

Oregon Youth Transition Program Procedures Manual



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YTP would not be what it is today had it not been for the early and continued dedication and devotion of many individuals. It is with great appreciation that we recognize those who have contributed to the development and sustainability of the Oregon Youth Transition Program for more than 25 years. We look forward to the next 25.

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INTRODUCTION

Established in 1990, the Oregon Youth Transition Program (YTP) is a collaborative partnership between the office of Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation, Oregon Department of Education, and the University of Oregon. The purpose of the YTP is to **prepare youth with disabilities for employment or career related postsecondary education or training**. What began as a three year federal grant to seven schools has spread into a majority of Oregon high schools over the last 25 years. To date, more than 25,000 youth have received services from YTP and that number grows by about 1500 youth yearly.

YTP has two distinct, yet interconnected goals. The first goal is to improve post-school transition outcomes for youth with disabilities by preparing them for employment or career related postsecondary education/training. The second goal is to increase capacity and create systems change in schools and other agencies serving students with disabilities in transition from school to work.

YTP is more than a good idea. Recently YTP has received national and international recognition. In 2010, It received the *Best Practices Award* from the *Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs (AMCHP)*, and in 2013, the *European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities* recognized it as a *Best Practice*. Also in 2013, a study by the *Zero Project* comparing the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities named YTP as the only *Innovative Project* to address transition.

The purpose of the YTP Procedures Manual is to provide a structure for YTP program development, maintenance, and evaluation. It is the starting point for new sites and new staff. For existing sites and staff, it serves as a resource for constantly changing systems related to various transition initiatives. The Manual is a living document supplemented by the YTP website (www.ytporegon.org). We constantly update the website with a depth of resources and references that extends the Manual.

The primary audience for the Manual is new YTP staff in newly granted YTP sites. Secondary audiences include new and experienced staff in established sites, as well as those supporting YTP directly or indirectly (e.g., school administrators, Vocational Rehabilitation staff in Branch Offices), and anyone considering applying to be a YTP site. We organized the Manual into seven sections:

General Transition Planning provides a brief introduction to transition planning for all students with a disability and places YTP transition services within the context of general transition services.

Program Management outlines a process for setting up a new YTP site.

Screening and Referral outlines the process for identifying potentially eligible students for the YTP and the process to refer them to VR services.

YTP Transition Services outlines transition planning and services specific to the YTP.

Instruction provides a brief description of four models for providing instruction within the YTP.

Employment provides strategies and procedures for obtaining competitive and integrated employment outcomes for YTP participants.

Final Job Placement and Follow-up outlines general procedures to prepare students for their final job placement, and then monitor their transition into the community.

Program Performance describes the mechanisms for evaluating and improving the YTP outcomes.

Appendices contains an example of a job description for a transition specialist and common transition related acronyms.

As you read the YTP Procedures Manual, keep in mind that although the YTP staff, particularly the transition specialist, plays a critical role in the implementation of the YTP, the intent is for active collaboration and involvement with the special education and vocational rehabilitation colleagues.

GENERAL TRANSITION PLANNING

Introduction

Transition planning is good for all students, whether they receive services for an identified disability or not. It is good practice. For students with a disability, transition services are a required part of their high school experience. We start the Youth Transition Program (YTP) Procedures Manual by describing the general transition requirements for all students with a disability because YTP is an extension of those services. The transition planning unique to YTP is described in the *Transition Planning for YTP* section.

The first purpose of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 is:

to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and *prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living*; (emphasis added 34 CFR §300.1(a)).

To achieve this purpose, IDEA 2004 requires every student who has an IEP to receive transition services. Transition services can be provided as specially designed instruction or as a related service to youth who receive special education services. To understand how transition services are provided by the YTP, we provided a brief introduction to the general transition planning process for all students with disabilities. The Youth Transition Program (YTP) is a service above and beyond the general transition services provided to all youth moving from high school to community living. To participate in YTP, youth **must** be eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services.

Merriam-Webster defines *transition* as ***the movement, development, or evolution from one form, stage, or style to another***. In this chapter we describe the key features of the transition component of the IEP using this definition. Because transition is a mandate in IDEA 2004, we include excerpts from the relevant section (§) of IDEA as reference.

Transition planning is a process that brings together a student and those individuals (e.g., family members, educators, and service providers) directly involved in helping the student prepare to enter a post-school environment. The transition services are designed to ensure the student receives the necessary skills and services to move from school to adult life as seamlessly as possible.

Purpose of Transition Planning

The purpose of a transition focused IEP is to prepare the student for his next step in life. The transition planning process should begin with the IEP in place for the school year the student turns 16. Transition planning can start younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team (e.g., for a child at-risk of dropping out of school). The IEP must have a statement of transition services which includes a multi-year plan of **strategies/activities** to help the student to prepare for postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, and community participation.

CFR§ 300.43 Transition services (a) Transition services means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability—

Coordinated means the activities have a purpose and a goal. They are selected with a plan in mind to accomplish a specific, postsecondary goal in further education, employment, and or independent living.

CFR § 300.43 This coordinated set of activities—

(1) Is designed to be within a **results oriented process** that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation; (2) Is based on the individual child’s needs, taking into account the child’s strengths, preferences, and interests; and includes—

- (i) Instruction;
- (ii) Related services;
- (iii) Community experiences;
- (iv) The development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives; and
- (v) If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.

Students receive a coordinated set of activities that include one or more of the following:

- **Instruction** –being taught, coached or trained in specific academic, functional, and behavior skills (*e.g., reading a bus schedule; calculating taxes, learning about careers in an awareness course; learning time management strategies, and learning self-advocacy*).
- **Related services** – receiving supportive services required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education; (*e.g., obtaining a driving evaluation; obtaining sources of support for coping with difficult life situations; identifying potential post-school providers of recreation therapy*).
- **Community experiences** – participating in activities, paired with instruction, that occur outside the school setting; (*e.g., visiting college campuses and meeting with student support services; learning to eat on campus; touring apartments for rent; visiting and investigating the youth volunteer program at the library; visiting the community theater group to learn how to participate; shopping in the community for food & clothes; finding the local bike repair shop*).
- **Development of employment objectives** – activities and skills that support employment (*e.g., participating the high school career fair to learn about careers; enrolling in the CTE Program of Study; enrolling in the entry-level career program; exploring summer employment options; opening a bank account and learning to manage finances, setting a budget, and paying bills*).
- **Development of other post-school adult living objectives** – activities adults typically engage in (*e.g., registering to vote and learning about the election process; learning to manage personal health; touring a variety of adult housing options with living supports*).

- **Acquisition of daily living skills** – activities that one does daily to care for himself (*e.g., feeding, clothing, and cleaning one’s self; maintaining a home; developing emergency procedures for use at home; managing daily time schedule*).
- **Provision of a functional vocational evaluation** – an assessment to learn about job or career interests, aptitudes, and skills. Information is typically gathered through situational assessments, observations, or formal measures (*e.g., providing opportunities for job sampling in the community; developing a vocational profile based on functional information*).

The coordinated set of activities is student specific and occurs within a *results-oriented process*. This means the focus is on the student’s “outcomes” not a “process”. The student must achieve an end product (e.g., postsecondary goals for education/training, employment, and independent living), not just move through a process or have a compliant IEP. The central question in a results-oriented process is *What has the student learned or achieved?* The focus is on both academic skills (e.g., reading, math, and writing) and functional skills (e.g., social skills, communication, and organization) needed to help the student reach a postsecondary outcome. Special educators and/or case managers are responsible for general transition planning.

Eight Key Provisions for Transition Planning

Next, we briefly describe eight key provisions of transition planning for all youth who receive special education services. These eight key provisions lay the groundwork for transition planning. Remember: all transition planning should be done with the youth, family, and educators and service providers working collaboratively. Good transition planning is never done in isolation.

1. Student Participation

IDEA 2004 Requirements

§ 300.321 IEP Team. (b) *Transition services participants.*

(1) ...the public agency must invite a student with a disability to attend the student’s IEP Team meeting if a purpose of the meeting will be the:

1. consideration of the postsecondary goals for the student; and,
2. transition services needed to assist the student in reaching those.

§ 300.321 IEP Team. (b) *Transition services participants*

(2) If the student does not attend the IEP Team meeting, the public agency must take other steps to ensure that the student’s preferences and interests are considered.

The IEP Team **must** actively involve the student in developing his/her IEP. By identifying the preferences, interests, needs, and strengths (PINS), the IEP Team will understand what the student wants to do when he/she has completed school (e.g., further education, employment, military, etc.), how he wants to live

(e.g., independent living, apartment, group home, etc.), and how he wants to take part in the community (e.g., transportation, recreation, etc.) after high school. Below are ways students can be involved in their IEP process:

- **Invite the student** to attend their IEP meeting. This is a mandatory compliance standard for the transition component of the IEP.
- **Ask the student** to share his preferences, interests, needs, and strengths in the meeting by helping them create a script or notes to use during the meeting.
- **Ask the student** to describe his post-school goals, what he has learned in the last year to help him achieve his goals.
- **Ask the student** to identify what he thinks he needs to learn this year that will help him reach his goal.

Resources

Below are three evidence-based practices shown to be effective in helping youth participate in their IEP meeting. The first two are free.

Self-Directed IEP. The Self-Directed IEP (SD IEP) lesson package is divided into four instructional units, including students leading meeting, reporting interests, reporting skills, and reporting options. It is a multimedia package designed to teach students the skills needed to manage their own IEP meetings. For more information, go to: <https://www.ou.edu/content/dam/Education/documents/miscellaneous/self-directed-iep-rev.pdf>

“Whose Future Is It Anyway?”. *“Whose Future is it Anyway?”* (WFA) is a student-directed transition planning curriculum designed to help students learn to be more involved in the IEP process. For more information, go to: <http://www.ou.edu/content/education/centers-and-partnerships/zarrow/trasition-education-materials/whos-future-is-it-anyway.html>

Self-Advocacy Strategy. The Self-Advocacy Strategy (SAS) is a motivation and self-determination strategy designed to prepare students to participate in education or transition planning conferences. For more information, go to: <http://sim.kucrl.org/products/details/self-advocacy-strategy>

2. Agency Participation

IDEA 2004 Requirement

§ 300.321 IEP Team. (3) To the extent appropriate, with the consent of the parents or a child who has reached the age of majority, in implementing the requirements of paragraph (b)(1) of this section, the public agency [school district] must invite a representative of any participating agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services.

If the purpose of the IEP meeting is to consider transition services for a student, the school district **must** invite a representative of any other agency (e.g., vocational rehabilitation, mental health, community college, brokerages) likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services. If an agency representative does not attend the IEP meeting, the IEP team should document their input.

If the participating agency fails to provide the agreed-upon transition services contained in the IEP, as soon as possible, the district must hold an IEP meeting to identify alternative ways to meet the transition objectives. This does not mean that the school district must provide the identical services written on the IEP; it means the IEP team must discuss the services in question and determine whether another agency or private company could provide/pay for the services, or if there is another strategy that would meet the objectives.

Transition Planning Requirements

IDEA 2004 Requirement

§300.320 Transition services. (b) Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually, thereafter, the IEP must include—

- (1) Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and
- (2) The transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals.

3. Transition Services

The student's transition services are part of a long-range plan that coordinates the last years of high school in preparation for adult life immediately following high school. Transition services should focus on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student with a disability to facilitate his or her movement from school to post-school activities. Post-school activities include postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living and/or community participation.

Transition services are the experiences, supports, and instruction beyond academic courses that will help the student achieve his or her postsecondary goals. At least one transition service should be listed in association with each measurable postsecondary goal; see Table 1 for examples. Transition service areas include instruction, related services, community experiences, or development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.

Table 1. Examples of transition services associated with postsecondary goals.

Postsecondary Goal	Example Transition Services
Postsecondary Education After high school, Jim will enroll in a 4-year college/ university to study biology.	Jim will contact the Disabilities Resource Office at three colleges of his choice and learn what services they offer students with disabilities and how to access the services.
Employment After high school, Darius will work half-time at a computer repair shop.	Amir will complete two different job shadows related to his interest in working on computers.
Independent Living After high school, Angela will live with roommates in an apartment.	Rhonda will learn to take public transportation to and from her home and place of employment and the community college.

Adapted from O’Leary (2010), *Reviewer Reference Form for the Transition Requirements Checklist*©

The intent in the provision of transition services is to ensure a seamless movement from high school to adulthood. A seamless transition is one in which the student’s last day of high school looks like the first day of the rest of his life. As the student nears exit from high school, the in-school services decrease and the community services, provided by adult agencies, increase. The color intensity in Figure 1 depicts the declining and inclining of services between high school and adult agencies as the youth transitions.

Figure 1. Declining and inclining of services between agencies as the youth transitions.



4. Age-Appropriate Transition Assessments

The age-appropriate transition assessments are part of an ongoing process of collecting information on the individual’s needs, preferences, interests, and strengths (PINS) 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 IEP. There are a vast number of age-appropriate transition services available. Some are free, like *Whose Future is it Anyway?*; others are available for a nominal price. Some are formal, such as *Brigance Life Skills Inventory*; others are informal, like those in the *Transition Planning Inventory*. Table 1 lists several different types of transition assessments.

Table 1. Types of Transition Assessments	
Behavioral Assessment Information	Intelligence Tests and Achievement Tests
Aptitude Tests	Career Maturity or Readiness Tests
Interest and Work Values Inventories	Self-Determination Assessments
Transition Planning Inventory	Work-Related Temperament Scales

Resources

- The 2009 Transition Resource Materials booklet contains descriptions of many types of formal and informal assessments. <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?=3798>.
- The Age-Appropriate Transition Assessment Toolkit (3rd ed.) describes transition assessment, provides sample instruments, links to other sources of information, and contains a transition assessment timeline.
<http://nstattac.org/content/age-appropriate-transition-assessment-toolkit-3rd-edition>

5. Postsecondary Goals

Postsecondary goals are important components to the transition services for students with disabilities. The postsecondary goals, based on the student's age-appropriate transition assessments and PINS, let the IEP team know what the student wants to do after high school. Postsecondary goals must focus on after high school and be related to education, training, employment, and independent living.

Figure 2. Rules for Writing Appropriate Measurable Postsecondary Goals

Rules for Writing Appropriate Measurable Postsecondary Goals

- Focus must be on postsecondary education/postsecondary training; employment; and where appropriate, independent living skills.
- Activity must occur **AFTER** graduation, and be clearly stated that the goal will occur after graduation.
- Goals must be measurable, observable, and/or countable.
- The expectation, or behavior, must be explicit.
- Goals must be based on age appropriate transition assessments.
- Must identify an outcome, not a process.

Below are examples of postsecondary goals:

- After high school Juan will work full-time at Whole Foods.
- After graduating from high school David will attend Chemeketa Community College part time to study Emergency Medical Technology.
- After high school, Dawn will live in an apartment with roommates.

6. Course of Study

The student's course of study must be updated annually and should list classes that directly relate to and support the student's postsecondary goals. It is **not** a listing of the courses required for a regular or modified diploma. Here are three examples depicting different courses of study: **Example 1:** *A student who wants a career in construction and to live on her own would take family and consumer science classes to acquire adult living skills, instruction in daily living skills, functional math, and community work experience; math coursework through algebra II, all industrial arts classes that focus on engineering in construction fields, and community work experience.* **Example 2:** *A student who wants to go to college for a career in graphic arts and live on campus would take college preparation courses, family and consumer science classes to acquire adult living skills, art, and computer science classes.* **Example 3:** *As shown in Table 2 depicts a course of study for a student who will become a personal exercise trainer.*

Table 2. Course of Study: Personal Exercise Trainer

Postsecondary Employment Goal —The student will obtain the training to become a personal exercise trainer.			
Freshman Courses for Graduation	Freshman Transition Course of Study	Junior Courses for Graduation	Junior Transition Course of Study
English 9		English 11	
Geography		US History	
Physical Science		Chemistry	
Algebra		Spanish 2	
Health/Phys.Ed.	<i>Health/Phys.Ed.</i>	Health/Phys.Ed.	<i>Health/Phys.Ed.</i>
Career Education	<i>Career Education</i>	Speech/Public Speaking	<i>Speech/Public Speaking</i>
Sophomore Courses for Graduation	Sophomore Transition Course of Study	Senior Courses for Graduation	Senior Transition Course of Study
English 10		English 12	
World History		Geometry	
Biology	<i>Biology</i>	Life Science	
Algebra II		Psychology	<i>Psychology</i>
Health/Nutrition	<i>Health/Nutrition</i>	Weight Lifting/Training	<i>Weight Lifting/Training</i>
Spanish 1		Community Work Experience	<i>Community Work Experience</i>

Figure 3 displays the requirements of a course of study:

- The course of study is a *multi-year* description of coursework from the student's current to anticipated exit year that is designed to help achieve the student's desired post-school goal(s).
- Course of study must be *reviewed annually* to ensure student was given access to courses, courses were passed, and the student did not drop a course.
- The courses of study must be *aligned with the postsecondary goals*.

Figure 3. Course of Study Requirements



Figure 4, on the following page, represents the secondary transition IEP process. This process starts when the student turns 16, and continues annually until he or she leaves high school. Using results from the age appropriate transition assessments to determine the students' PINS and present level of academic achievement and functional performance, the IEP team, including the student as a member, develops the postsecondary goals. The IEP team develops a statement of annual goals and transition services needed to achieve the postsecondary goals.

Figure 4

Annually

Secondary Transition IEP Process

Transition services begin no later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team.

District conducts age appropriate transition assessments

Transition IEP Team

The student must be invited

If student doesn't attend, the district must take steps to ensure the student's preferences and interests are considered.

Other required members of the IEP team:

- Parents
- Regular Ed Teacher
- Special Ed Teacher
- School District Rep
- Individual who can interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation results

Agency Representative

With parent/adult student consent, a representative of any participating agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services was invited to the meeting.

Transition IEP Content

- Results of age-appropriate transition assessments
- Student's preferences, needs, & interests.

Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

- Based upon age-appropriate transition assessments.
- Related to training, education, employment and, where appropriate, independent living skills.

Appropriate Measurable Postsecondary Goals

Academic and functional goals. Statement of how the annual goals will be measured.

Statement of Measurable Annual Goals

Courses of study Services needed to assist the student in reaching the post-secondary goals.

Transition Services

Annually

7. Transfer of Rights at Age of Majority

Under IDEA, the right to make educational decisions transfers to the student at the age of majority. In Oregon, transfer of rights occurs at the age of majority – 18 years old, when the student gets married, or becomes legally emancipated, whichever comes first. The IEP Team must plan ahead and assist the student and parent in understanding and preparing for the transfer of rights that will occur when the student turns 18. There are two critical "points in time" associated with the transfer of rights. The first occurs at least one year before the student reaches the age of majority; this is an IEP content requirement. The second occurs when the student reaches the age of majority; this is a procedural safeguard requirement.

IEP Content Requirement:

At least one year before student turns 18: The district must notify the student and the parent that rights will transfer at the age of majority. This notice must be provided and documented on the IEP that will be in effect when the student turns 17. A copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards must be given to the student at that time.

Procedural Safeguard Requirement:

When the student reaches the age of majority: The district must provide written notice to the student and parent at the time the student reaches the age of majority and rights transfer; districts may not wait until the next scheduled IEP meeting to provide such notice.

8. Summary of Performance

IDEA 2004 requires a Summary of Performance (SOP) for some students exiting special education services. The SOP is a document that contains (a) a summary of the student's academic achievement and functional performance; (b) the student's postsecondary goals; and (c) recommendations to help the student meet her postsecondary goals.

A student who graduates from secondary school with a regular diploma, or leaves due to exceeding the age of eligibility for a free appropriate public education (i.e., end of school year in which the student turns 21) must receive an SOP. The SOP must be completed in the last year of high school; however, it may be started at any time and provided to the student before he exits.

Resources

- ODE Sample Summary of Performance Form
<http://www.ode.state.or.us/pubs/forms/schoolage/1278-P.pdf>
- Transition Community Network <http://tcntransition.org/>

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Introduction

The Workforce Improvement Opportunity Act (2014) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (2004) place a much greater emphasis on the need for schools and VR agencies to collaborate in planning and delivering service for students with disabilities as they transition from school to the community. Together these legislative mandates have the potential for helping school and VR staff provide assessment, determine eligibility and plan joint IEP/IPE services in a more efficient and timely manner. These Acts are intended to ensure that there is no "break in services" between school programs and VR services. To move from legislative mandates to new and better services, systematic efforts must be made to address barriers that have historically discouraged school and VR staff from working together effectively.

The Youth Transition Program (YTP) is designed to address barriers by building a collaborative service delivery program for students in transition. The structure of the YTP allows school and VR staff to collaboratively improve the delivery of services to students in transition, and increase the capacity of agencies to serve students in transition. This chapter lays out the structure for these collaborative efforts. The purpose of this chapter is to provide sites with some strategies for organizing and marketing the YTP within local communities. The procedures recommended here are intended to accomplish **two major goals**:

1. To develop an efficient and effective YTP team that utilizes the strengths of team members and encourages exemplary case management of clients. **(Organizational Goal)**
2. To infuse the new pattern of service created by the YTP into the schools and facilitate systems change. **(Marketing Goal)**

By program management, we mean what needs to happen to set up a new YTP site and how to manage the program effectively. The first goal of program management is an **organizational goal**, providing a structured set of procedures that enable school and VR staff to work efficiently as a team throughout the YTP process. By following the steps outlined here, YTP team members define their roles and responsibilities, manage staff and student paperwork, and develop procedures for documenting their efforts as a team. The second goal of program management is a **marketing goal**. This goal focuses on the need to make YTP more than just an add-on program. To create true systems change, the YTP should become part of the existing school structure, influencing the delivery of services for all students. The marketing steps recommended here describe strategies for collaborating with existing programs and services, and infusing the YTP into the school and community.

This chapter is divided into Essential Features and Procedures for achieving the two goals. Essential Features describes the critical components of program management for YTP sites. The Procedures section provides recommendations for accomplishing the two goals of program management.

Essential Features

Table 1 lists four essential features to ensure successful management of the YTP. First, members of the YTP team need clearly defined roles that capitalize on individuals' strengths and interests. Second, collaboration is critical to the success of the YTP. Third, the YTP should coordinate with other programs and utilize existing resources within family, schools, and the community when providing and delivering YTP services. Finally, the team should market the YTP to effectively integrate it into the family, school, and community.

TABLE 1: Essential Features of Program Management

1. YTP STAFF ROLES:

YTP staff have clearly developed roles and responsibilities that capitalize on individual team members' strengths and interests.

2. SCHOOLS/VR/FAMILY COLLABORATION:

YTP and VR staff meet regularly to review client progress, program benchmarks, and the coordinated delivery of services. The team communicates regularly with family regarding student participation in the YTP program.

3. COORDINATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS:

A process exists for coordinating the YTP with existing school and community programs in the delivery of transition services. The family clearly understands the roles of agencies and programs that are supporting their young adult.

4. MARKETING/PUBLIC RELATIONS:

YTP staff have created opportunities for marketing the program in order to more effectively integrate YTP services into the school and community. Families are included as an integral part of the community of practice.

If you incorporate these essential features of program management, you will develop a collaborative program and create systems change.

The next section of this chapter describes the procedures associated with program management, specifically related to (a) organizing your YTP, and (b) marketing your YTP. These procedures described in each area have been developed, field tested, and revised by school and VR staff in sites across Oregon. The steps and recommendations presented throughout the YTP Procedures Manual are merely suggestions, not requirements. For help implementing one or more of the suggestions, contact your UO TA provider.

Procedures

Organizing Your YTP Site

Whether you are establishing your first YTP site, or entering the 20th year of having a YTP site, it is critical that you focus on the organizational goal: *develop an efficient and effective YTP team that utilizes the strengths of team members and encourages exemplary case management of clients.* This organizational goal is accomplished through **four basic steps**:

1. Identify the YTP team.
2. Develop roles and responsibilities for each team member.
3. Meet regularly as a team and create a format for documenting supervision and collaboration among team members.
4. Develop strategies for collecting student information and tracking student progress.

Step 1: Identify the YTP Team

Primary YTP team members will be the transition specialist and the Vocational Rehabilitation counselor assigned to work with the YTP site. Other team members may include administrators, general and special educators, support staff, and other service providers (e.g., occupational or physical therapists, or job coach), and other agency representatives. Service providers and other agency representatives may come and go as members of the YTP team based on the needs of the students being served in the program at the time.

Although the YTP pattern of services provides an effective vehicle for collaboration between schools and VR, **trust** and **teamwork** must drive that vehicle. Building trust and developing teamwork takes time. It is important to recognize and remember that separate federal laws, regulations, and reporting requirements govern the systems of education and vocational rehabilitation. Team members *must* understand and respect the inherent differences in the agencies they represent and coordinate efforts in the best interest of each client and family. Taking the time to learn the goals of the other agency, what they can and cannot do will contribute to the building of trust and teamwork at the local site.

An important member of your extended YTP team is your Technical Assistance (TA) Provider from the University of Oregon. The YTP TA Provider assigned to your YTP site is there to help you navigate and negotiate all aspects of the YTP— from program development to monitoring benchmarks. He or she will help you access the website and the YTP database, as well as act as a liaison between the two agencies, if needed.

Step 2: Develop Roles and Responsibilities

Building an effective team requires taking into account the differences in the education and VR systems and the federal requirements governing each system.

- Learn the separate responsibilities of each system. Identify commonalities and places where you can share responsibilities. A point of joint responsibility is the *School District and VR Shared Mutual*

Objectives under the YTP Interagency Governmental Agreement (IGA) between the district and VR. These *Shared Mutual Objectives* are to:

1. Arrange for the provision of Foundation YTP activities for all students with disabilities, in need of such services, without regard to the type of disability. Application for VR services is not a requirement before the delivery of Foundation YTP activities. Additionally, the delivery of Foundation YTP activities does not need to result in an application for VR services.
 2. Provide individualized, enhanced, vocational transition activities and services to students with disabilities and at a minimum, this shall include provision of Core YTP Activities to the Core Student Base.
- Make time to review the *School District and VR Shared Mutual Objectives* as a team. The Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) is a formal contract developed every two years between the local school district and Vocational Rehabilitation. The IGA outlines responsibilities and specific activities and duties for the YTP at the District level, VR Services, and Transition Specialist. Appendix A contains an example of a position statement for a transition specialists. Request a copy of the current IGA from the district administrator overseeing the YTP. As a team, review the roles and responsibilities.

