

Postsecondary Goals: Examples for Students with High Support Needs

Material adapted from the "Transition IEP Miniseries," a series of trainings produced by the Indiana Secondary Transition Resource Center, 2020.

◆ Independent Living Postsecondary Goal

Determining if an Independent Living Postsecondary Goal Is Needed

Each student must have an Employment and an Education/Training Postsecondary Goal. When it comes to the Independent Living Postsecondary Goal, the main question is, does the student have age-appropriate independent living skills based on the transition assessments that the student has completed? If the Summary of Findings from Age-Appropriate Transition Assessments indicates a need in independent living skills exists, the student must also have an Independent Living Postsecondary Goal.

Independent Living Postsecondary Goal

If the student does not have age-appropriate independent living skills, there must be an Independent Living Postsecondary Goal. When "No" is checked in the drop-down to the question "Is there sufficient evidence that the student has achieved sufficient skills for independent living?" a box will open to enter an Independent Living Postsecondary Goal. All parts of the IEP, including the Annual Goals and Transition Services, must include alignment to the Independent Living Postsecondary Goal. A new independent living transition assessment must be completed each year.

Best practice, for an Independent Living Postsecondary Goal, is to describe a skill or skills the student requires to reach the Independent Living outcome they desire. This is different from the way the Employment or Education and Training Postsecondary Goals may look. A little later, we'll look at examples of Independent Living Postsecondary Goals and citations if an Independent Living goal is not needed. When developing a Postsecondary Goal, transition specialists should consider the following skills that contribute to the successful independence of an individual in adulthood:

- daily living skills,
- leisure/recreation,
- finances,
- transportation,
- personal care/health and safety,
- home maintenance,
- community participation



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Independent Living Postsecondary Goal Examples

Example	Rationale
I will receive training in basic meal prep and kitchen skills so that I can be more independent while I live at home with my parents.	Even though we may believe a student could live more independently in the future, the current preference after the case conference may be to live with their parents. As teachers, we must support that student in learning skills necessary to be as independent as possible in the environment they choose to live in. It would be appropriate for a student to learn basic meal preparation and kitchen skills so they can be semi-independent while living with their family.
I will live in my own apartment with support from my family.	This Independent Living Postsecondary Goal indicates the student plans to live independently but may still require support to reach this goal. A student with an Independent Living Postsecondary Goal similar to this must have annual goals and transition services that will support them in reaching their goal of living independently in an apartment.
I will use public transportation so I can live independently.	A student who plans to live independently must have a means of transportation. This example would be appropriate for a student who plans to live independently but needs skills related to public transportation. This goal identifies how the student plans to live in the future, and it indicates a skill the student needs in order to be moving toward that goal.
I will participate in my daily routine with hand-over-hand support, learning skills needed to live in a supported living environment.	This is an example that would be appropriate for a student who may require more intensive supports in their future. Learning skills needed to complete their daily routine would help them to become as independent as possible.

◆ Employment Postsecondary Goal

Guiding a Student Toward Their Employment Goal

As educators, a goal we should have for all of our students is that they obtain a real job for real pay. Indiana is an Employment First State, which means integrated community employment at competitive wages is the first and preferred outcome for ALL people with disabilities. The Employment Postsecondary Goal in the IEP is used to help guide all students with disabilities toward this goal.

The Employment Postsecondary Goal should be directed toward the student's interests and plans for employment in the future. The goal should also be aligned toward the career the student plans to have, not the job they will have immediately following high school or while they are in college.

The goal can include supports the student may have in their chosen career. Goals directed toward full- or part-time jobs are acceptable. Sub-minimum wage jobs in a sheltered workshop are not accepted as a postsecondary goal.

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Employment Postsecondary Goals for Students with High Support Needs

Since Indiana is an Employment First state, we expect that all students will work toward a career. All students, regardless of the severity of their disability, must have an Employment Postsecondary Goal. Appropriate supports and a good job match can ensure success for a student working competitively in supported employment.

