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Transitioning from School to Employment

Valerie L. Mazzotti
University of Oregon, Eugene
David W. Test
University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Serena

Serena is a 14-year-old student with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) enrolled in the eighth grade at an urban middle school. She was diagnosed with ASD at the age of 4 and has been served under IDEA since preschool. She is verbal and has no major physical limitations. She lives with her parents and a younger sister in an urban community. Her parents are actively

involved with her education and have a good relationship with Serena's special education teacher. The family participates in services and social events at their church, where the community welcomes Serena openly. Serena's mother states that Serena often helps out with chores at home, and especially enjoys helping prepare dinner for the family.

Serena receives academic instruction in a self-contained setting with six other students with severe disabilities. Four of the students in the class have physical disabilities, and two are non-verbal. The students participate in community-based instruction once a week. Serena participates in a school club called "Circle of Friends", which is a school fundraising club and involves being paired with a peer without disabilities to raise money for the school through events like bake sales and car washes. Serena indicates that she loves cooking and participates in an integrated home and consumer science class twice per week. She also participates in music and art class with her peers without disabilities. Serena has a number of strengths including using the "one-more-than" strategy to purchase items and reading over 150 sight words. She also has a relatively good memory. If asked to run an errand composed of four different tasks, she usually remembers all of the associated tasks. Serena excels in her special education classroom when she works with an adult or a peer tutor from a general education classroom.

Serena struggles in social situations and tends to use a loud voice when she speaks. She often discloses information that is socially inappropriate to the context in which she is involved. She also perseverates on the color purple, insisting on wearing purple clothing daily, and using only a purple crayon, pencil, or marker. She has been paired with a peer buddy without disabilities because she has difficulty transitioning from class to class in unstructured situations. Loud group settings, such as physical education in the gym, are highly aversive for Serena. These environments often cause Serena to become anxious and agitated, resulting in her curling up on the floor and covering her ears to escape.

Serena's special education teacher has started working with her on becoming more aware of her strengths, needs, and disability as they relate to her in-school and postschool success. It is anticipated that in the area of future employment, Serena will need ongoing supported employment to work in a competitive employment environment. Recently, her teacher has started discussing the idea of supported employment with Serena and her family. Upon graduation, Serena would like to be placed in a job within her community that best suits her abilities and preferences. Because of Serena's love of food and food preparation, she believes she would like to work in the food service industry. For Serena to be trained on the appropriate work-related and social skills to be successful with this job, a job coach would be beneficial.

Rusty

Rusty is a 17-year-old student with severe disabilities. Rusty has a severe cognitive disability, is in a wheelchair, and has a speech impairment. He is a friendly, verbal, and attentive student who loves music. He has a functional vocabulary and can read a number of community sight words. Rusty likes to listen to music, watch movies, and enjoys going on family outings in the community. Rusty loves to watch *Dancing with Stars* on television.

Rusty is an only child and lives at home with his mother and father who plan for Rusty to live at home until he is 20-years-old. At that point, they will seek supported housing in a group home, or he will move in with a relative who is willing to care for him. Additionally, his parents feel it is important for Rusty to spend his days working to the best of his ability, so he can gain skills and experience a sense of accomplishment in his life. It is important to his parents that Rusty receives instruction on life skills (e.g., cooking, money, personal hygiene, transferring from wheelchair to furniture) and self-determination skills (e.g., self-advocacy, choice-making, goal-setting), so he can perform daily living and work tasks independently. Rusty's parents would also like additional information about financial planning and social security income to help them make informed decisions about Rusty's security in the future.

Rusty has participated in vocational training activities at school. Specifically, Rusty worked in a school-based enterprise, during which his duties included collecting inventory and assisting in ordering new supplies using the computer. Rusty's parents would like to see him pursue his computer interests after high school through customized employment. Rusty has indicated that he would like to start his own business in his community. Based on interviews with business owners, there is a need for DVD and video production, website development, and video game testing. Rusty's special education teacher has provided Rusty with information about these three

jobs and intends on focusing Rusty's community-based experiences in these three areas. Currently, Rusty has indicated he would like to have his own business copying DVDs for local businesses. Rusty's teacher is working with a local record store and computer programmer to develop a paid internship position for Rusty.

Cassandra

Cassandra is a 19-year-old student with severe disabilities. She is attending her neighborhood community college where she participates in a post–high public school program for 18- to 21-year-olds that is preparing her for movement to adult life. The program includes instruction in "real-life" and community settings. The focus of the program is to promote inclusion in the community and interaction with her peers without disabilities. Additionally, she receives daily content instruction in functional reading and math. Cassandra also participates in vocational and daily living skills training, which is primarily community-based. All of her coursework is delivered in individual and small-group settings in the classroom and in the community, except for Digital Communications (a career technical course), which she has taken (using a modified curriculum) with the support of a one-on-one instructional assistant. Additionally, Cassandra participates in an on-campus work placement in the school library.

Along with her family, Cassandra plans to stay in the program for 18- to 21-year-olds until she ages out at 21, which will provide her with two more years of services and additional instruction to prepare her for living and working as an adult. She lives at home with her mother, 11-year-old sister, 16-year-old brother, and grandmother who helps with her care. After receiving state-level mental health funding for personal care and 10 hours of one-on-one community-based services for the last four years, Cassandra was recently approved for Medicaid waiver-funded services. This funding source will provide Cassandra with an array of services to meet her needs, including augmentative communication devices, case management, one-on-one community and home support, respite, specialized equipment and services, and medical transportation. Funds will also be available for supported employment and day support after high school graduation.

Cassandra had a comprehensive transition component in place since she was 14. The development of a complete transition component was determined appropriate for Cassandra at an earlier age due to her complex needs and the length of time needed to obtain appropriate adult services. In preparation for transition planning, Cassandra has been administered speech, physical, and occupational therapy assessments focusing on skills and equipment needed for functioning in the home and community. Cassandra's parents have completed Parent Transition Surveys, and Cassandra has provided input by responding to picture choices in postschool domains. Transition assessments indicated that Cassandra will need regular and extensive support in all areas of adult life to achieve her postschool goals. Additionally, she will need protection and advocacy services for managing money, legal issues, and self-advocacy.

It is anticipated that in the area of future employment Cassandra will need ongoing supported employment to work in a competitive employment placement. Cassandra enjoys interacting with other people, music, horticulture, computers, and clerical activities. She responds well to verbal praise and is able to stay focused on her tasks and activities for 20+ minutes with occasional verbal redirection. Cassandra 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. Cassandra 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 help of a peer buddy.

Cassandra's postschool residential plans are uncertain. Cassandra is very happy at home and indicated that she loves her family. Two of her classmates have moved into group homes and through classroom instruction on postschool residential options, Cassandra appears to have some understanding of becoming an adult and living independently. Cassandra's mother would like to see her move into a group home or other supervised living arrangement after high school. Cassandra has no understanding of money and does not provide input with regard to her health/medical care. She has been covered under her mother's work insurance policy, but she was recently approved for a Medicaid waiver program, which will assist with medical care, equipment, and supplies. Cassandra's mother has guardianship of Cassandra and she has never received Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits.

INTRODUCTION

Although school is full of transitions—from preschool to elementary school, elementary to middle, and middle to high school—it is the transition from high school to adult life that is often the one that is the most anticipated and anxiety provoking. It is at this point that students' and families' dreams for the future come face-to-face with the reality of being employed, going to postsecondary education, or both. For students with severe disabilities, this reality is often harsh. In terms of employment, data from Wave 5 of the National Longitudinal Transition Study –2 indicated that while 60.2% of all students with disabilities had a paid job outside the house a year or more out of high school, the percentages were lower for groups of students who might be considered students with severe disabilities. For example, only 32.7% of youth with intellectual disability, 37.2% of students with autism, and 39.2% of students with multiple disabilities were employed outside the home a year or more after leaving high school (Newman et al., 2011).

Clearly more must be done while students are still in school to improve these outcomes. Halpern (1992) defined transition as "a period of floundering that occurs for at least the first several years after leaving school as adolescents attempt to assume a variety of adult rules in their communities" (p. 203). The purpose of this chapter is to provide readers with information so that their students with severe disabilities will avoid the floundering period and receive transition services and supports needed for making a transition to employment and adulthood.

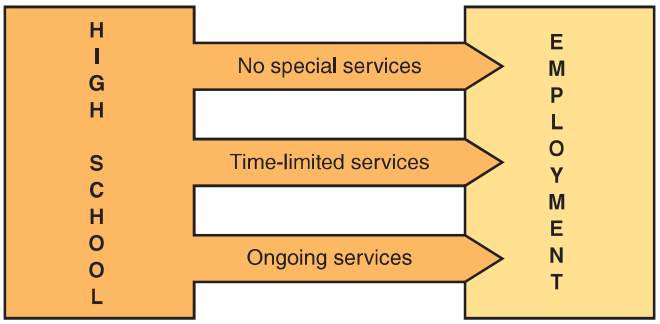
DEFINITION OF TRANSITION

In order to fully understand the transition from school to adulthood for students with severe disabilities, it is necessary to examine how the definition of transition has evolved. In 1984, the Director of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), Madeleine Will, identified the transition from school to work for students with disabilities as a national priority and defined transition as

> *. . . an outcome-oriented process encompassing a broad array of services and experiences that lead to employment. Transition is a period that includes high school, the point of graduation, additional postsecondary education or adult services, and the initial years of employment. Transition is a bridge between the security and structure offered by the school and the opportunities and risks of adult life. Any bridge requires both a solid span and a secure foundation at either end. The transition for school to work and adult life requires sound preparation in the secondary school, adequate support at the point of school leaving, and secure opportunities and services, if needed, in adult situations (Will, 1984, p. 2).*

Based on this definition, the *transition bridges model* (or OSERS model) was developed, which included three bridges to postschool employment for students with disabilities (see Figure 15–1). The first bridge, *no special services*, involved students moving from school to postschool employment without any services or with services readily available in the community (e.g., using the want ads, online job listings, friends, family members). The second bridge, *time-limited services*, involved services that were temporary with the intent that individuals would become independently employed and services would end (e.g., vocational rehabilitation services). The third bridge, *ongoing services*, involved services that would be ongoing for individuals with disabilities who would continue to need supported employment throughout their life (e.g., supported employment services). The *transition bridges model* was an important first step in defining the transition from school to adulthood for individuals with disabilities because it moved the focus of postschool employment from segregated employment to

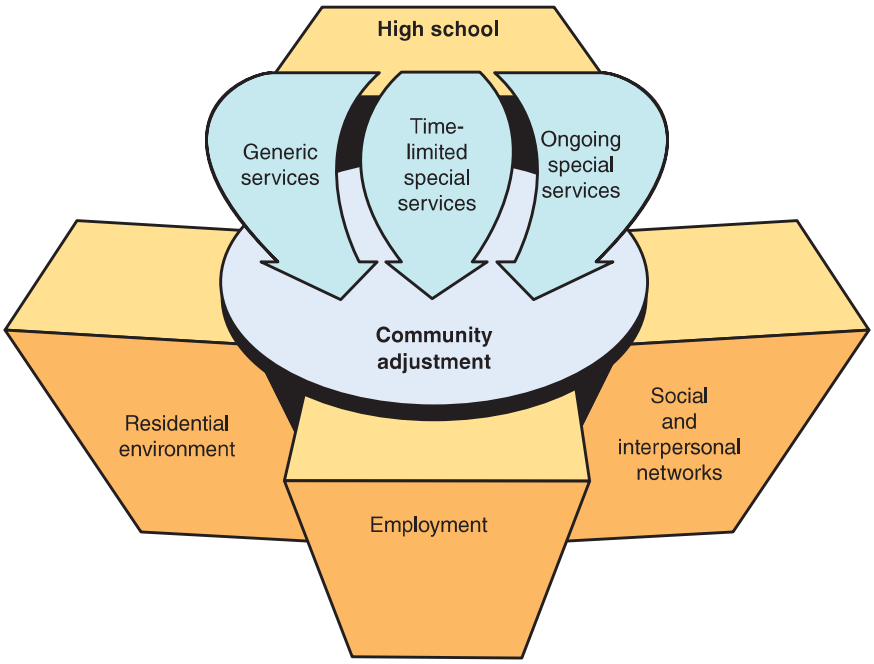
FIGURE 15–1
OSERS Model



supported employment where individuals with disabilities would have the same opportunities as individuals without disabilities to become gainfully employed.

While postschool employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities are important, the *transition bridges model* left out some key factors in the transition from school to postschool life. In 1985, Halpern expanded the transition model by suggesting that transition was not specifically about postschool employment, instead it was about quality of life and community adjustment. The revised transition model suggested by Halpern included three interrelated pillars that represented community adjustment (see Figure 15–2). The first pillar, *employment*, included various employment-related

FIGURE 15–2
Revised Transition Model



(From "Transition: A Look at the Foundations" by Andrew S. Halpern, *Exceptional Children*, Vol. 51, 1985, pp. 479–486. Copyright 1985 by The Council for Exceptional Children. Reprinted with permission.)

components (e.g., job finding networks, job search skills, wages, benefits). The second pillar, *residential environment*, included the quality of the community in which the individual lived (e.g., safety, community services, recreation opportunities). The third pillar, *social and interpersonal networks*, included the capacity to build and maintain relationships (e.g., daily interactions, self-esteem, family relationships and support, friendship). By expanding the model, transition from school to adulthood became more about overall quality of life and not just employment.

Although the transition movement expanded rapidly through the 1980s, it was not until 1990 that federal law recognized and mandated transition services for students with disabilities. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1990 (P. L. 101-476) was the first school-related federal mandate to formally recognize transition services for students with disabilities. Specifically, the law mandated that individualized education programs (IEPs) include a transition component for students with disabilities to begin no later than age 16. Additionally, IDEA 1990 required that the transition service needs of students be met through coordinated planning, which focused on movement from school to postschool life, emphasizing the role of family and adult service agencies in the transition planning process.

In 1997, IDEA was again reauthorized and the focus on transition services shifted from an educational process to an outcome-oriented process for students with disabilities (Cameto, 2005). Specifically, IDEA 1997 defined transition as

> *. . . a coordinated set of activities for students with a disability that is: (a) designed within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to postschool activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation; (b) based upon the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests; and (c) includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other postschool adult living objectives, and, when appropriate acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation (20 U.S.C. § 1400 sec. 602 [30]).*

IDEA 1997 (P. L. 105-17) focused on aligning students' educational programs to meet their goals for postsecondary life. Additionally, it required that transition services for students with disabilities begin at the age of 14.

In 2004, IDEA was amended and went one step further to focus on accountability and results by defining transition services as

> *. . . a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to postschool activities including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation; is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other postschool adult-living objectives, and when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation (20 U.S.C. § 1401 sec. 602 [34]).*

Unfortunately, IDEA (2004) reverted to the 1990 requirement that transition services begin no later than age 16 for students with disabilities. However, each state still had the right to require an earlier starting point in their state and many states recognized that best practices suggest that the transition planning process begin as early as possible, so they kept the age at 14 (Test, Aspel, & Everson, 2006). Because of this, readers should check to see what is required by their state.

