

Improving Student Achievement and Outcomes through Parent and Family Involvement

Parent and Family Involvement Tool Kit for Virginia Schools



Developed by
Parent Involvement Priority Project
Virginia Department of Education

Virginia Department of Education
and the Center for Family Involvement at the Partnership for People with Disabilities at
Virginia Commonwealth University

Why is Parent Involvement So Important?

Parents play a vital role in their children's education. Studies show a strong correlation between family involvement and student outcomes, including academic achievement. This relationship holds true for families of all economic, racial/ethnic, and educational backgrounds and for students of all ages, with or without disabilities. Student benefits include:

- Attaining higher grade point averages and scores on standardized tests.
- Enrolling in more challenging academic programs.
- Passing more classes and earning more credits.
- Having better attendance.
- Showing improved behavior at home and at school.
- Demonstrating better social skills and adaptation to school.

(From *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement*, 2002, by Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp. National Center for Family & Community Connections with Schools, Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. Available through their web site at

<http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/Keyfindings-reference.pdf>.)

Schools and the educators who staff them are one of the first places parents and families turn to in looking for information. In this tool kit you will find online resources that you can share with parents and family members to encourage and support their involvement in the education of their children.

This booklet's resources can be found at www.centerforfamilyinvolvement.org.

Credits:

Graphic Design
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Table of Contents

Section 1:

Academic Resources	2
--------------------	---

Section 2:

Assistive Technology Resources	3
--------------------------------	---

Section 3:

Person-Centered Resources	4
---------------------------	---

Section 4:

Collaborative Resources	5
-------------------------	---

Section 5:

Self-Determination Resources	6
------------------------------	---

Section 6:

Individual Education Program Resources	7
--	---

Section 7:

Transition Resources	8-9
----------------------	-----



Academic Resources

Training and Technical Assistance Centers (TTACs), funded by the Virginia Department of Education(VDOE), work to improve educational opportunities and contribute to the success of children and youth with disabilities (birth through 22 years).

Virginia Department of Education Training and Technical Assistance Centers:

- George Mason University: <http://www.ttacjmu.org/>
- James Madison University: <http://www.jmu.edu/ttac>
- Old Dominion University: <http://ttac.odu.edu>
- Radford University: <http://ru.ttacconnect.org/>
- The College of William and Mary: <http://education.wm.edu/centers/ttac>
- Virginia Commonwealth University: <http://www.vcu.edu/ttac>
- Virginia Tech: <http://www.ttac.vt.edu>

Also visit TTAC Online at www.ttaonline.org.



Assistive Technology Resources

- Assistive Technology Network of Virginia (Virginia Department of Education):
www.ttaonline.org/atmdp/
- AIM-VA: Accessible Instructional Materials of Virginia
www.aimva.org



Person-Centered Resources

Person-centered practices focus on the needs and preferences of the individual; empower and support the individual in defining the direction for his/her life; and promote self-determination, community involvement, contributing to society and emotional, physical and spiritual health.

Here are some web sites that can be used to learn more about person-centered planning, thinking and practices.

- <http://www.vcu.edu/partnership/cdservices/pcprb.htm>
- <http://personcenteredplanning.org/>
- <http://www.dimage.com/page27.html>
- <http://www.learningcommunity.us>
- <http://www.helensandersonassociates.co.uk>
- <http://www.disabilityisnatural.com>
- <http://www.circlesnetwork.org.uk>
- <http://www.communityworks.info>
- <http://www.bc.edu/schools/gssw/nrcpds>



Collaborative Resources

Partnership for People with Disabilities at Virginia Commonwealth University:

- Collaborative Standards-Based IEPs Online Training: A series of five training modules that address collaborative skills, person-centered practices, and basing goals on statewide age-appropriate standards.
<http://www.vcu.edu/partnership/ieps/index.html>
- Creating Collaborative IEPs: A Handbook second edition (in English and in Spanish): This handbook focuses on collaborative skills and practices that support full team involvement in the IEP process, including that of the student.
<http://www.vcu.edu/partnership/ieps/>

TTAC Online Collaborative/Teaming Webshop Training Resources
www.ttaonline.org

- Select “Online Training” tab
- Search for the following training titles

The Team Meeting Process: When schools work to effect change, the work often falls on the shoulders of the team. Team members need to make sure that their limited meeting time is used effectively and that there is a process for making certain that tasks are completed. A structured team meeting process offers a way to make meetings more productive.

What’s Your Team Type?: The webshop provides an introduction to the characteristics of the different team member types. An activity and description of the different team member types are included.