The formal roles and job descriptions are starting points. Certain components of the program will logically be assigned to either school or VR staff. Nevertheless, there are many ways team members can share responsibilities in order to serve YTP students effectively.

- Identify the critical activities that must be accomplished (e.g., screening and referral to VR, job development, public relations activities), and then decide who will be responsible for each activity.
- Hold a team brainstorming session to identify the important activities that need to be accomplished and clearly specific responsibilities for each team member.

Consider the strengths and interests of each team member as you assign responsibilities. Ideally, each staff member's role will complement his/her personal and professional interests and abilities. For example, the Transition Specialist who is a strong writer may take the lead in developing a marketing brochure for the program. The VR Counselor who operates weekly job club for adults may take the lead in conducting a weekly job club for students.

- Be flexible with assignments. Allow freedom to negotiate changes according to interests and strengths. Build a stronger team by taking time to learn each team members' interests and strengths.

Step 3: Meet Regularly as a Team

Building mutual understanding and trust between team members starts with good communication.

- Set a regular time to talk with your YTP team about your students and your program.

- Schedule a regular meeting day and time at least monthly. This meeting time may need to be more frequent, perhaps weekly, during the early phases of program implementation.
- Meet via Skype, FaceTime, teleconferencing, or in-person. Regardless of how often you meet, keep the meeting time sacred – avoid canceling a meeting with your YTP team.
- Discuss individual client progress, share information, and resolve any program management issues. Come to the meetings prepared with specific issues or concerns for discussion.
- Use the regular time to review program data. We strongly recommend that Transition Specialists share their progress notes with their VRC on a regular basis.

Step 4: Develop Strategies for Collecting Student Information and Tracking Progress

Utilize the YTP web-based system of program evaluation. It is important that your system of case management reflects a clearly defined and simple method of client assessment. Tracking student participation from application to YTP exit and YTP completion after 12 months of follow-up is a primary responsibility of the YTP team. The YTP database is designed to provide staff with a simple system for collecting student data, and documenting program outcomes. Database entries should be completed collaboratively by the Transition Specialist(s) and VR Counselor(s) on a regular basis.

Review student progress on a regular basis. Effective case management requires utilization of a system to regularly review and share student progress within the YTP team. Ideally, this would include sharing information with the VR counselor, perhaps in an electronic format.

- Briefly discuss each client currently active in the program during the regular YTP team meetings.
- Give a quick update on what each client is doing (e.g., looking for a job, finishing school, working part time, etc.) and determine any specific services that students need.
- Schedule “staffings” with individual YTP clients to develop IPE goals and track progress.

Detailed information about collecting and tracking student data is provided in the section on Program Performance later in the manual.

Marketing Your YTP

The marketing goal of Program Management is to *infuse the new pattern of service created by the YTP into the schools and facilitate systems change*. This goal focuses on the need to promote the YTP within the schools and community. Marketing your program enhances services to students by building connections to existing programs, and developing strategies to support the YTP on an ongoing basis. The ultimate marketing goal is to create a viable transition program for a broader population of students. The marketing component of program management is accomplished through **three basic steps**:

1. Identify opportunities to coordinate YTP services with existing programs and resources.
2. Create new opportunities that maximize awareness of the YTP.
3. Explore options for maintaining and expanding the YTP.

Step 1: Identify Opportunities to Coordinate

Coordinate and cultivate YTP services with existing programs. The experiences youth have in the YTP should be integrated into the school and community, not separate from them. Look for and cultivate opportunities to collaborate with existing programs rather than reinventing programs and duplicating resources. Identify and collect information about complementary programs within your school and community. Existing programs provide opportunities to combine resources, integrate students, and create positive experiences for your students.

Table 2. Examples of Existing High School and Community-Based Programs

Examples of existing high school programs/activities	Examples of existing community-based programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative Work Experience Programs • Career Technical Education Programs • School-Based Businesses • Life Skills Classes • Career Center Activities • Career Related Learning Activities • FFA Clubs • Internship Programs • School Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment First Initiative • Transition Network Facilitator Activities • Workforce Councils • Independent Living Programs • Oregon Youth Conservation Corps • Community College Programs • Chambers of Commerce/Public Service Clubs • Center on Brain Injury Research and Training • Community Developmental Disabilities Program • Oregon Parent Training and Information Center

As part of the transition planning process, you may have already collected information about these existing resources. During that process, your goal was to gather information related to providing services to individual students. Now, put on your “program manager hat”, and think about performing those same activities to accomplish a different purpose – **systems change**. Your goal should be to build bridges between programs in order to increase their capacity to serve all students in transition.

Share information about the YTP with key stakeholders who serve transition aged youth in the school and community. Start by simply sharing information about the YTP with staff from other transition programs. The YTP website (www.ytporegon.org) houses a multitude of resources useful for raising awareness and promoting your program in the school and community. These resources include:

- A brochure template to develop a personalized brochure describing your YTP <http://www.ytporegon.org/content/editable-and-customizable-ytp-program-brochure-available-your-use>
- Short video clips describing many aspects and benefits of the YTP
- The Oregon Youth Transition Program 20 Year Report highlights outcomes of YTP <http://www.ytporegon.org/ytp-20-year-report-now-available>
- A resource page for employment and other related transition services <http://www.ytporegon.org/content/employment-and-other-related-resources-ytp-transition-specialists-and-ytp-students>
- Archived materials from previous trainings <http://www.ytporegon.org/content/ytp-training-materials-past-events>

Determine opportunities for collaboration/cooperation. Develop working relationships with existing transition programs by matching what you need for YTP with the needs of other program. For example, you need work opportunities for your students and short-term, summer employment programs need workers. Summer presents an opportune time to collaborate with agencies. Many YTP sites refer their students for pre-employment classes as well as paid job training through the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) summer programs. Some YTP transition specialists have negotiated informal agreements where YTP students are placed high on the recruitment list, in exchange for the Transition Specialist agreeing to assist with on-the-job training and monitoring of students. Both programs benefit from these collaborative arrangements.

Step 2: Create New Opportunities that Maximize Awareness of YTP Services.

Develop a plan to promote the YTP. Your YTP team should create a plan to market the YTP based on your site's unique needs and strengths. Consider consulting with the school district's public relations representative. This person can help you decide who might be an appropriate community connection. Often, the district spokesperson can link you to vital organizations. Booking a presentation to the school board, the Chamber of Commerce or public service clubs will help create new networks and public support for the YTP.

Market the program within the school district and community. Once you have your materials developed, begin your outreach activities within the school and community. Determine team members' responsibilities for marketing according to their strengths. One team member may be confident and enthusiastic about making face-to-face presentations about the YTP. Another may feel more comfortable writing letters of introduction. Remember to market and create awareness within the parent community. Hosting "meet and greet" events to inform families about the program and coordinate outreach events with the local or state director charged with supporting parents of students with disabilities.

Step 3: Develop Strategies for Maintaining and Expanding the YTP.

Occasionally, you will need to educate new school administrators, school and VR staff, and community members about YTP, its purpose and how it operates. These are opportunities to infuse new life, ideas, and blood into the YTP in order to maintain and expand it. Remember to brag about the success.

- ***Develop administrative support for the YTP.*** Administrative support is crucial for ensuring long-term program success. You will need administrative support within the school and VR systems. Your team should provide information and develop relationships with building principals, district administrative staff, and school board members, as well as local VR Branch Managers, and state VR administrators. These are key people who need to be informed about YTP services and student outcomes. With their support and vision, the YTP can become a permanent resource for transitioning students.
- ***Promote the YTP model as an alternative learning environment for students outside of the YTP.*** Many components of the YTP model can be successfully adopted. By broadening the population served by the YTP, you broaden your base of support for maintaining the program and create more opportunities to infuse the YTP into the school structure. Remember, all students can benefit from the Foundation YTP activities, (i.e., pre-employment transition services) and an application for VR services is not required.

SCREENING AND REFERRAL

SCREENING AND REFERRAL

Introduction

YTP and VR are eligibility based programs. This means students must meet specific eligibility criteria in order to receive YTP and VR services. VR counselors (VRC) **must** establish a person's eligibility for VR services based on a review of information provided about the client. After reviewing the available information, the VRC determines whether further information is needed (e.g. testing, medical documentation, etc.) in order to determine eligibility. Students who meet the eligibility criteria can participate in YTP Core activities and services. This chapter focuses on the screening and referral process leading to VR eligibility and fulfills **two major goals**:

1. To determine the students most likely to require substantial VR services in order to overcome a barrier to employment; and
2. To identify the students potentially eligible for VR services.

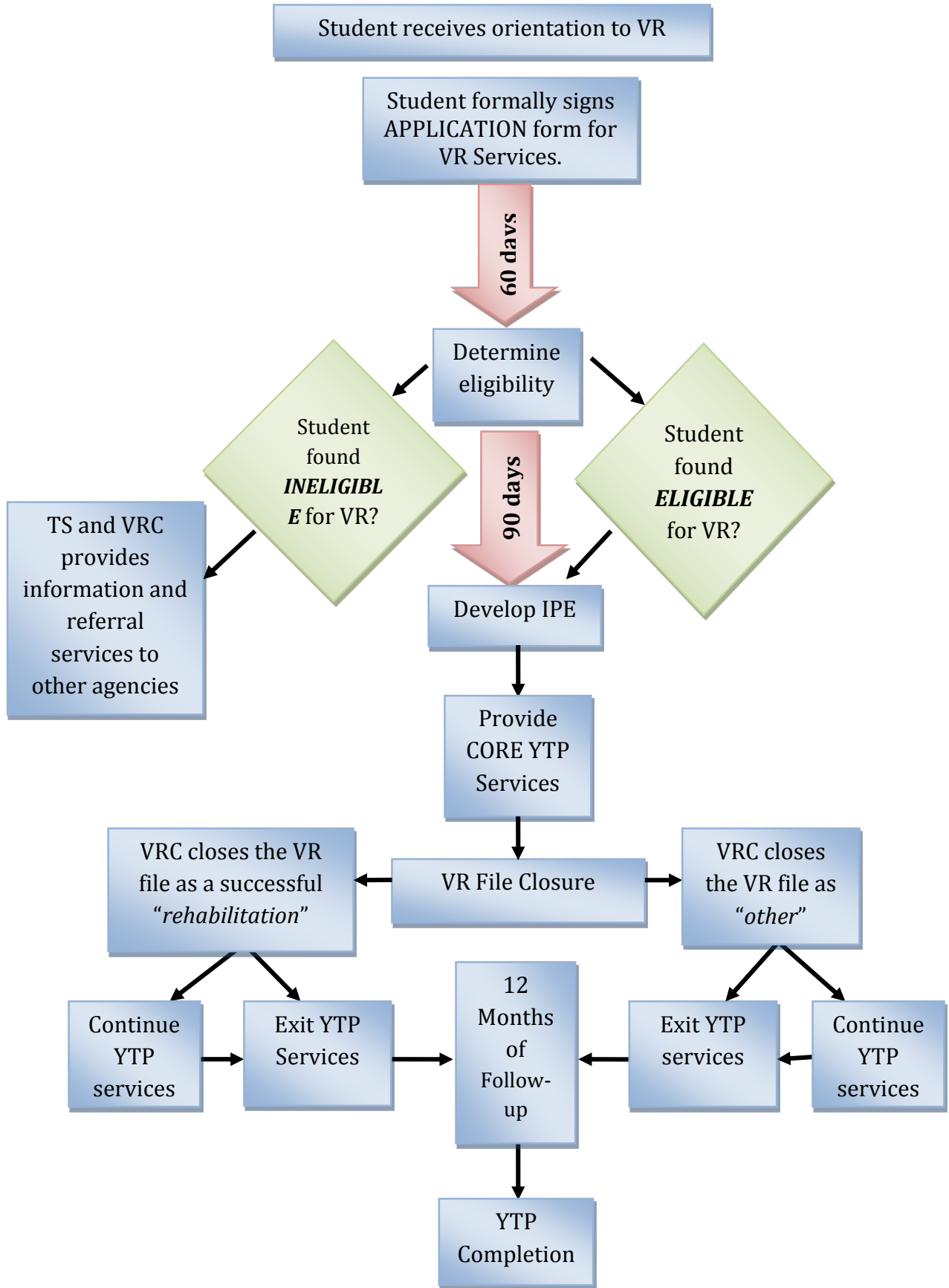
Screening refers to the process of determining whether students may be appropriate to refer for YTP services. Youth who have a disability and who need VR services in order to overcome a barrier to employment are appropriate to consider for YTP. It is also appropriate to refer students who are *potentially eligible* for VR services.

Potentially eligible means students who have an undocumented disability (e.g., mental health, physical disability, or health impairment).

Potentially eligible students do not require Section 504 services or special education services. Students are formally *referred* to vocational rehabilitation services through the VRC. The VRC, unilaterally, makes the final determination regarding a student's eligibility for VR services. The screening and referral process follows a sequence of activities and timelines. This sequence is outlined in the activities listed below and in Figure 1 on the following page.

1. An individual receives an orientation to VR and the services that can and cannot be provided.
2. Individuals interested in services sign an application form formally indicating that they want to become a VR client to receive those services. This places an individual "in application".
3. With the signed application, the VR counselor has 60 days to determine eligibility for services.
4. After determining eligibility for YTP services, the VRC has 90 days to develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The IPE lists all of the substantial services needed to result in employment.
NOTE: This is an excellent time to incorporate a *coordinated set of transition services* into the IEP and align them with the IPE. There are probably skills and services that can be provided by the school process and indicated in the IEP. There may be adult services identified in the VR process and indicated in the IPE that should be addressed in the educational process .
5. When an employment outcome has been achieved, the VRC and YTP transition specialist track the employment placement for 90 days. If employment is sustained, the VRC can close the VR file as a successful "rehabilitation" closure. **NOTE:** This does **not** mean that YTP services end necessarily. It may trigger follow-up services.

Figure 1. Screening and Referral Timelines



As a transition specialist, your role is to:

1. **Identify** a pool of potentially eligible students for the YTP program.
2. **Collect and review** screening information on identified students.
3. **Refer** the potentially eligible students to VR and, with the VRC, identify any additional evaluation information that needs to be collected in order to determine students who are potentially eligible for VR services.

Remember, once you make the formal referral to VR, it is the responsibility of the VRC to determine whether the student is eligible for VR.

Step 1: Identify a Pool of Eligible and Potentially Eligible Students for YTP Services

An *eligible* student is one who has a documented disability and a barrier to employment that requires VR services. A *potentially eligible* student is one who may have an undocumented disability, such as a mental or physical health condition, that does not require a 504 Plan or special education services to benefit from education, but may have a barrier to employment. Your pool of students must have traits that indicate a good possibility of meeting eligibility requirements for VR. Normally, there will be more students at your site who could potentially benefit from YTP than there are available YTP slots. Therefore, one of the first activities you will do is make a list of all the students who are potentially eligible for YTP; this is your pool of students. Table 1 provides general questions to ask and things to consider, and not to consider, when determining whether a student may be eligible for YTP services.

Table 1. General Questions and Considerations

Things to Consider	Things Not to Consider
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the student have a clear desire to work? • Does the student have a barrier to employment that requires VR services? • Is the student between the ages of 14 and 21? • Will the student leave school within the next two years (e.g., currently a junior or senior)? • Is the student at-risk of dropping out of school in the near future? • Does the student have a support system (may be family, friends, or school personnel)? • Has the student demonstrated a desire for help (e.g., is he involved and does he follow-through)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusively focusing on an age or grade group (e.g., only working with seniors or 17 year olds). • The student’s disability category (e.g., only students who are SLD). • The student’s identified diploma option (e.g., only working with students who have a regular or modified diploma). • Whether the student has left school (i.e., dropped out).

Strategies for identifying a pool of students include:

- Ask the special education teachers and case managers at your site for names of students who may meet the general considerations listed in Table 1.
- Share information about YTP at faculty meetings and request names of potentially eligible students.
- Ask the guidance counselor for a list of students who recently dropped out of school.
- Talk with a principal at an alternative school and ask for referrals.

Remember, YTP participants do not solely come from the site's population of students receiving special education services. Students on 504 plans, in alternate education settings, and those who have dropped-out of school can be potential VR clients and YTP participants. Maintain an on-going list of potential students so you can quickly fill a vacancy in YTP when a slot opens up in your program.

Step 2: Collect and Review Screening Information

When determining eligibility, rehabilitation law requires that determination should start with existing data provided by the individual with a disability, his/her family, or advocates. The VRC may also use information from educational agencies, including any existing testing data that may have been completed by school psychologists or other credentialed evaluators; social security information; or reports from the individual's physician. If existing data are outdated, or not available, additional assessments may be conducted to determine eligibility. The VRC uses the documentation to answer the following questions:

1. Does the applicant have a diagnosed disability?
2. Is that disability a significant barrier to employment?
3. Does the individual require substantial VR services to overcome the barrier?
4. If services are provided, will it result in competitive employment?

YTP school staff should participate in planning meetings where postsecondary goals are discussed for an individual who is being considered as a YTP participant. YTP teams, including a special educator or case manager, must determine who is leaving high school and when they are leaving to develop a pool of potential participants. Table 1, on the following page, shows the (a) questions driving eligibility determination, (b) information, the transition specialist should collect to help determine eligibility, and (c) possible resources for locating the information. The questions are answered and documented in the individual's VR file and/or Individual Plan for Employment (IPE).

Table 2. Questions Driving Eligibility Determination

Questions Driving Eligibility Determination	Information the Transition Specialist Should Collect	Possible Resources for Locating Information
Do you have consent to involve VR?	Signed consent form	Parent/family for youth age 17 or younger; from youth age 18 or older
	Signed release of information	
Does the applicant have a diagnosed disability?	Educational Testing	Student's Special Education File
	Medical Documentation	Student's Special Education File Family Physician
What assessments were used to determine eligibility for special education?	Statewide Testing Results	Student's Special Education File
	Work Assessment	Progress Notes; Age-Appropriate Transition assessment; IEP; Student's Special Education File
	Psychological Testing	Student's Special Education File
Is that disability a significant barrier to employment?	Communication	Speech/Language Pathologist (SLP)
	Interpersonal Skills	Teacher interviews about social skills, friendships, taking constructive criticism, ability to work in teams
How does the student's disability affect his ability to work?	Mobility	Physical Therapist / Occupational Therapist
	Self-care	Occupational Therapist /Teacher interviews about organizational skills, decision making, impulsivity, hygiene.
	Self-direction	Teacher interviews about following directions, homework completion, generalizing learned behaviors from one environment to another
	Work Skills	Teacher interviews about use of time, tardiness, absenteeism, initiative to start a project.
	Work Tolerance	Student's Special Education file regarding length of school day, absenteeism, relationships to teachers and other authority figures.
Does the individual require substantial VR services to overcome those barriers?	Strategies or mechanisms that allow the individual to overcome the barrier to employment created by the disability.	VR Counselor
If those services are provided, will it result in the positive outcome of competitive employment?	If those services are mindfully laid out, the fourth and final question will be adequately addressed.	VR Counselor

To be most effective in mapping out the best pattern of services, the YTP site staff may find it helpful to track the type of Oregon diploma a YTP participant is seeking. There are five (5) primary methods of exiting high school in Oregon (see <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=368>):

1. The Oregon Diploma
2. The Oregon Modified Diploma
3. The Oregon Extended Diploma
4. The Alternate Certificate
5. The General Educational Development (GED)

These choices affect the length of time a student has to complete high school, and in turn, create a timeline for the YTP staff that drive when the next steps after high school will occur. Only attainment of a regular diploma affects when the student leaves high school. All other students may stay until they are 21 years old. Ideally, the YTP team creates a pathway of seamless transition so that the participant's first days and weeks after leaving high school look identical, or very similar, to the last days and weeks of his or her high school career.

Step 3: Refer Potentially Eligible Students to VR

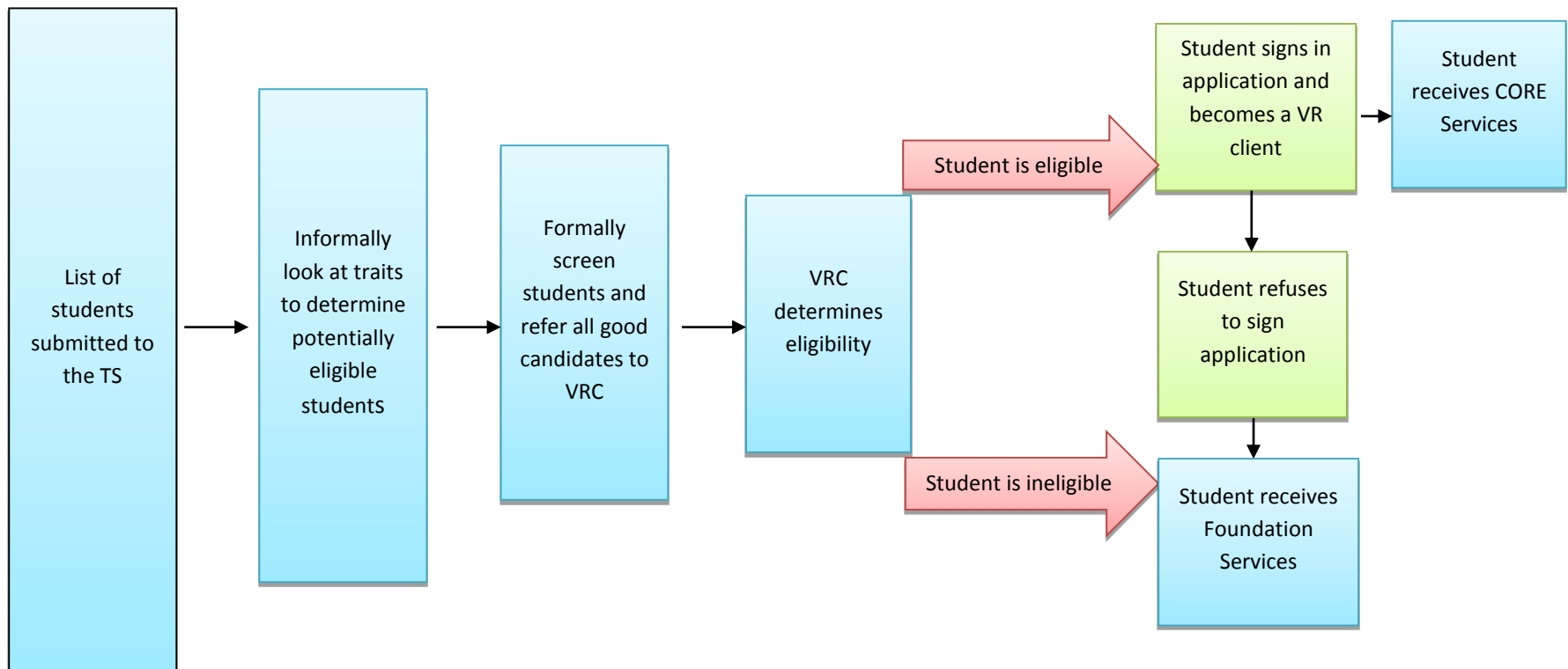
Once a student has been through the screening process, the information that has been gathered is given to the VRC who will determine eligibility. If the student is eligible, the student signs an application and becomes a VR client. The student is then eligible for CORE YTP services. If the student refuses to sign the application or is found ineligible for VR services, then the student may receive Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) which include: job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on opportunities for postsecondary education, soft skills and instruction in self-advocacy. This three part process is illustrated in Figure 2, the Screening and Referral Process.

Figure 2. Screening and Referral Process

Step 1: Identify a Pool of Potentially Eligible Students

Step 2: Collect and Review Screening Information

Step 3: Refer Potentially Eligible Students to VR



The remainder of this chapter is organized into two sections: 1) Procedures and 2) Essential Features. The first section describes the critical features of the screening and referral process. The second section outlines the recommended procedures and forms for the YTP screening and referral process.

The next section expands the procedures explained at the beginning of this chapter into recommended activities for accomplishing the YTP Screening and Referral process. These activities have been developed and field-tested over time, with staff in local schools and VR offices. They are based on the essential features described above. The specific steps in this chapter are suggested, not required.

Procedures

The overall goal of the YTP Screening and Referral Procedures is to identify YTP participants from those most likely to benefit from and be determined eligible for VR services. The Screening and Referral Procedures are detailed in Table 3 on the following page. The three steps are expounded into activities and several specific details are identified for each activity. Resources for the activities are on the YTP website (www.ytporegon.org).