TRANSITION PLANNING

In order to meet the requirements of IDEA (2004) and provide students with severe disabilities effective transition services leading to successful employment, it is important to understand the key elements of the transition planning process. Effective transition planning ensures that students with disabilities have every opportunity to reach their postschool goals (Test et al., 2006). The transition planning process involves a number of stakeholders including regular and special education teachers, the student with a disability, parents, outside service agencies, related service representatives, and anyone important in the student's life (Cameto, 2005). Transition planning provides students with disabilities and their families the opportunity to set goals for postschool life and make connections with adult service agencies to meet their postschool goals. Transition planning involves several steps, including (a) using transition assessment to identify student's strengths, needs, preferences, and present levels of performance; (b) developing postschool goals and related annual IEP goals that reflect information obtained through transition assessment; and (c) identifying related transition services to help students attain postschool goals (Mazzotti et al., 2009). This section will discuss components of the transition planning process, including (a) the requirements of the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR), Part B, Indicator 13; (b) age-appropriate transition assessment; (c) person-centered planning; (d) self-determination and student involvement in the transition planning process; and (e) the role of teachers in the transition planning process.

Indicator 13 Requirements

To ensure states meet the requirements of IDEA 2004, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in coordination with OSERS developed 20 State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) performance indicators related to Part B (i.e., children with disabilities; age 3 to 22). Of the 20 Part B indicators, four are directly related to secondary transition services, including (a) Indicator 1, improving graduation rates; (b) Indicator 2, decreasing drop-out rates; (c) Indicator 13, improving transition services; and (b) Indicator 14, improving outcomes for students moving from secondary to postsecondary activities. Specifically, *Indicator 13* is defined as

> *. . . appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age-appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition services needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority. (20 U.S.C. 1416[a][3][B]; OSEP, 2009).*

The National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC, 2009a) in collaboration with OSEP developed an Indicator 13 checklist to help states collect data. The Indicator 13 checklist includes eight items and provides guidelines for writing IEPs that meet both federal requirements of the Indicator, as well as help facilitate the transition planning process. The following are the required items:

1. *Is there an appropriate measurable postsecondary goal(s) in this area?* Postsecondary goals should be measurable (i.e., behavior identified can be counted as completed or not) and occur after the student graduates from high school. Figure 15–3 provides examples and non-examples of measurable postsecondary goals.

FIGURE 15–3
Indicator 13 Examples/Non-Examples of Measurable Postsecondary Goals

Examples of Measurable Postsecondary Goals	Non-Examples of Postsecondary Goals
Serena • Employment: After graduation, Serena will obtain a supported employment position in the food service industry. • Education: After graduation, Serena will take continuing education classes at the local community college. • Independent Living: Upon completion of high school, Serena will independently prepare for work each day, including dressing, making her bed, making her lunch, and accessing transportation.	Serena • Employment: After graduation, Serena prefers to work at Mic's Taco Stand. *("Prefers" does not indicate an explicit behavior by the student that will occur after high school that can be observed as occurring or not occurring.)* • Education: Serena wants to learn more about cooking when she graduates from high school. *("Wants" does not indicate an explicit behavior by the student that will occur after high school that can be observed as occurring or not occurring.)* • Independent Living: Serena enjoys cooking and wants to continue to help her mom in the kitchen after graduation from high school. *("Enjoys" and "wants" do not indicate an explicit behavior by the student that will occur after high school that can be observed as occurring or not occurring.)*
Rusty • Employment: After graduation, Rusty will receive job development services from vocational rehabilitation or a community rehabilitation program and will participate in supported self-employment within one year of graduation. • Education: After graduation, Rusty will participate in a compensatory education program and will take life skills classes (e.g., cooking, money and banking, self-advocacy, personal hygiene). • Independent Living: After graduation Rusty will participate in community-integrated recreational/leisure activities related to music, movies, and art at movie theaters, concerts at the local community college, art and craft museums downtown, and the entertainment store at the mall.	Rusty • Employment: Rusty will apply for services through vocational rehabilitation to support his participation in a vocational center program. (*There is no indication that this will occur after high school.*) • Education: Rusty wants to improve his functional communication skills after high school. *("Wants" does not indicate an explicit behavior by the student that will occur after high school that can be observed as occurring or not occurring.)* • Independent Living: Rusty wants to attend community dances sponsored by the local YMCA. *("Wants" does not indicate an explicit behavior by the student that will occur after high school that can be observed as occurring or not occurring; this is also an activity that could occur while Rusty is in school because there is no indication that it will occur after high school.)*
Cassandra • Employment: Within three months after graduation, Cassandra will obtain a supported employment position that allows her to work to her maximum stamina and incorporates the use of assistive technology for at least 10 hours per week. • Education: After graduation, Cassandra will participate in functional skill training through Community Alternatives Program (CAP) services one time per week at her home and in the community to develop her functional communication skills. • Independent Living: After graduation, Cassandra will attend independent living classes at an adult day program and will participate in her daily care routines to the maximum extent possible at home with her parents.	Cassandra • Employment: Cassandra will express her preferences related to her postsecondary employment options, given picture symbols and the iTalk2, an augmentative communication device. *(This goal could be achieved while Cassandra is still in high school and does not reflect a postschool goal of employment.)* • Education: Cassandra will receive CAP services to work on functional communication. *(There is no indication of how Cassandra will improve her communication skills or that this goal will occur after graduation.)* • Independent Living: Cassandra will communicate personal needs associated with daily care to her mom using picture symbols. *(There is no indication of how Cassandra will improve her communication skills to express her personal needs or that this goal will occur after graduation.)*

2. *Is (are) the postsecondary goal(s) updated annually?* Postsecondary goals should be updated annually and require a yes or no answer by the teacher.
3. *Is there evidence that the measurable postsecondary goal(s) were based on an age-appropriate transition assessment?* There should be evidence in the student's IEP file that transition assessment had been *conducted and was used to develop the student's postsecondary goals.*
4. *Are there transition services in the IEP that will reasonably enable the student to meet his or her postsecondary goal(s)?* Transition services (i.e., type of instruction, related service, community experience, development of employment and other postschool adult living objectives, acquisition of daily living skills [if appropriate], and provision of a functional vocational evaluation) should be included in the IEP to facilitate the student's movement toward postsecondary goals.
5. *Do the transition services include courses of study that will reasonably enable the student to meet his or her postsecondary goal(s)?* A student's course of study should be aligned with his or her stated postsecondary goals.
6. *Is (are) there annual IEP goal(s) related to the student's transition services needs?* The student's annual IEP goals should relate to the student's transition service needs and align with postsecondary goals
7. *Is there evidence that the student was invited to the IEP team meeting where transition services were discussed?* There must be evidence that the student was invited to participate in the IEP team meeting for the current year.
8. *If appropriate, is there evidence that a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority?* Representatives from adult service agencies (e.g., postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, community participation) should be invited to participate in the development of the IEP. There must be evidence that parents or the student (if age of majority) consented to inviting the agency representative.

IDEA (2004) mandates that a student's IEP (a) include all of the items on the Indicator 13 checklist and (b) must be in effect beginning no later than the age of 16, or earlier, if required by your state or if deemed appropriate by the student's IEP team. Additionally, postsecondary goals must be updated annually and based on age-appropriate transition assessment.

Age-Appropriate Transition Assessment

Transition assessment is the critical first step in the transition planning process and includes both formal and informal types of assessment (Mazzotti et al., 2009). Often, students with disabilities are faced with difficult decisions in middle school regarding diploma track options, academic and employment preparation, and postschool goals; therefore, transition assessment should begin in middle school and be an ongoing process as students progress through high school (Neubert, 2003). IDEA (2004) mandates that age-appropriate transition assessment be used as part of the transition planning process to identify the strengths, preferences, needs, and interests of students with disabilities. Additionally, teachers of students with disabilities are required to use transition assessment as a basis for developing students' postschool goals. The Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT) of the Council for Exceptional Children defined transition assessment as

> *. . . the ongoing process of collecting data on the individuals' needs, preferences, and interests as they relate to the demands of current and future working, educational, living, and personal and social environments. Assessment data serve as the common thread in the transition process and form the basis for defining goals and services to be included in the IEP (Sitlington, Neubert, & Leconte, 1997, p. 70).*

When considering this definition, it seems logical that transition assessment would be the first step in the transition planning process because it provides information needed to write postschool goals that reflect a student's strengths, needs, preferences, and interests.

Transition assessment plays several roles in the transition planning process. First, it provides a method for identifying students' strengths, needs, preferences, and interests, which in turn allows students to make informed choices about their goals for postschool life (Neubert, 2003; Sitlington & Payne, 2004). Second, it provides information about the student, enabling the IEP team to identify specific skills students need to help them meet their postschool goals (Sitlington & Payne, 2004). Third, it helps students take charge of the transition planning process because it makes them aware of their self-determination skills (e.g., ability to set goals, make choices, advocate for themselves) (Field & Hoffman, 2007). Finally, transition assessment can provide information on a number of skill areas (e.g., self-determination, vocational, independent living, academic) so that students' profile of skills needed to meet postschool goals can be identified for employment, education, and independent living (NSTTAC, 2007; Sitlington & Clark, 2007). When conducting transition assessment, three questions should guide the process:

1. Where is the student now?
2. Where does the student want to go?
3. How will the student get there?

In considering these three questions, it is important to be familiar with the types of transition assessment. Broadly, there are two types of transition assessment, formal and informal, which can provide valuable information about a students's strengths, needs, preferences, and interests. Using a variety of informal and formal assessments can lead to an overall picture of the student, which will help facilitate the transition planning process.

Formal Assessment

Formal assessments are typically standardized instruments that have been evaluated for reliability and validity to support the effectiveness of the instrument (NSTTAC, 2007). Formal assessments can be used to learn about a wide variety of skills in a number of areas (e.g., vocational, academic, social; see Chapter 3). There are various types of formal assessments, such as (a) adaptive behavior assessments (e.g., Scales of Independent Behavior–Revised [SIB-R], The Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales, AAMR Adaptive Behavior Scales [ABS]); (b) aptitude tests (Differential Aptitude Test [DAT], Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery [ASVAB], Bennett's Mechanical Comprehension Test); (c) interest and work inventories (e.g., Career Interest Inventory–Levels One and Two; Self-Directed Search Form R and E; Harrington/O'Shea System for Career Decision-Making); (d) intelligence tests (e.g., Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, Form L-M [SBL-M], Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children–IV [WISC-IV]); (e) achievement tests (e.g., Woodcock Johnson III, Basic Achievement Skills Inventory [BASI], Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement [2nd ed.]); (f) personality and preference assessments (e.g., Personal Career Development Profile [PCDP], Student Styles Questionnaire [SSQ]); (g) employability assessments (e.g., Career Decision Scale [CDS], Career Thought Inventory [CTI], Career Development Inventory (CDI), Brigance Transition Skills Inventory); (h) self-determination assessments (e.g., Arc Self-Determination Scale, AIR Self-Determination Scale); (i) work-related temperament scales (e.g., Work Adjustment Inventory [WAI]); and (j) postsecondary support needs assessments (e.g., Supports Intensity Scale [SIS]). Formal assessments are comprehensive and can provide detailed information about a student; however, they tend to be costly, time consuming, and difficult to score. Therefore, informal assessments may be an efficient alternative for teachers.

Informal Assessment

Informal assessments are non-standardized assessments that are more subjective in nature and can focus on the individual in a variety of settings (e.g., classroom, employment, community) (Mazzotti et al., 2009). Informal assessments include (a) observations in various settings (e.g., watching, listening, recording information about student's behavior); (b) questionnaires (e.g., providing student and persons involved in student's life with the opportunity to report on skills such as student's employment skills); (c) interviews (e.g., structured or unstructured conversations with student and persons involved in student's life); and (d) curriculum-based assessments (e.g., task-analysis, portfolio assessments, work sample analysis, criterion-referenced tests) (Test et al., 2006). Some popular informal assessments that have been used with youth with severe disabilities include the Transition Planning Inventory (TPI), the YES! (Your Employment Selections) program (**www.yesjobsearch.com**), Self-Directed Employment Assessment, Personal Preference Indicators, and ChoiceMaker Self-Determination Assessment.

Transition assessment is an ongoing and continuous process and should begin as early as possible to develop a well-rounded effective transition program that leads to positive postschool outcomes for the student with severe disabilities. Transition assessments have six relevant characteristics (Test et al., 2006):

1. *Should be an ongoing and continuous process.* Transition assessment should be an ongoing process that includes gathering information to facilitate development of the student's postschool goals and annual IEP goals, planning the course of study, identification of appropriate transition services, and evaluation of the student's performance.
2. *Should be student centered.* Transition assessment should be student focused, self-determined, and provide information about the student's strengths, needs, and desires for the future.
3. *Should occur in many places.* Assessment should occur in a variety of natural environments to meet postschool goals. For example, as students learn new skills and begin to make choices about options for postschool life, transition assessment should begin to occur in employment and community settings. By doing this, students can make informed choices about postschool employment, education, and independent living options.
4. *Must involve other people.* Transition assessment is a collaborative process that requires gathering information from a variety of people involved in the student's life (e.g., employer, special education teacher, general education teacher, parents, friends, case managers).
5. *Data must be understandable.* Data gathered from transition assessments must be useful and understandable not only to the adults involved in the student's life, but also to the student. It may be necessary to take steps to help the student interpret the assessment information.
6. *Must be sensitive to cultural diversity.* Teachers and others need to understand five key elements to be culturally sensitive to diverse students when conducting transition assessment: (a) personal, cultural, and ethnic identities, (b) personal values that underlie interpretation of assessment data, (c) the role that the student and his/her family's culture plays in the assessment process, (d) differences between "mainstream" values and cultural values of the student, and (e) the need to work as a team to help the student progress toward postschool goals.

Transition assessment encompasses all areas of transition and provides in-depth knowledge of the students' strengths, needs, preferences, and interests that can lead to specific skill development to allow the students to meet postschool goals. Once transition assessment has been conducted, teachers are one step closer to developing effective transition components to meet the needs of students as they progress through the transition planning process.

