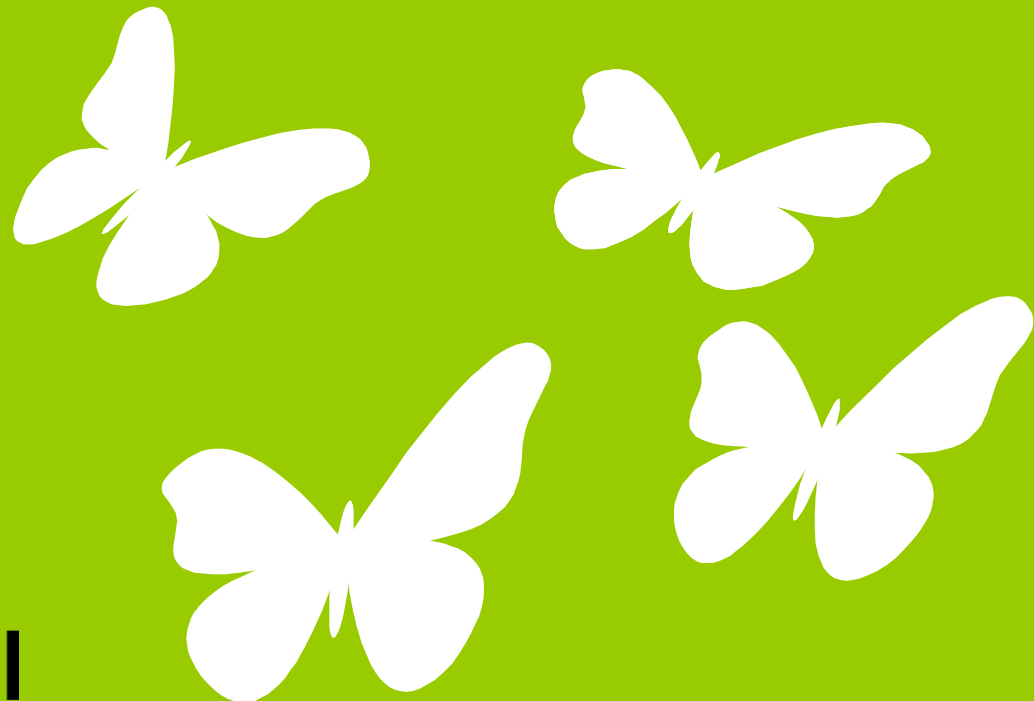


***Out of the Family Home:
Creating (and Working!) a REAL
Transition Plan***




EVOLIBRI





Welcome!

Introducing myself...

-  Jan Johnston-Tyler, MA – Author, Founder and CEO of EvoLibri Consulting – and mom to an Aspie young adult and teen with significant ADHD

Neurodiver-sa-wha?

-  Term coined several years ago to describe those individuals who have a neuro/biological difference which affects their experience of the world around them, and vice versa

-  Includes ASDs, AD/HD, LDs, pervasive depressive disorders, schizophrenia, etc...



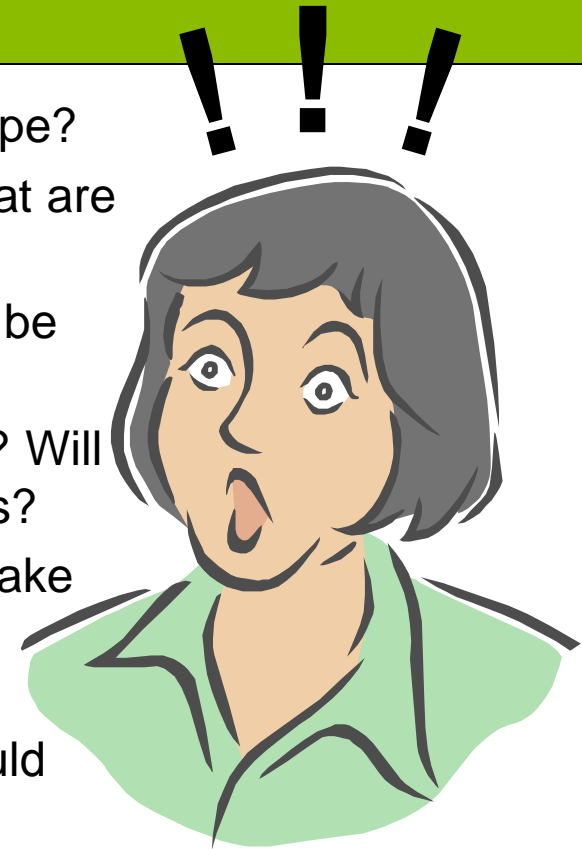
Ack! How Did We Get Here?

