
I. INTRODUCTION

The second edition of the Transition Toolkit is a compilation of existing practices, strategies, and available resources on transition that build on field experience and research. The Toolkit offers practical information that enables State and local administrators and service providers to provide high-quality transition services for youth moving into, through, and out of education programs within the juvenile justice system.

Even seemingly simple communication efforts, such as inviting parents to visit their child's institutional school, can have a dramatic impact on a student's outcomes. Similarly, processes such as the timely transfer of student academic records can affect a child's engagement in school and the likelihood that the child will avoid further institutionalization. The focus of this document is therefore on the administrative processes, coordination efforts, and communication practices related to a youth's experience with the justice system. It offers ideas and tools that administrators can use to improve the basic functioning of their treatment and institution-based education programs. Although the Toolkit identifies many systems, agencies, and support services, its primary focus is on the *educational needs* of youth and those who directly provide education services.

ORGANIZATION OF THE TOOLKIT

Section II of this document briefly addresses the topic of transition across three areas:

- The complexity of the transition process
- The characteristics of ineffective and effective transition systems
- Overarching strategies for successful transition

Sections III through VI each address a distinct stage of transition:

- Stage 1: Entry into the justice system
- Stage 2: Residence
- Stage 3: Exit from incarceration
- Stage 4: Aftercare

Each section provides stage-specific strategies to improve the transition process, including those to promote effective records transfer and maintenance and increased family involvement. The processes of records transfer and family involvement are specifically highlighted throughout this document to reflect the high volume of technical assistance requests that NDTAC has received on these topics.

Each section concludes with pertinent resources, such as sample forms, protocols, and tools currently used at each stage of the transition process. The Toolkit also contains a self-study and planning tool to guide program improvement within facilities for youth who are delinquent (Appendix A).

TRANSITION INTERVIEW DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

Information throughout this document is based on both current literature and the combined expertise of NDTAC staff. In addition, transition coordinators and project directors who were interviewed by NDTAC staff offered considerable information.

During the summer of 2007, NDTAC staff conducted telephone interviews with seven transition coordinators and project directors around the country. The purpose of these interviews was to synthesize practical insight and advice and identify strategies and tools that these experienced coordinators have used in their transition programs. NDTAC staff interviewed the following transition coordinators and project directors:

- **Dr. Mike Bullis**, Dean of the College of Education and Sommerville-Knight Professor of Education, Secondary Special Education and Transitions Department of Special Education and Clinical Sciences, College of Education, University of Oregon
- **Sgt. Belinda Cosgrove**, Garland County Juvenile Detention Center Mental Health Services, Arkansas Juvenile Re-Entry Action Program (J-RAP Program)
- **Chrissy Dorion**, Transition Coordinator, School District of Hillsborough County
- **Dr. Heather Griller-Clark**, Project Director, Arizona Detention Transition Project (ADTP) at Arizona State University
- **Marianne Moore**, Instructional Specialist, Middle/Secondary Transition, Virginia Department of Education
- **Jacque Reese, M.S.E.**, State Juvenile Education Initiative (JEDI) Coordinator for the Arkansas Department of Education, Special Education Unit
- **Dr. DeAnne Unruh**, Research Associate and Assistant Professor, Secondary Special Education & Transition, National Post-School Outcomes Center at the University of Oregon

The interviews focused on the following topics: general information about the transition programs of the interviewees; tools and research used to create their program; tools and research created as a result of their programs; tools and research used specifically to facilitate records transfer; types of outcome data collected and how the data are used; challenges and successes encountered during implementation; and advice the interviewees have for other transition coordinators.