

Person-Centered Planning

Person-Centered Planning (PCP)

Person-Centered Planning (PCP) is a way to help people with disabilities plan for their future. It brings together a group of people who focus on the person's dreams and goals, helping them decide what they want to do next.

Begin with the End in Mind

It's never too early to start thinking about your child's future. Middle school may seem far from adulthood, but time goes by fast. Before you know it, your child will be grown. Planning ahead is important for all kids, especially for those with disabilities, who might have extra challenges to face.

Kids with disabilities have their own hopes and dreams for life after high school. To help them reach their goals, start by thinking about the future: What do they want to do after graduation? How can you help them get there?

Remember, your child's dreams might be different from yours. It's important to listen to what they want while giving them guidance and support.

Create a Vision

Your child's future should be based on what's possible but not limited by their disability. Encourage them to think creatively! If your child dreams of being a doctor and you're not sure if it's possible, try to understand what they like about being a doctor. Do they like wearing a white coat or working in a lab? Keep asking questions and exploring! The PCP process is a great way to plan for the future.



When should it start?

You can start anytime! It's a good idea to talk about it before deciding on transition services, and it can help when planning for the future.



Who is involved?

The person with a disability can choose anyone they want to be part of the conversation. It can be helpful to have someone take notes during the discussion. Other people who can join include parents, caregivers, family, friends, professionals, or anyone else who cares about the person.

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The Steps of PCP

1. **Learn about the person's background:** Share important details about the person's life, like big events, medical history, important people, and how they've been affected by different experiences.
2. **Check for quality of life:** Talk about how the person's life is going by looking at things like being part of the community, having choices, being treated with respect, and feeling good at what they do.
3. **Talk about what they like and don't like:** Discuss the activities the person enjoys and the ones they don't like.

Creating Pathways

PCP helps your child think about what they want for the future and make a plan to reach their goals. The team talks about:

- your child's background and current situation,
- their dreams and goals,
- the challenges and opportunities they might face,
- the steps they need to take, and
- the services and support they will need to make the plan work.

Remember, the student is the most important part of the PCP, and their ideas are very important!

Questions to Ask:

- Does your child want to go to college or a trade school?
- Do they want to get a job?
- Where do they see themselves living, and who do they want to live with?
- What activities do they like to do for fun?
- How will they get around to different places?
- How will they stay healthy?
- What kind of support will they need to be as independent as possible?

A Successful Planning Meeting

Start the meeting by thinking about what could affect your child's life. Then, talk about their dreams and come up with ideas to make them happen. Also, discuss obstacles that could get in the way.

Next, make a plan with clear steps to reach those dreams. Start small with actions that can be done right away. Finally, figure out what services are needed to help make everything work for the person.

The team should meet often to see if the plan is working and make changes if needed. A family member or advocate that is part of the team can help. This is just the beginning of a lifelong journey!