Serena's *special education teacher has given her and her parents several informal transition assessments to identify her strengths, needs, and preferences related to employment, education, and independent living. Her teacher has used the Transition Planning Inventory (TPI) as the assessment tool. Serena completed a job-related interest and preference inventory that indicated she would like to work indoors with other people. Specifically, she would like to work in the food industry and wear a purple uniform when she graduates from high school. The informal assessments also indicated that Serena wants to continue to participate in social events (e.g., bake sales, dances) at her church. Additionally, Serena participated in some community-based vocational training at a local bakery and indicated that she enjoyed the task and the people. While participating in the training, Serena did not engage in her problem behaviors (i.e., curling up on floor, covering ears) and indicated that she liked this job because they used purple icing on the cakes. This further substantiated that working in the food service industry was what she desired. Finally, Serena's parents expressed that they would like to see Serena take some cooking and life skills classes at the local community college.*

Reports from informal interviews and observations suggested that ***Rusty*** *enjoys interacting with other people, music, dancing, and computers. During informal interviews, Rusty expressed a desire to continue working with computers when he graduated from high school. Other interest inventories conducted over the last few years have indicated that Rusty is interested in careers related to information technology. Rusty loves school and is always eager to learn new skills. He demonstrates a high level of motivation to please his teacher, and his parents report that even when he is sick he begs to go to school. These behaviors are important to consider in the development of his postsecondary goals of self-employment and independent living acquisition. Additionally, Rusty completed the ARC Self-Determination Scale. Results from Section One (Autonomy) indicated that Rusty wants to be independent by completing his daily routines by himself (e.g., personal care and grooming) and that Rusty needs to continue to work on improving his self-determination skills.*

Person-Centered Planning

One method for facilitating the transition planning process is person-centered planning (PCP). The idea behind PCP involves understanding and supporting an individual with a disability so that the individual can become an actively engaged and contributing member in the community (Test et al., 2006). PCP is (a) focused specifically on postschool outcomes and quality of life for the student with a disability (Michaels & Ferrara, 2005); and (b) used as one method to promote self-advocacy for youth with severe disabilities in high school and postschool life (Claes, Van Hove, Vandevelde, van Loon, & Schalock, 2010; Mazzotti, Kelley, & Coco, 2015). PCP allows the student to take a leadership role throughout the transition planning process and involves developing "collaborative, goal-oriented" plans to facilitate active community participation (Claes et al., 2010, p. 432). During the process, students are given the opportunity to think about their preferences and dreams when investigating options for postschool employment, education, and independent living (Lohrmann-O'Rourke & Gomez, 2001). As students take a leadership role in the transition planning process, the role of IEP team members is to support students and engage them in problem solving to allow them to move toward accomplishing postschool goals (Test et al., 2006).

The National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET; 2004) identified four steps that are commonly used in the PCP:

- *Step 1: Choosing a facilitator.* This person can be a consultant, family member, school staff, adult service provider, and should be someone who is a good listener.
- *Step 2: Designing the planning process.* A preplanning meeting should be conducted during which the student's profile is developed.

- *Step 3: Holding the meeting—implementing the PCP process*. This includes (a) reviewing the student's personal profile; (b) identifying events or conditions that may affect the student's life goals; (c) sharing visions for the future; (d) identifying barriers and opportunities to realize the student's vision; (e) identifying strategies and steps for facilitating the student's vision; and (f) developing an action plan.
- *Step 4: Planning and strategizing at the follow-up meetings*. Follow-up team meetings usually occur every 6 to 12 months and ensure the student's action plan is on track. Follow-up meeting should include (a) celebrating student successes; (b) listing activities that have occurred since the last meeting; (c) listing barriers that have arisen since the last meeting; (d) discussing new ideas and strategies for the student; (e) identifying priorities for the next meeting; (f) establishing a renewed commitment from team members; (g) developing 5 to 10 steps for each person to follow; and (h) determining the time of the next meeting (see **www.ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=1431** for details of each step).

There are several PCP curricula available, including Making Action Plans (MAPS) (Sherlock, 2001), Group Action Planning (GAP) (Turnbull & Turnbull, 1995), and Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (PATH) (Pearpoint, O'Brien, & Forest, 1993). By providing a model for increasing community experiences and participation, PCP plays an important role in the life of a student with severe disabilities and should be a part of the transition planning process.

Cassandra, her family, a family friend that works for the local parent advocacy center, the special education teacher, a representative from vocational rehabilitation services, and a peer buddy attended Cassandra's most recent person-centered planning meeting. During the meeting, they discussed things that would affect Cassandra's life goals (e.g., communication, personal care services, respite, medical transportation). The vision that emerged from this meeting was that Cassandra will continue to stay in school until she is 21 by participating in a program for 18- to 21-year-olds. Cassandra would then transition into an adult service program and supported employment. Several barriers to achieving her postschool goals were identified, including Cassandra's medical condition, her lack of communication skills, and her need for extensive support in all areas of adult life. Key stakeholders in Cassandra's PCP team were identified and specific roles were assigned to help carry out the task developed. At the conclusion of the meeting a plan was formed for Cassandra to enter the program for 18- to 21-year-olds, which will provide intensive community-based instruction in all life skill areas. Adult service providers were identified to assist with the transition from school to postschool employment and life.

Self-Determination and Student Involvement in the IEP

Another critical component in the transition planning process is promoting student involvement (Blalock et al., 2003). While several definitions of self-determination exist throughout the literature (e.g., Field, Martin, Miller, Ward, & Wehmeyer, 1998; Wehmeyer, 1995), Field et al. (1998) defined self-determination as "a combination of skills, knowledge, and beliefs that enable a person to engage in goal-directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior" (p. 2). Self-determination is a complex construct with multiple components, including choice-making, decision-making, problem solving, goal-setting, independence, self-observation, self-instruction, self-advocacy, internal locus of control, positive attributions of efficacy, self-awareness, and self-evaluation (Wehmeyer & Schalock, 2001). Teaching students self-determination skills allows them to take responsibility for their own life. Teaching self-determination skills to students with disabilities in high school has been shown to be a significant

predictor of postschool education and employment success (Test, Mazzotti, Mustian, Fowler, Kortering, & Kohler, 2009). Therefore, it is extremely important that teachers provide students with opportunities to develop self-determination skills. A primary goal for educators should be to teach self-determination skills to ensure that students with severe disabilities are prepared to lead self-determined lives (Cameto, 2005; Wagner, Newman, Cameto, Levine, & Garza, 2006). Unfortunately, self-determination is typically not included in school curricula (Carter, Lane, Pierson, & Stang, 2008).

One way that has been used successfully to teach self-determination to students with disabilities is to get them actively involved in their IEP process, which allows them to practice various self-determination skills, such as goal-setting, problem solving, self-advocacy, and decision-making (Test et al., 2006). Konrad (2008) identified five stages in which students can get involved in their IEP process: (a) stage one—developing background knowledge; (b) stage two—planning; (c) stage three—drafting; (d) stage four—meeting; and (e) stage five—implementation. Each stage includes specific elements to promote student involvement in the IEP, which in turn can lead to improved self-determination skills. We have included information about how to implement the five stages described by Konrad (2008) below:

Watch "Employment and Self-Determination" at www.youtube.com/watch?v=RfX4QFMgb3k

Stage 1: Consider Students' Background Knowledge

1. *Identify available resources.* There are many resources available to teachers to ensure that students are involved in the IEP process. Teachers should be aware of the resources to support students' learning as they become active participants in the IEP process.
2. *Provide opportunities for students to "get to know" their IEPs.* Teachers should provide students with opportunities to investigate their own IEPs and identify specific components. For students with severe disabilities, adjustments and modifications may be required based on the student skill level and needs.
3. *Provide opportunities to self-evaluate progress.* A checklist of the IEP components can help students evaluate their progress, accommodations, etc. For students with severe disabilities, the checklist may simply include pictures and symbols that allow the student, with teacher guidance, to identify specific parts of the IEP.
4. *Include books about youth with disabilities in instruction.* Books should include youth with disabilities. Provide students with severe disabilities opportunities to identify the strengths and needs of the characters using augmentative communication devices and create mock person-centered planning and/or IEP meetings that involve the characters in the books.

Stage 2: Planning for the IEP

1. *Work with students to help them develop vision statements.* Help students begin identifying their postschool goals. Students can be prompted by completing the following sentence, "After high school, I plan to live _____, learn _____, work _____, and play _____" (p. 237).
2. *Get students involved in the transition assessment process.* Have students complete informal transition assessments. It may also be important to share information with students from formal transition assessments so that students can begin to identify their strengths, needs, preferences, and interests to help develop postschool goals.
3. *Have students write letters to invite team members to attend.* Provide opportunities for students to complete letter templates on a computer.

4. *Use commercial programs.* For example, *The Self-Advocacy Strategy* (VanReusen & Bos, 1994) and the *Self-Directed IEP* (Martin, Marshall, Maxson, & Jerman, 1996; Martin, Van Dycke, Christensen, Greene, Gardner, & Lovett, 2006) have been shown to be effective for teaching students participation in the IEP process.
5. *Involve students in preparing for the meeting.* This could involve making name tags for team members, discussing what to wear to the meeting, and preparing a PowerPoint presentation.

Stage 3: Drafting the IEP

1. *Have students write about their IEP meeting.* This may include providing pictures and symbols to allow students to identify their strengths and needs.
2. *Once students have identified strengths and needs, the needs should be changed into "I will" statements.* These "I will" statements can be used to develop the student's postschool goals.
3. *Once the IEP has been drafted, students can meet with their parents to discuss their goals.* This will provide parents the opportunity to see what goals the student has set and prepare both the student and parent for the IEP meeting.

Stage 4: Meeting to Develop the IEP

1. *There is a range of options.* When involving students in the IEP process, level of participation may vary. For example, younger students may attend the meeting, introduce participants, and participate by actively listening. Whereas older students may actually lead the entire meeting by discussing their vision, strengths, needs, and goals.
2. *Provide opportunities for rehearsal.* Providing opportunities for students to verbally rehearse and role-play IEP meetings leads to greater participation (Test et al., 2006).
3. *Consider using PowerPoints presentations in meetings.* PowerPoints can provide a format for students to express their goals and develop and present their strengths, needs, and goals in a manner that expresses who they are.

Stage 5: Implementing the IEP

1. *Have each student create a fact sheet.* The fact sheet about the IEP provides a summary for teachers and the student and includes the disability, strengths, needs, goals, services, and accommodations.
2. *Teach students self-advocacy and self-recruitment skills.* Practice various ways to self-advocate with students by using role-play and modeling.
3. *Provide students with access to their IEP.* Give students the opportunity to revisit their IEP to ensure they are receiving accommodations, meeting goals, and making decisions.
4. *Teach students to self-monitor and self-evaluate their progress.* Using self-management strategies can help students meet their IEP goals.
5. *Have students develop person-first progress reports.* These can be used as a method for sharing progress toward goals with parents and IEP team members.

As students with severe disabilities are taught to be active participants in their IEP process, their self-determination skills will strengthen. When considering teaching self-determination skills to students with severe disabilities, teachers should investigate alternative methods to support self-determination skill development (e.g., using PowerPoint and web 2.0 tools [Voki, ToonDoo] to facilitate participation in IEP meetings; using apps and picture symbols to facilitate choice-making and goal-setting).

Cassandra and her teacher developed a PowerPoint presentation to facilitate her involvement in her IEP meeting. By developing a PowerPoint, Cassandra was able to participate in developing her IEP. She began the presentation by introducing herself and showing pictures of herself with family and friends on the first couple of slides. She continued by sharing information about her disability and portrayed her school day through photographs her teacher helped her take. After showing slides of her school day, she presented slides that expressed her likes (e.g., music, books) and dislikes (e.g., math, broccoli). Cassandra indicated in her presentation that she wants to work in a clerical position when she finishes high school and wants to have an apartment with a roommate, where she can live independently.

TEACHING EMPLOYMENT SKILLS

Considering the variety of possible careers and related employment skills, teaching employment skills to students with disabilities can be a daunting task. In this section, three important considerations for delivering employment skills instruction are discussed: (a) where to provide instruction, (b) how to provide instruction, and (c) how to collect instructional data.

Where to Provide Instruction

While it would seem to make sense that employment skills should always be taught in the community rather than on a school campus, this may not always be possible. Fortunately, employment skills have been successfully taught in both school and community settings. It is important to start by describing the advantages and disadvantages of both community-based and school-based employment instruction.

Community-Based Instruction (CBI)

CBI has the distinct advantage of happening in the real world with the natural variations that occur in life. This includes a variety of co-workers with different social and work skills and tasks that may change from time-to-time. This variety, combined with the use of real materials, will help promote skill generalization. However, in spite of these advantages, there are a number of disadvantages to CBI, which must be considered, including transporting students to community sites, allocating staff to provide CBI, and coordinating school and business schedules. While these are potentially obstacles to providing CBI, potential solutions to each problem will be described later in this section on CBI options.

School-Based Instruction (SBI)

SBI has the advantage of being an easier environment to control. Transportation and scheduling are not typically an issue, and school campuses tend to be a more forgiving environment for students who are learning how to perform job tasks, as well as how to behave appropriately. However, these advantages are offset by having to make sure that SBI is designed to incorporate strategies to promote generalization by using real materials and setting the instructional environment up to look as "real" as possible. SBI should help students build the stamina required for real jobs, as well as learn to work with little supervision and feedback. While logistically easier, SBI is often instructionally more challenging.

Given the advantages and disadvantages of CBI and SBI, one solution is to combine them. CBI provides students access to real-work settings, while SBI can provide opportunities to repeatedly practice skills that have not yet been mastered. However, it is important to not fall into the "readiness trap," in which student access to CBI is based on requiring them to master prerequisite skills taught during SBI. When this

happens, many students never get to CBI. Instead, students need CBI to support skill acquisition and generalization, and CBI should be provided as a critical and regular part of employment skills instruction.

Where to Provide Instruction: School-Based Instruction (SBI) Options

Test et al. (2006) described four SBI options for teaching employment skills including (a) career–technical education (CTE), (b) school-based enterprises (SBE), (c) on-campus jobs, and (d) job clubs and vocational school organizations. These four options are described below.

Career–Technical Education (CTE)

CTE was defined by the Carl Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Amendments of 1998 (P.L. 105-332) as

> *. . . organized activities that offer a sequence of courses that provides individuals with the academic and technical knowledge and skills the individuals need to prepare for further education and for careers (other than careers requiring a baccalaureate, master's, or doctoral degree) in current or emerging employment sectors. Vocational technical education includes competency-based applied learning that contributes to the academic knowledge, higher-order reasoning and problem-solving skills, work attitudes, general employability skills, technical skills, and occupational-specific skills for an individual" (Title III, Section 3: Definitions, 20).*

CTE can play an important role in preparing students with severe disabilities for employment because courses are taught by CTE staff who have expertise in preparing youth for employment. All students with severe disabilities need access to CTE courses to develop career awareness and preparation skills. Participating in CTE courses not only teaches students specific employment skills, it also gives them access to a variety of employment services (Test et al., 2006).

While the Carl Perkins Act assures students with disabilities have equal access to the full range of CTE programs available, some resistance may be encountered. Test et al. (2006) suggested several techniques for working with CTE staff, including the following:

1. Ensure that CTE teachers and special educators have joint staff development aimed at increasing knowledge of each other's instructional areas and the laws directing these areas.
2. Develop a formal communication system to keep special education staff informed of student progress and provide CTE staff with consultative services for instructional issues and concerns.
3. Determine how CTE job responsibilities relate to the transitioning.
4. Determine how CTE career development plans can be interfaced with the transition plan.
5. Allow students with severe disabilities to take the same CTE course more than one time and receive credit each time. This gives the students adequate time to cover the full range of skills taught in the course at a slower rate. The special education teacher and the CTE teacher should collaboratively identify which competencies will be worked on each year. These competencies should be clearly delineated so that coursework can be modified appropriately.
6. Arrange for students to complete CTE internships for credit. Internships might be a viable option for CTE credit if students need additional hands-on employment preparation and/or the courses available on the school campus do not match the students' postschool outcome goals for employment.
7. Work closely with CTE staff to determine types of accommodations students will need to be successful in CTE courses.

