



## Transition to Independence Process (TIP) System

# TIP Definition and Guidelines

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**For more information regarding the TIP System** and related evaluation methods, please visit our websites listed below or contact Hewitt B. “Rusty” Clark, Ph.D., Nicole Deschenes, M.Ed., Jordan Knab, Ed.S., Mason Haber, M.A., Department of Child and Family Studies, Florida Mental Health Institute, University of South Florida, Tampa FL 33612.





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**TIP website:** <http://tip.fmhi.usf.edu> **NCYT website:** <http://ncyt.fmhi.usf.edu>

**The complete revised *TIP System Development and Operations Manual*** is available through the TIP Website: <http://tip.fmhi.usf.edu>

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|    | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Revision of <i>TIP Operations Manual</i></b></p> <p>I have recently revised the <i>TIP System Development and Operations Manual</i> to clarify some issues that were not adequately described previously and to incorporate new knowledge, experience, and findings. This revised manual includes suggested changes from young people, parents, and program personnel, as well as, revisions based on research and program development efforts by our TIP Research Team and that of other programmatic and research personnel.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Dr. Hewitt B. "Rusty" Clark</p> |
|    | <p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Please visit our updated TIP website and NCYT website:</i></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><a href="http://tip.fmhi.usf.edu">http://tip.fmhi.usf.edu</a></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><a href="http://ncyt.fmhi.usf.edu">http://ncyt.fmhi.usf.edu</a></b></p>  |
|   | <p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Adapting the TIP System to Your Community</i></b></p> <p>The <i>TIP System Development and Operations Manual</i> provides a framework for the establishment and maintenance of the TIP system. However, the manual may need to be modified to fit the community in which the TIP system is being established (e.g., agency configuration, target population, service and support needs). For permission to adapt this manual for use by your community, please write Dr. Hewitt B. "Rusty" Clark.</p>   |
|  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A Book on the TIP System and Transition Issues</b><br/> <b>H.B. Clark and M. Davis (Eds.)</b><br/> <b>April 2000, Second Printing-November 2002</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Transition to Adulthood: A Resource for Assisting Young People with Emotional or Behavioral Difficulties</i></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Brookes Publishing Co., P.O. Box 10624, Baltimore, MD 21285-0624. Call toll-free 800-638-3775; Fax 410-337-8539 or order on line at <a href="http://www.brookespublishing.com/">http://www.brookespublishing.com/</a></p>                       |

# Definition of the TIP System

## TIP System Definition

The Transition to Independence Process (TIP) system was developed to engage youth and young adults in their own futures planning process, provide them with developmentally-appropriate services and supports, and involve them and their families and other informal key players in a process that prepares and facilitates them in their movement toward greater self-sufficiency and successful achievement of their goals related to each of the transition domains -- employment, career-building education, living situation, personal-effectiveness and quality of life, and community-life functioning. The TIP system is operationalized through seven guidelines and their associated elements that drive the practice level activities and provide a framework for the program and community system to support these functions.

## TIP System Guidelines

1. Engage young people through relationship development, person-centered planning, and a focus on their futures.
2. Tailor services and supports to be accessible, coordinated, developmentally-appropriate, and build on strengths to enable the young people to pursue their goals across all transition domains.
3. Acknowledge and develop personal choice and social responsibility with young people.
4. Ensure a safety-net of support by involving a young person's parents, family members, and other informal and formal key players.
5. Enhance young persons' competencies to assist them in achieving greater self-sufficiency and confidence.
6. Maintain an outcome focus in the TIP system at the young person, program, and community levels.
7. Involve young people, parents, and other community partners in the TIP system at the practice, program, and community levels.

## Other Aspects of the TIP System

### Transition Facilitators

To ensure the continuity of planning, services, and supports, the TIP system is implemented with the assistance of **transition facilitators** who work with the young people, their parents, and other natural, formal, and community supports.

- The term *transition facilitator* is used to emphasize the function of **facilitating** the young person's future, not directing it.
- Different sites and service systems use similar terms such as transition specialist, resource coordinator, mentor, transition coach, TIP facilitator, service coordinator, or life coach.
- The role of transition facilitators with young people, their parents, and other natural, formal, and community support persons will be described in detail throughout this manual.

