



# Family and Youth Engagement in Transition

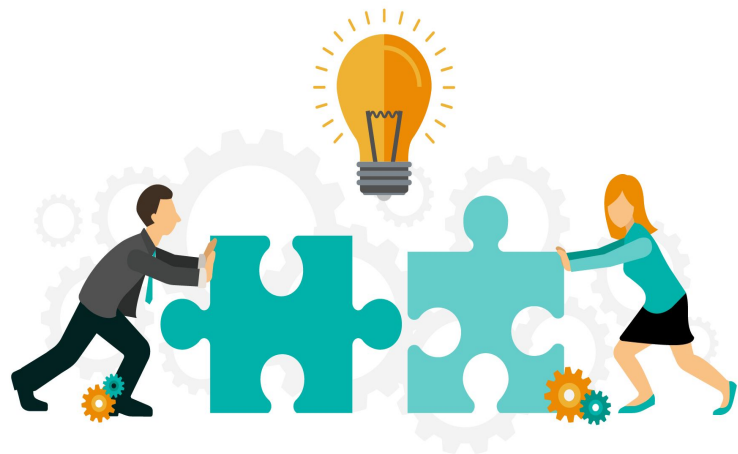
**April 8, 2026  
12:00 PM-1:00 PM**

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# Today's Intent

- **Critical partnership in transition~ Family!**
- **It's all about relationships**
- **Traditional vs Non- Traditional**
- **Person centered/transition meetings**
- **Student voice**
- **Family voice in PTP and WiTransition App**
- **Individualized Transition Meetings**



# Critical Partnership in Transition

- Families are the most knowledgeable and consistent support in a student's life.
- Provide insight outside of school, culture, supports, family and friends.
- Bring critical knowledge for planning.
- Will stay with the student long after school fades out.
- Explore and plan for life after school.
- Connect to outside resources.



# Families Bridge to Community

- Healthcare needs, transportation, living arrangements
- Family members are often the only people who remain a consistent part of the IEP team and the transition planning process from year to year.
- Families are often likely to remain involved in their child's life after high school



# It's All About Relationships

- Establishing shared time to connect
- Communication set that works for all
- Create a home-school partnership
  - Share insights
- Consider home visit or another location~comfortable environment
- Ask how to help, seek opportunities to be involved
- Bring learning home



# Connection Opportunities

- Consider schedule
  - What time and days can you commit to
- Communication platforms
- Invite into your world!
  - Home visit, work, community
- Volunteer
- Share your preferences, skills, share about YOU
- Personal connection to educator



# Traditional Family Engagement

## What Is Traditional Family Engagement?

Common Examples:

- Attending IEP meetings
- Helping with homework
- Signing forms or attending open house events
- Responding to school communication

Often focused on compliance or participation in school-led events

# Traditional Doesn't Fit All

## What's Missing in Traditional Approaches?

Often one-size-fits-all

- May not align with family work schedules, languages, or values
- Focuses on deficits rather than strengths
- Can exclude extended family, community, or informal supports

# Non-Traditional Family Engagement

## Expanding Non-Traditional Family Engagement: A Person-Centered Approach

Why Person-Centered Approaches Matter

- Traditional engagement often revolves around compliance and school agendas.
- A person-centered approach shifts the focus toward relationships, listening, and co-planning.
- It emphasizes:
  - What is important to the student and family
  - What is important for the student's safety, health, and well-being
  - The family's definition of a meaningful life
- This approach respects that families are the experts on their child and prioritizes their cultural, social, and lived experiences.

# Traditional and Non Traditional

## Traditional:

- Attending IEP meetings
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Transition information nights
- Open house
- Responding to school communication
- One size fits all

## Non Traditional:

- Home visit
- Meetings held at time and place of family choice
- Texting, social media- parent choice for communication
- Parent support groups/mentors
- Family storytelling
- Virtual check ins

# Non Traditional Importance

Traditional often revolves around compliance and school agendas.

