

AEA 10
Transition Topics and Agency
Profiles for
Benton 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, Work Experience Coordinator, and PEP educator from [Grant Wood AEA](#) 800-332-8488; 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, [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.

For more information, contact your child's teacher, consultant on Work Experience Coordination and the [Parent Educator Partnership \(PEP\)](#) program staff at 1-800-332-8488, x6849 or 399-6849. PEP can also be reached by mail: [Parent Educator Partnership Program; Grant Wood Area Education Agency](#), 4401 6th Street S.W; Cedar Rapids, IA 52404. Web site: www.aea10.k12.ia.us

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 or Work Experience Coordinator from Grant Wood AEA who serves your school
- The [PEP Program](#) at Grant Wood AEA

[Grant Wood AEA](#)

4401 6th St SW

Cedar Rapids IA 52404

(319) 399-6700

(800) 332-8488

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Web site: 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)				

Developing a Vision

WHAT?

The Student and Family Vision describes the student and family's hopes for employment, living arrangements and community participation after graduation.

FOR WHOM?

For any school-aged child in special education.

WHY?

The vision statement helps ensure the IEP goals and activities reflect what the family and student want. Family members know the student best and will provide that young person with ongoing support during adulthood. The vision also promotes working together as a team. It helps the team focus on the whole child, considering his/her strengths and needs.

WHEN?

The vision statement is part of every IEP. Beginning at age 14 it should include thoughts and plans for life after graduation.

HOW?

The IEP (Individualized Education Plan) team works with the student and family to develop a vision tailored to the student preferences and interests. Your son's or daughter's interests, preferences and choices are an important part of the Vision Statement. Include him/her in discussion and planning. Anyone who works with or knows your child can also be a source of information about your child's strengths, needs and interests. The Transition Topic "Transition Planning Grid" provides a framework for this discussion.

Educators typically provide families with information and examples of vision statements. Here are some questions that would help families think about what they might want included in their vision statement:

- What is it you want for your child? (within the next 3 to 5 or more years)
- What does the child want for him or herself?
- What do we need to do in order to accomplish what you want?

Examples of Vision Statements:

- Renee has not yet formulated a career goal. She needs experience and ideas to do this. She plans to live with her family after graduation, but eventually to live independently. Her family would like to investigate local possibilities for supporting independent living.
- John hopes to be competitively employed in a retail or office setting after high school, doing a job cashiering or data entry work. Although he plans to live with his family for a while after graduation, he anticipates eventually getting his own apartment, perhaps with a roommate.
- Mary plans to attend the community college to study child development. She wants to improve her study skills and organization. Also, Mary would like to practice explaining her disability and accommodations she needs in regular classes. Mary will continue her job at the YMCA Daycare Center.
- Chris doesn't have a clear picture of what a job is. He likes most things. We are not sure how he can work on a job because he can't do chores independently at home. We'd like for him to live in

some type of supported living situation, but are not sure what is available. He will always need care and supervision.

Our vision statement is:

WHERE?

Your child's classroom teacher can help you develop your vision statement. Grant Wood AEA consultants, work experience coordinators and PEP Staff can also be a resource in this process:

Parent Educator Partnership Program
Grant Wood Area Education Agency
4401 6th Street SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404
(319) 399-6700, ext. 6849
(800) 332-8488, ext. 6849
Web site: www.aea10.k12.ia.us

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, x6849, or, call 399-6849.

PEP can also be reached by mail:

[Parent Educator Partnership Program](#)

[Grant Wood Area Education Agency](#)

4401 6th Street SW

Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

Web site: www.aea10.k12.ia.us

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, Work Experience Coordinator, 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, Work Experience Coordinator, 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](http://www.aea10.k12.ia.us)
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
CEC	Child Evaluation Clinic
CPC	Central Point of Coordination
CSALA	Community Supervised Apartment Living Arrangement
DD	Developmental Disabilities
DHS	Department of Human Services
DVR	Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
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

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 and ask to speak to the Regional Facilitator for your child's school district.

[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 throughout in high school. 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, 4401 6th St SW, Cedar Rapids IA 52404

(319) 399-6700 or (800) 332-8488

TDD (319) 399-6766

<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 Cedar Rapids IA (319) 398-5517 or 1 800 363-2220 Web site: www.KirkwoodCollege.com	Belle Plaine Center 1214 9 th Ave. Belle Plaine IA 52208 444-2549	Vinton Center 111 W 3 rd St Vinton IA 52349 472-2318
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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

GUEST
Employment

