



# Preparing and Engaging Youth in Planning for Life After High School

*Hands-On Tools to Prepare and Engage Youth  
in Self-Advocacy*



*a brighter future for children with disabilities*

[www.tnstep.org](http://www.tnstep.org)

# STEP: Who We Are & What We Do

**Support and Training for Exceptional Parents, Inc. (STEP) is a statewide not-for-profit established in 1989 serving Tennessee families. We are Tennessee's PTI - Parent Training and Information Center.**

## WHO do we help?

Families or caregivers in Tennessee with children and youth, birth to 26, with a diagnosed or suspected disability or special healthcare/ mental health need. STEP believes parents and caregivers are a child's best advocate.

## HOW do we help?

- ★ Navigating special education laws
- ★ IEP or 504 Plan review and assistance
- ★ Workshops and in-person training
- ★ Referrals to other agencies
- ★ Life after high school planning
- ★ Training videos and webinars
- ★ Collaboration and communication
- ★ Special education updates

**Services are FREE for Tennessee families**

# STEP: Who We Are & What We Do

**STEP believes in collaborating with schools and agencies to improve results for Tennessee students.**

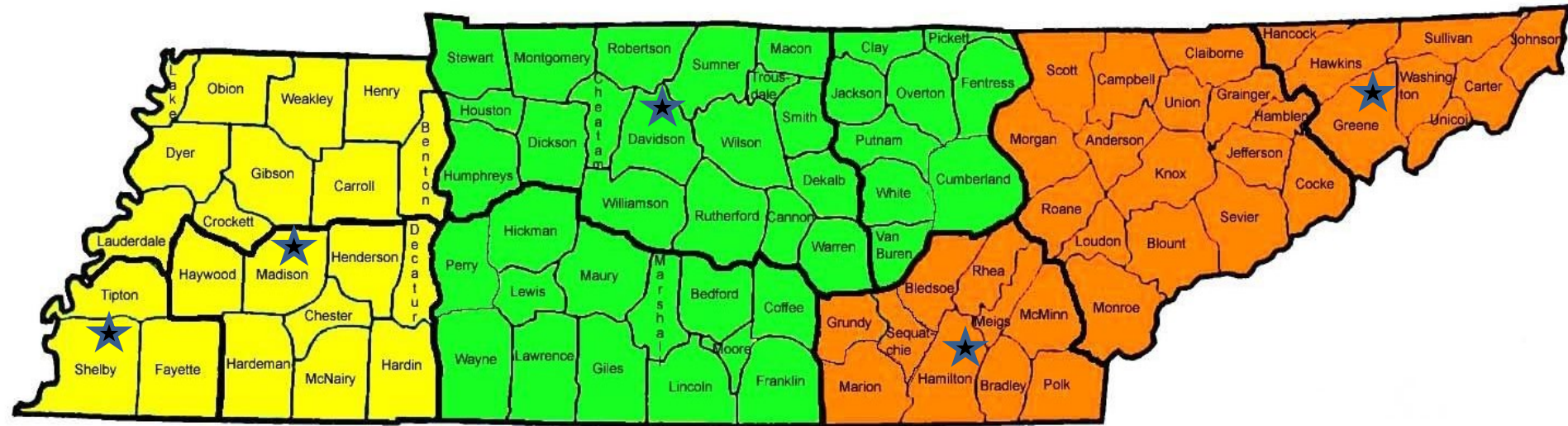
## **WHAT does STEP offer professionals?**

- ★ High quality in-service and professional development
  - IDEA and Section 504
  - Instructionally appropriate IEPs
  - Response to Intervention
  - Family engagement
  - Postsecondary transition
  - Customized needs-based training
- ★ Parent workshops on special education topics
- ★ Youth activities

## **HOW much does it cost for Professionals?**

- ★ FREE if parents and caregivers are invited
- ★ FREE if funded by grants from the Tennessee Department of Education
- ★ Fee-for-service but very cost effective

# Services Available Across Tennessee



## West

**Memphis office**  
**Serving the Urban Areas**  
 Fayette  
 Shelby  
 Tipton

**Jackson Satellite Office**  
**Serving the Rural Areas**  
 All other West TN counties

## Middle

**Nashville office**  
 Serving all counties in  
 Middle TN

**Bilingual staff available for  
 families**

## East

**Greeneville office and Headquarters**  
 Serving all counties in East TN

**Chattanooga Satellite Office**  
 Serving Bilingual families all across the  
 state

STEP, Inc. is one of over 100 Parent Training and Information Centers (PTIs) nationwide, providing training, tools, and information to parents, caregivers, and professionals in Tennessee.