### Independence and Interdependence

The TIP system promotes independence. However, the concept of "interdependence" is central to working effectively with young people. This concept nests the focus of independent functioning (e.g., budgeting money, maintaining a job) within the framework of young people learning that there is a healthy, reciprocal role of supporting others and receiving support from others (i.e., social support network for emotional, spiritual, and physical support).

### Self-Determination

The concept of *self-determination* is one that the fields of education and psychology are attempting to define (Field & Hoffman, 1996; Martin & Marshall, 1995; Rusch & Chadsey, 1998). In order to operationalize this concept as much as possible, it can be defined as the ability to: 1) set goals that are likely to improve one's quality of life, 2) formulate alternative strategies, 3) choose among the strategies to find the most viable ones for achieving each goal, 4) implement the selected strategies, and 5) evaluate one's progress in achieving the goals.

Some of the personal skills associated with self-determination are: choice clarification, decision-making, goal setting, creativity, delayed gratification, self-advocacy, assertiveness, self-monitoring, self-evaluation, and self-reinforcement.

# Table 1. TIP System Guidelines

## **1. Engage young people through relationship development, person-centered planning, and a focus on their futures.**

- ◆ Use a strength-based approach with young people, their families, and other informal and formal key players.
- ◆ Build relationships and respect young persons' relationships with family members and other informal and formal key players.
- ◆ Facilitate personal-futures planning and goal setting.
- ◆ Include prevention planning for high-risk situations, as necessary.
- ◆ Engage young people in positive activities of interest.
- ◆ Respect cultural and familial values and young persons' perspectives.

## **2. Tailor services and supports to be accessible, coordinated, developmentally-appropriate, and build on strengths to enable the young people to pursue their goals across all transition domains.**

- ◆ Facilitate young persons' goal achievement across all transition domains.
  - Employment and Career
  - Educational Opportunities
  - Living Situation
  - Community-Life Functioning
- ◆ Tailor services and supports to be developmentally-appropriate and build on the strengths, and address the needs, of the young people, their families, and other informal key players.
- ◆ Ensure that services and supports are accessible and coordinated.
- ◆ Balance the transition facilitators' role with that of the young people, their parents and other informal and formal key players.

## **3. Acknowledge and develop personal choice and social responsibility with young people.**

- ◆ Encourage problem-solving methods, decision making, and evaluation of impact on self and others.
- ◆ Balance one's work with young people between two axioms:
  - Maximize the likelihood of the success of young people.
  - Allow young people to contact natural consequences through life experience.

#### **4. Ensure a safety-net of support by involving a young person's parents, family members, and other informal and formal key players.**

- ◆ Involve parents, family members, and other informal and formal key players.
- ◆ Parents, family members, or other informal key players may need assistance in understanding this transition period or may need services/supports for themselves.
- ◆ Assist in mediating differences in the perspectives of young people, parents, and other informal and formal key players.
- ◆ Facilitate an unconditional commitment to the young person among his/her key players.
- ◆ Create an atmosphere of hopefulness, fun, and a future focus.

#### **5. Enhance young persons' competencies to assist them in achieving greater self-sufficiency and confidence.**

- ◆ Utilize assessment methods, e.g., functional in-situation assessment.
- ◆ Teach meaningful skills relevant to the young people across transition domains.
- ◆ Use teaching strategies in community settings.
- ◆ Develop skills related to self-management, problem-solving, self-advocacy, and self-evaluation of the impact of one's choices and actions on self and others.

