



Person~Centered Transition Academy



Q: What is an ideal “team” for the participating high school student?

A: For participation in Transition Academy, the ideal team would be 4-6 participants. This is not an opportunity for you to bring your full IEP planning team together. What will be presented during Transition Academy is meant for you to bring forward to your broader personal, support related and educational planning teams. One of the goals of Transition Academy is to share strategies and tools that support common language for communication across any informal or formal systems that you may be connected with.

Q: How many family members can join?

A: First keep in mind that “family” is defined by YOU. For these sessions, you may want to ask 1-2 family members or close “allies” to participate. These sessions will NOT take the place of individualized planning sessions, where you would typically have more family and personal supporters, OR school meetings where you often have a broader group of school and agency professionals present. These sessions are intended to provide you tools and strategies to bring those broader groups together to help you plan for your future. So, if each “team” is made up of the student, 2 family members, a school supporter and an area agency case Manager, that would be a manageable team for the purpose of this project.

Q: What is meant by “school supporter?”

A: Since this pilot project brings together a “team” around each student, there should be someone from your school team that works with you to plan your IEP services and goals. This person is likely to be a classroom teacher or school Case Manager or an educational consultant that works with your school team. We are not talking about your whole IEP team for this pilot, just a person or two from the school that is active in your IEP development.

Q: What if we do not have a school supporter who can attend this project with us, can we as family still participate?

A: YES, absolutely! This is primarily intended for students and families to learn about strategies for person-centered, student- and family-directed life and education planning that they can bring to meetings and discussions. The outreach to schools, and other entities about these strategies will continue over time.

Q: Is there a cost for Transition Academy?

A: No, there is no cost for this first pilot session of Transition Academy. Since we will be learning together, your feedback about this experience will help us shape what future sessions look like. That is compensation enough! Community Bridges will donate in-kind the cost of creating the materials that will be provided. We anticipate that future sessions may include a cost for participants.

Q: Is attendance mandatory?

A: Encouraged, YES, mandatory no. However, what you put into this pilot will determine what you get out of it! This is a progressive workshop, so each session builds on the one before. Over the span of the pilot, you will learn about tools that can be applied in a person centered planning process. Attendance at each session in your track and whole group sessions will increase the likelihood that you will develop connections with others, expand your personal network of families, students, or professionals, as well as hear about and share creative ideas.

Q: Why are there different tracks?

A: Whereas the themes, concepts and tools shared are similar for all tracks, we are offering the opportunity for students to meet with students, families to meet with families, professionals to meet with professionals to delve further into discussion topics from their perspective and interest.

Q: Can I attend a different track than the one my role falls into?

A: It depends...the intent is to give each group an opportunity to have discussions from their own perspective, freely. It is really important for students at this age to develop their own voice, and express their own ideas. However, students may need the support of a parent, Case Manager or school supporter to assist them during their track sessions, and can certainly choose to have someone join their session. We feel it is important for families to be able speak with families on their own time. In terms of the professional track, those participants may be open to having others join in a listening capacity. This is one of the things that the group can determine together.

Q: So, if the student needs a parent, aide, or staff to help them be successful in the student track, can that person join the student track?

A: Yes, absolutely, the student can ask anyone they want to assist them during the student meeting. There are also two different student session times offered for this purpose - each month there is an evening session if the student wants a parent to assist, and a daytime session if they want to do this with their school support.

Q: Can my student join the family track with me?

A: The family track is designed to allow family members to think about themselves, and what they need for their own good life, as well as what they see for their student's future. Sometimes, a family and student have different ideas about what that student wants in their life. The strategies that we will share, particularly through [Charting the LifeCourse™](#), are designed to offer all participants ways to think and plan from their own perspective, and foster ways to share those perspectives during individualized planning efforts.

Q: Should my student's whole school team attend the professional track?

A: No. This is not an opportunity to do individual student planning, rather, the professional track is intended to really think about the concepts and strategies that are shared during the pilot, to determine how they might be applied along with other strategies that school use to help students plan in a person centered way. As well, this will provide an opportunity for professionals to determine if shared concepts will help meet their regulatory compliance measures with regard to demonstrating the use of person centered practices.