

NORTHEAST OHIO
BOOSTER SESSIONS
Journey into a Meaningful Life

October 1, 2020

Welcome to Northeast Ohio Virtual Transition Booster Sessions!

Back to the Basics: Advocating for Your Transition-Age Loved One During COVID-19 and Beyond
Hosted by:

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Save the Date!

Guardianship & Other Alternatives
October 15, 2020
Kristen Henry, APSI & Family Panel
Register at: <https://tinyurl.com/ww2s4nl>

2021 Dates/Topics Coming Soon!
www.ohiof2f.org/training

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Agenda

Back to the Basics: Advocating for Your Transition-Age Loved One During COVID-19 and Beyond

- Tips & tricks for boosting your advocacy skills
- How to seek out and maintain services and supports for your loved one – focusing on socialization, employment, training and independent living skills
- Hear parent experiences and perspectives on being the best parent voice for your teen or young adult

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Speakers






Back to the Basics: Advocating for Your Transition-Age Loved One During COVID-19 and Beyond

Speakers:


Cheryl Mendel, Parent Mentor, Medina County ESC

Shari DeCarlo, Partner, Northeast Ohio Advocates, LLC

Gina Mitchner, Education Director, The Up Side of Downs

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How will this "virtual" session work?

- Participant's video functions are turned off and microphones are muted.
- If you are joining by video, please enter your questions via the chat box.
- If you are joining by phone, please email wendy@livespecial.com your questions for the presenters.
- This webinar is being recorded and will be available to access, along with a pdf of the slides, within two weeks on our website at: www.ohio2f.org/training-materials
- Please complete an online evaluation.

Thank you!

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Back to the Basics:

Transition Resources In School

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How can I better support my child?

Cheryl Mendel
Parent Mentor
ESC Medina County



- Learn the rules/laws of Special Education
- Build Positive Relationships with your IEP Team Members and collaborate with them to find the best path to success for your child.
- Work on Transition activities at home

"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much." *—Helen Keller*

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Parent Mentors &
Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children (OCECD)

- Parent Mentors - A Parent Mentor is the parent of a child with a disability who helps school districts and families by providing training, support and information services.
- OCECD Information Specialists - Information Specialists have children or family members with a disability. An Information Specialist provides information, support, and training for families.
- Contact OCECD at ocecd@ocecd.org or 740-382-5452 or 844-382-5452 and they will provide you with the name of a Parent Mentor or OCECD Information Specialist for your area.
- To find out if you have a Parent Mentor in your area or for information go to <https://www.ohioparentmentor.com/>
- Parent Mentors and Information Specialists are NOT Advocates
- Services are free

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Learn the laws & Rules of Special Education



- Read the Guide to Parent's Rights in Special Education
- Seek out information on reliable websites
 - Ohio Dept of Education: Reset and Restart of the 2020-2021 School Year:
 - <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Reset-and-Restart/Students-with-Disabilities>
 - OCECD website
 - <https://www.ocecd.org/>
 - Disability Rights Ohio
 - <https://www.disabilityrightsohio.org/covid-education>

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An IEP Team is a TEAM

- Parents are members of the IEP Team
- As a member of the team You can:
 - Ask questions
 - Ask for additional testing
 - Share information/experiences
 - Make suggestions
 - Request IEP Meetings (you do not need to wait for the annual review)
 - Come prepared with goals that you would like to see your child accomplish
 - Be prepared to talk about any services you believe your child might need, and how those services will help your child progress in the general curriculum.
 - Bring a friend or family member to participate/take notes
- Don't forget SSAs are part of the team too! Make sure they are invited!

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Build Positive Relationships

- Especially during CoVid, communication and building positive working relationships is key!
- Communication is the foundation of teamwork
 - Share with your child's IEP Team your child's wins and struggles
 - Dear Teacher Letter at the beginning of the year
 - Update them on new diagnoses, therapies, test results, behaviors
 - Send and respond to emails timely
- Reach out to individual therapists
- The power of a thank you note/email



IEP Meeting Essentials

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Transition Resources/Ideas

- Explore Career Options
 - Career One Stop Videos
 - <https://www.careeronestop.org/Videos/CareerVideos/career-videos.aspx>
 - Road Trip Nation
 - <https://roadtripnation.com/>
- Take a virtual tour of a college/university
 - <https://www.youvisit.com/collegesearch/>
 - <https://campustours.com/>
- Khan Academy Life Skills Courses (free)
 - <https://www.khanacademy.org/college-careers-more>
- National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT)
 - Transition during Coronavirus resources <https://transitionta.org/covid19>
 - <https://transitionta.org/>

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CONTACT

Contact

Cheryl Mendel,
Parent Mentor

Serving families in Medina County
(Medina City Schools, Black River,
Highland, Cloverleaf, Wadsworth &
Buckeye)

cmendel@medinaesc.org
Cell: 330-421-1475

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Back to the Basics:
Transition Resources in the
Community



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COMMUNITY
RESOURCES

TRANSITION RESOURCES
BEYOND THE LOCAL
EDUCATIONAL AGENCY
Shanti DeCarlo
Partner, NED Advocates

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THE
VALUABLE,
LIMITED
ROLE OF
LEA

LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES PLAY A VALUABLE ROLE IN
TRANSITION

LEA MUST PROVIDE EFFECTIVE AND CHALLENGING
TRANSITION GOALS BEGINNING AT AGE 14 IN OHIO.
(16 IN MOST OTHER STATES.)