#### **6. Maintain an outcome focus in the TIP system at the young person, program, and community levels.**

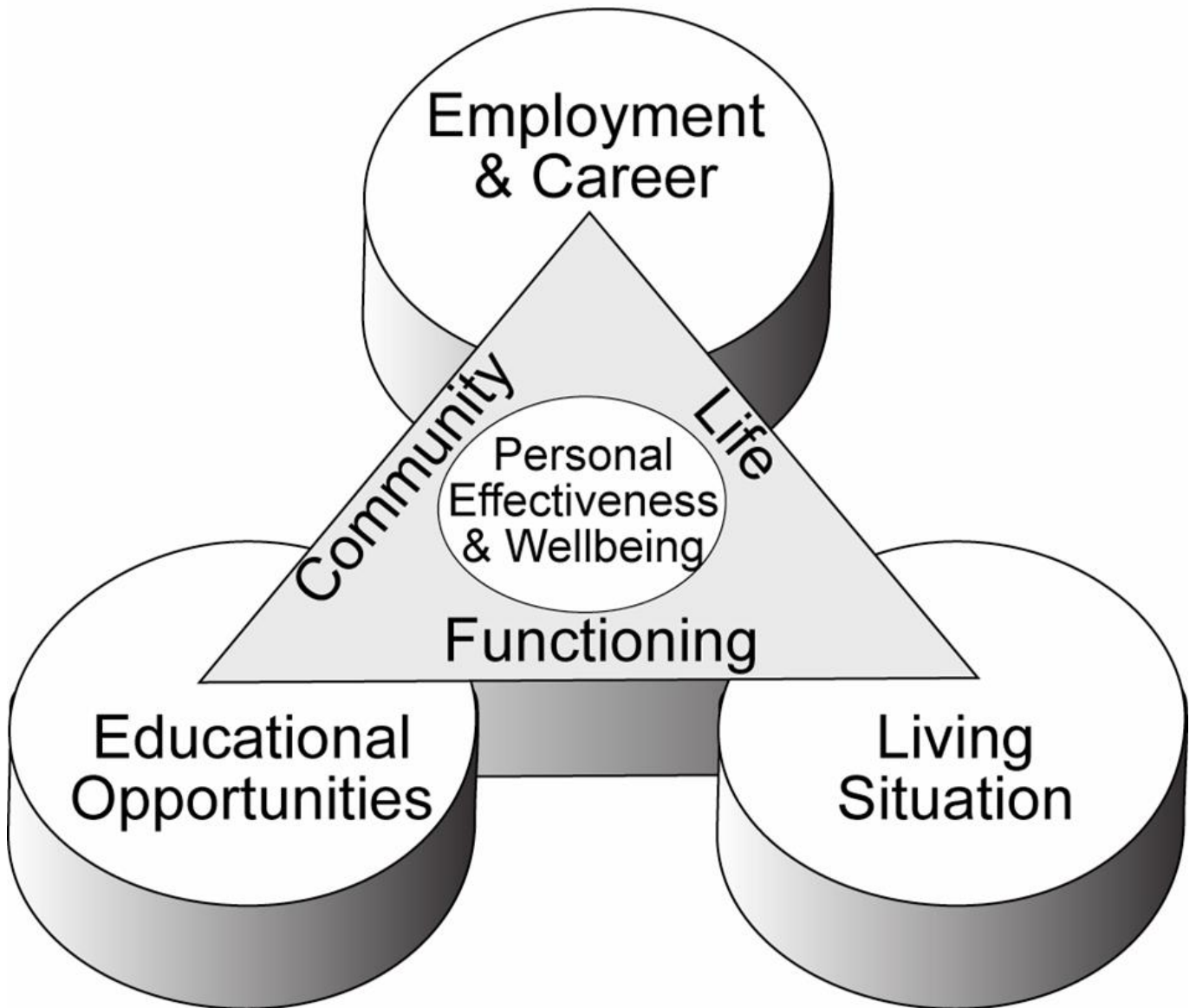
- ◆ Focus on a young person's goals and the tracking of his/her progress.
- ◆ Evaluate the responsiveness and effectiveness of the TIP system.
- ◆ Use process measures for continuous TIP system improvement.

#### **7. Involve young people, parents, and other community partners in the TIP system at the practice, program, and community levels.**

- ◆ Maximize the involvement of young people, family members, informal and formal key players, and other community representatives.
- ◆ Tap the talents of peers and mentors:
  - Hire young adults as peer mentors and peer counselors.
  - Assist young people in creating peer support groups.
  - Use paid and unpaid mentors (e.g., co-worker mentors, college mentors, apartment roommate mentors).
- ◆ Partner with young people, parents, and others in the TIP system governance and stewardship.
- ◆ Advocate for system development, expansion, and evaluation -- and for reform of funding and policy to support a responsive, effective service system for young people in transition and their families.

**NOTE:** Adapted from Clark (1993), Clark (1995), Clark & Foster-Johnson (1996), Clark, Unger, & Stewart (1993), and Clark et al. (2000).

# Transition Domains



**Figure 1. The Four Transition Domains:** The three setting domains (**Employment, Education, and Living Situation**) and the one **Community Life Functioning** domain shown in this figure are useful in capturing young people’s attention and their focus on their futures. The Community Life domain encompasses the individual’s *personal effectiveness/wellbeing and other skills and resources* that are relevant to one’s success in each of the other domains, as well as for community-life functioning (see Table 2).

