* (LCCE, Buchar & Brolin, 1987)
- *Brigance Life Skills Inventory* (Brigance, 1994)
- *Brigance Transition Skills Inventory* (Curriculum Associates, 2010)
- *Brigance Employability Skills Inventory* (Brigance, 1995)
- *Choice Maker Set* (Martin, Huber-Marshall, Maxson, Jerman, Hughes, Miller, & McGill, 2000)

**School Performance Measures.** Informal curriculum based measures, end of course and grade assessments, state-wide tests, and observations of student classroom behaviors (e.g., participation in group work, on task behaviors, assignment completion) provide useful information regarding a student's strengths, needs, and interests in the area of academics, relevant to future education or training environments. Other useful measures include student portfolios, use and effectiveness of test accommodations, and attendance data.

**Transition planning inventories.** Transition planning inventories involve a process which identifies strengths and needs for a given student as they prepare to transition from school to the community, including employment, schooling, and independent living. These inventories encompass various aspects of adult living, including employment, postsecondary schooling and training, independent living, interpersonal relationships, adult service needs, and community living. Examples include:

- *Enderle-Severson Transition Rating Scales – 3rd Ed.* (Severson, Enderle & Hoover, 2003)
- *Supports Intensity Scale* (American Association on Mental Retardation, 2004)
- *TEACCH Transition Assessment Profile – 2nd Ed.* (Mesibov, Thomas, Chapman, & Schopler, 2007)
- *Transition Planning Inventory – Updated Version* (Clark & Patton, 2009)
- *Transition to Work Inventory* (TWI) (Liptak, 2008)

## Formal Transition Assessment Methods

**Achievement tests.** Achievement tests measure learning of general or specific academic skills. Achievement tests provide results that can be linked to most occupational requirements while helping to identify potential areas needing remediation or accommodation (e.g., reading comprehension). They are usually general survey batteries covering several subject areas or single-subject tests. They can be criterion-referenced, norm-referenced, or both. Achievement tests are usually identified by grade level. It is important to establish the specific purpose for giving an achievement test to decide what type to use. Examples include:

- *Adult Basic Learning Examination – 2nd Ed.* (ABLE – 2, Karlsen & Gardener, 1986)
- *Basic Achievement Skills Inventory* (BASI, Bardos, 2002)
- *Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement - 2nd Ed.* (KTEA-2, Kaufman & Kaufman, 2004)
- *Peabody Individual Achievement Test-Revised-Normative Update* (PIAT-R/NU, Markwardt, 1997)
- *Stanford Achievement Test* (SAT -6,,
- *Wide Range Achievement Test – 4th Ed.* (WRAT 4, Wilkinson & Robertson, 2006)
- *Woodcock Johnson III* (WJ III, Woodcock, McGrew, & Mather, 2001)

**Adaptive behavior and independent living.** Adaptive behavior assessment helps determine whether a youth needs a post-secondary goal in the area of independent living, including the type and amount of special assistance they may need to be successful in a given environment (e.g., residential, self-care, transportation, social communication, and community participation). This assistance might be in the form of home-based support services, special education and vocational training, and supported work or special living arrangements such as personal care attendants, group homes, or nursing homes. These assessments rely on informed source (e.g., parent, care taker, teacher, student) to provide information. With some assessments respondents are interviewed, while others have respondents fill out a response booklet.

- *AAMR Adaptive Behavior Scales – School* (ABS-2, Lambert, Nihira, & Leland, 1993)
- *Brigance Life Skills Inventory* (Brigance, 1994)
- *Independent Living Scales* (ILS, Anderson-Loeb, 1996)
- *Inventory for Client and Agency Planning* (ICAP, Bruininks, Hill, Weatherman, & Woodcock, 1986).
- *Scales of Independent Behavior - Revised* (SIB-R, Bruininks, Woodcock, Weatherman, & Hill, 1996))
- *Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales – 2nd Ed.* (Vineland II, Sparrow, Cicchetti, & Balla, 2005)

**Aptitude tests.** An aptitude test is a measure of a specific ability relative to a given norm group (e.g., age peers, employees in a given job). Ability involves what a person can do now or, given the proper opportunity, possibly in the future (Betz, Fitzgerald, & Hill, 1989). There are two types of aptitude tests: Multi-aptitude or general test batteries and single tests measuring specific aptitudes. General aptitude test batteries contain measures of a wide range of aptitudes and combinations of aptitudes. A youth's performance on these tests provides valuable information that can help gauge their potential for success in a given training or educational program or occupation. Single aptitude tests are used when a specific aptitude needs to be measured, such as manual dexterity, clerical ability, artistic ability, or mechanical ability. Examples include:

- *Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery* (ASVAB, U. S. Department of Defense, 1999)
- *Bennett's Mechanical Comprehension Test* (Bennett, 2006)
- *Occupational Aptitude Survey and Interest Schedule -3rd Ed.* (OASIS-3, Parker, 2002)
- *O\*NET Ability Profiler* (U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration, 2002)
- *Wiesen Test of Mechanical Aptitude* (Wiesen, 1999)

**Interest Inventories.** Strong (1943) was one of the original vocational theorists to stress the importance of gathering data concerning individuals' likes and dislikes for a variety of activities, objects, and types of persons commonly encountered. Interest inventories provide the opportunity for individuals to compare their interest with those of individuals in specific occupational groups or selected peer groups. Fouad (1999) notes that regardless of specific measure interest inventories appear to generalize across time. Examples of interest inventories include:

- *Becker Reading Free Interest Inventory – Revised* (Becker, 2000)
- *Occupational Aptitude Survey and Interest Schedule – 3* (OASIS - 3, Parker, 2002)
- *O\*NET Career Interest Inventory* (U.S. Department of Labor, 2002)
- *Picture Interest Career Survey* (Brady, 2007)
- *Self-Directed Search Forms R* (Holland, 1996), *E* (Holland, 1994, and *CE* (Holland & Powell, 1994)
- *Career Decision-Making System - Revised* (Harrington & O'Shea, 2000)
- *Wide Range Interest-Opinion Test – Revised* (WRIOT-R, Glutting & Wilkinson, 2006)

**Intelligence tests.** Intelligence tests involve a single test or test battery to assess a person's cognitive performance. Powers (2006) clarifies cognitive performance by describing it as solving novel problems, adapting to new situations, and demonstrating competence when faced with new learning demands. Fives (2008) also reminds us that cognitive performance becomes especially relevant for students expressing interest in an occupation that has ability requirements beyond their current or projected ability level. Examples of intelligence tests include:

- *Comprehensive Test of Nonverbal Intelligence* (C-TONI, Hammill, Pearson, & Wiederhold, 1997)
- *Kaufman Adolescent & Adult Intelligence Test* (KAIT, Kaufman & Kaufman, 1993)
- *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – 3rd Ed.* (PPVT-III, Dunn & Dunn, 1997)
- *Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales – 5th Ed.* (SB-5, Roid, 2003)
- *Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-IV* (WISC-IV, Wechsler, 2004)
- *Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Adults – 3rd Ed.* (WAIS-III, Wechsler, 1997)
- *Wonderlic Basic Personnel Test* (Wonderlic, 1992)

**Personality or preference tests.** Personality inventories measure individual differences in social traits, motivational drives and needs, attitudes, and adjustment. Personality measures offer a means of evaluating support for, or opposition to a, career under consideration. The score alone should not be viewed

as a predictor of success or failure but rather should be compared with other data, including abilities and interests. Examples include:

- *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®) Instrument – Form M* (Meyers & Briggs, 1988)
- *16 Personality Factors – 5th Ed.* (16 PF, Cattell, Cattell, & Cattell, 2000)

**Career development measures.** Career development inventories measure developmental stages or tasks on a continuum. The degree of an individual's career maturity is determined by the individual's location on the developmental continuum. Examples include:

- *Career Beliefs Inventory* (CBI, Krumboltz, 1991)
- *Career Decision Scale* (CDS, Osipow, Carney, Winer, Yanico, & Koschier, 1987)
- *Career Thoughts Inventory* (Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon, & Saunders, 1996)
- *Job Search Attitude Survey – 3rd Ed.* (Liptak, 2006)

**On the job or training evaluations.** Perhaps one of the most effective ways to determine whether a student is ready to work at a given position is some form of on-site assessment. As noted earlier, most employers will have some form of evaluation tool that can be modified to meet your needs. In addition, the following assessments provide information on a student's general (i.e., behaviors and skills that apply to almost any job) employability relative to a training or job site.

