

AEA 10
Transition Topics and Agency
Profiles for
Washington County

Acknowledgements

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Getting Started in Transition

What Is Transition?

WHAT?

Transition is about preparing for and moving from high school to adult life. This move brings about many changes to the lives of the young person and the family. Planning is essential to make the transition easier.

FOR WHOM?

All children in special education.

WHY?

Transition is an issue in planning because differences in school and adult services are huge. Some of the differences between schools and adult services are:

SCHOOL

- Addresses the total child
- Brings issues and concerns to your attention
- Serves all students
- Free

ADULT SERVICES

- Separate agencies address employment, recreation, living and education services
- You must initiate communication and follow-up
- Serve people with specific disabilities; some have waiting lists
- Funding is not guaranteed

WHEN?

Transition planning is required to begin by age 14 at the child's IEP meeting. Transition will occur when the student begins accessing adult community services and/or graduates from the public school program.

HOW?

Transition is about preparing students to:

- Make choices
- Plan for their future
- Set goals
- Develop their career skills
- Perform needed daily living skills
- Participate in their community

WHERE?

Transitions take place at school, at home and in the community. Information about transitions and transition planning is available from:

Your child's teacher; consultant, transition consultant, and PEP educator from [Grant Wood AEA](#) (319) 351-2510; and from community agencies.

What Does Adulthood Look Like for People with Disabilities?

WHAT?

People judge success in adulthood in different ways. Researchers measure quality of life through these indicators: income level; employment; community participation; and access to buildings and transportation.

FOR WHOM?

Families, educators and community service providers can benefit from this information.

WHY?

Understanding the typical quality of life for adults with disabilities helps us realize the importance of beginning planning and transition services in junior/senior high school years.

WHEN?

At any age, but especially when planning with students ages 14 and older.

HOW?

National surveys show that real improvements in the lives of people with disabilities have been slow to materialize. The 1990 passage of the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) (ADA) has resulted in much greater awareness of disability and of the barriers. However, it has not shown a marked increase in the quality of the lives of people with disabilities. There are still huge gaps in their success indicators as reported in the 1998 [US Census Bureau](#).

Incomes Are Low

- Jobs are often part-time. Wages are lower than non-disabled.
- Even full-time earnings tend to be lower than non-disabled co-workers are.
- 30% of adults with disabilities live in poverty.

Less Social Participation

- People with disabilities live in relative social isolation. They are twice as likely to live alone.
- Lack of a full social life is a problem for many.

Unemployment

- 38.8% of 25-34 year olds with a disability are employed.
- 61.2% of 25-34 year olds with a disability are unemployed.
- 87.6% of nondisabled persons are employed
- This picture is even more dismal for those with a severe disability. Only 18.3% of those 25-34 year olds are in the labor force.

Physical Barriers

- Despite strong gains from ADA in building access and public transportation, barriers still exist.

WHERE?

Studies referenced are from The Disability Statistics Abstract, May 1998/Number 21, and May 2003, [Number 17, Disability Statistics Center](#). Institute for Health and Aging, School of Nursing, U of California, Box 0646, Laurel Heights, and 3333 California St., San Francisco, CA 94143-0646 www.dsc.ucsf.edu

The Emotional Impact of the Transition Planning Process

WHAT?

Families are often unprepared for the emotional impact that comes with transition planning. After all, this should be a time of anticipation and excitement. However, that may seem clouded with concerns, fears, anxiety and increased stress levels.

FOR WHOM?

Families of children with disabilities.

WHY?

Research has shown that professionals most often overestimate the impact of disability at the time of diagnosis and underestimate its impact at the time of transitioning from school to adult life. Transition times can be difficult, especially the transition of sons and daughters from school to adult living. Transitions put parents in touch with what might have been had the child not had a disability. Emotions return that haven't been this strong since the time of diagnosis. While this emotional reaction is part of the life long adjustment related to coping with disability, it can catch parents by surprise.

WHEN?

Transition planning may begin at any age. It is required for children in special education by age 14. Every transition, especially developmental milestones and moving from one program to another, can generate emotional reactions.

HOW?

FOR THE FAMILY WITH SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN:

While there are the stresses of:

- Making decisions about inclusion and special programming
- Participating in IEP conferences
- Dealing with the reactions of peers and generating friendships
- Arranging for extracurricular activities
- Adjusting emotionally to on-going implications of the disability

There are also the positives of

- Getting accustomed to implications of the disability in the educational arena
- Settling into the routine of how school systems work
- Watching sons and daughters fit in and get involved
- Recognizing strengths and seeing success
- Understanding and getting comfortable with the IEP process

FOR THE FAMILY WITH YOUNG ADULTS:

There are the stresses of:

- Adjusting emotionally to the adult implications of the disability
- Dealing with issues of sexuality
- Planning for residential, transportation, financial and post secondary training needs
- Dealing with an array of fragmented services versus one educational system
- Having to work with a whole set of new providers
- Facing fears of the unknown - finances, relationships, independent living...
- Balancing the need for independence with the need for on-going support

- Recognizing needs for continuing family responsibility
- Establishing new interests and self-identity for parents
- Knowing retirement options won't be the same as those for parental peers

Given all that can cause stress as children with disabilities become young adults, it isn't surprising that the emotional impact on families at the time of transitioning to adulthood is major.

It is important for families to know this is all part of a normal healthy process. Understanding the reality of their emotions will help families recognize why they may be feeling overwhelmed, anxious, burned out, isolated, resistant to getting involved, or not anxious to take important and necessary actions. Acknowledging fears and anxieties can be first steps to addressing them and moving on to celebrating the success and achievement that are also a part of transitioning to adult life.

