Case Studies

Companion to Training Materials for Indicator 13 Checklist
Alex is a 17 year old student with autism. He receives special education services in a self-contained classroom in an urban high school. At school, Alex receives instruction both in the classroom and in the community to improve his skills vocationally, academically, and socially. He is currently participating in community based training in an office setting completing tasks such as data entry and spreadsheet development. He is diligent and methodical in completing the varied tasks assigned to him.

After school Alex works part-time at a local office supply store entering numerical data to keep track of stock and services rendered by store staff. His behavior is appropriate at work and he has expressed that he likes working. He is punctual each day, and he is willing to stay late when needed. He really enjoys getting a paycheck although he usually spends his money on fast food and movies from the local video rental shop. Alex is detail-oriented and reviews each column of numbers several times before moving on to type another column. This results in slower production rates in comparison to other workers who complete similar tasks.

Alex is intimidated by his boss because he knows that the boss has the ability to fire him, a fact that his teachers at school presented during a unit about behaviors in the workplace. Alex has perseverated on this fact, making him afraid to talk to his boss. Also, Alex knows that at times his speech is not understood by people he doesn’t know, so sometimes he avoids talking to people he doesn’t know well. As a result, instead of speaking to his boss, Alex usually tells problems or concerns to his school job coach who voluntarily visits Alex at the job site each week. The job coach is concerned that Alex will not ask for help if an emergency occurs, and that a certain level of communication between Alex and his boss is necessary to develop a good working relationship. The boss views Alex as a valuable employee and is willing to provide opportunities for Alex to develop appropriate communication skills. The boss has also expressed an interest in employing Alex for more hours per week after graduation, if he continues to develop his business skills.

Alex’s mother has expressed that she will support her son in his job at the office supply store by helping him work on skills that are needed for the job, but she believes that he will need supports to be successful in this employment setting, especially when new tasks are assigned. She knows that after Alex graduates, realistically his school job coach will stop visiting him at work so she can’t depend on his continued help. Currently, Alex has no services from the local vocational rehabilitation agency, although his mother voiced an interest in this at his last IEP meeting.
Allison is an 18 year old student with a specific learning disability in reading comprehension and written expression. She is a friendly student who has several friends and interests outside of school. Allison’s oral expression skills are strengths for her as are her interpersonal skills. Academically she has maintained B’s with a C in Chemistry during her 10th and first half of 11th grade school years. She met her IEP goals for the past school.

Allison is the fourth of seven children. She says that her responsibilities at home include caring for her younger siblings and doing light chores around the house. Her older sister, Jessie, graduated from college and is finishing up her first year teaching first grade at an elementary school not far from their family home. Allison likes to go to her sister’s classroom after school and on the weekends to help her sister make materials for lessons. Allison decided that she wants work with pre-schoolers or kindergarteners, but she is not sure if she wants to be classroom teacher.

Allison likes to work out at the gym with her friends, and plays softball on a county league. She loves movies and shopping with her sisters. She has not been completing her homework so her parents are concerned about the impact that her newfound independence will have on her grades at a university. They are concerned that she doesn’t have the organizational skills to effectively manage her study time as well as her social life. Allison has told her friends about her disability status. She views her disability as a challenge, and she realizes that her organizational skills could be a barrier to achieving her goals. She has committed herself to making changes to become more organized but has yet to be successful in using a planner and getting her assignments done on time.

Her parents are also adamant that she attends a university that offers the major she needs to obtain a degree in child development. At her last IEP meeting, they expressed frustration that her older brother began taking courses that were related to his career plans; only to later find out that the degree he hoped to complete was not offered at his college. Allison’s teachers have suggested that Allison meet with a counselor and a representative from disability services on campus prior to the first semester to ensure that her college coursework is well-planned and that she has support to make decisions about her courses and to assist her in organization.
Jamarreo is a 19 year old student identified with emotional and behavioral disabilities. Jamarreo’s interpersonal skills and work ethic are strengths for him. Academically, he has maintained Cs and Bs in 10th and 11th grade. Jamarreo also has a moderate hearing loss that requires him to wear a hearing aid. His speech is intelligible to others despite his hearing impairment. He knows sign language, but typically communicates with others by lip reading and responding verbally.

