

INTRODUCTION TO STUDENT LED IEP MEETINGS

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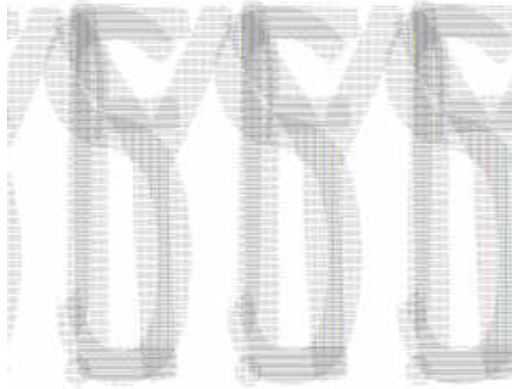


YES! Youth Employment
Solutions Center



TASH is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and leader in disability advocacy. Founded in 1975, TASH advocates for human rights and inclusion for people with significant disabilities and support needs – those most vulnerable to segregation, abuse, neglect and institutionalization.

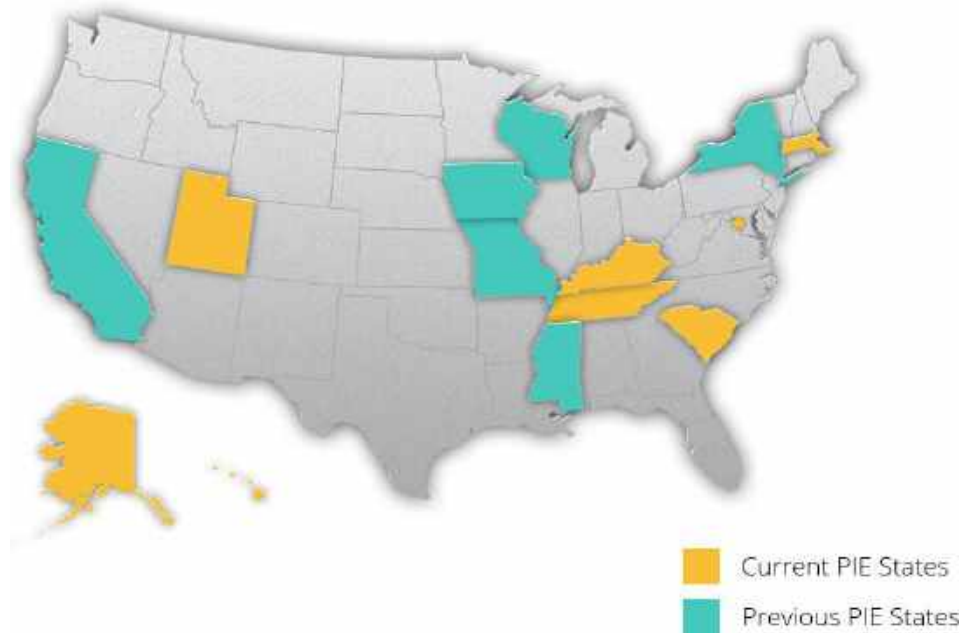
TASH works to advance inclusive communities through advocacy, research, professional development, policy, and information and resources for parents, families and self-advocates. The inclusive practices TASH validates through research have been shown to improve outcomes for all people.



TransCen is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving education and employment success of youth and young adults with disabilities.

TransCen's work is driven by the belief that employment and active community participation are attainable for all individuals, regardless of disability or other perceived barriers to employment.

Partnerships in Employment States



UTAH SCHOOL TO WORK PROJECT

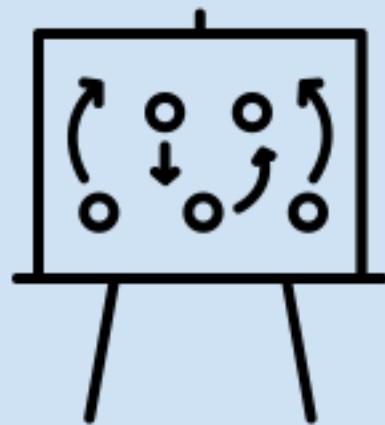
Provides technical assistance to schools in an effort to improve employment outcomes for transition age youth with intellectual or developmental disabilities, focusing on those who have significant barriers or high support needs. School to Work aims to engage transition students in employment related services prior to graduation so they are more prepared for competitive, integrated employment prior to or upon exiting school.