8. Ensure that CTE is represented on all special education committees and advisory councils and that special education is represented on all CTE committees and advisory councils.
9. Ensure that methods are in place to determine whether the CTE services being provided to students with disabilities are consistent with IEPs.
10. Coordinate CTE recruitment activities (e.g., career day, job fairs) with special education representative to ensure inclusion of students with disabilities.
11. Coordinate enrollment of students in CTE courses to ensure that all guidelines for class size are met. Coordination should involve special education, CTE, student data personnel, guidance counseling, and school administration. The goal should be to honor students' choices about vocational interests while ensuring that CTE classes are not overloaded with students to the point that students cannot receive adequate services and skill training.

Rusty and his IEP team have decided that in order for him to pursue his interests in working with computers, he should enroll in a CTE course. After careful consideration, they chose a course titled "Careers in Computers." As part of Rusty's IEP, the CTE and special education teacher reviewed the "blueprint" for this course, which contains 40 objectives, and selected the objectives that seemed to be most relevant for Rusty. These five objectives were then included in Rusty's IEP, which means that at the end of the course these will be the only objectives used to evaluate Rusty's performance on any end-of-course assessments.

School-Based Enterprises (SBE)

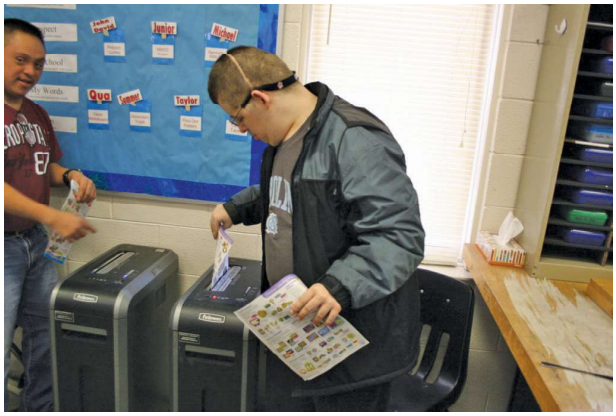
SBE has been defined as "any school-sponsored activity that engages a group of students in producing goods or services for sale or to be used by people, other than the student involved" (Stern, 1994, p. 3). While SBEs provide a simulated work environment, they allow students the opportunity to develop and operate small businesses, perform work for area businesses, and/or complete tasks for volunteer organizations (see Gamache and Knab [2008] for a description of how to plan, implement, and evaluate SBE).

SBEs can provide an environment in which students can learn work habits (e.g., attendance, punctuality, organizing work, storing supplies), work behaviors (e.g., staying on task, following directions, assembly line work, tool use), and social skills (e.g., use of social amenities, social conversation, co-worker interactions) needed to be successful in competitive employment. While working in a SBE, students are often involved in many procedures associated with operating a retail- or service-oriented business such as determining costs, ordering materials, maintaining equipment, marketing products/services, organizing tasks, and conducting inventory. While creating an SBE might seem to be a simple task, there are many things to consider including funding, space, organization, and ensuring quality (Test et al., 2006). Figure 15–4 provides examples of students working in an SBE.

Funding Considerations. Creating an SBE will require initial start-up funds for furniture (e.g., work bins, workstations, stools, file cabinets, work desks) and supplies (e.g., work aprons, safety glasses, work gloves) based on the type of work activities to be conducted. Funding can be obtained by using classroom instructional supply/equipment funds, grant/foundation funds, donations from civic groups, Parent–Teacher Association (PTA)/Parent–Teacher Organization (PTO) funds, contributions from local businesses, profits from work performed through business contracts (after students are paid based on Department of Labor regulations), and fundraising. Often equipment can be obtained from, or shared with, the CTE department or donated by local businesses.

FIGURE 15–4
School-Based Enterprises

(a) José is supervising Bruce at the shredding workstation in the school-based enterprise as part of a paper recycling program.



(b) Donald is sanding a small wood project at an assigned workstation as part of the school-based enterprise.

Photos: Robyn Thompson

Space Considerations. An SBE can be implemented in an extra classroom, a large open instructional area, or a mobile unit. Size should be based on the number of students served and type of planned enterprise. For example, if furniture-finishing and/or painting projects are planned, a large, well-ventilated area will be needed. If jewelry-making projects are planned, then smaller individual workstations could be used. If an SBE is going to be service oriented, such as a coffee and muffin shop, an area equipped with kitchen equipment would be needed.

Organizational Considerations. An SBE should be organized to resemble a real work environment as much as possible. If a teacher has limited experience with business and industrial settings, consider contacting local industries and requesting the volunteer services of an industrial engineer to help design the SBE work area. Next, consider how to set up and arrange the work area. At the same time, consider student abilities and needs to determine if work should be performed in an assembly line fashion or a "start-to-finish" manner. If possible, both options should be provided to increase the probability of skill generalization. Procedures should also be established for general work rules, appropriate dress, breaks, clocking in/out, evaluations, dismissals, lay-offs, suspensions, and promotions. It is also important to develop an orientation process for all new students to teach them about policies/procedures when participating in the SBE. Just like in a real workplace, students should be provided with written company policies and/or employee handbooks. Finally, opportunities should be made available in the SBE to experience different types of work, as well as hold various "positions" such as quality control supervisor, material handler, marketing director, inventory controller, accountant, and bookkeeper. Consider using these positions as a promotion and require an application and interview process.

Quality Considerations. The more realistic an SBE is, the more likely students will be able to successfully transfer the skills learned to jobs in the community. Keul (1991) developed a set of criteria to help ensure SBEs are as realistic as possible:

- Develop and use accurate task analyses that fully detail all steps in producing each service or product.
- Develop and use simple methods for measuring quality and speed of student.
- Make certain students (not teachers) perform the majority of tasks following instruction.

- Ensure sufficient resources and personnel are available to produce a quality product/service.
- Guarantee SBE mirrors actual work demands in terms of stamina, endurance, and strength.

Finally, Keul (1991) suggested seven guidelines for determining products or services to be provided by an SBE:

1. The service or product should be "sellable" in the community. Find out market prices for services and products, what quality/quantity demands are, and what consumers want.
2. The service or product should be feasible to produce within the SBE budget and time constraints, considering school schedule, staff supervision, cost/benefits, storage, space, safety issues, and transportation of materials.
3. The service or product should be beneficial to students in net profit (after expenses) and actual job skills gained. Are similar jobs available in the community?
4. The service or product should be produced with minimal teacher intervention (other than initial training and ongoing supervision).
5. The service or product should be valued and promote inclusion of students with disabilities. Consider joint projects with school clubs.
6. The service or product should provide students with employment options for the future.
7. The SBE should allow students to learn work habits and work behaviors associated with success in real jobs.

The SBE created dessert trays for school and community gatherings. Serena was assigned the job of prep-cook in the SBE, which included preparing the cookies with decorative purple sprinkles for the dessert trays. In order for Serena to complete her assigned job, she needed specific skills, such as safety and sanitation, following directions, time management, and following a recipe. These skills were addressed in Serena's annual IEP goals. Additionally, she was assigned a general education peer tutor to model and assist her in mastering the necessary skills to bake cookies.

On-Campus Jobs

Another school-based employment training option is on-campus jobs. On-campus jobs can be paid or non-paid work experiences in which students are placed in a real job on school grounds with supervision from a school employee. An on-campus job introduces students to a work environment that requires many of the same skill demands that they will encounter in community work settings. On-campus jobs can be part of a work–study program, which is designed for students with and without disabilities. These jobs should involve work experiences for students with and without disabilities, working together in on-campus work experiences. Examples of on-campus jobs include cafeteria worker, office assistant, teacher assistant, maintenance assistant, groundskeeper's assistant, bus maintenance assistant, biology lab assistant, and art assistant.

While on-campus jobs can provide students with a variety of fairly realistic work settings, they should not take the place of CBI. Nothing can take the place of work experience in the real world. On-campus jobs also offer the possibility of increasing student status. For students with severe disabilities, teachers can provide students with needed work experiences on campus, as well as providing opportunities to interact with peers without disabilities in a work situation.

The transition planning process should be used to inform parents and students about the purpose and importance of on-campus job placements, as well as including them in the decision-making process. Making decisions and choices about on-campus job placements can provide opportunities for students to practice self-advocacy skills. The types of jobs, their duration, and training goals should be included in the

transition component of the IEP. It is also a good idea to have parents and students sign a permission form for participating in an on-campus job to ensure that everyone is fully informed about performance expectations, compensation, duration of placement, and evaluation procedures.

Once on-campus job placements are identified, a job duties form listing all the duties for each job should be developed. The job duties form can be used to assist the student and her work supervisor in understanding performance expectations. Task analyses can be prepared for individual job tasks listed on the job duties form if a student needs this level of instruction. In some cases, job task modification or accommodations will be needed for some students to participate in a particular on-campus job. Finally, just like with an SBE, students will need an orientation session with each placement. During this session, the job duties form should be reviewed and a student contract documenting the student's agreement with the training placement, training, goals, performance expectations, and behavior rules should be signed.

Job Clubs and Vocational Student Organizations

The final school-based employment training options are job clubs and vocational student organizations (VSO). A job club can help students with disabilities develop job-seeking skills, while providing systematic peer support for obtaining and maintaining a job. Although job clubs lack the national connection and occupational specificity associated with a VSO, these groups have greater flexibility to match local labor market and student needs and interests. Job clubs typically meet after school hours once a week with a staff sponsor and (a) provide peer support for job searches, (b) share job leads, (c) develop resumes and reference lists, (d) explore the local job market, (e) visit local businesses to meet with personnel directors, and/or (f) practice role-playing job-seeking skills.

VSOs have similar goals but their focus is often on helping students pursue post-school training and education needed to obtain a career in a special occupational area. Examples of VSOs include Future Business Leaders of America, Future Farmers of America, Future Homemakers of America, Health Occupations Student Association, Technology Student Association, and Vocational Instructional Clubs of America.

> *Because Rusty has expressed interest in developing and running his own business as a customized employment option, he has decided to join the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA). This year his school's FBLA has decided to focus on the i-SAFE curriculum to learn about internet safety during the fall semester. Then, he will work on the Practical Money Skills for Life curriculum to learn money management strategies during the spring semester. Both activities will help Rusty gain the skills and confidence he needs to start his own customized employment computer business with the help of an employment specialist.*

Department of Labor Considerations for SBI

When scheduling school-based employment instructional activities, Department of Labor's (DOL) guidelines must be followed for employment preparation for students with disabilities. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which is administered by the DOL, outlines rules and regulations governing minimum wage payments, overtime, equal pay, and record-keeping requirements for payment of employees. School-operated employment preparation programs are not exempt from FLSA regulations and can be disciplined by DOL if labor regulations are ignored or violated. By following FLSA policies, school system personnel can be certain that program participants are treated in a fair and equitable manner and prevent the sanctioning of fines by DOL.

The DOL standards provide greater latitude for employment preparation conducted on a school campus. Basically, the DOL will not enforce FLSA with respect to minimum wages for students if a student is enrolled in a school-related employment preparation program, as along as compliance with child labor provisions is ensured. However, school personnel must ensure that the purpose of the employment

preparation activity is to benefit the student rather than meet the labor needs of the school. For example, if a student is placed as a cafeteria assistant, the placement should be about the student's need to learn about food service jobs and/or cashier skills and not about the cafeteria's need for additional help. In general, on-campus training should be limited to one period per day. Based on DOL policy, on-campus jobs can be viewed as non-paid employment preparation experiences unless the school district is contracting with a for-profit business for the service area to which the student is assigned. For example, if the school system is contracting with an outside lawn maintenance service, then a student cannot work with the groundskeepers unless he or she is compensated (Love, 1994). There are some exceptions to the DOL's policy regarding the application of the FLSA to school campus employment preparation programs. For example, if a school is contracting with private businesses for students to perform work as part of an SBE, then students must be paid at least minimum wage per hour unless the school has applied for and received a sub-minimum wage certificate from the DOL. Under no circumstances can students benefit private businesses by completing their work in an SBE unless they are compensated for work performed.

Where to Provide Instruction: Community-Based Instruction (CBI) Options

CBI options can include paid and non-paid experiences ranging from short-term job shadowing/job sampling assignments to long-term internships. Throughout, the goal is to design an individualized instruction program that includes multiple options to meet the needs of all students so that, as students get closer to graduation, training needs can change from exploring careers to developing specific employment skills.

Watch "Learn and Earn: Tips for Teens" at www.youtube.com/watch?v=0nAt9esEmFQ&feature=youtu.be

According to Luecking (2009) and Test et al. (2006), there are six types of CBI options:

1. *Job shadowing*. Job shadowing, sometimes called "work sampling," can be of short duration (one to three hours) or an extended period of time (one or more work days) spent by a student in a business following an employee as he or she performs his or her daily job. This can include "take your child to work" days. Job shadowing provides opportunities for students to "try out" a job by working alongside employees of area businesses allowing them to develop a comprehensive understanding of the job duties associated with a particular position.
2. *Internships*. Internships allow students to spend an extended amount of time at a single business to develop specific skills and knowledge needed for that occupational area. Internships typically last for several weeks to months, can be paid or non-paid, and may involve earning high school credits.
3. *Apprenticeships*. Apprenticeships offer opportunities to learn an occupation by being supervised by an experienced worker. Usually an apprenticeship lasts three to four years with a student working part-time while in high school. Over time the student assumes increasing amounts of responsibility as more advanced skills are learned. Apprenticeships are paid work experiences and often high school credits are earned for participation. After graduation, the student continues to work with the company and can pursue additional postsecondary education/training related to the occupation. Apprenticeships can be sponsored by unions, public agencies, or a business, and examples include furniture craftsperson and other highly skilled professionals who require on-the-job training and experience.
4. *Volunteerism/community service projects/service learning*. Individual or group volunteer projects can provide students with opportunities to learn and practice employability skills. All volunteer work should be recognized as such and meet Department of Labor guidelines for students with disabilities placed in volunteer settings. Students may never "volunteer" at for-profit businesses (Love, 1994).

5. *Mobile work crews or enclaves.* Mobile work crews or enclaves can provide a community-based instruction option for students who require more intensive supervision. Enclaves and mobile work crews involve a group of students, performing work for an area business or agency with continuous supervision. A mobile work crew moves from site-to-site performing similar job tasks (e.g., landscaping, custodial). An enclave is stationed at one location with students working together to perform a set of job tasks. These employment preparation experiences may be paid or unpaid (but if real work is performed, the student must be paid).
6. *Paid, competitive employment.* The opportunity to participate in paid employment experiences prior to graduation is a good predictor of a student's future employment success. These jobs can be scheduled during or after school, as well as during the summer.

Logistically, there are many things to consider when planning CBI, including staffing, transportation, safety, insurance, and Fair Labor Standards Act regulations. A successful CBI program will have approved policies in place to ensure the ongoing, safe, affordable, and effective delivery of off-campus instruction for all students. Figure 15–5 provides examples of students participating in various community-based employment experiences.

Staffing Considerations

CBI requires schools to rethink traditional methods of assigning staff and designing student schedules. The level and intensity of supervision required will be based on the type of training model used and student needs. For example, during job shadowing and job sampling, employees at each business site can be used to train and supervise students. Also, job-shadowing sites are usually established for individual students versus groups of students, although a single site might provide multiple training options within a single location. If using mobile work crews, school staff will be needed continuously to supervise a small group of students who need focused training and ongoing supervision.