- *Becker Work Adjustment Profile - 2nd Ed.* (Becker, 2005)
- *Job Observation and Behavior Scale* (JOBS, Stoelting Publishing, 2000)
- *Work Adjustment Inventory: Measures of job-related temperament* (Gilliam, 1994)
- *Work Personality Profile* (Neath & Bolton, 2008)

**Self-determination assessments.** Self-determination has been defined by Wehmeyer, Sands, Doll, and Palmer (1997) as actions that are identified by autonomous, self-regulated behavior of an individual, who is empowered and acts in a self-realizing manner. Fields, Martin, and Miller (1998) added to this definition, indicating that in order to have self-determination skills one must possess a belief in one's self and capabilities. Self-determination assessments help determine a student's aptitude and opportunity for specific components of self-determination such as goal-setting, problem solving, self-advocacy, self-evaluation, persistence, and self-confidence. Self-determination skills have been associated with independence and self-actuality which in turn have a positive effect on post-school outcomes (Agran et al., 2005). Examples of self-determination assessments include:

- *American Institutes for Research (AIR) Self-Determination Scale* (Wolman, Campeau, DuBois, Mithaug, & Stolarski, 1994)
- *The ARC's Self-Determination Scale* (Wehmeyer & Kelchner, 1995)

## Emerging Issues

There are prominent and emerging issues affecting transition assessment. First, the role of the internet and technology-based resources is rapidly evolving. Several publishers offer software packages for assessment and career planning. Second, the Summary of Performance (SOP) requirement must include recommendations to assist graduating students in meeting their post-secondary goals. Finally, the increasing importance of a college education suggests the need to consider college entrance exams (e.g., Scholastic Achievement Test or SAT and American College Testing or ACT) as part of the assessment process.

A number of websites offer transition assessments. Many of these sites use an interest test or self-reporting of perceived talents or needs. Based on the responses, these sites generally offer initial information for free but charge a fee for a full report. The sites offer convenience, but seldom have independent reviews or access to a technical manual. Notable exceptions include sites offering online access to established assessments (e.g., Self Directed Search, Kuder Interest Inventory, and Strong Interest Inventory). A few online tools that are totally free and popular among special educators include the following:

- [www.caseylifeskills.org](http://www.caseylifeskills.org)
- <http://itransition.pepnet.org/>

Various vendors offer software-assisted career planning resources. These software packages are all in one units that provide assessments of interests and self-reported abilities and then link one's responses to matching careers based on an occupational data base or groups of employees representing given occupations. These packages tend to have an expensive upfront cost but many districts use them with all their students thus lowering the per student fee. These resources also offer routine updates for their occupational data bases to better reflect emerging labor trends and new occupations. Some research, involving college students and adults, suggests that computer-assisted assessments compare favorably to more traditional paper and pencil assessments (see Chauvin & Miller, 2009; Gati, Kleiman, Saka, & Zakai, 2003; Gati, Gadassi, & Shemesh, 2006). A possible downside is that these resources may lack independent reviews of their utility, reliability, or validity for youth with disabilities, but some have technical manuals with useful background information on their product's development.

- <http://www.careercruising.com/>
- [http://www.bridges.com/us/prod/serv/choicesplanner\\_hs/index.html](http://www.bridges.com/us/prod/serv/choicesplanner_hs/index.html)
- <http://www.act.org/discover/>
- <http://www.kuder.com/>
- <http://www.onetcenter.org/tools.html>
- <http://www.sig3.org/>

The SOP provides a formal document that includes transition-related information, including formal and informal assessment information, classroom and school performance data, and information on appropriate accommodations and services during high school (Dukes, 2010). This document serves as an information

sharing tool that helps adult service providers (e.g., Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, Support Specialists in College or University settings) tailor services to the student's unique talents, limitations, and needs. The document also provides the student with an opportunity to prepare for their post-school goals by having an accurate summary of their transition assessment data that they then can be proactive with future service providers.

Given the increasing importance of a college education, it seems reasonable to consider helping youth prepare for college entrance exams as part of the transition assessment process. A student's performance of these exams has a considerable impact on whether they get admitted to a college of their choice. The two most common entrance exams are the ACT and SAT. In helping prepare a student for these exams, you may want to work with the high school guidance counselor given their working knowledge of regional colleges and related expertise. In addition, several publications and websites, most offering free and for a fee services, provide access to sample test questions or further training. Sample websites include the following:

- <http://www.actstudent.org/testprep/index.html>
- <http://www.kaptest.com/College/ACT/index.html>
- <http://www.act-sat-prep.com/>

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## INFORMATIVE LINKS AND OTHER ON-LINE RESOURCES

### Podcasts

[http://www.nsttac.org/products\\_and\\_resources/transitionassessmentsforstudents.aspx](http://www.nsttac.org/products_and_resources/transitionassessmentsforstudents.aspx) - Jim Martin and Lorrie Sylvester provided a webinar on Transition Assessment for Students with Low Incidence Conditions. This is their powerpoint along with supplemental resources.

### Websites

[http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/download/pdf/TK\\_TransAssessment.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/download/pdf/TK_TransAssessment.pdf) - Produced by the Colorado Department of Education, Special Education Services Unit. This site offers a brief document explaining Transition Assessment.

