Using Person-Centered Planning to Teach Future Expectations

Objective: To teach students to increase self-determination skills including goal-setting, communication skills, and self-advocacy.

Setting and Materials:

Settings: Special education classrooms
Materials:
1. Training
   - Specific Planning Encourages Creative Solutions (SPECS; Cotton & Boggis, 2007)
2. Person-centered planning
   - flip-chart paper
   - colorful markers
3. Follow-up assistance
   - checklist to connect work experience to preferences discussed during person-centered planning

Content Taught
Students will be taught self-determination skills including goal-setting, communication skills, and self-advocacy using a three-part intervention.

Teaching Procedures
1. Training session:
   - Use curriculum: Specific Planning Encourages Creative Solutions (SPECS; Cotton & Boggis, 2007)
     - Six modules including:
       - orientation to planning
       - tools for planning
       - creative problem solving
       - quality services
       - creative financing
       - getting into action
2. Person-centered planning:
   - Person-centered plan has the following 9 components (write the plan on flip-chart paper with colorful markers – document the discussion using the flip-chart paper or consider transferring to PowerPoint slides and present in IEP meetings):
     - History
     - Who you are today
     - Strengths and accomplishments
   - Map of relationships: intimate, friends, associates, professionals
   - Map of preferences: what words, what doesn’t work
   - Map of places for locating resources within the community based on interests and preferences
   - Map of future visions: interests, home, work, learning, social, experiences; and the helpful supports: relationships, routine, and services
   - Develop routines
   - Evaluate options
   - See Appendix A for examples of tools developed from Cotton’s (2003) Framework for Person-Centered Planning

4. Follow-up assistance
   - Arrange career exploration activities
     - informal interviews
     - job shadowing experiences
     - online/in-person investigation of postsecondary options
     - paid/practice work experiences

**Evaluation**

- A pre/posttest of 15-question true/false or multiple-choice items can reflect student knowledge on training sessions based on the SPECS curriculum.
- Create a checklist to confirm student’s experience in selected job sites match with their preferences

**Lesson Plan Based on:**
Appendix A: Examples of tools developed from Cotton’s (2003) Framework for Person-Centered Planning

Elements of Design:
Frameworks for Facilitating Person-Centered Planning

A Collection of Tools from the Manual
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Relationships are the primary source of strength in person-centered planning, fueling the energy needed to generate ideas, invent opportunities, and overcome obstacles. Creating a Relationships Map, or visual display of the individual’s relational network, can serve many purposes:

- Simply seeing the array of people that could be available to help him or her achieve a personal vision can be energizing;
- It is a useful tool to record changes in relational networks over time, allowing people to “see at a glance” where capacities and shortages for support exist;
- It can be used to draw out personal contacts team members have within community places where the individual wants to pursue membership; and
- A Relationships Map also provides a concrete format to assist the individual to consider who to include in his or her planning process.
In order to create the types of opportunities that will be most meaningful to an individual, people must first understand his or her personal preferences. The Preferences Map*, a tool developed by Beth Mount, is used to draw out information about characteristics and circumstances that either promote or interfere with the individual’s personal growth and satisfaction (Mount, 1987). Its purpose is to create a working list of simple common sense statements that capture the individual’s interests, ambitions, habits, strengths, relational qualities and personal needs. A Preferences Map is referred to frequently throughout the process of person-centered planning because it provides a foundation of pertinent information from which to build opportunities and create systems of support.

*Original materials can be found at Capacity Works at www.capacityworks.com
**Preferences Map**

**What Works:** Creates interest, connection, well-being, motivation...

- Order - things & routines
  - noticed details
- Books, magazines...
- Family parties
  - small familiar groups
- Puzzles
  - crosswords
- Computer games
- Facts & dates
  - historical events
  - birthdays & holidays
  - upcoming meetings
- **AMAZING MEMORY FOR DETAIL**

**What Doesn't Work:** Creates anxiety, isolation, frustration, anger...

- Crowds & commotion
- Cleaning jobs
- Too many instructions or steps at once
- Physical work of any kind
- Depth perception
  - uneven ground
- Feeling pressured
  - being rushed
  - around showing stress
  - fast-paced places
A Places Map* is a tool used to aid groups when brainstorming about community resources. Its purpose is to provide a “user friendly” format on which to record ideas about specific places in the individual’s community that hold possibilities for creating opportunity. The intent is to identify key workplace, educational and/or social cultures where his or her participation will be valued.

Based on the individual’s interests and preferences, people generate the names of all the businesses, schools, organizations, clubs, and community networks that they can think of where he or she might enjoy pursuing membership. As always, the best places are usually those establishments where family, friends, or allies already have a personal relationship with “insiders” who could be recruited to help facilitate opportunities and/or introductions for the individual.

*Original materials on Personal Futures Planning can be found at Capacity Works at www.capacityworks.com
Direction for planning begins to take shape as people hone in on a personal vision the individual has for his or her future. Seeing with the mind’s eye the type of lifestyle and relationships that he or she most desires enables people to create intentional opportunities and supports, as opposed to simply settling for what is offered. Both the individual and his or her core team need to have a shared picture of the future that they strive to create for him or her.

In order for members to be genuinely inspired to help pursue the individual’s vision, they need to be personally invested in some aspect of it. It is one’s own values, motives, and concerns that are the roots of commitment (Senge, 1990). Although in person-centered planning, shared vision emerges from learning about what the individual desires for him or herself, each member sees a unique version of the vision based on his or her own sense of personal direction. A Vision Map is used to capture images of the future, allowing people to sharpen their focus over time as they clarify what “ideal” looks like from various perspectives.
Most people invest in person-centered planning because they ultimately hope to create a more meaningful daily routine for themselves or for someone they care about. It doesn’t matter whether the individual wants a new employment, education, living, or social situation, developing opportunities will require making changes to his or her schedule (and often to the schedules of primary supporters as well). Walking step-by-step through what a typical week in the life of the individual is like can be an eye-opening experience for participants. It can help people to acknowledge periods of wasted or “down” time, to identify specific supports that are needed, and to find starting points for where to begin making changes. A Routines Map is also a useful tool for helping people to imagine the future and define what the ideal routine would involve.
There is surprisingly strong pressure in decision-making groups to head straight for an answer. Some jump prematurely to the first solution that comes to mind with little examination of potential consequences, while others spin and stall searching for an impossible single solution to a complex situation. Because many individuals and groups experience difficulty, stress, and sometimes conflict in relation to decision-making, it is often helpful for the facilitator to provide a structured and objective process for people to evaluate choices. In this way, members are encouraged to explore a range of possibilities, to carefully compare options, and to try to creatively synthesize the best parts of various solutions in order to make an informed decision.
EVALUATE OPTIONS

(Taken from Sibbet, D. 1980)

Format A
"Like Abouts"

Format B
"Pros, Cons & Probability"