

# Transition Planning:

## Supporting the Vocational and Social Development of Adolescents and Young Adults with Learning Disabilities

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# Strengths Perspective

The strengths perspective...directs people toward a healthy development fulfilling their potential. This perspective provides structure and content as it assesses attainable goals, mobilizes resources to promote change and self-esteem, and instills hope in the future. Further, resiliency theory and the strengths perspective share a common faith in human beings...

Susana Mariscal

# A Few Words about Disability, Time & Success

- Internally, a disability is about an individual's sensory, cognitive, emotional, or physical impairment.
- Environmentally, a disability is society's decision that a skill is deficient because of the length of time it takes to complete a task.
- How does this relate to success?

# Some Implications of Learning Disabilities

- Disorganization and sensory difficulties
- Difficulty reading social cues
- Short attention span
- Poor memory
- Difficulty following directions
- Inability to discriminate letters, numerals, sounds
- Poor reading and/or writing ability
- Eye-hand coordination problems
- Difficulties with sequencing
  
- Strengths!!!

# Rehab Services Administration's Seven Functional Skill Areas

- Mobility
- Communications
- Self-Care
- Self-Direction
- Interpersonal Skills
- Work Tolerance
- Work Skills

# Responding to Employer Needs

Responding to employer needs is the essence of all employment—no matter how knowledgeable, skilled, or able an individual may be.

The dilemma for anyone with a disability is that employers usually cannot see how their needs will be met if they hire an individual with a disability.

The key is to be prepared to show an employer how his or her needs will be met.

# Meeting the Needs of All Youth— The Guideposts for Success

- Access to high quality standards-based education regardless of the setting;
- Information about career options and exposure to the world of work; including structured internships;
- Opportunities to develop social, civic, and leadership skills;
- Strong connections to caring adults;
- Access to safe places to interact with their peers; and,
- Support services and specific accommodations to allow them to become independent adults.

# Meeting the Needs of All Youth— The Guideposts for Success

- School-Based Preparatory Experiences
- Career Preparation and Work-Based Learning
- Youth Development and Leadership
- Connecting Activities
- Family Involvement

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/guideposts>



# Success for Youth with LD

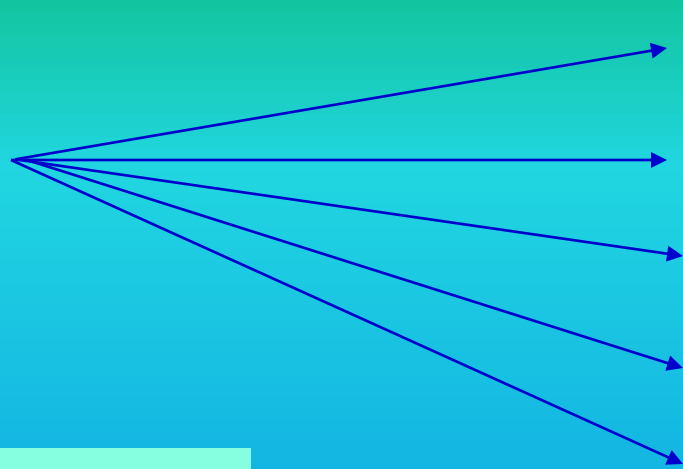
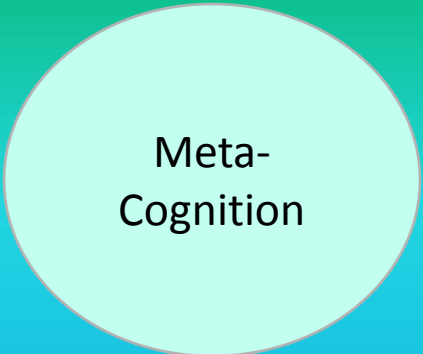
- Individuals with learning disabilities achieve success by accentuating their strengths, knowing their weaknesses, and learning strategies for dealing with specific difficulties.
- We focus supports in three areas:
  1. Strategic Learning
  2. Individual Development Strategies
  3. Disclosure and Accommodations

# Universal Design for Learning— 3 Principles

- An approach to designing course instruction, materials, and content to benefit people of all learning styles without adaptation.
  - *Multiple means of representation*, to give learners various ways of acquiring information and knowledge,
  - *Multiple means of expression*, to provide learners alternatives for demonstrating what they know,
  - *Multiple means of engagement*, to tap into learners' interests, offer appropriate challenges, and increase motivation.