Utah School to Work Project currently has 9 Project Demonstration sites, with 61 students enrolled cumulatively. Each site has a local coalition of partners including :

- Educators
- Voc Rehab Counselors
- DWS Counselor
- Employment Provider specialist

OVERVIEW

- What are Student Led IEPs?
- Purpose
- Benefit, Importance & Impact
- Common Obstacles
- Ways to get started NOW!



TELL US ABOUT
YOU:



What is your role?

POLL QUESTION:

How familiar are you with
student directed/student
led IEP meetings?



"THE BIRTHDAY PARTY"

WHAT IS A STUDENT LED IEP MEETING?

Student-led IEPs reflect practices that support active student participation in IEP development and processes in which students take a leadership role in making decisions about their future. Throughout the IEP process, IEP team members (**including the student**) assess student strengths and needs and develop goals.

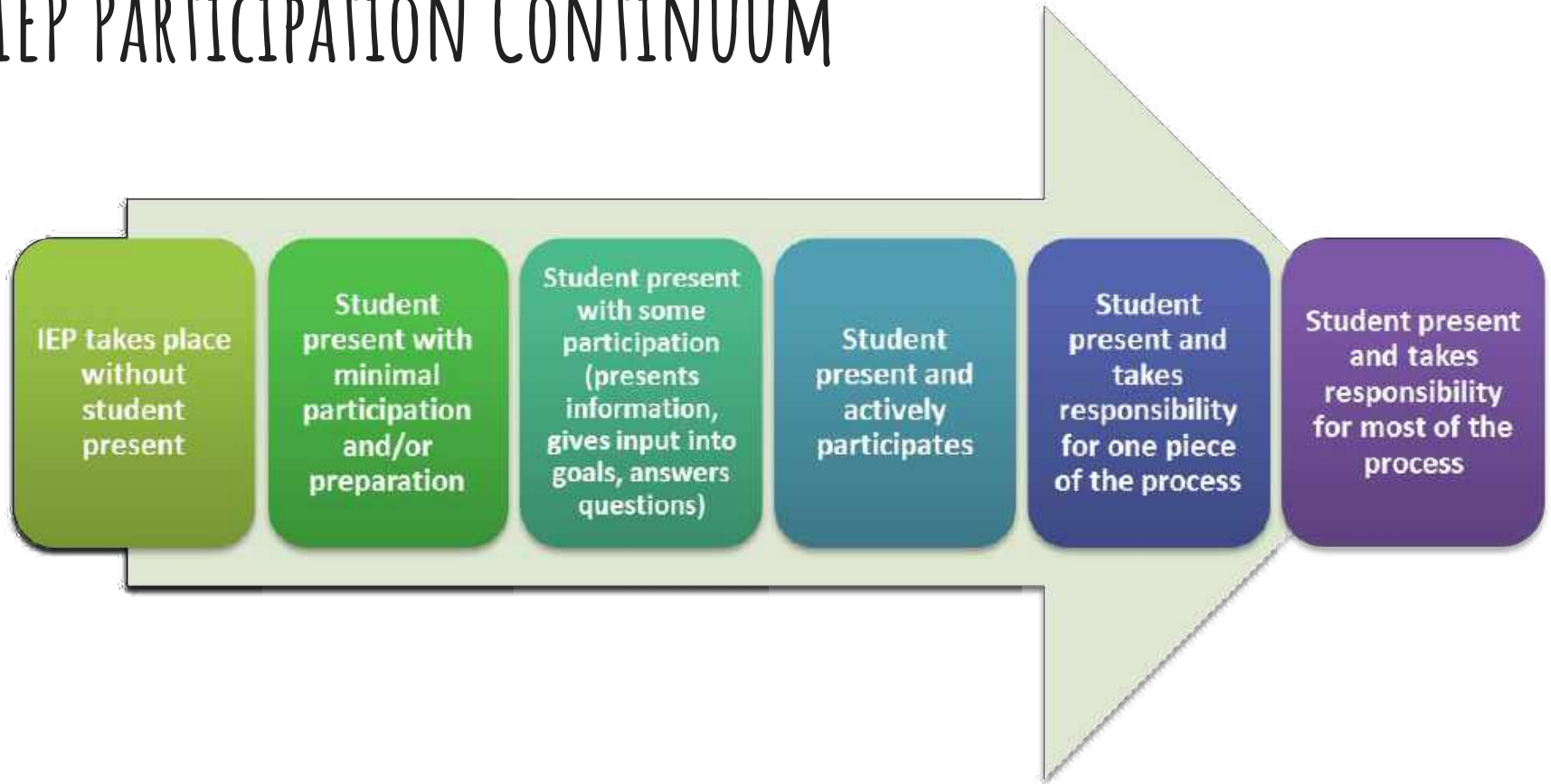
These plans are then implemented and regularly monitored in order to determine whether or not adjustments should be made.