## **Table 2: Components of the Transition Domains**

### **Employment and Career**

- Competitive employment site.
- Work experience opportunities (e.g., paid placement at competitive worksite with co-worker mentor).
- Supported employment (e.g., paid placement at competitive worksite with formal support, like a job coach).
- Transitional employment opportunities (e.g., paid placement at a worksite that is formally set up for serving individuals with emotional/behavioral difficulties).

### **Educational Opportunities (Career-Track Training)**

- Bachelor's degree or beyond.
- Associate's degree.
- Vocational or technical certification.
- High school completion or GED certificate.
- Work place educational programs (e.g., unpaid practicum with minimal, but necessary individualized supports).

### **Living Situation**

- Independent residence (e.g., living in an apartment with a roommate).
- Residing with natural, adoptive, or foster family.
- Other family situation (e.g., girlfriend's family, extended family).
- Semi-independent living (e.g., non-live-in service coordinator assists).
- Supported living (e.g., supervised apartment).
- Group home or boarding home.
- Restrictive setting (e.g., crisis unit, residential TX center, detention center).

NOTE: Two resources that are particularly relevant to Living Situation are: Kroner, 1999 and Platt, Kroner, and Ortiz, 2000.

## Table 2 Continued

### **Community Life Functioning: *Personal Effectiveness/Wellbeing and Community-Living Skills & Resources***

#### **Interpersonal Relationships**

- Relationship development & maintenance of friendships.
- Understanding the reciprocal nature of relationships.
- Balance of independence & interdependency with family members.
- Dating skills & development/maintenance of intimate relationships.
- Conflict resolution skills.
- Maintenance of relationships with informal key players.
- Has at least one trusted adult who serves a “mentor.”

#### **Daily Living & Leisure Time Activities**

- Self care skills, grooming, & appearance.
- Maintenance of living space & personal possessions.
- Cooking, nutrition, & laundry.
- Money management.
- Time management.
- Has official government issued picture I.D. (legitimate for airline travel).
- Maintenance & security of personal & financial documents.
- Safety skills (e.g., avoid dangerous situations, prevent victimization).
- Entertaining one’s self.
- Engagement in activities with others.
- Creating indoor & outdoor activities of interest & fun.
- Places of entertainment & fun.
- Safe & healthy activities (e.g., Cyberspace safety precautions, safe routes for walking, biking, & driving at different times of the day, choice of friends).

#### **Community Participation & Responsibilities**

- Knowledge of community resources.
- Citizenship responsibilities, knowledge of basic rights & responsibilities.
- Register to vote, obtain driver’s license.
- Transportation resources & skills (i.e., can get around the community as necessary).
- Community social support (e.g., peer groups, community organizations).
- Access to legal services.
- Cultural & spiritual resources.
- Does not create public disturbances or domestic violence.
- Avoids criminal activities & associated arrests, convictions, & incarcerations.

## **Communication**

- Express one's ideas & feelings through speaking & listening.
- Reading & writing skills for learning, fun, work, & communication.
- Knowledge of information sources (e.g., use of library, authorities, Internet communications, & other resources).
- Study & learning skills for gaining & applying new information.
- Cyberspace safety (e.g., revealing personal information, meeting contacts in person, use of credit cards on-line).

## **Self-Determination**

- Generate alternative options & make decisions.
- Set goals & develop plans for achieving such.
- Evaluate one's progress in achieving goals.
- Accept one's strengths & limitations.
- Advocate for one's rights & positions.

## **Emotional & Behavioral Well-Being**

- Express concern & caring for others.
- Manage anger & frustration & shows impulse control.
- Using strategies to coping with symptoms associated with emotional & behavioral difficulties (e.g., not interfering with work, school, or relationships).
- Manage the use of legal substances (e.g., alcohol, prescription medications).
- Avoids the use of illegal substances (e.g., street drugs).
- Use of substances is not interfering with work, school, or relationships.
- Feels confident in his/her ability to manage everyday life issues.
- Feels hopeful about his/her future.

