

NSTTAC's Proposed Literature Review

Purpose

The purpose of NSTTAC's review of the literature regarding transition services is to determine the evidence-base for transition practices, disseminate that information, and make recommendations to IES for a comprehensive meta-analysis of specific transition services. NSTTAC does not propose to conduct a comprehensive meta-analysis; however, we will work with researchers interested in conducting such a review.

Audience

The primary audience will be state and local transition personnel and researchers.

Procedures

To do this, NSTTAC will conduct a narrative literature review of the evidence-base of transition services. This will be a descriptive analysis, focused on articles (a) published in peer-reviewed journals, (b) that include students with disabilities participating in secondary education, (c) in which a transition service, so designated by the author, or so assessed by the reviewer, is described clearly as the independent variable, predictor variable, or discussion point, (d) in which the dependent variable or outcome variable are student in-school or post-school outcomes, and (e) in which results are reported or there is discussion of in-school or post-school outcomes. Sources will first be organized by the Taxonomy for Transition Programming (Kohler, 1996) that we have aligned with (a) CEC's Division on Career Development and Transition Competencies for transition professionals (2000); (b) *What Works in Transition* (Cobb & Alwell, 2005 a & b, 2006 a, b, & c); (c) Hughes et al. (1997a, b, & c); (d) National Standards & Quality Indicators (NASET, 2005); and (e) Phelps & Hanley-Maxwell (1997). The literature will

then be categorized by the Institute for Educational Sciences (IES) levels of evidence (B. Cobb, personal communication, May 12, 2006) and coded using the quality indicators, from *Exceptional Children* (Winter, 2005). Finally, literature may also be coded by the four post-secondary outcomes required in the reauthorization of IDEA (2004). See Table 1 for an example.

Step 1: Sources will be organized by the broad areas of the taxonomy first (a) Student Focused Planning, (b) Student Development, (c) Interagency Collaboration, (d) Family Involvement, and (e) Program Structure. Then articles will be organized by clusters within those categories (i.e., IEP Development, Family Empowerment). There may be articles that are sorted by multiple practices (i.e., provide tech-prep curriculum, ongoing transdisciplinary staff development). Articles that cannot be categorized by the taxonomy will be placed in an “other” category (see Figure 1).

Step 2: After organizing the literature by the Taxonomy for Transition Programming, each article will be evaluated to determine the level of evidence. Level of evidence will be determined by using the IES standards for levels of evidence (see end of Table 1).

Step 3: Finally, articles that use group designs, correlation, single-subject designs, or qualitative methodologies will be analyzed according to the quality indicators described in the Winter, 2005 issue of *Exceptional Children*. This analysis will allow NSTTAC to provide the field with a resource that aligns the evidence base with the quality of the evidence base for transition practices.

Literature search strategies: NSTTAC will begin the review of the literature with an electronic search from 1984 through the present, followed by a hand-search of 2004 –

present issues of relevant journals (i.e., Career Development for Exceptional Individuals) will be conducted to ensure that the sources gathered are comprehensive. These results will be compared with sources from the What Works in Transition: Systematic Review Project, literature reviews conducted and being conducted by the National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities, as well as the National Post-School Outcome Center. Meta-analyses of academic instructional strategies for students with disabilities will also be consulted.

Search terms may include full and truncated versions of the following:

- students, youth, adolescents, young adults
- autism, behavior disorder, blind, cognitive disability, disability, disabilities, deaf, developmental disability, emotional disability, emotional disorder, health impairment, hearing impairment, learning disability, mental retardation, orthopedic impairment, physical disability, severe disability, significant disability, speech language impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment
- career education, community based instruction, leisure skills instruction, life skills instruction, self-determination instruction, technical education, transition education, transition focus, transition practice, transition service, vocational education
- career training participation, community integration, community participation, employment, independent, job training participation, leisure skills, post-secondary education attendance, post-secondary education completion/

retention, recreation access, recreational participation, residential access,
residential independence

Inclusion Criteria

The following inclusion criteria are proposed for the literature review:

- Source
 - Peer reviewed journal article
 - Published from 1984 to the present
- IES Levels of Evidence (B. Cobb, personal communication, May 12, 2006)
 - systematic review of evidence – Level A
 - randomized controlled trials – Level A-
 - quasi-experiments – Level A-
 - single-subject studies – Level B+
 - correlational studies with statistical controls – Level B
 - comparative studies with matching – Level B
 - correlational studies with weak or absent statistical controls – Level B-
 - case studies – Level B-
 - qualitative studies – Level B-
 - pre-post studies – Level B-
 - beat-the-odds studies without matching – Level B-
 - expert opinion, with direct knowledge of the intervention – Level C
 - expert opinion, supported by conceptual models – Level C
 - survey research (NSTTAC will include, not addressed in IES Levels of Evidence)

- Population
 - Students, receiving special education services due to identification within IDEA classification or educational accommodations through section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act in secondary environments (middle/junior high until end of services under IDEA)
 - If a group study and results for students with disabilities cannot be distinguished, will be included and noted regarding results
 - Parents and teachers of students in secondary environments, served under IDEA of section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
 - If post-school outcome studies with participants, will include if initial exit data recorded when participants were receiving services from the local education agency under IDEA of 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- Setting
 - School, community, hospital, residential, or other
- Independent (intervention study) or Predictor Variable (correlational) or Practice Description (expert opinion article)
 - Described clearly enough to categorize by the Taxonomy OR so that practice can be described for replication
- Dependent (intervention) or Outcome Variable (correlational)
 - In-school or post-school outcome
 - Able to categorize by the Taxonomy, if the independent or predictor variable is a generic practice (i.e., praise, task-analysis)
- Results (intervention or correlational) or Discussion (expert opinion article)

- In-school or post-school outcome
- Able to categorize by the Taxonomy, if the independent or predictor variable is a generic practice

References

- Bratlinger, E., Jimenez, R., Klingner, J., Pugach, M., & Richardson, V. (2005).
Qualitative studies in special education. *Exceptional Children*, 71, 195-207.
- Cobb, B. (May 12, 2006). *Personal communication regarding Institute for Educational Sciences levels of evidence document draft.*
- Cobb, B., & Alwell, M. (2005a). *Transition Planning and Coordinating Interventions.*
Manuscript in preparation.
- Cobb, B., & Alwell, M. (2005b). *Self-Determination Interventions.* Manuscript in
preparation.
- Cobb, B., & Alwell, M. (2006a). *Functional/ Life Skills Curricular Interventions.*
Manuscript in preparation.
- Cobb, B., & Alwell, M. (2006b). *Social and Communicative Interventions.* Manuscript in
preparation.
- Cobb, B., & Alwell, M. (2006d). *Vocational Programming Interventions.* Manuscript in
preparation.

- Division on Career Development and Transition. (2000). Transition-related planning, instruction, and service responsibilities for secondary special educators: Fact sheet. Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.
- Division on Career Development and Transition. (2000). *Transition specialist competencies: Fact sheet*. Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.
- Gersten, R., Fuchs, L. S., Compton, D., Coyne, M., Greenwood, C., & Innocenti, M. S. (2005). Quality indicators for group experimental and quasi-experimental research in special education. *Exceptional Children, 71*, 149-164.
- Horner, R. H., Carr, E. G., Halle, J., McGee, G., Odom, & Wolery, M. (2005). The use of single-subject research to identify evidence-based practice in special education. *Exceptional Children, 71*, 165-179.
- Hughes, C., Eisenman, L. T., Hwang, B., Kim, J., Killian, D. J., & Scott, S. V. (1997). Transition from secondary special education to adult life: A review and analysis of empirical measures. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, 32*, 85-104.
- Hughes, C., Hwang, B., Kim, J., Killian, D. J., Harmer, M. L., & Alcantara, P. R. (1997). A preliminary validation of strategies that support the transition from school to adult life. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 20*, 1-14.
- Hughes, C., Kim, J., Hwang, B., Killian, D. J., Fischer, G. M., Brock, M. L., Godshall, J. C., & Houser, B. (1997). Practitioner-validated secondary transition support strategies. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, 32*, 201-212.