Table 3. Steps, Activities, and Details for the YTP Screening and Referral Process

Steps	Activities	Specific Details to Activities
<p>Step 1: Identify a pool of potentially eligible students for the YTP.</p>	<p><i>Meet with school district personnel to explain purposes and benefits of YTP.</i></p>	<p>Train high school personnel, including school administrators, special education teachers, school counselors, and others about the purpose and benefits of YTP.</p> <p>Give a brief overview of the services through a formal presentation to a full staff meeting, or an informal discussion with one or two individuals.</p> <p>The overview should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The roles and responsibilities of the YTP Transition Specialist, • The outcomes you hope to achieve for YTP students. • The process you will be using to identify potential students. • A flyer describing potential students
	<p><i>Collect a list of potential referrals from schools.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask school personnel for names of individual students who are potential candidates for the program. • Include students who are at risk of dropping out, and students who may have already dropped out from school. • Students who are interested may refer themselves to the program.
	<p><i>Meet with each student to explain the program and determine his/her interest in participating</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact all students who have been identified by school staff. • Describe YTP to each student as a program that combines a paid job with school. • Explain the services available, responsibilities required, and steps to determine if the student will be eligible for the program and VR services. • Ask if student’s parent(s) will support their participation in the YTP. • Eliminate uninterested students

Steps	Activities	Specific Details to Activities
	<i>Send information packets to parents of interested/motivated students</i>	Send parent the following information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Parent Information Letter</u> --description of program and steps taken to evaluate the student • <u>YTP Flyer</u>—In depth view of program • <u>YTP Consent Form</u>—explains rights and gives consent for consideration • <u>VRD Information Release</u> -- allows the school district to release information directly to VRD • <u>Financial Needs Test</u>—disclosure of financial information—VR requirement
Step 2: Collect and review screening information on identified students	<i>Complete the YTP Screening on students who have returned a signed participation form</i>	Once the two consent forms have been signed and returned, the referral source (e.g. teacher, counselor, etc.) will complete a Screening Packet which includes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a cover sheet, 2. student history, 3. functional limitations spreadsheet, and 4. summary of available testing information.
	<i>Meet with students to review the SCREENING PACKET</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the information in the Screening Packet with the student • Explain that information will be used to determine his/her eligibility. • Discuss his/her own disability with student including how their disability might impact their ABILITY to work, to learn a new task, or learn a new skill. • Ask the student to verify functional limitations indicated on the Functional Limitations Checklist , <u>or</u> • Have the student complete and sign his/her own version of the checklist. • Attach the student’s school records (transcripts, behavioral file, attendance records), and any existing evaluation information to the Screening Packet and send the original packet on to the VR Counselor. • The VR Counselor should share with educational personnel their Individual Plans for Employment, Functional Limitations they assign to the client during eligibility determination, and other relevant.

Steps	Activities	Specific Details to Activities
	<p><i>Identify students who will clearly be unable to benefit from the program or be ineligible for VR services</i></p>	<p>The YTP team will review the screening materials to determine those students who should be screened out before they are officially referred to VR.</p> <p>These students should have profiles that indicate that they either:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. do not need the program to function independently in the community (e.g., they have a good history of holding paid, competitive jobs in the community), 2. will not be able to benefit from the program in the time frame that services are available (e.g., there are substantial social support issues for this student such as drug/alcohol abuse which are unlikely to be resolved), 3. will not be determined eligible for VR services (e.g., the student is not on an IEP and/or it is questionable that a disability could be documented) or 4. do not need or want vocational services at this time (e.g. they want to focus their time and energy on completing a high school diploma). <p>The transition Specialist should communicate the outcome of the screening to the student and his/her parents.</p>
<p>Step 3: Refer appropriate students to VR, and determine the evaluation information that needs to be collected to determine eligibility.</p>	<p><i>Arrange for the VR Counselor to conduct an initial interview with each student who is a possible participant in the program</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team should set up times and locations for each potential student to be interviewed by the VRC. • The transition specialist may assist with transportation to the interview, or the VRC may schedule the interview at the high school. • The VRC decides if the parents will be involved in this interview. • The VRC will decide if the student should become a formal applicant of the VR agency, and complete the necessary paperwork is completed. • The VRC and transition specialist will decide who will provide the official communication to parents for those students who are screened out after the interview and intake process.

Steps	Activities	Specific Details to Activities
	<i>Identify and collect additional evaluation information that is needed to determine students eligible for VR services.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the information gathered during the screening process and the interview. • Review the existing test information that was identified and gathered earlier. • Identify the evaluation information needed for the VRC to make the final determination of eligibility. • Whenever possible, the VRC should use existing information from the student and/or the family, or from other sources.
	<i>Stay in contact with the VR Counselor to facilitate the eligibility determination process.</i>	<p>The VRC will notify school staff, students, and parents when a student has been <u>certified eligible</u> or <u>Ineligible</u> for VR Services</p> <p>The VRC must demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No employment outcome is possible in order to determine a person ineligible. • They do not have enough information to determine if the student can benefit from VR service and may place the student into <u>extended evaluation</u> for a period of time.
	<i>Meet with each selected student to begin the process of planning for the student's participation</i>	<p>Set a meeting up with each YTP student and parent (if appropriate) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the purpose of the program • Discuss the results of the evaluation • Present the benefits and responsibilities of the program • Answer any remaining questions that students and/or parents have • Confirm the student's commitment to participating in the program • Obtain information about how to stay in touch with the student (e.g. an aunt, a grandparent, a sibling, etc.) should they move away from the local community where they began the YTP • Discuss the steps to develop a coordinated transition plan and an appropriate post-school placement for the student.

Essential Features

TABLE 4: Essential Features of Screening and Referral

1. INFORMED CHOICES ABOUT SERVICES:

Potential YTP students and their parents are given information (verbal and/or written) about the YTP and VR, so that they may make an informed choice about their participation.

2. INITIAL SCREENING DECISIONS:

Screening information is collected for potential YTP students including: school records, information on functional limitations, existing evaluation/assessment data, and work history information, so that the YTP team (VR counselor and school staff) can make joint decisions about the students who are most likely to benefit from YTP/VR services.

3. ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION PROCESS:

School and VR staff work together effectively to support students and families during the VR eligibility determination process.

4. ONGOING COLLABORATION:

Implementation of the YTP screening and referral process continues to improve services to students in transition by streamlining the school to VR referral and eligibility determination process.

5. SYSTEMS CHANGE:

Coordination of IEP and IPE. Bringing functional limitation language into the special education transition IEP process, age appropriate transition assessment, measurable postsecondary goals, the Summary of Performance

6. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT:

Since families are involved in the IEP process, a family vision of the future for the young adult involved in YTP must be developed. That vision should include work as one of the components. Using IEP discussion starters (see forms and procedures section) can facilitate this process. Events such as family information nights and transition fairs enhance the families' ability to see what is possible in the future.

YTP Transition Services

YTP TRANSITION SERVICES

Introduction

As a provision of IDEA, all students with disabilities must have transition addressed in their IEP when they turn 16. For students who continue to require services beyond high school, many times, there is a gap in services as the student transitions to adult services (see Figure 1). The intent of transition services is to bridge the gap in services between the school and community and YTP is one way to fulfill that intent (see Figure 2). Some students need additional help and more intensive services in order to meet their postsecondary goals. YTP provides a mechanism for developing and providing strong, collaborative services between the school district and VR as one adult service agency. This is accomplished by involving the student, family, school, and agency representatives in planning (see Figure 3). YTP participants can receive two types of services: (a) Foundation YTP Activities, and (b) Core YTP Activities.

Foundation YTP Activities are a broad set of activities, assistance, and supports provided by the school district in its YTP. These activities include, but are not limited to, pre-employment transition services (P.E.T.S.). *All students with disabilities can participate in Foundation YTP activities and do not need to apply for VR services in order to participate.* Additionally, delivery of Foundation YTP activities does not need to result in an application for VR services. Foundation YTP activities can help the transition specialist and District recruit and refer appropriate students to Core YTP Activities.

Core YTP Activities are enhanced transition activities, assistance, and supports provided by the school district as part of its YTP to youth who are eligible for VR services. Core YTP Activities include: (a) identification and referral of students with disabilities with an interest in employment to VR; (b) utilization of Motivational Interviewing to elicit personal motivation for development and change; (c) IPE and IEP development focused on postsecondary employment goals; (d) instruction in vocational and related independent living and social skills; (e) career development activities and exposure and connection to paid employment; (f) Information and Referral to other sources of vocational assistance, including Work Incentives Planning; and (g) follow-up support for one year after leaving the YTP.

For students who qualify for VR services, the Core YTP Activities provide a focused, collaborative experience designed to help them meet their postsecondary employment goal. Youth who participate in YTP services have an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) developed and aligned with the transition services in the student's IEP. School personnel and support staff help the student achieve academic success and prepare for further education, employment, and independent living while the student is in high school. On the community side of the bridge is an array of options and a variety of service providers who can assist individuals with disabilities after they leave high school. In order for students to make the transition from high school to adult life, schools must work collaboratively with adult agencies, such as VR, mental health agencies, and brokerages in the planning and provision of services. Although IDEA makes it clear that the school district has the *primary* responsibility for providing transition services, interagency collaboration is strongly encouraged and regulated.

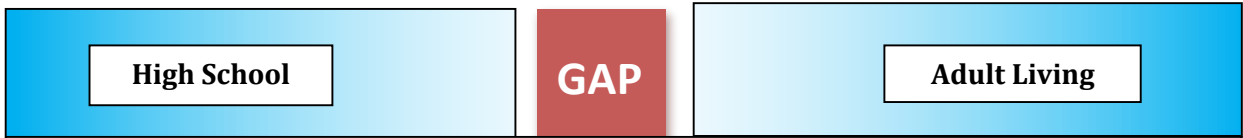


Figure 1. Within IDEA, the intent of transition services is to bridge the gap in services between the school and community.

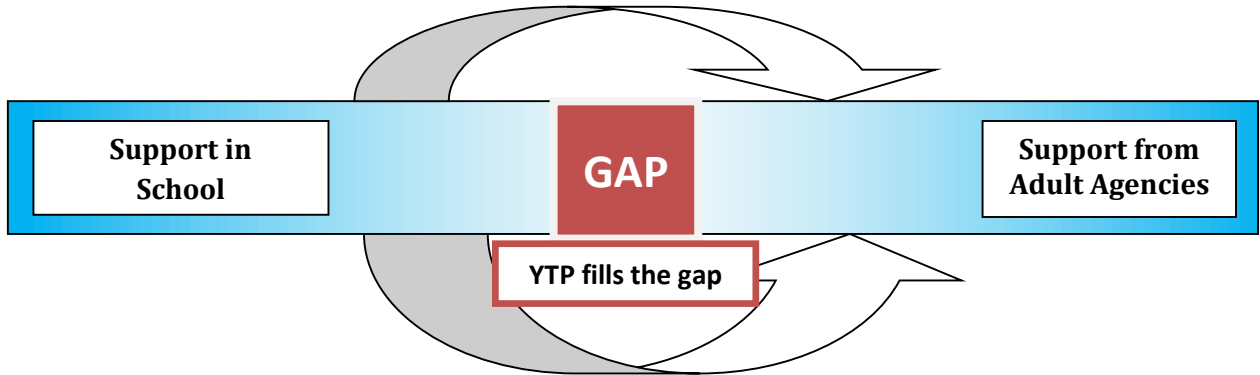


Figure 2. YTP transition services bridge the gap between the support in school and the support from adult agencies.

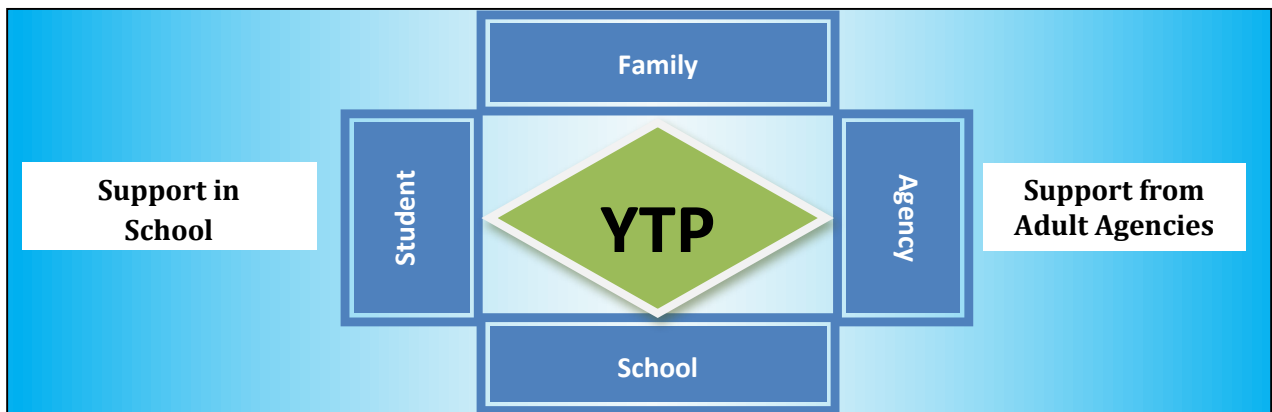


Figure 3. YTP provides a mechanism for developing and providing strong, collaborative services between the school district and VR as one adult service agency.

For students who are eligible, VR services start before the student graduates from high school and continue until employment is obtained. These services can include pre-employment transition services, vocational guidance, job exploration, assistive technology, or any other vocational services that will lead to permanent employment.

As you plan and develop this extended Transition Plan through YTP, focus on the following:

- Collaboration is done *with* the student *for* his/her future.
- Some Adult Services agencies can provide support *before* the student leaves high school.
- Early coordination between education and vocational education prevents a gap in services between high school and adult life.
- Coordination of wrap around services provides a wide-range of support to YTP students.

The Transition Specialist accomplishes these goals by following a seven-step procedure.

Step 1: Gather the Information Needed to Develop an IPE.

The VRC will need a variety of information and data in order to develop an IPE. In most cases, it is likely that the transition specialist will have the information readily available, or will be able to access it from other sources within the school. Gathering data is an important first step because it serves as the common thread in the transition process. Data may be gathered from a variety of sources including the student, family, school staff, and other sources. Information to be collected includes:

- Results from *age-appropriate transition assessments*, including formal assessment instruments (e.g., Adapted Behavior Rating Scales, General and Specific Aptitude Tests, Intelligence Tests, Achievement Tests, American College Testing Assessment (ACT), Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) or informal assessment instruments (e.g., interviews and questionnaires, direct observation, environmental or situational analysis)
- Statement of the student's preferences, interests, needs, and strengths (PINS) resulting from the *age-appropriate transition assessments*
- Statement of the student's post-secondary goals, which are based on the PINS and other assessments. For students participating in Core YTP activities, transition specialists should focus on the Post-secondary goals leading integrated competitive employment, or further education and training goals that lead to integrated competitive employment.
- Information that addresses a student's skills in academics (e.g., reading and math skills), self-determination (e.g., ability to set and reach goals, problem solving skills, decision-making skills), vocational interest/exploration (e.g., career interest inventories), and adaptive behavior/independent living (e.g., behavior scales, social skills, daily living skills).
- Other relevant information on each student such as:
 - Completed YTP screening packet
 - Evaluation information gathered by the VR Counselor to determine eligibility

- Current IEP
 - School records related to graduation plan and/or diploma
 - Data outlining the student’s functional strengths and needs
 - Summary of educational achievement and functional performance (SOP) if one has been initiated early
- Information on school and community resources which includes information from the YTP Planning Guide (e.g., types of resources that may be available within the community, the school, Vocational Rehabilitation and the YTP itself).

Step 2: Review and Summarize All the Information.

Summarizing the information learned from the different sources of data is as important as gathering these data. Summarize the information to determine “what you know” about the student and “what you still need to know” in order to develop the services the student will receive through the YTP. Include in the summary, information about the:

- Student’s strengths. These can be built upon to help develop realistic long-term goals.
- Areas where the student will need further instruction or training to function independently. These become considerations for services.
- Areas of "functional loss" (e.g., managing a daily schedule, difficulty communicating with adults) and areas that are difficult for the student. These functional limitations may indicate a barrier to employment.
- Any informational gaps that would indicate a need for further assessment or review.

Step 3: Prepare Students for the IPE Meeting.

No one likes to attend a meeting where they don’t know the purpose of the meeting, what will be discussed, or what the expected outcome is of the meeting. Meet with the student individually prior to the formal planning session with VR staff and others. Let the student know the purpose of this meeting is to prepare the student to participate in the meeting and to gather and correct information about the student.

1. Prepare student for meeting: Take time to explain what is going to happen, what information is being shared, and give them a chance to ask questions. With the student, determine ways for the student to be involved in the meeting. For some students, this may mean they lead the meeting. For other students, it may mean that they are prompted to provide input at key times. You may need to let student have time to practice what she will say, or develop a set of questions to ask. The informal meeting is another opportunity to practice motivational interviewing strategies with the student.
 - a. The student should know that the IEP and the IPE meeting processes are very similar—different players, but similar outcomes. If a student has been involved in a previous IEP meeting, many parts of the IPE meeting will feel familiar.

2. Gather and correct information about student: This meeting provides an opportunity for you to verify, and if needed, correct the information you gathered. During this informal time, with the student you can ask for clarification, confirm information or fill in any gaps in the information. After gathering information and meeting with the student, you should be able to answer the following questions:
 - a. What are the most important transition areas for YTP to address right now?
 - b. What are the student's preferences/goals in each of those areas?
 - c. What areas do we still need to know more about?

Step 4: Arrange the IPE Meeting.

The transition planning meeting brings together everyone involved in the transition process to develop a formal written plan. Set a meeting date and invite key participants. A written notice of the date and time for the planning meeting should be sent to the "key players", (a) student, (b) parent, or other support person, (c) YTP Transition Specialist, and (d) VR counselor.

Remember, even though the student becomes his own responsible party at the age of 18 in Oregon, that doesn't mean a parent or other family members are automatically excluded from being involved in their child's life. You will need to decide on a case-by-case basis, and with input from the student, how and to what extent to involve a parent or family members.

Step 5: Meet as a Team to Determine the YTP Services to be Provided in the IPE.

- At the beginning of the meeting, all of the members of the team should introduce themselves and explain their role in the transition process. The meeting facilitator should briefly explain the purpose of the meeting and explain that the whole team will work together to accomplish this purpose.
- Review the transition components (e.g., PINS, postsecondary goals, annual goals) of the student's IEP. This is an opportunity for the student to talk about her preferences, interests, needs, and strengths. It is an opportunity for the student to say what her life goals are, and what she would like to learn or accomplish while she still has support in high school.
- Review information prepared by students/parents, teachers and VR counselors. Parents should relay their hopes and expectations for their student's life after high school. School staff should give a brief overview of the evaluation information that was collected in preparation for this planning meeting. VR counselors may also want to present the results of their eligibility determination process at this time.
- Develop YTP transition services the student will need. This may include discussing what the student wants for his or her future, what needs or challenges are perceived as barriers to reaching the student's goals, and what accommodations and supports will help the student obtain the skills needed to reach her postsecondary goals. The student's IEP identifies a course of study - activities and classes that will help the student gain that skills needed in reaching their postsecondary goals.

YTP transition services are individualized and will look differently for each student in the areas of instruction, community experiences, related service and independent living skills. This individualization reflects the importance of self-determination for the student in conjunction with the shared responsibility of agencies and personnel design services that will help the student gain the skills to prepare him to live and work in the community.

Step 6: Coordinate and Align the IEP and the IPE

After all the activities in Step 5 are complete, the team members should reflect on the results of the meeting and determine ways to coordinate and align the IEP and the IPE. This is a good time to include the student's special education teacher and/or case manager in the discussion. Some examples include:

- Add the IPE to the IEP as an attached document.
- Revise the Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAPF) to include functional limitations.
- Assure that the Postsecondary Employment Goal is identical to the Goal in the IPE.
- Write new annual goals that reflect the Postsecondary Employment Goals.

Figure 1 shows the YTP Transition Services Process. All students with disabilities must receive the services left of the dotted line. If a student is eligible for VR services, then they may receive the Core YTP activities which are written as an addendum to the student's IEP. At the same time, the VRC develops the IPE. The YTP transition specialist should collaborate with the student's special education teacher or case manager to determine how to best align the IEP and IPE.

Figure 1. YTP Transition Services Process

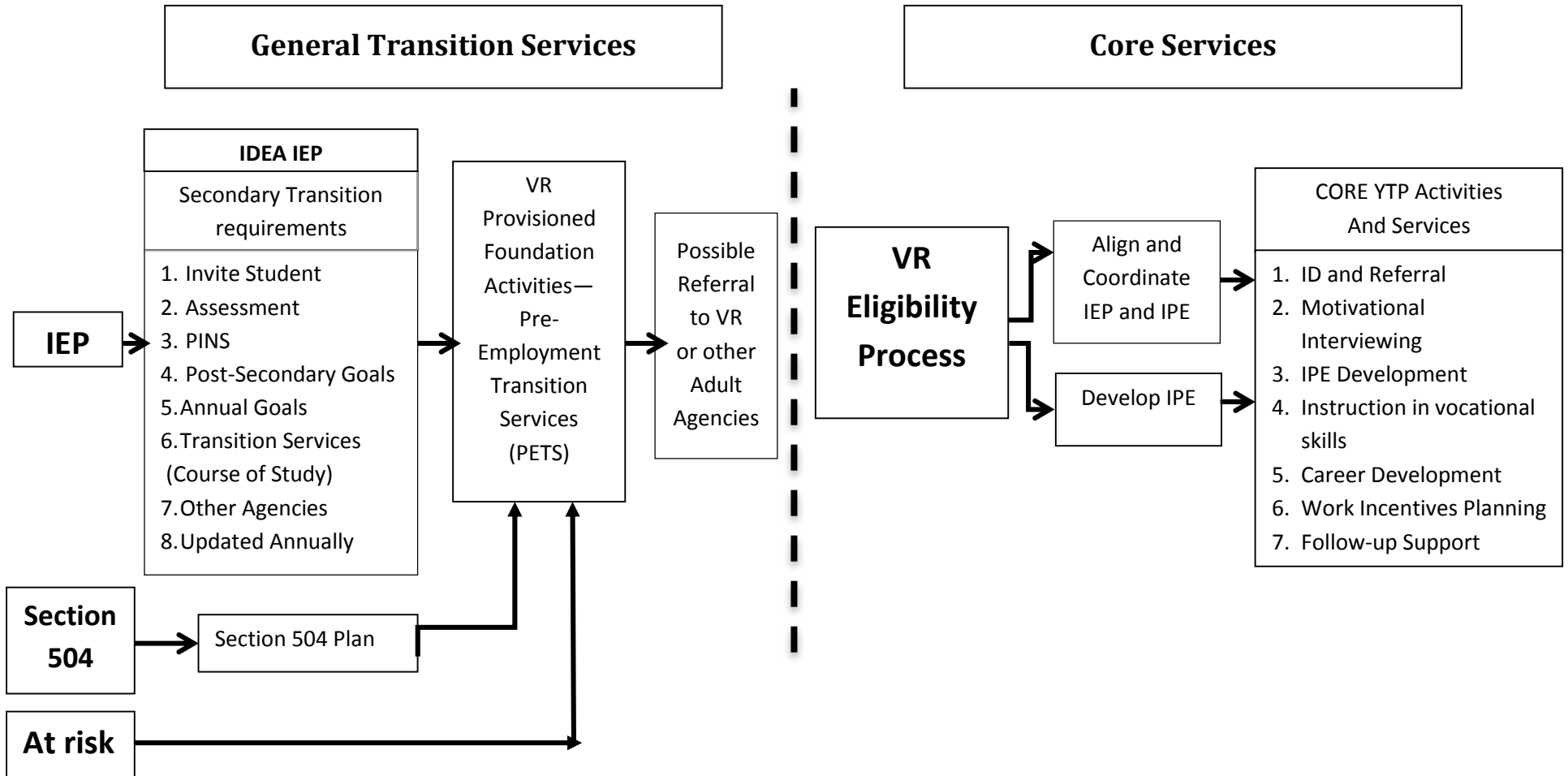


Table 1 lists the four essential features of Transition Planning in YTP. Transition planning ...

- is always based on the career the *student chooses* to pursue;
- uses the student’s skills to “fine-tune” the employment area that the student will be entering;
- requires input from many agencies working collaboratively to reach the student’s individual employment choice.
- provides a seamless movement from the IEP to the IPE.

Using the YTP Transition Services Process and the Essential Features will provide an effective system of planning for your students’ futures.

Table 1: Essential Features of Transition Planning in the YTP

1. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT:

Student and family preferences and interests are documented and incorporated into the YTP transition planning process, in order to ensure that the planning process is "client-driven".

2. STUDENT SKILLS:

The current skill levels of YTP students are documented and this information is incorporated into the transition planning process.

3. COLLABORATIVE PLANNING:

The transition plans are developed in collaboration with key players from appropriate school and adult service agencies, and coordinated with the student’s IPE developed by VR counselor.

4. POSTSECONDARY GOALS:

General transition planning incorporates all relevant areas of transition, including, education, training, employment, and, when appropriate, independent living goals. However, YTP services and activities are focused on the student’s postsecondary employment goal.

5. SYSTEMS CHANGE:

YTP procedures provide a model for using student input to drive a seamless movement from high school to adult life through collaborative planning and coordinating delivery.

INSTRUCTION

INSTRUCTION

Introduction

The provision of *instruction* is critical to fulfilling the purposes of IDEA, the first of which is

(a) to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and *prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living*; (emphasis added 34 CFR §300.1(a)).

Merriam-Webster defines instruction as the *action or process of teaching*. In this chapter, we offer guidance for developing and providing appropriate *instructional* options to youth as a transition service to prepare them to meet their education, employment, and independent living goals after high school. Students in YTP identify postsecondary goals based on their preferences, interests, needs, and strengths (i.e., PINS) as part of the general transition services. As you plan and provide instruction within the YTP, there are two critical, underlying aims to keep in mind:

- To develop instructional options based on the student’s postsecondary employment goal
- To provide YTP students opportunities to learn skills that enable them to live, work, and learn independently in their communities.

As a transition service provider, your charge, *in collaboration with the special education teacher and or case manager*, is to figure out **what** to teach, and **when, where, and how** to provide instruction that will help YTP youth achieve their postsecondary employment goal.

To achieve this, transition specialists should be invited, and make every effort to attend, the IEP meeting for all YTP participants and those youth who are potentially eligible for YTP services. Your input into the development of a student’s IEP is valuable as you may have information from a transition assessment or work experience that needs to be incorporated into the IEP. Knowing the annual goals, services, and supplemental aids that are included on the IEP, you can help. It is critical for you to work with the special education teacher, and potentially many others (e.g., general educators, families, other service providers) to provide the instruction students need to achieve their postsecondary goal. Working together to determine and provide instruction ensures the consistency and continuity students need in order to be successful. The remainder of this section focuses on determining **what to teach** and **when, where, and how to teach** it in order to prepare YTP youth to meet their postsecondary employment goal.

What to Teach

Determining **what to teach** will be based on the youth’s measurable postsecondary goals in three areas:

- training/ education,
- employment, and
- independent living skills where appropriate.