Several resources can be used to staff CBI, including team-teaching, the use of teacher assistants as job coaches, and integrating therapeutic support personnel into the program (Baumgart & VanWalleghem, 1986). Team-teaching provides increased flexibility in scheduling classroom and CBI by ensuring both areas are covered by licensed staff. By training paraprofessionals in safety issues, instructional strategies, transportation guidelines, and business relationships, they can assume a greater level of responsibility in the community. Further, therapeutic support staff in the areas of physical, speech, and/or occupational therapy can provide valuable hands-on therapy in environments in which students will ultimately need these skills. In some cases it is absolutely necessary to practice communication skills or mobility skills in real-life situations since the school environment cannot simulate community conditions (Baumgart, Johnson, & Helmstetter, 1990). For example, if a student is receiving mobility training or is learning to use a communication system, the best place to learn and practice these skills would be in a community work setting in which a student will ultimately work.

> *To help Cassandra choose which communication board with voice output to use in the workplace, her speech therapist has been coming to her community-based training site to provide her and her co-workers with practice using both her italk2® and GoTalk20+®. Her speech therapist started by helping facilitate conversation at break time and is now working with Cassandra's supervisor to teach them to interact about job-related duties. By doing this, Cassandra, her family, and co-workers can all help decide which augmentative communication system is best suited for the workplace.*

Staffing resources can also be found outside the school. For example, with proper orientation and training, volunteers (e.g., work buddies), college interns, and parents

FIGURE 15–5
Community-Based Employment
(a) Toni is setting up for a birthday party at an adult day care facility.
(b) Chris is preparing to take a dog to be groomed at the pet groomer.
(c) Alicia is stocking shelves at a holiday store where she job-shadows.
(d) Akeera is checking out a customer at the tanning and boutique shop.

a.

b.

c.

d.

Photos: Robyn Thompson

can assist with community-based training. If these options are not available and staffing is still a concern, the way in which students are grouped and scheduled for CBI can be adjusted. Using a single site combined with assistance from business employees can reduce the number of school staff needed. For example, a large retail store can provide training sites for customer service; food service; stocking; clerical work; plant or animal care; and custodial work all in one location. In this setting, students can be assigned throughout the businesses with designated employee supervisors. A

single school staff person could then "float," supervising and instructing as needed. Hospitals, nursing centers, daycares, malls, and manufacturing plants are also good settings for multiple training options. Heterogeneous grouping can also be used to reduce the number of staff members needed by allowing cooperative learning and peer tutoring opportunities between students of varying abilities as well as with students without disabilities (Baumgart & VanWalleghem, 1986).

Transportation Considerations

Without reliable and accessible transportation, a CBI program is not possible. Because of this, educators must consider the type of transportation that will be used, when transportation can be accessed, and the funding sources available to cover transportation costs. Transportation for CBI will require additional funds, but actual cost will vary based on geographical characteristics of the school system and type of transportation chosen. School staff should work closely with the system's Director of Transportation to ensure vehicle availability and staff are appropriately licensed to operate school-owned vehicles. Prior to establishing CBI sites, school personnel must know when and what transportation will be available. The most typical mode of transportation is school and activity buses. Lastly, parents can be asked to provide transportation particularly if the student is involved in competitive employment, which ends after school hours.

Safety Considerations

Educators and parents are always concerned about student safety. While classrooms located in a school building are perceived as "safe" environments, they are not the most effective environment for delivering employment preparation to students with severe disabilities. If students are expected to live, learn, work, and play in their community after graduation, then training in those settings must occur prior to graduation. As a result, the community must be viewed as an extension of the classroom for students with severe disabilities.

There are many methods for ensuring student safety while simultaneously protecting school staff from liability issues. It should be standard operating procedure for all parents and students to be fully informed about the various training components of a program, types of community-based settings offered, and expectations for behavior during CBI. This can be accomplished during IEP meetings when goals and objectives are written. Parents and students should sign written permission forms for all CBI activities. Even if the student is 18-years-old or older, it is still a good idea to involve parents in decisions about CBI. Parents should also be asked to provide medical information (e.g., medical conditions, allergies, special care considerations, primary physician, health insurance) for their son or daughter and sign a permission form that allows their child to receive emergency medical care if needed (see Taber, Alberto, Seltzer, & Hughes, 2003 for a description of how six secondary school-aged students with moderate cognitive disabilities were taught to use a cell phone to call for assistance when lost in school or community settings).

Next, adequate training should be provided to students on work safety before participating in CBI. Since it cannot be assumed that students will engage in safe behavior at a job site, training on work-related safety skills should be included in employment preparation curriculum (Pelland & Falvey, 1986). Work safety training should address identifying unsafe work conditions, practicing safe work behaviors, and responding appropriately to an accident. Since students with severe disabilities may also have medical conditions (e.g., seizures), sensory deficits, or motor impairments that can increase the likelihood of an accident, work safety should be considered a survival skill for employment. Although businesses are responsible for ensuring a safe work environment, school personnel are also responsible for adequately training students in safety awareness skills to avoid liability issues (Agran, Swaner, & Snow, 1998).

Insurance Coverage

Another factor that must be considered when planning a CBI program is insurance coverage (Test et al., 2006). Students should have some type of medical insurance coverage in case of an accident at the CBI site. Some students will have Medicaid and others may have private health coverage. One option is to have students covered through the school system's student insurance policy, which is usually available for a small annual fee. This ensures that students who are not otherwise covered will have a minimum policy in place.

Liability insurance for staff should also be provided. The school system liability policy should be amended to provide coverage for employees who are conducting CBI activities as part of a student's educational program. Liability coverage should also be pursued for local businesses that sponsor training sites. In some cases, this type of insurance may already be in place for work-based training programs operated by the CTE department and can be extended for use by the special education program. Being able to offer liability insurance for businesses may assist in encouraging larger businesses and industries to host a training site.

Fair Labor Standards Act Considerations

As described above, child labor laws must be adhered to when delivering CBI. Child labor laws fall under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which governs several factors related to vocational training and competitive employment. CBI staff should be familiar with the federal regulations governing establishing an employment relationship in order to prevent violations, which could result in serious financial repercussions for the school system and its business partners. It is important to make sure that participation in CBI is clearly for the student's benefit and that the CBI matches post-school goals. Keep in mind that if an employer–employee relationship is established, and the student and company are benefiting; then, the company must fairly compensate the student for his or her work.

In 1992, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and U.S. Department of Education (DOE) jointly issued a memorandum of understanding (often called the "Dear Colleague" letter), which established guidelines for providing CBI to students with disabilities. These guidelines were designed to guarantee that when school systems implemented training programs specifically aimed at student instruction, they were in compliance with federal guidelines in employment-related areas covered by the FLSA. The FLSA is administered and enforced by the Wage-Hour Division of the DOL and establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, equal pay, employment-related record-keeping requirements, and child labor regulations. If *all* of the trainee criteria stated in the DOL/DOE memorandum of understanding are met for each and every student at each and every community-based vocational training site, the school system should meet the requirements set forth in FLSA.

School staff must ensure that students' needs are met first (over the needs of business) with the employer deriving no advantage and that students are not being used to displace employees, fill positions, provide additional services, or relieve employees from regularly assigned duties. This means that a business cannot avoid hiring needed employees, use present employees to perform additional duties, or terminate employees due to the presence of community-based student trainees. When Pumpian, Fisher, Certo, Engle, and Mautz (1998) reviewed and analyzed litigation related to conducting non-paid, community-based training, they discovered that the courts examine four factors when determining employer benefit and the educational relevance of training. Based on these rulings, schools should evaluate training placements by asking questions regarding these same four factors:

1. Does the employer derive first and primary benefit?
2. Does the employer derive substantial benefit?

3. Does the trainee replace regular workers?
4. Is the experience educationally valid?

In addition, some of the reasons associated with failing to meet FLSA criteria for establishing training situations included

- trainees working at the convenience of the employer
- training so poorly organized that the trainees receive no advantage
- trainees being counted as a staff member and responsible for their own training
- employers being allowed to review training performance prior to actually hiring the trainee for a paid position
- profit structure of the business increasing significantly because of the presence of trainees
- reduction of paid employees due to the work of trainees
- trainees being responsible for learning skills through their own initiative

Test et al. (2006) offered suggestions based on the FLSA for school systems to follow when designing and implementing vocational training programs:

1. The transition component of the IEP for each student involved in non-paid community-based vocational training should clearly state goals and objectives for training. Training should be relevant to the student's postsecondary employment outcomes. Ideally, students should be given the opportunity to choose among a variety of training sites.
2. Prior to placement on a training site, student trainees should receive an orientation. At the work site, comprehensive training should be provided, and staff should assess student skills during the training period. Teacher checklists, anecdotal records, portfolios, rubrics, and performance graphs are all methods of evaluation appropriate for CBI sites.
3. Training conducted at the work site should directly relate to goals on the student's IEP. The IEP goals and objectives serve as the justification for a student's placement at a particular site and confirm that the placement is to meet the student's needs.
4. Although the time limits set forth in the DOL/DOE memorandum of understanding for vocational exploration, training, and assessment will not be the sole basis upon which an employment relationship will be determined, these time frames should be followed as closely as possible. However, flexibility should be allowed since students will learn at different rates.
5. All non-paid community-based vocational training should be conducted within normal school hours and should be based on documented student needs.
6. Parental permission must be obtained for a student's participation in the community-based vocational training program. Parents may be kept informed of changes in the program and of the student's progress. The parental permission form should contain (a) a statement concerning student insurance; (b) an indication as to how the student's performance on the training sites will be used to determine grades or credits; (c) a clear statement indication that the student will not be entitled to wages or to a job after the completion of training; (d) a statement concerning transportation arrangements; and (e) a statement granting permission for school staff to obtain medical care in the event of an emergency at the training site.
7. A release-of-information form should be signed for each student so that relevant information can be shared with appropriate representatives of the business at the training site.
8. Students should sign a written agreement concerning their participation in the community-based vocational training program. The student agreement should contain the following information: (a) how performance at the training site will

affect grades or credits; (b) a clear statement indicating there is no entitlement to wages or a job after completion of the training; (c) behavioral expectations; and (d) consequences for behavior problems on the training site.

9. Signed written agreements should be in place between the school system and the local businesses and industries providing the training sites. These agreements should include the responsibilities of the local business, FLSA compliance issues, the responsibilities of the school, the schedule for community-based vocational training, and any other special conditions relevant to the training site.
10. There should be clearly designated supervisors for all students on community-based vocational training sites. If a member of the school staff is not going to be present at all times on the training site, an employee of the business should be designated as the students' supervisor. Also, a member of the school staff should be designated as the indirect supervisor and school contact for the training site.
11. Records (e.g., timesheets) should be maintained indicating the dates and times a student is involved in various community-based training experiences. Students should be given responsibility for maintaining records, and adult assistance should be provided if needed.

These guidelines can help ensure the primary focus of the CBI experience is on the needs of the student, not focused on the interests of the participating businesses (Test et al., 2006).

Because Cassandra was enrolled in general education classes in high school, she has not yet decided on a career. So, as part of Cassandra's program for 18- to 21-year-olds, her IEP team has worked together to develop a set of CBI experiences to help her make an "educated" choice. First, based on talking with Cassandra and her family, it was decided that she will have the opportunity to job shadow at three job sites including the local public library, a small business that operates both a greenhouse and plant store, and the local city hall, which includes many different types of clerical and office assistant opportunities. If Cassandra likes one or more of these options, as indicated by her input and her hours at the job site, she will then be able to spend larger periods of time in each site as a paid, or non-paid, employee. At the same time, she will receive mobility and transportation training to help her get to each site. Additionally, she will receive communication systems training for herself and her co-workers at each site. By having experience with a job, transportation, and communication at a variety of possible workplaces, Cassandra and her family will have multiple sources of information to use to help choose a potentially fulfilling career.

How to Provide Instruction

When teaching employment skills in school and community settings, it is important to preserve the dignity of the student by not calling attention to them, while at the same time using effective instructional strategies. Therefore, it is recommended that when teaching employment skills, you use whole-task chaining, constant time delay, audio prompting, and/or self-instruction as your instructional strategies. (See Chapter 5 for further discussion of instructional strategies.)

Whole-Task Chaining

In whole-task (or total-task) chaining, training occurs in a forward fashion (from the first step in the task analysis to last step), and each step is performed by the student during every instructional session. The teacher provides assistance as needed and gives corrective feedback only on steps in which a student needs assistance. The whole task is taught to a predetermined criterion level (e.g., two whole sequences without assistance). Whole-task chaining (Certo, Mezzullo, & Hunter, 1985) has several advantages when teaching skills in the community. First, with whole-task chaining, students practice each step in the task analysis every time a skill is taught. Second, steps are taught and learned in the order in

which they actually occur. Third, you do not have to continuously repeat a step (e.g., having to complete step 4 three times without error before moving to step 5) since multiple trial instruction of the same step can be boring. Fourth, practicing the whole task, rather than part of the task, makes the most efficient use of community instructional time because each time you train, the entire task is completed (e.g., a check is cashed, a job task is completed). However, if a student is not having success on a particular step in the task analysis, it can be helpful to remove that step from the task analysis and practice that step in isolation until the step is performed at an acceptable level.

Constant Time Delay

Time delay involves first providing a student with immediate prompts at the level required to ensure errorless learning (i.e., verbal, gestural, modeling, physical guidance), and then providing the same prompt only if the student does not perform the correct response. When this happens, the teacher should provide a prompt after a short "waiting" period in which the student is provided with an opportunity to respond independently. That is, the student should be provided time to initiate the response. If the student does not respond in the given time (e.g., five seconds), then the teacher should provide the student with the correct answer, using the "most effective prompt." There are two types of time delay. In *progressive* time delay, in each training session the teacher gradually increases the wait interval before a prompt is given. In *constant* time delay, the wait interval remains the same during all training sessions.

Test, Walker, and Richter (2008) recommend constant time delay for teaching job skills because it has three advantages: (a) The prompt that always elicits a correct response from a student is used from the beginning, which should decrease training time; (b) time delay involves always using the single most effective prompt for an individual (rather than a series of prompts); and (c) having a single constant prompt time is easier to keep track of. As a result, constant time delay is usually the least intrusive prompting strategy. Although during initial training (at zero-second delay), time delay might be intrusive depending on the level of prompt used. See Chapter 5 for a description of time delay.

Cassandra is learning to use her debit card in a vending machine during break time at her CBI site. After developing an appropriate task analysis, her teacher identified that the most effective prompt for Cassandra was to model the correct response. At the zero-second delay interval, the initial request is made, "Insert your card" (the first step in the task analysis), at the same time as the teacher models inserting the card, then immediately says, "Now you do it. Insert your card." Training should continue at the zero-second delay interval for all steps for the task analysis. After several successful instructional sessions using the zero-second delay, the teacher would then lengthen the delay interval to four seconds. During the four-second delay interval, the initial request is made "Insert your card." If Cassandra does not respond correctly within four seconds or if she responds incorrectly, the most effective prompt (teacher model) is provided. Once a step is completed, the teacher then waits four seconds for Cassandra to start the next step in the task analysis before using the most effective prompt. If Cassandra correctly completes the step, then no prompt is given and the next step is attempted, and so forth until the whole task is completed.