- ✿ Many parents just start to begin to breathe again when their ND kids are about 15 or 16...
- ✿ Things at school may have settled down, you've found decent accommodations... things are pretty good...
- ✿ And then... You start thinking...



NOW WHAT?!?

- ✔ Can (or should!) my child go to college? If so, what type?
- ✔ Can my child live independently in a dorm? If not, what are my options? Can we afford them?
- ✔ Can my child handle his/her finances, or will I always be writing checks?
- ✔ Can my child remember to take a bath once in awhile? Will s/he remember to brush her teeth? Take his/her meds?
- ✔ What will my child do for social activities? Will s/he make friends as adult? Will s/he ever marry? Kids? Have KIDS??? I don't want him/her having SEX!
- ✔ What about transportation? My child can't drive! Should s/he learn, is that important?
- ✔ Learning to cook, going to the dentist, remembering birthdays, buying clothes...**OMG, HELP!**



Pretty Overwhelmed?

- ✿ When you break down the amount of things ANY kid needs to learn to become an adult, it can be overwhelming
- ✿ Need to:
 - ✿ *Understand your youth's unique situation*
 - ✿ *Understand what needs to be learned*
 - ✿ *Break down the learning into manageable tasks*
 - ✿ ***NEED TO START EARLY!!!!***
- ✿ *Not uncommon to see regressive behaviors around 16 or 17, probably from fear about leaving, especially in ND teenagers*



Start with the End in Mind

Realistically, where will your young adult be in five years?



The Truth

It's not about academics!
(usually, anyway)



General Plan Outline

- ✿ **Career?** What careers is the student interested in, can do, and make income at?
- ✿ **School?** Certificate, AA, BA? Vocational or educational?
- ✿ **Wrap program/gap year?** How much support/ILS amelioration is needed?
- ✿ **Employment?** Full-time, part-time? Retail, fast food? (Be realistic!)
- ✿ **Live at home?** (for how long?) Shire House, shared housing, supported housing?

✿ **Independent living skills?** Can s/he fend for
—him/herself?—



Career

- ✿ What careers are available to your student?
 - ✿ What are his/her interests?
 - ✿ What are his/her abilities or saleable skills (REALISTIC!)?
 - ✿ How much money does s/he need to survive?
 - ✿ How much education can the student tolerate and the family afford?
- ✿ This requires (IMHO) REAL career counseling by someone who understands educational requirements, job market, and targeted disability.

~~“I will have study psychology”~~



School

🦋 Community Colleges

- 🦋 AA to transfer
- 🦋 Standalone AAs
- 🦋 Certificates

🦋 Specialized AA colleges (Landmark, Taft, Marshall)

🦋 Traditional Four Year Colleges

- 🦋 Four Year Colleges with embedded programs (Cal State East Bay, SALT)

🦋 Wrap programs

- 🦋 College Learning Experience, College Internship Program



Wrap/Gap Programs

- 🦋 Deferred acceptance to four year
- 🦋 Wrap programs
 - 🦋 Meristem
 - 🦋 Shire House
 - 🦋 College Learning Experience
 - 🦋 College Internship Program
- 🦋 Highly-structured customized gap year with services (volunteer, community college, ILS)



Employment

- ✿ All work experience is good, but...not all jobs are equal
- ✿ Very few non-retail, non-labor, non-customer-facing jobs in the Bay Area
- ✿ Many jobs require some training
- ✿ Workability I and II, Department of Rehabilitation for competitive employment

~~“I will get a job”~~



Housing

- ✿ Currently, 55% of kids under the age of 26 live at home – which is fine, but...Need to have a realistic plan of where, when, and how young adults will move out.
- ✿ Financial or ‘between college and career’ should be the ONLY reasons for not leaving home by age 26.
- ✿ Shared housing, Shire House, supported living



Independent Living Skills

🦋 This is the biggest problem area our kids have, and YOU can do something about it NOW!

~~“I will learn how to drive.”~~

~~“I will learn how to take the bus.”~~

~~“I will learn how to manage my time.”~~

~~“I will learn how to cook.”~~

~~“I will learn how to manage my finances.”~~



Quick Aside...