National Alliance for Secondary Education and Transition (NASET). (2005). *National Standards & Quality Indicators: Transition Toolkit for Systems Improvement*.

Minneapolis: Institute on Community Integration.

Phelps, L.A., & Hanley-Maxwell, C. (1997). School-to-work transitions for youth with disabilities: A review of outcomes and practices. *Review of Educational Research*, 67(2), 197-226.

Thompson, B., Diamond, K. E., McWilliam, R., Snyder, P., & Snyder, S. W. (2005). Evaluating the quality of evidence from correlational research evidence-based practice. *Exceptional Children*, 71, 181-194.

Table 1

Evidence Base for Transition Practices

Taxonomy Categories	IES Levels of Evidence					
	A	A-	B	B-	C	Total
Student Focused Planning (SFP)						
IEP Development	Test, Mason, Hughes, Konrad, Neale, & Wood (2004)	Martin et al. (2006); Snyder & Shapiro (1997); Test & Neale (2005); VanReusen & Bos (1994)				5
Student Participation	Test et al. (2004)	Martin et al. (2006); Snyder & Shapiro (1997); Test & Neale (2005); VanReusen & Bos (1994)		DeFur et al. (2001);	Field et al. (1998); Pocock et al. (2002)	8
Planning Strategies		Powers et al. (2001); Martin et al. (2006)		Aspel et al. (1998); Wehmeyer & Lawrence (1995)		4
SFP Totals	2	10		3	2	17
Student Development						

Life Skills Instruction	Hughes, Hwang, Kim, Killian, Harmer, & Alcantara (1997) [social skills, self-management, decision-making]			Durlak et al. (1994) [self-advocacy, self-awareness]		2
Employment Skills Instruction				Aspel et al. (1998)		1
Career & Vocational Curricula			Hasazi et al. (1985)	Aspel et al. (1998)		2
Structured Work Experience			Hasazi et al. (1985) [work during high school, specifically <i>not</i> structured work experience]; Rabren et al. (2002) [work during high school]	Aspel et al. (1998)		3
Assessment	Hughes et al. (1997)				Neubert (2003)	2
Support Services	Hughes et al. (1997)		Hasazi et al. (2002) [questionable p.	Aspel et al. (1998); Hughes et al. (1997)		5

			461]; Rabren et al. (2002) [re: postsecondary ed. access]			
SD Totals	3		5	6	1	15
Interagency Collaboration (IC)						
Collaborative Framework				Aspel et al. (1998)		1
Collaborative Service Delivery				Aspel et al. (1998)		1
IC Totals				2		2
Family Involvement (FI)						
Family Training				Aspel et al. (1998)		1
Family Involvement				DeFur et al. (2001)		1
Family Empowerment				DeFur et al. (2001)		1
FI Totals				3		3
Program Structure (PS)			Blackorby & Wagner (1996) [graduation re: employment] Hasazi et al. (2002)		Blalock et al. (1999)	3

			[graduation & inclusion re: employment]			
Program Philosophy				Aspel et al. (1998)		1
Program Policy				Aspel et al. (1998); Williams & O'Leary (2001)		2
Strategic Planning				Aspel et al. (1998)		1
Program Evaluation				Aspel et al. (1998)		1
Resource Allocation				Williams & O'Leary (2001)		1
Human Resource Development						
PS Totals			2	5	1	8

* IES Levels of Evidence (as of 5/12/06)

- A, a systematic review of high quality evidence that supports the effectiveness of a program, practice, or approach
- A-, one or more well-designed randomized controlled trials or well-designed quasi-experiments and no contradictory evidence using the standards for effective or potentially positive findings from the WWC
- B, correlational studies with statistical controls and comparative studies with matching, the highest quality and preponderance of which are consistent with a program, practice or approach being effective

- B-, correlational studies with weak or absent statistical controls, case studies, pre-post studies, and beat-the-odds studies without matching, the highest quality and preponderance of which are consistent with a program, practice or approach being effective
- C, expert opinion favoring a program, practice or approach, supported by conceptual models and generalizations from related topic areas but without direct evidence

