The Future is Coming!
Why Transition Beings at Diagnosis
2017 DFW Autism Conference
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A Look Ahead Conference Series
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What we know... the future
is coming
is yours to create
happens as a result of what you do TODAY - NOW!

... disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to —
(A) live independently;
(B) enjoy self-determination;
(C) make choices;
(D) contribute to society;
(E) pursue meaningful careers; and
(F) enjoy full inclusion and integration in the economic, political, social, cultural, and educational mainstream of American society

- Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act)
What do you believe?

1. I believe all people can learn
2. I believe all people can communicate
3. I believe all people can contribute to society
4. I believe all people can live independently
5. I believe all people can live a self-determined life
6. I believe all people can work

Where to start?

Look Ahead... create a vision for the future

clear vision
clear results

What's the vision?

- What do you want for your child now and in the future?
- What's your dream?
- What's your nightmare?
Do you know everything you need to know?

- **Where will she live?** own home, family home, group home, college dorm, ICF-IID, cooperative housing, vocational/residential community, host family home
- **Will he work?** sheltered or integrated employment, entrepreneurship, supported employment, employment assistance, customized employment
- **How will she spend her free time?** day-hab, community activities, specialized sports programs, activities & classes
- **What relationships will he have?** family, friends, natural, paid, co-workers, faith group, intimate

- **Where will she learn?** general ed classroom, special ed classroom, college, trade-school, auditing classes, non-credit courses, interest-based learning
- **Will she need a guardian or will an alternative option work?** guardianship, supported decision making, representative payee, power of attorney, dual power of attorney and others...
- **Can assistive technology (AT) increase his independence?** AAC, AT device, AT service, funding options
- **What about long-term services & supports?** Is your child on the waiting list? Do you know who to contact, the service options, eligibility requirements and wait time?

What’s in Your Toolbox?

- Person-Centered Planning
- Information Sources
- Self-Advocacy
- Self-Determination
- Permission to Take Risks
- Public Education
- Personal Experience
Person-Centered Planning

Person-centered planning is a broad term used to describe an intentional, deliberate approach to planning for and with the person with a disability. It focuses on what is important to and for a person. It considers the person at the focus of planning, and those who love the person, as the primary authorities on the person's life direction.

Person-Centered Planning can move you (and your child) from the paralysis of fear to an action-oriented plan with hopes and dreams for the future.

~ Texas Project First

Consider all aspects of life - live, work, play, pray, learn. Challenges practices that separate people and perpetuate controlling relationships. Identifies paid & natural supports. Creates a plan of action. Vision without action is a daydream. Action without vision is a nightmare.
Predictable & expected features…

• community is considered a viable option
• dreaming
• ongoing exploration & discovery
• reciprocal or interdependent relationships
• self-determination

"Independence is not measured by the number of tasks we can do without assistance, but by the quality of life we can lead WITH assistance."

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Information Sources

• individuals with disabilities
• other parents/family members
• information/support groups
• conferences, workshops, training events
• advocacy groups
• newsletters/publications
• social media
Self-Advocacy

“Self-advocacy refers to an individual’s ability to effectively communicate, convey, negotiate or assert his or her own interests, desires, needs, and rights. It involves making informed decisions and taking responsibility for those decisions.”

VanReusen et al., 1994

Self-Determination

Self-Determination describes an individual’s right to make choices about their own lives, to have the same rights and responsibilities as everyone else, and to speak and advocate for themselves.

5 Principles of Self-Determination

Freedom: The freedom to make basic choices in one’s life.
Authority: Control over one’s life, particularly one’s finances.
Support: Organizing the people who support you to live your life, in a way that makes sense for you.
Responsibility: With freedom and authority comes responsibility.
Confirmation: Proof of your importance, the role you play in the lives of others.

"The quality of my life is related to how free I am to make my own choices."

~ Ed Roberts
The Dignity of Risk

a comfort zone
is a beautiful place,
but nothing ever grows there.

- Unknown

Public Education

• entitlement program
• general education curriculum
• peers with and without a disability
• extra-curricular activities
• co-curricular options
• transition services

Personal Experiences

• People with disabilities
• Family members