# Our Funding

## PTI

Tennessee  
Parent  
Training &  
Information  
Center



## FYI<sup>2</sup>

Family and  
Youth  
Information  
and  
Involvement



## SPDG

State  
Personnel  
Development  
Grant



## Gifts

Projects  
funded  
through  
donations  
and other  
funds



# Our Mission

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**STEP's Mission** is to serve families of children and youth, young adults, and those who are involved in their lives.

**We provide** accurate, timely, and relevant information and training related to special education rights, equal access to quality education, and connections to community resources.

**We believe** that parents and caregivers are their children's best advocates, and that youth disabilities should be self-advocates.

**We know** that families and youth who are informed, empowered, and engaged can effectively collaborate as part of a team for services and supports that will lead to improved outcomes and success in life.



# Our Vision

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**STEP's vision** is to ensure a brighter future for children and youth in Tennessee, with an emphasis on those with disabilities, special health care needs, and mental health needs.



# Engaging Youth is A Learned Skill

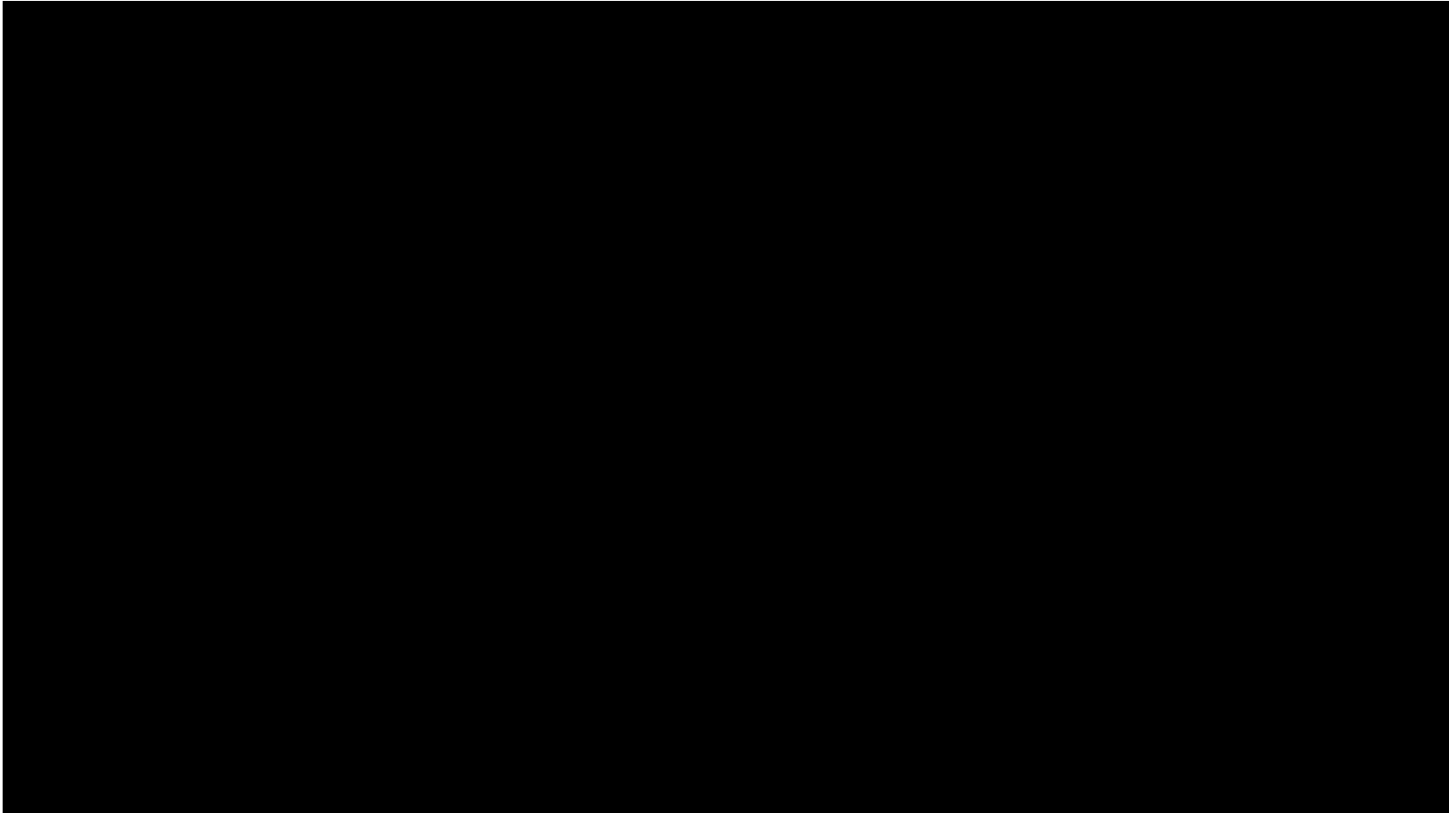
- What we know about the teen brain
  - **Enjoy risks**
  - **Seeks new experiences**
  - **Responsive to rewards**
  - **Crave “novel” information**
- Teens need an **active role** in planning their future