TIPS FOR ADDRESSING THE EMOTIONAL IMPACT:

- Acknowledge the feelings and their source
- Remember that the emotions are part of a normal healthy process
- Focus on your son or daughter's progress and accomplishments
- Enjoy his/her excitement and readiness to move on
- Regard and treat your daughter or son as a young adult who happens to have a disability
- Be aware of existing supports from family, educators and the community
- Identify additional supports and services needed for your family and young adult
- Communicate with other families who have survived the transition to adulthood
- Develop relationships with adult service providers who will assist your son/daughter
- Take risks and practice letting go, a little at a time. You may discover your young adult is better prepared than you had thought

WHERE?

PEP has parents and educators on staff who are familiar with the transition process and are willing to visit with you about your individual situation.

PEP networks with local disability specific groups where one might find others who have been there from whom to draw strength and information.

Role Of The Student

WHAT?

Involving the young person in making decisions about his/her life is extremely important.

WHY?

If the student has a say in making plans for the future he/she is more likely to feel a strong commitment to making the plan work.

FOR WHOM?

Any student in special education.

WHEN?

Active participation by the student in their IEP is important at any age. At age 14 their participation in the IEP is required.

HOW?

All too often decisions are made for, rather than with, young people with disabilities. With this in mind some helpful suggestions might be:

1. Have the student take ownership of their IEP. They could help with the scheduling, facilitating and planning of the IEP meeting.
2. Help them become their own advocate. When possible have them learn about their strengths, needs and supports necessary for success.
3. Include the student in reviewing information and visiting adult service providers to assist with the decisions that affect his/her own future.
4. Support them in asking questions regarding their disability and how it may affect their future. They may want to consult others with the same disability for information about creative solutions to common problems.
5. Prepare students to participate in their IEP meeting by learning to make choices and state preferences.

WHERE?

Preparation for their role takes place both at home and at school.

Self-Advocacy

WHAT?

Self-Advocacy skills (sometimes called self-determination) are critical for adulthood. These skills are frequently taught in special education and included on the IEP.

Self determined individuals:

- Are aware of their personal needs
- Choose goals and persistently pursue them
- Make their needs known
- Evaluate progress toward their goals
- Adjust their performance

FOR WHOM?

Individuals with disabilities.

WHY?

The ability to make choices isn't developed overnight; rather, it's learned over the course of a lifetime. Students with disabilities can have highly structured classrooms and/or home environments that allow few choices. Both home and school must provide opportunities for practice. Research finds self-advocacy skills among the key elements for a successful transition to employment and post secondary education.

WHEN?

Children can learn self-advocacy skills at any age. Young children can begin learning the foundations by learning preferences and making choices. Older children can learn and use the skills identified above.

HOW?

Some ways students build self-advocacy skills include:

SCHOOL

1. Include self-advocacy skills in the IEP.
2. Invite students to attend and participate in their IEP conference.
3. Base educational activities in the IEP on the student's needs, preferences and interests.
4. Ask school personnel to prepare the student for the IEP meeting so the student:
 - Understands their own strengths and skills and is able to tell others about them
 - Knows about his/her disability and is able to explain it to others
 - Knows what types of accommodations help him/her succeed
 - Advocates for him or herself
 - Knows his/her vision and long range goals

HOME

1. Use every day situations at home to build your child's power to make choices.
2. Allow mistakes to be made and learning to occur from making mistakes.
3. Inform your child of the options he/she may have.
4. Listen more carefully to what your son/daughter says and respond accordingly.
5. Have respect for his/her likes and dislikes.
6. Model competence.
7. Model problem-solving and making adjustments to meet goals.
8. Encourage your child to take risks and broaden their experiences.

WHERE?

- Your child's teacher
- The special education consultant from Grant Wood AEA who serves your school
- The PEP program at Grant Wood AEA

Grant Wood AEA
200 Holiday Road
Coralville, Iowa 42241
(319) 351-2510
(800) 854-0446
TDD (319) 358-6299

Grant Wood AEA
4401 Sixth St. SW
Cedar Rapids IA 52404
(319) 399-6700
1-800-332-8488
TDD (319) 399-6766

www.aea10.k12.ia.us

Transition Planning Grid For Students And Parents

WHAT?

The educational activities in the IEP are based on student's needs, preferences and interests. Goals are based on this information from the student and family.

FOR WHOM?

Students engaged in transition planning and their families.

WHY?

Thinking about the future can seem fuzzy and distant. Families lead busy lives with many immediate concerns. Careful thought about the future takes some time to reflect. A little time now will pay off in big ways by easing your family into the next step of life.

Answering specific questions can help see transition in a concrete manner. It can help develop your family vision. The family vision is a statement teachers will ask you to formulate to guide the development of the IEP.

WHEN?

Engage in the process before each IEP meeting. Completing the grid annually allows reconsideration as needs and goals change with new experiences. Schools are required to initiate the transition planning process with students who are age 14 and older.

HOW?

Your child's teacher may have a format to use to assist in developing a vision statement and IEP goals. Complete that or use the grid at the end of this page.

1. Complete the grid separately or together with your child.
2. Allow ample time for explanation and discussion. This is a time for dreaming of possibilities.
3. From this discussion, formulate a family vision statement for the IEP meeting. See Transition Topic "Student and Family Vision" for guidance in formulating this statement.
4. Bring the completed grid to the IEP meeting.

WHERE?

Complete the grid at home and bring to the IEP meeting for you and your child to use as a resource in presenting your vision statement and developing IEP goals.