During elementary school, Jamarreo exhibited behavioral outbursts including yelling and cursing loudly when things didn’t go his way in the classroom and at school. At the age of 15, he was sure that he would drop out of high school on his sixteenth birthday because he didn’t like school and wanted to earn money like his older relatives. His special education teacher, mother, and uncle worked with Jamarreo to develop a program that included career-related courses, paid work experiences, and job-specific training so that he could earn the money he sought while gaining skills for a career. He worked part-time with his uncle at his welding shop and expressed an interest in working in a similar environment after high school. He enjoyed working with other young men, doing manual labor, and listening to loud music while working. He exhibits strengths in the area of mechanical work. Career assessments indicate that he is likely to be a serious, dedicated employee. At home, he fixes appliances around the house, which his mother appreciates. One time in the past year, Jamarreo received criticism from his uncle because he was not consistently wearing appropriate safety gear. Jamarreo did not accept the feedback well; he walked out of the shop and went home for the day.

Jamarreo is most interested in racing cars on the weekends. He has never played sports, and doesn’t have an interest in them other than watching stock car races on television. For the past few years, he and his friends have worked to fix up a car they bought from the junk yard for a few hundred dollars. They enter local races on the weekends to win cash prizes. Jamarreo doesn’t race the cars; he does the body work on them. He doesn’t always wear the necessary protective gear when welding, which is dangerous. His uncle sometimes helps him with the more detailed welding work in his welding shop. Jamarreo loves to work on the cars and attend the races on the weekends. This hobby has prepared him with valuable vocational skills related to welding and automotives, but these races are illegal. The local police have begun to pay more attention to these events. Jamarreo doesn’t express any concern that he will be caught participating in the races. Jamarreo’s uncle and mother are concerned that he will get into trouble with the law, postponing his career plans.
Jason just completed his junior year of high school. He is seventeen years old. He is a bright, friendly student with a Specific Learning Disability in Reading and Reading Comprehension. He is treasurer of the student council at his high school and he plays racquetball in a community league with some of his friends. He is an active member of the youth group at his church. He has a girlfriend, who is a sophomore in high school, who he has been dating for about six months. On the weekends, he likes to watch sports basketball, hockey, or football on TV or in person. With the money he earned from his summer job last year, he bought season tickets to see the local NBA team. He has been successful in going to the games and completing his school work on time. On Saturdays during the school year, he earns spending money by working in his uncle’s legal firm, answering the telephone and filing various documents.

Jason plans to be a high school teacher. Both of his parents are teachers. Jason believes that because of his learning challenges, he has learned a number of effective strategies that will benefit struggling learners in his future classes. He plans to get his teaching degree at a four-year state college with some of his friends from high school. He will live in the dorms with many other first year students. At his last IEP meeting, his parents discussed the services on college campuses available to students with disabilities. Jason will visit the disability support services on campus, but he is unhappy about disclosing his disability to his professors. He would prefer that his high school guidance counselor send a letter to his professors so he does not have to engage in a conversation about his disability. However, most colleges and universities require the student to seek services and approach professors to acquire accommodations and modifications to course requirements. His special education teacher asked the IEP team if there were any training programs available to prepare Jason for this experience, but no one was familiar with such a program.
Jeremy is a 20 year old student identified with multiple disabilities including a moderate cognitive disability, visual impairments, and a speech impairment that makes his speech mostly unintelligible to people who are not familiar with him. He receives special education services in a transition-level classroom in an urban public separate school. The school he attends serves students with significant cognitive and multiple disabilities aged 5-21. Jeremy is currently in his last year of school, as he will turn 21 prior to the end of the school year. Since he will graduate in a few months, his family has been working closely with his special education teachers, related service professionals, and transition coordinators to ensure that his transition to the center-based adult program and part-time employment is seamless.

His grandmother, who doesn’t have a driver’s license, is his guardian and primary source of support at home. He has no siblings, and his parents are inconsistently in the picture. His grandmother works full-time as a nurse’s assistant and she must continue to work full-time to support herself and Jeremy. She is concerned about Jeremy’s schedule after he graduates, because she cannot stay home with him. Jeremy has expressed an interest in working in the community, but he currently does not have the skills necessary to work independently. He also has never expressed any preferences about where he would like to work. His transition coordinator has worked with Jeremy and his grandmother for the past three years to qualify Jeremy to use special public transportation at no charge. These services began last month and Jeremy has successfully used the transportation to get to school on five occasions as a means of practice using the system.

