Considerations in Transition Preparation for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

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Learning Objectives

• Increase understanding of …
  – considerations in transition planning and preparation practices for students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Transition Planning

• Refers to a coordinated set of activities.
  – Outcome oriented.
  – Student and family focused.
  – Collaborative.
Transition Planning

- Transition planning and preparation are instrumental to improving outcomes in the areas of...
  - Post-secondary Education
  - Employment
  - Independent Living
- Best outcomes require...
  - participation in the planning & preparation process.
  - opportunity to learn and apply needed skills.

Transition Planning

- The nature of ASD can affect both participation and opportunity.

- Therefore, students with ASD are likely to require enhanced transition planning and preparation to improve outcomes.

Transition Age Students with ASD

*Understanding Adolescent Development in Students with ASD*
Adolescent Development

- Adolescence is a period of rapid brain development.
  - Physical.
  - Cognitive.
  - Emotional.
  - Social.
- Also marked by changing expectations.
  - Increased independence and autonomy.

Adolescents with ASD

- ASD is a neurodevelopmental disorder.
  - Atypical development in multiple areas.
  - May see uneven development throughout the adolescent age range.
- High rate of co-occurring conditions.
  - Emotional (mental health) and behavioral.
  - Medical conditions.
  - Sleep and eating.

Adolescents with ASD

- Delays/impairments and co-occurring conditions can affect the development of...
  - Self-awareness
    - Self Determination & Self Advocacy
  - Self-management
    - Independent Living Skills
- ASD features may limit the number of opportunities to learn and practice important life skills.
Adolescents with ASD

ARE THEY DEVELOPMENTALLY READY FOR TRANSITION?

POST SECONDARY & TRANSITION PLANNING OUTCOMES

Post-Secondary Outcomes

• Poor outcomes compared to other disability groups.
  • Un-or-under-employed.
  • Job instability.
  • Low wages.
  • Less likely to complete college.
### Transition Practices Outcome

- Examination of transition practices in ASD finds….
  - Students may not be actively engaged in the transition planning process.
  - Parents may not be actively engaged in the transition planning process.

### Transition Practices Outcomes

- Transition professionals may not be knowledgeable of more effective transition practices in ASD.
  - Teaching participation skills so student can participate in his/her planning meetings.
  - Dedicated transition planning meetings.
  - Linking transition goals to IEP goals/learning objectives etc.
  - Implementing transition preparation activities using effective instructional methods.

### Transition Practices Outcomes

- Transition teams may not include representation from post-secondary settings.
  - May not be aware of resources/partners needed for transition planning.
    - College representation.
      » Recruitment and disability services.
    - Adult agency.
      » Residential.
      » Community integration.
      » Vocational training.
Transition Planning Outcomes

• Transition teams may not include representation from post-secondary settings.
  – State-supported post-secondary disability programs.
    » ACCES-VR.
  – Business representation.
    » Employment/workforce agencies.
    » Human resource representation.

Transition Practices Outcomes

• Parents may not see value in their child’s transition planning process.
  – May not receive education about the process.
  – Transition personnel may not facilitate a collaborative relationship.
  – May not be connected with needed transition resources.
  • Needed resources may not be recommended because transition teams not familiar.
  • Needed resources may not be available in the community.

Implications

• Current transition planning models may not be effective due to these various factors.

• Therefore, need to consider enhancing and/or modifying transition planning practices to improve outcomes.
Considerations in Transition Planning in ASD

Considerations
• Transition planning should improve student outcomes in...
  – Post-secondary Education.
  – Employment.
  – Independent Living.
• Transition planning should assist in reducing barriers to participation & increase opportunities for learning and applying skills.

Considerations
• Begin Early.
  – Maximize participation in planning.
    • Student, parent, community representatives.
  – Maximize opportunity for learning needed skills, across settings/contexts.
• Assessment.
  – Assessment of student & context.
    • Identify areas where student requires training to meet contextual expectations.
Considerations

• Develop Preparation Plan.
  – Identify skills needed.
    • ASD, co-occurring & post-secondary areas.
  – Select curriculums and evidence-based instructional methods.
  – Identify personnel/collaborators
    • Define roles and responsibilities.
  – Detail preparation activities.
    • Person, place, time etc.
  – Ensure alignment with IEP.
    • Course of study.

Considerations

• Provide parent education & professional development.
  – Roles and responsibilities.
  – Creating opportunities for learning.
  – Strategies and methods used.
  – Identifying and accessing needed resources.
  – Collaborative planning and problem-solving
Considerations

• Implement and Evaluate Plan.
  – Instruct in typical environments (where possible).
  • Multiple skills and opportunities.
  – Routine progress monitoring.
  • Regular team meetings for…
    – Evaluation of progress and on-going planning.
    – Problem-solving learning difficulties and plan implementation difficulties.
  • Revise plan as needed.

Transition Planning

For Students with ASD
Pre-Planning

• Pre-planning meetings are needed to prepare student (and parent) for the formal planning meetings.
  – Increase student and parent participation.
    • Individual meetings with student and parent.
      – Purpose of transition planning.
      – Format of meetings.
      – Roles & responsibilities.
    • Use Social Story (Stories) to assist with increasing understanding and participation.

