

# **P.A.T.H. (Planning Alternative Tomorrows of Hope)**

## **Adult Transition Planning**

Planning Alternative Tomorrow of Hope (PATH) is a planning tool, which was created by Marsha Forest and Jack Pearpoint, from Inclusion Press Inc. The PATH planning tool can be used for any transition for an individual, or a group (e.g., team, school district, school, etc.) With regards to its use with students, we need to define and picture a life based on what the student wants. For some students with severe/profound cognitive disabilities, we often require input from those who know him/her best, (e.g., family, close friends, teaching assistants, teachers, etc.).

Historically, many parents have expressed some of the following needs...

- the need to start early planning for transition to adulthood
- action plans sometimes are not implemented
- the Transition Plan needs to be holistic; all issues need to be addressed (e.g., health, relationships, housing, finances, assistance when parents die, etc.)
- a dream or vision for the future needs to be identified
- there is a need for a facilitator from adult services to identify grants, agencies, resources, government programs, etc.
- special education teacher may have limited experience or knowledge about career counseling or job searches for their students; likewise, the career counselor may have limited knowledge about severely disabled students and their skills. These two individuals need to work together to create options for the student and his/her family to consider in the PATH dream.

Once the resource teacher has a clear idea regarding the dream for the student as an adult, a community activity matrix should be developed.

- Refer to the sample Community Activity Matrix in this section.
- Refer to the sample PATH in this section, developed for a student with severe multiple disabilities.

For more information and training tools regarding PATH, including videos, refer to the website for Inclusion Press at:

<http://www.inclusion.com/vdpathtraining.html>

It is important during the PATH process, that a stable figure is identified as case manager for the student to continue to provide support and be an advocate for the student long after he/she leaves school. Some examples could include the family, a Microboard, or a Citizen Advocate who establishes a "life long" advocacy. A community advocacy group may be helpful to build expertise, knowledge and promote long-term advocacy and responsibility the special needs individual. For more information on Microboards, refer to the section on Microboards.