His grandmother is not willing to have Jeremy live in a group home until her health makes it impossible for her to care for him. She believes that Jeremy must be as independent as possible each day in order to gain new skills and feel good about himself. Specifically, she would like him to be more independent getting ready for his day each morning. Also, Jeremy has asked for help from staff when showering after swimming class. His classroom staff are confident that given training to safely get around the bathroom and consistent placement of hygiene products given his visual impairment, As a result, Jeremy will be able to effectively shower, shave, and brush his teeth with little assistance.

Jeremy uses large font picture symbols successfully in his classroom to self-monitor his work completion and to make a daily schedule. He can decode approximately 250 picture symbols. Jeremy could start using this strategy at home to complete tasks. Finally, Jeremy’s grandmother is also concerned that he exhibits socially inappropriate affection at times. Jeremy tends to hug and kiss people when he gets excited; it is not uncommon for him to hug strangers in community settings.
Jodi is a 16 year old student with mild cognitive disabilities who is pursuing an occupational diploma. She is currently in her third year of high school, but she plans to go to school until she is 21 years old. She is completing a specialized course of study that includes both applied academics and vocational preparation to receive a high school diploma. Jodi lives at home with her mother, who is a real estate agent. Jodi’s mother is supportive of her plans, and has a special interest in improving Jodi’s ability to read. Jodi likes to look at magazines, store advertisements, and newspapers. Sometimes she can decode the words in them. She has never had an opportunity to budget her money although she identifies all bills and coins. She can also make change and pay for items in simulated and community experiences.

After high school, Jodi wants to go to the community college and work at a store like Target running the register or stockings items on the shelves. This year, she worked at a discount store during school hours, and did well. There, she mostly stocked shelves, but a few days she ran the register with her job coach nearby to assist when needed. She can make change independently, but she got confused and nervous when customers asked her questions she couldn’t answer. Jodi will need to get herself to work each afternoon, but her mom will be able to pick her up. Neither Jodi nor her mother has ever taken a city bus to get anywhere. Furthermore, her mother is scared of the idea of her talkative daughter sitting on the bus with strangers.

Jodi’s mother believes that she would be happy in a retail position, but she would like Jodi to get to explore other jobs within the retail environment, such as janitorial tasks, organizational tasks, and jobs within the store café. Jodi expressed that any of those jobs would be fine, as long as she could earn money. However, her special education teacher has concerns that Jodi’s hygiene skills are not adequate for a food service environment. She frequently touches her hair and face during the day, although she always appears clean. At her most recent vocational experience, Jodi’s site supervisor was pleased with her work ethic but indicated that he had to provide consistent prompting to Jodi about excessive talking when she should have been working. He expressed concern that this could ultimately cause her to lose a job in the future, because as her talking increased, her productivity decreased.
John is a 16 year old student with a specific learning disability in reading fluency, reading comprehension, written expression, and oral language processing. John demonstrates strengths related to managing money, but struggles with use of calendar or other planners. In reading, teacher records indicate that John reads at an eighth grade level with fluency, but struggles with oral reading comprehension and written expression. John’s reading and writing performance require accommodations for testing and participation in the general curriculum, including extended time, read-aloud, and computer software resources to support listening comprehension and writing.

Currently, John receives special education services in an inclusive setting as well as a resource setting. His special education teacher and a general education teacher co-teach his English courses. He also attends a weekly study skills session with a special education teacher who works on the development of independent study and organizational skills. He will finish his Sophomore year in high school in less than two weeks.

John tends to be fairly quiet when he is in new situations and when he is around people he doesn’t know. Recently, he told his mother that he is embarrassed by his disability. His mother expressed at his last meeting that these feelings deter John from discussing his disability with his teachers, from asking teachers for additional help, or from telling his friends about his disability status. During his freshman year, he chose not to attend his IEP meeting, even though his teachers and parents encouraged him to attend. This past year, he attended the IEP meeting but participated passively by signing forms, making few comments throughout the meeting, and making little eye contact with the other team members present.

