

Self-Determination for Persons With Disabilities: A Position Statement of the Division on Career Development and Transition

Sharon Field, Wayne State University, James Martin, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, Robert Miller, Mankato State University, Michael Ward, Oregon Health Sciences University, & Michael Wehmeyer, The Arc, Arlington, Texas

For over 75 years the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) has had a rich history in advocating for better educational services for children and youth with disabilities, and those who are gifted and talented. The century began with the members of CEC fighting for education for students with disabilities to replace what was considered benign neglect in some places and deplorable conditions in many others. CEC, whose membership is composed primarily of teachers, administrators, support staff, parents and advocates concerned about the quality of education for students with disabilities, helped draft the landmark Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1973. This legislation took special education out of the realm of goodwill and made it the right of all children and youth with disabilities.

The Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT) was established in 1978 to give a voice to those special education professionals who were becoming increasingly concerned about the limited post-secondary outcomes faced by most youth with disabilities upon leaving school. DCDT has affirmed this concern through previous position statements on issues such as career development for children and youth with disabilities (Clark, Carlson, Fisher, Cook, & D=Alonzo, 1991), life skills instruction for youth with disabilities (Clark, Field, Patton, Brolin, & Sitlington, 1994), the transition of youth with disabilities to adult

life (Halpern, 1994), the participation of students with disabilities in School-to-Work programs (Benz & Kochhar, 1996), and transition assessment for students with exceptionalities (Sitlington, Neubert, & Leconte, 1997).

The Division on Career Development and Transition embraces the concept of self-determination. The concept of self-determination is consistent with CEC=s history of moving special education from a charitable activity to a civil right and with DCDT=s role in moving employment training from helping youth get jobs to providing the support necessary for them to explore and choose their own career paths. During the past decade, research and practice in self-determination has shown that systematic instruction in self-determination improves post-school outcomes of youth with disabilities. Moreover, it makes good sense that as these youth transition into adulthood, they have the same right to control their lives and their futures as their non-disabled peers.

Definitions of Self-Determination

Many definitions of self-determination have been offered in the recent literature (e.g., Field & Hoffman, 1994; Martin, Marshall & Maxson, 1993; Mithaug, Campeau & Wolman, 1992; Ward, 1988; Wehmeyer, 1996). Although each of these authors approach self-determination from a slightly different perspective, there are common themes that run throughout self-determination definitions. These common themes are embraced in a summary of these definitions offered by Field, Martin, Miller, Ward and Wehmeyer (1998):

self-determination is a combination of skills, knowledge, and beliefs that enable a person to engage in goal directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior. An understanding of one=s strengths and limitations together with a belief in oneself as capable and effective are essential to self-determination. When

acting on the basis of these skills and attitudes, individuals have greater ability to take control of their lives and assume the role of successful adults. (p. 2)

This view of self-determination, emphasizing choice, control and personally meaningful success, is evident throughout several movements which resulted in the current focus on self-determination in special education.

Historical Underpinnings of Self-Determination

There has been a changing view of disability in the United States as a result of the Independent Living, normalization and self-advocacy movements. People with disabilities are more visible and vocal than ever before in our nation's history and they are increasingly asserting their right to self-determination.

This increased visibility and advocacy by persons with disabilities is demonstrated in legislation that mandates greater consumer choice and involvement in service provision. For example, the Americans With Disabilities Act (P.L. 101-336) and the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (P.L. 105-17) both include specific provisions that promote and support self-determination for persons with disabilities. Legislation aimed at broader constituencies, such as the School-to-Work Opportunities Act (P.L. 103-239) and the Goals 2000: Educate America Act (P.L. 103-227), also set expectations for the full participation of individuals with disabilities. The policy agenda reflected in recent legislation emphasizes issues of empowerment for persons with disabilities and supports the concept of self-determination.

