

What is Transportation Education

&

Why is it Important?

Module 1



Module 1: What is Transportation Education and Why is it Important ?

Learning Objectives

- Understand the definition of transportation education
- Describe the principles of transportation education
- Identify key participants in transportation education
- Articulate how transportation education supports college and career readiness and transition planning

Defining Transportation Education

Transportation education creates a culture, accompanied by a coordinated set of practices, to connect students, families, educators, pupil transporters, and public transportation professionals to ensure students have knowledge, access and choice regarding a continuum of accessible transportation options across grade levels, especially as they transition from school to postsecondary education, employment and independent living. Transportation education is especially important for students with disabilities who may have fewer transportation options than their peers without disabilities

Principles of Transportation Education Focus on:

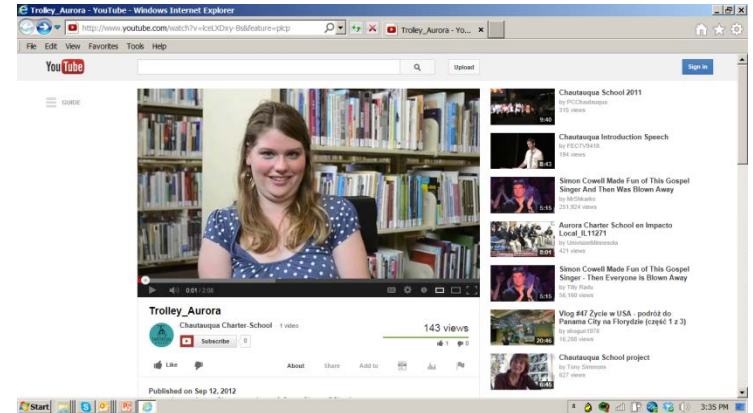
- Embedding content about accessible transportation options in curriculum and instruction across grade levels
- Providing professional development to educators and other school professionals regarding accessible transportation options for students
- Engaging students and their families in discussions regarding accessible transportation options throughout a student's education

Principles of Transportation Education Focus on:

- Ensuring that students and their families have the knowledge and skill to choose the transportation option that is best aligned with their needs, preferences and postsecondary goals
- Inviting collaboration across educators, pupil transporters and community transportation personnel
- Evaluating the quality and outcomes of transportation education
- Using evaluation data to inform practice and continuously improve transportation education

Voices from Youth

I feel like I am independent. I don't need to depend on my mom and dad to take me places. Now I can ride the bus to get to my job and to the movies with my friends.



[Hear from Aurora in her YouTube video as she described what access to public transit has meant to her](#)

These are some of the reactions from youth and adults with disabilities who have gained independence and mobility due to the simple fact that they can now get a ride to work, school, the mall or the library. For more stories read this ESPA-U of Minnesota product.

Voices from Youth – Benefits of Learning about Transportation and Travel Instruction

[Click to view video of student discussing the benefits of learning about transportation.](#)

Key Participants in Transportation Education

- **Students** – Transportation education expects that students are actively involved in planning and informing services. Services should seek ways to engage students and create a culture of self-determination
- **Families** – In K-12 settings, families and supports that students have in their community and home are important contributors to planning and receiving services around accessible transportation

Key Participants in Transportation Education

- **Educators and Related Services Personnel** (such as occupational therapists, speech pathologists) are important contributors as members of the IEP team
 - Educators and paraeducators can provide content related to the behavior and performance of students in academic and classroom settings
 - Classroom personnel can integrate transportation education content in curriculum and instruction

Key Participants in Transportation Education

- **Pupil Transportation** – These are the individuals responsible for providing transportation to students with disabilities to and from school. Module 2 suggests strategies to engage pupil transporters in transportation education.
 - The National Association for Pupil Transportation ([NAPT](#)) is the professional association for people who provide school-based transportation services

Key Participants in Transportation Education

- **Community Transportation** – Public and private
 - A number of transportation organizations may contribute to a school's transportation education program
 - Local transit agencies
 - Metropolitan planning organizations or councils
 - Human services organizations or public agencies that provide transportation
 - Private transportation companies such as taxi cab providers

[Click here to view video about transportation organization participation.](#)

Why Transportation Education is Critical

- Transportation is necessary to enable students to participate in post-school goals such as employment, higher education and independent living
- Learning to use fixed-route public transportation provides students with independence and allows for *spontaneous choice* in mobility across the community
- Travel instruction is connected to teaching independent living skills, a critical part of transition planning required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Why Transportation Education is Critical (cont.)

- Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), transit agencies that provide fixed-route services are required to provide complementary transit services, such as paratransit. Paratransit can only be used by individuals who are functionally unable to use fixed-route transportation for some or all of their trips.
- The presence of a particular disability does not automatically qualify an individual for ADA complementary paratransit services. Eligibility is based on functional ability rather than diagnosis.

Why Transportation Education is Critical (cont.)

- Emphasis on college and career readiness. K12 schools have an increased focus on preparing students to attend college and have the necessary skills to be employed successfully

- College and career readiness definition

The bottom line: Employers are demanding more education and training, and jobs that require a high school diploma or less are disappearing. Middle- and high-skills careers are the path to the middle class, and a strong K-12 preparation for education and training beyond high school is the path to those careers.

Achieve (<http://www.readyby21.org/news/information-update/what-does-it-mean-be-career-ready>)

Discussion Questions

- What is the definition of transportation education?
- Identify the principles that provide the foundation for transportation education
- Who are the key participants in transportation education?

Learning Activities

- Think about the key participants that are important to your work around transportation education.
 - What can these individuals and organizations contribute to the process?
 - Have you clearly articulated their role and contribution?
 - If key participants are not currently engaged, what are some ways you can enhance their participation?

Learning Activities (cont.)

- How does transportation education affect and support college and career readiness?
- Can you identify opportunities to share these connections with colleagues?
- What data would help you know whether connections exist between transportation education and college and career readiness?

Congratulations, you have completed Module 1!



Please take a few minutes and
provide us with feedback

Time to move on to Module 2!