
Self-Determination in the Transition to Adulthood

— Presented by UIC DSCC and —
IL-LEND

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Illinois Leadership & Education for Neurodevelopmental Disorders (IL-LEND)

Part of a national program that trains **self-advocates, family members, and graduate students** from various disciplines on:

- Policy
- Advocacy
- Research
- Clinical Skills



University of Illinois at Chicago Division of Specialized Care for Children (UIC DSCC)

We partner with Illinois families and communities to help children and youth with special healthcare needs connect to services and resources.



Objectives for Today

What is self-determination?

Why is it important?

How do you promote it?

Check out your folder for additional resources!

Transition & Self-Determination

What is transition?

The life-long process of making and acting on plans for:¹

- Life after high school
- The move from pediatric health care to adult health care

Why is transition important?

- Transition services help optimize long-term outcomes for employment and independent living.²

What is self-determination?²

Self-Awareness

Self-Advocacy

**Decision
making**



Why is self-determination important?

- Students with disabilities who practice self-determination skills may be more likely to:
 - Achieve **academic success** in postsecondary education^{3,4,5}
 - Have positive adult outcomes in **employment, healthcare access, and independent living.**⁶
 - Report better **quality of life**^{7,8}
 - **Actively contribute** to their transition planning⁹
 - **Envision person-centered life and career goals** for their future⁹

What is self-awareness?

“...Construct an **enduring and coherent sense of self** that will serve them well in meeting the challenges & opportunities of life”¹⁰

“The ability to **examine and understand** who we are relative to the world around us”¹¹