TRANSITION PLANNING GRID

Transition Areas (ideas to consider)	What does your child do now?	What goals do you and your child have for his/her future?	Is support needed to participate?	What agencies or support services are you using now?
Home Living (live alone, with a roommate, with support, with family or relatives, or in a group home)				
Community Participation (drive car; use bus, taxi, SEATS; shopping; make dental or medical appointments; bank, vote, participate in religious or community events)				
Recreation and Leisure (participate in sports, hobbies, group activities, fitness activities, family events, clubs, make or maintain friendships, volunteering)				
Careers or Job Preparation (full, part-time, supported or sheltered employment; on-the-job training, volunteer work)				
Post-Secondary Education (community college, community and adult basic education, on-the-job training, military service)				

Role of Parents

WHAT?

What's my role as a parent in all of this? may be a question running through your mind, as you become aware of the transition planning process. It's a good question. This can be a tricky time for parents who frequently hear two opposing messages: Be involved! and Let go!

FOR WHOM?

Any child in special education.

WHY?

Parents have a major influence on their children's attitudes toward work and life. Many studies have noted the effect of parental influence on educational and career decisions. Young people with disabilities have a special need for parental guidance.

WHEN?

At any age, but required for children ages 14 through 21. Starting early to think about and plan for the future of a child with a disability can help families make the needed adjustments and become more comfortable with those adjustments. The early transitions, from home to center-based, from preschool to elementary, etc., can provide a foundation for later transitions.

HOW?

To address the question of parental involvement, we've identified six roles for parents in the transition planning process. Remember that nobody does them all. Roles shift as parent's concerns and students' strengths and needs change over time.

1. Providers of Unique Information:

Parents know many things about their children's strengths and needs that won't be taken into consideration if parents don't share what they know. Parents know what motivates their children, what catches their interest and what sends them into a frenzy. Parents have unique insights into their children's traits, interests and capabilities. They are experts in developing reasonable accommodations. Such expertise is very valuable in transition planning.

2. Role Models:

Children form opinions about the value of work, different careers and self-worth from what they observe their parents saying and doing. With spoken and unspoken messages, parents communicate the expectation that their child will be an important member of the community - living an adult life that includes opportunities for work, life-long learning, recreation, family, friends, volunteer activities, etc.

3. Case Monitors:

Often the good intentions of working agreements and plans are not fully met. So parents may find themselves with the responsibilities of suggesting, reminding, confirming and checking up with busy educators and service providers. The better understanding parents have of the transition process, the less likely important information, deadlines and opportunities fall through cracks.

4. Promoters of Independence and Self-Advocacy:

Few of us live totally independent lives. The same is true for young people with disabilities. With regard to transition plans, it is vital that the student be actively involved in the process. Parents can provide numerous opportunities for their children to practice communicating their

interests, preferences and opinions so students will be experienced in expressing their choices and needs effectively.

5. **Planners of Future Finances and Support:**

Taking time to plan increases the chances of shaping a future that includes the opportunities and activities most desired by the young person with disabilities. By planning, the young person and his/her family will have a clearer picture of what they want and need, who should be involved and when certain steps should be completed.

6. **Advocates for Practical Plans and Activities:**

The school years are most valuable when they are used to teach persons with disabilities concrete everyday skills that will allow them to achieve the kind of adult life they want for themselves. Useful transition plans are ones that provide work, leisure, transportation, communication and independence experiences in the community. Parents can help provide these experiences and encourage their inclusion in school plans.

WHERE?

- PEP's Resource Library includes many materials that address the transition planning process. Call PEP's Resource Specialist and Grant Wood AEA's van mail will deliver the items to your closest neighborhood school where you may pick up. Or have your young adult bring them home to you.
- PEP has parents and educators on staff who are familiar with the transition process and are willing to visit with you about your individual situation.
- PEP will assist schools in setting up a Transition Information Evening for a building, a district, or any group of interested parents and educators.

For more information, call the [Parent Educator Partnership](#) (PEP) program staff at 1-800-332-8488, or call (319) 399-6700.

PEP can also be reached by mail:

[Parent Educator Partnership Program](#)

[Grant Wood Area Education Agency](#)

4401 6th Street SW

Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

The Parent Educator Partnership Program is located in our 33rd Avenue Facility at 1120 33rd Ave. SW, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

The Importance of Record Keeping

WHAT?

A record keeping system helps you organize and readily use information you have gathered from school and community agencies.

FOR WHOM?

Any student in special education who is planning for transition.

WHY?

Moving from school to adult services involves a lot of information and paperwork.

WHEN?

At age 14 you will begin discussing transition issues at your child's IEP conference. This is a good time to begin a folder to keep transition information.

HOW?

The record keeping process can vary depending on how you choose to organize your information. Information many people choose to keep includes school records and information about agency services.

School Records:

1. Recent IEP's and transition plans
2. High school transcripts
3. Evaluation reports
4. Work experiences, on the job training, and work history reports
5. Resume and employer evaluations

Agency Records:

- name of the agency and program
- dates of contact
- contact person's name
- notes of phone conversations with agency personnel
- services available, eligibility requirements, referrals
- brochures or handouts from each agency
- copies of letters and documentation written by you to agencies and received from agencies

Periodically go through your records to refresh your memory about issues still pending.

WHERE?

A folder may be provided for keeping transition information, or you may make and organize your own. Keep and take the folder with you to transition and agency meetings to use as a resource and planning guide.

The Transition Planning Team

WHAT?

Transition planning is a team process.

FOR WHOM?

Anyone involved in transition planning.

WHEN?

A transition planning team is required for all children 14 years or older, but is also required for any child engaged in transition planning.

WHY?

The changes and challenges a young person faces after graduation are huge. Planning that includes people that know your child from a variety of perspectives and have knowledge about different aspects of transition issues is essential.

HOW?

