

**National Disability Organization Releases Report on Interagency,
Interdisciplinary Approach to Transition**

SILVER SPRING, MD (May 29, 2013) — The Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) has released a comprehensive new report on one of the most significant issues facing youth with disabilities, the transition from adolescence to adult life. The report, [*A Collaborative Interagency, Interdisciplinary Approach to Transition from Adolescence to Adulthood*](#) builds on the unique interdisciplinary capabilities of the AUCD network to promote discussion and collaboration among agencies, programs and youth who impact and are impacted by the transition planning and implementation processes.

“All kids need support as they transition through life. Kids with disabilities and their families often need extra support as they traverse the more complex universe of state and federal systems of public supports and accommodations in health care, school, transportation, housing, and work,” said AUCD’s Past-President and lead author of the report, Tony Antosh, EdD. “For children and youth with disabilities, the quality of the supports and interagency collaboration during these transitions can often mean the success or failure to succeed in the next phase or the rest of their lives.”

As youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) leave school, they face several transitions, including school to work or postsecondary education, family home to community living, and child-oriented health care to adult care. Multiple barriers currently stand in the way of a coordinated approach to supporting all aspects of successful transition to adulthood, including failing to support self-determination, lack of coordination among professionals, and an insufficient understanding of a student’s culture and in a language understood by families and adolescents. The new report addresses these issues by promoting four core concepts:

1. Transition planning should include all the perspectives, disciplines, and organizations that will impact the transitioning youth

2. Self-determination should be the foundation for transition planning
3. Interagency collaboration is essential to effective transition
4. Transition should be viewed through a cultural lens

An improved transition process, achieved through the collaborative approach and core concepts included in the report, has the potential to change the trajectory of a student's life. Successful transitions can increase an adolescent's access to post-secondary education, competitive prevailing-wage work, and community living.

The national network of University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), whose purpose is to provide interdisciplinary pre-service and continuing education, demonstrate evidence-based community services, conduct research and translate research findings into practice, are well situated to facilitate communication across agencies, schools, health and other providers as they are accustomed to blending resources and have had extensive experience working with state agencies and community partners and interdisciplinary academic departments. Transition experts from UCEDD programs across the country are eager to join together in breaking down the barriers to collaborative and coordinated supports for transition in response to the well-documented transition needs of youth with IDD.

This report is intended to help inform the public and policymakers about the current barriers to successful transitions, raise awareness, and share information about evidence-based research and best practices. The report also contains information on current projects and resources to help facilitate successful transitions for youth with disabilities. "This initiative has the dual potential to both improve outcomes for youth and adults with disabilities and increase their potential for leading independent and productive lives characterized by full participation in the social and economic activities of their communities" said AUCD's George Jesien. "Successful transitions for youth with disabilities could also make many youth less dependent on public assistance programs thus saving longer term federal outlays."

The [Association of University Centers on Disabilities](#) (AUCD), located in Silver Spring, MD, promotes and supports a national network of interdisciplinary centers on disabilities. Copies of the [report are free online](#) or can be ordered from the AUCD website.

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