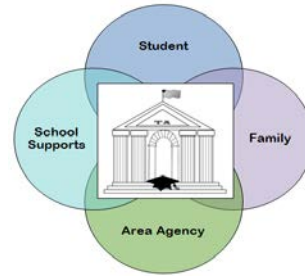




## Person~Centered Transition Academy



# Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: What is an ideal “team” for the participating high school student?**

**A:** For participation in Transition Academy, the ideal team would be no more than 6 participants. This is not an opportunity for you to bring your full IEP planning team together. What will be presented during Transition Academy is meant for you to bring forward to your broader personal, support related and educational planning teams. One of the goals of Transition Academy is to share strategies and tools that support common language for communication across any informal or formal systems that you may be connected with.

**Q: Is there a cost for Transition Academy?**

**A:** No, there is no cost for Transition Academy. We are thrilled to have been awarded a grant from the NH Council on Developmental Disabilities that will help us continue the work of the pilot through a demonstration project over the next three years.

**Q: How many family members can join?**

**A:** First keep in mind that “family” is defined by YOU. For these sessions, you may want to ask 1-2 family members or close “allies” to participate. These sessions will NOT take the place of individualized planning sessions, where you would typically have more family and personal supporters, OR school meetings where you often have a broader group of school and agency professionals present. These sessions are intended to provide you tools and strategies to bring those broader groups together to help you plan for your future. So, if each “team” is made up of the student, 2 family members, a school supporter and an area agency case Manager, that would be a manageable team for the purpose of this project.

**Q: What if I am not connected to an area agency, can I still attend?**

**A:** Yes, the target group for Transition Academy is transition aged students ages 16 - 20 who experience a developmental, health related or learning disability. However, because this is also intended to expand the skills of area agency staff, a decision may be made to prioritize candidates who are connected with the NH home and community based services system.

**Q: What is meant by “school supporter?”**

**A:** Since this pilot project brings together a “team” around each student, there should be someone from your school team that works with you to plan your IEP services and goals. This person is likely to be a classroom teacher or school Case Manager or an educational consultant that works with your school team. We are not talking about your whole IEP team for this pilot, just a person or two from the school that is active in your IEP development.

**Q: How many sessions in all will I attend?**

**A:** Transition Academy is progressive series, not stand alone sessions. There will be 4 learning and planning sessions for all teams together, and 1 celebratory wrap up session. In between, there will be 2 Student Leadership sessions, 1 Family Roundtable session and 1 professional session.

**Q: Should my student's whole school team attend the professional track?**

**A:** No. This is not an opportunity to do individual student planning, rather, the professional track is intended to really think about the concepts and strategies that are shared during the pilot, to determine how they might be applied along with other strategies that school use to help students plan in a person centered way. As well, this will provide an opportunity for professionals to determine if shared concepts will help meet their regulatory compliance measures with regard to demonstrating the use of person-centered practices.

**Q: What if we do not have a school supporter who can attend this project with us, can we as family still participate?**

**A:** YES, absolutely! This is primarily intended for students and families to learn about strategies for person-centered, student- and family-directed future planning that they can bring to meetings and discussions. The outreach to schools, and other entities about these strategies will continue over time.

**Q: Is attendance mandatory?**

**A:** Encouraged, YES, mandatory no. However, what you put into Transition Academy will determine what you get out of it! This is a progressive workshop, so each session builds on the one before. Over the span of the project, you will learn about tools that can be applied in a person centered planning process over time. Attendance at each session will increase the likelihood that you will complete your personal transition portfolio and short-term action plan, develop connections with others, hear about and share creative ideas.

**Q: Why are there separate focus group meetings for students and families?**

**A:** We offer the opportunity for students to meet with students, and families to meet with families, to delve further into discussion topics from their perspective and interest. Student meetings support individual expression of future hopes, and offer strategies for taking a more active role in your school planning. Family meetings allow for families to freely share their hopes and dreams as well as challenges and concerns with other families. This provides a unique connection, support and idea sharing opportunity with others who have who have similar lived experience.

**Q: Can I attend a focus group session that is different than the one my role falls into?**

**A:** It depends...the intent is to give each group an opportunity to have discussions from their own perspective, freely. It is really important for students at this age to develop their own voice, and express their own ideas. However, students may need the support of a parent, Case Manager or school supporter to assist them during their focus sessions, and can certainly choose to have someone join their session.

**Q: Can my student join the family track with me?**

**A:** The Family Roundtable session is not for students. That session is intended to allow family members to think about themselves, and what they need for their own good life, as well as what they would like to see for their student's future. Sometimes, a family and student have different ideas about what that student wants in their life, or families do not want to share their worries with the student. The Family Focus session allows families to share their hopes and wishes, challenges and concerns, as well as ideas to share with others who have lived experience as a family member of a person with a disability.

**Q: When is the next Transition Academy Session starting?**

**A:** There are two sessions scheduled for early 2022 - a Winter session that begins February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2022 and a Spring session that begins April 6<sup>th</sup> 2022. See flier for details.

***Please contact Lesley Blecharczyk at [lblecharczyk@communitybridgesnh.org](mailto:lblecharczyk@communitybridgesnh.org) for more information***