



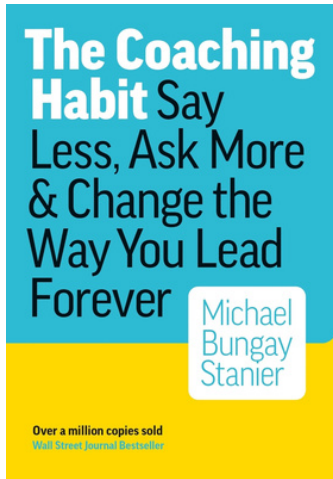
# VOICE, CHOICE, AND INDEPENDENCE

Building Confident Communicators for  
Life After School

OSSPEAC Conference 2025  
Empower. Evolve. Excel.  
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## MINDSET MATRIX: FINDING THE “I” IN MINDSET



1) What's on your mind?

2) What do you want for the student/yourself?

3) How can I help?

## SORTING MAYA'S DATA

Big 3 (+1)	Desired Outcomes	What data is missing?
Employability		
Independent Living		
Education & Training		
Recreation & Leisure*		



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## Building Confident Communicators for Life After School

*Email from Maya's parents ahead of the annual IEP meeting:*

"We're not focused on college for academics—we're more interested in community college as a stepping stone to help her grow. We want Maya to become more independent, more confident, and continue developing her communication skills. She's making progress, but group conversations and unexpected changes are still tough for her."

"She's in JV choir and really enjoys it—especially when she gets to perform. She also participates in Special Olympics and is excited about going to the Fall Formal this year with her boyfriend. She really lights up in those social spaces where people know her and she knows what to expect."

"We're trying to think ahead, and we want Maya's goals—especially speech therapy—to help her communicate more clearly, ask for help, and feel ready to participate in whatever comes next. We want her life after high school to include connection, contribution, and confidence—not just task completion."

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## SUPPLEMENT FOR MAYA'S TRANSITION SERVICES

### **Appropriate student involvement in the student's transition to life outside the public school**

**system:** Maya participates in Special Olympics events in her community and enjoys the social atmosphere of these activities. She also attends school dances such as the Fall Formal and is active in her school choir, which performs at community events.

### **If the student is less than 18 years of age, describe the parent(s) ' involvement in transition**

**planning:** Maya's parents are actively engaged in her transition planning. Their goal is for her to enroll in community college to continue maturing, increasing independence, socializing, and developing her communication skills rather than focusing solely on academics.

**Any postsecondary education options:** After graduation, Maya will enroll in a local community college to participate in classes and campus activities that foster socialization, communication, and independence, with support from disability services as needed.

**Employment goals and objectives:** Maya will participate in part-time or volunteer work in a community setting aligned with her interests (such as music, recreation, or inclusive sports), using self-advocacy and communication supports (including AAC as needed) to interact with supervisors, coworkers, and customers.

**Independent living goals and objectives:** Maya will manage her personal routines (hygiene, daily schedule, transportation) with minimal support and will use verbal communication or AAC to ask for help, clarify information, and navigate new situations in the community.

**The transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the student in reaching the postsecondary goals:** Prior to graduation, Maya will receive transition-focused speech-language services emphasizing pragmatic communication, communication repair strategies (including AAC), and self-advocacy. She will also participate in at least two planning meetings with college disability services or community programs to support her postsecondary transition plan.

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## ACTIVITY: WHAT COUNTS AS EVIDENCE?

Jot down 3 examples  
of evidence you've  
used to show a  
secondary student's  
IEP progress.

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Consider both  
“traditional”  
(Quantitative) and  
“Non-traditional”  
(Qualitative) sources.

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Answer: Which of  
these feel most  
meaningful in showing  
growth to parents, the  
student, teachers,  
and future support  
professionals?

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## SUPPORTING RESEARCH

McConnell, A., Sanford, C., Martin, J., Cameto, R., & Hodge, L. (2021). Skills, Behaviors, Expectations, and Experiences Associated with Improved Postsecondary Outcomes for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 46(4), 240-258. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15407969211053810>

Perryman, T., Ricks, L., & Cash-Baskett, L. (2020). Meaningful Transitions: Enhancing Clinician Roles in Transition Planning for Adolescents With Autism Spectrum Disorders. *Language, speech, and hearing services in schools*, 51(4), 899–913. [https://doi.org/10.1044/2020\\_LSHSS-19-00048](https://doi.org/10.1044/2020_LSHSS-19-00048)

Santhanam, S. P., & Bellon-Harn, M. L. (2025). The Speech-Language Pathologist's Role in Supporting Autistic Students in Postsecondary Education Settings. *American journal of speech-language pathology*, 34, 2533-2546. [https://doi.org/10.1044/2025\\_AJSLP-24-00467](https://doi.org/10.1044/2025_AJSLP-24-00467)

Santhanam, S. P., & Bellon-Harn, M. L. (2022). Speech-Language Pathologist's Role in Understanding and Promoting Self-Advocacy in Autistic Adults. *American journal of speech-language pathology*, 31(2), 649–663. [https://doi.org/10.1044/2021\\_AJSLP-21-00223](https://doi.org/10.1044/2021_AJSLP-21-00223)

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While we were created under Ohio statute and operate through the Educational Service Center of Central Ohio, our reach extends far beyond central Ohio and state borders. We take pride in being a global leader in creating and connecting resources and relationships. From being a trusted source of reliable information and data, to



American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

Making effective communication, a human right, accessible and achievable for all.

CAREERS	CERTIFICATION	PUBLICATIONS	EVENTS	ADVOCACY	CONTINUING EDUCATION
<a href="#">Audiologists</a>	<a href="#">Speech-Language Pathologists</a>	<a href="#">Academic &amp; Faculty</a>	<a href="#">Audiology &amp; SLP Assistants</a>		

## Postsecondary Transition Planning

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004) mandates transition planning for students who have an individualized education program no later than the first IEP that will be in place when the student turns 16 years old. Some states require transition services at younger ages. Transition plans facilitate the student's move from school to post-school activities. The plan addresses, at minimum, three areas:

1. education and training
2. employment
3. independent living

Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) collaborate with the student, parents, and additional secondary school personnel to develop and implement the transition plan. The plan considers the student's needs, strengths, interests, and preferences.

## Transition Planning

The roles and responsibilities of secondary school personnel, including the SLP, for transition planning are as follows (ASHA, 1994):

- including students and parents in planning (e.g., their vision for the future)
- being sensitive to the culture and values of the student and family
- educating students about their legal rights
- helping students develop self-advocacy skills
- helping the student and family in the selection of appropriate postsecondary school and vocational settings and assisting with application processes
- informing students and families about services in postsecondary settings (e.g., disability support services and academic counseling)
- providing current documentation needed to access services (including academic accommodations) in a postsecondary setting
- informing students and families about vocational support services
- helping students identify the need for supports and any accommodations and assistive