Figure 1

Appendix A. *Taxonomy Codes for NSTTAC Literature Review*

1	STUDENT-FOCUSED PLANNING
1A	IEP Development
1A1	Options identified for each outcome area or goal
1A2	Post-secondary education or training goals and objectives specified in the IEP
1A3	Vocational goals and objectives specified
1A4	Community-related and residential goals and objectives specified (e.g., voting)
1A5	Recreation and leisure goals and objectives specified
1A6	Educational program corresponds to specific goals
1A7	Goals are measurable
1A8	Personal needs are addressed in planning (e.g., financial, medical, guardianship)
1A9	Specific goals and objectives result from consumer choices
1A10	Progress or attainment of goals is reviewed annually
1A11	Responsibility of participants or agencies specified
1A12	Evaluation of participant fulfillment of responsibilities
1B	B. Student Participation
1B1	Planning team includes student, family members, and school and participating agency personnel
1B2	Assessment information is used as basis for planning
1B3	Transition-focused planning begins no later than age 14
1B4	Meeting time adequate to conduct planning
1B5	Preparation time adequate to conduct planning
1B6	Planning meeting time and place conducive to student and family participation
1B7	Accommodations made for communication needs (e.g., interpreters)
1B8	Referral to adult service provider(s) occurs prior to student's exit from school
1B9	Planning team leader identified
1C	C. Planning Strategies
1C1	Self-determination facilitated within the planning process
1C2	Planning decisions driven by student and family
1C3	Planning process is student-centered
1C4	Student involvement in decision making
1C5	Documentation of student interests and preferences
1C6	IEP involvement training for students
1C7	Career counseling services provided to student
1C8	Student self-evaluation of process
2	2. STUDENT DEVELOPMENT
2A	A. Life Skills Instruction
2A1	Leisure skills training
2A2	Social skills training
2A3	Self-determination skills training, including goal setting and decision making
2A4	Self-advocacy skills training
2A5	Independent living skills training
2A6	Learning strategies skills training
2B	B. Employment Skills Instruction
2B1	Work-related behaviors and skills training
2B2	Job seeking skills training
	Occupation-specific vocational skill training
	C. Career & Vocational Curricula
	Provide career education curriculum
	Provide tech prep curriculum
	Provide cooperative education curriculum
	D. Support Services

	Identification and development of environmental adaptations
	Identification and development of accommodations
	Identification and development of natural supports
	Provision of related services (e.g., OT, PT, speech therapy, transportation)
	Use of mentors
	E. Assessment
	Vocational assessment (including curriculum-based and situational assessment)
	Academic, cognitive, and adaptive behavior assessments
	F. Structured Work Experience
	Apprenticeships
	Paid work experience
	Work study program
	Job placement services (prior to school exit)
	3. INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION
	A. Collaborative Service Delivery
	Coordinated requests for information (e.g., to parents, employers)
	Reduction of system barriers to collaboration
	Collaborative funding and staffing of transition services
	Collaborative development and use of assessment data
	Coordinated and shared delivery of transition-related services
	Systems information disseminated among cooperating agencies
	Collaborative program planning and development, including employer involvement
	Collaborative consultation between special, "regular," and vocational educators
	Collaboration between post-secondary education institutions and the school district
	B. Collaborative Framework
	Interagency coordinating body that includes consumers, parents, service providers, and employers
	Formal interagency agreement
	Roles of service providers clearly articulated
	Established methods of communication among service providers
	Student information shared among agencies via established procedures (with appropriate release of information and confidentiality)
	Single-case management system
	"Lead" agency identified
	Designated transition contact person for all service providers
	4. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT
	A. Family Involvement
	Participation in program policy development
	Participation in service delivery
	Involvement in student assessment
	Participation in evaluation of student's program
	Parents/families exercise decision making
	Parent/family attendance at IEP meeting
	Parents/family members as trainers
	Parents/family members as mentors
	Parents/family role in natural support network
	B. Family Empowerment
	Pre-IEP planning activities for parents/families
	Parents/families presented with choices
	Transition information provided to parents/families prior to student's age 14
	Structured method to identify family needs
	Parent/family support network
	Child care for transition-related planning meetings (e.g., IEP, ITP)
	Respite care
	Information to parents/families provided in their ordinary language
	C. Family Training