There are several additional factors contributing to the development of an emphasis on self-determination in special education. A major initiative by the U.S. Department of Education,

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), which funded 26 model demonstration projects in self-determination, provided an important impetus for a focus on self-determination. The results from these model projects were infused into the state systems change programs and other OSERS funded projects. This OSERS initiative, which demonstrated the impact that self-determination can have on students with disabilities, provided a major thrust for self-determination in special education programming and transition services.

Numerous follow-up and follow-along studies of former participants of special education programs also provided an impetus for a self-determination focus for students with disabilities. These studies found consistently that students with disabilities often achieve less than desired outcomes after completing special education programs. Upon completing educational programs, too few people with disabilities live independently, are competitively employed in a full time capacity, or are employed at a living wage (e.g., Hasazi, Gordon, & Roe, 1985; Mithaug, Horiuchi, & Fanning, 1985; Siegel, Robert, Waxman, & Gaylord-Ross, 1992; Sitlington, Frank & Carson, 1993; Wagner, D=Amico, Marder, Newman, & Blackorby, 1992). Disability status has been found to have a strong, consistent, and negative influence on occupational aspirations of high school seniors (Rojewski, 1996). Furthermore, few people with disabilities continue in postsecondary education to learn the employment skills needed for the 21st century (Fairweather & Shaver, 1991; Wagner, Newman, D=Amico, Jay, Butler-Halin, Marder, & Cox, 1991).

Self-determination emerged as a promising practice to meet the need for improved postschool outcomes identified by the follow-up studies cited above. Research has found that helping students acquire and exercise self-determination skills is a strategy that leads to more positive educational outcomes. For example,

Wehmeyer and Schwartz (1997) found that one year after graduation, students with learning disabilities or mental disabilities who were self-determined were more likely to have achieved more positive adult outcomes, including being employed at a higher rate and earning more per hour, when compared to peers who were not self-determined. Additional research supports the relationship between self-determination and positive educational outcomes (e.g., Perlmutter & Monty, 1997; Realon, Favell & Lowerre, 1990; Schunck, 1985; Wang & Stiles, 1976).

Finally, the development of teaching technology has contributed to the emerging emphasis on self-determination. There has been a shift over the past several years from instructional strategies that are teacher directed to techniques that rely on active learner participation. For example, the learning strategies approach and self-management technology have become widely accepted instructional strategies in both special and general education. These approaches have gained acceptance because research has demonstrated that instructional strategies which promote active student involvement result in more positive educational outcomes, and help students generalize skills to natural environments (Agran, 1997; Martin, Burger, Elias-Burger & Mithaug, 1988, Mithaug, Martin & Agran, 1987). This focus on active learner participation has contributed to the increased emphasis in special education on self-determination.

Importance of Self-Determination to Career Development and Transition

There is little doubt that educators, parents, politicians, business representatives and the general public are concerned with the state of education in the nation's elementary and secondary schools. There is considerable evidence that students of all abilities often leave high school without the skills they need to be successful in adult life (Mithaug, 1991). For all young people, the skills and

abilities they hold at the time of their transition to adult life are considered a measure of the success of the educational system. One of the significant changes brought about by this reexamination of the educational system is a commitment by many special educators to focus on educational outcomes that will assist students to become self-determined -- to help students with disabilities develop the skills they need to take charge of their educational programs, meet their educational goals, and prepare for their lives after graduation.

The focus on teaching self-determination skills has historical roots in the career development and transition movements. In a classic work on career development, Super (1983) identified a set of factors important to career development. These career choice factors include:

- * the ability to plan for near and distant futures;
- * the ability to take control of one's own life (locus of control);
- * an understanding of the relationship of time to goal attainment;
- * a healthy self-esteem;
- * the ability and willingness to explore careers and opportunities;
- * the willingness to ask questions and seek solutions;
- * the willingness to seek out and use resources; and
- * the willingness to participate in school-based and community-based activities.