The primary goal of YTP is to increase employment outcomes for youth with disabilities. Therefore, most YTP instruction should focus on helping a student gain the skills needed to obtain and maintain competitive employment, which may include skills related to education or training needed for the job, as well as the independent living skills needed to function in adult roles. To determine what to teach, ask yourself the question: *What knowledge, behaviors, and skills does this student need to learn in order to...*

- enroll in and persist in postsecondary education or vocational education, continuing or adult education to reach his employment goal?
- obtain and maintain integrated competitive or supported employment?
- participate in adult services, and live independently or participate in his or her community?

As you answer these questions, think about the general work readiness skills and occupation specific knowledge, behaviors, and skills:

(a) **General work readiness skills** are the basic knowledge, behaviors, and skills needed for most jobs.

Examples includes such things as reading, math, and arriving on time. General work readiness includes:

- academic skills (e.g., reading for information, applied mathematics, locating information, problem solving, and critical thinking).
- soft skills (e.g. communication, personal characteristics, and behavioral skills, including getting to work on time, adaptability, integrity, and cooperation).

(b) **Occupation specific knowledge, behaviors, and skills** are specialized and dependent on a specific job or occupation the student is seeking (e.g., reading a blueprint, dress for an office job, or operating a backhoe).

Most students will need instruction in both general, work readiness skills and occupation specific skills to meet their postsecondary goals. Using age-appropriate transition assessments will help you identify the general and specific skills a student needs. Embedded within both general and specific skills are the self-determination and self-advocacy skills students need in adulthood.

Self-Determination and Self Advocacy

The emphasis on self-determination and self-advocacy embedded throughout YTP reflects the *implicit* nature of self-determination in I.D.E.A. 2004 and the *explicit* nature of self-determination in W.I.O.A. 2014. I.D.E.A. requires students be invited to their IEP meeting whenever transition is discussed. Through age-appropriate transition assessments their preferences, interests, needs, and strengths form their postsecondary goals. W.I.O.A. 2014 mandates instruction in self-advocacy as a pre-employment transition service.

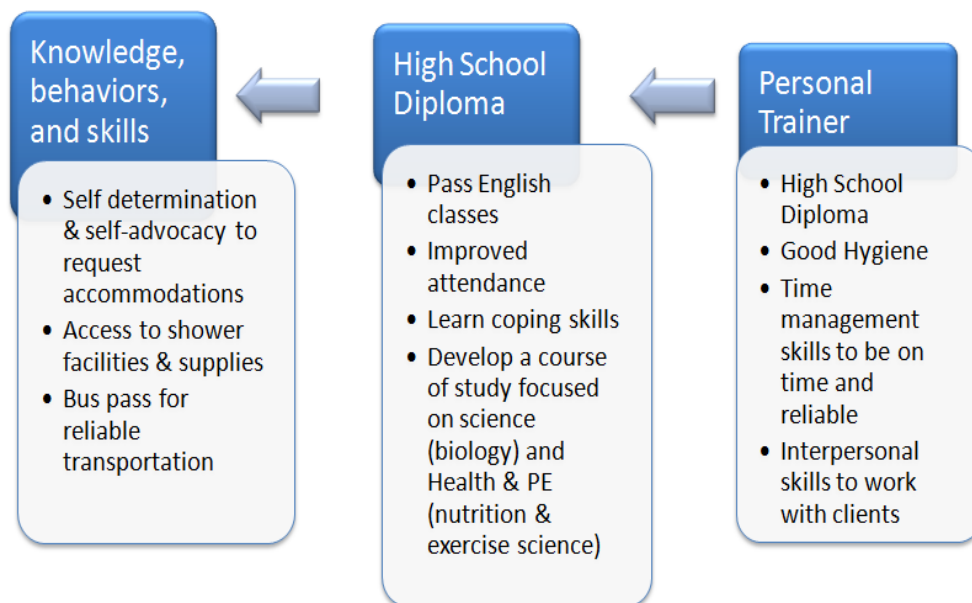
Self-determination is defined as *“the ability to make choices, solve problems, set goals, evaluate options, take initiative to reach one’s goals, and accept consequences of one’s actions.”* (Rowe et al., 2014). Self-determination skills empower students to make decisions and direct their futures. Though out their involvement in YTP, students learn self-determination skills and self-advocacy skills by being allowed and required to make choices and direct their lives. This philosophy manifests through teaching goal setting, problem solving, self-advocacy skills, and by allowing students to experience both failure and success. Once the student’s postsecondary goals are identified, develop a plan of **what to teach** by starting with the student’s employment goal and working backward from where she wants to be to where she is. Try to

identify the specific knowledge, behaviors, and skills she needs to learn in order to achieve her specific goal; this forms the basis of what you will teach her. Do the backward planning exercise with students to solicit their input about what they want and need to learn to reach their goal and become more independent. Be both tenacious and patient in this phase. YTP students are not familiar with professionals seeking their input in program design. They may respond, "I don't know" or "I already know it all". Students may not trust that their ideas will be heard or used. Using a backward planning process with YTP students will assure them their input is valued and will be implemented. Figure 1 shows an example of a backward planning process.

After high school, Darius will work as a personal trainer at the YMCA. To reach her employment goal, Darius needs a high school diploma. Although preferred by many agencies, further education such as a certificate is not required for a personal trainer. To reach her postsecondary employment goal, Darius and her IEP team determined she needs to graduate high school with a standard diploma. To get a high school diploma, she needs (a) a course of study focused on her interests in science and health and PE, and (b) to pass English classes. Additionally, Darius needs instruction in: (a) self-determination /self-advocacy skills (she refuses to request and accept accommodations in English classes), (b) good hygiene (she doesn't shower regularly), (c) time management skills (she is often late or absent), and (d) coping skills (she frequently loses her temper and yells at peers and adults).

Figure 1. Backwards Planning

Example of working backward to determine what a student needs to learn in order to meet her postsecondary employment goal of being a personal trainer.



When, Where, and How to Teach

Once you identify what knowledge, behaviors, and skills each student needs to learn, the next step is to determine **when, where, and how to teach** those things. There is no pre-determined "YTP curriculum" that all YTP students must master before they complete the program. All YTP students should receive instruction in five major areas:

- functional academics – reading for information, money management, and writing in daily life;
- vocational – general work readiness skills and specific occupation skills for the worksite
- independent living – washing clothes, and securing a place to live,
- personal/social skills – communication, and appropriate worksite behaviors,
- self-determination/self-advocacy – setting and monitoring of goals, making decisions.

When and Where

YTP instruction can take on many forms. Some students may enroll in a "work-readiness" class at a high school; others may attend an independent living skills class offered at an apartment in the community. Some students may participate in a job-club that meets after school, while still others learn social skills through one-on-one instruction provided by a community mentor on Saturday. As the transition specialist, you may provide instruction to a single student, a small group of students, or you may have sole responsibility for teaching a class or co-teaching a class with a special education teacher or other colleague. To determine when and where you'll instruct students, follow the four steps outlined in the procedures.

Procedures

Instruction does not occur in isolation and you are not solely responsible for delivery of instruction. Collaborating with the YTP student's special education teacher and /or case manager is vital to ensure the instruction in YTP is consistent with and complementary to the instruction occurring in other aspects of the student's education program. Below are five steps for getting started. Remember: although each YTP site develops its own methods and unique format for providing instruction, hallmarks of instruction in YTP are:

- individualization, taking into account the unique needs of each YTP student
- flexibility, to meet youth where he is
- practical, real-life applications, to enable youth to be more independent
- relevant to the student's current and future environments
- strong focus on self-determination and self-advocacy development

Step 1: Create a Master List of What Students Need to Learn.

Review the information and create a master list summarizing the knowledge, behaviors, and skills your YTP students need to learn based on their postsecondary employment goals and the backward planning process.

Step 2: Gather Information on Existing Programs.

Identify programs that exist within the school and the community YTP students could access to meet the instructional needs you prioritized in Step 1. You may have already collected this information during the transition planning process, or your community may have developed a Transition Resource Manual that

includes this information. To get started, consider:

- **resources within the school:** work experience programs for all students such as vocational education classes, career –technical education classes, life skills classes, alternative education classes, Vocational/Technical preparation classes, etc. Remember, YTP students are general education students first. They should access the same resources in school as students without disabilities.
- **resources within the community:** summer employment program, community college classes, private non-profit agencies provide vocational evaluation and training (e.g. Goodwill Industries, St. Vincent DePaul Rehabilitation), Job Corps, Adult and Family Services job search classes, Consumer Credit Counseling Services, parenting classes, substance abuse education resources, etc.

Determine whether these programs will meet the needs of some or all of your YTP students. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of students participating in these programs vs. a class developed specifically for YTP students. Your individual community and the resources that exist will drive the approach you choose.

Step 3: Investigate Model Programs

Review information on model programs developed by other YTP sites across the state. The YTP network contains an unparalleled wealth of knowledge. Talk with your YTP Technical Assistance provider about the options you are considering. Ask him or her to facilitate a cross-site conversation with a site similar to yours that is doing what you want to do. Seek advice and learn from others' experiences.

Step 4: Discuss Options with Your YTP Site Team.

Talk about the options you are considering with your (administrator, VRC, and other stakeholders to determine what instructional model you will implement. In order to reinforce the systems change nature of the YTP and to increase the program visibility/credibility, you will want to include some other key personnel within the school, such as school administrators, 21st Century School council members, educational reform planners, business/education partnership participants, or school counselors in these planning sessions.

As part of your planning process, you need to check the list of instructional priorities identified in Step 1. Consider these how priorities translate easily into any logical groupings for providing instruction. For example, if many of your students want and need to learn how to drive, you may decide to develop a class to prepare them to get their driver permits. Or, if many of your students need to learn how to develop resumes and interview for jobs, you might consider developing a job club. If you find that your students' needs are varied, you may have to address them by providing individualized instruction, or by connecting students to existing instructional resources in the school or community.

Step 5: Develop a New Program

After doing the research, develop a new program designed to meet the transition needs of your YTP students. Procedures for five different instructional models: (1) a mentorship program (2) a job club, (3) a YTP class, (4) an independent living program, and (5) school-based business are provided next.

Procedures

You have a variety of options for when and where you will teach your students the knowledge, behaviors, and skills they need. As you think about each of the different instructional models options, consider the needs of your students, as well as the resources (current and potential) you have available in the school and community. Remember, this work is done in collaboration with the student’s special education teacher and or case manager. It takes time and energy to develop any of these programs. Be clear about the reasons you adopt or modify any of these instructional models. These reasons are summarized in Table 1:

Table 1. Instructional Model and Reasons to Consider Adopting the Model

Instructional Model Options	Reasons to Consider Adopting the Model
Mentor Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have no <u>exposure</u> to the world of work • Students need to be connected to adult role models • Students need to develop social skills for employment • YTP staff have the desire and ability to develop a broad base of supportive community employers
Job Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many students have left the high school program and/or students are spread out in different geographic locations • Students need to learn job seeking, getting, and keeping skills • Students need a peer support group to process job related issues • YTP staff want to provide instruction <u>away</u> from the school environment • YTP staff have the support needed from the school administration and in some cases VR management to run a job club in an off campus setting or at the local VR office
YTP Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most YTP students are enrolled in a high school program • Students need to learn a variety of skills across several content areas • YTP staff have the support needed from the school administration to develop a new class within the high school or at the community college
Independent Living Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many students are ready to move into their own homes or apartment • YTP staff want to provide hands-on instruction in a community setting • YTP staff have the support needed from the school administration to develop an off-campus program
School-Based Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community does not have the business and industry base to provide sufficient opportunities for students to gain work-based learning experiences. • Students needs instruction in a more closely monitored setting before entering the community job setting

How to Teach

Determining how to teach students the knowledge, behaviors, and skills they will need to work, learn, and live in their communities is as important as determining what, when, and where to teach. High quality research in secondary transition has provided evidence-based practices (EBP). EBPs are instructional strategies used with individual students to help them learn specific knowledge, behaviors, or skills. EBPs support IEP goals and objectives as well as skill development. Select the appropriate EBP to use with a student based on the skill being taught and the needs of the student. Pair the EBPs with the YTP instructional models to maximize the likelihood of success for a student. For example: In job club, use mnemonics to teach students job application skills. Table 2 lists the EBP in secondary transition, the specific skill taught using the EBP, and the description of the practice from research literature. For references used to establish the practice and information pertaining the how these practices were identified, visit www.nsttac.org.

Table 2. Descriptions Evidence-Based Practices in Secondary Transition

Evidence-Based Practices - instructional strategies used with individual students to help them learn specific knowledge, behaviors, or skills.	
Practice & Skills	Description
Use Backward Chaining to Teach Functional Life Skills	Backward chaining is defined by all behaviors identified in the task analysis initially completed by the trainer, except for the final behavior in the chain. When the learner performs the final behavior in the sequence at the predetermined criterion level, reinforcement is delivered and the next-to-last behavior is introduced.
Use Check and Connect to Promote Student Participation in the IEP Meeting	<i>Check and Connect</i> is a structured intervention model designed to assist schools and organizations in identifying students who are at risk for dropping out of school, then pairing those students with mentors who address each student's individual needs to help them progress toward school completion (http://checkandconnect.org/model/default.html).
Use Community-Based Instruction to teach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banking Skills • Grocery Shopping • Integration Skills • Purchasing Skill • Safety Skills • Communication Skills • Employment Skills • Community Integration 	Community-based instruction is teaching functional skills that take place in the community where target skills would naturally occur.
Use Computer Assisted Instruction to teach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Preparation and Cooking Skills • Grocery Shopping Skills • Job Specific Skills • Student Participation in the IEP 	Computer-assisted instruction (CAI) has been defined as “the use of a computer and other associated technology with the intention of improving students’ skills, knowledge, or academic performance” (Okolo, Bahr, & Rieth, 1993, p. 1) and is synonymous with terms such as computer-based instruction, computer-mediated instruction, interactive hyper-media instruction, and multimedia instruction. CAI offers an interactive format that can provide examples and feedback to students, while including multiple components, such as graphics, photographs, audio, text, and video.

Evidence-Based Practices - instructional strategies used with individual students to help them learn specific knowledge, behaviors, or skills.	
<p>Use Constant Time Delay to teach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banking Skills • Functional Life Skills • Leisure Skills • Job Specific Skills • Food Preparation Skills 	<p>Constant time delay is a variation of time delay, a prompting procedure that uses variations in the time intervals between presentation of the natural stimulus and the response prompt. Time delay transfers stimulus control from a prompt to the natural stimulus by delaying the presentation of the prompt following the presentation of the natural stimulus. Constant time delay is implemented by presenting several trials Use a 0-second delay between the presentation of the natural stimulus and the response prompt. The trials that follow the simultaneous prompt condition apply a fixed time delay (e.g., 3 seconds or 5 seconds).</p>
<p>Use an Extension of Career Planning Services after Graduation to Promote Increased Finance Skills</p>	<p>Services extended beyond graduation include any individualized services focused on postsecondary achievement provided after a student completes the secondary program. In the study used to establish the evidence base for extending career planning services beyond high school to increase finance skills included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational assessment • Agency contacts • IEP meetings • Vocational training • Employability counseling • Job club • Job interview assistance • Job development • Job coaching
<p>Use Forward Chaining to teach Functional Life Skills</p>	<p>Behaviors identified in a forward chaining task analysis are taught in their naturally occurring order. Reinforcement is delivered when the predetermined criterion for the first behavior in the sequence is achieved then the next step in the task analysis is taught.</p>
<p>Use Least to Most Prompting to teach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food preparation and Cooking • Communication Skills • Functional Life Skills • Grocery Shopping Skills • Purchasing Skills • Safety Skills • Specific Job Skills 	<p>A system of least-to-most prompts is a method used to transfer stimulus control from response prompts to the natural stimulus whenever the participant does not respond to the natural stimulus or makes an incorrect response. Least-to-most prompts begin with the participant having the opportunity to perform the response with the least amount of assistance on each trial. Greater degrees of assistance are provided with each successive trial without a correct response.</p>
<p>Use Mnemonics to teach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Application Skills • Academic Skills 	<p>Mnemonics is defined as Use keywords that provide acoustic reconstructions of unfamiliar information such as symbolic pictures of abstract concepts or descriptive pictures of concrete information.</p>
<p>Use Most to Least Prompting to teach Functional Life Skills</p>	<p>A system of most-to-least prompts is a method used to transfer stimulus control from response prompts to the natural stimulus whenever the participant does not respond to the natural stimulus or makes an incorrect response. Most-to-least prompting starts with physically guiding the participant through the performance sequence, then gradually reducing the amount of physical assistance provided as training progresses from session to session.</p>

Evidence-Based Practices - instructional strategies used with individual students to help them learn specific knowledge, behaviors, or skills.	
<p>Use the “One-More- Than” Strategy to teach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counting Money • Purchasing Skills 	<p>The <i>One-More-Than Strategy</i> a rounding up strategy that teaches individuals to give “one more” dollar than the amount requested (e.g., if the requested amount is \$3.29, the individual gives \$4.00 and waits to receive change; Denny & Test, 1995). The strategy is also referred to as “next dollar”, “counting on”, or “dollar more” strategy.</p>
<p>Use Peer Assisted Instruction to teach Academic Skills</p>	<p>Teaching Use peer assistance may include the following: Peer tutoring as the delivery of instruction by another student, either older or the same age as the tutee. Cooperative learning when groups of students of different ability, sex, or ethnicity work together to achieve mutual goals. Peer instruction when students are given specific roles to assist other students in completing an activity or teaching of a lesson.</p>
<p>Use Progressive Time Delay to teach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchasing Skills • Safety Sills • Functional Life Skills 	<p>Progressive time delay is a variation of time delay, a prompting procedure that uses variations in the time intervals between presentation of the natural stimulus and the response prompt. Time delay transfers stimulus control from a prompt to the natural stimulus by delaying the presentation of the prompt following the presentation of the natural stimulus. Progressive time delay is implemented by presenting a trial with a 0- second delay between the presentation of the natural stimulus and the response prompt and then gradually and systematically extending the time delay, often in one second intervals (e.g., 0 sec to 2 sec to 3 sec).</p>
<p>Use Published Curricula to teach Student Involvement in the IEP</p>	<p>Published curricula to teach student involvement in the IEP meeting includes the following curricula:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Self-Directed IEP (Martin et al., 2006) • Self-Advocacy Strategy (Test and Neale, 2004) • Whose Future is it Anyway? (Lee et al., 2010) • An adapted version of Personal Futures Planning model
<p>Use Response Prompting to teach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation and Cooking Skills • Grocery Shopping Skills • Home Maintenance Skills • Laundry Tasks • Leisure Skills • Purchasing Skills • Social Skills • Employment Skills 	<p>Response prompting is defined as stimuli that later functions as extra cues and reminders for desired behavior. Prompts can be visual, auditory, textual, or symbolic.</p>
<p>Use the Self-Advocacy Strategy to teach student participation in the IEP meeting</p>	<p>The Self-Advocacy Strategy (SAS) is a motivation and self-determination strategy designed to prepare students to participate in education or transition planning conferences. The strategy consists of 5 steps which are taught over seven acquisition and generalization stages. The steps are presented Use the mnemonic “I PLAN” to help students remember the steps for the strategy. I PLAN represents:</p> <p>I - Inventory completed by students listing their strengths, weaknesses, learning needs, goals, and choices to prepare them for their upcoming IEP conference</p> <p>P - Provide your inventory involves identifying appropriate time for individual to share information during the conference, speaking clearly and completely, and referring to inventory as needed</p>

Evidence-Based Practices - instructional strategies used with individual students to help them learn specific knowledge, behaviors, or skills.	
	<p>L - Listen & Respond addresses being an active listener and responding to statements made by others in a positive manner</p> <p>A - Ask Questions focuses on asking questions to gather needed information</p> <p>N - Name your goals to communicate goals and ideas on actions to be taken</p>
Use the Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction to teach Goal Attainment	<p>The Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction (SDLMI) is a curriculum that teaches students to engage in self-directed and self-regulated learning. The curriculum is comprised of three units: 1. Set a goal; 2. Take action; and 3. Adjust goal or plan. Students are required to solve the problems through a series of four steps: 1. Identify the problem; 2. Identify potential solutions to the problem; 3. Identify barriers to solving the problem; 4. Identify consequences of each solution.</p> <p>Each question links to a set of teacher objectives that describe the student outcomes. Each phase includes a list of educational supports that teachers can implement to enable students to engage in self-directed learning.</p>
Use the Self-Directed IEP to teach student participation in the IEP	<p>The Self-Directed IEP (SD IEP) consists of four units, (a) students leading meeting, (b) reporting interests, (c) reporting skills, and (d) reporting options. It is a multimedia package designed to teach students the skills needed to manage their IEP meetings. Instruction follows a model-lead-test format. It includes a teacher manual, a student workbook, and two videos presenting 11 steps necessary for students to lead their IEP meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin meeting by stating purpose • Introduce everyone • Review past goals and performance • Ask for others' feedback • State your school & transition goals • Ask questions • Deal with differences of opinion • State the support you'll need • Summarize your goals • Close meeting • Work on IEP goals all year
Use Self-Management Instruction to teach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Skills • Social Skills • Job Specific Skills 	<p>Characteristics of self-management interventions are methods for students to manage, monitor, record, and/or assess their behavior or academic success. Self-management has also been called: self-monitoring, self-evaluation, self-instruction, goal setting, strategy instruction; or some combination of these.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Self-monitoring is a multi-stage process of observing and recording one's behavior"; • "Self-evaluation is a process wherein a student compares her/his performance to a previously established criterion set by student or a teacher and is awarded reinforcement based on achieving the criterion"; • "Self-instruction refers to techniques that involve the use of self-statements to direct behavior"; • "Goal setting generally refers to a process of a student self-selecting behavioral targets, which serve to structure student effort, provide information on progress, and motivate performance"; and • "Strategy instruction refers to teaching students a series of steps to follow independently in solving a problem or achieving an outcome".
Use Self-Monitoring Instruction to teach Functional Life Skills	<p>Self-monitoring is defined as a procedure whereby a person observes his behavior systematically and records the occurrence or nonoccurrence of a target behavior. The procedure is also called self-recording and self-observation.</p>

Evidence-Based Practices - instructional strategies used with individual students to help them learn specific knowledge, behaviors, or skills.	
Use Simulations to teach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banking Skills • Purchasing Skills • Social Skills 	Simulation is defined as using materials and situations in the classroom that approximate the natural stimulus conditions and response topographies associated with the performance of functional skills in community settings.
Use Technology to teach Academic Skills	Technology can be defined in many ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer-based instruction (CBI) is when computers or associated technology are used to improve students' skills, knowledge, or academic performance. • Computer-assisted instruction (CAI) includes software designed to provide instruction and practice for meeting specific learning objectives or goals with drill- and-practice or tutorial instruction. • Computer-enriched instruction (CEI) is the utilization of computer technology to augment instruction and includes usage of the computer as a calculating tool, a programming tool, and to conduct simulations. • Computer-managed instruction (CMI), also referred to as integrated learning system (ILS), is used to describe the application of computer technology and extensive software programs designed to present sequential instruction to students over extended periods of time while maintaining records of student progress.
Use Total Task Chaining to teach Functional Life Skills	Total task chaining is defined as a variation of forward chaining in which the learner receives training on each step in the task analysis during each session. Total task chaining is also sometimes referred to as concurrent training.
Use Training Modules to Promote Parent Involvement in the transition process	A training module is a unit of education or instruction with a relatively low student-to- teacher ratio, in which a single topic or a small section of a broad topic is studied for a given period of time. http://thefreedictionary.com/module .
Use Video Modeling to teach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Preparation and Cooking Skills • Home Maintenance Skills 	Video modeling is a form of video response prompting. Response prompting is defined as a stimuli that later functions as extra cues and reminders for desired behavior.
Use Visual Displays to teach: Academic Skills	Visual displays are tools used to represent the complexity of the mental and physical world in which we live. Visual displays are used in several ways including: graphic organizers, cognitive organizers, cognitive maps, structured overviews, tree diagrams, concept maps, and Thinking Maps.
Use " Whose Future Is It Anyway? " to teach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Determination • Student Knowledge of Transition Planning Process <p>It is free - Google it!</p>	" <i>Whose Future is it Anyway?</i> " is a student-directed transition planning curriculum to help students learn to be more involved in the IEP process. The curriculum is comprised of six sections and 36 sessions related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having self-awareness and disability awareness • Decision making about transition-related outcomes Identifying and securing community resources to support transition services • Writing and evaluating goals and objectives • Communicating effectively in small groups • Developing skills to become and effective team member, leader, or self-advocate

The remainder of this chapter consists of Essential Features, and Procedures. Essential Features describes the critical components of the YTP instructional process.

Essential Features

Table 3 lists the essential features of YTP instructional opportunities. Instruction ...

- is always based on the postsecondary goals, specifically the employment goal, of the individual students participating in the program.
- emphasizes self-determination skills and provides students opportunities to learn by taking risks and making choices.
- is practical and relevant, preparing students to be independent adults.

The Instructional opportunities and procedures are only *guidelines*; suggested but not required. As long as all of the essential features are implemented, the process will be successful and will create "systems change" within the schools and community.

TABLE 3: Essential Features of Instruction
<p>1. POSTSECONDARY EMPLOYMENT GOAL: YTP students' instruction in academic, vocational, independent living and personal social areas is based on meeting each student's postsecondary employment goal.</p>
<p>2. SELF-DETERMINATION: YTP instruction emphasizes goal setting, problem solving, self-determination skills, so students can make their own decisions and direct their own futures.</p>
<p>3. INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES: To prepare YTP students to live and work independently in their community, they receive instruction in academic, vocational, independent living, and personal-social areas tied to their postsecondary employment goal.</p>
<p>4. SYSTEMS CHANGE: Instructional strategies, formats, an/ or curriculum have been modified within the existing school structure to accommodate students' transition needs as a result of the implementation of YTP instructional services.</p>
<p>5. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT: Families are the first instructors. Finding ways to involve families leads to positive post-school outcomes for youth participating in the YTP.</p>

Procedures for developing a MENTOR PROGRAM

1. ***Gather information and develop a program description.*** Review the information about the mentor program included in the back of this chapter. Talk to YTP sites that have developed successful mentor programs. Learn about their program goals, the materials they use, and meeting schedule. Develop a brief program description outlining the purpose and general structure of the program. Include the program goals

and the students it is designed to serve. Use the written description when you lobby for support within the school and community to develop the program.