http://dc-transition_guide.frameworked.com/page/studentled_iep_toolkit_introduction_

WHY STUDENT LED IEPs ARE IMPORTANT

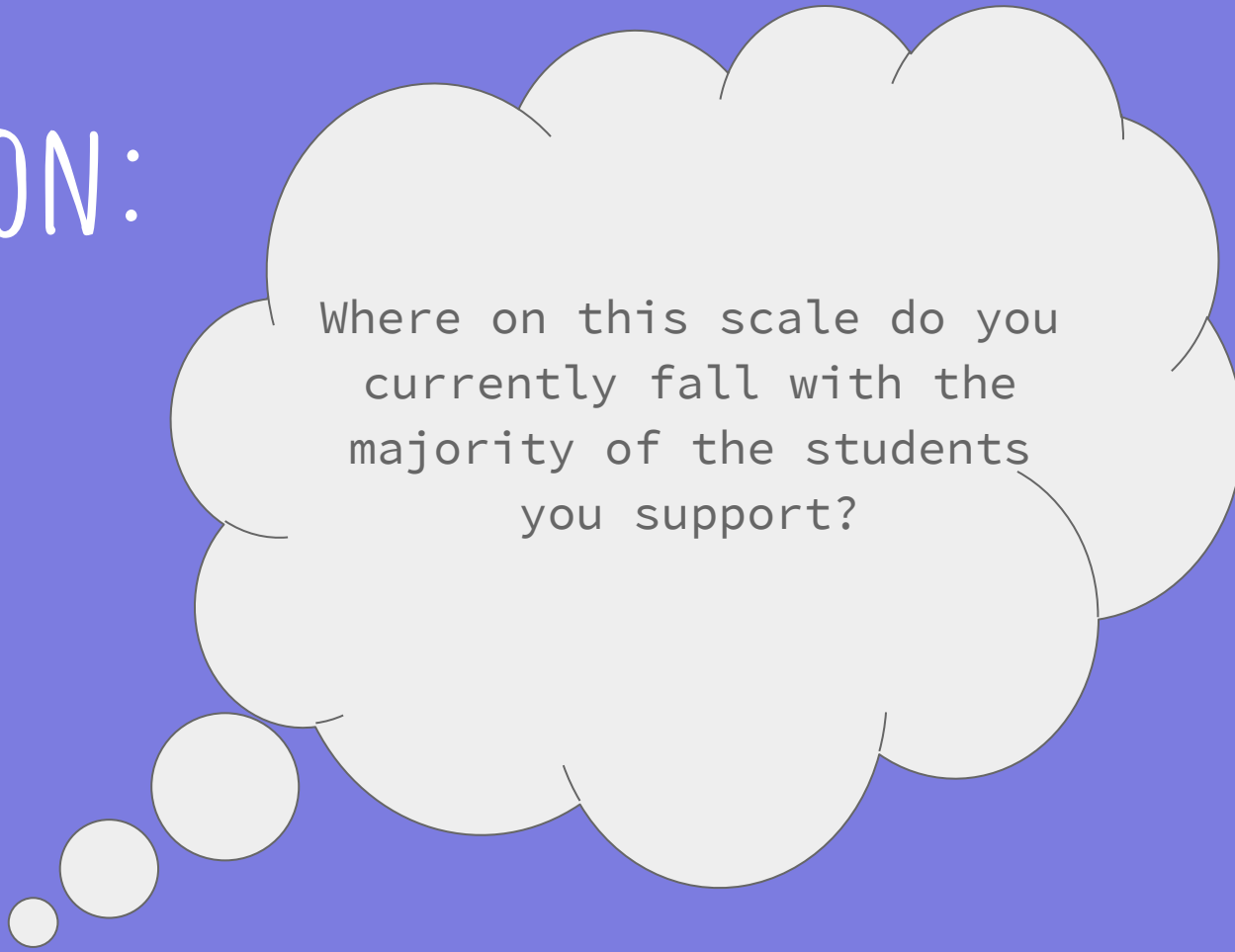
- If students don't know what an IEP or goals are... how are they suppose to be working on their goals?
- Helps students understand about their disability and how they can work on improving their weaknesses.
- Gives students real life experience in problem solving, social skills, leadership and decision making
- Gives students self-advocacy skills & raises self-esteem
- Makes the IEP a more enjoyable/positive process!