Cognitive factors identified by Super (1983) as important in career development include: (a) information for decision making, (b) decision making skills, (c) self-knowledge, (d) work experience, (e) crystallization of personal values and interests, and (e) preferences in occupations. According to Super, young adults can develop a realistic vision of their strengths and limitations and a

reality orientation by using these skills. Furthermore, this will assist them to identify their needs, wants, and aspirations to focus their efforts to attain appropriate goals.

Many students with disabilities have encountered difficulties developing these important skills and attitudes. In a review of literature, Biller (1985) found students with disabilities often:

- * exhibit an external locus of control;
- * exhibit low self-esteem;
- * exhibit poor planning and goal setting skills;
- * participate least in extracurricular activities;
- * have difficulty in gathering information for decision making;
- * are weak in career decidedness at the time of graduation; and
- * have a weak reality orientation regarding their strengths and limitations and the relationship of that self-knowledge to career choice.

The cumulative effect of these characteristics is that adolescents with disabilities often are less able to make career decisions and less prepared for adult responsibilities than their non-disabled peers. Students with disabilities often are unable to advocate for their own needs, wants, and desires and are less prepared to make the hard choices and decisions needed to take control of their lives and become self-determined adults (e.g., Wehmeyer, 1993; Wehmeyer & Kelchner, 1994). Learned helplessness and self-deprecating attributions have been widely documented among students with learning disabilities (Smith, 1989) and also present barriers to student self-determination (Field, 1996).

Students with disabilities are not learning the skills related to career development and self-determination on an informal basis. These skills and attitudes must be structured into the school curriculum. Reexamination and re-focusing of educational

programs to address these important skills must occur so that more students will attain the desired outcomes. Education is first and foremost preparation of the learner for success in life (Clark et al., 1994).

Importance of Self-Determination for All Students

The concept of individual empowerment that leads to self-determination forms the foundation of DCDDT's 1994 transition policy (Halpern, 1994). Building upon this framework, the Division strongly believes that self-determination instruction during the elementary, middle, and secondary transition years prepares all students for a more satisfying and fulfilling adult life. There is substantial evidence that encouraging self-determination for all youth could help them be more successful in their educational programs as well as helping them to develop lifelong success skills (Field, 1997). Furthermore, several self-determination curricula (e.g., Field & Hoffman, 1996a; Halpern, Herr, Wolf, Lawson, Doren & Johnson, 1997; Huber Marshall, Martin, Maxson, Miller, McGill & Hughes, 1998) have been implemented in inclusive environments and have resulted in positive outcomes for students with and without disabilities.

Self-determination skills benefit all persons when used in a manner that appropriately matches each person's needs, interests, and goals. For example, students with more significant needs may express their self-determination by choosing the job they want after shadowing several and picking an illustration of their preferred one. Similarly, college-bound high school students may exhibit self-determination by selecting a college that matches their perceived interests and strengths.

Self-determination is important for all students, with and without disabilities, and regardless of the type or severity of the disability. However, the manner in which self-determination is encouraged

needs to be tailored to meet the needs of each individual. It is especially important to note that self-determination is just as important for individuals with severe disabilities as it is for persons who have more mild disabilities. Self-advocacy and self-determination both grew out of the work on normalization and dignity of risk (Nirje, 1972). This perspective emphasizes A making available to the mentally retarded patterns and conditions of everyday life which are as close as possible to the norms and patterns of the mainstream of society@ (Nirje, 1972, p. 363). Self-advocacy and self-determination within Nirje=s framework provided people with severe disabilities choice and control (at least partially) with the norms and patterns of the mainstream.

Exemplary Educational Activities That Encourage Student Self-Determination

Curriculum, instruction, and many other educational activities can be developed in a manner which promotes self-determination if the teacher is focused on the self-determination process and is aware of individual student needs. To teach generalized self-determination skills and attitudes, educators must realize that self-determination is a function of the interaction between an individual=s skills and the opportunities provided by their environments. Specific assessments and lessons must be designed to focus on the acquisition of knowledge, skills and beliefs associated with self-determination. Examples of educational activities that promote self-determination are provided below.