2. **Obtain support within the school.** Before you can implement the program, you need administrative support within the school. Set up a meeting with school administrators to describe the proposed mentor program, and obtain their input and support for developing the program. Specific questions to discuss at this meeting include:
 - a. Can students get credit for participating in the program?
 - b. When will students meet with their mentors, and how will this fit into their regular, daily schedules?
 - c. How will students get to their mentor site?
 - d. How will students and mentors be chosen, screened, and paired for the program?
3. **Obtain support within the community.** Brainstorm a list of individual community members who might be interested in serving as mentors. Consider employers who hired students with disabilities in the past, members of service clubs or other business groups, employers in specific industries, friends, neighbors, or other prominent community members – one YTP site had the city manager as a mentor! Contact these individuals to assess their interest in participating. Share your program description. Describe the purpose of the program, the time commitment involved, and the benefits to students and mentors. Ask for an initial commitment to participate, (e.g., one term), and explain that you will contact them again when you have a specific student identified for them to mentor.
4. **Develop materials needed for the program.** Check with other YTP sites to see what materials and learning activities mentors and students complete. Develop materials that clearly define the:
 - a. roles and responsibilities of the mentor and the student,
 - b. different options available for developing a mentoring relationship (e.g. short-term occupational exploration vs. long-term mentoring relationships that could go beyond the workplace),
 - c. methods of evaluating mentoring outcomes, and
 - d. methods for mentors and students to receive support

Mentoring relationships are a 2-way street that takes both parties actively participating, communicating, problem-solving, and negotiating in order to develop meaningful and successful relationship.

5. **Select students to participate.** You may decide to have all your YTP students participate in the mentor program, or only individuals who expressed an interest. Either way, it is helpful to have the prospective students complete a program application, which includes a brief job history, employment goals, and general interest areas. Review the applications, and for each student, note areas of occupational interest, and possible mentor sites.
6. **Match students with mentors.** Students can be matched with mentors in several ways:
 - a. Students can request a specific occupation or person with whom they would like to mentor.

- b. Students may request to be placed with several different mentors to explore different jobs, spending a limited amount of time with each one. (This is especially useful if students are unsure of their vocational goals.)
 - c. YTP staff can select a mentor for the student based on the information gathered in the application process.
7. **Arrange for the initial meeting.** Once you have matched each YTP student with a prospective mentor, YTP staff should contact potential mentors from the initial start-up list and reconfirm their willingness to participate. Next, have the student contact the mentor and set up the initial meeting. At this meeting, mentors and students should schedule regular (usually weekly) meeting times for a prescribed period of time (usually one school term). During this first meeting students should expect to:
- a. Be given a tour of the business, and a general explanation of the mentor's job duties.
 - b. Discuss the mentor's expectations and goals.
 - c. Discuss the student's goals for the mentorship.
8. **Provide support to mentors/students.** After the mentorship placements have been established, it is important for YTP staff to contact mentors on a regular basis to check progress. Find out if the student is having any difficulties either in keeping to the established schedule, or in completing the tasks the mentor has assigned. Is the mentor satisfied that this student is making progress in meeting his/her goals? In some cases, students may need to be matched with a different mentor if the problems encountered don't seem to be easily resolved. Both mentors and students need to know that there are established and constructive ways to alter or end their relationship.
9. At the completion of a mentorship placement, YTP staff should schedule a final meeting with each student/mentor pair. This is a time for the students and mentors to discuss their experience, and talk about what they have learned. YTP staff should also review any written assignments students have completed, and, if this has been negotiated in advance, award school credit.
10. **Evaluate the success of the program.** The final step in developing any new program is to evaluate the effect. YTP staff should gather evaluation information from mentors and students to determine the overall effectiveness of the program. Consider using a business driven evaluation tool, such as a consumer satisfaction survey. Students should have the ability to evaluate their experience as well. Based on this feedback, YTP staff decide if the program needs to be revised and ultimately whether to maintain the mentor program as one instructional option for YTP students.

Procedures for developing JOB CLUB

Below are eight steps for developing a YTP Job Club. For additional information, talk with your UO TA Provider.

1. **Gather information and develop a program description.** Begin by reviewing the information about job club included in the back of this chapter. Talk to YTP sites that have developed successful mentor programs. Learn about their program goals, the materials they use, and meeting schedule. Develop a

brief program description outlining the purpose and general structure of the program. Include the program goals and the students it is designed to serve. Use the written description when you lobby for support within the school and community to develop the program.

2. **Obtain support within the schools.** Before you can implement the program you need administrative support within the school. Meet with school administrators and other interested teachers to describe the proposed program and obtain their input and support for developing the program. Specific questions to discuss at this meeting include:
 - a. Who will participate in job club?
 - b. How will students be referred to job club?
 - c. How might other school staff be involved in job club?
3. **Obtain support from Vocational Rehabilitation.** Your local VRC is a key resource for developing a job club. Some VRC may have existing job clubs that serve adults with disabilities, while others may have years of experience teaching job search skills on an individual basis. In either case, you should work closely with your VRC to develop the structure for job club. The most successful job clubs are collaborative programs, developed and run jointly by school and VR staff
4. **Develop specific materials needed.** There are many vocational curriculums available which are designed to teach interviewing skills, resume writing, and other job search skills. After reviewing a variety of materials, develop a set of specific goals for the program, along with a general outline of content you plan to teach at each job club session. Depending on the goals you have for this program and the skill level of your students, you may want to adapt the materials already developed, or develop your own materials designed to meet the needs of your students.
5. **Schedule regular job club meetings.** Most YTP sites have scheduled weekly job club meetings at a location away from school grounds, including the VR office, the community college, and at a local mall. The off-campus location helps reinforce the idea that this is an adult program, which is designed to teach skills needed for independence. Be sure to schedule job club at a convenient time for students who may be in school, or working in the community. Generally, late afternoon or early evening seems to work best.
6. **Select students to participate.** You may include all of your YTP students or invite only a selected few to join job club. As part of the selection process, it is important to explain the purpose of the program to students, and get an initial commitment from them to attend the meetings. Give students a written reminder of the time and meeting place. School staff may need to provide transportation to the meetings, especially if you are in an area with no reliable public transportation.
7. **Hold weekly meetings.** Job club meetings should be informal, interesting, and enjoyable for the students and staff. Provide structured time each week for teaching or practicing specific skills, as well as time for more informal student driven discussion. Encourage peer support, individual goal setting and networking. At one YTP job club, students and staff set a personal weekly goal. To encourage participation at job club,

plan fun events such as pizza parties or BBQs as part of job club.

8. **Evaluate the success of the program.** The final step in developing any new program is to evaluate its impact. YTP staff can informally collect evaluation information from students to determine the overall effectiveness of the program. Based on this feedback, YTP staff decide if the job club format should be revised, and whether or not to continue to offer a job club as one instructional option for YTP students.

Procedures for developing YTP CLASS

Below are six steps for developing a YTP Class. For additional information, talk with your UO TA Provider.

1. **Gather information and develop a course description.** Talk to YTP sites that have developed a successful YTP Class. Learn about their program goals, the materials they use, and the schedule. Develop a brief program description outlining the purpose and general structure of the class. Include the program goals and the students it is designed to serve. Use the written description when you lobby for support within the school and community to develop the program.
2. **Obtain support within the schools.** Before you can implement the class, you need administrative support within the school. Set up a meeting with school administrators to describe the proposed class and obtain their input and support. Specific questions to discuss at this meeting include:
 - a. When and where will the class be held?
 - b. How long will the class be, full year, or one term?
 - c. What type of credit can students receive for participation?
 - d. How will this class fit in with other activities, such as paid work for YTP students?
 - e. What will the curriculum content be?
 - f. Who will teach the class? (In one YTP site the YTP Teacher/Coordinator offered to team-teach a "transitions" class with another teacher who was interested but not confident in her skills. The class ended up involving both YTP and non-YTP students. The following year, the other teacher agreed to continue to teach the class on her own.
3. **Invite students to participate.** You may decide to include all of your YTP students in the class, or limit enrollment to those students who need specific skills. Student participation will be influenced by existing class and work schedules. As part of the selection process, it is important to explain the purpose of the class to students, and get an initial commitment from them to attend.
4. **Develop specific materials needed.** There are many pre-packaged curriculums available which are designed to teach independent living, personal/social, self-determination/self-advocacy, and vocational skills to students with disabilities. Review a variety of materials and decide whether they address the needs of your targeted YTP students. Depending on the goals you have for this program, and the skill level of your students, you may want to adopt or adapt curriculum materials already developed, or develop your own materials designed to meet the needs of your students. On a weekly basis, you will need to develop lesson plans, and specific handouts or activities for each class.

5. **Teach class on regular basis.** Most YTP classes meet every day for at least one hour, as part of the regular school schedule. The class should be a mixture of structured instruction which focuses on the specific goal areas identified by your students, and more informal discussion and activities. Some YTP classes take "field trips" to local businesses or community agencies. Other classes include a series of speakers on transition related topics. In general, YTP staff have had the most success by obtaining student "buy-in" and input, facilitating student learning through hands-on instruction or role-playing, and by emphasizing problem solving and self-advocacy skills.
6. **Evaluate success of class.** The final step in developing any new program is to evaluate its overall effectiveness. Evaluate the effect of the class by measuring student performance on specific skills or competencies, and/or by interviewing students to get their perception of the effectiveness of the class. Based on this feedback, decide whether the class needs to be revised, and whether to continue it. Ultimately, the effectiveness is measured by whether your YTP students function independently as young adults in their community.

Procedures for developing an INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM

Outlined below are 12 steps for developing an Independent Living Program. For additional information, talk with your UO TA Provider.

1. **Gather information and develop program overview.** Talk to staff in YTP sites who have a successful independent living program. Learn about their program goals, the materials they use, and the day-to-day operations. Involve key school and VR administrators and partners early to discuss the feasibility of this type of program and get their input on the overall goals of the program. Develop a brief program description outlining the purpose and general structure of the program. Include the program goals and students it is designed to serve. Use the written description when you lobby for support within the school and community to develop the program.
2. **Obtain support within the school.** Before you can implement a program you need administrative support within the school. Meet with district and school administrators, describe the proposed program, and solicit their input and support for developing the program. Although all of the questions listed below will not be answered at this first meeting, district and school administration should be willing to give an initial support for developing an independent living program. Specific questions to discuss include:
 - a. Is the district willing to support an off-campus program to teach independent living skills?
 - b. What are the potential benefits to students as well as the risks/concerns to the school district?
 - c. What are potential sources of funding for this program?
 - d. Could the students receive school credit for participation?
 - e. How will liability issues be addressed?
 - f. Where will or could the program be housed?
 - g. How will the program be staffed?
 - h. What types of instruction will be offered?

3. **Obtain support from VR for developing the program.** Your local VRC and VR Branch Manager are key resources as you develop an independent living program. VR staff can refer you to other local agencies that provide independent living services to adults with disabilities. These agencies can provide information and may be interested in developing a collaborative program. VR staff will also be critically important as you discuss funding options for this type of program. Some YTP sites have used VR case service dollars to help pay for independent living program development. Meet with your local VRC to identify potential resources within the VR system.
4. **Obtain funding for the program.** Independent living programs need funding beyond the basic YTP grant to hire staff, rent a house or apartment, and purchase furniture and household supplies. There are several options for funding an independent program. YTP sites have used VR case service dollars (money used by VRC to provide a variety of special services for individual clients such as job coaching, special clothing, bus passes, etc.) to pay for independent living program development. Grants through the local school district or Oregon Department of Education, or other VR funds such as Transitional Services Program dollars are potential funding sources. Once you have a potential funding source, you will submit a detailed proposal and budget to the funding agent.
5. **Address liability issues for providing off-campus instruction.** One of the biggest barriers to developing off-campus instruction is addressing the school district's liability. After the program funding is secure, work with your school district administrators to address any liability issues associated with providing instruction away from the school grounds. Meet with school district personnel responsible for risk management to talk about insurance coverage, and issues surrounding how students and classified staff will be supervised. You will also need to determine who will sign the lease or rental agreement.
6. **Locate a site to provide off-campus instruction.** Locate an appropriate apartment or house for the program. Most sites have found one or two bedroom apartments to be easy to find and affordable. The building should be easily accessible for students either on a bus line, or within walking distance of school. As you investigate various possibilities, meet with the landlord to describe the program and be sure he/she understands and supports the purpose of the program. Some sites receive a rent reduction by doing building or grounds maintenance, which provides a vocational training environment for students.
7. **Arrange for personnel needed.** Most YTP sites hire staff that are responsible for developing and coordinating an independent living program. They are responsible for providing direct instruction and supervision to students. Independent living staff can be hired through the school district, as additional transition specialists, or as direct contractors through VR. Whatever the funding source, you should develop a position description, post the job, interview applicants and hire the most qualified individual you can find. The person in this position needs to have good organizational skills, good teaching skills and the ability to work in collaboration with staff from the school and VR.
8. **Develop instructional materials needed.** There are several curriculums available which are designed to teach a variety of independent living skills, including money management, cooking and nutrition, and household management. If you are unsure of the content to teach, ask students what they skills they think should be taught. Develop specific goals for the program, along with a general

outline of content you plan to teach at each session. Depending on the goals you have for this program, and the skill level of your students, you may want to adapt the materials already developed, or develop your own materials designed to meet the needs of your students.

9. ***Invite students to participate.*** You may decide to include all of your YTP students in the independent living program, or you decide to limit participation only to those students who need training in specific skills. As part of the selection process, it is important to explain the purpose of the class to students, and get an initial commitment from them to attend. You should also get input from the students about the best schedule for providing instruction. Existing YTP sites have found that it is most effective to schedule small groups of students for specific blocks of time at the apartment. For example, some student groups meet twice weekly from 12:30 to 3:30, others meet one evening a week from 3:00 - 6:00 p.m.
10. ***Purchase supplies/furnishings needed to set up the program.*** One of the first "lessons" students in these programs learn is how to furnish an apartment and purchase the supplies needed to set up a household. Students should be involved in all aspects of setting up the environment, from painting walls, to buying and refinishing furniture, to purchasing groceries for meals. Involving students in this initial set-up process is very motivating and helps promote the idea that this is "their place". Some sites show off the new living program by hosting open houses for school staff and families.
11. ***Facilitate instruction in independent living skills.*** Independent living skills instruction should include time for structured instruction in specific skills, and time for discussion and activities. Staff in these programs adopt the role of facilitator. They provide opportunities for learning, and guiding students as they make choices and participate. Although much of the instruction takes place at the apartment, many sites also incorporate field trips and community-based instruction at local businesses, community agencies, or recreational facilities.
12. ***Evaluate success of the program.*** The final step in developing any new program is to evaluate its overall effectiveness. Evaluate the effect of the independent living program by measuring student performance on specific skills or competencies, and/or by interviewing students to get their perception of the effectiveness. Based on this feedback, decide whether to revise different aspects of the program, or continue it. Ultimately, the effectiveness is measured by whether your YTP students function independently as young adults in their community.

EMPLOYMENT

EMPLOYMENT

Introduction

Work is an integral part of most American's lives. The majority of individuals with disabilities want a job and some will need supports to gain successful employment. Ultimately, the purpose of YTP is to help students with disabilities get and keep competitive integrated employment in the community. All YTP activities and services are designed to achieve this purpose. Preparing students to be well-situated, that is, placed in competitive employment or career-related postsecondary training upon exit from VR, is at the heart of the YTP. The YTP employment process used to help students get and keep competitive integrated employment defines much of the work of the transition specialists and the VR Counselors. There are **four major goals** that structure this employment process. These goals are:

1. To develop ongoing relationships with community employers who will be supportive of the YTP (employer recruitment).
2. To achieve good student/job matches in order to provide meaningful, paid jobs that students will be both qualified for and interested in pursuing. (job placement),
3. To provide students with job-related support that promotes self-determination, appropriate job search strategies, job satisfaction and retention, and quality of life (job training and monitoring).
4. To expand employment opportunities for YTP students by developing innovative programs that build work skills (developing new employment options).

The first half of this chapter addresses how these four goals are accomplished through the major components to the YTP employment process: (1) employer recruitment, (2) job placement, (3) job training and monitoring, and (4) developing new employment options. The second half of this chapter addresses the procedures associated with the student's final job placement within the YTP employment process. To fully understand the employment process, it is important for everyone including transition specialists, educators, youth and families to understand commonly used employment related terms, listed below, and the efforts Oregon has undertaken to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Following definitions of key employment related terms and a brief description of Oregon's Employment First and Supported Employment Policy, each component of the YTP employment process is described. For additional information, see the attached glossary or the referenced resources.

Employment Related Terms

Competitive Integrated Employment means full- or part-time work where the individual:

- (1) receives compensation at not less than the higher of Federal or State minimum wage and not less than the customary rate paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by other employees who do not have a disability;
- (2) is eligible for the level of benefits provided to other employees;

(3) is employed at a location where they interact with other persons who do not have a disability (not including supervisory personnel); and

(4) is provided, as appropriate, opportunity for advancement.

Other means within the VR system a participant's VR case file has been closed without gaining competitive integrated employment. The participant may be doing a variety of other things, including enrolled in further education or employed in some other employment that is not competitive integrated employment. A case file closed as Other is not considered a successful closure for the VR counselor.

Rehabilitated means within the VR system a participant has gained and maintained competitive integrated employment for 90 days and his or her VR case file has been closed. Rehabilitated, also referred to as 'rehabbed', is considered a successful closure for the VR counselor.

Supported Employment means employment with supports, in competitive integrated employment, that are individualized and customized, consistent with the strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the participants involved. Supported employment services are collaborative, combining short-term VR services with long-term, extended services designed to maintain employment after VR has successfully closed a participant's case file.

Natural Supports are the reciprocal relationships that occur in everyday life with family members, friends, and co-workers that are inherent in community and for which, typically, no monetary compensation is paid for the provision of services.

Oregon's Employment First and Supported Employment Policies

Recently, Oregon has adopted several initiatives and policies to address barriers to employment for students with disabilities. These employment initiatives are *Oregon's Employment First Policy* and *Supported Employment Policy*. *Oregon's Employment First Policy* presumes that, with the right support and job match, each individual who experiences an intellectual or developmental disability can work in an individual, integrated job that pays minimum wage or better, but no less than the same wage and level of benefits as people who do not experience a disability. Recognizing the pivotal role employment plays in the lives of individuals who experience an intellectual or developmental disability, employment is the first, and priority, option for individuals using Medicaid-funded services through Oregon's Office of Developmental Disability Services. Employment in fully integrated settings is the highest priority over unemployment, segregated employment, facility-based employment, or other non-work day services.

Many aspects of *Oregon's Employment First Policy* focuses on youth. Oregon's Department of Human Services (DHS) includes both Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and the Office of Developmental Disability Services (ODDS). Students with intellectual or developmental disabilities who have integrated employment experiences while in school, with compensation at or above minimum wage, have higher rates of maintaining integrated employment as adults. Moreover, students are most successful in

obtaining and maintaining integrated employment when their services are coordinated and there is collaborative funding between the Oregon Department of Education (ODE), VR, and ODDS.

Supported Employment Policy

Supported Employment focuses on identifying an appropriate vocational goal, VR services, and long-term support services to assist a participant to find and keep a job. Comprehensive pre-employment activities set the stage for Supported Employment and the information gathered during these activities facilitates development of the participant's individualized plan for employment (IPE).

Supported Employment is employment with supports in competitive integrated employment that is individualized and customized, consistent with the strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the participants involved. Supported Employment services are collaborative, combining short-term vocational rehabilitation services with long-term, extended services designed to maintain employment after VR has successfully closed a participant's case file. Publicly funded, extended ongoing supports, regularly available from designated community-based providers is a hallmark of long-term, extended services. Natural Supports or employer provided supports may also be an option for some participants' ongoing support needs. For more information about supported employment in Oregon, visit the YTP website at www.ytporegon.edu. The YTP attempts to support these policies by:

1. creating a collaborative program that combines the resources and expertise of individuals in the schools and VR agency;
2. providing additional resources to hire transition specialists who, together with the VR counselor, have specific responsibilities to place, train, and support students in meaningful, paid jobs; and
3. providing materials, training, and technical assistance to support these personnel in the implementation of these job development duties.

Essential Features

Table 1 highlights the essential features of employment. The YTP employment process provides strategies for schools and VR to collaborate during the job placement and training process. Collaboration is critical to students' success. Several critical features are incorporated into this process:

- YTP staff work closely with community employers, involving them in various aspects of the employment process.
- Students are active participants in the job placement process, learning the skills needed to find their own jobs.
- The YTP process emphasizes job maintenance, incorporating the concepts of developing informal support networks.

TABLE 1: Essential Features of Employment

- 1. EMPLOYER RELATIONSHIPS:**
YTP staff provide information to community employers, and develop a network of employers who assist in the provision of YTP services.
- 2. JOB PLACEMENT:**
YTP students receive the instruction and support needed to obtain meaningful, paid jobs that are matched to their interests and skills.
- 3. JOB MAINTENANCE:**
YTP staff work effectively with employers, co-workers, and students to assist students in increasing job satisfaction and retention.
- 4. ALTERNATE PATHS TO EMPLOYMENT:**
Programmatic changes within the school district or VR have been created through the development of employment opportunities for YTP students.
- 5. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT:**
Families and friends provide opportunities for resources that can be used to help YTP participants locate, obtain, and maintain integrated competitive employment.
- 6. SYSTEMS CHANGE:**
The YTP supports employment as the first priority consideration for students with disabilities.

The remainder of the chapter focuses on procedures for navigating the four major components to the YTP employment process: (1) employer recruitment, (2) job placement, (3) job training and monitoring, and (4) developing new employment options. These procedures are based on the essential features described above. It is important to remember, however; that the specific steps in this chapter are merely suggestions, and are not required.

Procedures

Employer Recruitment

Recruiting employers to work with your YTP is paramount to your students' success. There are many approaches to employer recruitment. Across the various styles, the actual process of developing relationships with employers in the community requires a special combination of public relations skills, knowledge of the local business community, and *optimism*.

The next section describes procedures to help you successfully recruit a broad base of community employers who will support the YTP in your community. These preliminary recruitment activities are extremely important. The more successful you are in creating support within the employment community for your program, the easier it will be to place students into satisfying jobs. The three basic steps to employer recruitment are:

1. Identify potential jobs in your community;
2. Develop a systematic approach for contacting employers; and,
3. Contact employers in your community.

Take time to meet with individuals in your local employment agencies to learn about the services they offer and to help them understand the role of YTP.

Step 1: Identify Potential Jobs in Your Community

Begin networking with other agencies. Employer recruitment begins with marketing the YTP and networking with other agency personnel. Identify other agencies or programs whose purpose is to place individuals into community employment. For example, your local Oregon State Employment Division office may have a youth employment program; private non-profit agencies in the community may offer employment training programs; or specific vocational skill training programs may exist at the local community college. Personnel in these programs are potential resources for employment information.

In some cases, established programs may view your efforts in the community as ‘stepping on their turf’. Be especially sensitive to this issue; it can confuse and alienate important contacts in the business community when they are approached by a wide variety of programs all seeking the same outcome – jobs for individuals. In addition, you may run the risk of sabotaging relationships with agencies that have resources or contacts you need. With good communication skills, you can learn to share information on employment resources, and work cooperatively to provide the best services to students.

Review existing labor market information. Another way to identify potential jobs in the community is to familiarize yourself with the current and projected local labor market demands for your community. If your community has an existing transition team, they may be able to supply additional information on the status of the local labor market. Confirm and update this information, if necessary. Online tools to help you identify potential jobs in your community are:

- Oregon Labor Market Information System (<https://www.qualityinfo.org/>)
- Oregon Career Information System (CIS) (<https://oregoncis.uoregon.edu/Portal.aspx>)
- Oregon Employment Department <http://www.oregon.gov/employ/pages/default.aspx>

Visit your local Oregon State Employment Division office and/or your local VR office to get current statistical information. There are several Employment Division Economists across Oregon. These economists can do locally-referenced labor market studies that you may find helpful.

Develop a list of potential employers to contact. Once you have talked with personnel at other local agencies, and learned about the current and future market demands in your community, *create a list of the types of jobs that are currently available, or projected, in your community, and that may be appropriate for YTP students.*

- Develop a list of employers to contact about participating in the YTP. Include any local business groups in your community such as the Chamber of Commerce, or service clubs like Kiwanis, Masons, or Rotary. These groups are almost always interested in hearing presentations about local programs and they provide an opportunity to present information about YTP to a group of potential employers.
- Use Chamber of Commerce listings or the classified section of the local newspaper to identify individual employers who may have jobs appropriate for YTP students. You will probably have good luck with employers who have had work experience students, or who have hired persons with disabilities in the past.
- Organize the employers by type of jobs offered or group them by geographic location. These groupings will make it easier for you to plan your actual job search contacts.

Step 2: Develop a Systematic Approach for Contacting Employers.

Plan your strategy for contacting employers. You will need to make some decisions about the strategies you will use when contacting employers. Decide how much time you have each week to devote to job development activities, and how you plan to divide your energies between general marketing or networking activities (such as making group presentations), and contacting individual employers.

There is no model for how much time to devote to weekly job development activities. This decision will depend on a variety of considerations, including whether you are starting a new YTP site, have a well established site, are familiar with the local community, and how many network contacts you have. There are three basic strategies for contacting individual employers: (a) informational interviews, (b) cold-calls, and (c) strategic conversations when you have a specific student in mind for a job. For an *informational interview*, you schedule a specific time to meet with an employer, usually 15 - 30 minutes, to provide information about the YTP and learn about the company or industry. The conversation is informal and the purpose is to learn more about a specific field or area of employment. For more information on informational interviewing, visit <https://career.berkeley.edu/Info/InfoInterview> .