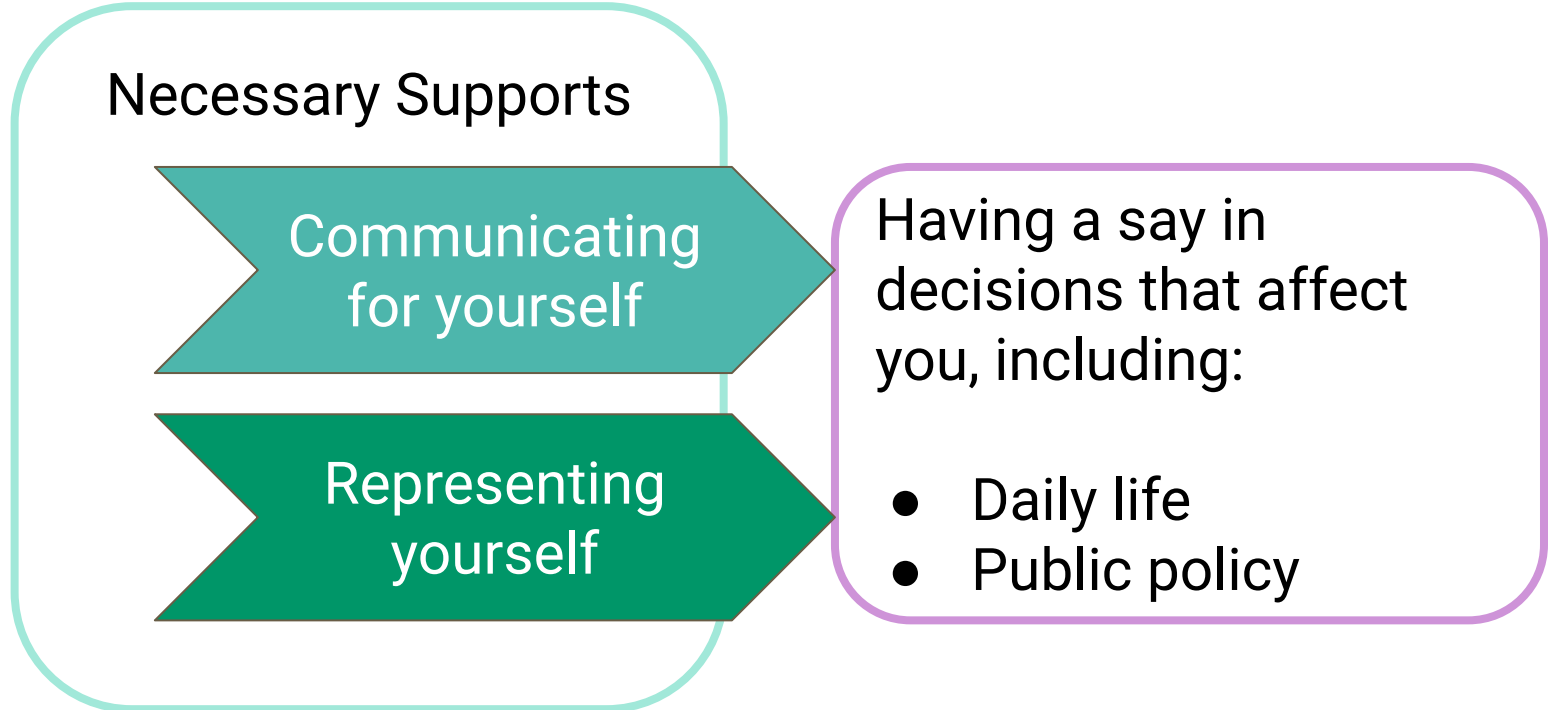
“...Creating a sense of self”¹⁰

“...“the development of a **deeper sense of self-consciousness**”¹¹

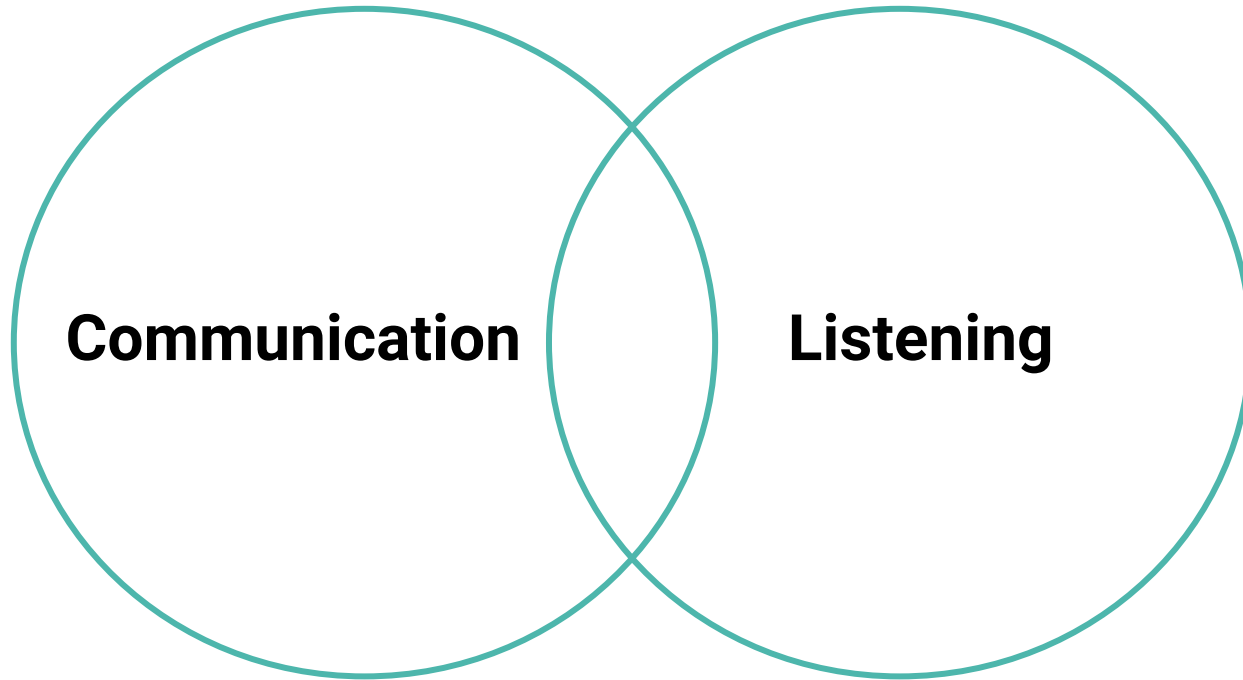
How can we promote self-awareness?

- Instructional and guided activities such as journaling or reflective writing
- Utilize formal strengths inventories
- Helping individuals use their strengths to propose solutions
- Provide opportunities for people to recognize their efforts toward solving a problem

What is self-advocacy?¹²



How can we promote self-advocacy?