Student Involvement in Assessment

Career and transition assessment provides an opportunity to model, facilitate, and support self-determination instructional efforts. Students need to be active participants in deciding what needs to be assessed, how those factors will be measured, and how

assessment results will be used. In a self-determination assessment process, students may:

- * reach agreement with educators and parents on the need for assessment;
- * help decide the questions assessment will answer;
- * actively participate in the data gathering process;
- * offer suggestions and approve involvement from others who may provide assessment information;
- * participate or conduct interviews to collect information needed to answer assessment questions;
- * assemble portfolio information; and
- * use assessment results to help make informed decisions and define educational goals.

Assessment provides a foundation for the instructional process. A self-determination oriented assessment process respects student input and decisions. When students assist in developing assessment questions, help to secure background information, actively participate in data gathering and aid in interpreting the results, they become actively engaged and experience a sense of self-determination first-hand. This primes the pump for planning and implementing self-determination oriented instructional programs.

Student Involvement in IEP Transition Planning and Implementation

IDEA mandates that students participate in the Individualized Educational Planning (IEP) transition process, and that student interests and preferences guide transition activities. Expecting and supporting active student participation and leadership of their IEP=s helps to accomplish the IDEA mandate. By planning and implementing their own IEP=s, students learn self-advocacy, decision-making, self-evaluation, and goal attainment skills. Rather than IEP meetings merely fulfilling a bureaucratic

necessity, active student involvement, combined with a supportive team, converts the process into a meaningful celebration of a student's education.

Students need preparation for the IEP planning and implementation process (Powers, 1996). They must be taught the roles, duties, and responsibilities for effectively planning and implementing their IEP's. IEP team members also need to learn how to support students practice of self-determined behaviors. (Note: Field et al. [1998] describe several instructional strategies designed to facilitate teaching active student participation and leadership of the IEP process.)

Examples of activities students can engage in that support self-determination through the IEP and transition process include:

- * inviting team members and guests, including friends, to the meeting and sending reminder notices;
- * scheduling the meeting;
- * preparing refreshments and name tags;
- * wearing clothes appropriate for a formal meeting;
- * sitting at the head of the table;
- * leading their IEP meeting - with support as needed provided by their teacher, parent, or friend;
- * implementing strategies each week to help accomplish their goals and objectives;
- * meeting with support personnel weekly to discuss their goal attainment process; and
- * adjusting strategies, schedules, or supports (in collaboration with their teachers or family members) to help attain their goals.

This listing is not meant to be exhaustive. Rather, it is intended to provide samples of the types of activities that help students to learn and practice being self-determined. The use of any particular activity needs to be determined based upon the skills and needs of

the individual student. The activities listed above are often quite different, if not diametrically opposed to, typical practice. Their use requires a shift in perspective for all team members (e.g., students, parents, educators, agency representatives) that makes educational and transition planning truly student-centered and supportive of self-determination.

Students need repeated opportunities to practice their self-determination skills in a supportive environment. The IEP process, including preparation, planning and implementation phases, provides an excellent opportunity to teach these skills. While they are learning crucial self-determination skills, students develop a transition plan that is developed for them, by them.

Implications of A Self-Determination Focus for Families

Parents can play an important role in fostering self-determination by promoting choice and decision making skills with their children from an early age. There are several features of families that affect the development of self-determination (Turnbull & Turnbull, 1996). According to Turnbull and Turnbull, these features include family characteristics, such as cultural values, beliefs and expectations, and coping styles; family interactions, such as role expectations, relationships, cohesion, and adaptability; family functions, including economic, daily care, recreation, socialization, affective, educational/vocational, and self-definition needs; and family lifespan issues (including developmental stages of family interactions and function over time, transitions or changes in family characteristics, composition, cohesion, and function).