IEP PARTICIPATION CONTINUUM



POLL QUESTION:

Where on this scale do you currently fall with the majority of the students you support?





PARTICIPATION



We are **mandated** to invite students to attend their IEP meetings. This invitation does not guarantee **meaningful** student involvement in the meeting, nor does it equal meeting participation on behalf of the student.

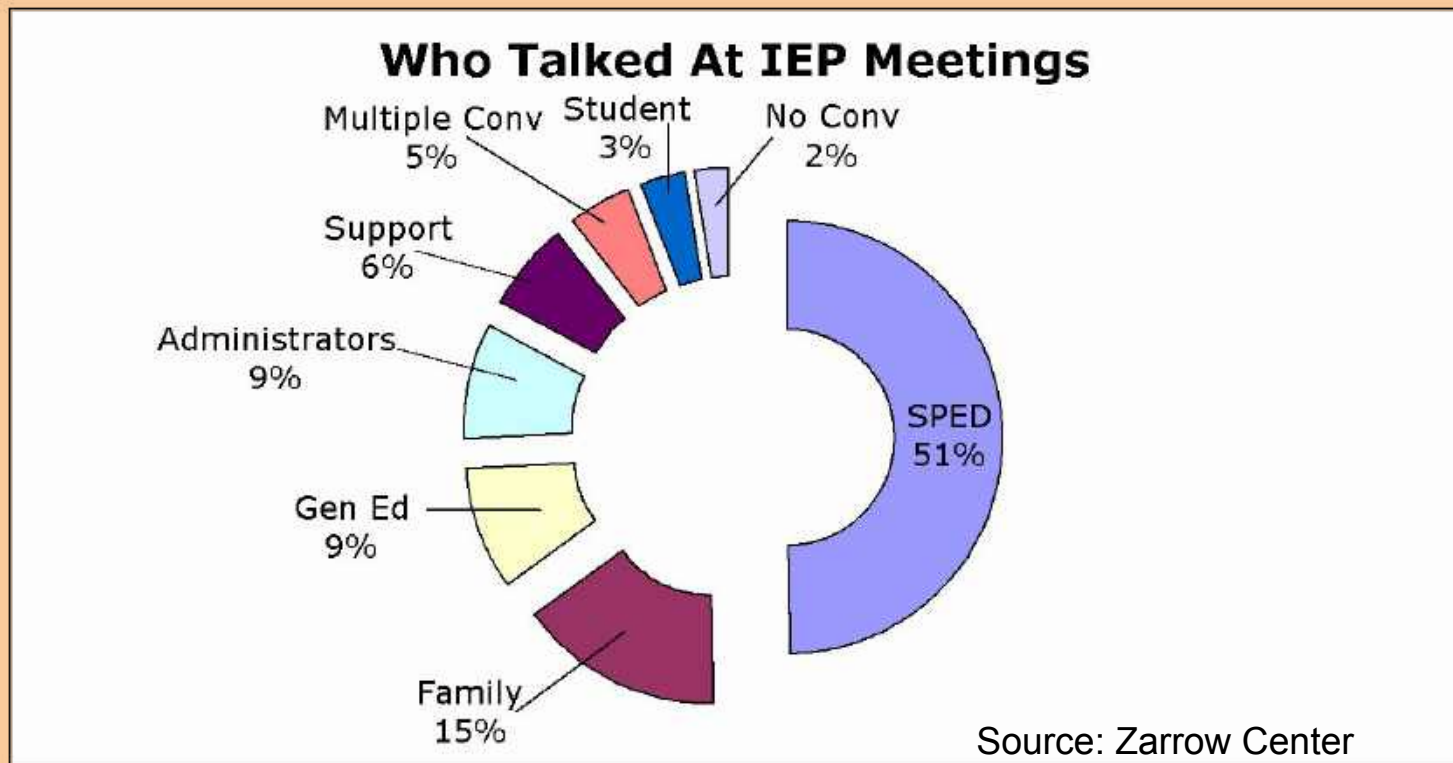
JUST BEING THERE ISN'T ENOUGH...