John receives accommodations in several courses, including additional time on tests, separate testing area, and reading aloud of test question teacher-made and state-mandated testing. He has maintained a 2.3 GPA for the past two years. His teachers said that John does well when he is interested in the topic, however, at times he draws in class. This causes him to miss information that he then must make up at home by reading the textbook, which can be an arduous task given his problems with reading comprehension. At his last IEP meeting, one teacher stated that he would really benefit from a strategy that prompts him to pay attention for the whole class session so he can review his notes in the evening rather than playing catch up to gain missed information. This line of discussion then lead to his parents voicing concern that John’s inability to maintain focus could be a potential problem in a work setting as well.

John has not been absent a single day during his Freshman and Sophomore years in high school. According to his parents, he likes school. John benefited from weekly speech and occupational therapy services throughout elementary school. In eighth grade his therapists and his parents agreed that he made sufficient progress to warrant less service in both of these areas. He currently receives related services of speech and occupational therapy one time each month on a consultative basis, so direct service is no longer provided. These consultative sessions are in place to evaluate John’s progress and to ensure that John maintains the skills and strategies that he gained in elementary school.

Around his friends and family, John is outgoing and witty. John plays soccer on the Junior Varsity team at his high school. He hopes to make the varsity team next year. He has plans with a group of friends on most weekend evenings. This summer, he plans to get a job at a game booth on the boardwalk. His mother and father are excited for him
to have the opportunity to gain work experience and manage money for the first time. They are willing to drive him to work when they can, but they both work full-time. His employer at the boardwalk has a policy that workers younger than 18 work the day shift, so it is unlikely that his parents will be able to drive him. Several other students from school who will be working on the boardwalk are willing to drive him to work when their schedules are similar, but John is concerned about what will happen when neither his parents nor his friends are available to drive him.

Upon graduation, John plans to attend Ocean County College, which is about twelve miles from his house. Many of the graduates of his high school attend OCC for the first two years of post-secondary education. He plans to live at home and work part-time on campus until he finishes an associate’s degree. At that point, John plans to transfer to a four-year state college to continue his degree. He is most interested in the careers related to business data processing and medical technology.

OCC has a disability services office on campus. Personnel visited his high school during a recent college fair to tell students about the services available to students with disabilities. John told his mother that he is willing to go to the office to ask about services, but he wants her to go with him. John, his parents, and the special education teacher agree that OCC will be a good place for John to continue his education, become more independent and confident, and determine his career goals.
Kevin is an 18 year old young man with significant intellectual disabilities who is attending his neighborhood high school. Kevin is following his state’s Extended Content Standards which are aligned with the general curriculum’s Standard Course of Study. He receives daily instruction in Literacy (reading, writing, and communication), Math, and Science. Kevin also is involved in vocational and daily living skill training. His coursework is delivered in individual and small group settings in the special education classroom except for Digital Communications (a general education Career Technical Course) which he has taken (using a modified curriculum) with the assistance of a one-on-one instructional assistant. Kevin also participates in a school-based enterprise through the Occupational Course of Study (a state endorsed curriculum for students with special needs leading to a high school diploma) and an on-campus work placement in the school library.

Kevin has spastic quadriplegic cerebral palsy and uses a manual wheelchair for mobility which has been adapted with trunk support and subasis bar. He is able to use his right hand to manipulate larger items and can use his left hand for stabilization. Kevin receives physical therapy one time a week for 30 minutes and has ongoing therapy services in the classroom including positioning on adaptive equipment. He wears AFOs for stability when using a stander and a left hand-elbow mobilizer. Kevin’s physical therapist would like for him to have a motorized wheelchair but funds have not been available. Kevin also receives occupational therapy on a consultative basis. His teacher and the occupational therapist have been working on developing vocationally related jigs.

Kevin has little intelligible speech other than single words and yes/no responses but within the classroom has used an iTalk2 to communicate simple needs and choices and is learning to use a GoTalk20+. He does not use an augmentative communication device at home but does have a picture board which transitions with him between school, the community, and home. Kevin receives speech therapy 2 times a week for 30 minutes each session.