The important role that parents play in the self-determination process needs to be supported and nurtured. For example, parents can encourage their children to ask questions and express opinions and they can model positive self-determination and self-esteem for

their children. Several practical strategies that families can use to promote self-determination are provided in Field et al. (1998).

Policy Implications of a Self-Determination Emphasis in Special Education

If a primary goal of special education, and education in general, is to ensure better results in employment and community living, it is critical that educational practices and policies support self-determination instruction on a school and district-wide basis. There are many ways in which self-determination can be supported throughout the school from specific curricular efforts, to the way in which discipline is conducted, to the manner in which student scheduling is completed. Collaboration representing a variety of perspectives (e.g., students, parents, support services staff, special educators, general educators and administrators) is needed to develop broad support for self-determination.

Self-Determination for Educators

In order to be most effective, a system-wide approach is necessary to promote self-determination for students. Research (e.g., Bandura, 1986) suggests that students learn significantly from what is modeled by the educators with whom they act. If teachers and administrators are expected to effectively model and provide instruction in self-determination for students, self-determination for teachers and administrators must also be encouraged. This requires an examination of pre-service and in-service preparation programs as well as school policy and organizational issues.

Teachers and administrators need opportunities for choice to exercise self-determination. For example, a factor affecting the degree to which teachers can practice and promote self-determination is the level of control they have over the curriculum. If curriculum requirements are rigidly set, teachers will have

difficulty finding ways to incorporate self-determination into the curriculum. In addition, if the system's bureaucracy is very complex and inflexible, it will be difficult to introduce a new focus into the school. For self-determination programs to be most effective, policies are needed which promote empowerment and flexibility for staff to respond to changing student needs.

The Role of Self-Determination in Other Reform Initiatives

Efforts to bring about increased self-determination must be aligned with other reform efforts in the schools, such as Goals 2000 and School-to-Work initiatives. Other reform initiatives, including district-wide improvement plans and local control of school funding, are also affecting the delivery of educational services. Whether reform initiatives are viewed

positively or negatively, questions should be raised as to how they promote student choice and control of their course of study.

School-to-Work programs, as mandated through the School to Work Opportunities Act (P.L. 103-239), have great potential for promoting self-determination as young people choose their careers. Exploration of careers at an early age can provide students with information and hands-on exposure to a wide variety of careers through school-based learning, work-based learning, and connecting activities. Self-determination practices within a school-to-work framework can include, at minimum, students choosing career pathway options and making periodic self-assessments. The self-assessment process should allow students to explore different jobs in a career field or different career fields all together.

Legislative Implications

Recent legislation affecting services for students with disabilities affirms the right of persons with disabilities to self-determination.

For example, as discussed earlier, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1990 requires that all students, age 16 and older, be invited to attend the Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting at which the provision of transition services is discussed. Such services must be based on an individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests. The IDEA Amendments of 1997 (P.L. 105-17) extends the transition requirements to state that transition planning must begin at age 14. This statement of transition service needs must focus on the student's courses of study, such as participation in advanced-placement courses or a vocational education program. In addition, under the IDEA Amendments of 1997, public agencies must now notify students as to the rights, if any, that will transfer to them upon reaching the age of majority. Adopting a self-determination perspective in IDEA implementation can lead states and local education agencies to interventions and strategies that help students identify their preferences and interests so that they may choose self-directed courses of study. This will, in turn, more likely lead to better post-secondary outcomes and to meeting the true spirit of the legislation.

As special educators, we must be aware that self-determination is also impacting legislation affecting other disability services. For example, the reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act will most likely promote the concept of client choice. Client choice has already been implemented throughout the vocational rehabilitation system through model demonstration projects. A second example comes from the 19 state self-determination projects funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to change the way developmental disabilities services are provided to enable individuals and their families to have more control and direction regarding the purchase of services. The emphasis on self-determination affecting a wide variety of disability related services reflects the widespread belief of consumers, families and

practitioners in the value of adopting a self-determination focus in special education.