Audio Prompting

Because CD players, iPods™, and other electronic devices are now widely used by people in the community, using these devices to provide students with auditory prompts is a very unobtrusive strategy that can be used to facilitate skill

generalization to other places or when the teacher is not there. Auditory prompting systems have been used when teaching vocational tasks (Grossi, 1998; Post & Storey, 2002). When using audio prompts to teach community skills and facilitate generalization, Test and colleagues (2008) suggest using either a *step-by-step instructional format* or *step-by-step instruction with inserted evaluation questions*.

When using a *step-by-step instructional format*, the whole-task analysis is read and recorded. The "script" should include instructions for successfully completing each step in the task analysis. Remember to leave enough time between instructions for the student to complete each step. While this process has been used to successfully teach new skills, Test et al. (2008) recommend that it be used after a student has learned how to do the task as a way to help remember how to successfully complete the task when the teacher is not present. For example, once a student has learned how to perform a job task, the task could be recorded and played each time the student needed to perform the task in his or her job.

Using *step-by-step instruction with inserted self-evaluation questions* is the same as the previous strategy except that at the end of the instructions, a series of self-evaluation questions are provided. For example, after completing a job task, the following questions might be asked: "Did you remember to complete all steps?" and "Did you ask for help if you got stuck?"

Self-Instruction

Because real-life workplaces are often busy, constantly changing places, if a student can learn to provide her own prompts, her chances of success should increase. Self-instruction is one strategy that can be used to facilitate this process and is appropriate for students who have some language, can attend to auditory and visual stimuli, and can initiate communication. Agran and Moore (1994) suggest that prior to initiating self-instruction training, a student should be provided with a clear explanation of the strategy, as well as its benefits.

Training sessions should use a model-practice-feedback-reinforcement format. All of the methods of self-instruction can be modified to use verbal labels, self-reinforcement, picture cues, self-monitoring, peer tutors, and group instruction in order to meet a wide variety of student needs. Before beginning self-instruction, a task analysis should be prepared and training sequences should be developed from the task analysis. When students are trained to use a specific self-instruction strategy, it is important to remind students to say prompts quietly so that they do not draw attention to themselves. Agran and Moore (1994) described four types of self-instruction strategies:

1. *Problem-solving*. This method of self-instruction teaches students to identify and resolve problems in a workplace by stating the problem, coming up with a solution, and directing themselves to perform the planned response. This approach can be used when running out of supplies/materials, misplacing a tool/item, and needing to ask a question.

   Serena is learning to follow a task analysis for making coffee. In step 3, she must lay out the coffee filters, since there will be time when the coffee filter container is empty. For this step, her teacher has taught her to say, "Are there enough filters?" If yes, then she will do the next step, or, if no, she will get the container from the storage cabinet.

2. *Did-next-now*. This method of self-instruction is useful with sequenced tasks and involves stating what task was just completed (did: "I did . . ."), which task needs to be done next (next: "Next, I . . ."), and directions to perform that task (now: "Now, I . . .").

   For example, Serena might say to herself, "I did lay out the coffee filters, next I place one scoop of coffee on the filter."

This strategy can be used when students are performing sequenced job tasks such as cleaning a house, bulk mailing, packaging materials, and/or collating projects.

3. *What-where*. This self-instruction strategy is appropriate for students who can already perform a task, but are not consistent or have difficulty with skill generalization. When using this strategy, the student reminds him/herself of what needs to be done (what) and where the task is to be performed (where). This method can be used in jobs where the student is assigned to more than one area of a business (e.g., cleaning offices or motel rooms).

   For example, since Serena prepares the coffee in the dining area, but must wash the coffee pot in the kitchen, she could be taught to remind herself, "I finished making coffee, now I need to wash the pot in the kitchen."

4. *Interactive did-next-ask*. The final self-instruction strategy is appropriate for tasks requiring social interactions in the area of customer service. Repeating the self-instruction aloud reminds the student what to do while performing the task and interacting with another person, without making a negative impression on others. With the first verbalization (did) a student is reminded of the task just completed. The second step (next) directs a student to do the next step of the process. The third step (ask) involves a student asking a question to the person with who they are interacting. For example, a student can use this strategy when preparing a sandwich, taking a food order, checking in dry cleaning, assisting a customer in picking up a pre-ordered item, or gift-wrapping.

   Serena is now working at the counter filling coffee orders for customers. To help her remember the task, as well as interact with the customers, she is taught to say, "I put coffee in your cup, next I need to find out what extras I need to add, would you like cream or sugar in your coffee?"

In conclusion, all CBI should be delivered with the understanding that ultimately the student must be able to perform the job skills independently even if a long-term job coach is going to be available. During training, the instructor must teach students how to continuously assess their own performance and then seek out the natural job supports that will eventually lead to a level of independence comparable to that of co-workers without disabilities.

How to Collect Instructional Data

Since most employment skills are chained tasks, Test et al. (2008) suggest that task analytic assessment strategies be used with the following modifications. First, use an upside-down or self-graphing format (see Figure 15–6 for an example). To make a self-graphing task analysis, start by putting the first step in the task analysis at the bottom of the page, with additional steps placed above it in reverse order. Step numbers are then placed in columns to the right of each written step. As a student completes the task, each correctly performed step is marked with an "X." Incorrect responses are not marked. After the task is completed, the number of X's are counted and the number that represents the total number of X's is circled in that column. For example, on September 7 Cassandra correctly completed one step, on September 8 Cassandra correctly completed three steps, and on September 9 she completed four steps correctly. A graph can then made by connecting the circled numbers. Since a graph depicting student progress is generated as data are collected, the self-graphing data collection strategy makes instructional decision-making easy because you can see any problematic steps and use that information to make modifications the next time you teach the skill.

Second, Test et al. (2008) suggest that data do not need to be collected every time you teach a skill. In school, it is easy to collect data on every step that a student makes. However, when training in the community, they suggest using probes to

FIGURE 15–6
Upside-Down Task Analysis

Sample Self-Graphing Task Analysis: Withdrawing Money from an ATM						
Steps						
14. Put card and receipt in wallet.	14	14	14	14	14	14
13. Remove receipt.	13	13	13	13	13	13
12. Remove card.	12	12	12	12	12	12
11. Choose NO for another transaction*.	11	11	11	11	11	11
10. Remove cash from cash dispenser.	10	10	10	10	10	10
9. Press ENTER.	9	9	9	9	9	9
8. Enter $ amount on keypad.	8	8	8	8	8	8
7. Select CHECKING ACCOUNT*.	7	7	7	7	7	7
6. Select WITHDRAW*.	6	6	6	6	6	6
5. Press ENTER.	5	5	x	5	5	5
4. Enter pin number on keypad.	4	4	(4)	4	4	4
3. Choose ENGLISH or ESPAÑOL.	3	(x)	x	3	3	3
2. Insert debit card into the card slot.	2	x	x	2	2	2
1. Remove bank debit card from wallet.	(x)	x	x	1	1	1
Key:	9/7	9/8	9/9	9/10	9/11	9/12

X = correct step
O = Total # of correct
*Note: For step 6 – student will choose from three choices (i.e., deposit, withdraw, or balance). For step 7 – student will choose either checking account or savings account to withdraw money. For step 11 – student will choose YES or NO based on whether another transition is needed.

gather student performance data. Using probes, the teacher can teach for a while, then step back, watch the student perform the task without providing assistance, and collect data. Data collection sheets could be kept out of sight in a pocket notebook during instruction and pulled out only during probes. If the task analysis is short, data can even be recorded at a later time. The idea is to collect only enough data to allow instructional decisions related to student skill development.

Cassandra is prompted through the task analysis two or three times and then the teacher steps back and conducts a data collection probe using a self-graphing task analysis. This method is fast and provides useful data.

To gather enough data in an unobtrusive manner, consider (a) conducting at least one data collection probe every day you teach the skill, (b) switching to a once-a-week probe once a skill is mastered (as per your criteria), and (c) switching to monthly probes after three weekly probes.

Finally, Test et al. (2008) recommend teaching students to collect their own data. Having students learn to record their own performance (often called self-monitoring or self-recording) may itself increase the likelihood of independent and generalized performance. In addition, self-monitoring is unobtrusive because the student can record his or her own data and then review it with the teacher at a later time. (See Chapter 4 for additional measurement strategies).

Using Assistive Technology

As technology advances, so do the possibilities for individuals with severe disabilities to live and work independently within the community. Mobility, communication, and environmental control devices are now available, and they open doors previously closed in the business world. In many cases, the only limits placed on accessing

career possibilities through assistive technology are those of funding and staff expertise. IDEA (2004) defines the term "assistive technology device" as any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of a child with a disability. Assistive technology (AT) can be high-tech or low-tech. Low-tech devices are simple and low cost, including materials such as non-skid matting, VELCRO attachments, reachers, and pencil grips. Many low-tech devices can be purchased in the community or can be designed from commonly available materials. High-tech devices are commercially manufactured by specialized vendors, expensive, and involve a high level of electronics or computerized components.

Since Cassandra has recently been approved for a Medicaid waiver, she has many options for both low-tech and high-tech AT devices. Cassandra's teacher and family have begun to use PicSyms on a ring, a low-tech device, that provide her with a simple tool to communicate her needs during CBI. They have also purchased a high-tech device, a Talking Photo Album, for Cassandra. The Talking Photo Album records up to four minutes of speech per page and will support Cassandra's independence, promote communication, enhance her social capabilities, and facilitate communication at school and in community settings.

A major part of the transition process for students with physical, communication, and/or sensory disabilities should be to ensure that proper technological devices are accessible to students for use in all domains of their life. Usually teachers, parents, and other people involved in a student's transition from school to postsecondary life will seek to solve problems by using the simplest AT devices first and work up the continuum to more complex devices if necessary to meet student needs (Geary, Griffin, & Hammis, 2006). Although AT is not going to eliminate all barriers to employment, it should not be considered a luxury. For some individuals, AT is a necessity without which the possibility of competitive employment will be eliminated (Scherer & Galvin, 1996). Use of AT in the workplace is often included in the discussion around reasonable job accommodations. Data from the Job Accommodations Network (JAN at **www.jan.wvu.edu**) indicates that most accommodations cost under $500.

It is important to remember that AT devices used in school for instructional purposes may not be appropriate for community use. In school, trained educators and therapists are available to facilitate the use of devices, make adjustments/repairs to devices, and modify the environment to maximize the effectiveness of a device. However, in the community, the student will be involved in situations where the use of AT is virtually non-existent. Therefore, it is imperative that students receive a comprehensive assessment by a team of qualified professionals to determine the type of AT that will be needed for the various work environments encountered during training and competitive employment. Test and colleagues (2006) offer suggestions for ensuring that a student's success on the work site is enhanced through the use of AT:

1. Consider issues such as portability (i.e., the ease with which the device can be transported), expansion (i.e., the potential of the device to be expanded as a student's vocational needs change), maintenance (i.e., the ease with which the device can be maintained and repaired), adaptability (i.e., the ability of the device to be used in a wide range of environments and situations), and preference (i.e., what type of device the student is most at ease using).
2. Get specialists (e.g., physical therapist, speech therapist) involved in planning sessions.
3. Access a rehabilitation services engineer through vocational rehabilitation (VR) services. Rehabilitation engineers can provide evaluation and assessment of the client, environment, and equipment; information about technology; recommendations for modifications, adaptations, and prototype development; and follow-up services to determine the ongoing effectiveness of the AT.
4. Identify possible funding sources (e.g., Medicaid, VR, public schools, private insurance, supplemental security income work incentives, private pay).

5. Provide an orientation period in work environment to evaluate the effectiveness of a device.
6. Ensure employer and key employees understand the importance of the AT device to the student's success and have been given strategies for supporting student in the use of the device.
7. If school personnel have been primarily responsible for coordinating the purchase, upgrading, and maintenance of AT devices for the student, measures must be taken prior to graduation to provide the student and family with the knowledge needed to conduct these activities in the future.

Meeting Medical and Health Needs

Some students with severe disabilities, who will be participating in employment training, will have medical or health considerations that require advanced planning and accommodations. These may include conditions such as seizure disorders, metabolic disorders, bowel/urinary conditions, asthma, diabetes, and heart conditions. From an early age, the goal for students with medical/health needs should be to teach them about their conditions and to implement healthcare procedures (e.g., glucose monitoring, administration of medication, colostomy/ileostomy care, cauterization) as independently as possible. The first priority for a student with a medical problem is maintaining and improving his or her health. Preparing for future employment can actually enhance the health of an individual due to the emotional and psychological benefits associated with independence and community inclusion. Practices and strategies to consider when planning community-based training and job placements for students with specialized medical/health conditions include the following:

1. Gather all information about a student's medical condition by obtaining signed releases from the students and/or parents to access medical records, including names and contact information for all physicians and/or specialists, student's medical history, prescribed medications, specialized medical procedures, physical restrictions, prognoses, and any other health-related information.
2. Help parents obtain a physician's opinion about the types of work environments and tasks in which student might encounter difficulties.
3. Develop a packet for each student containing parental permission for participation in community-based vocational training, specific instruction for performing all medical or health procedures, basic medical information (e.g., allergies, medication administration schedule, medication side effects, medical emergency information, physician contact information), parental permission for medical emergency care, and any work restrictions. Ensure work supervisors (school, business) are aware of this information and where it is located.
4. Use transition planning sessions to help parents and students use physician recommendations, situational assessment results, and student interests to design employment preparation experiences that will lead to a job.
5. Provide training to enable the student to independently perform medical care procedures and self-administer medication.
6. Determine the types and amount of medical equipment and supplies that will be needed and a method for ensuring their accessibility to the student while on the job site.
7. Teach students self-advocacy skills to coordinate their healthcare, including negotiating and problem-solving with medical care professionals regarding changes in medical care that can facilitate employment, with adult service providers regarding services needed for employment, and with employers regarding job accommodations and modifications.
8. Involve therapeutic support staff and school health professionals in planning for employment preparation activities and job placement.

Cassandra has spastic quadriplegic cerebral palsy, which requires her to use a manual wheelchair for mobility. The wheelchair has been adapted with trunk support and subasis bar. She uses her right hand to manipulate larger items and uses her left hand for stabilization. Cassandra receives physical therapy once per week for 30 minutes and has ongoing therapy services in the classroom including positioning on adaptive equipment. She wears ankle-foot orthotics for stability when using a stander and a left hand-elbow mobilizer. Cassandra's physical therapist would like for her to have a motorized wheelchair, but funds have not been available. Cassandra also receives occupational therapy on a consultative basis. Her teacher and occupational therapist have been working on developing vocationally related jigs. Additionally, Cassandra has little intelligible speech other than single words and yes/no responses. She uses an iTalk2® to communicate simple needs and choices and is learning to use a GoTalk20+®. She does not use an augmentative communication device at home but has a picture board, which transitions with her among school, community, and home. Cassandra receives speech therapy twice a week.

