

Self-Determination/ Self-Advocacy Correlated with Improved Education and Employment Outcomes

What is the level of evidence?

This predictor of post-school success has been labeled by NTACT at a Promising level of evidence regarding education and employment, based on one *a priori* correlational study in each outcome area. *More information on NTACT's process for identifying effective practices is available here: [NTACT's Effective Practices](#).*

What is the predictor?

Self-Determination is the ability to make choices, solve problems, set goals, evaluate options, take initiative to reach one's goals, and accept consequences of one's actions.

What are the essential characteristics?

1. Provide administrative support (e.g., professional development for teachers and paraprofessionals, common planning, providing paraprofessionals) to teachers for students with disabilities included in general education classrooms.
2. Provide specific instruction to support students with disabilities who are included in general education (e.g., differentiated instruction, learning strategies, study skills, organizational skills, personal management skills).
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of inclusive programming by using formative assessment to identify when adjustments are needed to accommodate all students' learning differences (e.g., pace, communication skills).
4. Develop a receptive school atmosphere for including students with disabilities in general education by educating administrators, teachers, other staff, and students about person-first language and disability rights.
5. Observe and assess integrated environment to identify and provide interventions for needed academic, social, behavior, and communication skills to ensure a conducive learning environment for all students.
6. Use diverse instructional strategies to meet the learning needs of all students including universal design for learning, technology, and linking instruction to student interests.
7. Provide professional development for secondary personnel to ensure personnel are qualified to use universal design for learning and evidence-based instructional strategies.
8. Engage students as active participants in general education instructional processes utilizing multiple models of inclusive learning.

Where is the best place to find out how to do this practice?

The Division on Career Development and Transition of the Council for Exceptional Children developed a Fast Fact on Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy available here:

https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/SPED/34aee1c1-7ded-4d59-af82-da4af08d5fc4/UploadedImages/DCDT-Fast-Facts-Self-Determination_Delphi_Final.pdf.

Additionally, the following Practice Descriptions are available at www.TransitionTA.org under Transition Planning and Effective Practices:

- Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction to Teach Goal Attainment
- Published Curricula to Teach Student Involvement in the IEP
- *Self-Advocacy Strategy* to Teach Student Involvement in the IEP
- Self-Directed IEP to Teach Student Involvement in the IEP
- *Whose Future Is It?* to Teach Student Involvement in the IEP or Self-Determination Skills
- *Check and Connect* to Promote Student Involvement in the IEP

References used to establish this evidence base:

Halpern, A.S., Yovanoff, P., Doren, B. & Benz, M.R. (1995) Predicting participation in postsecondary education for school leavers with disabilities. *Exceptional Children, 62*, 151–164.

Test, D. W., Mazzotti, V. L., Mustian, A. L., Fowler, C. H., Kortering, L., & Kohler, P. (2009). Evidence-based secondary transition predictors for improving postschool outcomes for students with disabilities. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 32*, 160-181.

Wehmeyer, M. L., & Schwartz, M. (1997). Self-determination and positive adult outcomes: A follow-up study of youth with mental retardation or learning disabilities. *Exceptional Children, 63*, 245–255.

Reference used to define and identify characteristics of this predictor:

Rowe, D. A., Alverson, C. Y., Unruh, D. K., Fowler, C. H., Kellems, R., & Test, D. W. (2014). A Delphi study to operationalize evidence-based predictors in secondary transition. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals, 38*, 113-126.

This Description was developed by The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT), Charlotte, NC, funded by Cooperative Agreement Number H326E140004 with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS). This document has been reviewed and approved by the OSERS. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education. OSEP Project Officer: Dr. Selete Avoke. RSA Project Officer: Kristen Rhinehart-Fernandez. This product is public domain. Authorization to reproduce it in whole or in part is granted. While permission to reprint this publication is not necessary, the citation should be: National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (2015). *Self-Determination Predictor Description*.