Pre-Service and In-Service Training Implications

The concept of self-determination is a new concept in schools. Special and general education teachers, administrators, support staff and para-professionals at all levels (i.e., pre-school through postsecondary) need the opportunity to learn about the concept of self-determination and how it fits into their lives and the lives of their students. Staff development to promote self-determination includes:

- * introducing staff to the concept of self-determination and an understanding of the component skills;
- * providing staff with the opportunity to further develop component skills of self-determination (e.g, self-awareness, assertive communication, decision-making, goal setting) for themselves;
- * providing an awareness of instructional materials and strategies to promote self-determination with students; and
- * providing staff with support for addressing how self-determination can be infused into existing curricular efforts.

In addition to the above content recommended for in-service training, staff will be better prepared to promote self-determination if their pre-service preparation programs, at both undergraduate and graduate levels, have provided a foundation for this effort. They will be better prepared to promote self-determination for students if their self-determination has been encouraged in their educational programs. Personnel preparation programs should examine their course-and fieldwork requirements, advising practices, instructional techniques, and methods of evaluation to determine if their practices promote or discourage self-

determination and make modifications as needed (Field & Hoffman, 1996b).

Leadership Implications

Advocacy refers to actions that must be taken by people with disabilities to achieve full rights and responsibilities; *leadership* refers to actions people with disabilities take to get all people and the entire community to support and defend their rights and responsibilities. The exercise of leadership focused on achieving both individual and collective self-determination is at the heart and soul of the future of people with disabilities as they prepare to face the divisive and controversial issues of the 21st Century. Effective advocacy, personal self-determination and

responsible leadership will assure focused and substantial progress for all people with disabilities while building community, celebrating diversity, and acting with sensitivity for global and personal interdependence. If people with disabilities are to achieve full citizenship, their challenges must become the challenges of the communities in which they live. This will only happen when individuals with disabilities are included in the leadership of their communities.

Future Research and Development Needs

Although application of self-determination concepts has made a definitive imprint on the education of youth with disabilities, there are numerous research and development issues which need to be addressed. Despite the success of self-determination practices in education, many other systems, programs, and services for persons with disabilities still maintain a paternalistic and controlling approach in relating to their student or client customers. Since most of these service providers rely on State and Federal funds which are increasingly shrinking, such providers are looking for

ways to provide their services as expeditiously as possible. Instruction to promote self-determination can be staff intensive, and therefore costly. Attention needs to be given to maximizing effectiveness and efficiency in implementation of self-determination oriented instruction. Systems and programs which are effective and efficient are also more cost-effective as they produce more positive outcomes per expenditure. Therefore, our challenge is to first improve dissemination efforts of best, proven, and promising practices that encourage youth with disabilities to take more control of their lives. These dissemination efforts need to target broad audiences. Furthermore, they need to address the general public's concerns and, perhaps, uneasiness about implementing self-determination practices.

Summary

The concept of self-determination, which has emerged as both a civil rights issue and a curriculum need, can help students be more successful in education and transition to adult life. Self-determination holds great potential to transform the way in which educational services are planned and delivered for students with and without disabilities. Self-determination is an approach that celebrates and builds on the intrinsic value of each human being. Research data support the effectiveness of instruction based on self-determination principles for bringing about positive outcomes in education and employment settings. Voices of persons with disabilities attest to the importance of self-determination for respecting the personhood of each individual. The Division on Career Development and Transition of the Council for Exceptional Children supports and affirms approaches to the development and delivery of effective educational programs that are rooted in self-determination.

References

Agran, M. (Ed.) (1997). Student directed learning. Pacific Grove, CA: Brookes-Cole.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C.A. '12101 et.seq. (West 1993). S. 1579, Rep.No. 105-106, 105th Cong., 2d sess. (1998).

