

Transition From School To Work for People Who are Deaf-Blind: Some Practical Ideas

*Adapted from Eileen R. Milner. "Transition: School to Work for Individuals who are Deaf-Blind"
Mississippi Deaf-Blind Project*

- ★ **Get to know the person who is deaf-blind and his/her family.**
Determine needs and strengths in the areas of:
 - ⊕ Communication
 - ⊕ Orientation and mobility
 - ⊕ Level of vision
 - ⊕ Level of hearing
 - ⊕ Use of adaptations
 - ⊕ Personal needs
 - ⊕ Medical/health needs
- ★ Meet with all team members, including the student, to coordinate services.
- ★ Develop several varied work experiences:
 - ⊕ 14 – 16 years old = in-school work experience
 - ⊕ 16 – 22 years old = community work experience
- ★ Take pictures or make video tapes of the site before and after any modifications have been developed.
- ★ Collect data on the student's performance at the worksite.
- ★ Ask the employer to fill out a worker performance evaluation several times during the work experience.
- ★ Work on building a written resume, as well as a video resume.
- ★ Ask the employer to complete a letter of recommendation near the completion of work experience.
- ★ Continue with each step for each of the years prior to graduation.



School-To-Work: Let's Get Started!

Initial information needed:

How does the student:

- ⊕ Communicate?
 - Expressively?
 - Receptively?
- ⊕ Move within the environment?
- ⊕ Use vision and at what level?
- ⊕ Use hearing and at what level?
- ⊕ Use adaptations? Are there additional adaptations to be considered?
- ⊕ Care for personal needs, medical, and health needs?
- ⊕ Work with or without rest periods?
- ⊕ Work in settings that are too noisy (echoes, volumes, pitch, etc.); too bright, or too dark; too hot, or too cold?



(Adapted from Eileen R. Milner. "Transition: From School to Work for Individuals who are Deaf-Blind" Mississippi Statewide Deaf-Blind Project)

Possible In-School Work Sites

Main Office
Library
Yearbook Staff
Attendance Office
Teacher's Work Room
Audio Visual Room
Student Newspaper
Nurse's Office
Cafeteria
Athletic Office
Counselor's Office
Testing Center

Possible Community Sites

Office
Store (grocery, hardware, music, etc)
Library
Post Office
Hotel
Garden Centers
Police, Fire, EMT Units
Health Clubs
Restaurant
Golf Courses
Health Care Facility
Universities, Community Colleges

Possible Tasks Across Sites

Typing
Data Entry
Collating, Stapling
Photocopying
Filing
Stocking shelves
Domestic Chores
Mail Preparations
Messenger
Food Preparations
Utensil Set-ups
Assembly, Sorting

It's a Team Effort!

High School Personnel:

- Provide community work experience sites for the student.
- Provide information to vocational staff about the types of tasks and locations that match the student's preferences.
- Meet with the parents to discuss current work experiences and performances.
- Introduce parents to adult service providers and assist them in the application and referral process.

Vocational Personnel:

- Get input from the student, family, and friends.
- Use job sampling as part of vocational assessment.
- Look at data collected from the previous work sites.
- Assist student in putting together a resume.
- Search for and locate employment sites.
- Introduce employer and co-workers to parents and student.
- Arrange for transportation.

Related Services Personnel (May include Vision, Hearing, Orientation/Mobility Specialists; Occupational and Physical Therapists; Speech/Language Pathologist; etc.):

- Provide input on job design strategies.
- Provide input for eating, drinking, and bathroom use for the work sites.
- Provide input on positioning for best motor functioning for the work site.
- Identify mode of mobility the student will use.
- Provide mobility training, when needed.
- Identify effective modes of communication.
- Assist parents to access an alternate communication system when needed.

(Adapted from Sowers, J. and Powers, L. 1991. "Vocational Preparation and Employment of Students with Physical and Multiple Disabilities" Paul H. Brooks Publishing company.)

Coming January 15 & 16, 2005
Mark Your Calendars For CARD CONFERENCE 2005
Don't miss hearing Jerry Petroff, Director of the New Jersey
Deaf-Blind Project, talk about *Adult Transition*.
<http://www.ucf-card.org/>

Individual & Family Points of Consideration for School-to-Work

- Understand how various adult service agencies work so you know how to access services.
- Work with your educational team to assist in transition.
- Create a shared vision; get involved from the beginning; and work together.
- Begin thinking about how to get your family ready for the next step. It's never too early!
- Help your child to make choices and decisions, and allow him/her to make mistakes; it will help prepare them to advocate for themselves as they mature.
- Utilize all available resources.

SOME TRANSITION RESOURCES:

- ◀ Division of Blind Services
<http://www.state.fl.us/dbs/contact.shtml#stateoffice>
1320 Executive Center Circle Drive
Room 100, Atkins Building
Tallahassee, FL 32399-2050
(800) 342-1828 (phone)
- ◀ Training Resource Network, Inc.
<http://trninc.com>
PO Box 439
St. Augustine, FL 32805
(866) 823-9800 (phone)
- ◀ National Transition Alliance (NTA)
<http://www.ncset.org/publications/nta/>
- ◀ ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Voc. Ed. Ctr on Ed. & Training for Emp.
http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed363798.html
1900 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1090
- ◀ National Ctr. on Secondary Ed. and Transition (NCSET)
<http://www.ncset.org/topics/ieprtransition/default.asp?topic=28>
- ◀ Institute on Community Integration
ncset@umn.edu
University of MN, 6 Pattee Hall
150 Pillsbury Drive SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
(612) 624-2097 (phone)
- ◀ National Transition Network (NTN)
<http://ici2.umn.edu/ntn/>
- ◀ Div. of Vocational Rehabilitation - Florida
<http://www.rehabworks.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=SubMain.STWT>
2002 Old Saint Augustine Road, Bldg.A
Tallahassee, Florida 32301-4862
(850) 245-3399 (Voice/TDD)
- ◀ Helen Keller National Center
www.helenkeller.org/national
Southeastern Regional Office
1003 Virginia Ave., Suite. 104
Atlanta, GA 30354
(404) 766-9625 (phone)
- ◀ DB-Link
National Information Clearing House On Children Who Are Deaf-Blind
www.tr.wou.edu/dblink
345 N. Monmouth Ave
Monmouth, OR 97361
(800) 438-9376 (phone)
- ◀ Florida Outreach Project For Children and Young Adults Who Are Deaf-Blind
www.deafblind.ufl.edu
University of Florida
PO Box 100234
Gainesville, FL 32611
(352) 846-2758 (phone)