Cold-calls involve dropping-in, unscheduled, on a business, asking about possible job openings, and leaving your YTP marketing materials. Sometimes you can use a cold-call to arrange a later in-depth conversation with an employer. Cold-calls are fast and require little to no advance preparation. Cold calls can require a substantial investment of time with little gained in return.

Strategic conversations entail contacting an employer when you have a particular YTP student in mind AND the student's specific vocational focus aligns with the business. Strategic conversations provide an opportunity for the employer to learn more about the YTP and the potential employee.

Most transition specialists have found some combination of these approaches are effective. No matter which approach you use, it is very important to listen carefully to what it is the employer wants and needs. Employers frequently state that they welcome appropriate training and support (some of the 'business services' you will be offering as you job develop), but express a strong aversion to inflexible and bureaucratic procedures inherent to many vocational programs. Approach potential employers with your 'business-person's hat' on and take off your 'program hat'. This means, put yourself in the employer's shoes and think about what his or her needs are first and how YTP and your student can support those needs. Avoid approaching employers from a place of helping the needy individual with a disability. Follow these general steps to develop a strategy for contacting employers:

1. Set specific goals for employer contact. For example, you could contact at least 10 employers weekly, or plan one marketing presentation each month.
2. Decide who will be responsible for making the contacts – the transition specialist, VR counselor, or some combination of staff.
3. Plan general timelines for making contacts with employers.

Design a system for maintaining employer contact information. Because you will be contacting many potential employers, it is important to maintain a record of these contacts. You will ultimately want to develop a well-organized resource bank of potential employers. This information can be organized in paper form – using file folders, in an online database, or in your smart phone. Regardless of how you organize the information, establishing a systematic approach for maintaining contact information will help you track when to re-contact interested employers and when to purge those employers who are clearly not interested in the YTP.

Presentation Outline

- ❖ *Overview the goals of the YTP*
- ❖ *Describe the YTP services*
- ❖ *Describe how a school/ business partnership benefits youth and the business*
- ❖ *Share student success stories, with their permission*
- ❖ *Distribute your YTP marketing materials and contact information*
- ❖ *Describe how employers can be involved (e.g., mentoring)*
- ❖ *Collect names of those who want additional information*

Step 3: Contact Employers in Your Community.

Present the YTP to community organizations/business clubs.

Presentations about the YTP can be made to local organizations like the Chamber of Commerce, and other business and service organizations. If you are invited to speak about the YTP, plan a brief presentation outlining the services provided through the YTP, and describing how schools and business people can develop partnerships to better prepare students with disabilities for life in the community and benefit the business. Show the 2 – 3 minute YTP Promotional Videos that describe and explain YTP (see <http://www.ytporegon.org/content/ytp-promotional-videos>).

You may need to differentiate your program from existing employment programs in the community. Avoid using educational jargon to describe the YTP, and use real examples of students to illustrate your points. If you are new to the YTP or your site is new, ask your TA Provider or check out the YTP website for examples of student specific stories. ***Be sure to***

obtain the students' written permission (i.e., photo/story release specifically including use YTP) to use their picture and story when talking about their participation in YTP. Distribute your YTP marketing materials and contact information.

Close your presentation by giving employers options for participating in the YTP (e.g., job shadowing or work experience sites, mentoring relationships, field trip or informational interview sites, etc.). Collect names of people who want more information. Ongoing contacts with business people will give the YTP credibility in the community, and assure sources for specific job leads later.

Prepare for contacts with individual employers. Before you meet with potential employers, become familiar with the goals and benefits of the YTP, and become comfortable presenting this information to individual employers. Your TA Provider can help you prepare for these initial contacts with employers. Prepare your marketing materials and any other written materials you think are important or would be helpful for the employers to know.

When conducting *informational interviews* with selected companies you will need to do some groundwork. First, learn who has the real decision making authority is relative to hiring. Often, this person is NOT in the Human Resources Department, but may be a line supervisor, or mid-level manager. Next, gather as much background information about the company (e.g., size, product, reputation) as you can. You may find this information online through the company's website or social media site, at the Chamber of Commerce, or from talking with other local business people in the community. Review the YTP Employment Process packet on the YTP website (www.ytporegon.org).

Visit company/business sites and meet with employers. Since this is your initial contact with the employer, it is important that you are well prepared. Dress as you would for a job interview, and be sure to have your YTP marketing materials and business card with you. The YTP Employment Process packet contains an example of an **Employment Site Screening Form** (available at www.ytporegon.org). Use this form, or a similar one that you create, as a way to help you organize information about specific employers and businesses. Remember, employers are busy people; plan to spend about 15-30 minutes for this interview. During the interview, you will want to:

1. Introduce yourself and describe the YTP program.
2. Ask about this company's personnel needs and answer any questions the employer may have.
3. Ask questions to learn any additional information needed to complete the Employment Site Screening Form. You will want to pay particular attention to the following issues:
 - Evaluate the attitudes of the employer. Is he/she flexible, cooperative, and willing to work closely with school personnel?
 - Evaluate the capabilities of supervisors and other personnel to work alongside students with disabilities. Are employees disrespectful with each other?
 - Document the business location. Is it located on, or near public transportation?
 - Evaluate the safety of the work environment. Note if machinery is in good working order, with safety systems in place.

- Evaluate the stability of the business. How long has the company been in operation? What is the rate of employee turnover?
- Determine whether there will be opportunities for career advancement in this company. With experience, will students be able to move beyond entry-level positions?

Determine employer's level of commitment and interest in YTP. Make certain that you have thoroughly explained the benefits and goals of the YTP, and that the prospective employer understands the support services that will be provided. Check with your TA Provider if you have questions about these areas. Before you end the interview, find out whether the employer is interested in making a commitment to working with YTP students. Give the employer several options for participation.

Options may include:

- allowing students to visit their business to observe or job shadow with their employees;
- talking with students about their business as part of a YTP class or job club;
- serving as a volunteer mentor with a specific individual student;
- offering their place of business as a work experience site; and
- hiring students as paid employees.

If the employer is interested in any of these options, determine which ones and make follow-up arrangements with the employer. Even if the employer is not interested at this time, let the employer know he/she can always contact you in the future. As you leave, thank the employer for taking the time to talk with you, and leave your YTP business card with your name and number.

Document employers contacted. You will need a system for keeping track of the employer contacts you have made. An example for doing this is the **Employer Contact Card** in the Employment Site Screening Form. This information will be invaluable as you build a network of employers who can potentially support your YTP. First, document any contacts you made, including those not currently interested in the program. Later, you will update this information if the employer chooses to interview or hire one of your students. Next, review Employment Site Screening Forms and organize employers by how they are interested in participating with the YTP – talking to students, providing job shadows, mentoring students, etc. As you review your notes, answer the bottom line question, "*Is this a potential employer for YTP students?*" You may meet some employers who want to hire your students, but for one reason or another, you don't think the work site is a good one. Don't be afraid to screen out these employers.

Send a thank you letter to every employer contacted. Since every employer contacted *may someday* participate in the YTP, it is important to maintain positive working relationships with all of them. Let them know, in writing, that you appreciate their time and the contribution they made. A sample letter is included *YTP Employment Process packet* on the YTP website.

For employers you don't intend to work with at this time, send a standard thank you letter. For those you plan to develop further, send standard thank you letter and include a paragraph outlining how their future involvement with YTP Staff. Remember to personalize the letter by using their name, company

name, and details specific to your conversation and visit (e.g., *I learned a lot about molding plastics from the tour of plant*).

Job Placement

During job placement, specific work sites are analyzed to determine their characteristics and demands. You will use this information to match students' characteristics and skills to the appropriate business. Both YTP staff and students are actively involved in job search activities. The ultimate goal is the placement of students in a paid job for which they are qualified, and in which they are interested. As you think about placement of students in a particular job with a particular company, evaluate the potential the student has for upward mobility within the company, further training, and benefits. Listed below, and described in detail in the following section, are the steps in the job placement process:

1. Review information on student job behaviors, abilities, and interests.
2. Prepare students for job search activities.
3. Gather information on jobs that are currently available.
4. Arrange for students to interview with potential employers
5. Follow-up with employers to finalize job placements.

Step 1: Review Information on Student Job Behaviors, Abilities, and Interests.

Review information from the screening and eligibility determination process. Review the student's information gathered during the screening and eligibility determination, especially related to vocational skills and interests. Become familiar with the student's general vocational strengths and his present level of functional performance, and any specific limitations (e.g. transportation problems, physical limitations) that could restrict the jobs available to the student. This information is especially helpful to the VR counselor when developing the student's Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

Discuss job preferences and interests with the student. YTP and VR is a time-limited relationship, thus it is critical that the student play a major role in planning for his/her job placement. Meet with the student to confirm and refine his preferences and interests. Explore the preferences or restrictions that could affect the kind of job the student would accept. For example, ask: How many hours is the student available to work each week? What type of transportation will be used to get back and forth to work? Is the student looking for a job in a specific field, or will he/she accept other related positions?

Motivational Interviewing

(MI) is a way of having a collaborative conversation about change, focused on a specific goal. In the case of a YTP student, that goal might be work/employment. A key component of MI is that it is evocative, strategically drawing out the student's motivations for and commitment to a particular change goal.

The MI **card sorts**, depicting values, strengths, roadblocks, are a way to facilitate a discussion about the student's goals and offer opportunities to increase self-knowledge using multiple modalities.

Use any vocational evaluation tools you have available to help the student identify his/her vocational interests and job preferences. Motivational Interviewing and the card sorts are examples of such tools. Consider visiting job sites aligned with the student's preferences and interests. Site visits give students a "hands-on" view of the demands of specific jobs. Through this process, your goal is to assist the student in identifying realistic job goals – jobs that are available in the community, and that he or she can perform.

Record information on the Student Summary Form. After reviewing the available vocational evaluation information and meeting with the student, complete the Student Summary Form (available at ytporegon.org). This form gives you and the vocational rehabilitation counselor a quick picture of the student's job abilities and preferences. You will use this information to help "match" the student to a suitable job placement.

Step 2: Prepare students for Job Search Activities.

Assist students in developing resumes. Before students begin an active job search, make sure they have a complete resume. The *Resume Worksheet* (available at ytporegon.org) can be used to help students develop their resume.

Prepare students to submit job applications. Students need to learn how to fill out job applications neatly and accurately. Stress the importance of making a good first impression and explain that the job application is often the first contact they have with a potential employer. Whether the application is online or hand written, a neat and complete job application gives an employer a first impression of the student as a potential employee. The appearance of the application is often the only opportunity a student will have to present their qualifications to an employer. Teach students to transfer the information contained in their resumes to job applications by completing a series of practice applications. As part of the process of completing job applications, you will want to verify that the student has the necessary paper work to document their eligibility for employment in the United States. Review the Employer Eligibility Verification (1-9) form, and help students obtain copies of any special documentation, such as a birth certificate, that they will need to be hired.

Practice interview skills with students. Use the resource *Common Interview Questions and Tips for Answering Them*, to help prepare students for the interview. Have students write answers to the questions on the Job Interview Questions: Student Worksheet (available at ytporegon.org). Give students opportunities to verbally practice their answers. Provide feedback to students on the content of their answers, as well as how they present themselves. For example, encourage them to have good posture, smile, and if culturally appropriate, shake hands and maintain eye contact with the interviewer. After students practice these skills in isolation, have them participate in a series of mock interviews, where they practice entering a room, greeting an employer, answering a series of questions, and closing the interview. As a final test of interview skills, consider inviting a local business person to your classroom and interview each student.

Develop a specific job search plan. Although the YTP staff will be actively involved in developing job leads, each student should also have specific job search responsibilities. Many times students will have connections through family or friends that can help them get their first job. Encourage students to use their connections and follow potential jobs leads. Students may be responsible for developing a list of potential employers to contact, or for completing a certain number of job applications each week. YTP staff should meet regularly with students to review progress, share information on possible job openings, and set new job search goals. All things considered, YTP students will have a higher probability of success in seeking and securing employment if they are taught and practice effective strategies to find, get, and keep their own jobs rather than having it done for them.

Step 3: Gather Information on Jobs that are Currently Available.

Contact specific employers to determine available jobs. At this point in the job placement process, you are identifying current job openings to meet the needs of specific students. Start by contacting many of the potential employers you identified during the employer recruitment process and making additional "cold-calls", if needed. For each employer you contact, find out if he/she has any current or projected job openings, and if he/she is willing to meet with you to discuss the placement of a *specific* YTP student. You should use other resources for job leads such as online job posting sites, newspaper Help Wanted ads, information from the Employment Division, and your network of community contacts.

Collect information from employers. After you identify employers with potential job openings, arrange to visit each place of business to gather information about job requirements and employer expectations. Collect this information by asking questions of the employer and by directly observing the job. Keep in mind there may be more than one job available at any site. For example, a restaurant may have openings for a dishwasher, a prep cook, and a waitress. Be sure to complete a *Job Summary Form* (available at ytporegon.org) for each job, noting any special skills required.

- Interview the employer about the jobs available, noting the work hours required and the job duties. If possible, observe the job(s) that may be available. Note any special skills required, such as filling out forms, operating complex machinery, or running a cash register.
- Complete the *Job Summary Form* for each job.

Compare the abilities and interests of the students with the specific jobs available. Compare your *Job Summary Forms* and the *Student Summary Forms* and develop a list of jobs that match students' interests and may be possible job placement. For example, a local retailer has an opening for a stock clerk. You serve a YTP student whose job goal is to work in retail sales, and he has some previous experience stocking shelves at a grocery store. You compare the specialized skills listed on the *Job Summary Forms*, to the student's specific strengths and weaknesses indicated on the *Student Summary Forms*, and determine that the student can already perform most of the skills that will be needed for this job. This particular student is also available to work during the hours the employer requires. On paper, this sounds like a good job match for this student. If the student is interested in the position, move ahead with the application and interview process.

This process of job matching – identifying job openings, and comparing them to students’ needs and abilities – is ongoing. Job matching is a very individualized process. It requires a combination of logical thinking, "gut reactions", and "being at the rabbit hole when the rabbit comes out". Sometimes you discover an "ideal employer" and move ahead with a job placement, even though the student doesn't currently have all the skills needed to perform the job duties. You know your student, and you can probably predict that with the right type of training and support she will eventually be independent on the job. Similarly, there may be situations where you *screen out* certain available jobs because you may not have any students who are interested in the type of job or who are qualified to perform the job duties. Generally, your team needs to feel confident that students can succeed on the job before proceeding with the next steps of job placement.

Step 4: Arrange for Students to Apply and Interview with Actual Potential Employers.

Complete applications for potential jobs. Most employers will require that a YTP student fill out an application and some may even request a resume prior to scheduling a job interview. Even if the employer doesn't require the application and interview, they are good practice. Help the student obtain and complete a presentable, competitive application. Remind students the importance of a neat application, paying attention to detail, thoroughness, demonstrating a work history, and honesty. You might also point out that employers often use the information contained in applications to develop interview questions that explore work history, skills, and qualifications.

Schedule interviews with potential employers. Through your job development activities and the job search efforts of your students, you probably identified a variety of employers who have suitable job openings. Help the student contact these targeted employers and schedule an interview. Make sure the student knows how to dress for the interview and how to get to the employment site. Help the student prepare answers to interview questions that are specific to the company and job she is applying for. Prepare the student to ask appropriate questions when given the opportunity during the interview.

Accompany student to the interview (if necessary). Some students may feel more comfortable going to an interview if you go along with them. You may need to sit in on the interview if you feel the student is not ready to answer questions independently, or if you feel you need to be available to answer the employer's questions about the YTP. Observing the interview will give you a chance to determine if the student needs additional practice in interviewing skills.

Document each interview. Students should use the Job Contact Sheet (available at ytporegon.org) to document each interview. You will also want to note the date and outcome of each interview in your tracking/monitoring system. Overtime, look for patterns in this information that can help you tailor instruction and training for your students. For example, if your students are continually being turned down for a job at the major manufacturer in town, investigate what additional training may help

Have student send a follow-up letter to all employers who interview them. Sending a follow-up letter after an interview demonstrates students’ interest and follow-through. Students need to learn how to write a brief follow-up letter after a job interview. This contact is their opportunity to thank the

employer, emphasize to the employer how interested they are in the position, and provide any additional information requested in the interview. Help the student prepare a formal, typed letter. As with the application, the follow-up letter is another opportunity to make a positive impression with the employer. Work with the students to make sure it is error free.

Step 5: Follow Up with Employers to Finalize Job Placements.

Check back with all employers who provided interviews. If the employer doesn't contact the student within a reasonable period of time, based on the timeframe discussed in the interview, encourage the student to contact the employer and determine the status of the job opening. The student should find out if the employer is interested in hiring them, with the understanding that YTP staff will be available to provide training and support as needed. As a YTP TS, you may also want to ask the employer for feedback on the student's performance during the interview, and their perception on the potential for success on the job. If the student isn't being offered the position, understanding his strengths or areas for improvement from the employer's perspective is invaluable information that will help you and him prepare for the next interview.

Determine an appropriate job placement. With the student and as a team, decide whether the job placement fits the abilities and interests of the student. This is an important conversation that will guide the types of jobs the student applies for or whether she should accept a job after an offer has been made. This discussion may occur before the student applies for a specific job, after she has interviewed, or even after a job has been offered to the student. Before the student makes a final decision on a job placement, as a team you will want to discuss the pros and cons of the job with the student. Consider the following questions:

- Does the student have the basic skills needed to be successful on the job?
- Is the student interested in this type of work? Make sure she asks the right questions in the job interview to understand the type of work she will be asked to perform.
- Does the job fit with the student's postsecondary employment goal or is it 'just a job'?
- Does the job provide benefits, opportunities for further training, or other aspects that would promote upward mobility?
- Where is the job located? Is it within walking or biking distance or near public transportation if the student does not drive?
- What are the working hours? Are the hours flexible if the student is enrolled in school?
- What are the wages and benefits? Is there a probationary period?
- Will the job need to be modified for this student; if so, how?
- What is the temperament of the supervisor? What is the work environment?
- Does the student need to disclose his or her disability to his immediate supervisor? What, if any accommodations will the student need to request?

The answer to these questions will inform a student's decision to accept or reject a job offer, should one be made. Empowering students to be self-determined and self-advocates means they have a right to

accept or reject a job offer. It also means that they need to fully understand the advantages and disadvantages of taking a job and the consequences of accepting or rejecting a job. The ultimate purpose of YTP is to help students get and keep jobs aligned with their postsecondary employment goal. Understanding students' preferences, interests, needs, and strengths; developing a well articulated, clear, and appropriate postsecondary goal that capitalizes on their strengths, preferences and interests; and matching students to jobs aligned with their goal facilitates fulfilling this purpose.

Finalize arrangements for the job placement with the employer. Once the student has a firm "job offer" from an employer, and the student has accepted the position, there are a few final details to work out before their first day on the job.

- Student and employer determine a start for on-the-job training and agree on a weekly schedule.
- Help the student plan transportation arrangements and provide transportation training if needed.
- Prepare the student to request accommodations, if needed.
- Student should find out whether any special equipment or clothing is needed for this job, and make arrangements to purchase these before the job begins. Often, the VR Counselor can assist in paying for these job-related expenses.

Job Training and Monitoring

Job training and monitoring includes on-the-job instruction as well as the monitoring and follow-along services provided to help students maintain successful job placements. Job training in ideal circumstances will generally take place in the work environment and during work hours. In rare occasions, it may be possible to bring "pieces" of a job back to a classroom or similar setting to practice refining the skills necessary to perform the job. The goal of job training is to teach students to be independent, so that they can perform the job with minimal monitoring from the YTP Transition Specialist. The Transition Specialist should help students learn job tasks correctly from the beginning, and teach students the skills needed to solve problems independently. Job training and monitoring includes the five general steps:

1. Plan and prepare for the job placement.
2. Provide on-the-job training.
3. Gradually reduce the level of support/supervision given.
4. Monitor the work site.
5. Provide follow-along support to "fine-tune" independence.

For students who experience a developmental disability or an intellectual disability and are eligible for long-term, support services, collaborate with the student's Brokerage or County DD Provider to ensure that they are planning for employment supports like job coaching. Once the student is competitively employed work with the student's Brokerage or County Developmental Disabilities Provider to plan for a seamless transfer of employment supports.

Step 1: Plan and Prepare for the Job Placement

Visit the job site and document the job duties. In order to provide systematic training and instruction relevant to the job, a Transition Specialist must know all the steps involved in performing a job. Arrange a time to visit the job site and observe the specific duties. If your student needs intensive job training to learn all of the tasks required, break the job into a clear sequence of steps – a task analysis. Use the task analysis for teaching the skills and the documenting the student’s process. If the student does not require a task analysis, the general job duties should still be documented.

Step 2: Provide On-The-Job Training.

Orient the student to the job. On the student’s first day of the job, with the job supervisor, explain the general job duties and the expectations of the employer to the student. This is also the time for the student to complete any additional paperwork that the employer requires.

Decide who will provide the initial job training. Training begins after the orientation is completed. It can be conducted by the employer, the Transition Specialist, or both. In deciding who should provide the initial task training consider the following:

- What is the ability level of the student?
- How much experience does the job trainer have with the job tasks? Does the Transition Specialist have the knowledge and skills (e.g., a metal fabrication company, installing heating ducts) to provide the training.
- How complicated are the tasks which need to be learned?
- How much time does the employer have available to train the student?
- Are there individuals at the job site who can provide "natural supports" to the student? Natural supports may be provided by co-workers who take an interest in the success of the new worker and mentor that new worker toward independence.

Teach the student the specific job tasks. Whether working alone or with an employer, you should follow a systematic process to teach the job tasks. Use the following general steps:

1. Demonstrate the task to the student.
2. Have the student try performing the task.
3. Provide assistance to the student as needed.
4. Give the student feedback about his/her performance.
5. Once the student has mastered the job tasks, work on increasing his/her speed.
6. Gradually decrease the amount of supervision provided.
7. Keep your eyes open for "natural supports" in the form of interested co-workers willing to mentor or take the worker "under their wing" and facilitate a relationship between those natural supports and your student.
8. Begin self-monitoring strategies.

Develop strategies for self-monitoring. Since the goal of job training is to teach students to be independent, students should learn how to monitor their own work performance. Explain to students that self-monitoring is a method for watching and checking themselves to insure that the job is done

right. Help students learn to use a method for recording their goals, and monitoring their progress. This may be a task checklist such as a an app on a smartphone, picture cues in a photo album on a smartphone, or some other self-monitoring form. Help the youth and employer understand the utility of an electronic device as an accommodation for a student.

Collect data on the student's performance. You will need to collect data on the student's performance. A task analysis or task checklist can be used to monitor performance, or some other strategy. Regardless of how you monitor performance, you need an ongoing record of the student's performance and progress. Remember:

- Any data you collect should be useful both to measure the student's progress, and to decide whether your training methods are working.
- Use the easiest behavior measurement you can find that tells you what you want to know.
- When you take data, share it with the student.

Gradually reduce the level of support/supervision given. By reviewing the data collection forms, you learn which tasks the student is doing well, and which tasks require more training. Once the student can do most tasks independently, begin to gradually decrease direct supervision. The student and employer need to understand that the goal of the training is to teach the student to be independent. Let the student know how he/she is doing, and communicate regularly with the employer to get feedback on the student's progress. Co-workers working closely with the student could be part of this feedback and progress reporting process, if it will support the student's success. Take advantage of any co-workers who are interested in taking over the role of the job trainer. Be mindful to present the student as competent and capable in the eye of their co-workers; co-workers are just that, not supervisors.

Step 3: Monitor the Work Site/Placement.

Monitor the student's performance on the job. Once the student can do the job independently, move from training into monitoring. Prepare for and transition to monitoring participants' training by

- Agreeing with the employer on the level of supervision that the student needs.
- Planning a regular monitoring schedule.
- Visiting the job site at least weekly, initially, then fade visits to bi-weekly or monthly as the student demonstrates independence.
- Monitoring the student's progress regularly.

Document each visit to the job site or phone call to the employer. You may want to create a case note form, either electronically or on paper. Document successes and any problems the student is having, as well as the types of intervention provided by YTP staff. This information will be helpful to determine what supports are working and what supports are needed for students.

Facilitate the development of a support network on the job. Capitalize on and establish all of the hidden and overt support systems available on the job site. These support networks have the potential to supplement and continue the consistent support and training provided during the initial phases of job

training. This process moves the support from an "artificial source" provided by YTP staff to one that is more typical to most employment circumstances also known as "natural supports". That process is something we all may take for granted because it has long been established in our "working culture" (i.e., the notion of getting support and training from those around us in our work environments). In the case of YTP students, they may need to be taught **how to access that "informal support network"**. At the same time the employer and co-workers may have to learn how to make that support network more available by designating "mentors" or "lead workers" that take over the function of the transition specialist as they fade into more of a follow-along support mode.

Assist in solving problems on the job. Work with the student and employer to solve any problems that come up with the student's job performance. These problems could include anything from excessive absences, to inappropriate grooming and hygiene to difficulties getting along with the supervisor. Just because a student has a job doesn't mean the instruction ends. Previously where instruction focused on *getting* a job and general work-readiness skills and behaviors, now instruction focuses on the specific skills and behaviors the student needs to *keep* her job. When problems arise, with the student, develop a specific plan of action for correcting.

Step 4: Provide Follow-Along Support.

Maintain regular contacts with employers. Even if a student is working completely independently, it is still important to check-in with the employer at least monthly. By checking with an employer, you can deal with any difficulties the student may be having on the job before they escalate to something that could lead to termination. It is better to call an employer and find out everything is going fine, than to have an employer call you because things are so bad that the student is about to be fired.