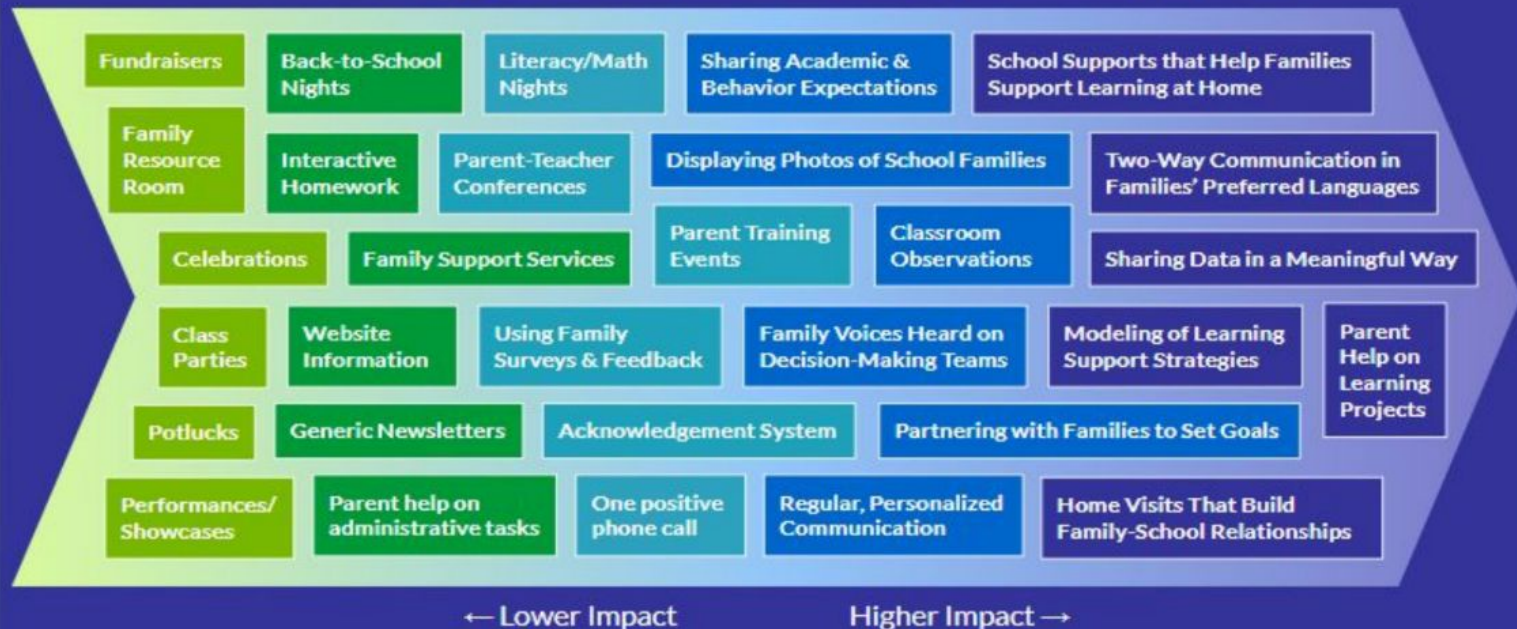
Non traditional focuses on relationships, listening and co-planning.

- What is important to the student and family
- What is important for the student's safety, health and wellbeing
- Student and family defines meaningful life

This approach respects that families are the experts on their child and prioritizes what transition means to them.

# WSPEI Presentation Reference

## Moving Toward Higher Impact



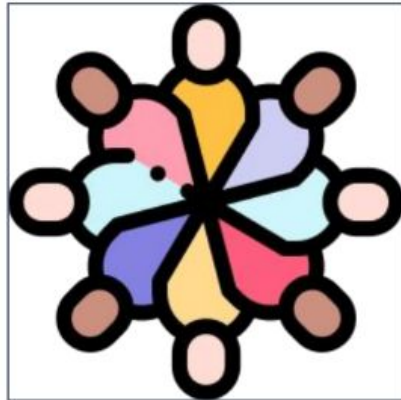
# Disengaged or Unreached?

Are we labeling families as disengaged when they are actually unreached?