The student and parent are essential to the planning team (see Transition Topic pages that discuss these roles in more depth). Responsibilities of team members include, but are not limited to:

Student:

- Attend IEP and transition meetings
- Choose career/work areas of interest
- Learn about post-school opportunities for working and living
- Develop skills for working and independent living

Parent:

- Suggest ideas at the IEP or transition meetings:
- skills you want addressed
- your child's likes/dislikes, strengths and needs
- strategies that work
- any concerns
- Learn about services available after graduation:
- get suggestions from your teacher and team members
- visit agencies and ask questions
- take advantage of training opportunities for parents
- teach and give responsibilities at home for daily living activities, (e.g., cooking, shopping, money management, laundry, car maintenance, cleaning)

Teacher:

- Provide daily instruction that supports the family and student's vision
- Suggest areas to be addressed
- Suggest community resources; invite community agency personnel to attend transition meetings
- Maintain open communication between team members
- Schedule meetings as needed or requested

Support Staff (guidance counselor, transition consultant, consultant, school social worker, speech pathologist, OT, PT, psychologist):

- Participate in IEP and transition meetings
- Suggest activities, based on their area of expertise, that will support the student in achieving their vision
- Assist with the application process for obtaining community resources
- Provide information about community resources
- Identify ways to enhance a smooth transition

Community Agency Personnel (personnel from Vocational Rehabilitation, disability services from your county, and other adult service agencies):

- Attend IEP meetings when invited
- Identify and explain program services, eligibility requirements, and application procedures
- Assist the family in exploring options

WHERE

The student's teacher is often the person who, with input from the family, forms the transition planning team. Call the consultant, regional administrator, or PEP educator at Grant Wood AEA for additional information or support in forming the team and the roles people may play.

Grant Wood AEA
200 Holiday Road
Coralville, IA 52241
(319) 351-2510
(800) 854-0446
TDD (319) 358-6299

Grant Wood AEA
4401 Sixth Street SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404
(319) 399-6700
(800) 332-8488
TDD (319) 399-6766

<http://www.aea10.k12.ia.us>

Acronyms and Abbreviations: A Glossary

WHAT?

Many professionals use abbreviations and initials that sound like a foreign language. This glossary of terms and acronyms can help you sort out educational jargon.

FOR WHOM?

For anyone not familiar with the abbreviations or initials commonly used by educator and community agency personnel.

WHY?

Part of the intimidation that parents feel during the transition process is caused by new language. Teachers and adult service providers forget that you are unfamiliar with their jargon.

WHEN?

Use this as a reference when you come across acronyms.

HOW?

GLOSSARY

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
BP	Behavior Disability
CC	Career Connections
CPC	Central Point of Coordination
CSALA	Community Supervised Apartment Living Arrangement
DD	Developmental Disabilities
DHS	Department of Human Services
IIVRS	Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services
EC	Early Childhood
FIP	Family Investment Program (formerly AFDC)
GWAEA	Grant Wood Area Education Agency
HCBS	Home and Community Based Services
HR	Human Resources
ICF	Intermediate Care Facility
ICP	Individualized Comprehensive Plan
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IEP	Individualized Education Plan
IHP	Individualized Habilitation Plan
ITBS	Iowa Test of Basic Skills
JTPA	Job Training Partnership Act
KCC	Kirkwood Community College
LD	Learning Disability
MD	Mental Disability
MH/DD	Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities
MI	Mentally Ill
MR	Mentally Retarded
OJT	On the Job Training
OT	Occupational Therapy
PEP	Parent Educator Partnership
PT	Physical Therapy
PWD	People with Disabilities
RCF	Residential Care Facility
RTP	Resource Teacher Program
S/P	Severe/Profound Disability
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
VITAL	Vocational Individualized Training and Learning
WAT	Work Adjustment Training
WEC	Work Experience Coordinator
WIC	Women, Infants, and Children Services

Directory of Washington County Agencies

County Funded:

Residential:

ICF/MR

REM-Iowa, Inc.

Washington Site 319-53-7278

1307 N 5th Ave

Washington IA 52353

Kalona Site 319-656-2142

507 3rd St

Kalona IA 52247

RCF

Orchard Hill ResCare 319-653-6571

2175 Lexington Blvd

Washington IA 52353

Supported Community Living

ResCare Community Services 319-653-4782

2175 Lexington Blvd

Washington IA 52353

WCDC, Inc 319-653-7568 or 7248

PO Box 61

Washington IA 52353

HCBS/MR

ResCare Community Services 319-653-4782

2175 Lexington Blvd

Washington IA 52353

REM-Iowa, Inc.

Washington Site 319-653-7278

1307 N 5th Ave

Washington IA 52353

WCDC, Inc 319-653-7568 or 7248

PO Box 61

Washington IA 52353

Systems Unlimited, Inc. 319-338-9212

1556 S First Ave

Iowa City IA 52441

Life Skills, Inc. 319-354-2121

1700 First Ave, Suite 25E

Iowa City IA 52240

Vocational:

Work Activity/Enclave
WCDC, Inc 319-653-7248
PO Box 61
Washington IA 52353

Supported Employment
WCDC/Advanced Employment Services 319-653-7568
109 South Marion
Washington IA 52353

Adult Day Care
WCDC, Inc 319-653-7248
PO Box 61
Washington IA 52353

Mental Health Outpatient Services:

Case Management for Emotional Disturbed Youth, Community Support Assessment, Consultation, Education, Evaluation, Outpatient Counseling, Psychiatric, or Psychological Testing

Washington County Community Mental Health Center (CMHC)
319-653-6161
2175 Lexington Blvd #4
Washington IA 52353

