



Presentation Choices for Breaking Barriers 2025

SESSION 1 - 90 minute Sessions

1) **Título:** Transiciones en la educación especial de prekínder a preparatoria

Descripción: Tres madres compartirán sus experiencias personales sobre las transiciones de sus hijos desde preescolar hasta preparatoria.

Mariela hablará sobre tres puntos clave de su propia experiencia al ingresar a la escuela preescolar y primaria.

Rosa compartirá sobre su experiencia personal con la transición de su hijo de 5to grado a la escuela secundaria y cómo todo se ve diferente y la importancia de hablar con otras familias que han tenido experiencias previas en la transición.

Maria compartirá sobre su experiencia personal con la transición de su hija de la escuela secundaria a la preparatoria.

Presentado por: Maria Rangel (FACT Oregon), Rosa Belem Ochoa (Consultang difents agencies), Mariela Herman Hernandez (The Arc of Lane County)

Esta sesión está destinada principalmente a: Miembros de familia y Profesionales

Title: (Presented in Spanish) Transitions in Special Education from Kindergarten to High School

Description: Three mothers will be sharing their own personal experiences with their transitions from preschool to High School.

Mariela will be talking about three key points in her own experience when entering preschool and elementary grade school.

* Importance of visiting school, teachers in each transitioning

*One page profile

*Review IEP Goals and accommodations annual

Rosa will be sharing about her personal experience with her son transition from 5th grade into Middle and how everything looks different and the importance of talking with other families who have had previous experiences in transition.

Rosa 5th grade to Middle School Transitions

- General Visual Boards for support in school and out of school
- Have visual of how the school looks and building etc..
- Summer class schedule (prepping and practice)
- Talk with other mothers and parents about personal experiences when transitions
- Importance of additional support outside the school meeting same goals and achieving them
- Review IEP Goals and accommodations annual
- Give addition time to transition from class to class

Maria will be sharing her experience in navigating through the high school transition. Focusing on understanding the IEP transition plan, navigating the new environment and encouraging independence and self-advocacy.

Presented by: Maria Rangel (FACT Oregon), Rosa Belem Ochoa (Consultang difents agencies), Mariela Herman Hernandez (The Arc of Lane County)

This session is intended primarily for: Family members & professionals

2) Title: Caregiver Burnout

Description: We will be speaking about caregiver burnout, and the importance of seeking assistance with this, through various computer slides and personal stories. We aim to give out information about resources available to parents and approach this topic from the personal standpoint of being parents of a child who requires 24hr care. We will share how we set up our household, maintain caregivers, and work on relationships within the household.

Presented by: Tripp & Tonya Robertson

This session is intended primarily for: Family members, professionals

3) Title: Ableism 101

Description: We often hear the term ableism, but what does it really mean? Ableism is not just slurs or discrimination, it is a lot of different things. In this session, we will talk about the different ways ableism can happen, how it impacts our support and services, and what actions we can take to challenge ableism and advocate for change when we see it.

Presented by: Glenna Hayes

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, self-advocates, family members, service providers

4) Title: Connecting & Collaborating when there are both IDD & Mental Health care needs

Description: This will be a combination of sharing information and drawing from personal and professional experiences from a panel of professionals who work within the IDD and Mental Health programs that participate on a committee to enhance collaboration between the two programs. We hope to include individuals with disabilities who have or are receiving these services and supports as well to share their experiences.

The session will focus on ways individuals, families, and various service providers can understand some of the differences between the two programs and identify some ways to increase collaboration. Discussion will include a PowerPoint presentation and Q+A session. We will provide information related to Behavioral Health Services & IDD, and the panel is hoping to have an open forum where questions and examples can be discussed. While the presenters all serve Deschutes County or have received services in Deschutes County, the goal is to share from our experiences and be able to approach this as a broader topic and concept so that it is relevant to people no matter what region they live in.

Presented by: Tara Hare (Facilitator), [Rebekah Hilgers](#) (Facilitator), Rachel Anady

This session is intended primarily for: Family members

5) Title: Living in a supported living house that my parents set up. Feeling Empowered with a Disability.

