

**Table 2.1. Opportunities to Enhance Self-Determination**

<i>Transition Planning Element</i>	<i>Opportunity</i>	<i>Teaching Tips</i>
<b>Transition assessment</b>	<p>Students provide information about their interests and preferences; their strengths and preferences come to the fore in choosing future goals; recognizing their challenges and limitations helps them make realistic decisions. It is important that students take the lead, and that others simply guide the process; students may learn more about how their disability impacts their lives outside of school, and that helps them make wise choices for transition.</p>	<p>Talk through the results of the testing with the student prior to the transition IEP meeting. Have the student share some of the results with the team (e.g., career interest information). Work with the student to summarize the results in a meaningful way and place relevant data in a planning portfolio for ongoing classroom use.</p>
<b>Transition IEP meeting</b>	<p>IDEA requires student participation in transition IEP meetings beginning at age 16. Preplanning and preparation are critical for this to be a successful experience for the student. In the first meetings of this type, students should at least introduce themselves; after developing the necessary skills they may run their own IEP meetings.</p>	<p>Instruct students on how best to prepare and participate in their own transition IEP meetings. Students need to know what to expect, how they can participate, what information they can bring to share, what decisions will be made, and topics to which they will need to respond when attending IEP meetings.</p>
<b>Self-assessments</b>	<p>Students need constructive feedback as well as opportunities to self-assess in a safe environment free of criticism. Self-assessment increases the likelihood that new skills will be assimilated and ultimate learning will occur.</p>	<p>Facilitate student discussions about experiences (both good and not so good); have students keep a journal; arrange peer mentoring; assist students in identifying a key adult to talk with and to debrief about their fledgling self-determination skills.</p>

<i>Transition Planning Element</i>	<i>Opportunity</i>	<i>Teaching Tips</i>
<p><b>Direct instruction</b></p>	<p>The transition assessment identifies student needs, providing the instructional basis for teaching self-determination skills and annual measurable IEP goals. The IEP team determines the services (type and amount) and location to address the self-determination goals, which need to be of interest to the student and dynamic. When the student sees that the skills he is acquiring are helpful in daily life with friends, in school, or on the job, he is more likely to participate in and benefit from the instruction.</p>	<p>The special educator can work with general educators to design self-determination activities or experiences in the general education environment or the team might implement specialized curricula. Students, no matter what their desired postschool outcome or their abilities, can benefit from direct instruction on self-determination skills.</p>
<p><b>Self-determination skills</b></p>	<p>It is important to teach students self-determination skills such as decision making, self-advocacy, and problem solving, and to facilitate the application and practice of these skills in multiple environments. It is important to have caring adults available to support evolving skills (Miller, Lombard, &amp; Corbey, 2007).</p>	<p>Establish opportunities for students to practice self-determination skills either during or outside the school day; follow up by discussing the experience. Provide community-based instructional experiences for students in “real” environments outside the classroom—this gives students an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and teachers an opportunity to evaluate skill application. Bring employers and other community partners into the classroom, visit postsecondary education training sites, etc.</p>