

Positive Transition to Adult Life Outcomes for Youth who are Deaf-Blind
School and Family Transition Assessment Tool

I. Brief Historical Perspective

The Positive Transition to Adult Life Outcomes for Youth who are Deaf-Blind Rubric was developed in 2007 by a subsection of the Northeast Regional Community of Practice, Creativity and Support (COPCS) Network. This was a network of Deaf-Blind Project Personnel from the Northeast Region that was organized by the National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness for the purposes of sharing and resource-managing across states within the region. One of the several subsets of the overall COPCS was a group of Project Directors, Training and TA Providers and Family Specialist that were interested in collective learning in the shared domain of transition from school to adult life for youth with deaf-blindness. As a result a subset of the Northeast Regional COPCS was created with eight representatives. The COPCS Transition Committee met over the 2006-2007 academic year for the purposes of identifying, developing and piloting a product that would guide families and professionals in the transition process for youth with deaf-blindness. The committee met during shared attendance at National meetings and conferences as well as within planned meetings within the region. The product that was developed and subsequently piloted and validated by the larger COPCS Northeast Community was what has come to be referred to as the “Transition Rubric”. A rubric format was chosen to reflect the fluid nature of the transition planning process and to promote movement toward a successful transition to adult life.

II. Current Status

Although it has been 6-7 years since the development of this assessment tool, a review of the Positive Transition to Adult Life Outcomes for Youth who are Deaf-Blind Rubric, shows that the content and structure of the tool remain relevant. The relevancy of the tool can be linked to the State Performance Plan Indicators #13 & #14. These indicators mandate a strong theme that emphasizes the development and implementation of individualized programs that reflect coordinated, measurable goals and transition services that will reasonably promote post-secondary goals of independence and employment. However, the following modifications or inclusions may be considered:

- Review for increasing the role of the general education curriculum and setting as a means to achieve successful transition to adult life;
- A stronger emphasis on the role of Vocational Rehabilitation in the transition assessment and planning process;
- A component of the rubric that leads families to an understanding of the blending of federal/state benefits and competitive employment (including the influence on medical insurance);
- The addition of a more explicit mention and definition of Customized Employment within the rubric;
- The presence of the option of Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Programs especially within colleges as an option for youth with deaf-blindness.
- Inclusion of training youth with deaf-blindness to use Support Service Providers as support for independence and employment;
- Remove the references to the Outcome Performance Indicators for the purposes of making the document less confusing to those that are not familiar (however indicate that they are available); and
- Add a component on guardianship and the age of majority

III. Summary

This document is developed as a brief summation and review of the Positive Transition to Adult Life Outcomes for Youth who are Deaf-Blind Rubric regarding its use by Deaf-Blind Projects to assess the transition process for youth with deaf-blindness. It is suggested that the assessment be reviewed for the above considerations and additions that its authors and others may present. Furthermore, consideration to making the rubric an on-line tool that can collect and track progress could provide National data and aggregate overall trends.