Psychological Rehabilitation
ResCare Community Services 319-653-4782
2175 Lexington Blvd
Washington IA 52353

Emergency Services Crisis Hotline 1-800-332-4224

Enhanced Case Management:

Title XIX Case Management
Southeast Iowa Case Management 319-653-6217
121 West Washington
Washington IA 52353

NOT County Funded:

Partial List of Other Services Available:

Adult Day Care

Lending Hands, Inc. 319-653-2661
125 E 2nd
Washington IA 52353

Case Management

Department of Human Services 319-863-0049 OR 866-863-0061
Orchard Hill Complex, Bldg #3
2175 Lexington Blvd
Washington IA 52353

Home Health Care

1. Washington County Public Health and Homecare 319-653-7758
314 McCreedy Drive
Washington IA 52353
2. TLC
Washington IA

Outpatient Counseling

1. Psychological Services, PC 319-653-6032
519 Highway 1 South
Washington IA 52353
2. Kelly Swift 319-653-4362
3. Carol Yangsy

Vocational Training

WCDC/AEA 319-653-7568
109 South Marion
Washington IA 52353

For out-of-county, county-funded residential or vocational services, please contact:

Kelly Yeggy 319-653-7751

CPC Administrator

2175 Lexington Blvd A

Washington IA 52353

Education

Grant Wood Area Education Agency (GWAEA) Special Education Transition Services

WHAT?

The services support students in their movement from home to school, school to school, and to their post-school employment, education, and living settings.

FOR WHOM?

For any child planning for transition.

WHEN?

At any time the team is planning for transition for your child. Transition planning and services are required for children ages 14 and older.

WHY?

Children and youth with disabilities often require individualized or specialized services to plan and prepare for success in their desired future settings.

HOW?

GWAEA provides consultative, direct and coordinating transition services to children, their families and school personnel at no cost to families. Services include:

- Individualized student assessment for identification of learning needs in relation to desired outcomes;
- Individualized transition planning with students and families to address learner needs at school and for success in desired future settings;
- Individualized or small group instruction or therapy (in the areas of learning, hearing, communication, motor, health, vision, assistive technology, career development and work experience, or social) to support their transition goals.
- Information about transition planning; identifying a vision and outcomes; self-determination and preparing students and families for the Transition/IEP meeting; work experiences; and post-school educational and community services/interagency linkages for residential, employment and community living arrangements.

WHERE?

Services are provided at the student's school, in the home or in the community. To find out about services, ask your child's teacher or principal; or call GWAEA (351-2510 in Coralville or 399-6700 in Cedar Rapids) and ask to speak to the Regional Facilitator for your child's school district.

Grant Wood AEA

200 Holiday Road, Coralville, IA 52241
(319) 351-2510 or (800) 854-0446
TDD (319) 358-6299

Grant Wood AEA

4401 Sixth Street SW, Cedar Rapids, IA
52404
(319) 399-6700 or (800) 332-8488
TDD (319) 399-6766

<http://www.aea10.k12.ia.us>

Work Experience Program

Grant Wood AEA

WHAT?

The Work Experience Program provides hands-on experience in a variety of work settings in the community allows students to explore careers and identify careers they may wish to pursue after high school.

FOR WHOM?

High school students in special education programs.

WHY?

Why are the initial experiences nonpaid?

Because nonpaid experiences are really better for exploring careers. This allows for :

- Hands-on learning
- Job tryouts at several business
- More careers are available, because qualification is not a requirement
- Willing support from the business community
- Short term commitments that match a school trimester/semester
- 2-3 class periods in the community

WHEN?

Community work experiences occur in high school, frequently during the junior and senior years.

Prerequisites include career education classroom instruction and bus training or other transportation arrangements.

HOW?

Students begin by learning about jobs and employee attitudes in the classroom. Initially students try out various non-paid jobs at work sites in the community. They can progress to holding down a paid job on a long-term basis.

Students in the program have a wide range of abilities and needs for support. The coordinator strives to match student interests and abilities with tasks available at local businesses. Students with independent work abilities are provided individual work experiences. Students needing frequent supervision or support are provided small group or work crew experiences. School personnel accompany the work crew to the business and provide direct supervision during work and transportation time.

WHERE?

Talk to your child s teacher about how and when to get involved with the Work Experience Program.

The Work Experience Coordinator can be contacted at:

[Grant Wood AEA](#), 200 Holiday Road, Coralville, IA 52241

(319) 351-2510 and (800) 854-0446

TDD (319) 358-6299

<http://www.aea10.k12.ia.us>

Kirkwood Community College

WHAT?

Kirkwood offers college credit courses, continuing education courses, and high school completion programs. Course work for many programs can be obtained through a center in your community. See the Agency Profile on the [Kirkwood VITAL program](#) that is designed specifically for students with disabilities.

FOR WHOM?

Youth or adults who wish to further their education post-high school.

WHY?

Many careers require post-secondary education and training.

WHEN?

When a person has completed their high school education and desires further education or training.

HOW?

Kirkwood programs cover a wide range of academic areas, from agriculture and art to social welfare and physical therapist assistant. Coursework in the Arts and Sciences prepares students for transfer to a four-year institution. Career Option programs prepare students to enter a specific career area upon graduation or to transfer and continue their educational goals at a four-year college or university. Technical Career programs in the Applied Science and Technology departments prepare students for various career opportunities upon graduation.

WHERE?