C.A.R.D. Service Regions:

- **University of Florida/Gainesville, 800.754.5891 (phone)**, Alachua, Bradford, Citrus, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Hernando, Lafayette, Levy, Marion, Putnam, Suwannee, Union.
- **University of Florida/Jacksonville, 904.737.5239 (phone)**, Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, St. John.
- **University of South Florida, 800.333.4530 (phone)**, Charlotte, Collier, Desoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Hillsborough, Indian River, Lee, Manatee, Martin, Okeechobee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Sarasota, St. Lucie.
- **University of Central Florida, 800.769.7926 (phone)**, Brevard, Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Sumter, Volusia.
- **Florida State University, 800.769.7926 (phone)**, Bay, Calhoun, Escambia, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Taylor, Wakulla, Walton, Washington.
- **University of Miami, 800.928.8476 (phone)**, Broward, Dade, Monroe.
- **Florida Atlantic University, 888.632.6395 (phone)**, Palm Beach.



The “RD” in CARD: What are Related Disabilities and Why Are They Part of CARD?

Donna Gilles

Associate Director, UF-Gainesville CARD

Director, Florida Outreach Project for Children and Young Adults Who Are Deaf-Blind

In 1993, the Florida Legislature created the system known as Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD), providing nonresidential resource and referral, training, individualized and program-matic technical assistance, and public awareness services for and about individuals who have communication and behavioral difficulties with the diagnosis of autism, autistic-like, sensory impairment with additional disabilities, or deaf-blindness. For years prior to CARD’s establishment, parents and professionals had worked hard to get legislators to respond to the needs of families and service providers regarding autism spectrum disorders. At the same time, a project called the “Community Intervention Project for Students with Sensory Impairments and Other Handicapping Conditions (CIP)” funded by the Florida Department of Education, was operating at UF’s Department of Psychiatry (the current home of UF/Gainesville CARD), with Greg Valcante, Donna Gilles, Art Wallen, and Winnie Gayler. This three-year grant provided assistance to families and service providers who lived with or worked with children and young adults who were blind/visually impaired or deaf/hard of hearing with additional disabilities, or deaf-blind (“dual sensory impaired”). After the end of the grant cycle in 1991, CIP parents were promised that they would be able to receive similar services through programs developed in the future. Two years later, that promise was met by being named as a constituency group of CARD.

At first, many people questioned why individuals with sensory impairments and additional disabilities (including deaf-blindness) were considered for services. But the more we find out about the complex characteristics of autism as well as the related disabilities, the easier it becomes to recognize how similar the supports are between groups. One basic difference between constituencies is that individuals who have Autism Spectrum Disorder tend to have difficulties in processing auditory or visual information, whereas individuals who

experience vision and or hearing loss accompanied by other disabilities have difficulty in gathering information through the affected sensory channel(s) as well as processing that information. Given this difference though, most individuals in both groups benefit when information is presented in more than one modality, while concentrating on the sensory channel that provides them the best access to and processing of information. In fact, many established practices such as using schedules and routines, can be found in earlier literature about strategies for people who are blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind. And of course, using alternative means of communication (e.g., sign language) originated within the deaf/hard-of-hearing culture.

So what is CARD doing for the other part of our constituency? First, CARD accepts referrals for children and adults who would qualify for vision, hearing, or deaf-blind services and who also have cognitive disabilities. Second, we collaborate with the Florida Outreach Project for Children and Young Adults who are Deaf-Blind, directed by yours truly, to present topics of interest to a broader constituency at the annual CARD conference. The 2003 conference marked the first time we organized presentations in strands, one of which was the related disability strand. Three presentations on literacy, considerations for students with multiple disabilities, and calendars, were as well attended as other strands, a success that supports having future strands on related disabilities.

What can you do? Many of you know other families who have children or teachers who have students who meet eligibility criteria for CARD services, but do not have autism. The individuals may have cognitive disabilities accompanied by a vision loss or a hearing loss, or may have a vision and a hearing loss together. In order for CARD to represent its constituency better, please encourage them to call CARD in their region so that the staff can determine their eligibility to be placed on the registry for mailings or to request assistance.



University of Florida
P.O. Box 100234
Gainesville FL 32610

Florida Outreach Project

For Children and Young Adults Who Are Deaf-Blind

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College Students	Life Guards	Interpreters	Healthcare Professionals

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Sales Table	Saturday Night Social	Conference Registration Station
Arts & Crafts	Assistance with Healthcare	Sign Language Interpreters
	Spanish Language Translators	

**For information contact: Susy Morales, Conference Host
(305) 259-9655 or (305) 992-3912 or susv@chargesyndrome.org**