## **Physical Health**

- Health care & fitness (e.g., physical activity, stress management).
- Emotional/behavioral self-management (e.g., anger-control, acceptance of negative feedback, self monitoring, self-evaluation & self-control skills).
- Self-management of substance use.
- Self-management of medications & knowledge of side effects.
- Knowledge of sexual functioning & birth control (e.g., prevention of sexually-transmitted diseases & unwanted pregnancies).
- Ability to access medical & dental services.

## **Parenting**

- Female young person gets regular medical check-ups throughout pregnancy.
- During pregnancy & nursing, the mother is engaging in healthy behaviors (e.g., appropriate diet, maintaining personal hygiene, appropriate exercise, avoiding smoking & illegal drugs, little or no alcohol consumption).
- Male young person assists the pregnant female in engaging in healthy behaviors (e.g., accompanying her on medical appointments, avoiding smoking around her, helping her avoid the use of alcohol & substances, planning for labor).
- Knowledge of child rearing needs for the age of the child(ren).
- Assumes responsibility associated with parenting & child rearing.
- Attending to health needs appropriate to the child's age (e.g., immunizations, nutrition, personal hygiene of the children).
- Uses child-rearing practices that are essential to healthy physical development & safety of his/her child(ren) (e.g., not smoking around child, maintaining personal hygiene, maintaining a clean home environment, supervising child's safety).
- Uses child-rearing practices that are essential to emotional & behavioral well-being of children (e.g., providing social praise & reinforcement for appropriate behaviors & incremental improvements, setting appropriate limits for child, showing affection & bonding interactions, listening to child).
- Has fun with the children & engages them in positive activities (e.g., reading & talking to/with child, playing with the child).

NOTE: The four primary Transition Domains match those in the *Transition to Adulthood Program Information System (TAPIS) Progress Tracker* (Clark, Karpur, Deschenes, & Knab, 2005). Figure 1 was adapted from Clark and Stewart (1992); Clark, Unger, and Stewart (1993); and Clark and Foster-Johnson (1996). Table 2 was adapted from Gary Clark and Jim Patton (1997) and Clark, Karpur, Deschenes, & Knab, (2005).

## **Descriptive Outline of Transition-Aged Young Person**

**Writing a Descriptive Outline pertaining to a youth or young adult can assist a program in celebrating its successes and problem-solving its challenges. This Descriptive Outline is designed to yield brief descriptions of youth or young adults for discussion, planning, and documentation purposes. (For each goal, refer to footnote.)**

**Description of Young Person:** (e.g., demographic, diagnosis, social history factors)

**Strengths of Young Person:** (e.g., Interests, dreams, positive personal characteristics, personal and familial resources)

**Current Challenges Related to the Young Person's Transition:**

**Young Person's Goal A:**♦

**Young Person's Goal B:**

**Young Person's Goal C:**

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♦ For each of the young person's goals, bullet the following: 1) State the goal and the related transition domain; 2) Describe progress being made and provide data when possible; 3) What is working to facilitate progress; 4) What behavioral, familial, programmatic, and/or systemic barriers are inhibiting progress.



## **Personnel Training Modules** for Working with Transition-Aged Young People

**Karen Blase, Robin Wagner, and Hewitt B. “Rusty” Clark have just completed the development and pilot-testing of a series of new Personnel Training Modules.**

### **Modules:**

*Strength discovery assessment process for transition-aged youth and young adults.*

*Developing and using rationales with transition-aged youth and young adults.*

*Social problem solving for transition-aged youth and young adults: The SODAS framework.*

*Negotiated decision-making for working with transition-aged young people and their parents: The SCOCS framework.*

### **Modules Available Through Websites:**

**<http://tip.fmhi.usf.edu>**

**<http://ncyt.fmhi.usf.edu>**

**Capacity Building Available:** Competency-based training and training-of-trainer workshops can be arranged to strengthen an organization’s transition program capacity. Hewitt B. "Rusty" Clark, Ph.D., Nicole Deschênes, M.Ed., or Jordan Knab, Ed.S.

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Transition Websites: <http://tip.fmhi.usf.edu> <http://ncyt.fmhi.usf.edu>

## ***Wrap-up & Look to the Future***

***Think about your work with youth/young adults/families:  
Your own youth/young adults  
Those you work with professionally***

***What will you do different tomorrow than you did  
yesterday -- based on what you learned?***

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***Making a difference in the lives of youth and young adults!  
Thank you!***