[Kirkwood Community College's](#) main campus is located in Cedar Rapids, Iowa on 320 acres near the intersection of I-380 and Highway 30 on the southern edge of town. Twenty-six modern buildings house classrooms, laboratories, and lecture halls. Some of the other special features of the campus are a Career Development Center, a Library with over 50,000 volumes, a full-service bookstore, indoor and outdoor athletic facilities, Counseling/Student Support Services, an Information Technology Center with 175 computer stations for instructional use, and a 300-acre agricultural crop laboratory. Campuses are located in Cedar Rapids, Marion, Monticello, Belle Plaine, Tipton, Vinton, Washington, and Williamsburg.

Contact the admissions office for help with classes, financial assistance, and planning your education:

Admissions Services 221 Linn Hall (319) 398-5517 or 1 800 363-2220	Kirkwood Community College Learning Center 111 Westview Drive Washington IA 52353 319-653-4655
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Or register in person, over the Internet or by using K-TRAC. If you need more information or would like to visit with Enrollment Services, stop by room 216 in Kirkwood Hall or e-mail us at: enserv@kirkwood.cc.ia.us, or you can make an appointment by calling (319) 398-5635 or 800-332-2055, ext. 5635.

Kirkwood VITAL Program

WHAT?

The [VITAL program](#) is designed to help high school special education students enroll in a vocational/technical major at [Kirkwood Community College](#).

FOR WHOM?

Students referred to the VITAL program must meet three requirements:

- Be enrolled in a high school special education program
- Have vocational training goals and objectives in their current IEP
- Have completed all academic requirements but still have unmet vocational training goals.

WHY?

Students can get valuable training at the community college level while still in high school. The program also prepares students for valuable careers.

WHEN?

The local school's multi-disciplinary team should refer students by the first semester of the senior year.

HOW?

While students are enrolled in VITAL, they officially remain a secondary student, but they take the regular Kirkwood curriculum and required courses in their vocational major. Credits earned while in VITAL will count towards credits required for a Kirkwood degree, diploma or certificate appropriate to their major. Students must commit themselves to a specific vocational major; VITAL is not for career exploration. VITAL students must attend Kirkwood full-time (at least 12 credits hours per semester).

Students participating in VITAL are enrolled in regular vocational/technical majors. Majors available include:

- Agricultural Technologies
- Business
- Career Option
- Health Sciences
- Industrial Technologies

In addition, each VITAL student receives individual support such as:

- Tutoring
- Alternative testing
- Tape-recorded textbooks
- Proofreading, editing and assistance with written assignments
- Study skills instruction
- Organization/time management
- Progress follow-up with instructors
- Note taking accommodations

WHERE?

1. The local school's multi-disciplinary team refers the student to the VITAL program. VITAL sends the student an application packet.
2. The student applies for admission to Kirkwood and to VITAL.
3. The student takes a placement test (COMPASS, ASSET, or ACT).
4. A Kirkwood vocational instructor from the student's selected vocational major interviews the student.
5. The VITAL staff interviews the student.
6. To participate in VITAL Kirkwood must accept the student into a specific vocational major.
7. For those students for whom VITAL is being considered, the local school hosts a staffing including the multi-disciplinary team, a VITAL staff member, the student and the parent(s).
8. A new IEP is developed, detailing the vocational training goals.

For more information on the VITAL program or the referral process, contact any of the following:

[Chuck Hinz](#) (319) 398-5455 or 1 800 332-2055, Ext. 5455

[Pat Albaugh](#) (319) 398-4930

VITAL Staff (319) 398-5448 or (319) 398-4932

FAX (319) 398-4933

VITAL WEBPAGE at: <http://www.kirkwood.cc.ia.us/developmental/vital1.html>

Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School

WHAT?

The [Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School](#) is the state's NCA accredited K-12 educational program for students who are blind, visually impaired, or blind/visually impaired with additional disabilities.

FOR WHOM?

School-aged children, who are blind, visually impaired, or blind/visually impaired with additional disabilities.

WHY?

Children with both visual impairments and other disabilities often require specialized services to support them in obtaining an education and preparing for adult life. Beginning services early in the child's life and continuing throughout the years can make a difference.

WHEN?

We plan with you from the time your child is age 14 (sometimes even earlier!)

HOW?

Nearly 500 Iowa children and young adults are served both on-campus in Vinton, Iowa and throughout the state in their local communities. The school is governed by the State Board of Regents and is funded by a state appropriation. There is no charge for students to attend the Iowa Braille School or to receive services from the school in their local community. Transition services include:

- 1) Transition Planning:
Individual Transition Plans (ITP) are created for your child by an IEP team. The plans include things like where your child will live and work as an adult. Planning will help make that transition from school to the adult world go more smoothly.
- 2) Educational Consultations, Evaluations, and Therapies:
Occupational, physical, speech, psychological and educational consultation and therapy are available both on campus and in the home community to plan for and support the educational program.
- 3) Assistive Device Training Center:
Students have daily access on campus to the center. It has the equipment necessary to help students use technology as a tool for learning and for preparation for employment.
- 4) Recreation/Leisure:
This service helps parents with the exploration of recreation/leisure possibilities for children by building an awareness of programs/services available in the home community. Demonstration of adaptations used for various sports and activities is also available as well as assistance with getting the child involved in community activities.
- 5) Orientation and Mobility:
In order for children who are blind to become more independent they must learn to travel independently. Teachers of orientation and mobility work one on one with students teaching them to move safely as independently as possible and to become more aware of where they are as they move.
- 6) Career/Vocational Program:

- Work Experience - Students have paid work experiences in a variety of jobs in the community.
- Career Education- Students learn about the world of work, how to write a resume, and about different jobs through job shadows.
- Community Class- Students learn skills in the community setting.
- Workplace Readiness- Students under 16 have jobs at Iowa Braille where they learn skills for future employment.
- Orientation to the World of Work- Students attend a summer program on the campus of the University of Northern Iowa at Cedar Falls. The six-week sessions provide students with paid work experience and instruction on the skills of independence, orientation and mobility.