Description: This presentation will talk about living in a supported living house that my parents set up. I will talk about not letting my disability hold me back. What are the best living arrangements and ways to feel empowered?

- What is it like to live on your own
- Living in a group home can be helpful
- Don't be ashamed to have a disability

Presented by: Andrew Selig

This session is intended primarily for: Self-advocates, family members

6) Title: Self-care... What is the Amygdala Hijack & why does it matter?

Description: It is important to take care of yourself: let's learn about some responses we may have and some skills and resources to support our own self growth.

Amygdala Hijack: what does that mean for the work we do and for ourselves? We will go over the scientific proof behind how and when we may find ourselves in the flight, fight, freeze, fawn and flop response.

We will practice different ways to understand our responses and how we can take care of our own self to better show up for others. The desired outcome is to give participants tools to support them so that they can walk away with tangible ways to ensure they know what to do if needed for selfcare.

Presented by: Erica Drake

This session is intended primarily for: Family members, educators, self-advocates, service providers

7) Title: Understanding School Behaviors: Brain Insights & Practical Strategies for Success

Description: This session will explore the brain and the brain's role in behavior. Tools and strategies for bringing our children back to their thinking brain will be explored.

Presented by: Erin Taylor

This session is intended primarily for: Family members, educators, service providers

8) Title: Positive Behavior Support: Practical Strategies for Better Days

Description: This session explores positive behavior support and practical strategies to address unsolved behavior challenges.

Participants will learn how to identify unmet needs, apply affective support strategies, and leave with tools they can use immediately to promote positive outcomes.

Presented by: Stephanie Hunter & Tawny Allen

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, family members, service providers

9) Title: Self-Advocacy Guide to DD Services

Description: Over the last year, ODDS (Office of Developmental Disabilities Services) has worked alongside self-advocates to create a new Self-Advocate Guide (printed and online) and a series of videos that go with the guide. This guide was made to empower self-advocates to learn about services that are available to them, explain processes for the ONA, support people during their ISP, and to give advice on how to be a self-advocate to get what you need in your life.

Presented by: [Ryley Newport](#)

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, self-advocates, family members, service providers

10) Title: Empowering Yourself & Your Words in 2025 & Beyond

Description: Let's explore how to build a respectful and uplifting world for everyone, simply by being thoughtful about the words we choose. This presentation will empower self-advocates, caregivers and others supporting people with disabilities by discussing the power of language, what shapes the words we choose and the things to think about when choosing your words in 2025 and beyond.

This topic will explore how language impacts our lives. What shapes the words we choose (ie. the medical model & social model of disability), the different types of language we can use (person-first or identity-first), and the things to consider when choosing widely-used words in 2025. We will explore how to know and respect the words other people prefer for themselves and how to share with others what your preferences are for yourself or for your loved one.

Presented by: [Stefany Cunningham](#)

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, self-advocates, family members, service providers

11) **Title:** Biology of Burnout: Understanding & Overcoming Being Overwhelmed in Caretaking

Description: This interactive session will provide caretakers with an understanding of how stress impacts their overall wellness and functioning. Participants will leave with greater understanding of their own symptoms of stress and create an individualized wellness plan to improve their quality of life.

Presented by: Amy Yillik

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, self-advocates, family members, service providers

SESSION 2 - 60 minute sessions

1) Título: Metas de transición en el IEP: una hoja de ruta hacia el futuro

Descripción:

Vas a:

- Infórmese sobre los servicios de educación especial previstos en la Ley de Educación para Personas con Discapacidades (IDEA) para alumnos de primaria a 21 años
- Sepa cómo formar parte del equipo de educación especial de su hijo
- Obtenga consejos y herramientas para el proceso de educación especial

Presentado por: Damaris Elix

Esta sesión está dirigida principalmente a: Educadores/as, Autodefensores, Miembros de la familia, Proveedores de servicios

Title: (Presented in Spanish)

Special Education 101 Training

Description:

You will:

- Learn about Special Education services as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for students K-21.
- Know how to be a part of your child's Special Education team
- Gain tips and tools for the Special Education process

Presented by: Damaris Elix

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, Self-advocates, family members, service providers