Are we ensuring information and family engagement is:



Communicated Effectively



Culturally Relevant



Scheduling Considerations



Accessible Location

# Person(Family) Centered Approach

- Relationship building
- Listening sessions
- Meet families where they are at
- Create flexible meeting formats
- Partner with community navigators
- Person centered tools to help guide conversations



# Transition Meetings Outside of IEP

**Who has time to fully discuss  
Transition in an IEP meeting??**

**What if we explored holding space  
and time that worked best for  
families, outside of the IEP meeting  
time!**



# Defining A Transition Meeting

Creating time and space to meet as a team outside of the IEP meeting, and collaborate on student's transition planning.

- Family picks time and location.
- More informal and comfortable setting.
- Collaborating and brainstorming time.
- Allows each to share out updates and information to reflect on how the transition plan going.
- Can pause if need to change IEP.



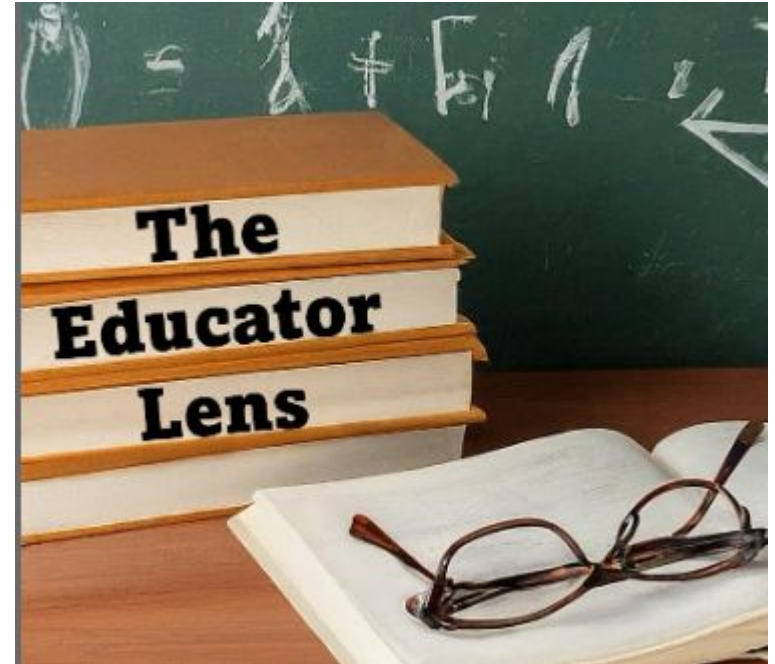
# Family Lens

- Helps connect with each outside agency at once instead of several meetings.
- Ability to see options in a space that is comfortable.
- Frequent conversations lower fear and create a can do environment.
- Works around their schedule and is family driven.



# Educator Lens

- Taking initiative shows deep care and concern of student.
- Can offer space and help family manage all agencies involved.
- Confidential space for family as needed.
- Allows time to share options and understanding of beyond age 18 programming.
- Support in developing transition planning from multiple partners.



# Drop it in the Chat!

**What are you doing that is working beyond the traditional?**

**Are there strategies we haven't thought of yet to increase family engagement in transition?**

# Student Led IEP Planning

## Educator-Directed Transition



## Student-Directed Transition



Students who actively participate during their IEP meetings are more likely to be employed and/or enrolled in higher education after graduation.

# Student Led IEP

## Student Led-IEP Resources

### Self-Advocacy

✓ Home

✓ Self-Advocacy Assessments

^ **Student-Led IEP**

Student-Led IEP Resources

Disclosure

Person Centered Planning

NTACT:C

Self-Advocacy Resources, Curricula, and Activities

# Student- Led IEP

## Defining the Student-Led IEP



Student involvement in their Individualized Education Program (IEP) is crucial for developing self-advocacy skills, understanding their disability and IEP, requesting accommodations, and participating in their transition planning. It empowers students and fosters self-determination. Students can participate in a variety of ways that are comfortable to them, from doing introductions, sharing work, offering coffee or water as participants arrive to sharing their goals, and

# NEW Updated WiTransition App

## WiTransition App

### Supporting Student Voice in Transition Planning

[Access the WiTransition App](#) – NEW app, Now Available!

