Teaching Self-Determination Skills

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What is Self-Determination?

Sarah
Knowing & believing in yourself

Justin
Knowing what you want your future to be like and how to make plans to achieve this future

Danny
Knowing the supports that you need to take control of your life

Why Teach Self-Determination Skills?

- Too often, people with disabilities have decisions made for us rather than with us.
- Students will have more of a “buy-in” to special education services, therapies, and supports if we have a say in them.
- Research indicates that self-determination skills are linked to improved outcomes for students with disabilities in the areas of academics, employment, and independent living (Shogren, Wehmeyer, Palmer, and Forber-Pratt, 2015).
- It is the law! (IDEA 2004)
- It is the right thing to do!

Domains of Self-Determination

Sarah
Self-Awareness
- Decision Making
- Internal Locus of Control
- Problem Solving
- Goal Setting

Self-Advocacy
- Power Standards
- Definition: The skills of knowing one’s own strengths, abilities and limitations, and knowing how to use these unique attributes to beneficially influence one’s own life.

Power Standards

- Our teachers Christina Eagle, Laura Dinardo, and Deborah Hammer created Power Standards to help you and students better understand each of the self-determination areas.
- You can use these Power Standards with your students when you are helping them create their self-determination IEP goals

1. Student will identify _# of things that they are good at academically, socially, and vocationally.
2. Student will identify _# of things that they need to work on in the areas of academics, social skills, and vocational skills.
3. Student will identify their interests, hobbies, and preferred activities
4. Student will identify dislikes and non-preferred activities
5. Student will participate in their IEP as fully as possible.
Self-Advocacy

**Definition:** Skills necessary to be able to speak up or defend a cause of personal interest.

**Power Standards:**
1. Student will be able to state what their disability is.
2. Student will be able to state how their disability affects them.
3. Student will be able to ask for help.
4. Student will be able to identify who they can ask for help in a given situation.
5. Student will be able to identify supports and/or accommodations that they require.

Self-Regulation

**Definition:** The process of monitoring one's own actions.

**Power Standards:**
1. Student will be able to identify their own personal emotion.
2. Student will be able to identify their own current state of regulation (i.e. expected and unexpected).
3. Student will be able to identify the expectation for self-regulation in a given setting (i.e. cafeteria, PE, math class, baseball game).
4. Students will be able to identify strategies that allow them to maintain expected behaviors for a given setting.
5. Students will be able to use strategies that allow them to maintain expected behaviors for a given setting.

Goal Setting and Attainment

**Definition:** The skill of determining how you are going to accomplish what you want (setting the goal, putting it into action, and measuring success).

**Power Standards:**
1. Student will demonstrate understanding of a goal.
2. Student will identify steps necessary to achieve a goal.
3. Student will set short term goals.
4. Student will set long term goals.
5. Student will follow the steps to meet short and long term goals.

Problem Solving

**Definition:** Being able to identify a problem, identify different solutions, and make a choice.

**Power Standards:**
1. Student will identify the problem.
2. Student will identify different solutions to the problem.
3. The student will think through each possible solution.
4. Student will pick the best solution and do it.
5. Student will evaluate the success of the solution that they chose.

Internal Locus of Control

**Definition:** The belief that one has control over outcomes that are important to their life.

**Power Standards:**
1. Student will recognize that their behavior has positive and negative consequences.
2. Student will identify factors that they control or not control that affect them in school (i.e. studying, sleeping, etc).
3. Student will be able to listen and respect the perspective of another person.
4. Student will accept that it is ok to make mistakes and make the needed corrections.
5. Student will accept corrective (positive and negative) feedback.