Kevin has generalized tonic-clonic seizures which are 85% controlled with two different anti-convulsant medications (Tegretol and Mysoline). He is fed through a gastrostomy tube although he is able to take some pureed foods by mouth in limited amounts. Kevin can feed himself by mouth using a CP Feeder but has to be closely monitored and reminded to eat slowly to avoid asphyxiation. Usually Kevin is only allowed to feed himself during special occasions such as a class party or special meal. The gastrostomy tube placement was primarily due to asphyxiation of food during meal times that resulted in recurrent upper respiratory infections. These URIs have greatly decreased since his surgery. A functional vision assessment has indicated that Kevin’s visual acuity with corrective lenses at near distances is 20/80 and at far distances is 20/100. His most effective visual field is slightly below eye level and he is able to localize to visual stimulus and fixate his gaze on objects and people as well as shift his gaze. Kevin does not like wearing his glasses but is cooperative in this area most of the time. Kevin has good hearing.
Kevin and his family plan for him to stay in the public schools until he ages out at age 21 which will provide him with three more years of services. He lives at home with mother, step-father, 11 year old sister, and a great aunt that helps with his care. Kevin also has one older brother who is in college. After receiving state level mental health funding for personal care and 10 hours of one-on-one community-based services for the last 4 fours, Kevin was recently approved for Medicaid waiver funded services. This funding source will provide Kevin with an array of services based on his individual needs including: augmentative communication devices, case management, one-on-one community and home support, personal care services, respite, specialized equipment and services and medical transportation. Funds will also be available for supported employment and day support after high school graduation.

Kevin has had a comprehensive transition component in place since his 14th birthday. The development of a complete transition component was determined appropriate for Kevin at an earlier age due to his complex needs and the length of time needed to obtain appropriate adult services. His school level transition planning team has consisted of: Kevin and his parents, a special education teacher, a CTE Special Populations Coordinator, Kevin’s case manager, a regular education teacher, Kevin’s one-on-one worker, and a LEA representative (e.g., school administrator or diagnostician). Kevin’s has not been referred for any services other than those he is receiving from Mental Health through the Developmental Disabilities division.

In preparation for transition planning, Kevin has been administered speech, physical therapy, and occupational therapy assessments focusing on the skills and equipment needed for functioning in the home and community. Kevin’s parents have completed Parent Transition Surveys and Kevin provided input by responding to picture choices in post-school domains.

Kevin’s teacher also administered the Supports Intensity Scale to his parents to determine the frequency, amount, and type of support needs in the home living, community living, learning, employment, health and safety, and social activities Kevin will need after graduation from high school. The assessment indicated that Kevin will need regular and extensive support in all areas of adult life to achieve his post-school goals. In addition he will need protection and advocacy services for managing money, legal issues, self-advocacy, and protection from exploitation.

It is anticipated that in the area of future employment Kevin will need ongoing supported employment to work in a competitive employment placement. Using observational data, situational assessment, and modified picture interest inventories Kevin enjoys interacting with other people, music, horticulture, computers, and clerical type activities in which he has the opportunity to complete a project. Kevin responds well to verbal praise and is able to stay focused on a task for 20+ minutes with occasional verbal redirection. Kevin has developed the skills to operate a variety of switch activated devices (e.g. button maker, blender, etc.), use a paper shredder, and collate papers with a jig. Kevin has worked successfully on an assembly line in the school-based enterprise and has held an on-campus job in the school library checking books in and out using a scanning system.
and shelving books with the assistance of a teacher assistant. He tried a job in the school cafeteria bagging cookies for sale but due to hygiene issues (e.g. drooling) it was determined that this was not a good placement for Kevin.

Kevin loves school and is always eager to learn new skills. He demonstrates a high level of motivation to please his teachers and his parents report that even when he is sick he begs to go to school. Everyone who knows Kevin feels that it would be beneficial for him to be involved in post-secondary education. His recently approved Medicaid waiver services will provide one-on-one ongoing daily and adult living skill training but participation in continuing or compensatory education classes at the local community college might be a good option for Kevin. This type of setting would allow Kevin to develop skills in some of his areas of interest as well as provide a social framework.