- When students aren't taught to participate:
 - Meeting atmosphere is intimidating
 - Agenda driven rather than student-centered
 - Students don't actively participate and discuss preferences
 - Self-determination skills inhibited

TOKEN MEMBER OF THE IEP TEAM

- Students can often be token members of the IEP teams
- Invitation to be present does not provide opportunity for equal participation or decision making.

WHO TALKS DURING IEP MEETINGS?

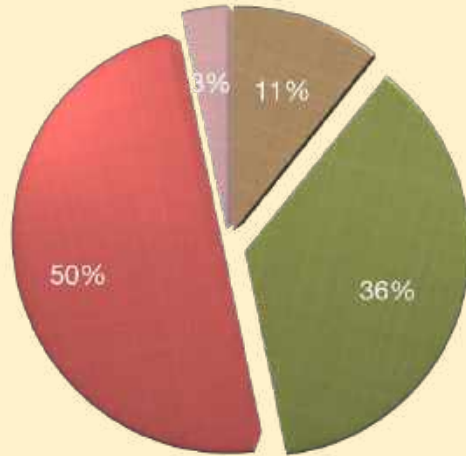


SHIFTING PERSPECTIVE: YOUTH LEADERSHIP

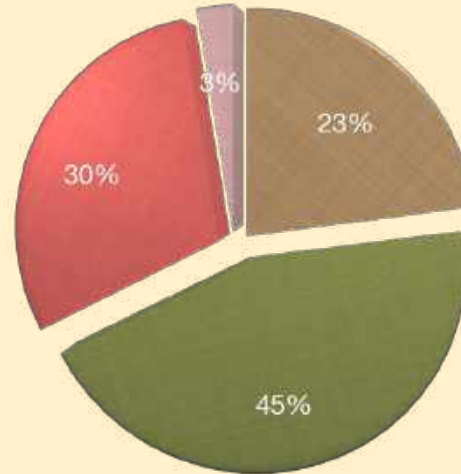
Who is Participating in IEPs?

- Do Not Attend Meetings
- Are Present But Participate Little
- Are Moderately Active
- Are Leaders in Planning

Percentage of Students Who...



Intellectual Disability



Autism

WE BELIEVE STUDENT-LED IEP MEETINGS ARE MEANINGFUL
OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL STUDENTS TO TAKE LEADERSHIP ROLES
IN THE CREATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR EDUCATION
AND TRANSITION PLANS.

STUDENT LED IEPs CAN BE IMPLEMENTED WITH ALL STUDENTS!

- Students of any age
 - Elementary school and beyond!
- Students with any disability
 - Mild, Moderate, Severe
- Students in ANY instructional setting
 - Inclusion
 - Resource
 - Cross-categorical
 - Self-contained



COMMON OBSTACLES TO STUDENT LED MEETINGS



COMMON OBSTACLE # 1: I DON'T HAVE TIME!



Suggestions...

- Re-allocate time & make a priority
- Doesn't have to take long - consider a course or sessions on Self-Directed IEPs
- Preparation may take longer but over time will decrease
- Involve other team members in the process

COMMON OBSTACLE # 2: ACCESS TO GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM AND HIGH STAKES TESTING

Suggestions...



