



PROJECT ACCESS FACT SHEET #1

projectaccess.missouristate.edu
projectaccess@missouristate.edu
866-481-3841



TRANSITIONING TO THE NEXT ENVIRONMENT FOR STUDENTS UNDER AGE 16

TRANSITION PLANNING FOR THE STUDENT UNDER AGE 16

A person experiencing autism would benefit from a transition goal in every IEP beginning from the first one written. This goal would address issues of transition such as moving from:

- one level of schooling to another
- one teacher to another
- one building to another
- one type program model to another, etc.

The IEP team can ensure successful transitioning of the school-aged child with autism by delineating staff responsibilities, as well as student expectations, in the IEP. In this way, each succeeding level of school staff members becomes aware of the transition needs of the student.

CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

1. Assign a teacher to act as current case manager for the child. This person leads the team in managing the child's care, arranging meetings, and making contacts, which will benefit the child.
2. Establish a three-ring binder to hold valuable information that is not usually saved from year to year. It's really helpful to maintain a history of strategies tried (when, how long, results), so that teacher years down the line can easily see what worked and what did not. The binder should contain a history of the child's preferred activities, objects, and people; what the child does not prefer; medications tried though the years; and parent preferences. The binder gives a longitudinal picture of the child's progress toward a happy and productive adulthood.
3. At least one year prior to the student's transition to the next level, assign a case manager from that level. That person begins immediately attending all meetings concerning the student.

4. Training is essential. The next level teacher should be chosen and trained during the school year prior to the student's transition. Providing the future teacher release time to attend the student's classroom at least one full day in the previous setting is essential.

5. Write an IEP transition goal and objectives detailing the steps to be used to prepare the student for the move. A clear, written record of required procedures helps to eliminate confusion among service providers. The binder mentioned above will help in this.

VISUAL SCHEDULING

Visual scheduling is a highly successful method for predicting changes in routine. When used consistently, visual scheduling improves behavior and increases independence. Using such a representation of time will decrease the time needed for adjustment to the new routine, improve behavior, and increase independence. The next level case manager and teacher should become proficient in developing and using visual scheduling. Some form of visual schedules will be used by the person with autism throughout life and in multiple environments. For detailed information on creating and using visual schedules, see the ACCESS fact sheet on [Visual Scheduling](#).