FAMILIES AND STUDENTS MUST GUIDE THE LEA IN
DETERMINING THOSE GOALS

LEA ROLE IS LIMITED BY TIME, FUNDING, ABILITY, SCOPE OF
LAW

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE FAMILY AND STUDENT TO
PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE

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WHY DOES IT
MATTER?

In 2019, 19.3% of disabled people
were employed.

The jobless rate is roughly twice as
high as the rate for those without a
disability.

Disabled people are less likely to hold a
bachelor's degree than those with no
disability.

Disabled workers were more likely to
be employed part time than those with
no disability.

(U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/dt4.html>)

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WHY DOES IT
MATTER?

THOSE WITH DISABILITIES ARE OFTEN THE
FIRST TO BE LAID OFF OR FIRED DURING
CUTBACKS.

**Advocates say people with disabilities
'disproportionately' impacted by unemployment
and pandemic**

New study finds 36 per cent of people with disabilities reported temporary or
permanent job loss since March

By Peter Dinklage, Aug. 26, 2020 (The Associated Press)



with pandemic job losses


Graphic: Williams, The Detroit News

When COVID-19 hit Michigan, one segment of the workforce was hit especially
hard: people with developmental disabilities.

Employment advocates in Michigan and across the country are working to
overcome challenges and the pandemic to keep their clients engaged in training
and employed. They're balancing the availability of jobs with the safety of their
clients and the workers' health of their families.



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WHY DOES IT
MATTER?

Those with disabilities experienced loneliness, low perceived social support and social isolation at significantly higher rates than those without disabilities.

2020 Elsevier Inc.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7403030/>

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WHY DOES IT
MATTER?

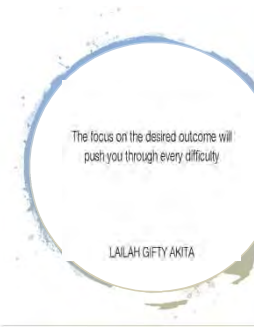
Every person has the right to live their most independent life.

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**DIFFERENT INDIVIDUALS =
DIFFERENT NEEDS**

AGE/GRADE
INTENSITY OF NEED
PARENT OR GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT?

DESIRED OUTCOME



The focus on the desired outcome will push you through every difficulty

LAILAH GIFTY ANITA

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BACKWARDS PLANNING

WHERE DOES THE PERSON WANT TO BE ON THEIR 22ND BIRTHDAY?

EMPLOYMENT

EDUCATION

VOCATION

DRIVING

TRANSPORTATION

LIVING INDEPENDENTLY

SUPPORTED LIVING

GROUP LIVING

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

RELATIONSHIPS

SUPPORT CIRCLE

WORK BACKWARDS TO MEET THESE OBJECTIVES, BEGINNING AT AGE 14

FOR MORE ON BACKWARDS PLANNING:
OHIO EMPLOYMENT FIRST BACKWARDS PLANNING
https://ohioemploymentfirst.org/view.php?nav_id=193#block_298

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HOW DO WE GET THERE?

COMMUNITY RESOURCES


COUNTY RESOURCES

STATE RESOURCES

NATIONAL RESOURCES

PRIVATE ORGS

Don't reinvent the wheel!



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COMMUNITY RESOURCES

[Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities \(OCECD\)](#)

[OCALI](#)

[Ohio Employment First](#)

[Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities \(Services for Independent Living\)](#)

[Ohio Means Jobs](#)

[Disability Rights Ohio](#)

[Educational Service Centers](#)

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COMMUNITY RESOURCES

[NAMI](#)
[Arc of Greater Cleveland](#)
[Upside of Downs](#)
[OAKLEAF \(UCP\)](#)
[Milestones Autism Resources](#)
[Autism Society](#)

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COMMUNITY RESOURCES

[Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates](#)
[The Esken Group](#)
[Fare-Cle](#)
[Autism Personal Coach](#)
[Rec2Connect](#)
[Perkins Elearning](#) (Transition timeline planning)
[Live Binders Transition Toolkit](#)
[NTACT](#) (National Technical Assistance Center on Transition)

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COMMUNITY RESOURCES

[Job Corp](#)
[Think College](#)
[Koinonia](#) (Housing options)
[Medina Creative](#) (Housing Options)
[Social Security Administration](#)
[STABLE Accounts](#)
[Cuyahoga County Probate Court](#) (Guardianship)
[Northeast Ohio Advocates](#)

