Transition Planning:
Supporting the Vocational and Social Development of Adolescents and Young Adults with Learning Disabilities

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Strengths Perspective

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

Susana Mariscal

A Few Words about Disability, Time & Success

- Internally, a disability is about an individual's sensory, cognitive, emotional, or physical impairment.

- Environmentally, a disability is society's decision that a skill is deficient because of the length of time it take to complete a task.

- How does this relate to success?

Some Implications of Learning Disabilities

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

- Strengths!!!

Rehab Services Administration's Seven Functional Skill Areas

- Mobility

- Communications

- Self-Care

- Self-Direction

- Interpersonal Skills

- Work Tolerance

- Work Skills

Responding to Employer Needs

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

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

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

Meeting the Needs of All Youth— The Guideposts for Success

- Access to high quality standards-based education regardless of the setting;

- Information about career options and exposure to the world of work; including structured internships;

- Opportunities to develop social, civic, and leadership skills;

- Strong connections to caring adults;

- Access to safe places to interact with their peers; and,

- Support services and specific accommodations to allow them to become independent adults.

Meeting the Needs of All Youth—The Guideposts for Success

- School-Based Preparatory Experiences

- Career Preparation and Work-Based Learning

- Youth Development and Leadership

- Connecting Activities

- Family Involvement

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

Success for Youth with LD

- Individuals with learning disabilities achieve success by accentuating their strengths, knowing their weaknesses, and learning strategies for dealing with specific difficulties.

- We focus supports in three areas:
    1. Strategic Learning
    2. Individual Development Strategies
    3. Disclosure and Accommodations

Universal Design for Learning—3 Principles

- An approach to designing course instruction, materials, and content to benefit people of all learning styles without adaptation.

  - *Multiple means of representation,* to give learners various ways of acquiring information and knowledge,

  - *Multiple means of expression,* to provide learners alternatives for demonstrating what they know,

  - *Multiple means of engagement,* to tap into learners' interests, offer appropriate challenges, and increase motivation.

Executive Functions

- A set of mental processes that helps connect past experience with present action.

- Includes activities such as planning, organizing, strategizing, paying attention, remembering details, and managing time and space.

- Limited executive function can derail academic progress especially as coursework becomes more intense in high school and then in college.
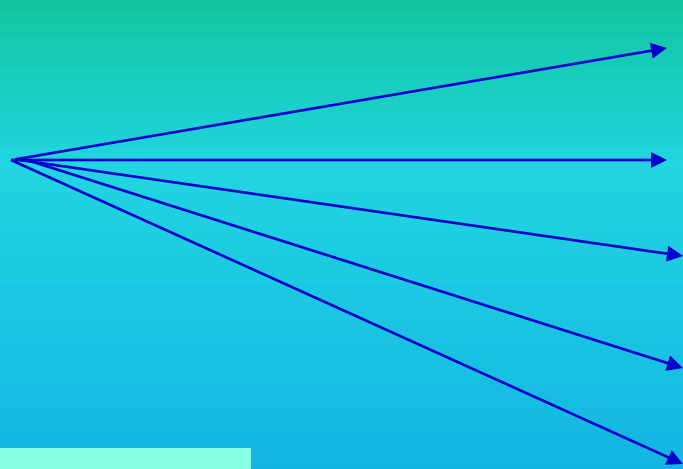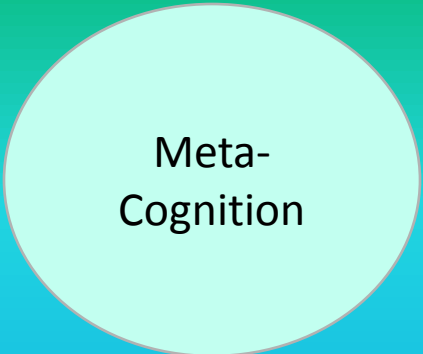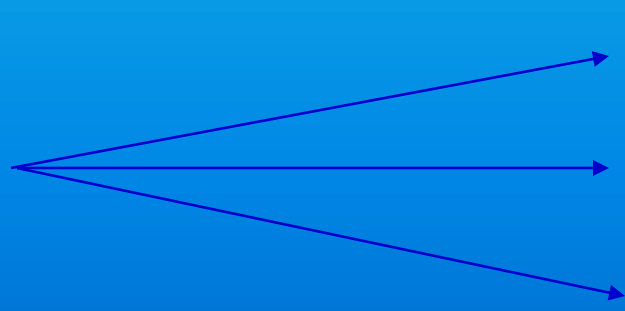
Meta-Cognition
- Monitor
- Organization of Materials
- Plan/Organize
- Working Memory
- Initiate

Executive Functions—Eight Domains

Behavioral Regulation
- Emotional Control
- Shift
- Inhibit
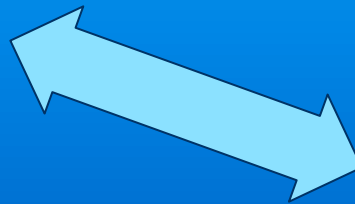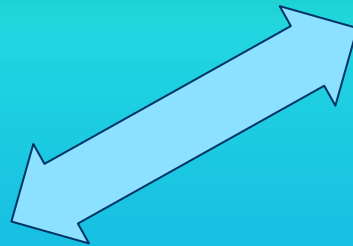
Strategy Instruction

- Involves teaching about learning strategies, and about how and when to use particular strategies.

- Includes increasing the ability to engage in self-regulated planning, monitoring, and evaluating of their own learning

- We believe that the most effective way to facilitate learning for all learners is by combining direct instruction (lecture, discussion, book learning) with strategy instruction

Strategy Instruction Teaching Techniques

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

David Conley's Key Cognitive Strategies
(Monitor Precision and Accuracy)

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

Design Features of Individual Development

- Self-determination and the related capacities of self-awareness, goal setting and self-advocacy

- The integration of learning opportunities to practice interpersonal skills that are necessary for success in school or in the workplace

Individual Development Strategies

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

- a sense of safety and structure

- high self-worth and self esteem

- feeling of mastery and future

- belonging and membership

- perception of responsibility and autonomy

- a sense of self-awareness and spirituality

Disclosure and Accommodations

- Disclosure—youth should decide when and how much to tell others, and understand how their disability affects their capacity to learn and/or perform effectively; they should also be "aware"…

- Accommodations—youth should be empowered to determine what environmental adjustments, supports, and services they need in order to access, participate and excel in school, at work, and in the community.

Publications

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

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

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

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

Transition Websites

- National Center on Secondary Education &Transition

http://www.ncest.org

- National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth

http://ncwd-youth.info

- National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center

http://www.nsttac.org/

- Institute on Community Integration

http://ici.umn.edu

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