

PEATC
Parent Educational Advocacy
Training Center



Virginia's NEXT STEPS Transition Program for
Families, Youths, and Professionals:
Building Effective Partnerships and Accessing
Resources

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Don't Leave School Without It
What's In Your Wallet?

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Interdependence

- We believe that interdependence is the only way to live.
- Young people with disabilities are most successful when they are working in collaboration with family, allies, friends, and the community.



Interdependence

- This presentation is in 3 parts:
 - what we and other young people with disabilities want,
 - tips and suggestions we, as youth organizers, have learned,
 - and specific tools young people can use when exiting high school.



What Do Young People with
Disabilities Want?



Self determination!

- We want...

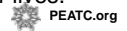
- people that support us to see themselves as our allies.
- to be at our IEP meetings.
- to make our own career and life goals.
- our dreams respected.
- allies that will advise us but also let us figure things out on our own.



We want self determination!

--> So how do we do it?

- Talk about ableism [power that privileges people without disabilities] and ideas that shape society's understanding of disability.
- By understanding the two layers of self determination: personal and community.
- We think youth need to understand all of these factors before we can have real conversations about "choice" and what we want in our lives.



Resources to help you practice self determination:

- Youth Information, Training & Resource Centers. Information on how to lead your IEP meeting or make your goals. - addyic.org
- CILs often have youth transition specialists that are also young people with disabilities. - ilru.org
- Parent Training & Information Center. - yellowpagesforkids.com



Information we need!

- The system will never teach us everything that we need to know to thrive. We can learn from elders, families, community, and other people with disabilities.
- We want to learn about safe sex, healthy relationships, how to get what is right via advocacy, and how to maximize our potential.



Information we need!

- We want to know what options we have after finishing high school. We want to know all of the options, not just the ones other people think are right for us.



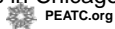
We want info --> how do we get it?

- NYLN finds that "choice" is meaningless if we do not have the information we need to understand all the choices.
- We believe in the power of people connecting, of people working together. We want youth with disabilities to talk to older people with disabilities, parents talking to other parents. People power!



Resources you can check out to get info you want:

- The Riot! Newsletter:
hsri.org/leaders/theriot (The folks who put out the Riot also have teleconferences about relationships, advocacy and other topics)
- Your state Youth Leadership Forum!
- Doin' It: Sex, Disability and Videotape. This is a documentary created by the Empowered FeFes, a group of young women with disabilities in Chicago



Access!

- We want to live in communities that are accessible to us.
- We want the world to accept & include us.
- This includes accessible language and accommodating different learning styles.



We want access! → How do we do it?

- NYLN writes at 8th grade level & teaches other people how to be accessible too.
- NYLN loves popular ed. Popular ed is learning that comes from people--everyone working together to teach each other from each person's own experiences. This is accessible learning. It isn't a lecture, but includes everyone and is in many formats. It values knowledge that everyone has.



Resources for making things accessible:

- NYLN member Micah Fialka Feldman's struggle to live in his dorm. Throughthesamedoor.com
- NYLN's guides for writing and making meetings accessible. nyln.org
- Kids as Self Advocates' selection of writings on access, advocacy, and living your life: fvkasa.org
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Community!

- We want our support systems to be recognized and respected.
- We want reciprocal relationships [partnerships where everyone is giving & getting].
- We want relationships fostered but not guided.
- We want chances to grow & opportunities to make mistakes and learn in relationships.



We want community! --> How do we do it?

- General disability rights awareness. It is hard to be in community with people who are working from other models of disability.
- Connecting young people with disabilities with other young people with disabilities.
- Celebrating disability culture and pride.



**Resources for finding/
building community:**

- Disabledandproud.com – good stuff on disability pride, culture and identity. Home of disability pride parade.
- Disability History Month – a few states are starting to celebrate Oct. as Disability History and Awareness Month. There are resources popping up all over the place.



**Forging Your Crew: Re-envisioning
Support Systems Conference**

- July 29 - 31, 2010, Raleigh, NC
- adult/youth team approach
- low cost hotel & dorm housing

We will be unveiling a new, interactive curriculum for families and youth to learn how to build interdependent support systems. Participants will learn how to facilitate the curriculum to groups of youth and allies.



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