WHERE?

For services provided in the local school district, contact Ian Stewart, Director of Outreach Services at 1-800-645-4579 Ext. 1209.

For services provided on the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School campus, contact [Michael Hooley](#), Director of Center-Based Services at 1-800-645-4579, ext. 1130.

For transition information call the Transition Coordinator, [Nancy Oddo](#), at 1-800-645-4579, ext. 1223.

Employment

Am I Ready to Work?

WHAT?

Are you interested in getting and keeping a job? Trying out jobs is a good way to discover a career that matches your interests and abilities.

FOR WHOM?

Special education students in junior high school should read this page.

WHEN?

Your teenage years are the perfect time to explore career options.

WHY?

It's hard to find places that might hire young people without experience. You might be scared to go ask for a job. Such a fear is normal. Your disability might make it hard for you to go alone to find a job. There are things you can do to prepare, and support available to help you when you are ready.

HOW?

You can do this by taking part in the Work Experience Program, by getting an after school or summer job, and by enrolling in vocational programs at your high school. Jobs that you have now will help you to decide what you would like to do as an adult.

- Do chores at home and volunteer in your community. This will help you learn to work and will give you experience to document to an employer that you know how to work.
- Do the best you can in school to learn to read, do math and handle money. These are all skills an employer will want you to have.
- Ask your teacher about vocational options at your high school. Sit in on one of the classes to find out what it's like.
- Talk to the Work Experience Coordinator to find out about their program. Consider if it would be a good choice for you.
- Ask your family and friends for ideas on your strengths and about jobs in which you might do well.
- When you are ready to get a job, ask your family members to help you answer these questions:
 1. What kind of job would I be good at doing?
 2. How many hours a day can I work? How many days a week?
 3. Where are the places I should look for those jobs?
 4. How would I get to the job?
 5. Do I need help to ask for a job?
 6. Do I need extra help to learn how to do a job?
 7. Where can I find help to get, learn and keep a job?

WHERE?

Places to find more information are:

- Other information sheets in this Employment section.
- AEA 10 School to Work web site: www.aea10.k12.ia.us/stw
- America's Career Kit web site: www.alx.org

Shopping For Vocational Support

WHAT?

There are many sources of help available for people with disabilities who want to work after high school. Vocational supports could include an evaluation of work skills, training to learn new skills, helping you find a job or help in finding a job or in learning the job once you are employed.

FOR WHOM?

Young persons with disabilities and their parents.

WHEN?

At the latest, start this process by the junior year of high school.

Parents should begin shopping for vocational support during early high school years. Selecting an agency before the senior year allows time for agency staff to attend IEP meetings and get to know your child. Sometimes there are waiting lists. Acquiring funding to pay for vocational support also takes time.

WHY?

After graduation, a school district no longer has a legal responsibility to provide services. There are several vocational service agencies in the Johnson County area. Not all services are offered by all agencies. In order to pick an agency that will give you the services you need, you should shop around.

HOW?

When looking for an agency to provide vocational support, it is important to get answers to questions that help you learn if that agency is right for you. Shop around by requesting an interview and then visiting with people at the agency. Some ideas for questions to ask are listed below.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSUMERS TO ASK:

1. What is your agency's philosophy? What do you think is important? What are your goals?
2. How could you help me find employment in the community? Would I have a choice in the type of job?
3. Where do your consumers work? What is the range of support you give them?
4. What are the different ways you help people get a good job match? Assessment? On-the-job-training? Work crew? Job carving?
5. How would I get started with your agency? Is there a waiting list?
6. What do your services cost? Can I get financial assistance? Where?
7. How many years has your program existed? How do you evaluate your services?
8. What is your consumer to staff ratio? Who would I work with?
9. What do you do if an employer fires a consumer or discriminates against them?
10. What if a consumer loses or quits a job?

WHERE?

Vocational agency resources in Washington County include:

[Iowa Department for the Blind](#)

411 3rd St SE, Suite 745
Cedar Rapids IA 52401-1811
319-365-9111 or toll free 888-346-9557

[Iowa Workforce Development](#)

212 N Iowa Ave
Washington IA 52353
319-653-4787
Email: waynebowman@iwd.state.ia.us

Vocational Rehabilitation (DVRS)

Washington Site
109 South Marion Ave
Washington IA 52353
319-653-7568 (by appointment)

WCDC/AES

109 South Marion
Washington IA 52353
319-653-7568

WCDC, Inc.

PO Box 61
Washington IA 52353
319-653-7248

Iowa Department for the Blind

WHAT?

Time limited services to help persons with visual disabilities to become employed.

FOR WHOM?

An individual who has been determined to be legally blind resulting in a significant problem for them in getting or keeping a job.

WHEN?

Information is available to all ages; assessment and employment services are available at age 18.

WHY?

With a positive attitude about blindness, proper training, and opportunity anyone can reduce blindness to a physical nuisance.

HOW?

After meeting eligibility standards through an assessment process, individuals are helped to evaluate their vocational rehabilitation needs and given appropriate counseling and guidance. Other goods and services that are determined necessary for the individual with a disability to achieve an employment outcome can be provided through the Department for the Blind or individuals may be referred to other service providers. Some examples of services provided by the Department for the Blind include:

<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Physical and mental restoration2. Maintenance3. Vocational rehabilitation to family members4. Reader, rehabilitation teaching, orientation, and mobility5. Recruitment and training6. Personal Assistance7. Rehabilitation technology8. Transition	<ol style="list-style-type: none">9. Vocational and training10. Transportation11. Interpreter12. Job search, placement, and retention13. Support employment14. Post employment15. Occupational licenses, tools, equipment, initial stocks, and supplies
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WHERE?