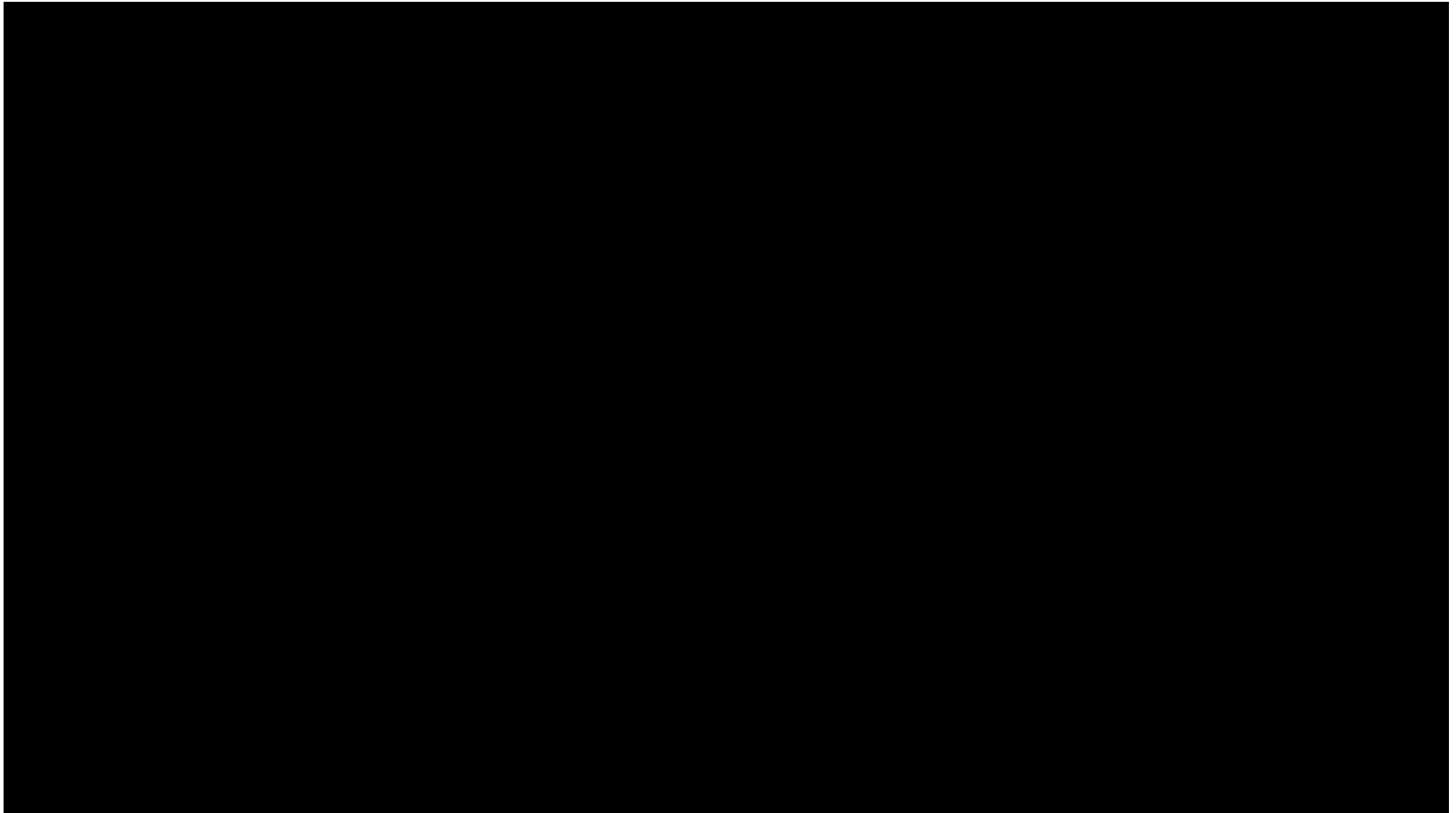
# Engaging Youth is A Learned Skill

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# Engaging Youth is A Learned Skill