	Training about promoting self-determination
	Training about advocacy
	Training about natural supports
	Training focused on their own empowerment
	Training on transition-related planning process (e.g., IEP, ITP)
	Training about agencies and services
	Training on legal issues
	5. PROGRAM STRUCTURE
	A. Program Structure
	Curricula are community-referenced
	Curricula are outcome-based
	Education provided in least restrictive environment
	Education provided in integrated settings
	Student has access to all educational options (secondary and post-secondary)
	Cultural and ethnic sensitivity in programs and planning
	Flexible programming to meet student needs
	Program planning is outcome-based
	Longitudinal approach to transition (early childhood to adult)
	B. Program Evaluation
	Data-based management system
	Evaluation utilization for program improvement
	Ongoing program evaluation
	Specific evaluation of student outcomes
	Student/family role in program evaluation
	Secondary-level education services needs assessment
	Post-school services or program needs assessment
	Annual evaluation of interdisciplinary policy and procedures
	C. Strategic Planning
	Community-level strategic planning focused on local issues and services
	Regional-level strategic planning
	State-level strategic planning
	Community-level transition body focused on local issues and services
	Regional-level transition body focused on regional /state issues
	State-level transition body focused on regional state issues
	D. Program Policy
	Adult service systems restructured to include transition-related planning and services as integral components
	Education system restructured to include transition-related planning and services as integral components
	Administrative, school board, and community support for the program
	Program values, principles, and mission are clearly articulated
	Specific and consistent transition-related policies and procedures between and within agency and education participants
	Transition planning program structure and process clearly articulated
	E. Human Resource Development
	Transition practices resource materials available to personnel, families, and employers
	Assigned staff are qualified
	Preservice training on transition practices
	Sufficient allocation of personnel
	Transition-related technical assistance
	Establishment of transition-related personnel competencies
	Ongoing transdisciplinary staff development
	F. Resource Allocation
	Creative use of resources
	Sufficient allocation of resources

	Student/family role in resource allocation
	Resources transferred from sheltered and/or segregated facilities to community-based and/or integrated settings

<p>5. continued</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Not identified <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear _____ <input type="checkbox"/> NA IV delivered by _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Not identified <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear _____ <input type="checkbox"/> NA (natural event) </p> <hr/> <p> Number of people involved in delivery of IV _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Not identified <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear _____ <input type="checkbox"/> NA Training for deliverers of IV _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Not identified <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear _____ <input type="checkbox"/> NA Costs of intervention _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Not identified <input type="checkbox"/> NA </p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Baseline or control condition described <input type="checkbox"/> Procedural Reliability Data _____ </p> <p> Limitations to providing IV (note if reviewer or author identified): </p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> No limitations <input type="checkbox"/> NA _____ </p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> IV replicable <input type="checkbox"/> IV maybe replicable (essential characteristics of IV described, and description of IV matched definitions of IV Characteristics) <input type="checkbox"/> IV maybe not replicable (authors omitted essential information OR implementation may not be consistent with definitions) <input type="checkbox"/> IV not replicable (authors omitted essential information AND implementation may not be consistent with definitions) </p> <p> If qualitative: <input type="checkbox"/> Construct validity of intervention established (thick description of phenomenon/ intervention and network of literature provided to support), <input type="checkbox"/> Probably (reasonable description of phenomenon and adequate description of literature) <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe not (cursory description and limited connection of phenomenon to the literature) <input type="checkbox"/> Not established (phenomenon unclear and no attempt to connect to the literature) </p>	
<p>6. Dependent variable(s)/ Outcome variable(s): /____</p>	<p>Dependent Variable (list variables w/ operational definition)</p>	<p>Measure(s) (instrument/ measure of each DV)</p> <p>Reliability data on measure(s) <input type="checkbox"/> above 80% single-subject, <input type="checkbox"/> above 90% group experimental <input type="checkbox"/> Validity of measure(s) reported</p>
<p>7. Outcomes/ Results (check box and provide summary of results for variable(s) measured) /____</p>	<p>Brief Description of Results:</p>	

