

It is with great pleasure that we offer this publication, *Transition Planning for Students who are DeafBlind*. Its purpose is to provide information and resources for deafblind students as they plan for or participate in postsecondary education and training. We hope that the use of this publication won't be limited to students and their parents; high school teachers, transition specialists, postsecondary services professionals, rehabilitation counselors, and other related staff also may use this as a tool when working with students as they transition from secondary to postsecondary education and training programs.

We view transition as a collaborative effort among several groups of people who can provide resources and support. Students and their families may find it helpful to work closely with high school faculty and staff, transition specialists, vocational rehabilitation counselors, educational audiologists, orientation and mobility specialists, and other related professionals. We strongly encourage students to visit colleges, universities, and vocational training programs to see where the best "fit" is for them. Meeting with students or consumers at these institutions can provide additional information that can be valuable when making decisions about the future. Other online resources can be very helpful throughout the process as well.

A valuable resource for students who are deafblind is the Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults (HKNC), whose mission it is to ***enable each person who is deaf-blind to live and work in his or her community of choice***. Many of the contributors to this publication have provided services for or received services from HKNC staff; this publication would not have been possible without their involvement with HKNC. Authorized by an Act of Congress in 1967, HKNC is a national rehabilitation program serving youth and adults who are deaf-blind. Support services for youth and adults who are deaf-blind, their families, and the professionals who serve them across the country are provided through a system of field services, including regional offices, affiliate programs, and national training programs. The regional center representatives are responsible for assessing the needs of individuals, communities, and states within their regions; developing strategies of collaboration, coordination, and cooperation to help meet those needs; and advocating for those who are deaf-blind in local, state, national, and international forums. Through the affiliate programs, HKNC is able to develop and expand a nationwide network of state and local programs to meet the needs of individuals who are deaf-blind. The

National Training Team (NTT) was established to increase knowledge and support the development of skills specific to deaf-blindness in those working with consumers who are deaf-blind across the country. Additional information about the Helen Keller National Center and its services can be found at www.hknc.org.

As students consider postsecondary options and opportunities, another resource may provide additional information for students, their families, and the professionals who interact with them. In 1996, the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services funded four regional postsecondary education centers across the United States to serve as a collaborative organization to provide technical assistance to post-secondary educational institutions that enroll individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, late-deafened, and deafblind. These centers comprise the Postsecondary Education Programs Network (PEPNet). Technical assistance comes in the form of workshops, written materials, conferences, informational guides, and consultations to help such institutions initiate or enhance the accessibility of their programs to this student population. PEPNet works closely with two-and four-year colleges, secondary education programs, vocational training and rehabilitation programs, adult education programs, private and public community service agencies, individuals with hearing loss, consumer and professional organizations, state and national organizations, and clearinghouses. Providing resources and training related to successful transition from secondary to postsecondary education and training is an important goal of this project. Readers are encouraged to contact the nearest PEPNet regional center for assistance. Additional information about PEPNet and the four regional centers can be found at www.pepnet.org.

We are proud of the effort that has gone into developing this publication. The contributors worked in a very creative and collaborative manner to provide as much information as possible. It is our hope that it will be a practical and helpful tool for you.

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