- ❖ **Conserved?** *Maybe.* Each young adult's needs are different, and conservation can be tricky. Speak to a good attorney and other parents.
- ❖ **Special Needs Trust?** *Maybe.* Depending on the family's wealth, and whether or not the young adult is likely to access SDI, this may be useful. Speak to a good attorney.
- ❖ **Regional Center?** *Maybe.* Some young adults qualified for RC, but may not need them now. If the services are there, keep them – may be useful later.



Skills Needed to Launch

🦋 How do we get our young adult ready to launch?

1. Assess current performance in each domain
2. Understand needed skills
3. Develop roadmap between the two



What Are the Basics for a Transition Checklist?

- ✈ Managing School/Work
- ✈ Transportation/Mobility
- ✈ Personal Finances
- ✈ Self-Care & Health
- ✈ Social Life
- ✈ Cooking, Shopping, Cleaning
- ✈ Self-Advocacy



Managing School

- ✿ With some exceptions, all structured support is GONE, and what is there is SELF-SERVE.
- ✿ Moved from the land of FAPE to ADA...most colleges RESIST having mom/dad 'interfering'!
- ✿ Must help teen enroll in Disability Resource Center, and make sure s/he uses these services!
- ✿ Have your teen sign a 'FERPA' and submit copies to the Admissions, DRC, and the Counseling offices.



NEEDS: Managing School

🦋 Needs:

- 🦋 Ability to get up and to class every day – on time
- 🦋 Ability to do homework and study independently and turn homework in on time
- 🦋 Ability to read a syllabus, ask questions as needed, manage time effectively
- 🦋 Ability to work in groups (unless he has a waiver)
- 🦋 Ability to participate in class discussions
- 🦋 Ability to live with a roommate (unless private room is available)



Transportation/Mobility

- ✿ Even if your student lives close, or will live on campus, s/he needs to learn how to get around
- ✿ If driving is off the table, consider:
 - ✿ Public transportation – bus, train, light rail
 - ✿ Private transportation – Uber, Lyft, taxis
 - ✿ Locomotion – biking and skateboarding
- ✿ Huge leap to independence to cut the ‘drive ties’ – and will be necessary sooner rather than later (when the student gets an internship or starts to work)



NEEDS:

Transportation/Mobility

🦋 Needs:

- 🦋 Ability to use more than one mode of transportation
- 🦋 Ability to plan out travel – how to get there, how long it will take, consider traffic
- 🦋 Ability to be safe in a variety of settings, and know what action to take in a variety of situations
- 🦋 Ability to always have a backup plan



Personal Finances

- ✿ Starting at age 15 or so...
 - ✿ Set up a savings account for your teen, and deposit some or all of his/her allowance into that account.
 - ✿ Stop being the Bank of Mom/Dad!!
- ✿ Explain to him/her that all personal purchases (school lunches, games, videos, movies, dances, presents, some clothing) must be purchased with this money.
- ✿ Be very clear about what you will buy and what your teen is responsible for and stick to it!
- ✿ Create a workable budget in Mint.com



NEEDS: Personal Finances

🦋 Needs:

- 🦋 Ability to purchase and exchange items in store
- 🦋 Ability to purchase items online
- 🦋 Ability to manage \$200 or so in checking account
- 🦋 Ability to use Mint.com, manage budget, and track 'unknown' purchases
- 🦋 Knowledge not to sign ANY contracts without talking to parents first



Self-Care and Health

- ✿ Many young adults don't know the basics of general health care – minor illnesses, basic first aid, etc
- ✿ Many young adults also don't know how to 'read' their internal cues that they are not doing well emotionally, and may isolate instead of seeking out help
- ✿ If in a regular college, no one is 'looking out' for your young adult – they need to look out for themselves



NEEDS: Self-Care and Health

🦋 Needs:

- 🦋 Ability to monitor own health (recognize symptoms, take temperature, take regular medication without fail)
- 🦋 Ability to treat minor wounds, rashes, allergies, upset stomach, colds, flu
- 🦋 Has access to adequate health care (go WITH your teen to the clinic, or to a private physician if necessary)
- 🦋 Has a therapist nearby and is scheduled for the first visit – get confidentiality waiver!!
- 🦋 Has had excellent and honest training on sexuality et al and knows what resources are available to him/her







Social Life

- ✿ Most kids 'lose' the friends they had in high school at graduation
- ✿ Need to teach our young adults how to generate new social connections before high school ends
- ✿ Can't let this slide, must get creative...
 - ✿ Clubs, interest groups, athletics, places of worship
 - ✿ Meetup.com, Bay Area LinkUp, Facebook Groups
 - ✿ Volunteer positions, work
 - ✿ Continue to really work on social skills, if necessary!
- ✿ Limit the amount of time with gaming/TV



NEEDS: Social Life

Needs:

-  Ability to create and use social plan with action items for each week and each month
 -  Once a month, must choose a new activity that may result in meeting someone new (i.e., Meetup.com)
 -  Once a week, must invite one or more people over or out for dinner or an activity
-  Ability to 'tolerate' feeling of awkwardness when joining new group



If your young adult is interested in dating, remind him/her that this Social Plan can be used for dating!