Decision Making

**Definition:** The skill of choosing between more than two known options.

**Power Standards:**
1. Student will be able to choose between two presented options.
2. Student will be able to identify the best choice from the field of one expected and unexpected options.
3. Student will be able to identify potential consequences of a choice.
4. Student will be able to decide between a goal-oriented choice and a non-goal-oriented choice.
5. Student will be able to choose an option when presented with an open-ended question or situation.
How to Teach Self-Determination: Things You Can Do To Help Your Students or Children Become Self-Determined

1. Teach them self-determination skills, using lessons from *I'm Determined* and other places
2. Involve them in their IEPs
3. Help them create Self-Determination Clubs

Jordan

Use Templates from *I'm Determined*:
One Pager and Good Day Plans

Sarah

*I'm Determined*

http://www.imdetermined.org

- Project funded by the Virginia Department of Education and created by our Training and Technical Assistance Centers (T/TAC)
- Focuses on providing direct instruction, models, and opportunities to practice skills associated with self-determined behavior.
- This project facilitates youth, especially those with disabilities, to take control of their lives.

Danny

My Needs
- Extended time for tests/assignments
- Close to front of class for vision

My Interests
- Composing & listening to music
- Creating & playing computer games
- Programming

My Strengths
- Pick up concepts quickly
- Witty with a good sense of humor
- Creative

My Preferences
- Planning in my head, rather than on paper
- Listening to music while I work

I Want to Know
- Interests
  - Basketball
  - Softball
  - Video Games
  - Computer Games
  - Youth Groups
  - Special Olympics (Unified)

Joe

I Like To
- Verbal
- Praise

Accommodations that Work
- Extended time on assignments
- Scribe
- 10 problems in math per night
- Water Breaks
- Clinic Visits
- Study Guides and Back-up Notes

Accommodations that Work
- Extended time on tests/assignments
- Close to front of class for vision

I Want You to Know
- My otherserie the honor roll.
- I am really good at my hands tasks.
- My favorite class is social studies.
- My parents are both teachers.
- I have no learning disabilities.
- I have ADHD diagnosed at age 11.
- I have difficulty putting my thoughts into words.
- I am on the VDOE Youth Leadership Team.
- I am the only one in my family on the honor roll.
- I scored a perfect score on my Geometry SOL.
- My college choice is John Tyler.
- My career interest is in Criminal Justice.
Involving Students in the IEP (Individual Education Plan)

- Involve students in meetings to the best of their ability level
- Bring food, fidgets, and communication tools
- Talk with students, not about them! We don’t like it when people talk about us as if we are not even there.
- Have students prepare presentations ahead of time that cover main concepts of their IEP

Additional Guidelines For Successful Self-Determination During An IEP Meeting

- Focus on all the things that the student has accomplished and what they are good at, not just what we can’t do.
- Talk about how the student has been successful throughout the year. Share a video or portfolio of things they have done.
- Don’t read every single word of the IEP. This makes it harder to concentrate in the meeting.
- Don’t use jargon or lingo! Use language that everyone at the table can understand easily.
WELCOME TO MY IEP MEETING
BY J.

Reason why you are here.

• To help me get the right education to get where I want to go in the future.
• To help me learn the skills necessary to be able to hold down a job and function properly out there in the world.

How my autism affects me.

• It makes it harder for me to study or do tests in noisy environments.
• It means that I like small enclosed spaces like being in my bedroom with the door shut, my music on and all three of my family's cats on my bed napping.
• It means that I relate better to animals than other people.
• It means that I like listening music while I am working on stuff it helps motivate me to finish stuff.

Strengths

• My reading level
• Social skills
• Written learning

Areas of need

• Organization
• Time Management
• The Breaking Down Of Big Projects

Attendance List

• Mr. Stapleton
• Ms. Troiano
• Ms. Stoppel
• Ms. Kohlberg
• Ms. Leavitt
• Ms. Dye
• Ms. Hammer
• Ms. O’Laughlin
• Ms. German
• Ms. Boda
• (Dad) and (Mom)
Welcome To My IEP Meeting!