2) Title: Person-Centered Facilitation and Self-Advocacy: An Open-Dialogue Q & A with Keynote Speaker, Alva Gardner

Description: A facilitated conversation where attendees can ask Alva questions about topics covered in her Keynote presentation or about her general experience as a woman with a disability navigating the disability service system, Self-Determination, etc

Presented by: Alva Gardner

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, Self-advocates, family members, service providers

3) Title: Doing Your Best in a Job Interview

Description: This is a hands on session where attendees will be actively participating in learning the do's and don'ts in an interview, developing an elevator pitch and practicing their skills in a group mock interview. Participants will leave this session ready to do their best in their next interview.

Presented by: Margie Blackmore

This session is intended primarily for: Self-advocates

4) Title: SSA Disability Process- Presenting & Answering all Questions

Description: Navigating the Social Security Administration (SSA) disability process can be overwhelmingly difficult and time-consuming. I am an attorney who has exclusively represented SSA disability applicants for more than 17 years at all stages of the SSA disability process from pre-application up through federal court appeals. I will have a power point presentation on the pre, during, and post-application process. I will answer all questions about the SSA Disability process, as well as questions about the rules and regulations once someone is already on benefits.

Presented by: Ari Halpern

This session is intended primarily for: Self-Advocates, family members, service providers

5) Title: High Desert Self Advocates: Growing Stronger & Time to Thrive!

Description: We have long wanted to bring back the High Desert Self Advocates to not only be as strong as we were before COVID but to make us even stronger! Our local self-advocate leaders Felicity Woods and Jordan Ohlde have brought their skills, expertise and passion as they help to lead this mission of having a strong, local self-advocacy group here in Central Oregon. As part of that work, we recently did a PATH plan that gave us a vision of where we want to go in the next two years. We are excited to share that vision with you, our next steps and give you opportunities to support and join us in our efforts!

Presented by: Ryley Newport, Jordan Ohlde, Felicity Woods

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, Self-advocates, family members, service providers

6) Title: Breaking Barriers with Social Emotional Learning(SEL): Supporting Students with Big Feeling in After-School Spaces

Description: Our after-school program uses trauma-informed social-emotional learning (SEL) to support students with complex behavioral needs, through engaging activities, relationship-building, and self-regulation strategies. We create an emotionally safe space where students develop resilience, conflict resolution skills, and a sense of belonging. This presentation will highlight the successes of the program, while guiding other educators and community partners in how they can also integrate social emotional learning into programs and activities.

Presented by: Karen Bures, Liv Roberts, Emmy Young

This session is intended primarily for: Educators

7) Title: Inclusive Dance & Creative Movement

Description: Dancing is a universal language that offers improved physical and mental health, increased confidence, and a stronger sense of community. Dance classes and groups foster a sense of community and belonging. They provide opportunities for social interaction, friendship, and support. Being part of a dance group can help combat feelings of isolation and loneliness. Dancing is also something that individuals can do from the comfort of their own homes. I explore movement and expression, creating a world where dance is accessible to everyone. We will discuss the importance of moving our bodies, how dance can make that fun, and a brief introduction to different styles of dance. There are a couple short videos that I would love to show that demonstrate inclusive dance. We will start by moving our bodies and allow ourselves to be creative and then learn some fun line dances. My hope for this presentation is that individuals leave with a little more confidence as well as knowledge about new ways to move their bodies and express themselves.

Presented by: Stacey Koch

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, self-advocates, family members, service providers

8)Title: Social - Sexual Supports: The Unspoken need of Love, Sex & Relationships for People with Disabilities

Description: In this session, we dive into the stigma and shame that many individuals with disabilities deal with when discussing their romantic and sexual desires. Together, we uncover the impacts of remaining silent about these needs and the emotional toll that happens when this vital aspect of life is overlooked. From this foundation, we engage in meaningful collaboration with advocates, explore how we can wholeheartedly embrace every part of people's needs and enhance the support for social-sexual services.