<http://education.ou.edu/zarrow/?rd=1> – The Zarrow Center at the University of Oklahoma provides access to a variety of transition-related assessments and related materials.

<http://www.khake.com/page51.html> - This page provides links for students and guidance counselors including resources to self assessments, career planning, career development and college planning. Additional career exploration resources for younger students are found on the [Career Guides](#) page. For a more complete list of career and technical education resources in each state visit the [State Career and Technical Education Resources](#) page

<http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=3235> – This link provides general information on various types of transition assessments.

[http://www.ncwd-youth.info/resources\\_&\\_Publications/assessment.html](http://www.ncwd-youth.info/resources_&_Publications/assessment.html) - Career Planning Begins with Assessment: A Guide for Professionals Serving Youth with Educational and Career Development Challenges. This guide serves as a resource for multiple audiences within the workforce development system. Youth service practitioners will find information on selecting career-related assessments, determining when to refer youth for additional assessment, and additional issues such as accommodations, legal issues, and ethical considerations. Administrators and policymakers will find information on developing practical and effective policies, collaboration among programs, and interagency assessment systems.

<http://www.nsttac.org/transitionstates/map.aspx> - Using the google search function at the bottom of the map, enter the term 'transition assessment' and 13 states will come up. Click on the respective links to locate relevant materials and tools relating to transition assessment.

<http://www.ode.state.or.us/gradelevel/hs/transition/newsletters/2004/ttvol02issue03.pdf> – Produced in November 2003 by the Oregon Department of Education and Transition, this issue of the Transition Toolbox newsletter focuses on Vocational Transition Assessment-its purpose, types, and uses, and the role of professionals in the vocational assessment process and resources for vocational assessment.

<http://www.onetcenter.org/guides.html#tests> and other assessments helping you make better career decisions - Testing and Assessment Consumer Guides by the Occupational Information Network (O\*Net) resource Center.

<https://sites.google.com/site/transitionassessment/> - This site contains information on transition assessment, including presentations, classroom resources, useful links, and publications.

[http://transitioncoalition.org/transition/module\\_home.php](http://transitioncoalition.org/transition/module_home.php) - Assessing Students with Disabilities: Transition Planning for the IEP is a website developed by Gary Clark at the University of Kansas.

[http://transitioncoalition.org/transition/assessment\\_review/all.php](http://transitioncoalition.org/transition/assessment_review/all.php) - This page is part of the Transition Coalition Website and includes peer reviews of various transition assessments.

<http://www.vcu.edu/ttac/transition/assessment.shtml> The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Assessment Transition Packet was designed to assist those individuals who might need a structured, coordinated effort that involves collecting data on students' strengths, preferences, and interests related to their postsecondary goals. The matrix is a sampling of different assessments that may be used to define those goals.

## Presentations

[http://www.ncset.org/teleconferences/transcripts/2005\\_10.asp](http://www.ncset.org/teleconferences/transcripts/2005_10.asp) - A Transcript of NCSET teleconference call held on October 25, 2005, with associated PowerPoint. Presented by Joe Timmons, (Project Coordinator) and Mary Podmostko, (Senior Project Associate) from the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability/Youth and titled 'Career Planning Begins with Assessment'

## Transition Assessment Implementation Timeline: Suggestions for Assessment

The following timeline provides educators and service providers with guidance for implementing an on-going transition assessment process. The timeline suggests that assessment begins as early as elementary school (and is required by age 16 and lower in some states) and evolves over time. Each area begins with questions to consider when selecting assessment tools. There are four sections: (a) academic assessment, (b) self-determination assessment, (c) vocational interest and exploration, and (d) adaptive behavior/ independent living. Within each section is a list of tools which may be used and suggested grade levels for administration. It is suggested that some assessments be administered every year and others would be more appropriate for occasional administration. The list of assessments instruments is not exhaustive, but provides a starting point for practitioners. Please be aware that there are other transition related assessments for students with disabilities. NSTTAC is not endorsing any programs or products that are sold for profit and described in this guide. If there are other assessments you feel have assisted in the transition planning process for students and would like for NSTTAC to consider adding to the timeline please feel free to contact Larry Kortering ([korteringlj@appstate.edu](mailto:korteringlj@appstate.edu)) or Dawn Rowe ([drowe6@uncc.edu](mailto:drowe6@uncc.edu)).

## Transition Assessment Implementation Timeline

Authors' Note: NSTTAC staff developed this resource by extending materials from Jim Martin at University of Oklahoma's Zarrow Center, the West Virginia Department of Education, the Colorado Department of Education, and the Transition Coalition at the University of Kansas



Average: 5 (9 votes)