Bandura, A. (1986). Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Benz, M.R., & Kochhar, C.A. (1996). School-to-work opportunities for all students: A position statement of the Division on Career Development and Transition. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 19, 31-48.

Biller, E.F. (1985). Understanding and guiding the career development of adolescents and young adults with learning disabilities. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

Clark, G.M., Carlson, B.C., Fisher, S., Cook, I.D., & D=Alonzo, B.J. (1991). Career development for students with disabilities in elementary schools: A position statement of the Division on Career Development. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 14, 109-120.

Clark, G.M., Field, S., Patton, J.R., Brolin, D.E., Sitlington, P.L. (1994). Life skills instruction: A necessary component for all students with disabilities. A position statement of the Division on Career Development and Transition. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 17, 125-134.

Fairweather, S. & Shaver, D.M. (1991). Making the transition to postsecondary education and training. *Exceptional Children*,5, 264-270.

Field, S. (1996). Self-determination instructional strategies for youth with learning disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*,29, 40-52.

Field, S. (1997). A historical perspective on student involvement in the transition process: Toward a vision of self-determination for all students. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*,19, 169-176.

Field, S., & Hoffman, A. (1994). Development of a model for self-determination. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*,17, 159-169.

Field, S., & Hoffman, A. (1996a). Increasing the ability of educators to promote youth self-determination. In L.E. Powers, G.H.S. Singer, & J. Sowers (Eds.) *Promoting self-competence among children and youth with disabilities: On the road to autonomy* (pp. 171-187). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Field, S., & Hoffman, A. (1996b). *Steps to Self-Determination*. Austin, TX: ProEd.

Field, S., Martin, J., Miller, R., Ward, M., & Wehmeyer, M. (1998). *A practical guide for teaching self-determination*. Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.

Goals 2000: Educate America Act, 20 U.S.C. '5801 et seq. (Congressional Record, 1994).

Halpern, A.S. (1994). *The transition of youth with disabilities to adult life: A position statement of the Division on Career*

Development and Transition. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 17, 115-124.

Halpern, A.S., Herr, C.M., Wolf, N.K., Lawson, J.E., Doren, B., & Johnson, M.C. (1997). *Next S.T.E.P.: Student transition and educational planning*. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

Hasazi, S., Gordon, L., & Roe, C. (1985). Factors associated with the employment status of handicapped youth exiting high school from 1979-1983. *Exceptional Children*, 51, 455-469.

Huber Marshall, L., Martin, J.E., Maxson, L.L., Miller, T.L., McGill, T., & Hughes, W.M. (1998). *Take Action: A Goal Attainment Strategy*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997, 20 U.S.C. ' 1400 et seq, (Congressional Record 1997).

Martin, J.E., Burger, D.L., Elias-Burger, S. & Mithaug, D.E. (1988). Practical application of self-control strategies with individuals who are mentally retarded. In N. Bray (Ed.), *International review of research in mental retardation* (pp. 155-193). Orlando, FL: Academic Press.

Martin, J.E., Huber Marshall, L. & Maxson, L.L. (1993). Transition policy: Infusing self-determination and self-advocacy into transition programs. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 16, 53-61.

Mithaug, D.E. (1991). *Self-determined kids*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

Mithaug, D., Campeau, P., & Wolman, J. (1992). *Self-determination assessment*. Unpublished manuscript.

Mithaug, D.E., Horiuchi, C.N. & Fanning, P.N. (1985). A report on the Colorado statewide follow-up survey of special education students. *Exceptional Children*, 51,397-404.

Mithaug, D.E., Martin, J.E. & Agran, M. (1987). Adaptability instruction: The goal of transitional programs. *Exceptional Children*,53, 500-505.

Nirje, B. (1972). The right to self-determination. In W. Wolfensberger (Ed.), *Normalization*. (pp. 176-193). Toronto, Ontario, Canada: National Institute on Mental Retardation.

