Student Participation in IEP Process

Facilitating Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy

Adapted from Student-Led IEPs (CEC), I’m Determined Project. And M. Griffin.

Why should students be involved in their IEPs?
- It is consistent with IDEA 2004 which states that the IEP must focus on the student’s preferences, interests, needs and strengths.
- It results in an IEP that is more relevant to the student’s needs.
- It enhances self-determination of the student: “offers presents an opportunity to embed this instruction in a formal, systematic, and personally meaningful context” (Griffin, 2013).

Why should students be involved in their IEPs?
- It increases parental involvement.
- It becomes more than paperwork.
- Students can have greater awareness of themselves through the process of identifying:
  - Strengths
  - Limitations
  - Preferences
  - Interests
  - Needs to support learning.
Some initial considerations when planning to increase students’ participation in the IEP process:

- Inform/involve parents
- Be serious about confidentiality
- Consider the levels of student involvement - individualize

Challenges:

- Preparation Time
  - Where to present lessons
- Direct instruction
  - Disability Awareness
  - Self-determination
  - Legal jargon/information
  - Confidentiality

Getting Started:

- Choose students
  - Explain process
    - Preparation time
- Begin working
  - Independent worksheets
  - Interview format
- Involve Parents and IEP Team members

Change is always a struggle!
Working with the student ...

- Review parts of IEP
- Determine level of participation
- Begin writing chosen pieces/create presentation
  - Student may type or dictate
  - Use actual document
  - or
  - Break up into smaller assignments
- Highlight areas student will present

Consider using One Pagers

- Can give a lot of information “at a glance”
- Be handed out before/during IEP meetings or be embedded in a presentation
- Can be given to people who are unfamiliar with the student
  - Teachers
  - Employers
  - Co-workers

I'm Determined Project

Name: Aiden
Address:
DOB: 03/2011

My Needs
- Extra time
- Write down lists
- Visualize the process

My Strengths
- I am a good listener
- I have learned a lot of speech sounds

My Interests
- I like playing my DS
- I like to play outside
- I like school

My Preferences
- Playing in centers helps me learn
- Speech class helps me

My Interests
- Animals
- War history
- Photography

Preferences
- Visual & Tactile/Kinesthetic
- Play out the process of the project in my head
- Draw pictures in margins, look at graphics

Name: Tori
Address:
DOB: 03/21/10

You're Invited
Date: 10/23/10
Time:

Strengths
- Time to process things in my head before reading
- I work with animals at a vet clinic
- I enjoy presenting to people about my disability and how I deal with it

Needs
- Extra time
- Write down lists
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Address:
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Other Formats

- Video one pagers
- (Jermal)

What could help the student understand the process of the IEP meeting? (Griffin, 2013)
- understand the content that will be talked about during the meeting?
- develop greater awareness of their strengths, weaknesses, preferences, and interests?
- communicate to others about their strengths, weaknesses, preferences, and interests?
- What are other ways that the student can be involved in planning for and participating in the meeting?

Working with the student…

- Increase disAbility and Ability awareness
  - Impact on functioning
- Discuss meeting structure
  - How long?, Who attends?...
- Discuss laws
  - Pre-graduation (IDEA 04)
  - Post-graduation (ADA)

Working with the student…

- Discuss relaxation techniques
- Hold mock meetings--Practice!
Working with the student...

- Determine seating
- Create back-up plan
- Establish prompts and encouragement

Working with the student...

- Provide PRAISE!
- Encourage thank you notes
- Debrief and request feedback

I’m Determined Project

- Excellent and comprehensive website on increasing student involvement in IEPS. Resources include lesson plans, power points, templates, assessments, video, etc.
- [http://www.imdetermined.org](http://www.imdetermined.org)