ADULT OUTCOMES AND MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

Developing employment skills in high school is key to preparing students with severe disabilities for postschool employment. In this next section, postschool employment opportunities are discussed including (a) supported employment, (b) natural supports, and (c) customized employment.

Supported Employment

Beginning in the 1980s, supported employment emerged as an alternative employment model to provide individuals with severe disabilities employment options other than working in sheltered workshops (Wehman, Gibson, Brooke, & Unger, 1998). As youth with disabilities transition from school to work, it is important that they have the same employment opportunities as their peers without disabilities. Youth with disabilities should have the opportunity to move from school into integrated working environments and should be provided with the necessary supports to be successful in integrated working environments (DiLeo, Rogan, & Geary, 2000). Supported employment is defined as

> *Competitive work in integrated work settings, or employment in integrated work settings in which individuals are working toward competitive work, consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individuals, for individuals with the most significant disabilities for whom (a) competitive employment has not traditionally occurred, (b) competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability, and/or (c) because of the nature and severity of their disability, need intensive supported employment services. (Section 36 [a] of the Rehabilitation Act).*

The purpose of supported employment, also referred to as integrated employment (ODEP, 2014a), is to assist individuals with disabilities in becoming and remaining competitively employed in integrated work settings (Wehman & Revell, 1997). Data on the cost-effectiveness of supported employment as compared to sheltered workshops indicate that supported employment is more cost-effective for taxpayers than sheltered workshops (Cimera, 2006; 2008). The National Council on Disability (NCD) findings indicated "supported employment is not the end of a career, but rather a stepping stone to greater self-sufficiency" leading to greater employment opportunities and a more "inclusive" American workforce (2012, p. 6). Supported employment includes four models.

Individual Placement Model

This model involves one individual with a disability working in an integrated setting with a job coach to help him or her perform specific job tasks. Job coach responsibilities include on-the-job training and advocacy for the individual with a disability (ODEP, 2014a).

Small Business Model

This model involves a group of individuals with disabilities (i.e., up to six) and individuals without disabilities that operate a small business within a community setting. The business operates like any other small business would by providing work and paying employees like a typical business (ODEP, 2014a).

Mobile Work Crew Model

This model involves a group of individuals with disabilities (i.e., up to six) who move from job site to job site to perform job-related tasks (e.g., landscaping, gardening, painting) in various community settings. A job coach supervises the crew to ensure it is performing the job-related tasks correctly (ODEP, 2014a; Test et al., 2006).

Enclave Model

This model involves a group of individuals with disabilities (i.e., five to eight) who work at one job site and perform a variety of job-related tasks under the supervision of a job coach. The job coach provides ongoing support (ODEP, 2014a; Test et al., 2006).

Natural Supports

The idea of natural supports developed out of the supported employment concept. The ODEP defines natural supports as "support from supervisors and co-workers, such as mentoring, friendships, socializing at breaks and/or after work, providing feedback on job performance, or learning a new skill together at the invitation of a supervisor or co-workers" (ODEP, 2014a). There are several benefits to natural supports. First, natural supports provide social integration among the employer, co-workers, and the employee with a disability. Second, natural supports tend to be more permanent because they are readily available in the workplace. Third, because natural supports are a part of the working environment, job retention tends to be more long term (ODEP, 2014a). Additionally, Cimera (2007) found natural supports to be significantly more cost-effective than supported employment because they reduce the cost of hiring job coaches.

Watch "Great Hires!" at www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPXilYz4uw0

When discussing the use of natural supports in the workplace versus supported employment with a job coach, it is important to identify how natural supports work. Trach and Shelden (1999) identified six categories of natural supports:

1. *Organizational supports*—preparing/organizing job activities to facilitate successful employment for the employee with a disability (e.g., work schedule, supplies, child care)
2. *Physical supports*—design and function of physical objects in the job setting (e.g., computer equipment, accessibility ramps, assistive technology)
3. *Social service supports*—disability-related services to facilitate successful employment outcomes (e.g., personal assistant, residential service provider).
4. *Training support*—training and instruction on specific job skills provided by the employer or co-worker(s) (e.g., providing a task analysis for completing the job task or picture checklists)
5. *Community supports*—identification of community agencies and services that can be accessed by the employee with a disability to facilitate movement to the job site and improve employability skills (e.g., public transportation, compensatory education courses)

6. *Personal and family supports*—involving family and friend networks to support the needs of the employee with a disability (e.g., self-advocacy group, help with employment referrals)

Finally, Trach and Mayhall (1997) found that the key component in utilizing natural supports was an effective planning process that prepared individuals in the working environment to provide accommodations and supports to employees with disabilities.

Customized Employment

In an effort to meet the employment needs of individuals with severe disabilities, the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) in 2001 began to fund projects that offered customized employment to individuals with severe disabilities (Luecking & Luecking, 2006). Customized employment means "individualizing the relationship between job seekers and employers in ways that meet the needs of both. It is based on an individualized determination of the strengths, requirements, and interests of a person with a complex life" (ODEP, 2014b). Specifically, job tasks are developed based on the needs of the employer and employee with a disability. Customized employment can benefit not only the individual with a disability, but the employer as well because it meets the vocational goals of the employee and the work-related needs of the employer (Elinson, Frey, Li, Palan, & Horne, 2008). Four key elements comprise customized employment: (a) meeting the needs and interests of the individual with a disability; (b) utilizing a person to represent the individual with a disability (e.g., counselor, job developer, advocate, employment specialist); (c) successfully negotiating with the employer; and (d) developing a system of ongoing supports for the individual with a disability (ODEP, 2014b).

Identification of customized employment for individuals with severe disabilities is considered a "discovery process," during which time a job developer and a group of individuals work together to identify possible employment sources for the individual (Silverman, 2013). The job developer works with the group to identify the individual's strengths, needs, and preferences based on interviews and observations with the individual and his or her family in a variety of home and work settings (Heath, Ward, & Reed 2013; Silverman, 2013). During this process, work-related skills are identified that provide information about possible job placements that will meet the individual's needs. Finally, the team works with employers to negotiate a customized employment position that can meet the individual's needs in addition to meeting the needs of the employer (Silverman, 2013). Benefits of customized employment include competitive employment for individuals with severe disabilities, career advancement, competitive pay, job satisfaction, and integration (Fesko, Varney, DiBiase, & Hippenstiel, 2008).

FAMILY ROLES IN TRANSITION

When considering the transition to postschool life, family members play a key role in ensuring successful postschool outcomes for individuals with severe disabilities. Parent involvement has been identified as a predictor of postschool employment success for individuals with disabilities (Test et al., 2009) and has been defined as "parents/families/guardians' active and knowledgeable participation in all aspects of transition planning" (Rowe, Alverson, Unruh, Fowler, Kellems, & Test, 2014, p. 30). Families play a key role in the decision-making process, provide support at all levels, and serve as advocates for their children. Families should be involved throughout the entire transition planning process and are often the determining factor in whether a student succeeds or fails in obtaining postschool employment (Test et al., 2006). Eliciting family involvement is one of the greatest challenges special educators face. It becomes the special educator's role to initiate family involvement and help families

prepare their child to meet postschool goals. It is important for teachers to develop strong relationships with parents to support and promote successful transition for students with severe disabilities (NSTTAC, 2009b).

To ensure families are supported in the transition planning process, it is imperative that teachers (a) engage families in the collaboration process; (b) provide multiple opportunities for involvement (e.g., flexible meeting times); (c) connect families with support networks (e.g., advocacy groups); and (d) are prepared to work with families, including families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Rowe et al., 2014; Trainor, Lindstrom, Simon-Burroughs, Martin, & Sorrells, 2008). Parents can contribute to the transition planning process in several ways. They can (a) support their child's development of self-determination skills, (b) become actively involved in community-based employment preparation, (c) help their child obtain and maintain competitive employment, (d) act as a liaison as their child navigates through the adult service provider system, and (e) be a deciding factor in whether their child obtains his or her postschool goals for education, employment, and independent living (Test et al., 2006). However, as mentioned previously, eliciting family involvement can be a challenge for teachers. Test et al. (2006) identified 11 strategies to promote family involvement:

1. Prepare elementary teachers to talk with families in the area of transition and employment for students with disabilities. By doing this, teachers can provide parents with information that will help them begin thinking about self-determination, normalization, and person-centered planning when their child is at a young age. Teachers can also set the expectation that their student will graduate from high school and move forward to postschool employment, education, and independent living options. Additionally, parents can assist students in developing skills to attain postschool goals at an early age (e.g., reading stories about employment options, doing household chores, developing money skills by budgeting allowance).
2. Provide parent training opportunities so that parents can develop the necessary skills to help their child with career choices. Parents can assist with job searches and job attainment. Parent training can be conducted via webinars, podcasts, written products, family night opportunities, and small-group or individual training sessions.
3. Keep parents informed by ensuring they are included in all communication. Parents should be informed (a) about how important their role is in the transition planning process and (b) that they have valuable information regarding their child that other team members lack.
4. The emphasis placed on documents and forms at meetings can often be intimidating for parents, so this should be minimized as much as possible. Additionally, avoid the use of jargon because it can make parents feel as if they are not members of the teams. Be sure that meetings are parent-friendly and that all team members make parents feel that they are capable members that can understand the system and make informed and objective decisions.
5. All team members should be considerate and sensitive to cultural diversity.
6. Build a relationship with parents that helps them understand that the team is dedicated to the student and parents as they dream about the child's future plans for education, employment, and independent living.
7. Establish a network of support for parents. By assisting in establishing parent networks and support groups, parents have the opportunity to interact with other families as they progress through the transition planning process. Parent networks and support groups give parents the opportunity to express their fears and concerns with others that are in similar situations.
8. Encourage parents to get involved and talk with their child about jobs and career paths. Parents can provide job-shadowing opportunities and can model strong work ethics for their child.

9. Help parents set reasonable and high expectations for their child. Often, parents of youth with severe disabilities do not recognize the opportunities their child has for part-time or full-time employment once they graduate from high school.
10. Keep parents informed about all transition assessment information and be sure to include parents in the transition assessment process. Ensure that transition planning is based on the student's strengths, needs, and preferences, and let parents know that decisions are based on their child's abilities. Also, interviews with parents can help identify natural supports within the student's family life that can assist the student with job development.
11. Meeting the needs of the family may be the first step in supporting students. Families may need assistance with transportation, financial planning, understanding Supplemental Security Income and adult agency services, and overcoming fears associated with the student's transition.

In addition to these strategies, it is important to keep families informed about all aspects of the transition planning process (e.g., evidence-based practices, financial planning) (Test et al., 2006). Implementation of these strategies can assist schools in promoting active family involvement that can be nothing but beneficial for the student with severe disabilities.

Rusty's parents have researched various PCP models and are excited about the process. They are committed to help his Case Manager facilitate the person-centered planning process because they understand the importance of collaboration not only with the school, but with families and agencies as well, to help Rusty achieve his postsecondary goals. In PCP, several strategies were identified to facilitate family involvement, such as increasing teacher–parent communication, linking his parents to a support network, classroom volunteering, and working with agencies to ensure Rusty will have necessary services when he enters adult life. Rusty's teacher is going to provide his parents with task analyses of a variety of life skills (e.g., cooking, purchasing, safety) so that they can better practice these skills with Rusty at home. Additionally, Rusty's parents, in collaboration with the transition specialist, will identify community members for Rusty to work with to help obtain his dream of becoming an entrepreneur.

INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

In terms of transition to employment, interagency collaboration refers to having key people, businesses, and agencies come together to plan and help students become successfully employed after leaving school. During the school years, the IEP planning meeting serves as the primary place for interagency collaboration to occur. Therefore, it is important for teachers to become familiar with the IDEA requirements for agency notification and participation (Section 300.344f) and agency responsibilities (Section 300.348). In addition, teachers must also learn about the eligibility requirements and types of services provided by adult service agencies in their community. While the range of possibilities varies across communities, there are four types of community supports that are particularly important for students with severe disabilities: (a) vocational rehabilitation services, (b) developmental disabilities services, (c) social security services, and (d) one-stop career centers.

Vocation Rehabilitation Services

Since vocational rehabilitation (VR) services are the primary source for a student's transition to employment services, it is important to know what federal rehabilitation legislation says about employment and transition. First, the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992 (p. 2, 102-569) and 1998 (Title IV of P.L.105-220; Workforce Investment Act of 1998) both included what is known as the "presumption of benefit,"

"which is the assumption that all individuals can benefit from VR services unless the agency can demonstrate clear and convincing evidence that an individual cannot benefit from employment because of disability." (Test et al., 2006, p.14). Second, both Acts define transition services using the same definition as IDEA. Third, vocational rehabilitation counselors can use school assessment data as part of their eligibility intake process as long as the assessments are completed on the past year. Fourth, the individualized plan for employment (IPE) developed by VR must be coordinated with the student's IEP. Finally, the VR system does not recognize (nor will pay for) segregated employment as an outcome (Mank, 2009).

Possible VR Services

The range of services that is potentially available to students through a VR agency can include, but are not limited to, (Brooke, Green, & Revel, 2006; Luecking, 2009) the following: (a) assessment for determining eligibility for VR services, (b) vocational counseling, guidance, and referral services, (c) vocational and other training, including on-the-job training, (d) job placement and supported employment services, (e) transportation related to other VR services, (f) personal assistance services while receiving VR services, (g) rehabilitation technology services and assistive technology devices, (h) physical restoration and mental health services, (i) interpreter services for individuals with hearing impairments, and (j) reading services for individuals with visual impairments.

Finally, because VR services are typically a student's doorway to supported employment services, teachers must be aware that when students leave school they are leaving the school world of entitlements and entering the adult world of eligibility. That is, while students are in school, they are entitled to special education services because of IDEA; however, once they leave school, they must be deemed eligible for services by each agency. Therefore, it is critically important for teachers to know, and help students and families know, the eligibility requirements for adult services, and help students and families get on waiting lists of employment services as early as possible.

According to Luecking (2009), to be eligible for VR services an individual must (a) have a physical or mental impairment that results in a substantial impediment to employment; (b) be able to benefit from employment (see the definition of "presumption of benefit" above); and (c) require VR services to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment. Finally, individuals who currently receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) are presumed eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.

Developmental Disabilities Services

Every community has a system for providing services to individuals with developmental disabilities/mental retardation/mental health/substance abuse. Sometimes they are managed by local community service boards; and sometimes they are managed by a state agency. In addition, in some states VR provides services and supports directly to individuals and in others they contract for services and supports through "community rehabilitation providers" (CRPs). Regardless of how services and supports are organized in your community, it is important to remember that these services are eligibility-based and, since waiting lists for service are often long, it is important to help families get their student on the list as early as possible.

Services that are provided by CRPs typically include, but are not limited to, case management, community housing and supported living options, counseling, family planning, personal health care, and mental health services. In terms of employment, CRPs should be involved in the transition planning process because they can provide both job development and job coaching services for youth while they are still in school, as well as also providing the long-term support services and funding needed for supported employment.