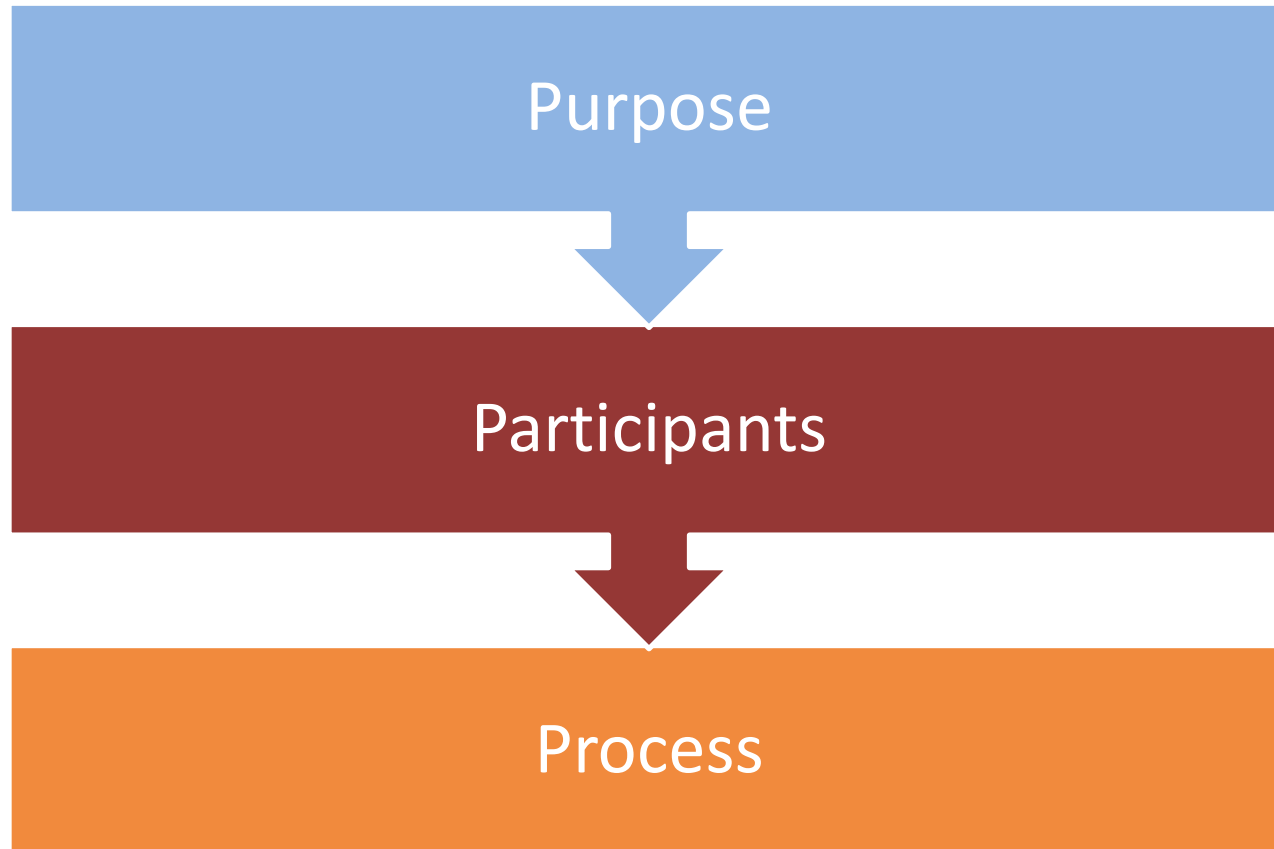
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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwjAAgGi-90>