Please call or visit for more information at:

<p>Cedar Rapids District Office: Iowa Department for the Blind 411 3rd St SE, Suite 745 Cedar Rapids IA 52401-1811 319-365-9111 or toll free 888-346-9557</p>	<p>Washington County residents may contact: Dave Hauge toll free 800-362-2581, ext 1-1331</p>
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Vocational Rehabilitation (DVRS)

WHAT?

Time limited services to help persons with disabilities become employed.

FOR WHOM?

A student who has a medical, psychiatric or learning disability that results in a significant problem for them in getting or keeping a job.

WHEN?

Ages 16 and older, usually beginning in the last term of the sophomore year or later. Due to limited resources, DVRS is maintaining a waiting list for services based on severity of disability and eligibility date, with those determined to have the most significant disabilities being served first.

WHY?

Work can be a large segment of how you spend your time. It is important that you feel good about your work and that it provides you with a sense of well being. Vocational Rehabilitation can assist you in developing your potential in the world of work. We provide time limited funding to purchase vocational services you need from other community agencies.

HOW?

Not everyone needs every service we offer and all services must be directed toward an employment goal. Possible services include:

- Medical, psychiatric or psychological evaluations to determine eligibility (needed only if current records are not sufficient).
- Referrals to community support services, assistance with transition planning at IEP meetings.
- Services to help a person decide on a job goal, including counseling, testing and vocational evaluation.
- Service coordination with other community resources.
- Services to prepare a person for employment, such as training in college or a vocational/technical school; supported employment; job coaching; medical restoration.

WHERE?

The student's teacher, guidance counselor, school nurse, work experience coordinator, or other school personnel refer a student. An individual or their parent may also make direct application. A Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor will meet with you to describe services, discuss needs and begin the application process. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors are assigned to area high schools. The Iowa City Office serves Johnson, Iowa, Washington & Cedar Counties.

[Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services](#)

1700 South First Ave., Suite 25-D
Iowa City, IA 52240 (319) 354-4766

See Transition Topic Shopping for Vocational Support for a list of questions for reference during your visit to Vocational Rehabilitation.

Iowa Workforce Development

WHAT?

Iowa Workforce Development (formerly Job Service of Iowa) is a state agency that performs job placement services for job seekers.

FOR WHOM?

Workers of all ages from age 14 to retirement.

WHEN?

Any time employment assistance is desired.

WHY?

Iowa Workforce Development can provide a valuable service to job seekers by providing information on current hiring activity and trends in our area.

HOW?

Services available at Iowa Workforce Development include:

- Job Opening Referral- we advertise the requirements, duties and salary of job openings for area employers. Listings are available at our office and on the Iowa Jobs Homepage at <http://www.state.ia.us/jobs>
- Skills Testing- We administer Work Keys, 10-key, data entry, typing, math, and grammar tests to help workers assess and improve their marketable skills and to certify those skills for employers.
- Labor Market Information- we provide unemployment rates, average starting pay, and overviews of the area's economy and quality of life.
- Technology Resources- Computers with Internet access enable job seekers the opportunity to explore job openings or career resources. Resumes and cover letters can be created and printed by job seekers with basic computer skills.
- Work Permits- we provide the permits required for 14 and 15 year olds who enter the workforce.
- Unemployment Insurance- Compensation to employees that become unemployed through no fault of their own, and who are able and available to work while they seek new employment.

WHERE?

Interested individuals can register to use all services available by completing an application form from our office. The office in Washington County is located at:

111 Westview Drive

Washington IA 52353

Email: waynebowman@iwd.state.ia.us

WCDC, Inc. Advance Employment Services (AES) Supported Employment

WHAT?

Training and support with employment opportunities in a competitive community placement.

FOR WHOM?

Individuals with disabilities.

WHEN?

Our services to student transitioning from school begins when the student is still attending high school and continues until service is no longer deemed necessary.

WHY?

WCDC, Inc./AES is committed to serving persons with disabilities to obtain and maintain employment in a competitive community setting.

HOW?

- WCDC, Inc. provides support services and vocational development service in, but not limited to:
- Skill Development
- Skill Training
- Job Carving
- Job Counseling
- Job Adaptation Job Coaching
- Enclave support
- Behavior Modification
- Liaison Between Employer and Co-workers
- Positive Community Image
- Follow Along Services
- Program Management and Service Coordination

WHERE?

If you are interested in meeting with our agency to gather more information or request services, please contact:

Beth Widmer Voss
WCDC, Inc.
PO Box 61
1425 West 5th
Washington IA 52353
319-653-7248

WCDC, INC. Workshop

WHAT?

Employment preparation opportunities in a workshop setting.

FOR WHOM?

Individuals with disabilities.

WHEN?

Our services to students transitioning from school begin when the student is still attending high school and continues until service is no longer deemed necessary.

WHY?

WCDC, Inc. is committed to serving persons with disabilities in the workshop setting to increase vocational skills and/or to evaluate current work characteristics.

HOW?

WCDC, Inc. provides support services and vocational development services in, but not limited to:

- Skill Development
- Academics
- Job Seeking
- Skill Training
- Job Counseling
- Job Adaptation
- Job Coaching/Enclave Support
- Behavior Modification
- Physical Tolerance Assessments
- Job Follow-up
- Program Management and Service Coordination

WHERE?

If you are interested in meeting with our agency to gather more information or request services, please contact:

Beth Widmer Voss
WCDC, Inc.
PO Box 61
1425 West 5th
Washington IA 52353
319-653-7248

Living Arrangements

GUEST
Statistics Center.