Kevin’s residential plans for after graduation are uncertain. Kevin is very happy at home and indicated that he loves his family. Two of his classmates have moved into group homes and through classroom discussion and lessons on post-graduate residential options, Kevin appears to have some understanding of becoming an adult and living more independently, possibly away from his family. Kevin’s mother has very mixed feelings about Kevin’s future living arrangements. As Kevin’s primary caregiver since birth she feels she would be lost without him but realizes that as time goes on it might be necessary to seek an out-of-home placement. Kevin’s father would very much like to see Kevin move into a group home or other supervised post-school living arrangement as soon after high school as possible. Kevin’s father would like to spend more time with his younger daughter and wife and believes that his elderly aunt is not going to be able to assist them much longer with Kevin’s personal care. Both Kevin’s mother and father are very happy about his recent approval for Medicaid waiver services and have stated that this additional support might result in Kevin remaining in their home for several more years.

While at home, Kevin’s mother and great-aunt provide total physical care. Although Kevin could assist with some personal hygiene tasks this is not an expectation for him while in the home. Other than insignificant type choices, all decisions are made for Kevin by his parents. He goes into the community on occasion with his one-on-one worker when she is allowed to use the family wheelchair lift van. Kevin is able to sit in a car using a seatbelt and then be transferred into a Pogo Buggy for community outings but his parents prefer him not to be transported in that manner. This limits Kevin’s community-based learning activities. A great deal of Kevin’s one-on-one worker’s time is spent in the home with him. While at home Kevin enjoys watching DVDs, looking at books, listening to his I-Pod, watching his younger sister play video games, family meals, and making music on his electronic keyboard.

Kevin’s has no understanding of money and does not provide input into his health/medical care. He has been covered under his father’s work insurance policy but his recent approval for a Medicaid waiver program will assist with medical care, equipment, and supplies. Kevin’s parents plan to work with his Mental Health case manager to obtain guardianship since Kevin has now turned 18 years of age. Kevin has never received SSI benefits.
Post-School Goals:

Education/Training: Immediately after graduation, Kevin will participate in habilitative and functional skill training through CAP services and will attend Compensatory Education classes 2 times per week at the community college.

Employment: Within three months of graduation, Kevin will obtain a supported employment position that allows him to work to his maximum stamina and incorporates the use of assistive technology.

Independent Living (if appropriate): After graduation, Kevin will continue to live with his parents and will participate in his daily care routines to the maximum extent possible.

Immediately following graduation, Kevin will participate in 1-2 age-appropriate community and individual community-based activities per week related to horticulture, socialization with young adults, animals, and music.

Potential Transition Activities:

| Instruction | Participate in the Extended Content Standards and obtainment of a Graduation Certificate
|            | Participate in self-advocacy training to increase choice-making skills
|            | Meet with Compensatory Education Coordinator at the Community College to discuss program and process for enrollment
|            | Repeat CTE (Digital Communications) to advance technology skills
| Related Services | Consult with Physical Therapist and wheelchair vendor regarding Motorized Wheelchair
|            | Involve Transition Coordinator and Special Education teacher in annual CAP plan meetings to coordinate transition
|            | Continue speech therapy with a focus on skills needed to use a higher level communication system and investigating appropriate system for the home
|            | Consider guardianship
|            | Investigate eligibility for SSI monthly payments
| Community Experiences | Volunteer at the city Botanical Garden
|            | Investigate handicapped accessible community transportation options
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<th>Adult Living Skills</th>
<th>Participate in monthly age-appropriate community based recreational activities with peers (e.g. movies, bowling, school events)</th>
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<td>Participate in art classes at the local arts council</td>
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<td>Employment</td>
<td>Participate in on-campus clerical job experience in school office and possibly in another school office</td>
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<td>Continue participating in the school-based enterprise or small school business</td>
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<td>Begin referral process to obtain Vocational Rehabilitation for rehabilitation engineering consultation and supported employment</td>
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<td>Visit/tour area businesses related to Kevin’s interests</td>
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<td>Daily Living Skills (if appropriate)</td>
<td>Investigate supported living options</td>
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<td>Conduct in-home accessibility evaluation to determine issues and assistive technology needs</td>
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<td>Functional Vocational Evaluation (if appropriate)</td>
<td>Assess daily living skills to determine if assistive devices can increase independence level in the home and at school</td>
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<td>Conduct situational assessment during on-campus job</td>
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Lissette is a 20 year-old student with Down Syndrome. As an adolescent, Lissette had several surgeries to correct scoliosis. She now walks at an average speed, but she uses a cane for stability areas with elevation changes, such as stairs, hills, curbs, and broken sidewalks. In areas with bumpy terrain, she has been taught by her physical therapist to walk slowly to prevent a fall. She has a number of post-secondary plans.