The Employment Postsecondary Goal for students with significant disabilities may be more general if the student does not yet have a specific career in which they are interested. Goals for this student may include volunteering, working in a job that includes individualized supports, and/or working in a job based on their interest. You'll find examples of Employment Postsecondary Goals at the end of this module.

Employment Postsecondary Goal Examples

Example	Rationale
I will work full time in a beauty salon as a hairstylist.	This example is direct. The Summary of Findings from Age-Appropriate Transition Assessments for this student would include information that stated the student wanted to be a hairstylist. This is the most common example of an Employment Postsecondary Goal. It reflects the way the Employment Postsecondary Goal would look for students who have a single career in mind for their future.
I will obtain a job in the healthcare industry with supports from an adult employment provider.	This student knows they are interested in helping others in the healthcare industry but are not sure of the exact career or job they would prefer. This goal would be an appropriate Employment Postsecondary Goal for a student in that situation. The Summary of Findings from Age-Appropriate Transition Assessments would indicate that this student was interested in the healthcare field.
I will be employed in a job that involves using a head pointer to activate a machine.	Students with significant disabilities may require supports and or accommodations in order to work in the community. This example indicates a support a student would need to complete a job. This student would then have annual goals and transition services that would include training and practice using a head pointer in various environments and activities.
I will obtain a job involving computers.	Some students may not have a specific career in which they are interested. They may have more general postsecondary goals. The Summary of Findings from Age-Appropriate Transition Assessments for this student indicates that the student knows they want a job involving computers but they are not sure of the specific job they want. Transition services and activities should be aligned to the postsecondary goal that will help the student determine what job involving computers they may want to pursue. As transition assessments and services help a student refine their postsecondary goal, they will move to a more specific goal.

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◆ Education and Training Postsecondary Goal

Encouraging Lifelong Learning

Continued education and training after high school is important for all students. Encourage students to think about their education in the future by creating a quality Education and Training Postsecondary Goal in their IEP.

The Postsecondary Education and Training Goal must describe the student’s plans for education and training after high school. This goal would also connect to their Employment Postsecondary Goal by identifying the education and training they would require to reach their chosen career.

Education is defined as the formal postsecondary instruction that will enable the student to obtain skills for their chosen career field. This could be 2-year or 4-year college programs. Training includes short-term programs that could include getting a certificate from a postsecondary vocational school, on-the-job training, or training offered through employment agencies or other adult service providers.

Education and Training Postsecondary Goals for Students with High Support Needs

All students, regardless of the severity of their disability, must have an Education and Training Postsecondary Goal. Everyone has the potential and the right to participate in some form of education and training after high school.

Postsecondary education programs are available for students with significant disabilities and/or students who will exit secondary education with a Certificate of Completion rather than a diploma. For students with significant disabilities, the Education and Training Postsecondary Goals can be directed toward these programs or to other education and training opportunities based on the student's preferences and interests.

Education and Training Postsecondary Goal Examples

Example	Rationale
I will enroll in a college or university to obtain a degree in journalism.	The Summary of Findings from Age-Appropriate Transition Assessments for this student indicates that they would like a career in journalism and want to go to college to learn the skills needed for that career.
I will obtain on-the-job training as an electrician.	Some students do not want to further their education in college. All jobs require some kind of on-going training. An Education and Training Postsecondary Goal can be on-the-job training if transition assessments described in the Summary of Findings from Age-Appropriate Transition Assessments indicate that this is the student's preference.
I will participate in training through an adult service agency to learn skills that will enable me to obtain community employment.	Some students may require training from an adult service provider in the future. Adult service providers may provide training in employment, social, community, independent living, and other skills. A postsecondary goal similar to this may be appropriate for students with significant disabilities.

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Postsecondary Goals: Examples for Students with High Support Needs

Example	Rationale
I will enlist in the US Army to obtain training to further my career in the military.	This is an example of a postsecondary goal appropriate for a student who plans to have a career in the military. Enlisting in the army could be an employment goal also. This goal is written to obtain training in the Army, which makes it an Education and Training Postsecondary Goal.