Video from INCLUDEnyc:¹³ [10 Self-Advocacy Tips for Young People with Disabilities](#)

What is decision-making?

Decision making
Choosing from
unlimited options



Choice making
Choosing from
two or more
available options

Video from PACER:¹⁴ Jeff on Medical Decision Making

How can we promote decision-making?¹⁵

Assist youth to:

1. Understand situations and choices they face
2. Think about options and information
3. Understand what will be expected of them and the risks involved when they make decisions

Give youth:

1. Chances to observe and experience options before they make a decision
2. List of questions to ask when a problem arises
3. A direction of what they want to achieve (SMART goals)

Takeaway Points

- **Self-determination...**
 - looks different for everybody
 - is not about complete autonomy
 - is a lifelong process; it's never too early to start!

THANK YOU!
Time for Q&A

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Take-Home Activities

**YOUTH
QUIZ**

I AM #ONTRAC

A LIST OF QUESTIONS TO HELP YOUTH
LEARN TO MANAGE THEIR HEALTH AND
GET READY FOR ADULT CARE

PUT A SYMBOL IN EACH BOX TO COMPLETE THE QUIZ

GOT IT! NEEDS WORK

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Take-Home Activities

Self-Awareness Worksheet

What are three of your greatest strengths?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What two things seem harder for you than for other kids your age?

- 1.
- 2.

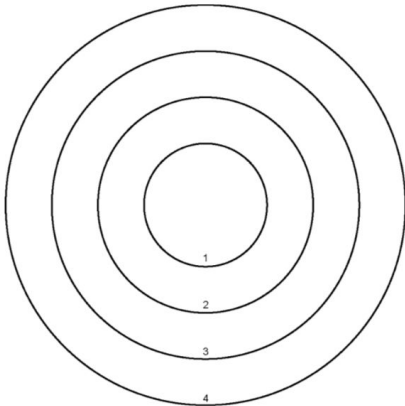
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Take-Home Activities

CIRCLE OF SUPPORT

A Circle of Support is a group of people who provide friendship and support for an individual. Frequently these groups agree to meet on a regular basis to help a person accomplish certain personal visions and goals. The members of a circle are usually friends, family members, teachers, neighbors, and service providers. People involved in the Circle of Support are involved because they care about the focus person.

This exercise is a social scan. It will give you a quick picture of who is in your life. This exercise is very useful in clarifying who you can rely upon to provide support and advice when you need it.



Originally published at UAA website (currently under construction):

University of Alaska Anchorage Center for Human Development. (n.d.). Self Determination. Retrieved March 10, 2019, from

<https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-health/departments/center-for-human-development/interests/self-determination-toolkit.cshtml>

Currently available via Let's Get To Work website:

University of Alaska Anchorage Center for Human Development. (n.d.). Lesson Plan Examples. Retrieved March 10, 2019, from

<http://www.letsgettoworkwi.org/index.php/lgtw-project-resources/self-determination-resource-library/lesson-plan-1-13/>

Take-Home Activities

Role Playing Assertive Behavior

It helps to practice a new skill before you have to really use it. Pair up with another student and take turns acting out the situations below. Remember to include the nonverbal (facial expressions, posture, body language) as well as the words you'd say in the situation you are acting out.

1. A salesman is trying to sell you an encyclopedia that you don't want.
2. Another student wants to copy the homework you did last night for his/her own assignment.
3. You are at work and your boss has given you instructions to do something that you don't understand.
4. You want to go to the movies, but the theater is not accessible and you use a wheelchair.
5. You want to give a staff person who works with you positive feedback about something they've done.
6. You want to tell your parents that you want to be included in your IEP planning meeting.

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Take-Home Activities

SMART Goals

S: Specific, rather than general. Focus on one step of what you want to accomplish. Example: Instead of “I want to get healthier”, try narrowing it down to “I want to exercise more often”.

M: Measurable. How will I tell if I met my goal? How will I measure my progress? Example: “I want to exercise for 30 minutes, 3 times each week.”

A: Achievable. Prioritize. Is this goal within reach? Example: Ask yourself, “Do I have 3 days each week with 30 minutes of free time to exercise? If not, can I change my routine to make time?”