# Executive Functions

- A set of mental processes that helps connect past experience with present action.
- Includes activities such as planning, organizing, strategizing, paying attention, remembering details, and managing time and space.
- Limited executive function can derail academic progress especially as coursework becomes more intense in high school and then in college.



Monitor

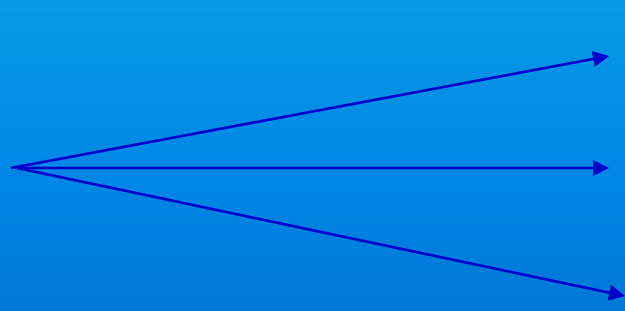
Organization of Materials

Plan/Organize

Working Memory

Initiate

**Executive Functions—  
Eight Domains**



Emotional Control

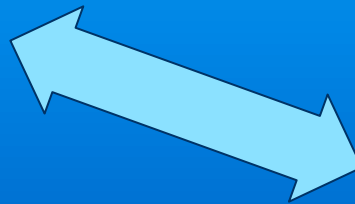
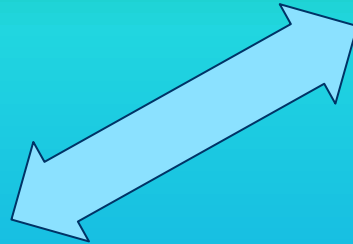
Shift

Inhibit

**What Students Need  
to Know Today**

**What Students Need  
to Know for Work  
Success**

**What Students Need  
to Know for Next  
Year/Next School**



# Strategy Instruction

- Involves teaching about learning strategies, and about how and when to use particular strategies.
- Includes increasing the ability to engage in self-regulated planning, monitoring, and evaluating of their own learning
- We believe that the most effective way to facilitate learning for all learners is by combining direct instruction (lecture, discussion, book learning) with strategy instruction

# Strategy Instruction Teaching Techniques

- Teach important skills
- Teach less better
- Teach explicitly
- Teach contextually
- Explain what is to be learned and why it is important
- Check the old before teaching the new

# David Conley's Key Cognitive Strategies

## (Monitor Precision and Accuracy)

- Problem Formulation
  - Hypothesizes about potential outcomes
  - Plans Strategies
- Research—Access Information
  - Identifies Resources
  - Prioritizes
- Interpretation
  - Analyzes evidence
  - Evaluates findings and conclusions
- Communication
  - Organizes reasoning
  - Constructs a final product



# Design Features of Individual Development

- Self-determination and the related capacities of self-awareness, goal setting and self-advocacy
- The integration of learning opportunities to practice interpersonal skills that are necessary for success in school or in the workplace

# Individual Development Strategies

Individual development strategies focus on processes, techniques, and practices that build skills in *aspects of identity*

- a sense of safety and structure
- high self-worth and self esteem
- feeling of mastery and future
- belonging and membership
- perception of responsibility and autonomy
- a sense of self-awareness and spirituality

# Disclosure and Accommodations

- Disclosure—youth should decide when and how much to tell others, and understand how their disability affects their capacity to learn and/or perform effectively; they should also be “aware” ...
- Accommodations—youth should be empowered to determine what environmental adjustments, supports, and services they need in order to access, participate and excel in school, at work, and in the community.

# Publications

- Career Planning Begins with Assessment--A Guide for Professionals Serving Youth with Educational and Career Development Challenges

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/career-planning-begins-with-assessment>

- Charting the Course--Supporting the Career Development of Youth with Learning Disabilities

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/ld-guide>

# Transition Websites

- National Center on Secondary Education & Transition  
<http://www.ncest.org>
- National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth  
<http://ncwd-youth.info>
- National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center  
<http://www.nsttac.org/>
- Institute on Community Integration  
<http://ici.umn.edu>

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