



Opening Doors to Self-Determination



A Project Transition Interagency Council Initiative...

Volume 1 Issue 1

January, 2012

PURPOSE:

The purpose of *Opening Doors to Self-Determination* is to introduce you to the concepts and the value of self-determination. The goal is to share ideas, suggestions and teacher tips regarding the development of self-determination (S-D) knowledge and skills within the lives of students.

THE FIRST ISSUE:

The first issue is devoted to a review of the S-D surveys conducted in 2010-11 of students in 8th and 12th grade. Subsequent issues will address topics identified in the surveys as “strengths” and as “needs”, S-D awareness, instruction, and incorporating S-D into the IEP process. Even though survey results are a starting point for discussion, the newsletter will also highlight research-based information and best practices for teaching or support of S-D.

Opening Doors to Self-Determination will be circulated each quarter of the school year, beginning in January, 2012.

WHAT IS SELF-DETERMINATION?

Although different definitions of S-D can be found in current literature, the common thread of directing one’s own life and making informed choices are key concepts. The following two definitions offer insights into S-D tenets:

Self-determination is the desire, ability and practice of directing one’s own life. It is often referred to as “The BIG picture” because it has so much to do with the person you are and the person you want to be.

*The 411 on Disability Disclosure
(National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth)*

Self-determination is a combination of skills, knowledge and beliefs that enable a person to engage in goal directed self-regulated, autonomous behavior. An understanding of one’s strengths and limitations together with a belief in oneself as capable and effective are essential to self-determination. When acting on the basis of these skills and attitudes, individuals have greater ability to take control of their lives and assume the role of successful adults in our society.

Field, Martin, Miller, Ward, and Wehmeyer (1998)



To read more:

[Project 10 Self-Advocacy and Self-Determination](http://www.project10.info/DetailPage.php?MainPageID=185&PageCategory=Taxonomy%20of%20Effective%20Practices&PageSubCategory=Student%20Development)
<http://www.project10.info/DetailPage.php?MainPageID=185&PageCategory=Taxonomy of Effective Practices&PageSubCategory=Student Development>

[National Center on Secondary Education and Transition \(Self-Determination: Supporting Successful Transition\)](http://www.ncset.org/publications/printresource.asp?id=962)
<http://www.ncset.org/publications/printresource.asp?id=962>

[I’m Determined](http://www.imdetermined.org/)
Virginia Department of Ed Self-Determination Project
<http://www.imdetermined.org/>

WHY IS S-D IMPORTANT?

Simply put, S-D relates to positive postsecondary outcomes. That is, “students who have high levels of self-determination achieve greater success after they exit high school.”

(Wehmeyer & Palmer, 2003; Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1997; Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1998)



WHY IS S-D IMPORTANT? (Continued)

It has been shown that when youth with disabilities exercise personal control over their lives they learn to take responsibility for their actions and experience the outcomes of their choices. Furthermore, when youth participate as effective decision-makers during their IEP meetings they:

- understand their disability
- learn how that disability will affect their dreams of college, work, independent living and relationships
- build the confidence to communicate their dreams and needs



To read more:

[National Center on Secondary Education and Transition](http://www.ncset.org/topics/sdmhs/faqs.asp?topic=30)
(Self-Determination for Middle and High School Students: Frequently Asked Questions)
<http://www.ncset.org/topics/sdmhs/faqs.asp?topic=30>

SURVEY SAYS...

Results of Lee County S-D Surveys 2010 & 2011

Surveys of randomly chosen students in 8th and 12th grades were conducted to discover student awareness of and proficiency in self-determination skills. Eighty-nine (89) 8th grade surveys and sixty eight (68) 12th grade surveys were completed respectively in 2010 and 2011.

Results indicated that students were participating in IEP meetings, were learning about postsecondary options at school and at home or in the community, and were able to identify many components of self-determination such as making choices, setting goals and problem solving.

Results also indicated that a majority of 8th grade students *did not know* they had a disability; more than one-third 12th grade students *were unaware of* their disability.

Additional survey results will be shared in later issues in order to highlight a topic or area of S-D for development in the classroom.