She plans to attend Montgomery County Community College to take courses. In this program, she will be able to continue to gain skills related to functional academics and career preparation. One requirement of the program is that prospective students complete an application with several pieces of personal information. Lissette wants to complete this application herself, without help from her parents. A few other students from her high school Work Study Skills classes also plan to attend this program. Lissette wanted to attend this program because she knows that courses at the college will help her gain skills for work. Also, she wants to go to school with students her age and she is excited about traveling to the campus by herself using public transportation. She uses her cane each day to practice walking to the bus stop where she will catch the bus to get to the community college next year. However, when asked by her mother and teachers how the walk to the bus stop was, several times she has said it was “difficult” and reported that she almost fell several times.

Lissette and her family, along with her IEP team, decided that she will live at home for approximately four years after she graduates from high school. At that time, she will move into a supported apartment with other young women in the local community. Lissette has expressed a desire to someday get married and have children but she doesn’t currently have a boyfriend. She wants to move out because she has witnessed her older sister moving out of the family home, and she wants these experiences for herself as well.

Lissette does not currently have a job, but she participated in several unpaid work training experiences in the community through her high school’s transition services. She has expressed an interest in jobs related to the food service industry, cleaning, and laundry. She has never had her own bank account, but she has had some experiences managing small amounts of money she received as a gift or for chores around the house. At the job site, she was extremely efficient, but her co-workers had difficulty understanding her requests when she asked for help. In order to better communicate with unfamiliar people, she just received an assistive technology voice output device that is about the size of a palm pilot. Lissette is willing to use the device, but she is till learning to use it effectively.

Lissette’s parents are supportive of her plans, but they worry for her safety. They are interested in community programs that will help Lissette protect herself around unfamiliar people. Lissette also has a tendency to talk to strangers on the public bus, which makes her mother nervous about her trip to the community college.
Paulo is an 18 year old student with a mild cognitive disability and autism. According to his IEP, he is identified as a student with Autism. His verbal skills have dramatically increased in the past six years, although he still primarily communicates through adapted sign language, gestures, words, and vocalizations that his family and teachers understand. Paulo’s family has been actively involved in Paulo’s education and transition planning process. Paulo lives at home with his mother and father, his older brother, and his younger sister. His mother and father immigrated to the United States from Brazil 22 years ago. All of the children were born in the United States and they speak both English and Portuguese fluently. His parents expect Paulo to live with them for at least the next 10 years. When they are no longer able to care for him, he will live with one of his siblings, most likely his sister. Paulo’s independent living skills are important to his family. In fact, at times his teachers were concerned that Paulo did too much housework in comparison to his siblings because sometimes he would arrive at school smelling of bleach and appear tired. When asked about this, his parents explained that work was good for him and that he enjoyed it.

Paulo was provided with the services of an interpreter in elementary and middle school and provided with training in sign language. His IEP team, including his parents, discontinued the services because they agreed that he was not benefiting from the services and that he could effectively communicate with others using adapted sign language, some words, gestures, and vocalizations. Paulo can independently take directions and answer questions that require a yes or no response in both English and Portuguese. He also uses adapted signs and gestures for names of activities he likes and to express basic wants and needs.

Paulo loves watching movies in his house with his sister. He also enjoys outdoor activities such as raking leaves in the yard and sweeping the patio. His older brother played soccer in high school and now plays in college. Paulo can run fast, and has picked up some soccer skills from his brother’s lessons like shooting the ball and passing to a teammate. He has few opportunities for fun outside of the family home, and his parents are open to him having leisure activities as long as he gets his chores done at home.

