



Things to Think About!



By Brandan Atkin

SNRP Site Link Requirements

Want to have your organization listed on our Resource Links page? SNRP does take submissions for Resource Links on the Resource Links pages. Organizations must be nonprofits and disability related. NO For Profit Businesses or Law Firms, please.

“[Contact Us](#)” then e-mail the information below and we’ll get it posted!

- A. Name of organization/site
- B. Best category for the organization
- C. Contact information as appropriate (Address, phone numbers, fax, etc.)
- D. Web link
- E. Email address for public contact
- F. Short description of program/services offered

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Making the Transition to College and Career

By Linda Jorgensen

Remember those dreams and goals your child talked to you about when they were little? Ideally, you’ve been working towards those goals with your child and his (or her) education team for several years now and your child is ready to transition out of the IDEA program and into the adult world of college and career training. Now is the time to put your child's dreams of higher education or career training on track for future success in the adult world. It’s time to get creative, again.

1. Find Basic Program Information

Be sure to do your homework. Be realistic and investigate the options you have. Weigh the pros and cons of each program and look for a situation you believe will be appropriate and best fit your child’s goals and educational needs. Remember, the most important thing here is an education or career training in the least restrictive and most productive environment for your child.

2. Start Early

The best time to look for schools and programs is about a year before your child will need them. Begin by talking to school professionals such as the High School Guidance Counselor, Special Needs Education Specialists, Vocational Rehabilitation Councilors, college Special Needs Councilors, parents, and others to find programs and courses that may be appropriate for your child.

3. Network

Any time you are in an agency or program office you have an opportunity to find more programs or information you may need. Don’t forget to communicate, communicate, what it is you want and need. If the agency or office can’t help you, ASK if they know of someone who can. It is important to ask! Don’t be afraid to ask for referrals or contact information. You’ll be surprised at how much information you’ll gain by asking a simple question.

4. Be Prepared

Have your program information and questions ready BEFORE you start making your phone calls. On a communication log list what

programs and services you are interested in, admissions requirements, referrals etc. Have questions written down and ready leaving space for answers. Don't forget some services and programs have income, age, or geographic requirements so be sure to find out what those are. Be sure to also ask what documentation is required along with a program application. Make your list so your application packets will be complete.

5. **Get your Docs in a Row**

There are many documents you may be asked to provide as part of an application. The following is a list of a few of these:

- Social Security Eligibility letter
- Medicaid Waiver Eligibility letter
- School transcripts
- First and last Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Medical Sufficiency letter or a doctor's note
- A notarized copy of court ordered Guardianship and Incapacitation Findings
- Proof of military dependency
- Letters of denial from other programs and agencies
- Letters of recommendation

6. **Keep Your Documents!**

Don't shred any applications or documents! Keep copies and originals in a binder or file that is easily portable and accessible. This will become one of your best time saving tools. Need a form or a letter? You've already got it. Simply make a copy and return your copy to your file folder. DO NOT carry originals around unless they are absolutely required!

7. **Don't Take "No"....**

....from anyone who does not have the authority to say, "Yes"! If you are struggling to enroll in a program, need to obtain equipment or obtain

benefits be sure to get your information from the appropriate person. Many parents assume a "No" from a receptionist is as good as a "No" from a supervisor. This isn't always the case. Be sure to get your answers from the right person. "Don't take 'No' from anyone who does not have the authority to say 'Yes'".

8. **The All Powerful Secretary**

When it comes to school staff (and many agencies) there is one person in the building more powerful than the Principal and that's the secretary! She is the one on the front lines who decides to talk or meet with the administrative staff, whose messages make it into his in-box, and informs parents if he is "in" or "out" at the moment. She's also the one who has to deal with all the angry, whiney, demanding, and desperate parents that come in to the office or call on the phone. When calling an office, be polite! Develop a rapport with the secretary and other office staff. Ask about photos of children, spouses and pets sitting on her desk. Let the secretary and other office staff know you appreciate all the hard work they do. A good secretary can be your best ally or your worst enemy. Treat them kindly and with respect.

9. **Respond Before You React**

Find yourself in a heated conversation or situation? Respond rather than react. A quick, gut reaction can make a heated situation worse, but a thoughtful response can open up a dialogue. Take a deep breath and think before you speak. You may be able to work that bad situation around to your advantage yet.

10. **Stick To It...**

Don't give up. It may take many tries before you find a program or situation that will be optimal for your child. Be patiently persistent and things will work out.

"We can do anything we want to if we stick to it long enough" ~ Helen Keller~