Presented by: (Glenna Hayes) John Griffiths, Laddie Read

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, self-advocates, family members, service providers

9) Title: There's Nothing We Can't Do... Insights from the Author of "Down Syndrome Loud: 20+ Stories about Disability & Determination"

Description: In this lively and inspiring presentation, I'll walk participants through my process of researching, proposing, and writing my newest nonfiction book, "DOWN SYNDROME OUT LOUD: 20+ STORIES ABOUT DISABILITY AND DETERMINATION". I'll explain how growing up with my younger brother who has Down syndrome inspired this book, and I'll give people insight into how I selected and interviewed 25 people from around the world who have Down syndrome. I'll share the most exciting and surprising revelations from my interviews, along with a wealth of resources related to the people I interviewed— everything from inclusive college programs and standup comedy troupes for people with IDD to cutting-edge independent living projects and clothing designed to fit the bodies of people with Down syndrome.

I'll talk about working with the illustrator on respectful, authentic portraits of each profile subject, and what this book means to the people featured. Participants will get an excellent sense of how they, themselves, can go about writing and publishing a book, as well.

Presented by: Melissa Hart

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, self-advocates, family members

10) Title: Moving From Awareness to Acceptance: Celebrate Neurodiversity! (MFATA)

Description: Why does Pepsi always achieve its goals?

Join national trainer, award winner, business owner and advocate Alex Kimmel, aka The SelfDeterminator, to learn the punchline to this joke as he guides attendees through a series of teaching and self-assessment segments. Time is embedded for self-reflection and discussion on the role of norms, acceptance, autistic neurology and, of course, self-determination. Key concepts include:

The importance of language choice and emphasis that each person decides how to define their life; neurodiversity and the celebration of all kinds of minds; social norms and inclusionary/exclusionary practices

Culture of Gentleness and the power of setting a meaningful life on the foundation of fostering one to feel safe and loved.

Personal examples of the 5 Principles of Self-Determination in a self-directed life.

This interactive workshop utilizes recent data, lived-experience wisdom, and time to reflect in small groups as well as independently. Alex is known for his use of humor and thought-provoking content, certain to impact attendees at all stages of their advocacy path. Material is designed to have you depart this conference and head back home to put what you learn into practice on day 1.

Presented by: Alex Kimmel

This session is intended primarily for: Self-Advocates, service providers, family members

11) Title: How to get help with Special Education

Description: CODSN, FACT Oregon and the Oregon Department of Education will co-present this session to help attendees learn about the support available to them when they have Special Education questions. Attendees will learn what each of these organizations offers related to Special Education, how we work together to best support families and who they can contact when they need support. ODE staff will also share about the different dispute resolution options and the processes available to families to resolve concerns.

Presented by: Jeremy Wells (ODE), Callie Kackley (CODSN), Christy Reese (FACT)

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, Self-Advocates, Family Members, Service Providers

12) Title: Connection, Community, Collaboration: working together for employment success.

Description: The focus/outcome of this presentation will be to hear from a panel of people working in their community. Hear from people in the community about their experience and what work has meant to them and about how the road between school and work provides successful outcomes.

Presented by: Kelsey Hargove & Erica Drake

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, Self-Advocates, Family Members, Service Providers

SESSION 3 - 60 minute sessions

1) Título: Metas de transición en el IEP: una hoja de ruta hacia el futuro

Aprenda por qué la planificación para la vida después de la escuela es importante para los estudiantes con discapacidades, cuándo comenzar, y cómo los servicios de educación especial ayudan a los estudiantes con discapacidades a prepararse para la edad adulta.

Descripción: “Objetivos de transición del IEP: una hoja de ruta hacia el éxito” es una presentación diseñada específicamente para familias de niños en edad de transición que participan en un Programa Educativo Individualizado (IEP). Esta sesión tiene como objetivo iluminar el camino crítico de la planificación de la transición, como un componente estratégico del IEP que prepara a los estudiantes con discapacidades para la vida después de la escuela secundaria, incluida la educación superior, el empleo y la vida independiente. Se presentará a los participantes los aspectos fundamentales de la planificación de la transición según la IDEA, el momento óptimo y su papel fundamental en la preparación para la adultez.