At school, Paulo loved going to the grocery store to job shadow a man who collected the carts and bagged groceries. Even though Paulo was only supposed to watch the job, the employee he was shadowing was willing to share his work, and Paulo did a good job with collecting the carts. He will need more training to bag groceries. Also, he was unresponsive to the man’s corrective feedback. Paulo kept saying to himself “Good job, Paulo” to himself after he packed each bag, even though the employee tried to show him a better way to pack the bags. He apparently enjoyed the experience, because Paulo would request that his teacher take him to the store even on days that it was not scheduled by signing “Me, work, store, please” over and over. Paulo is quiet and well-mannered. The store manager was impressed with his work ethic and is interested in having Paulo work part-time after he graduates.
Rolanda is a 18 year old student with multiple disabilities. She is a non-ambulatory teenager with a profound cognitive disability. She has athetoid cerebral palsy that impacts all motoric functioning. Until the age of 12, Rolanda ate soft and pureed foods in small amounts several times a day. Choking became a concern after several problems that scared her parents and teachers. Doctors decided that it was necessary at that point for Rolanda to gain nutrition through a g-tube that another person connects to a source of nutritional liquid. She has branchial cysts that required a tracheotomy procedure when Rolanda was nine years old. Currently, Rolanda breathes with the assistance of a ventilator through her tracheostomy. She is an only child, and both of her parents and a part-time in home nurse have a structured schedule for her care on a daily basis.

Rolanda is a friendly, alert student who is responsive to music. She communicates desires and needs inconsistently through switches and picture symbols. She can make choices from three options to select music to listen to, movies to watch, and places to go. Her family will take her most places, as long as no food is served there, because Rolanda gets upset when others eat around her. Her mother thinks that she feels jealous that she can no longer eat the foods she loved as a child. Rolanda loves to watch American Idol on television. Each summer her family travels to see the contestants on tour in a new city.

Rolanda’s parents had her just after they married when they were in their early twenties. They plan that Rolanda will live with them for approximately twenty years. At that point they will seek supported housing in a group home, or Rolanda will move in with a relative who is willing to care for her. Her parents are willing to implement a program that will benefit Rolanda at home, yet they are concerned that she could benefit from technology that they do not have the skills to utilize effectively. They also feel that it is important that Rolanda spend her days working to the best of her ability so that she gains skills and feel a sense of accomplishment in her life. Although her parents are young and strong right now, but it is still important to them that Rolanda provides as much assistance as possible in self-care tasks such as transferring from her wheelchair to the floor, the bed, and to other adaptive furniture throughout the house as well as hygiene tasks. Rolanda’s parents would also like additional information about financial planning and social security income to help them make informed decisions about Rolanda’s security in the future.
Stephanie is a 20 year old student with a mild cognitive disability. Stephanie will graduate from public school in less than six months. She is a quiet young woman who works diligently without much interaction with others. Stephanie will engage in conversation with her family and friends at school, but she is rather quiet at work. She currently lives with her mother, father, and younger brother but would like to live with her older sister in a few years. Stephanie likes to go to the mall with her girlfriends, and she was on the dance club at her high school.

For the past few years, Stephanie has worked at a pretzel shop in the mall approximately 20 hours each week where she is responsible for all steps in making the pretzels, including preparing the dough, shaping the pretzels, baking the pretzels, and placing them in the glass display case.

Stephanie enjoyed her job at the pretzel shop, but she would prefer to work in a restaurant. She thinks that a downtown restaurant would be an exciting place to work, but right now she doesn’t have the skills necessary to be a cook or prep chef. Stephanie needs to acquire new skills to reach her goal of working in a downtown restaurant. Stephanie expressed a desire to apply for jobs at local chain to gain experience in a restaurant setting. Also, her mother and father have taken her to and from her summer job, but after graduation, she will work all year round. Her parents will not be able to transport her regularly to and from work every day. She will need to make other transportation plans, but she never taken a public bus on her own.

Stephanie’s parents would like some strategies to help Stephanie get ready for work in the mornings after they leave the house for work. They expressed concern that she will forget something such as her employee identification, her cell phone for emergencies, her house keys, or her money. Also, Stephanie reads at a third grade level and is unable to read signs that she sees in unfamiliar places. She also has problems reading the time on analog clocks, which are found in most in food service environments.