To inquire about the survey results contact FDLRS Island Coast: Pattimc@leeschools.net

PROJECT TRANSITION

What is *PROJECT TRANSITION of Lee County*?

PROJECT TRANSITION of Lee County is an interagency council that is funded by a state grant through Project 10: Transition Education Network located at USF St. Petersburg. Its mission is to expand and strengthen collaborative relationships among families, students, agencies, and school and community resources to provide successful transition of young adults with disabilities by increasing the awareness of all available post-school options.

PROJECT TRANSITION of Lee County meets monthly and has representation from twenty-eight agencies and the School District of Lee County.



For more information on *PROJECT TRANSITION of Lee County*, go to the Project 10 website Florida District Resources and click Lee County:

<http://www.project10.info/DistrictFlorida.php>

~ ~ ~



Thank You!

To all Staffing Specialists, Learning Resource Specialists, Department Heads and Teachers who participated in the S-D surveys during 2010-2011.



Core Components of Self Determination



- ✓ Choice Making
- ✓ Decision Making
- ✓ Problem Solving
- ✓ Goal Setting & Attainment
- ✓ Self-Regulation
- ✓ Self-Instruction
- ✓ Self-Advocacy
- ✓ Self-Advocacy
- ✓ Internal Locus of Control
- ✓ Self-Efficacy
- ✓ Efficacy Expectations
- ✓ Self-Awareness & Self-Knowledge

(I'm Determined, Virginia Department of Education's Self-determination Project)

THE S-D UMBRELLA

Take a look at the S-D umbrella to see the many facets of self-determination. *Opening Doors to SD* will highlight an area in each issue. The area of focus in this issue is Self-Awareness and Understanding One's Disability.



To read more:

Core components of Self Determination

http://www.imdetermined.org/files_resources/131/core_components_of_self-determination.pdf

SELF-AWARENESS and UNDERSTANDING ONE'S DISABILITY

The Lee County S-D Survey results indicated that nearly 2/3 HS students know they have a disability and less than 1/2 of the 8th grade students surveyed know they have a disability.

When responding to the questions as to how their disability affects their school experience nearly 1/3 12th grade students believed they were affected by their disability with regard to time/test, assignments, grades, and communication. About 1/2 8th grade students believed they were affected by their disability (8th grade students were not questioned as to how the disability affected school performance).

These results highlight the fact that many students we teach are not knowledgeable of and/or do not understand their disability. If we ask ourselves what our students should know in order to participate fully in IEP meetings, *self-awareness* and *self-advocacy* come to mind. An integral part of both is knowledge of one's disability.

An activity to help students get started on developing self-awareness and an understanding of their disability can be found in the manual *The 411 on Disability Disclosure: A Workbook for Youth with Disabilities*. See page (1-5) Just What Do You Know About Yourself and Your Disability if you have a copy, or access the "411" link below:



Try this activity: <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure>
Be sure to also review Unit 1: Self-Determination...the Big Picture!



Chat-Box Corner

Chat back with us about your ideas, needs, thoughts, and success stories!

The **CHAT BOX CORNER** will be included in each issue for teacher-to-teacher chats about what's happening in the classroom, sharing successes and the challenges of meeting student needs, etc.....

In this first issue, look at our thoughts to guide your way. Just click the link, fill it out to fill us in, and click again to return.

CHAT BOX CORNER Survey:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/BBWHK7S>

You can also contact the S-D E-Letter team anytime by clicking below: We hope to be chatting with you soon!



[S-D CONTACT](#)



SAVE THE DATE!

Wills, Trusts and Guardianships

Presented by local attorney

Roger O'Halloran

February 23 (6:30 pm-8:00 pm)

LCPEC, Board Room

Promising Pathways National Conference on Autism

Speakers: Temple Grandin, Ph.D

Tristram Smith, Ph.D

April 14th (8:00 am-2:30 pm)

FGCU Alico Arena

Standing Up for Me

Self-Determination Curriculum

For: ESE Teachers, K-12

March 22, 2012 (5:00 pm-8:00 pm)

Location TBA