# STEP to Dream Building Activity Cards

**A fun way to engage students, teachers and parents  
in transition planning!**



# Now You Want to Have a Set...Right?

- Invite STEP to come to your school for a Dream Building session
- Purchase a set of cards from STEP
- Develop your own cards
- Identify corporations who support outcomes for youth as a funding source. (Walmart, banks, foundations)

STEP's Dream Building Activity Cards Guide Sheet

<https://goo.gl/S7mSAN>



# Tools to Give Youth a Voice

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## Dude, Where's My Transition Plan



**Dude, Where is My Transition Plan Book**

<https://goo.gl/anQq4Y>

# Tools to Give Youth a Voice

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## Plan a Perfect Life



**Transition Services**

<http://www.tnstep.org/resources/transitionServices.aspx>

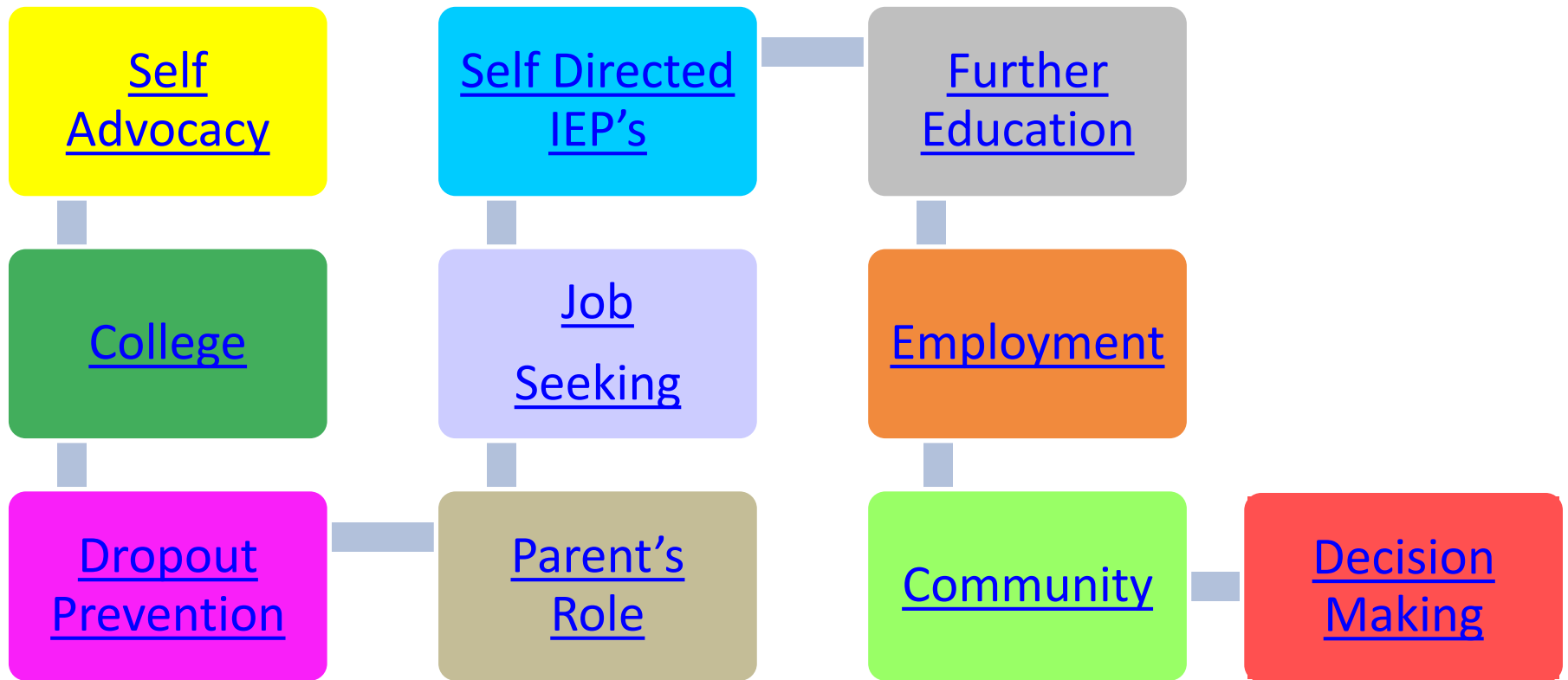
**Plan a Perfect Life**

<http://www.tnstep.org/pdf/A-Perfect-Life.xls>

# Transition Guides:

## A STEP & TN Dept. of Education Initiative

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Transition Guides <http://www.tnstep.org/news/?id=494>