- All are priorities! Skills needed for student led IEPs directly/indirectly relate to standards and general education curriculum
- Student led IEPs focus on skills critical for success in life

COMMON OBSTACLE # 3: MY STUDENTS AREN'T MOTIVATED!

Suggestions...



- Make it fun!
 - Allow the students to pick the pictures, colors, themes, etc
- Students might express lack of interest however it's important to teach them the purpose of the IEP
- This obstacle leads to a self-fulfilling prophecy
- Once a student leads their IEP, they take more ownership in the transition process

OBSTACLE #4: SOME STUDENT'S DISABILITY IS TOO SIGNIFICANT



Suggestions...

- Assumptions are dangerous!
- Be creative with adaptations (it's what we do best!)
- All students can communicate in some way - pictures, symbols, signs, gestures
- "Whenever appropriate means always" (Wehmeyer, 1998)

OBSTACLE #5: I WILL LOSE CONTROL OF THE MEETING

Suggestions...



- Yes, the meeting will not be scripted as past meetings and you can't be sure what students will say but it's worth the risk!
- It is a good thing to lose some control - if you always get your way, students are not really being self-determined!

OBSTACLE #6: WE DON'T HAVE THE RESOURCES

Suggestions...



- Mini grants through local organizations (Lions, Rotary clubs)
- Use school resources - computer labs, video equipment, etc.
- IEP templates can be re-used

OBSTACLE #7: NO ONE ELSE AT MY SCHOOL WANTS TO TRY IT!



Suggestions...

- It is generally easier to try new ideas or implement change with a collaborative team
- Your success with students will inspire others!

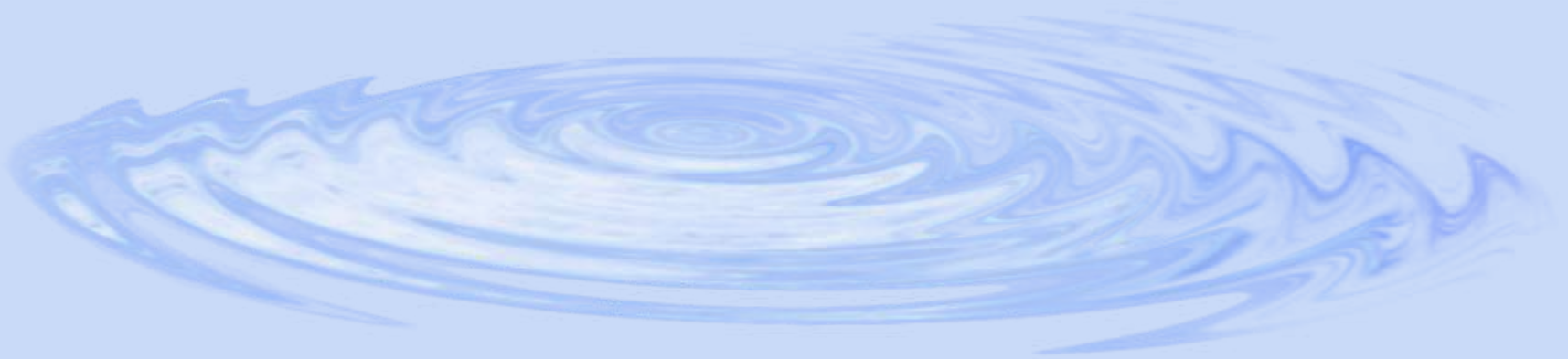
OBSTACLE #8: MY ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT IS LIMITED

Suggestions...