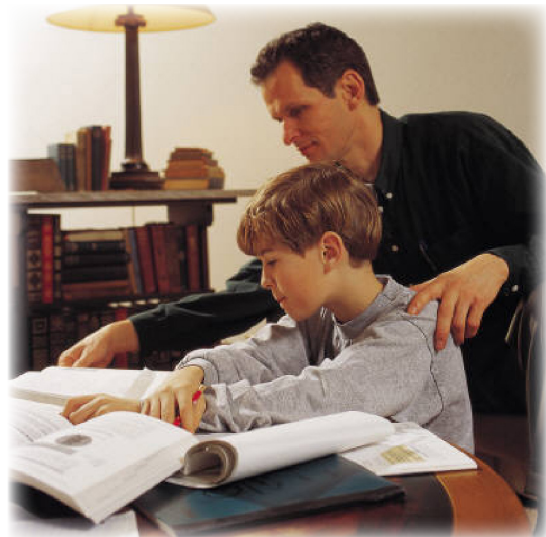
Collaboration and Communication: This www.Workshop provides information on collaboration and communication in the schools.

Self-Determination Resources

I'm Determined and IEP Resources

www.imdetermined.org

- For Youth: Self-Determination is all about you taking control of your life! Part of taking control is taking responsibility for your education, your goals and your future.
<http://www.imdetermined.org/youth/>
- For Parents: Self-determination is about youth with disabilities taking control of their lives. Strategies to assist your son or daughter in developing self-determination skills can be found here.
<http://www.imdetermined.org/parents/>
- For Educators: Here you will find a variety of tools and resources to support implementation of I'm Determined materials
<http://www.imdetermined.org/educators/>



Individual Education Resource Programs

Parent Educational Training Center (PEATC):

www.peatc.org

- Select Special Education, then choose Transition and scroll down page to “Next Steps” for transition program resources including fifteen informational webinars.

Transition Resources

- **Going to College:** contains information about living college life with a disability. It's designed for high-school students and provides video clips, activities and additional resources that can help students get a head start in planning for college. www.going-to-college.org
- **HEATH Resource Center (Online Clearinghouse on Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Disabilities):** information for students with disabilities on financial assistance, scholarships and materials that help students with disabilities transition into college, university, career-technical schools, or other postsecondary programs. The "Modules" tab includes links to a "Parents' Guide to Transition." www.heath.gwu.edu
- **National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET):** A national resource for secondary transition including resources and effective practices. Under "Hot Topics," the "IEP and Transition Planning" links to a number of helpful resources, including a thorough and very readable explanation of the IDEA transition requirements under "Frequently Asked Questions." www.ncset.org
- **National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC):** A national Technical Assistance and Dissemination center funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). Under the "Students and Families" tab are links to many resources related to transition, including a helpful postsecondary goals activity, and the "Transition Assessment Guide." www.nsttac.org
- **A Life 4 Me:** A middle-school transition web site designed to introduce students with challenging disabilities to opportunities in their communities. <http://www.alife4me.com/>

Transition Resources (cont'd)

- PACER Center (Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights): A parent training and information center for families of children and youth with all disabilities from birth through 21 years. Under the “Programs & Resources” tab is a link to “Publications,” and the topic “Transition” includes a lengthy list of (free) handouts on a broad array of topics. “Parent Tips for Transition Planning” is a helpful starting place. www.pacer.org
- Virginia Easy Access and Virginia Navigator: A web site developed for seniors, adults with disabilities, their caregivers, and the providers that support them. Virginia Easy Access has helpful information about services and supports available across the Commonwealth and is the gateway to the Virginia Navigator provider database. www.easyaccess.virginia.gov
- Community Services Boards (CSBs): Virginia’s Community Services Boards (sometimes called Behavioral Healthcare Authorities) are local government agencies created by the Code of Virginia. CSBs exist in every locality and provide community-based mental health, substance abuse, and developmental disability services. From the home page, click on the “CSB/ BHA Directory” tab for local CSB contact information. www.vacsb.org
- Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services: The state’s vocational rehabilitation agency provides a variety of service options. Employment services help people with disabilities get ready for, find, and keep a job. Several community-based services support people with significant disabilities to maximize their independence, employment, and full community inclusion. The department also provides Assistive Technology and Disability Determination services. The “Find an Office” tab on the home page links to a list of contact information for field offices. www.drs.virginia.gov





VA Department of Education

The Center for Family Involvement at the
Partnership for People with Disabilities at
Virginia Commonwealth University
provides training and resources for families and
the people who work with them.



**CENTER FOR
FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

www.centerforfamilyinvolvement.org
1-877-567-1122



The Partnership for People with Disabilities is a university center for excellence in developmental disabilities at Virginia Commonwealth University. VCU is an equal opportunity/affirmative action university providing access to education and employment without regard to age, race, color, natural origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, veteran's status, political affiliation or disability. If alternative formats of this documentation are needed, please contact the Partnership for People with Disabilities at 804-828-3876 or 800-828-1120 (TTY Relay).