Document student performance. Encourage the employer to rate the student's performance using the Monthly Progress Report (available at ytporegon.org). This form goes into the student's file to provide an ongoing progress record. The Monthly Progress Report also gives the employer a format for communicating any problems the student is having. Review the performance form with the student and make sure he knows what he is doing well. Help him to identify what improvement he needs to make and how he will make them.

Provide retraining to students as needed. Some students will need additional on-the-job training when their job responsibilities change, or if they have trouble performing part of their job. You'll need to be available to go back to the job site, assess what is and isn't working to determine what help and student needs, then provide the extra training needed for them succeed on the job.

New Employment Options

The preceding sections described procedures for placing YTP students into paid employment. There are other approaches to building and expanding relationships with the business community. Taking a wider view of the employment process often results in creating a new range of opportunities for your students to learn about the world of work. This view sets the stage for *systems change* as business, education,

YTP staff, and VR learn to build cooperative relationships in their attempts to develop competitive workers. There are three basic steps in developing new employment options for YTP students:

1. Review information on model programs developed by YTP sites.
2. Discuss options with the YTP team and develop a plan.
3. Develop new programs designed to expand employment opportunities or build work readiness skills.

Step 1: Review Information on Model Programs.

If you are considering developing a new program to create new employment options for your YTP students, you may want to adopt or adapt some approaches used by other YTP sites around the state. This section includes information on two strategies for providing employment or enhancing the employment process: (1) School-Business Partnerships, and (2) Entrepreneurial Ventures. Each of these approaches was developed to meet the unique needs of a specific YTP site, the community, and the students involved in that site. A description of each approach, along with a chart summarizing their unique features, is included on the following page.

Although the ultimate employment goal of YTP is placement in paid jobs, there are many paths to that goal. Using a standard job development, placement, and training approach will be your bottom-line approach to employment. Standard job development can be frustrating, in some cases, if your students are not "work ready" and have little or no concept of what the business community and the world of work is all about. You may want or need to develop several other model program approaches to build a work related foundation for young adults while creating relationships with the business community. The model programs described in Table 2 give you opportunities to build work readiness skills.

Table 2. YTP Model Programs – Employment Options

	School-Business Partnerships	Entrepreneurial Ventures
Program Overview	Partnerships linking individual businesses with specific schools or programs within a school. For example, a business could sponsor a classroom, or individuals from a business may serve as mentors.	Small businesses developed and operated by students and school staff. For example, coffee-carts, or catering companies.
Business Commitment	Requires time commitment from individual business people, or financial commitment to provide resources to school.	School staff may need to survey the local business community as part of their market research. Businesses may employ students trained by the school.
School Commitment	Staff time to develop partnership, and participate in partnership activities.	Staff time to develop and operate the business. Up-front costs to purchase equipment and supplies (ranges from \$250 to over \$5,000).
Unique Benefit to Sites	Develops long-term relationships between school and business.	Provides students with opportunities to learn how to manage a business. Can generate income to support YTP or other school programs.

As you consider the options for building your students’ work readiness skills, think about the needs of your students, your capacity to develop new approaches, and the diversity of opportunities that may or may not be available to you in your community. Developing any model program requires time and energy. If, in your development of an innovative approach, you find that you are diverted from the focus of developing *paid permanent employment* for YTP students, you should re-evaluate your decision to start a model program. Model programs should buttress and enhance the employment development picture, not hinder, confuse, or replace it. Be clear about the pros and cons of creating these options. Issues to consider in adopting any of these model programs are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Considerations for Model Employment Options.

Model Employment Options	Issues to Consider (“pros and cons”)
School-Business Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds relationships with the business community • Gives students a realistic picture of the world of work • Requires time from staff to create relationships
Entrepreneurial Ventures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides training in structured work environment • Gives YTP high visibility within the school or community • Creates new potential to generate money for the program • Demands time and energy from staff to develop and operate a business • Requires initial financial investment for equipment and supplies.

Step 2: Discuss Options for Developing Programs with the YTP Team and Develop a Plan.

After reviewing the possibilities, you should have a fairly good idea about your capacity to implement one of these options. Meet with the site YTP team (i.e., transition specialist/s, administrator/s, and VR counselor) to discuss possibilities. Since one goal of the YTP is to promote systems change, consider involving key personnel (e.g., business community, site-based planning council members, or school counselors) in the planning sessions.

As a part of the planning process, consider the unique characteristics of your local site. Develop a model that fits with, and ideally fills, a need of your school and your community. For example, your community may support a diverse manufacturing base. In addition to actual employment, there could be an opportunity, through a school-business partnership, to develop on-site classes in a local manufacturer's business to expose students to that potential occupation. Understanding the needs of the community is an important step in the planning process. Develop a concrete action plan that will work for your community. At the conclusion of your discussion, you may decide not to develop any new employment models. Or, you may decide there is a need to develop one or more new programs. Specific procedures for creating many of the new employment options are listed below.

Step 3: Develop New Programs Designed to Expand Opportunities or Work Readiness.

The procedures outlined next are designed for sites that will develop expanded employment strategies for YTP students as well as other students who might benefit from alternative learning experiences.

Suggested procedures are included for developing (1) school-business partnerships, and (2) entrepreneurial ventures.

Procedures for Developing School-Business Partnerships

Gather information and develop a program description. There are many different types of school-business partnerships – simple sponsorship activities, (e.g. school teams, recognition programs) to complex collaboration efforts, (e.g., Business/Education Compacts, City Alliances, Youth Investment Projects). All school-business partnerships require a commitment from a local business and the school staff. Partnership activities benefit students by providing an initial connection to the real work world. Employers benefit from a better understanding of the school system and a better prepared workforce.

Talk with other YTP sites that have developed partnerships to determine your particular approach to developing a school-business partnership. Once you have gathered the necessary information, develop a brief program description outlining the general structure of the partnership, the goals of the partnership, and the students it is intended to serve. This program description will be useful as you gather support within your school and community.

Obtain support within the school. Before you can implement a school-business partnership you need administrative support within the school. Obtaining administrative buy-in and input will afford you a higher probability of success and continuation as you create innovative opportunities for YTP students (and others) to explore the world of work through partnerships. Schedule a meeting, or series of meetings, with school administrators to discuss your plans for a school-business partnership. Specific issues to discuss include:

I. Developing the Partnership Concept:

- a. What are the goals of the partnership?
- b. What format will the partnership take?
- c. How will the partnership benefit the school and individual students?
- d. How will the partnership benefit the participating business?
- e. How will the partnership be coordinated with other existing school-to-work transition activities?

II. Partnership Activities:

- a. Who will be responsible for connecting with local businesses to develop partnerships?
- b. What specific activities will be offered to students?
- c. Which students will be selected to participate?
- d. How will partnership activities be worked into the existing school schedule?

III. Monitoring and Evaluating the Partnership:

- a. Who will serve as liaison between the school and participating business?
- b. Who will schedule students and monitor student participation?
- c. How will the effectiveness of the partnership be evaluated?

Remember that other programs within the school, such as career-technical education programs, or cooperative work experience programs may already have established relationships with business partners within the community. It is important to be aware of these existing relationships, and understand how your new program fits into the bigger picture of school-to-work transition activities for all students. There is nothing worse than having businesses close their doors to partnerships with the school, only because they have become overwhelmed by a whole variety of vocational or transition programs clamoring for their participation.

Obtain support within the community. *Once you have school support, identify community members who may be interested in partnerships or who could be instrumental in connecting you to the business community, (e.g., Chamber of Commerce, local Workforce Investment Board or local employers). Determine the type of business that would be desirable to engage in a partnership with your YTP or school. Be creative and consider the range of possibilities that could be proposed that would attract a local business to a formal partnership with your program. Some business leaders are very concerned about the broader issues of preparation of the future workforce and influencing education, while others may be more interested in being involved as work experience or employment sites only. Develop a list of possibilities. Use all of your networking skills to locate and cultivate potential partners.*

Select an appropriate business partner. *Assuming that you have been able to work as a team with your school administration to identify the specific goals of your program, and you have identified a list of potential business partners, the next step is to target a specific business to help you develop your partnership activities. Selection may be driven by a number of factors ranging from the business' attitude towards education, business size and economic viability, marketing and public relations needs of the business, and/or the fact that someone in your program personally knows that "Cathy Yin, CEO of Wooster Widgets, is a real champion for at-risk students and would love to get involved with our YTP as a partner". Once you identify a potentially appropriate business partner, make your pitch, highlighting the benefit of the partnership to *both* the business and school/individual students.*

Develop materials needed for the partnership. *School districts with school-business partnerships often have forms and procedure manuals that formalize these relationships. Depending on your goals, you may want to adapt existing materials or develop materials designed to meet the needs of your particular circumstances. Whichever approach you choose, your partnership should have (a) a written agreement to eliminate any potential misunderstandings, and (b) a method for evaluating the progress and success of the relationship.*

Many businesses and schools already have some of the materials available for you to adapt for your school-business partnership. For example, sample cooperative agreements probably exist in the department that manages cooperative work experience. Some businesses may have training feedback or marketing surveys that could help evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership. Volunteer programs in the schools often have materials and procedures that may dovetail nicely with minor adaptations to a school-business partnership. In short, reinventing the wheel may not be necessary to get your partnership program up and running. Look for existing materials.

Select students to be involved in the partnership. Ideally, you should collaborate with your business partner to select students to participate in the program. You may decide to have all of your YTP students participate in the partnership or only certain students who have expressed interest. It is also a good idea to make these activities available to other students enrolled in vocational education or professional-technical programs. YTP students will benefit from participation in an integrated program, and you will also promote the concept that YTP is just one component of a larger school-to-work strategy for all students.

Specific decisions regarding student selection ultimately depend on the details of the partnership. For example, a partnership may allow individual students the opportunity to conduct informational interviews with workers who are performing a high-technology manufacturing job. In exchange, your students may be collating and stapling the company newsletter. It may not make sense to have students who have no expressed interest in this occupation to participate in the interviewing aspect of the partnership. But, it is conceivable that a student not interested in the informational interview phase may be interested in collating and stapling.

Participate in partnership activities. Generally, you want to focus on quality rather than quantity in the initial launch of the partnership. Although you may have ideas for activities during the initial phases of planning the partnership, you now need to propose those activities to your business partner and get their input and support. Partnership activities should be interesting, fun, and beneficial to students *and* employers. Some activities may unfold over the school year, (e.g., job shadowing visits) and some may focus on a single event (e.g., career fair). As your partnership develops, you may agree to participate in more involved activities (e.g., student apprenticeship programs or teacher internships in industry). Retain some flexibility, so that both partners can adapt and mutually re-design activities as needed.

Monitor and evaluate the success of the partnership on an ongoing basis. The final step in developing any new program is to evaluate its effectiveness. Decide on a evaluation format and jointly participate with your business partner to determine the overall effectiveness of the relationship. You should evaluate the partnership in terms of benefit to the business as well as to the school/ students. Students who participate in the partnership should have the opportunity to evaluate their experience. Based on feedback, the partners can decide whether the program needs to continue or be revised.

Procedures for Developing Entrepreneurial Ventures

There are multiple examples of successful entrepreneurial ventures operated by the YTP sites. Dog grooming services, auto detailing services, and catering services are just a few examples within the YTP network. You can find a list of school-based businesses and the contact information on the YTP website at www.ytporegon.org.

Gather information and develop a program description. To learn about the intricacies of entrepreneurship, contact a YTP site that operates a successful small business venture; ask your UO TA Provider for suggestions of successful programs in your area. Once you have gathered the necessary information, develop a brief description of the business venture, outlining the goals, structure of the

business, and students it is designed to serve. This written description will be helpful as you lobby for support within the school and community.

Obtain support within the community. Although local employers are directly involved with operating your business, it is important to be sensitive to the local community as you implement your plan. Below are ways to be aware of the needs of local businesses:

- Survey the community – is there a market for your product?
- Determine how your business will affect other small employers in the community – are you competing with a local business?
- Consider the type of training students will receive by participating in this business – are the skills they will learn transferable to community employers?

The answers to these questions will help you decide the type of business that is most appropriate, and likely to succeed, in your community.

Obtain support within the schools. Before you can begin developing a small business, you need to have administrative support within the school. Set up a meeting, or a series of meetings, with school administrators. If possible, include your district's risk management specialist, to obtain their input and support for developing the business. Specific issues that need to be discussed and resolved include:

I. Developing the Business:

- a. Does the school district have any policies regarding school based businesses?
- b. What liability and licensure issues need to be addressed?
- c. How much will the initial start up costs be and how will these expenses be met?
- d. How will profits, if any, be processed through the school's business office?
- e. Who will be responsible for developing and managing the business?
- f. How will this business coordinate activities with other school-to-work transition activities?

II. Student Participation:

- a. Which students will participate in the business and what will their responsibilities be?
- b. How will student participation affect daily school activity?
- c. Will students be able to get credit for participation?
- d. Will students be paid wages?

III. Monitoring and Evaluating the Business:

- a. What skills will be taught and how will student progress be measured and evaluated?
- b. How will the overall program be evaluated?

Select students to participate. You may decide to have all of your YTP students participate in operating the business, or you may invite only those students who have an interest in learning the

specific vocational skills associated with the business. Student participation will also be influenced by existing class and work schedules. As part of the selection process, explain the goals of the business to the students and get an initial commitment from them to participate. As much as possible, provide opportunities for students to be involved in the management decisions of the business so they gain experience with the entire process of developing and operating a business. Consider involving other vocational education or business students in the venture. These students may be interested in the day-to-day tasks of operating the business, or may they want to be involved only in special projects (e.g., developing a marketing strategy).

Develop a business plan. Work with your students to develop a clear plan of operation for the business. Consider the following questions:

- What product or service will you sell?
- Who are your potential customers?
- What kind of advertising or marketing strategies do you need?
- What are the initial costs and the ongoing costs of operating the business?

Consider reviewing materials from other small school businesses to get guidance on developing a business plan. The Small Business Administration is also a resource for you. They have a group of retired executives (e.g., Service Corps of Retired Executives) who will provide free consultation to individuals who are developing small businesses. Remember that it is a lengthy and sometimes frustrating process to work within the existing bureaucracy of a school system to create a for-profit venture. You will need to be focused, yet patient, as you proceed.

Develop supporting materials needed to run a successful small business venture. Any small business has some amount of paperwork that is needed to help the business run smoothly. As you develop or adapt paperwork needed for your small business, think about the skill levels of your students. Some of the materials you may need are listed below.

I. Training Materials:

- a. Job descriptions for each position in the business
- b. Training outlines, including task analyses for certain components of the business (e.g., list of steps in making a mocha espresso)
- c. Training certificates
- d. Information matching curriculum goals to skills taught in the business

II. Advertising or marketing information:

- a. Brochures
- b. Catalogues
- c. Flyers listing products and prices

III. Accounting and inventory materials:

- a. Order forms
- b. Inventory sheets
- c. Time sheets
- d. Procedures for payroll

Purchase equipment and supplies. Most new businesses will have startup costs. The costs may include purchasing specific equipment (such as an espresso machine), or materials and supplies (such as flavored coffees, milk, and paper cups). Determine the minimum equipment and supplies you need to get started and make that initial investment. It is always a good idea to start small, and then build your inventory when you know your profit margin.

Advertise your product. It is important to advertise your product, even if your business is school-based and geared toward student customers. Use flyers, catalogs, websites, or social media outlets you have developed to provide information to potential customers. Consider developing special promotional materials to announce the "grand opening" of the new business.

Staff and run the business. After you have finalized the paperwork, purchased the equipment and supplies, you will need to provide hands-on training to students to teach them the specific tasks involved in operating the business. You may need to provide instruction for making change, packaging materials, or taking orders. Once training is complete, develop a daily schedule for students and staff. Now you are ready to **open your business!**

Evaluate the success of the business. The final step in developing any new program is to evaluate its affect. Creating a small business from scratch is not easy, so give yourself some time before you evaluate your success too harshly. When you are ready, YTP staff can collect information from customers as well as students to help determine the success of the venture. You will certainly want to consider the profits made as one marker of success, but also remember the intangible benefits that students receive from participating in the development and operation of a brand new business. Staff and students should discuss the need to modify the business operating procedures and ultimately decide if it is feasible, and profitable, to continue operating the business.

When the student is in a stable job situation, or you think it is time for the student to exit YTP services, prepare for the final phase of the YTP program – final job placement and follow-up.

FINAL JOB PLACEMENT and FOLLOW-UP

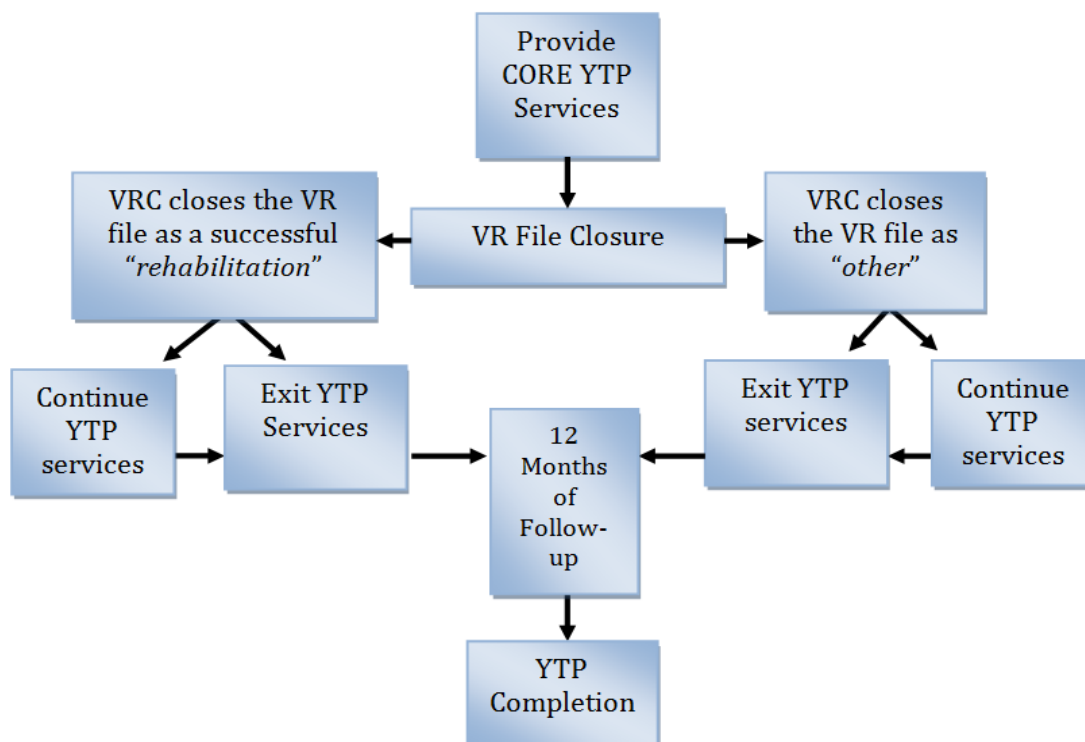
Final Job Placement and Follow-Up

Final placement and follow-up services are the last chapter of the YTP process. Early in the program, students set goals and developed plans for their future. Now is the time to review their progress and celebrate their success! This section describes general procedures to prepare students for their final job placement, and then monitor their transition into the community. There are three **basic steps** that structure the YTP final job placement and follow-up process:

1. Plan and prepare for the final job placement.
2. Meet as a team with students to complete the exit planning process.
3. Provide follow-up services to students.

To put final job placement in context, recall the screening and referral process described earlier in the YTP Procedural Manual and partially shown in Figure 1. Following the provision of Core YTP services the VR counselor (VRC) closes the VR file either as a successful *rehabilitation* or as *other*. This decision is the VRC's to make and is commonly referred to as case closure. Regardless of how a case file is closed, there is a critical decision to be made, that being: whether the student continues or exits YTP.

Figure 1. Partial Screening and Referral Process



The decision to continue or exit YTP services is that of the YTP team. *Continue* YTP services means the student is still actively involved in YTP activities. He can continue to attend job club, work in a school-based business, and receive services from the transition specialist. *Exit* YTP services means he is no longer actively involved in YTP activities and receiving YTP services from a transition specialist. VR file closure and exit from YTP does not always happen at same time; in fact, it will be unlikely that these occur on the same date. Some considerations for whether to continue or exit are described in Table 1.

Table 1. Considerations to Continue or Exit a Student from YTP Services

Continue YTP Services	Exit YTP Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still needs support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No longer needs support; stable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impending change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresponsive; lacks follow-through
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not yet met IPE goal/s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met the IPE goal/s

Step 1: Plan and Prepare for the Final Job Placement.

Review criteria for YTP closure to determine if student is "ready" to exit the YTP. There are several reasons for to exit a student from the YTP. In most cases, students exit the YTP because they have met all of their goals, and no longer need active YTP services. However, there are some situations that lead to students exiting the program unsuccessfully. Table 2 lists reasons for program closure.

Table 2. Criteria for Exit from YTP

Criteria for Exit from YTP	Example
<i>Closed successfully</i>	Student is placed into permanent competitive employment consistent with the vocational goal identified in the IPE.
<i>Transfer to VR caseload</i>	Student no longer requires YTP services but maintains an open file with VR counselor (for example, student may be enrolled in long-term vocational training program).
<i>Moved/Unable to locate</i>	Student may have moved out of the area and the VR file may be transferred to another office or YTP team may not be able to locate the student.
<i>Declined services</i>	Student no longer wants to participate in the YTP.
<i>Lack of follow-through/uncooperative</i>	YTP staff are unwilling to maintain student in program, because student is uncooperative, or refuses to follow-through with program expectations.

Schedule an exit planning meeting. If the team decides that a student should be exited from the YTP, an exit planning meeting should be scheduled. This meeting should involve the student, transition specialist and VR counselor. Other key people, such as family members, or agency personnel can also be invited. If the student refuses to cooperate, or simply disappears, the YTP staff will need to close the student's case without holding an exit planning meeting. It is also possible for exit planning to happen as a series of meetings as opposed to a single event, called an exit planning meeting.

Step 2: Meet as a Team with Students to Complete the Exit Planning Process.

Document student status and goals achieved. The first part of the exit planning meeting should focus on the student's current status, and the progress she made in the YTP. Discuss the student's current educational, living, and employment status; giving a quick picture of what the student is doing. The second part of the meeting should focus on goals identified and goals achieved. This is an opportunity to look at progress in many areas of transition and to celebrate the student's achievements. Even if a student is exiting the program under negative circumstances, it is important to note the goals that may have been achieved (e.g., obtaining a high school diploma, or passing the driver's license exam).

Discuss goals and expectations for final placement/program exit. For students who have met all their program goals and are being placed into competitive employment, this discussion at the exit planning meeting should focus on final placement itself. Be sure to keep the discussion student-centered; always ask for and respect the student's opinions as you answer the following questions:

- Is everyone satisfied that this is a good job match for this individual?
- Will there be opportunities for career advancement or further training in this position?
- Are there any concerns or issues that may prevent the student from maintaining this job?

For YTP participants who may be exiting without meeting their IPE goals, the exit planning meeting is still an important process. YTP participants need to understand why they are being closed and what they would need to do to re-enter the YTP or adult VR system. This may also be an opportunity to refer YTP participants for services provided through other agencies.

Determine any unmet needs and describe follow-up services. During this part of the meeting, the team should identify any transition needs that have not been met through the YTP. For example, a YTP participant may have a goal of living in her own apartment that has not yet been achieved. If unmet needs are still a priority, and she is exited from the YTP, she must now assume overall responsibility for achieving those goals, with support from family members and any other community resource people. If extensive unmet needs are identified through this discussion, the team may want to reconsider the decision to exit the student at this time.

It is important for students understand that although they are exiting the program, they will continue to receive minimal support from YTP staff. Exiting a YTP participant triggers the start of follow-up services. YTP staff will follow-up with students to find out how things are going. If a student is having difficulties she may be referred back to VR or to another agency to get any needed services.

Step 3: Provide Follow-Up Services to Students.

Collect follow-up information. The follow-up is designed to monitor students as they complete their transition into the community. YTP staff should collect follow-up information at 6- and 12-months. Information can be collected over the phone, or in a face-to-face meeting. Follow-up information should be collected on students who have been closed by VR. In addition, any students who may have exited the YTP but still have active files with VR should receive follow-up services. Follow-up data

focus on whether the student is engaged, their job title, hourly wage, number of work hours, benefits, training program, and number of training hours.

Document student status and need for services. Transition specialists are most often the staff who complete the follow-up contacts. You will be asked to document the student's employment, educational, and living status in the YTP secure database.

Provide follow-up services as needed. If substantial needs are identified through the follow-up interview, the YTP team should schedule a meeting with the student to develop a plan of services for the next six months. Follow-up services can vary in intensity, ranging from a minimal phone call to check-in, to re-opening a VR file and developing a new plan for services. Table 3 lists a range of follow-up services and examples of services provided.

Table 3. YTP Follow-Up Services

Services	Examples of Services Provided
No intervention beyond follow-up contact in 6 months	Phone contact to “check-in” every 6 months
Short-term assistance provided by the YTP team without change in VR status	Assistance with obtaining a promotion within current job, assistance with living situation
Referral to another agency without change in VR status	Referral to Adult and Family Services to obtain Food Stamps, referral for family planning services
Short-term assistance by the YTP team	Purchasing tools, or clothing, needed to maintain a job or obtain a new job within the same general field
Long-term assistance provided by the YTP team, including reopening of the VR file	Extended assistance with career planning, job placement, and job training

The goal of follow-up is to collect information, and more important, to provide a minimal level of support or case-management services students need to maintain their independence in the community. The majority of YTP follow-up services have been provided in the areas of employment and continuing education. Most follow-up services are short-term, involving a minimal commitment of time and energy from YTP staff. Typical follow-up services include providing (a) information about job leads, (b) help to update a resume, and/or (c) referral for further education or training to meet a career goal. Occasionally, students need extensive vocational counseling or long-term training during follow-up. Students requiring a higher level of service should return to VR, re-establish eligibility, and work with the VR counselor to develop a new plan.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Introduction

There's an old adage- what gets measured, gets done. In this chapter, we describe how the YTP performance is measured or evaluated. The performance measures are intended to accomplish the **two major program goals of YTP**:

1. To improve post-school transition outcomes for youth with disabilities by preparing them for employment or career related postsecondary education/training. (**Outcome**)
2. To increase capacity and create systems change in schools and other agencies serving students with disabilities in transition from school to work. (**Process**)

Post-School Outcomes

The first program goal focuses on the outcomes YTP participants achieve once they leave school –being engaged in either employment, or enrolled in career related postsecondary education/training. Being engaged is the ultimate program goal of the YTP. All of the program activities, resources and efforts should culminate to achieve this goal. The measure for this is *Closed as Rehabilitated*. YTP participants are considered *closed as rehabilitated* when they achieve the employment outcome described in their IPEs and maintain that outcome for at least 90 days. The District's target for the percent of the student based *closed as rehabilitated* is 35% for rural sites, and 45% for urban sites, at the time youth exit the District's YTP. These targets are monitored within the YTP Database.