Sarah Cornett

- My name is Sarah Cornett
- I am 20 years old
- I am in the 13th grade
- I go to the Arlington Career Center
- I want people to know that I have type I diabetes.
- I love cats, reading different types of books, doing different types of puzzles, and playing video games.
- Some of my favorite activities are going ice skating, clubs after school, traveling, and going to figure skating lessons

Plans for the future

- Have a job working with animals
- To live on my own and live independently.

Education Goals

- To eventually go to NOVA and take Animal Science classes online.
- To get my Standard High School Diploma
- To get my certification in animal massage.
- To get recertified as a National Association Of Petsitters a accredited Pet Sitter.

Learning Style

- I learn by watching people do things and copying them.
- I learn by reading about things I need to know/learn.
- I learn by watching visuals.

How You Can Help Me

- By giving me extra time on tests, quizzes and essays.
- By allowing me access to a computer when I need it in certain classes.
- By allowing me to take breaks when I get overstimulated.
- By writing down what you want me to do clearly on a piece of paper if it has a lot of little steps in it.
- By physically showing me what you want me or need me to do.
Strengths

- I am good with people
  ○ I like helping the other students that are in my PEP class, when they need help with their classwork and other assignments.

- I am a hard worker
  ○ I usually keep working to complete the tasks or assignments that I am given.

- I am responsible
  ○ I always try to follow the rules and that are given by the teacher or somebody else.

- I am good at writing
  ○ My writing has improved since the beginning of the school year.

What I need to be more independent

- Better money skills
  ○ I will work at the brown box sales table one day a week during the second semester.

- Take initiatives on job sites
  ○ I will have a goal of helping/instructing other students at my internships.

- Traveling more independently
  ○ I will take the metro or art bus to my internship during next school year.

Things That Help Me Learn

- Visual demonstrations in the classroom

- Practice helps me learn skills

- Extra time to review and repeat instructions given by the teacher.

- Multi steps written down when I think I need it

My Future Plans and Dreams

- I am interested in a career in child development.

- After high school I want to go to NOVA Community College Alexandria Campus.

- I want to get better at being part of my community through volunteer work.

Jobs I might like to do

- I would like to work in child care and early childhood education.
  ○ for example, as a teacher’s assistant.

- Library work/sciences is a job that I might be interested in doing.
  ○ (Like being a volunteer librarian in the local public library on the weekends).

- I also might want to do some career path that has to do with artwork.
  ○ I would like to do something that involves being creative, like becoming a digital graphic artist and/or designer.

Living arrangements in the future

- Living somewhere with my friends, sharing an apartment or a house.

- I might also want to live in a neighborhood that is close to my family.
Thank you for coming to my IEP!

Self-Determination Clubs:
*The Order of Self-Determination*

**Justin**
- We started our own club to learn all about self-determination and teach other students about it.

**Justin**
- We inspire other students with disabilities to advocate for their needs

**Danny**
- We meet once a week

**Sarah**
- Our activities include:
  - Working with classrooms from pre-school to high school
  - Mentoring other students with disabilities
  - Planning and hosting an annual conference for our peers.

**PHOTOS FROM OUR CONFERENCES**

Additional Resources

- National Gateway to Self Determination
- PACER
- Autistic Self-Advocacy Network
- Cognitopia
  [https://www.cognitopia.com/](https://www.cognitopia.com/)
- WVU Center for Excellence in Disabilities
- A Student’s Guide to the IEP
  [https://www.bridges4kids.org/StudentGuidelEP.pdf](https://www.bridges4kids.org/StudentGuidelEP.pdf)

Books About Self-Determination and Person-Centered Planning (PCP)

- *The Integrated Self-Advocacy ISA Curriculum* by Valerie Paradiz
- *Ask and Tell: Self-Advocacy and Disclosure for People on the Spectrum* edited by Stephen Shore
- *Self-Determination* by Michael Wehmeyer and Sharon Field
- *PATH: Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope. A Workbook for Planning Possible Positive Futures* by John O’Brien, Jack Pearpoint, and Marsha Forest
Thank You For Coming!
For more information about our club email us at: OrderOfSelfDetermination@gmail.com

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