[Access the WiTransition App](#) – Access to this version of the app will end after June 30th, 2026

The Transition Improvement Grant has designed a **NEW** transition application (app). The WiTransition App is a free, web-based tool developed by the Transition Improvement Grant (TIG) to support meaningful student participation in transition planning. It is designed to center the student's voice by creating space for students' to reflect on their transition goals and future plans in a structured and supportive way.



[Check out the new WiTransition App!](#)



# WiTransition App Supports Families

## WiTransition App - [witransition.app](http://witransition.app)

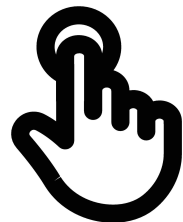
### How to Use the WiTransition App For Families



The WiTransition App is a web-based application (app) that helps students think about their future after high school. It helps them share their goals and make a plan for their future.

### How Families Can Support the WiTransition App with Students

The WiTransition App helps students share their goals, strengths, and support needs as they plan for life after high school. Families can use the WiTransition App with their youth in preparation for the IEP meeting. Listening, encouraging, and helping students prepare for their transition planning meetings are important roles that families play.



# Self-Advocacy for Families and Students

## How Families Can Help

- Talk with your student about their goals and interests
- Complete the app with your student or on your own to share your hopes and dreams for your student
- Review the WiTransition App report together
- Help your student think about questions to ask at their IEP Team meeting
- Encourage your student to share their ideas during their IEP Team or Transition meetings
- Support your student in updating their plan as their goals change



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## What the App Helps Students Share

- Their goals for life after high school
- Their career interests and job ideas
- Their education or training needs after high school
- Their hopes for where and how they want to live
- Their strengths and areas where they need support
- The supports that help them at school, work, and in the community
- How they speak up for themselves and make choices about their future
- The people who are important to them and who can help support their goals



# How the WiTransition App Helps

## Why This Matters for Families

- Completing the WiTransition App with or separate from your student helps you:
  - Speak up on behalf of your student
  - Make informed choices along with your student
  - Be part of the IEP Team decisions
  - Understand the different people who can help your student while they are in school or when they leave school to meet their future goals.



# PTP and Family Involvement

## A Families Guide to PTP



### A Family's Guide to the Postsecondary Transition Plan (PTP)



#### What is the PTP?

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (WDPI) has developed a web-based Postsecondary Transition Plan (PTP) that will assist school districts to document the post high school transition requirements while meeting individual student needs. In Wisconsin, state law requires transition planning to begin for your child at age 14.

#### How will the PTP be used during an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting to create a transition goal?

The PTP guides the IEP team through the transition process by asking a set of questions relating to postsecondary goals in the area of education/training, employment, and independent living, when applicable. The PTP will be created during the IEP team meeting with input from all team members, including the student and family.

#### How can you be a valuable member in the transition planning process for your child?

The WiTransition App can be used to assist you in preparing for the transition portion of your child's IEP meeting.

WiTransition APP

# Transition Planning For Families

## Transition Planning For Families

### Transition Planning for Families: Outside Agencies



The postsecondary transition planning process can feel overwhelming unless you know what agencies are available to support your child, where to get the help you need, and have a solid transition plan in place with your child's school. It is important to begin to think and plan for life after high school as early as possible.

#### How do you find out about outside agencies?

There are a number of ways to find outside agencies:

- Contact your county Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC): <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc/>
- Connect with Wisconsin Wayfinder online to find county and statewide disability and mental health services and supports. <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/wiscway/index.htm> or call 1-877-947-2929.
- Attend transition activities such as fairs, workshops, and conferences offered through your school or other agencies.
- Contact Independent Living Centers (ILC): <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disabilities/physical/ilcs.htm>.
- The Transition Improvement Grant (TIG) website Transition Partnerships: <https://witig.org/transition-partners/>

#### How and when do I contact outside agencies?

- Contact your local Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) office two years prior to your child's graduation/exit from high school to complete a referral for employment opportunities.
- Contact your local ADRC office when your child is 17 years 6 months for assistance with long term care options and decision making options.

# Thoughts~ Comments~ Questions?



# Contact Us!



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