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Questions?
Contact me:

sdecarlo@neoadvocates.com
www.neoadvocates.com
440-510-3800

sdecarlo@thearcofgreatercleveland.org


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Back to the Basics:
Transition Resources from
Fellow Families



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Parent to
Parent
Support



"Parent to parent support can be a life-line, knowing there is an experienced guide, a trusted ally, a listening partner just a phone call away." *Parent to Parent USA*

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PRIORITIZE SELF-CARE

Stay connected with others virtually.
 Seek support from those around you.
 Be kind to yourself.
 Take short breaks from the immediate stress of the situation.
 Seek help when needed from family, friends, support groups.
 Let go of unreasonable expectations – things may not always go as planned and that's OK.



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COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Stay informed - don't overdo the media. Use reliable sources for accurate updates —
 Check-in with your child's school, teachers and therapists – how will support be offered if they are at home learning?
 Don't feel pressured to exactly replicate school and therapies at home
 Check-in with your child's health-care provider by calling or using telehealth services if available.
 Check in with your child's service providers to see what help they can offer to you during this time.



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REASSURE YOUR CHILD

Foster calm - take breaks,
 Create routines – make new routines if the old ones have been disrupted.
 Be empathetic to the changes your child is experiencing.
 Reach out to therapists and other families in similar situations to brainstorm ideas to address any challenges.
 Encourage talking about feelings - social isolation may be an issue during this time so give your child an opportunity to discuss these feelings.
 Brainstorm ways for your child to interact with others through texting, phone calls, and video chatting and other virtual platforms.



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Creative Ways to Meet Your Child's Needs

ROUTINES

Keep a consistent schedule – morning routine, bedtime routine, schoolwork routine

Use visuals to illustrate schedules and activities

Build in time for movement activities – go outside

REACH OUT TO TEAM/ REQUEST AN IEP MEETING

Proactively discuss your child's needs & what services would be most helpful to them during remote learning

Discuss appropriate accommodations for your child while they are learning from home.

Have materials at home that help with meeting your child's learning needs

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Creative Ways to Meet Your Child's Needs

BE CREATIVE

Respectfully request alternative methods of instruction or therapies – 1:1 or small group.

Use service providers to help you find alternative ways to provide the skills needed to keep up with their transition goals.

Incorporate chores into your child's daily routine if they are at home

Encourage independence building activities – have them choose what they want for lunch or dinner, encourage them to choose a game that everyone can play together, prepare meals together

Request a modified list of assignments that will help with the goals your child needs to meet.

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Post School Considerations

BE FLEXIBLE

Stay in touch with your Support Administrator

Look into relaxed rules for Waiver Programs

Consider a new provider if yours isn't working now due to Covid (Fare-CLE, NMT)


Consider other options for work

Virtual programming options (L.E.A.P., USOD, YouthAbility, Buddy Up Zumba, Fitness and Kickboxing)

In-person socially distanced options (L.E.A.P., Empower Sports, Rec 2Connect, Solon Blue Ribbon)

Ombudsman or Risk Manager

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STAYING CONNECTED


Remember the existing supports you have in place for your child – school staff, therapists, your PCP, or any other health specialists.

State agencies and service providers – offer support or help when dealing with challenges.

Find new and unique ways to connect with your support system - Reach out to at least one friend per day through phone or email.

Join a local support group or a national support group – utilize their virtual offerings.

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STAYING CONNECTED

Zoom Meetups – Parents Night Out, Mom's Night Out, Dad's Group

Webinars – Sign up for different learning opportunities

Facebook groups or pages – school support, disability group support, behavior support

Tik Tok – has supportive videos for different disabilities.

Other social media platforms – Pinterest, Twitter, Instagram...

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support
education
advocacy
community

The Up Side of Downs of Northeast Ohio

Zoom support meetings – Dad's group, Mom's Night Out, Parent's Night Out

Grandparent's Support Group

Parent roundtable on different topics


Question & Answer Sessions

Psychologist talk about how to handle stress/anxiety

Medical Outreach

IEP Support/Outreach to Schools

Circle of Support



Contact Information

Gina Mitchner – gina@usod.org

Laurie Kowalski – lauriek@usod.org

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Put on your thinking cap and get creative!









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A few free online resources

Life Skills:

- [Learningforapurpose.com](https://learningforapurpose.com)






Career Discovery:

- <https://nacdd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Career-Discovery-Guide-MODDC.pdf>

Community:


- [Ymca360.org](https://ymca360.org)
- Community Centers, Parks & Rec free programming
- Local zoo, science center, museum, theater or sports team






Some agencies that offer waiver services can provide all three

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Life Domain Vision Tool – Family Perspective



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John's Vision Tool – Family Perspective

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Transition
BOOTCAMP

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Questions?



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