La presentación guiará a las familias para comprender los objetivos de transición, enfatizando la importancia de adaptar los objetivos a las fortalezas, preferencias e intereses de cada estudiante. También destacará el papel indispensable de las familias en el proceso de planificación de la transición, ofreciendo estrategias prácticas para una participación y comunicación efectivas y la colaboración con los equipos escolares.

Se guiará a los asistentes a través del proceso de identificación de objetivos de transición sólidos y SMART (específicos, medibles, alcanzables, relevantes y con plazos determinados). El resultado deseado de esta presentación es empoderar a las familias con el conocimiento y las herramientas necesarias para participar activamente en el trabajo con el equipo escolar de su hijo para elaborar un plan de transición integral con énfasis en los objetivos de transición, asegurando una transición más fluida para sus hijos hacia una edad adulta exitosa.

Presentado por: Maria Rangel

Esta sesión está dirigida principalmente a: Family Members

Title: (Presented in Spanish) Transition Goals in the IEP: A Roadmap to the Future

Learn why planning for life after school is important for students with disabilities, when to start, and how special education services help prepare students with disabilities for adulthood.

Description: “IEP Transition Goals: A Roadmap to Success” is a presentation designed specifically for families of children on an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that are of transition age. This session aims to illuminate the critical path of transition planning, as a strategic component of the IEP that prepares students with disabilities for life after high school, including further education, employment, and independent living. Participants will be introduced to the foundational aspects of transition planning under the IDEA, optimal timing, and its pivotal role in adulthood preparation.

The presentation will guide families in understanding transition goals, emphasizing the importance of tailoring goals to each student’s strengths, preferences, and interests. It will also highlight the indispensable role of families in the transition planning process, offering practical strategies for effective involvement and communication and collaboration with school teams.

Attendees will be led through the process of identifying robust, SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) transition goals. The desired outcome of this presentation is to

empower families with the knowledge and tools necessary to actively participate in working with their child's school team to craft a comprehensive transition plan with an emphasis on transition goals, ensuring a smoother transition for their children into successful adulthood.

Presented by: Maria Rangel

This session is intended primarily for: Family Members

2) Title: Pathways to Success: Understanding Supported Employment

Description: This session explores supported employment, including what it is, how it helps young people with disabilities find and keep jobs, and why it's important for their independence and confidence. This session will cover different kinds of support available, like job coaching and workplace adjustments, to make sure everyone can work successfully.

Presented by: Jennifer Knapp

This session is intended primarily for: Self-Advocates, Family Members

3) Title: Empowerment Through Advocacy

Description: In this session we cover:

- What is Advocacy?
- What is Empowerment?
- The different types of advocacy
- John Griffiths and TBD: Why I advocate
- How to get motivated to advocate
- Why those in our services need our advocacy on all levels

Presented by: John Griffiths & TBD

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, Self-Advocates, Family Members, Service Providers

4) Title: Artificial Intelligence- Your Ultimate Collaborator, Creative Partner, and Unexpected Friend

Description: Imagine a partner who helps you brainstorm ideas, refine your writing, compose music, design visuals, or even produce videos – all while adapting to your unique style, needs, and goals. This presentation isn't just about using AI... it's about teaching it to work for you.

We'll dive into actionable strategies for "coaching" AI to deliver results that align with your voice and vision, including:

- The Art of AI Communication: How to craft prompts that get better, smarter, and more personalized help.
- Tools That Do the Heavy Lifting: A curated showcase of user-friendly platforms helpful to you and our community
- Beyond Efficiency: Ways AI can reduce frustration, boost confidence, and even spark joy in your daily workflows.

After this session, you may find yourself saying “Oh, AI can help me with that” on a daily basis.

Presented by: Michael Boll

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, Self-Advocates, Family Members, Service Providers

5) Title: How I created the Kid Patrol from My Memories

Description: I will start by introducing myself. Then I will share my slide show presentation describing how I created the Kid Patrol by writing books, making movies, costumes and recruiting my Kid Patrol Gang, first in Idaho and now in Oregon.

I will introduce members of my Kid Patrol Gang, some of them will come with me in person as part of my presentation, some will be in my slide show.