FIGURE 15–7
Web-Based Resources for Social Security Administration (SSA) Benefits

www.ssa.gov/
This is the SSA's homepage. There is a plethora of information on this website related to resources and supports for individuals with disabilities and employment.
www.socialsecurity.gov/work/
This SSA site includes employment supports for individuals with disabilities, including the Ticket to Work program. Information is available for transition-aged youth with disabilities related to work experiences and supports.
www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook/
The SSA Redbook is a fantastic resource for teachers, families, students, and administrators. It provides general information related to employment provisions for individuals with disabilities, including information on program availability and supplementary programs that provide information for teachers, advocates, youth, and others involved in the lives of individuals with disabilities.
www.ssa.gov/ssi/links-to-spotlights.htm
This SSA sites includes a number of resources, including handouts related to SSI issues. The handouts cover a number of topics including employment rights and responsibilities, reporting SSI earnings, SSI for individuals with blindness, and many more.
www.socialsecurity.gov/work/WIPA.html
This SSA site provides information related to the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance program. The site provides background information and includes information about requirements and services the program offers.

Note: For additional information, see **www.ssa.gov/disability/.**

(Adapted from "Web-Based Resources for Social Security Administration (SSA) Benefits" by Valerie Brooke and Jennifer T. McDonough, *Teaching Exceptional Children,* Vol. 41, 2008, pp. 58–65.)

Social Security Administration

Probably the number one concern for students and families when a student with severe disabilities becomes employed is the possible loss of social security benefits (both financial and medical). It is extremely important to help students and families get assistance with benefits planning. While it is not possible to explain all the benefits in detail in this chapter, it is possible to provide an introduction to the topic and provide resources for more information (see Figure 15–7). For transition-aged students, the two most relevant programs are Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Income (SSDI). SSI is a Social Security Administration (SSA) "benefit program funded by Federal income tax and is a minimal monthly payment to people with disabilities or aged who are financially needy" (Brooke & McDonough, 2008, p. 62). SSDI is "an insurance benefit authorized under Title II of Social Security Act for individuals who paid into the system through FICA taxes" (Brooke & McDonough, 2008, p. 62). Since eligibility criteria differ for both SSI and SSDI, see resources listed in Figure 15–7.

Because the fear of losing benefits has kept many students with disabilities from pursuing competitive employment, the Ticket to Work program and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 (TWWIIA) (P.L. 106-170) was designed to remove many of these disincentives. While Figure 15–8 lists eight SSI and SSDI employment supports, three of the most relevant incentives for transition-age students are described below.

Plan for Achieving Self Support (PASS)

PASS allows individuals receiving SSI to set aside earnings to reach a specific employment-related goal. These savings are not counted when determining monthly benefits amounts. PASS plan goals must be pre-approved by SSA, reasonable to achieve within a specified time period, and increase the chances of becoming financially independent. Examples of what might be purchased with PASS funds include "education tuition, job coaching, transportation, job-related items, or equipment to start a business" (Brooke & McDonough, 2008; p.63).

FIGURE 15–8
SSI and SSDI Work Incentives and Supports

SSA Benefit Program	Type of Work Incentive/ Exclusion	Description of Work Incentive/Exclusion
SSDI/SSI	Impairment-Related Work Expenses (IRWE)	Cost of certain impairment-related expenses will be deducted from earnings if determined based on performance of substantial work. Examples of impairment-related expenses include, but are not limited to, wheelchairs, certain transportation costs, and specialized work-related equipment. Monthly impairment-related work expenses are excluded from earned income when determining monthly SSI payment amount.
SSDI/SSI	Medicaid/ Medicare	Working individuals with disabilities will continue to receive at least 93 consecutive months of hospital insurance; Supplemental Medical Insurance, if enrolled; and prescription drug coverage, if enrolled, after the nine-month trial work period.
SSDI/SSI	Blind Work Expense (BWE)	Earned income by an individual with blindness does not count toward SSI expenses when determining SSI eligibility and payment amount. Expenses do not need to relate to blindness and include earned income used to pay income taxes, meals consumed during work hours, transportation costs, or guide-dog expenses.
SSDI/SSI	Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS)	Allows individuals opportunities for self-support to use income and/or things owned to reach a work goal.
SSDI/SSI	Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE)	A student with a disability regularly attending school, college, or university, or a course of vocational or technical training, can have limited earnings not counted against SSI benefits. Maximum amount of the income exclusion applicable to a student in 2014 is $1,750 per month, but not more than $7,060 in 2014.
Title II	Trial Work Period (TWP)	Period of at least nine months that individuals can work (at any earning level) without losing cash benefits. Any month in which earnings exceed $770 is considered a month of services. In 2015, this monthly amount increases to $780.
Title II	Extended Period of Eligibility (EPE)	EPE begins the month after the Trial Work Period (TWP) ends, even if you are not working that month and first 36 months of the EPE is the re-entitlement period.
Title II	Unsuccessful Work Attempt (UWA)	Earning that ended or fell below the Substantial Gainful Activity level after six months or less due to individuals' disabilities or the loss of necessary supports needed to work.

Note: For additional information, see **www.ssa.gov/disabilityresearch/wi/detailedinfo.htm.**
(Adapted from "Web-Based Resources for Social Security Administration (SSA) Benefits" by Valerie Brooke and Jennifer T. McDonough, *Teaching Exceptional Children,* Vol. 41, 2008, pp. 58–65)

Impairment-Related Work Expenses (IRWE)

IRWEs are both an SSI and an SSDI work incentive. IRWEs are the cost of services and equipment that a student needs to be able to work due to a disability. The IRWE costs are deducted from a student's earnings resulting in increased SSI benefits. IRWEs have been used to pay for job coach services, assistive technology, and personal assistants. IRWEs can also be prorated over time to allow for expensive purchases (e.g., wheelchairs, computers).

Student-Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE)

The SEIE is designed to allow individuals under the age of 22 who are receiving SSI and regularly attending school to exclude a certain amount of their employment earnings. According to O'Mara and Farrell (2006), this work incentive can allow many students to be employed without affecting their SSI cash benefit because the amount of earning that can be excluded is so high. Regularly attending school is defined as (a) attending Grades 7–12 for a minimum of 12 hours per week, (b) attending a college or university for a minimum of 8 hours per week, or (c) attending an employment training course for a minimum of 12 hours per week (O'Mara & Farrell, 2006).

Finally, another important component of the Ticket to Work program and Work Incentives Improvement Act for transition-aged youth is the National Benefits Planning, Assistance, and Outreach (BPAO) initiative (Brooke & McDonough, 2007). The BPAO program is designed to provide students and families with direct, individualized benefits planning on how work and different work incentives will affect SSA benefits. To find the BPAO nearest to you go to **www.vcu-barc.org**. In conclusion, social security benefits should not stand in the way of students with severe

disabilities becoming employed. However, good transition planning must include benefits planning to help students and their families avoid the harm that can be caused when they are not aware of the effects that earnings can have on cash benefits and medical insurance (Brooke & McDonough, 2008).

One-Stop Career Centers

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) (P.L. 105-220) established One-Stop Career Centers in 1998 as a place youth and others can go to have easy access to career skills and training. One-Stop Career Centers typically house multiple employment-related agencies and supports under one roof. Services include job search and career information, training (e.g., resume writing, interviewing), as well as job training and youth employment programs. Hoff (2002) stated the three levels of services provided by One-Stop Career Centers are core, intensive, and training. Core services are available to anyone in the community and involve providing basic employment-finding assistance (e.g., job listings, resume writing). Intensive services are available to certain job seekers such as individuals who were recently laid off or who have a low income (Luecking, 2009). Training services can include vocational assessments and career counseling and are designed for individuals who were not successful using core or intensive services. Eligible persons may receive intensive training, such as job-readiness training, on-the-job training, and adult education/literacy training (Luecking, 2009).

While it is early for Serena and her family to invite outside agency personnel to her transition/IEP meeting, her IEP team agrees that she will probably need both VR and CRP services to help her with future employment needs, whether this is an individual supported job or customized employment. In addition, they plan to get Serena on the waiting list for supported living through her county developmental disabilities services agency. Finally, they plan to invite a financial planner to discuss social security issues to their next meeting.

As Rusty moves forward with his plan to develop his own computer business, his IEP team continues to invite his VR counselor and the coordinator of a local CRP who specializes in customized employment to his meeting to help ensure that everything is on track for his graduation next year. Although he plans to live at home for a few more years, they plan to invite a developmental disabilities case manager to his next IEP meeting to begin exploring residential options and to look at the implications of his future career plans on his social security benefits.

Since Cassandra will be moving to the local community college next year to participate in her school system's program for 18- to 21-year-olds, her IEP team continues to invite representatives from VR and a local CRP to her team meetings. Together, they have been very useful in helping plan Cassandra's sequence of community-based training activities and integrating it with her transportation, mobility, and communication training. Finally, although no longer needed at every meeting, her SSA financial planner has explained the use of PASS, IRWE, and SEIE, and is available to provide assistance as these benefits are needed in the future.

LEARNING OUTCOME SUMMARIES

15.01 Transition Planning

Learning Outcomes

1. Identify how the IDEA definition of transition has changed over time.

For the first time in 1990, IDEA mandated the IEP to include a transition component for students with disabilities beginning no later than age 16. It required that the transition needs of students be met through coordinated planning focused on movement from school into

postschool life, emphasizing the role of families and adult service providers. The reauthorization of IDEA in 1997 shifted transition services from an educational process to an outcome-oriented process, focusing on aligning students' educational programs with their postschool goals. IDEA (1997) required transition services begin at the age of 14 instead of 16. The reauthorization of IDEA in 2004 went one step further by focusing on accountability and results and required transition services to include a "coordinated set of activities designed within a results-oriented process" focused on improving both academic and functional achievement of the student with a disability to facilitate movement from school into postschool life. IDEA (2004) reverted to the 1990 requirement that transition services begin no later than age 16.

2. Describe the eight required components of an IEP measured by Indicator 13.

There are eight required components of an IEP to ensure states are meeting federal requirements for Indicator 13 and appropriately facilitating the transition planning process. The eight required components are (1) appropriate measurable postsecondary goals, (2) postsecondary goals updated annually, (3) evidence that measurable postsecondary goals are based on age-appropriate transition assessment, (4) transition services that are included to facilitate the student's movement from school into postschool life, (5) appropriate course of study aligned with students' postsecondary goals, (6) annual IEP goals that relate to transition services and align with postsecondary goals, (7) evidence the student was invited to the IEP meeting, and (8) evidence a representative from an adult service agency was invited to the IEP meeting.

3. Describe the five stages of the IEP process that can be used to facilitate student involvement.

There are five stages to facilitate student involvement in the IEP. First, **developing background knowledge** includes providing students opportunities to learn about their disability, the IEP process, and special education (e.g., conducting an IEP scavenger hunt). Second, **planning for the IEP** includes working with students to develop vision statements, involving students in the transition assessment process, writing letters to invite IEP team members to meetings, using specific curricula to teach participation in the IEP, and involving students in meeting preparation. Third, **drafting the IEP** includes providing students opportunities to write about their IEP meeting, changing *needs* into *"I will . . . "* statements to develop postschool goals, and having students meet with parents to discuss goals. Fourth, **meeting to develop the IEP** includes considering options related to the level of participation, providing opportunities to rehearse, and using technology to facilitate involvement during the meeting. Finally, **implementing the IEP** includes providing students with the opportunity to create a fact sheet about their IEP, teaching self-advocacy skills, having students revisit their IEP, teaching students to self-monitor and self-evaluate their progress, and developing person-first progress reports.

15.02 Teaching Employment Skills

Learning Outcomes

1. Describe and discuss the important characteristics of school-based instruction (SBI).

SBI has the advantage of being an easier environment to control because transportation and scheduling are not a problem. In addition, school campuses are a more accepting environment for students who are learning to perform job tasks and behave appropriately. However, these advantages are offset by having to make sure SBI incorporates strategies to promote generalization by using real materials and setting up the environment to look "real." So, while SBI is logistically easier, it is often instructionally challenging.

2. Describe and discuss the important characteristics of community-based instruction (CBI).

CBI has the advantage of happening in the real world where natural variations occur. This includes a variety of co-workers with different social and work skills and tasks that may change. This variety, combined with the use of real materials, should help promote skill

generalization. However, in spite of these advantages, CBI disadvantages can include the need for transportation, allocating staff, and coordinating school and business schedules.

Finally, both SBI and CBI should be designed to help students build stamina needed for real jobs and learn to work with little supervision and feedback. In addition, both types of instruction should be designed to meet the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

15.03 Adult Outcomes and Meaningful Employment Outcomes

Learning Outcomes

1. Identify the different types of postschool employment outcomes for students with severe disabilities.

2. Describe the different types of postschool employment outcomes for students with severe disabilities.

First, **supported employment** consists of competitive employment in integrated work settings, where individuals with and without disabilities work together to assist individuals with disabilities in becoming and remaining competitively employed. There are four supported employment models, including individual placement model, small business model, mobile work crew model, and enclave model. Next, **natural supports** are individuals (e.g., co-worker, supervisor) who provide support to individuals with disabilities in the competitive work environment, including mentoring, friendships, socializing at breaks and/or after work, providing job performance feedback, or learning a new skill together. Finally, **customized employment** involves individualized job opportunities that benefit the employer and the employee with severe disabilities and includes developing job tasks based on the individuals' strengths, interests, and job requirements to meet the needs of both the employers and employees on the job.

15.04 Family Roles in Transition

Learning Outcomes

1. Describe several roles families can play in the transition planning process.

Families should be involved throughout the decision-making process, provide support at all levels as their child moves from school into postschool life, and serve as advocates for their child.

2. Identify four ways to support families in the transition planning process.

To support families in the transition planning process, teachers should engage families in the collaboration process by talking to them about transition and postschool employment and providing opportunities for them to be involved in their child's skill development to help them attain postschool goals. Additionally, teachers should provide multiple opportunities for involvement (e.g., flexible meeting times and locations) and connect families with support networks (e.g., advocacy groups). Finally, teachers should be prepared with strategies for working with and involving families, including families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

15.05 Interagency Collaboration

Learning Outcomes

1. Identify the four types of community supports that are important for students with severe disabilities.

2. Describe the four types of community supports that are important for students with severe disabilities.

First, **vocational rehabilitation** (VR) services are the primary source for a student's transition to employment services. It is important to know what federal rehabilitation legislation says about employment and transition. Second, every community has a **developmental disabilities services** system. Regardless of how services and supports are organized in your community, it is important to remember that these services are eligibility based and, since waiting lists for service are often long, it is important to help families get their student

on the list as early as possible. Third, **Social Security Administration** is important because often the number one concern for students and families when a student with severe disabilities becomes employed is the possible loss of social security benefits (both financial and medical). As a result, it is important to help students and families get assistance with benefits planning. Finally, **One-Stop Career Centers** are places youth can go to get access to career skills and training since these centers typically house multiple employment-related agencies and supports under one roof, including job search, career information, and training (e.g., resume writing, interviewing), as well as job training and youth employment programs.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Use the Indicator 13 checklist to evaluate a set of IEPs for high school students. Do they contain all required elements? If not, which elements are missed the most? Do you think that "compliant" IEPs are also "quality" IEPs?
2. Develop a list of possible school-based and community-based work experience sites for a school in your community. List the pros and cons of each.
3. Develop a support employment/customized employment fact sheet for a high school student (or parent) that includes (a) contact information for related adult service agencies, and (b) social security information and resources.