Perlmutter, L.C., & Monty, R.A. (1977). The importance of perceived control. Fact or fantasy? *American Scientist*,65, 759-765.

Powers, L.E. (1996, June). Promoting self-determination in transition planning: What does it take? Presentation at the 11th Annual Transition Project Directors= Meeting, Washington, D.C.

Realon, R.E., Favell, J.E. & Lowette, A., (1990). The effects of making choices on engagement levels with persons who are profoundly mentally handicapped. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation*,25, 248-254.

Rojewksi, J.W. (1996). Educational and occupational aspirations of high school seniors with learning disabilities. *Exceptional Children*,62, 463-476.

School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994, 20 U.S.C. '6101 et seq. (Federal Register 1994).

Schunck, D.H. (1985). Participation in goal setting: Effects on self-efficacy and skills on learning disabled children. *The Journal of Special Education*,19, 307-316.

Siegel, S., Robert, M., Waxman, M., & Gaylord-Ross, R. (1992). A follow-along study of participants in a longitudinal transition program for youths with mild disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 58, 346-356.

Sitlington, P.L., Frank, A.R., & Carson, R. (1993). Adult adjustment among high school graduates with mild disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 59, 221-233.

Sitlington, P., Neubert, D., & Leconte, P. (1997). Transition assessment: The position of the Division on Career Development and Transition. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 20, 69-79.

Smith, D.D. (1989). *Teaching students with learning and behavior problems*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Super, D.E., (1983). Assessment in career guidance: Toward truly developmental counseling. *The Personnel and Guidance Journal*, 61. 555-561.

Turnbull, A.P., & Turnbull, H.R. (1996). Self-determination within a culturally responsive family systems perspective: Balancing the family mobile. In L.E. Powers, G.H.S. Singer, & J. Sowers (Eds.), *Promoting self-competence in children and youth with disabilities: On the road to autonomy*. (pp. 195-220). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Wagner, M., Newman, L., D'Amico, R., Jay, E., Butler-Halin, P., Marder, C., & Cox, R. (1991). *Youth with disabilities: How are they doing? The first comprehensive report from the National Longitudinal Transition Study of Special Education Students*. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

Wagner, M., D'Amico, R., Marder, C., Newman, L., & Blackorby, J. (1992). What happens next: Trends in postschool outcomes of youth with disabilities. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

Wang, M.C., & Stiles, B. (1976). An investigation of children's concept of self-responsibility for their learning. *American Educational Research Journal*, 13, 159-179.

Ward, M.J. (1988). The many facets of self-determination. *Transition Summary*, 5, 2-3.

Wehmeyer, M.L. (1993). Perceptual and psychological factors in career decision-making of adolescents with and without cognitive disabilities. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 16, 135-146.

Wehmeyer, M. (1996). Self-determination as an educational outcome: Why is it important for children, youth and adults with disabilities? In D.J. Sands & M.L. Wehmeyer (Eds.) *Self-determination across the lifespan: Independence and choice for people with disabilities* (pp. 1-14). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Wehmeyer, M.L. & Kelchner, K. (1994, December). Interpersonal cognitive problem-solving skills of individuals with mental retardation. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities*, 265-278.

Wehmeyer, M., & Schwartz, M.A. (1997). Self-determination and positive adult outcomes: A follow-up study of youth with mental retardation and learning disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 63, 245-255.

Author Information: Sharon Field, Ed.D., Associate Professor (Research) at Wayne State University; James Martin, Ph.D., Professor at University of Colorado at Colorado Springs; Robert Miller, Ph.D., Professor at Mankato State University; Michael Ward, Ph.D., Assistant Professor at Oregon Health Sciences University; Michael Wehmeyer, Ph.D., Director of the Bill Sackter Center on Self-Determination at Arc of the United States.

Contact Information: Dr. Sharon Field, Associate Professor (Research), Wayne State University, 469 College of Education, Detroit, MI 48202; sfield@coe.wayne.edu