Then I will end my presentation with acting out a small Cat Crime with Kid Patrol Gang.

Then I will take questions and hand out small cards to people who may want them as a souvenir from the Kid Patrol Gang.

Presented by: Robby Dishner

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, Self-Advocates, Family Members, Service Providers

6) Title: The Fitness Industry’s Forgotten Population

Description: It is no secret that America is facing an obesity epidemic. In the latest CDC release, 41.9% of American Adults were obese. Obesity has been linked to heart disease, stroke, and Type II diabetes, which are the leading causes of preventable premature deaths. There are a plethora of resources and fitness professionals available to the American adult population who need support due to struggling with obesity. It is well known that diet and exercise are two factors in combating obesity, which both fall to professionals within our industry. What if I told you that there was an adult community that is 57% more likely to become obese in comparison, yet there is a limited amount of fitness professionals to provide the guidance they need? This presentation creates awareness about the importance of exercise, guidance in finding a qualified professional to work with, creating healthy eating habits, and creating an at home workout routine.

Presented by: Ryan Lockard

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, Self-Advocates, Family Members, Service Providers

7) Title: Introduction and History of IDD: Learn the important history of people with I/DD and how far we have come.

Description: In this session participants will learn the history of I/DD and how competitive employment supports our mission. You will walk away with tools to use to better understand people who experience I/DD. We will discuss dignity of risk and Person-Centered practices. John Merrick, a self-advocate, will share how he advocates for himself and others in his community. John is involved in advocating legislatively as well as personally. John is a trainer for the Office of Developmental Disabilities and attended Treasure Valley Community College to gain even more skills to train the Supported Employment curriculum.

Presented by: John Merrick & Erica Drake

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, Self-Advocates, Family Members, Service Providers

8) Title: My Journey to America & My Path to Self Advocacy

Description: This training is more than just a workshop; it's a journey into the reality experienced by a woman of color who is a transracial adoptee with disabilities. We will learn how people's assumptions can impact things, making it harder for us to connect and often keeping us stuck in our own comfort zone. The goal of this presentation is to help people understand the experiences of individuals from diverse backgrounds, including people of color, women, adoptees, and those with various intersecting identities. It aims to foster support among one another during challenging times and to strengthen our connections in the face of misunderstanding and discrimination.

Presented by: Yuan Fengxian

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, Self-Advocates, Family Members, Service Providers

9) Title: Visualizing Your Day: How Visual Prompts Can Lead to Stronger Independence and Autonomy.

Description: Both providers and families can help clients move through their day with appropriate visual prompts. In this hand-on workshop, participants learn how to create and implement prompts appropriate to maximize client independence and autonomy, how to modify each for individual needs, and how to overcome resistance in implementation.

Presented by: Susan Traugh, Matthew Traugh

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, Family Members, Service Providers

10) Title: Disability Awareness - Japan & Nonprofit Vision for Madras

Description: I will do a powerpoint Presentation and will give a visual about how it's all going to play out and what the possible outcomes of the project will be like. I will also talk about my role as a Disability Advocate and the benefits from the local community. I will do it this year, for sure. I will also talk about my plan to start a Non - Profit and how this will tie in to my international project as well.

Presented by: Sam Robinson

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, Family Members, Service Providers

11) Title: Possibilities!: When Supports, Independence/Interdependence, Safety, & Self-Determination All Come Together

Description: This interactive workshop focuses on Alex Kimmel's reel of the Michigan Developmental Disability Institute award winning "Possibilities" project which presents a vision of how individuals with developmental/intellectual disabilities can lead the lives that they wish to (<https://ddi.wayne.edu/possibilities>). Alex, aka The SelfDeterminator, is on a mission to help others realize the power of self-determination.

The presentation provides guided and interactive discussion on philosophies of Culture of Gentleness, 11 core competencies of self-determination, and interdependence. Accompanying worksheet records new discoveries to implement on day one back home. Be ready for laughter and opportunity to challenge your assumptions and update your thoughts on neurodiversity!

Presented by: Alex Kimmel

This session is intended primarily for: Educators, Family Members, Service Providers