Parent Guide for TN Diploma and Postsecondary Options

<https://goo.gl/1uFyqa>

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# Webinars

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<http://www.tnstep.org/events/archivedWebinars.aspx>



# Web-Based 2.0 Tools

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Voki

[www.voki.com](http://www.voki.com)

<http://tinyurl.com/yba2mp8l>



# Web-Based 2.0 Tools

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Animoto

[www.animoto.com](http://www.animoto.com)



# Web-Based 2.0 Tools

Glogster

[www.glogster.com](http://www.glogster.com)

**[ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION]**

By Rafiq Kasumu  
Springfield Township  
High School

**[INTRODUCTION]**

One cannot deny the ever-present role technology plays in our educational system. However, few people are aware of just how essential technology is in the realm of special education. "Inclusion" is a type of educational strategy within special education that integrates students with mental and physical disabilities into the curriculum and schedule of non-disabled students to the fullest degree possible (Arnold and Dodge 1993). This type of special education was declared essential under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) of 1990 so that all students have access to the same education. In fact, the act states that all special needs students should be placed in the "least restrictive environment," or LRE, possible (Arnold and Dodge 1993). However, this is only possible if both disabled and non-disabled students receive the same personalized education.

With 10% of students in U.S. public schools receiving special education services, instructors strive to teach special education students to the best of their cognitive ability as well as adapt to their needs through breakthrough, assistive technology (Hasselbring and Bausch). "Assistive technology" is any equipment or system used to facilitate, preserve, or advance the cognitive abilities of an individual with disabilities (Hasselbring and Bausch). These forms of technology continue to revolutionize the field of special education, advancing mentally and physically challenged students' understanding of communication, organization, and perception through a personalized, interactive environment.

**Communication Books**

**[COMMUNICATION BOOKS]**

Communication books are reliable and inexpensive alternatives used to offer a means of expression for those who have difficulty verbalizing. From my volunteering experience, I have seen that many communication books incorporate sign language, photographs, and

**[COMPUTER PROGRAMS]**

Mentally and physically challenged students benefit from computer

# Reaching Youth: How Can We Help?

- In-service professional development with teachers
- Train-the-trainer model in juvenile facilities and mental health facilities
- Classrooms
- One-on-one planning sessions with families and youth
- Youth conferences



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# More Information



[www.youtube.com/user/TNStep](http://www.youtube.com/user/TNStep)



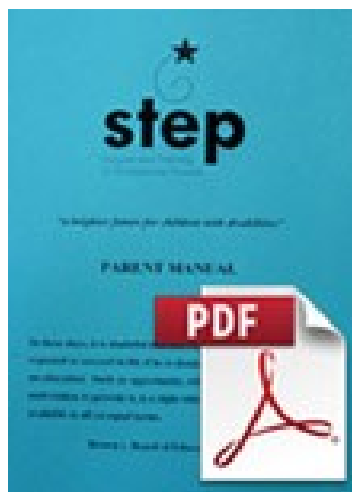
## Events Calendar

[www.tnstep.org/events/](http://www.tnstep.org/events/)



## Workshops

English & Spanish



## STEP's Parent Manual

View on front page of

[www.tnstep.org](http://www.tnstep.org)

or order disc or hardcopy



[www.facebook.com/steptn](http://www.facebook.com/steptn)

# Empowering Families to Ensure a Brighter Future for Children with Disabilities

This is a journey and the STEP staff is available to provide support, information, and training to families and students!

Call 800-280-7837 or your local office

## West Tennessee

Memphis and Shelby/Fayette/Tipton counties

(901) 726-4334

[westrtc@tnstep.org](mailto:westrtc@tnstep.org)

## All other West counties

(731) 225-6034

[Deborah.mcbride@tnstep.org](mailto:Deborah.mcbride@tnstep.org)

## Middle Tennessee

[middlertc@tnstep.org](mailto:middlertc@tnstep.org)

(615) 463-2310

(615) 693-2547

## East Tennessee

[eastrtc@tnstep.org](mailto:eastrtc@tnstep.org)

(423) 639-0125 x17

## Español

(800) 975-2919

## Business Office

712 Professional Plaza

Greeneville, TN 37745

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Fax (423) 636-8217

(423) 639-0125



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