Pre-Planning

• Pre-planning meetings are needed to prepare student (and parent) for the formal planning meetings.
  – Interview student for general interests/preferences.
    • Visual representation (Choice Board).
    • Communication scripts to bring to formal Transition Planning meetings.

Pre-Planning

• Draft an initial Transition Plan.
  – Potential preparation activities.
    • Resources.
    • Collaborators.
  – Visual supports.
    • Transition Plan & Communication Scripts.
    • Choice Board.
  – Identify Transition meeting accommodations.
    • Sensory supports.
    • Format (frequency, number of people, duration, location, etc.)
Pre-Planning
• Preparing for the formal Transition Planning meeting.
  – Student
    • Social Skill Story.
    • Social/communication scripts.
    • Exposure to meeting room and people.
    • Rehearsal.
    • Reinforcement system for participation.
  – Personnel
    • Communicate the format that is best for student participation.

THE TRANSITION PLAN

Transition Plan
• Transition Plan should detail....
  – Student goals for each post-secondary area.
    • Post-secondary Education
    • Employment
    • Independent Living
  – Skills needed to achieve goals.
    • Interventions for skills.
      – Curriculum and instructional methods.
      – Instructional supports and accommodations.
    • Preparation plan for maximizing opportunity for learning and using skills.
      • Intervention methods and support strategies
Transition Plan

- Transition Plan should detail...
  - Roles and responsibilities.
    - Student.
    - Parents.
    - School Personnel.
    - Collaborators.
  - Professional development needed.
  - Parent education and/or training needed.
  - Resources needed.

THE PREPARATION PLAN:

SKILLS TRAINING
Transition Preparation

• Skills training needed on…
  – ASD related skill areas.
  – Co-occurring conditions skill areas (if applicable).
  – Post-secondary goal areas.

Transition Preparation

• ASD and co-occurring conditions….
  – Functional Communication.
  – Social Interaction.
  – Behavior Regulation.
    • Repetitive Behavior/circumscribed interests.
    • Disruptive behavior problems/disorders.
  – Emotional Regulation.
    • Anxiety
    • Depression
    • Adjustment reactions

Transition Preparation

• Multiple strategies can be used for skills training…
  – Functional communication training.
    • Direct instruction
    • Joint Action Routines.
    • Incidental teaching methods.
    • Communication scripts, AAC.
  – Social skills and interaction training.
    • Direct instruction.
    • Social stories and social scripts.
    • Peer modeling and networks.
Transition Preparation

- Multiple strategies can be used for skills training…
  - Behavior Regulation training.
    - Contingency management.
    - Other reinforcement systems.
  - Emotion Regulation training.
    - Coping skills training and scripts.
    - Problem-solving training and social autopsies.
  - Train across settings/context.

Transition Preparation

- Post-secondary education.
  - College/Technical School skills.
    - Entrance/selection.
    - Self-advocacy.
    - Disclosing disability and accessing supports/accommodations.
  - Study skills.
  - Self-management of workload.
    - Organization and time management.
  - Independent living skills.

Transition Preparation

- Employment.
  - Career selection.
  - Job interview and acceptance procedures.
  - Self-advocacy for accommodations.
  - Job specific skills.
  - Social-communication skills.
  - Emotional-Behavior regulation skills.
Transition Preparation

• **Independent Living.**
  – Personal care.
  – Domestic skills.
  – Consumer behavior.
  – Community integration.
    • Including travel training.
    • Recreation and leisure.

• **Independent Living.**
  • Money management.
  • Safety skills.
    – Physical.
    – Media.
  • Sexuality/Intimate social relationships.
    – Dating.

• **Multiple strategies** can be used for skills training…
  – Direct instruction
  – Task analysis & Activity schedules
  – Coaching
  – Social Stories & Social Skill Stories
  – Scripts
  – Reinforcement system to improve motivation and learning.
• Train across settings/contexts.
Select Resources

Resources

• New York State Education Department
  – Transition Regulations:
    – This is the link to the NYS Education Department’s Transition Requirements & Guidelines for students classified with a disability.

• Autism Speaks
  – Multiple resources including a Transition Toolkit, Visual Supports, & an Autism Apps listing.

• Organization for Autism Research
  – Multiple resources including a Guide to Transition (search site for Transition Guide).
Resources

- Geneva Center
  - Various tip sheets for visual supports and choice board (see Resources Tab and select Visual Aids Gallery or use 2nd link listed below).

Resources

- Rochester Regional Center for Autism
  - See Community Education & Technical Assistance Activities tab for …
    - Information Sheet on Transition.
    - Training DVDs for Daily Visual Schedules & Direct Instruction for Social Skills.
    - Various links to other resources.
  - [http://www.urmc.rochester.edu/childrens-hospital/developmental-disabilities/RRCASD.aspx](http://www.urmc.rochester.edu/childrens-hospital/developmental-disabilities/RRCASD.aspx)

Question & Answer

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