Building Self-Determination Skills through Participation in Student Led IEPs

Elise James
Georgia Department of Education, ejames@doe.k12.ga.us

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Building Self-Determination Skills through Participation in Student Led IEPs

Georgia Association for Positive Behavior Support Conference
December 3, 2014
The one skill set that appears to be associated with successful life outcomes is self-advocacy and self-determination.

(Wehmeyer & Palmer, 2003; Raskind, Goldberg, Higgins, & Herman, 1999)
What is Self-Determination?

• A combination of skills, knowledge, and beliefs that enable a person to engage in goal-directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior.

• An understanding of one’s strengths and limitations together with a belief in oneself as capable and effective are essential to self-determination.
What is Self-Determination?

• Acting as the primary causal agent in one’s life
• Making choices and decisions regarding one’s quality of life.
• Individuals have greater ability to take control of their lives and assume the role of successful adults in our society.

My Strengths

• Spelling
• Math
• Softball
In Plain English......

- Knowing & believing in yourself
- Knowing what you want your future to be like and how to make plans to achieve this future.
- Knowing the supports that you need to take control of your life.
What does the IDEA Say?

Students (regardless of how young, but always by age 16) must be invited to an IEP meeting where transition will be discussed.

AND

The student’s individual strengths, weaknesses, needs, and interests must be considered when the IEP is being completed, as well as throughout its implementation.
At the IEP meeting, critical issues are discussed, and imperative decisions are made.
What is a Student-Led IEP?

• An IEP meeting where the most important person at the meeting—THE STUDENT—takes part in the meeting to the greatest extent possible.

• The greatest extent possible is different for each child.
The Link: Student-Led IEPs and Self-Determination

- Preparing students to lead their IEP meeting provides a perfect, real opportunity to learn and practice these critical life skills, as well as many other related skills.
# The Link: Student-Led IEPs and Self-Determination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Determination</th>
<th>Student-Led IEPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choice-making</td>
<td>Choosing mediums to communicate progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision-making</td>
<td>Compromising/Reaching consensus/Proposing compromise solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-solving</td>
<td>Thinking and planning for the future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal-setting &amp; attainment</td>
<td>Goal setting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Link: Student-Led IEPs and Self-Determination

**Self-Determination**
- Self-Observation
- Self-Evaluation
- Self-Reinforcement
- Internal locus of control

**Student-Led IEPs**
- Evaluating effectiveness of accommodations
- Taking turns and inviting others to speak
- Choosing appropriate interactions with adults
- Supports needed
- Characteristics of disabilities
- Rights/responsibilities
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Student-Led IEPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Instruction</td>
<td>Using presentation skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Advocacy &amp; Leadership</td>
<td>Asking relevant, proactive questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Awareness</td>
<td>Advocating - Stating opinions, backing with data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Knowledge</td>
<td>Strengths/Preferences</td>
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<td>Listening and responding with a relevant and</td>
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<td>appropriate answer</td>
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Benefits (Research)

- IEP meeting participants report a more relaxed, positive atmosphere, focused more growth and accomplishments.
- Students ...
  - know about their disability rights and accommodations,
  - gain increased self confidence
  - are able to advocate for themselves,
  - assumed more responsibility for themselves,
  - were more aware of their challenges and the resources available to provide support.
Student-Led IEPs provides the opportunity for the student to be in control of his world.
ASPIRE
Active Student Participation Inspires Real Engagement
2014-15 Implementation

- **Houston County District-Wide Implementation**
  - Train remaining educators and administrators
  - Increase students to half caseload

- **GLRS Implementation**
  - East Central, North Ga., Middle Ga., Southeast Ga., and Northwest received mini-grants

- **GNETS Implementation**
  - Futures, Oconee, Heartland, Elam Alexander

- **College and Career Readiness (CCaR) Project**

- **Readiness**
Elise James
Program Specialist
GaDOE/State Personnel Development Grant

ejames@doe.k12.ga.us
SPDG Website: ASPIRE
www.gaspdg.org/ASPIRE

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