MORE: Social Life

✿ Social is different in college and work

✿ College:

- ✿ Kids are expected to work together in groups on projects and to study
- ✿ Kids are expected to get some (but not all) of their social interaction from their roommates
- ✿ Kids are expected to 'self-serve' from the college's social activities

✿ Work:

- ✿ Co-workers may or may not socialize after hours
- ✿ Co-worker groups may be hard to 'break into' – best for new workers to find alternate social life



Cooking and Shopping

- ✿ Cooking (and eating well) is important!
 - ✿ A great way to make (and keep) friends
 - ✿ A great way to feel accomplishment and to ‘feed the soul’
- ✿ Teach your child how to stock a pantry so that there is always something to eat.
- ✿ If at all possible, have your teenager responsible for cooking one meal (at least) a week – rotate among dinner, breakfast, and lunches.
- ✿ Have your teen create one ‘signature’ dish that they can always make for potlucks...brownies, lasagna...



NEEDS: Cooking and Shopping

🦋 Needs:

- 🦋 Ability to plan and shop for healthy, reasonably priced meals
- 🦋 Ability to cook and clean up simple meals
- 🦋 Understanding of the cost and health impact of too much fast food
- 🦋 Understand the necessity of proteins, whole grains, fruits and vegetables – every day!
- 🦋 Widen spectrum of what s/he will eat – don't want to miss out on social events because of rigid food preferences!








Self-Advocacy

- ✿ Difficult to teach in a short period, but...
 - ✿ Spend considerable time verbally problem-solving with your child over typical scenarios
 - ✿ Make sure your teen 'talks over' things with you, with a therapist, with a good friend – need an NT sounding board to navigate the NT world
- ✿ Probably the toughest thing to teach...
 - ✿ Teaching when to recognize 'Stuck'
 - ✿ Teaching when to recognize 'Wronged'
 - ✿ Teaching 'Gray'
 - ✿ Teaching resiliency



NEEDS: Self-Advocacy

Needs:

-  Ability to know when s/he needs help and/or has the right to self-advocate
-  Ability to calm down and not act in anger – learn HOW to calm down
-  Knowledge of how and when to escalate
-  Knowledge how to ask to be treated with respect...and how to be respectful in return
-  Knowledge of when to stand down and walk away

 This is a LONG TERM NEED!



Recapping Our Checklist

- 🦋 Managing school and/or work
- 🦋 Cooking & shopping
- 🦋 Personal finances
- 🦋 Self-care
- 🦋 Social life
- 🦋 Self-advocacy

*Not all of these will be perfected – they never are.
But is there enough competency to warrant hope
for a good outcome? Go with that!*



Post-Secondary Options

- ✈ Doesn't have to be college...Or can be college later
- ✈ More and more focus on skills-based learning than traditional four-year degrees in the workplace
- ✈ Be willing to think out of the box (work, school, volunteering, etc), and to think longitudinally – education and skills acquisition are processes, not events!



Employment Options

🦋 Good news...

- 🦋 More and more opportunities for ASD in tech (SAP, Microsoft, other smaller companies)

🦋 Bad news...

- 🦋 Small efforts, still need good qualifications

🦋 Bottom line...

- 🦋 Find a saleable skill you like, can do well, and go from there



Housing Options

- ✈ Not a good story for the most part, largely because of the general housing shortage
- ✈ More creative avenues:
 - ✈ Families buying homes together
 - ✈ Leasing housing together
 - ✈ Getting on Section 8 waiting lists
 - ✈ Have young adult pay parents rent, save that money for 'move out fund'



Remember...

- ✿ We are raising ADULTS not CHILDREN
- ✿ Maturation may come more slowly, but it often comes
- ✿ Must keep working on skills, often well past 18...but should start as early as possible
- ✿ Set realistic – CLIENT-CENTERED goals
- ✿ Look realistically where the young adult is now, build programming and scaffolding toward the goals



Thank you!

 Questions??



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