PREPARING FOR SUCCESS IN ADULT LIFE FOR PEOPLE WITH AUTISM
Using our Strengths to Achieve a Fulfilling and Productive Life
JUST LIKE EVERYONE ELSE

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AGE[5] OF TRANSITION

Introduction

A little bit about my life and experiences...

AREAS TO CONSIDER FOR SUCCESSFUL ADULTHOOD
Overview

What we are doing now that has implications for adult life

Interdependent Living
Biomedical
Residential
Behavioral/Developmental/Educational
Employment
Relationships (including sexual)
Continuing Education
Sensory
Self-Advocacy and Disclosure

SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION
Introduction

The Autism Bomb
Loss of speech & tantrums
Self-stims
Environmental withdrawal

SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION
A CLOSER LOOK AT MY PLACEMENT ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM — ADULT

Beyond the Wall

Finishing doctoral dissertation on comparative educational approaches for engendering success for people with autism and Asperger Syndrome

THE AUTISM SPECTRUM
Severe Moderate Light

Increasing Variability of Presentation

Kanner’s PDD-NOS HFA/AS

Twice Exceptional
SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION
Some Variables Leading to a Fulfilling and Productive Life

Acceptance as a Whole Person with Challenges
Early Intervention
Set the Stage for Self-Determination
Family Support

SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION
Get Involved with Support Organizations Such as...

Autism Society America
ASPEREN
AHA/AS/PDD

SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION
Become Friendly with the Literature...

Jessica Kingsley Publishers

SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION
Get to Know Some Early Intervention Approaches

Lovaas (ABA): Watson, Skinner, Operant conditioning, Shaping behaviors
TEACCH: Employs approaches based on the needs of a person's needs and emerging capabilities
Miller Method: Miller, Developmental-Cognitive Systems, Elevation, Piaget, Vygotsky, Luria, Werner, Bertalanffy
DIR (Floortime): Greenspan, Developmental-Affective, Circles of communication
RDI: Gutstein, Experience sharing rather than instrumental relationships
SCERTS: Prizant, Social-Communication, Emotional-Regulation, Transactional Support
Biomedical: Medical-Chemical, Diet (GFCF), Adjusting chemical imbalances, Persistent measles, Heavy metal toxicities
Other: Sensory integration, PECS, Inclusion, Social stories, Power cards, AHA/AS/PDD

SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION
Three Areas of Intervention

Educational-Behavioral
• DTT/ABA
• Daily Life Therapy
• TEACCH
• Miller Method
• DIR (Floortime)
• RDI
• SCERTS

Sensory
Occupational Therapy to Treat Imbalances of the Outer and Inner Senses
• Sight
• Touch
• Taste
• Smell
• Hearing
• Vestibular
• Proprioception

Biomedical
Treating chemical imbalances caused by internal and external factors
• Digestion
• Nutrition
• Chelation
• GFCF Diet
• Vaccines
• Dysbiosis
• Immunology
• Feingold Diet
• Mercury and other heavy metal toxicities [metallothionein & glutathione]

SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION
Navigating the sea of interventions

SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION
Understanding Neurotypicals for Dummies

• Learn to decode nonverbal behaviors
• Educate children on radical acceptance of differences
• Successfully communicate without eye contact

SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION
Set the Stage for Self-Determination

Condition improves to "neurotic"
The wonderful world of watch motors

Which Sets the Stage for Disclosure…

Acting as the primary causal agent in one's life and making choices and decisions regarding one's quality of life free from undue external influence or interference (Wehmeyer, 1994)
Typical development
Turn over at 8 days
Rapid physical and motor development
Autism bomb hits
Withdrawal from environment
Tantrums
Putnam evaluation of atypical development, strong autistic tendencies & psychotic
Early intervention from parents who refute recommendations for removal from home
Enter Putnam Condition improves to "neurotic"
The wonderful world of watching motors
Echolalia and return of speech
Eating baby food
Kindergarten
Social & academic difficulties
Discovered making a mess of myself while eating BBQ chicken wings
Loved cats but dogs… Yikes bikes!

REALITY CHECK
Most people are busy with living
Most people are not in the mindset of accommodating people with differences

The road to successful self-advocacy starts by accurately assessing your circumstances.

Self-advocacy involves knowing when and how to approach others in order to negotiate desired goals, and in order to build better mutual understanding, fulfillment, and productivity.

Successful self-advocacy often involves an amount of disclosure about oneself that carries some degree of risk, in order to reach a subsequent goal of better mutual understanding.
Who must we get on board?
- Student
  - Student’s Guide to the IEP
  - Helping Students Develop Their IEP
  - www.nichcy.org
- Parents
- Special Education Teacher
- Regular Education Teacher(s)
- Administrators
- Others

Self-Initiated Individual Education Plan (Cont.)

EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS
Matching Needs to Possible Positions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Characteristics</th>
<th>Preferred Job Attributes</th>
<th>Possible Positions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong visual-motor skills</td>
<td>Requires good visual-motor skills</td>
<td>Small-parts assembly, manufacturing, printing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior challenges</td>
<td>Few antecedents to challenging behaviors, with situations where possible problems don’t endanger others</td>
<td>Situations where behavior doesn’t cause dangerous situations; avoid factories or jobs using heavy machinery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savant skills</td>
<td>Responsibilities capitalizing on these strengths</td>
<td>Matching stock numbers to packing lists, mathematically oriented positions for those with good math skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS
Determining Career Matches – Possible Employment Structures

- Competitive employment
- Full-time employment
- Part-time employment
- Permanent employment
- Short-term jobs
- Seasonal jobs
- Self-employment / Micro-enterprise

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<tr>
<td>Rituals and compulsions</td>
<td>Attention to detail and order</td>
<td>Positions with repetitive tasks that must be done with high accuracy, such as counting items to be placed into packages or looking over products for defects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS
Accommodations – We can Work it Out – Paul Wehman & Peter Gerhardt

- If you can teach the skill, teach it.
- If you can’t teach the skill, adapt it.
- If you can’t adapt it, figure out a way around it.
- If you can’t find a way around it, teach the neurotypicals to deal with it!

SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION
Some Examples...

Sarah
Teacher of and seller of beads
(Special Interest)

Laura
A study in synesthesia

David
Employed at the National Weather Service
(Special Interest)

Shawn
1st place ribbon in State Science Fair
(Special Interest)

Valerie
Founder of school for children with AS
(Personal Experiences)

Takamimori
Sumo Wrestler
www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajQWQrxn1hc
(Special Interest)

Successful Adults

Zack
“a guck goo…”

Kassiane
AAU tumbling state champion; 3rd national
(Special Interest)
**AREAS TO CONSIDER FOR SUCCESSFUL ADULTHOOD**

**Overview**
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**SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION**

**Definition**
If you are productive and fulfilled with your life you are probably successful

It’s all in the journey.

You are exactly where you need to be right now.