Process Outcomes

The second program goal, increasing capacity and creating systems change, focuses on how systems within the school and other agencies help youth reach and maintain their employment outcome. Although listed second, it is the systems and processes of YTP that enable youth to prepare for and meet their employment outcome. Without adequate systems and processes in place – such as providing in-school transition services, pre-employment transition services, allocating sufficient resources, and implementing key program areas (e.g., communication, staffing) – the desired outcome will not be achieved. The effectiveness and efficiency of these processes are measured through a variety of techniques at the program and individual student levels. At the program level, information is collected by assessing site needs, evaluating training events, and monitoring the database. At the student level, the benchmarks for *In Application*, *Individualized Plans for Employment*, and *Follow-Up Support Services* are indications that students, and therefore programs, are on track to reach the *closed as rehabilitated* target. Information gained from monitoring the program performance is used to improve the systems and processes experienced by the YTP participants.

Using Data to Drive Improvement Program. Monitoring program performance is more than just watching benchmarks; it requires using data to guide program improvement in a way that will increase positive outcomes for students with disabilities participating in the YTP. Below are some questions to consider that will help you use data to guide program improvement.

Using Outcome and Process Data

Outcome data measure the final results of the YTP. These data focus on what students achieved as a result of participating in the YTP. Process data measure what features of the program contributed – either positively or negatively – to the outcomes. *Outcome data* tell you whether a specific goal or benchmark was met (e.g., 55% rehabilitation rate). Knowing whether an outcome was achieved does not tell you what to continue doing or what to change; this information comes from evaluating the process. *Process data* tell you how or why that benchmark was met (e.g., all student had multiple work experiences before leaving high school). Information about a process is more useful than the outcome for developing and implementing your program. Table 1 lists examples of questions to consider when measuring outcomes and corresponding process questions. For more information on how to collect or use outcome or process, contact your UO TA Provider.

Table 1 Examples of Outcome and Process Questions

Outcome Questions	Process Questions
Are your students meeting their IPE goals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are all YTP participants receiving pre-employment transition services? • Is your program using the predictors of post-school success to provide students the best opportunity to be prepared for employment? • Are key program areas (e.g., communication, staffing) implemented consistently? • Are YTP students participating in the general, in-school transition services provided to all students with disabilities as well as those transition services provided to the general student population (e.g., college visits, writing resumes, completing senior project)? • Are the IPE’s being developed within 90 days? • Are your students staying interested and actively involved in the YTP?
Are there differences in IPE goal completion rates based on gender, disability, age, school exit methods (graduate, dropout)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are males and females given participating in job club or job shadows at the same rate? If not, why not? • Do all of your YTP participants have multiple, paid work experiences before they leave school? • Is your YTP team collaborative and cooperative? • Do you have all the needed team members on the team? • Should you involve agencies who can provide long-term supports and services? • Have the site and community needs been assessed (e.g., do you know what jobs are needed or available in the community)? • Do you find some activities are relevant to the majority of your students (e.g., most of them need a driver’s license)?
Do the YTP staff have what they need to do the job (e.g., knowledge, skills, & resources)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are sufficient resources allocated? • Have you received the training and support you need in order to provide appropriate services to students? • Do you need specific training or technical assistance in a particular area (e.g., collecting data, working with collaborators, talking to employers, utilizing the website, or reporting data). • Are training events helpful and informative?

The remainder of this chapter is divided into Essential Features (see Table 2) and Procedures for monitoring program performance on two major program goals of YTP.

Essential Features

TABLE 2: Essential Features of Program Performance

1. YTP STAFF ROLES:

YTP staff have clearly developed roles and responsibilities that capitalize on individual team members' skills, strengths and interests.

2. SCHOOLS/VR/FAMILY COLLABORATION:

YTP school and VR staff meet regularly to review client progress, program benchmarks, and coordinate delivery of services. The team communicates regularly with the family regarding student participation in the YTP program.

3. COORDINATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS:

The delivery of transition services are coordinated among the YTP , existing school programs, adult agencies and community programs. The family clearly understands the roles of agencies and programs that are supporting their young adult.

4. SYSTEMS CHANGE:

YTP staff have created opportunities for marketing the program in order to more effectively integrate YTP services into the school and community. Families are included as an integral part of the community of practice.

Procedures

Each site's contract, contains language relative to responsibilities and benchmarks used to measure the effectiveness of the site's YTP. Being aware of and monitoring the YTP is important to program sustainability. There are four basis steps to monitoring program performance at your site:

1. Know your contract
2. Monitor your benchmarks
3. Conduct and monitor follow-up support services
4. Build a strong program

Step 1: Know Your Contract.

Become familiar with the YTP contract for your site. Request and read the YTP contract, also known as the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). The IGA outlines important information relative to operating a YTP site. This information includes timelines, definitions, roles and responsibilities, and data collection elements for monitoring performance. If you are a member of a consortium site with many schools or districts, ask for any information relevant to your specific school or district.

When a school/s or district applies to VR to be a YTP site, local education administrators determine the number of youth to serve in the YTP. This number, known as the student base, is used for two purposes. First, the student base is used to determine the amount of time (i.e., full time equivalent, FTE) the transition specialist can devote to YTP. Second, the student base is used to set the performance goals, or

benchmarks, specified in the YTP contract. Having an adequate student base is critical for the overall success of your YTP site. You'll recall, determining the student base is the first step in developing a YTP.

Step 2: Monitor Your Benchmarks.

As outlined in the site IGA, YTP sites are expected to fulfill performance benchmarks in three areas: (a) VR Application, (b) Individualized Plans for Employment (IPE), and (c) Closed as Rehabilitated. These areas are assessed at specific intervals over the life of the IGA. Read the current IGA for your YTP site for the dates and performance criteria for each key area. Below is a brief description of the three key areas.

VR Application: Youth in YTP who participate in Core YTP activities are required to apply to and be determined eligible for VR services. Participants are expected to be involved in developing their vocational goals. Within the YTP database, the *In Application* benchmark measures the percent of the student base that have met this criterion.

Individualized Plans for Employment (IPE): After a student is determined eligible for VR services, the VRC, with input from the transition specialist, writes the IPE. The IPE activities are designed to help the student achieve her employment goal. The IPE should be written as soon as possible and ***no later than 90 days***. Within the YTP database, the *IPE* benchmark measures the percent of the student base that have met this criterion.

Closed as Rehabilitated: When a YTP participant achieves his employment outcome described on his IPE and maintains that outcome for at least 90 days, he is considered "*rehabilitated*". The *Closed as Rehabilitated* benchmark measures the percent of the student base that have met this criterion.

Step 3: Conduct Follow-Up Support Services.

Provide follow-up services as needed. Many young adults experience "peaks and valleys" after they leave the predictability of the school system. Follow-up services provide ongoing support and crisis management to help these young adults manage the complex realities of the adult world during the first few years out of school when many critical career decisions are being made.

The YTP follow-up process provides specific strategies for staff to work with students during exit planning and follow-up. There are several critical features incorporated into the follow-up process.

- Each student participates in an exit planning meeting with key YTP staff.
- YTP staff monitor student progress for a year beyond program exit to document outcomes and need for further services.
- YTP follow-up services emphasize student self-determination and problem solving to help ensure independence.

When a student is ready to exit YTP, key YTP staff meet with the student to conduct a follow-up interview. If substantial needs are identified through the follow-up interview, the YTP team should schedule a meeting with the student to develop a plan of services for the next six months. Follow-up services can vary in intensity, ranging from a minimal phone call to check-in, to reopening a VR file and developing a new plan for services.

When a YTP participant exits YTP, they move into follow-up status. There are a few key terms that are important to understand relative to exiting a student from YTP:

- **Exit from YTP** means the student has met all of his or her goals and no longer needs active YTP services. Exiting a student from the YTP triggers the start of follow-up services. The decision to exit a student from YTP is made collaboratively by the transition specialist and VR counselor.
- **Follow-up** means that for 12 months YTP participants can continue to receive support services to encourage them to achieve or maintain a positive outcome in the community.
- **Positive outcome** means employment, training, or post-secondary education; collectively known as engagement.
- **Engagement** means employment or enrolled in post- secondary education or training, or a combination of employment and education/training, consistent with a participant’s abilities and interests and when applicable, the student’s IPE.

Follow-up services emphasize self-advocacy and self-determination skills to ensure that students and families take ultimate responsibility for the transition process. At minimum, follow-up services consist of check-ins with the student at 6-months and 12-months. Follow-up services are based on the individual needs of the participant and may include such thing as:

- Gathering information,
- Allowing YTP staff to monitor their progress,
- Case management,
- Referral to other agencies, and/or
- Information & Referral activities for additional employment related resources.

Table 3 lists the range of follow- up services, and includes some examples of services that can be provided. Follow-up services will be individualized and unique to each YTP participant.

Table 3. Level and Examples of Follow- Up Services

YTP FOLLOW-UP SERVICES	
Level of Services	Examples of Services Provided
<u>No intervention</u> beyond follow-up contact in 6 months	Phone contact to “check in” every 6 months for 1-year
<u>Referral</u> to another agency without change in VR status	Referral to Adult and Family Services to obtain Food Stamps, referral for family planning services
<u>Short- term assistance</u> provided by the YTP team without change in VR status	Assistance with obtaining a promotion within current job, assistance with living situation
<u>Short-term assistance</u> by the YTP team	Purchasing tools, or clothing, needed to maintain a job or obtain a new job within the same general field
<u>Long-term assistance</u> provided by the YTP team, including reopening of the VR file	Extended assistance with career planning, job placement, and job training

The goal of follow-up is to collect outcome data, and more important, to provide the minimal level of support or case-management services YTP participants need to maintain their independence in the community. The majority of YTP follow-up services provided by transition specialists have been related to employment and continuing education. Most follow-up services are short-term, requiring a minimal commitment of time and energy from YTP staff. Typical follow-up services include: providing information

about job leads, helping to update a resume, or referring youth for further education or training. Occasionally, YTP participants require extensive vocational counseling or long-term training during follow-up. YTP participants requiring extensive services should return to VR, re-establish eligibility, and work with the VRC to develop a new plan. At the end of 12-months, the YTP obligation for services ends. At this 12-month mark, the YTP participant is a *YTP Program Completer*. The YTP maintains a secure on-line database for collecting follow-up data. Individual Site Reports show the site’s progress toward achieving benchmarks. Refer to your site’s IGA for specific benchmarks.

To exit the YTP, or not—that is the question.

The decision to exit a participant from YTP depends on several factors and should be made by the YTP team, including the student. In most cases, YTP closure will coincide with the closure of the VR file. Occasionally a VRC will maintain an open file if some specific services need to be provided that don't require the assistance of school staff. Table 4 provides criteria for program exit.

Table 4. Criteria for Program Exit

Table 4. Criteria for Program Exit	
<i>Closed successfully</i>	Student is placed into permanent competitive employment consistent with the vocational goal identified in the IWRP
<i>Transfer to VR caseload</i>	Student no longer requires YTP services but maintains an open file with VR counselor (for example, student may be enrolled in long term vocational training program)
<i>Moved/Unable to locate</i>	Student may have moved out of the area, and the VR file may be transferred to another office or YTP team may not be able to locate the student
<i>Declined services</i>	Student no longer wants to participate in the YTP
<i>Lack of follow-through/ uncooperative</i>	YTP staff are unwilling to maintain student in program, because student is uncooperative, or refuses to follow-through with program expectations

Step 4: Build a Strong Program.

In order for YTP participants to achieve their desired postsecondary employment goal, they will need a variety of program experiences to build their skills. Each YTP site is unique and how program experiences are provided will vary across YTP sites. A job club in an urban area of Oregon may operate differently from a job club in rural Eastern Oregon. Nevertheless, there are key characteristics of a job club that should be apparent in both locations. Below are three strategies for building a strong YTP:

- Stay Current with what’s happening in the field of transition
- Implement the best available research
- Work closely with your Technical Assistance Provider

Stay Current

There are exciting things happening in the field for secondary transition; you might even say the field of secondary transition is in a *transition*. Although it is not the role of the YTP to become political, what happens at the national and state levels influences the YTP overall. Here are some recent highlights:

At the national level,

- *The Workforce Improvement Opportunities Act (W.I.O.A.)* was reauthorized in 2014. W.I.O.A. is the legislative authority over the Vocational Rehabilitation system. W.I.O.A. supersedes the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and amends three other acts: (a) the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, (b) the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the (c) Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
 - The W.I.O.A. regulations will provide important details for provisions outlined in the statute that may affect the operation of the YTP. Note: as of the writing of the Procedures Manual (2015), the regulations for W.I.O.A. were not available.
- *The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA)* was last reauthorized in 2004. IDEA is the legislative authority governing special education. Many people speculate IDEA reauthorization will quickly follow the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education (also known as No Child Left Behind) Act. Both ESEA and IDEA have versions in the U.S. House and Senate as of the writing of the Procedures Manual. The Manual will be revised once reauthorizations are complete and as regulations are written.

At the state level,

- Oregon leaders have taken several steps to improve outcomes for youth with disabilities, especially as related to employment outcomes.
 - The Office of the Governor Executive Order 13-04 calls for improved systems of designing and delivering employment services.
 - Employment First initiative makes integrated employment the goal for all Oregonians with intellectual and development disabilities.

There are several things YTP staff can do to stay current.

- Read updates and transmittals from Vocational Rehabilitation and the Department of Education.
- Talk with the YTP Management Team and your local VRC about the updates and transmittals to make sure you understand their implications for the YTP.
- Attend the yearly trainings provide by the YTP Management Team, and yearly conferences sponsored by VR or the Department of Education.
- Join professional organizations focused on transition, career development, and vocational rehabilitation. These memberships often come with subscriptions to leading journals in the field, such as Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals and Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Implement the Best Available Research

Recent research in secondary special education has identified 20 in-school experiences that increase the likelihood of individuals with disabilities having positive post-school outcomes in further education, employment, and or independent living (Test et al., 2009; Mazzotti et al. 2015). For example, based on research, we know youth who receive career awareness while in-school are more likely to have better

outcomes in employment and education than those who do not have career awareness training. Youth who have community experiences are more likely to have better employment outcomes. Table 5 lists the predictors of post-school success.

Table 5. Predictors of Post-School Success

Predictors of Post-School Success Based on High Quality Research	
Career Awareness	Self-Care/Independent Living
Community Experiences	Social Skills
Exit Exam Requirements/High School Diploma Status	Student Support
Inclusion in General Education	Transition Program
Interagency Collaboration	Vocational Education
Occupational Courses	Work Study
Paid Employment /Work Experience	Family Expectations
Parental Involvement	Youth Autonomy
Program of Study	Goal Setting
Self-Advocacy /Self-Determination	Travel Skills

Similar to the predictors, research has identified several evidence-based practices, also known as instructional strategies that have been shown to help youth learn specific skills. For example, mnemonics have been shown to be effective for teach academic skills, and simulations have been effective in teaching banking skills and social skills. Review the listing in the Instruction section of this manual for a complete list of the evidence-based practices. By building your YTP on the best available research, you increase the likelihood your students will learn the skills they need to be achieve positive post-school outcomes. For more information on predictors of post-school success or the evidence-based practices, visit www.nsttac.org and read the following references:

- Mazzotti, V. L., Rowe, D. A., Sinclair, J., Poppen, M., Woods, W.E., & Shearer, M. (2015). Predictors of post-school success: A systematic review of NLTS2 secondary analyses. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals*. doi: 10.1177/2165143415588047.
- Rowe, D. A., Alverson, C. Y., Unruh, D., Fowler, C. H., Kellems, R., & Test, D. W. (2014). A Delphi study to operationalize evidence-based predictors in secondary transition. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*. DOI: 10.1177/2165143414526429. Available online at <http://cde.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/03/26/2165143414526429>.
- Test, D. W., Fowler, C. H., Richter, S. M., White, J., Mazzotti, V. L., Walker, A. R., Kohler, P. H. & Kortering, L. J., (2009). Evidence-based practices in secondary transition. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 32, 115-128.
- Test, D. W., Mazzotti, V. L., Mustian, A. L., Fowler, C. H., Kortering, L. J., & Kohler, P. H. (2009). Evidence-based secondary transition predictors for improving post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 32, 160-181.

Work closely with your Technical Assistance Provider

Your Technical Assistant (TA) team from the University of Oregon (UO) have a wealth of knowledge and expertise related to secondary transition and career development. They are here to help you navigate and negotiate all aspects of the YTP. For information or help, contact your UO TA provider.

Appendices

Appendix A: SILVER FALLS SCHOOL DISTRICT Transition Specialist Job Description

Job Title: Youth Transition Program Coordinator Vocational Education Consultant
Reports To: Administrator
Evaluated By: Director of Special Services
JOB GOAL: To coordinate, plan, and implement the Youth Transition Program (YTP) School to Work Program for the Silver Falls School District. To work in concert with the Silverton High School Special Education Team school to Work personnel to identify community work sites that give target Participants the opportunity to gain meaningful employment skills in a structured work setting.

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS: To perform this job successfully an individual must be able to execute each requirement satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability needed for the position.

1. High School Diploma or equivalent as required by OAR 581-37-030, Oregon Department of Education.
2. Must meet Federal Requirements of being "Highly Qualified," (AA degree or 2 years of college, or pass the district test for academic knowledge and pedagogy)
3. 21 Years of age or older
4. Ability to work harmoniously with others and to communicate effectively (both orally and in writing) with Participants, parents, staff and community employers
5. Ability to understand and follow oral and written instructions
6. Ability to communicate with parents and community members
7. Ability to work with Participants with ethnic, cultural, and language differences
8. Ability to maintain confidentiality
9. Ability to work effectively in a n environment which can be both physically and emotionally fatiguing; perform physically demanding requirements of the job
10. Ability to develop curricular materials and participate in designing individual plans for applicable Participants
11. Ability to develop contacts in the business community to promote the district's School-to-Work Program
12. Ability to be self-directed to organize, plan and initiate community contacts and programs
13. Possesses an interest in developing Participant programs in occupational choices
14. Ability to serve as the liaison between the district and Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR) as well as developmental Disabilities Services (DD)
15. Possess knowledge of district/school procedures and policies and ability to interpret to Participants, parents, staff and community
16. Familiar with the federal and state regulations as they relate to Participant employment (i.e. Wage and Hour Laws, etc.)
17. Ability to operate a computer, telephone and other office equipment
18. Ability to perform secretarial and administrative support functions requiring independent judgment, decision making and problem solving
19. Ability to respond to and direct Participants
20. Perform physical requirements which may include:
 - A. Moderate degree of physical stamina
 - B. Frequent standing, walking, bending
 - C. Physically restraining a Participant as needed
 - D. Possible exposure to bodily fluids in assisting Participants with using restrooms and in tending to injury and illness
 - E. Ability to drive to various locations in the community and to all the school/district locations
21. Such alternative to the above requirements as the School Board or the Administration may deem appropriate and acceptable.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: In delivering Youth Transition Program activities and assisting Participants, the Youth Transition Program Coordinator's duties shall include:

1. Identifying and referring Participants to VR; and, as necessary or as requested by VR, assisting VR in referring Participants to other employment related sources of assistance.
2. For each Participant, gathering and providing school documentation of disability, and key informant information, and other relevant information that can be found in the Participant's Summary of Performance and/or IEP to assist VR in determining the Participant's eligibility for VR services and identifying the Participant's vocational goals and supports.
3. Assist Participants in application with VR to acquire transportation in order to keep appointments to assess their eligibility and determine their priority for services. Assist with transportation for non-wait listed Participants in order to keep appointments to access Independent Plan for Employment services.
4. In addition, for Participants subject to a VR Order of Selection wait list:
 - A. Ensure that referrals are to non-YTP or non-VR funded resources.
 - B. Ensure that individualized Information & Referral (I&R) is provided to non-YTP and non-VR funded resources.
5. In addition for non-waitlisted YTP Participants:
 - A. Coordinate with VR and Participants for additional disability assessment or career exploration activities needed to develop a Participant's Individual Plan for Employment
 - B. Identify transition and career-skill readiness deficits that need to be in Participant's Individual Plan for Employment.
 - C. Coordinate Participants Individual Education Plan and Individual Plan for Employment transition activities and services with VR.
 - D. In collaboration with the VR provide a variety of transition activities and services to Participants, such as; development of work experiences, job shadows, and career exploration activities; and develop paid employment consistent with the vocational goal of the Participant.
 - E. Advocate for Participants to ensure that they have access to District training opportunities and resources needed to successfully transition from school-to-work or additional education and career training.
 - F. Provide referral and access to individualized and group activities beyond the training or resources that are available to the general Participant body. Examples include job clubs, community-based work experience, work skill development, job coaching, community mobility training, selection or enrollment in post-secondary training, arranging for long-term employment etc.
 - G. Provide individualized job development for both work experience and career related employments.
 - H. Take lead responsibility in assisting the Participant to ensure that the activities of the Individualized Plan for Employment are carried out.
 - I. May take the lead with the Participant to develop the content of the Individualized Plan for Employment (including assisting the Participant in identification of vocational goals).
 - J. Provide Follow-Up Activities for 12 months following Participant's completion or termination of campus based secondary schooling activities, to ensure access to needed resources required for success in post-secondary training or employment.
 - K. Collect and report data to VR and University of Oregon YTP Technical Assistance Team to document Participant progress toward completion of activities related to IEPs and Individualized Plans for Employment.
 - L. Meet with Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor as requested by VR to provide updated information on Participant progress and status of completion of secondary school, employment, or post-secondary activities.
 - M. Report to VR any changed in the status of a Participant that impact successful completion of the IEP or IPE or identification of appropriate (I&R) resources.
6. Attending training and meeting provided by the YTP T/A Team. Training includes training intended to further the understanding and use of evidence-based vocational rehabilitation practices, including the use of Motivational Interviewing methods.

7. Utilizing resources and training available on the YTP website to support and further develop understanding of VR evidence-based practices.
8. Assist Participants in the completion of a variety of Participant information forms and job application, in preparing for interviews and in completing GED tests.
9. Complete vocational and interest assessments with Participants.
10. Facilitate opportunities for Participants to visit a variety of work related conferences and workshops as available and appropriate.
11. Attend all staff in-service and training activities related to the vocational education.
12. Maintain a high level of ethical behavior and confidentiality of information about Participants and staff
13. Facilitate the completion and maintenance of an individual Participant work portfolio for each program Participant.
14. Provide job coaching and on-site support to individual Participants as needed
15. Monitor work sites and evaluate Participant's performance
16. Communicate on a regular basis with community employers or work-site supervisors regarding Participant performance
17. Organize and arrange for a variety of pre-work activities (vocational survey, shadowing, work crew on/off campus) leading to community-based work experience placement
18. Match interests and abilities to each Participant to potential work-site
19. Participate as part of a team in designing a Individual plan for applicable Participants, leading to self-sufficiency and employability
20. Participate, as requested, as part of a team designing and Individual Transition Plan for specific Participants
21. Maintain records pertaining to Wage and hour Laws for each of the Participants on case load
22. Assist at-risk youth to remain in school or attain a major level of education (GED)
23. Act as a friendly ambassador for the Silver Falls School District
24. Perform such other tasks (which may require knowledge of other job descriptions) as may seem to be appropriate to the Board of Administration
25. Maintains satisfactory attendance, as defined in District policy and regulations (GCBD/GDBD).

CERTIFICATES, LICENSES, REGISTRATIONS, BONDING, AND/OR TESTING REQUIRED

1. Possess a valid First-Aid card as required
2. Criminal Justice Fingerprint Clearance
3. Possess Valid Oregon Driver's License
4. Blood borne Pathogens Training
5. Hepatitis B Shot Series Training as required

PHYSICAL DEMANDS: The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. (See addendum)

WORK ENVIRONMENT: The Work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. (See addendum)

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT: Days and hours to be arranged, with salary according to current schedule.

EVALUATION: Following the probationary period, performance of this job will be evaluated annually in accordance with provisions of the Board's policy on evaluation of classified personnel

I have read and understand the responsibilities and qualification of this job description.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Appendix B: Common Transition Related Acronyms

A	
ACT	American College Testing
B	
C	
CAI	Computer-Assisted Instruction
CBI	Computer-Based Instruction
CEI	Computer-Enriched Instruction
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CMI	Computer-Managed Instruction
CIS	Oregon Career Information System
CTE	Career and Technical Education
D	
E	
EBP	Evidenced Based Practices

F	
G	
H	
I	
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individualized Education Program
IGA	Intergovernmental Agreement
ILS	Integrated Learning System
IPE	Individualized Plan for Employment
J	

K	
L	
LEA	Local Education Agency (usually the local school district)
M	
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
N	
O	
OAVSNP	Oregon Association of Vocational Special Needs Personnel
P	
PETS	Pre-Employment Transition Services
PCP	Person Centered Planning

PE	Physical Education
PINS	Preferences, Interests, Needs, and Strengths
Q	
R	
S	
SAS	Self-Advocacy Strategy
SD IEP	Self-directed Individualized Education Program
T	
TAP	Technical Assistance Provider
TPA	Third Party Administrator
U	

V	
VR	Vocational Rehabilitation Services
W	
WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
Y	
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YTP	Youth Transition Program