**People aren't
always going
to be there for
you, that's why
you learn to
handle things
on your own.**

- Suggest student-led conferences as a school wide approach to begin
- Continue to discuss with your administrator - focus on the student benefits (it's hard to argue that point!)
- Have the student talk with the administrator

THE IMPACT



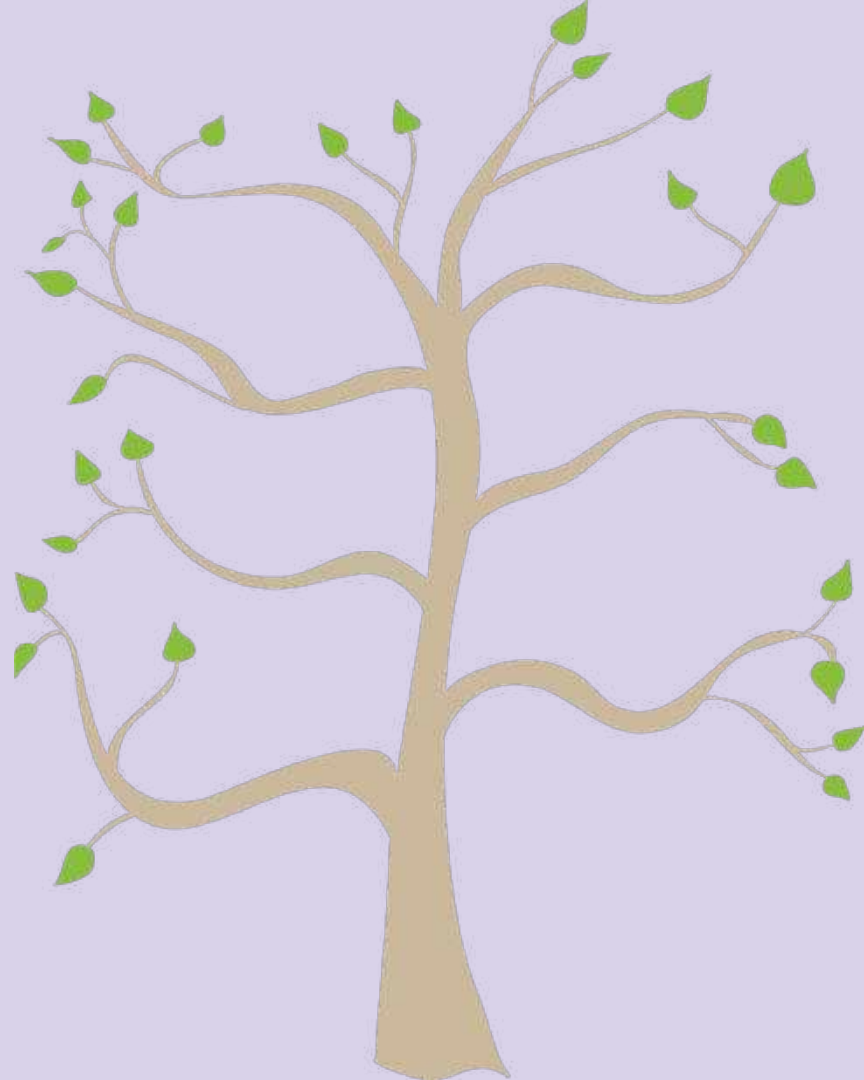
IMPACT ON STUDENTS:

- Students attend more IEP meetings – they become more meaningful
- Students talk more about their interests
- Students share more about their dreams for the future
- Students talk more about the job and careers they want
- Students feel more in control
- Students feel more confident about reaching their IEP goals



IMPACT ON FAMILIES:

- More parents attend IEP meetings
- Increased parental involvement and voice
- Improved communication with teacher
- More self-determined youth
- Positive interaction with school professionals



IMPACT ON PROFESSIONALS:

- Promotes positive relationships with student and families
- IEP meeting becomes more about student and less about the process
- ALL Team member learn about the student
- Shows students in a new light
- Indicator 13 & 14



POLL QUESTION:

What are some ways you support students to meaningfully participate in their IEP meetings?

AJ LEADING HIS IEP MEETING



WAY TO GET STARTED **NOW**

- Use existing material - Positive Personal Profiles
- Explore PowerPoint and presentation templates
- Start with one student at a time
- Incorporate skills for student led IEPs in classes
 - Support student in leading a class discussion
 - Provide opportunities for students to present
- Include as a goal in their IEP
- Get pictures & videos (with permission)



QUESTIONS & COMMENTS?



PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT WEBINAR ON
OCTOBER 15TH AT 3PM MT

5

steps to a meaningful student led IEP meeting & strategies for
implementation

CONNECT WITH US!

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