

Informing Families

Building Trust

A Partnership for Better Communication
On Developmental Disability Issues in Washington State

Tools for Inclusion: Travel Training

When it comes to high school transition planning, much of what goes into developing goals is grounded in values of inclusion and independence. What inclusion looks like in each person's life may differ, but one thing is for sure: it can't happen if you don't show up.

As any family who has a loved one with a disability knows, figuring out logistics—how to get from Point A to Point B—can be a major undertaking. Learning to use fixed route transit, especially when your son/daughter is in high school, can be a really good way to increase community inclusion without causing a lot of stress.

Most transit agencies throughout the state offer individual instruction to anyone old enough to travel on his/her own. Travel training (which may be called something different in your area) is for persons of any ability, including those who use paratransit services who would like to explore the increased flexibility and independence that using one or more fixed routes can provide.



Travel Training Basics

While travel training may vary from county to county, most transit agencies provide the following:

Assessment

An in-person meeting to identify the individual's goals and needs for using transit, as well as any barriers that need to be addressed.

Training

Depending on the individuals specific needs and goals, training may include: learning how to ride specific routes, read and understand route maps, pay fares and purchase passes, get to and from the bus stop, recognize bus stops and landmarks, get on and off the bus safely, use a wheelchair lift, position a wheelchair on the bus, transfer to other buses, get information, and travel with confidence.

Trip Plan

A step-by-step plan to help the individual get where s/he needs to go.

Note: You can have as many lessons as you need and return for new training when needed (for example, to learn a new route or transfer).

“A Team Effort”

If you have questions about safety and what-if scenarios specific to your son/daughter, be sure to ask the travel trainer.

Don't be shy about speaking up and participating. “We always try to include the parents,” says Erin Pratt, Travel Training Coordinator for Intercity Transit. “It's a team effort.”



For more information about travel training in your area, visit:
wsdot.wa.gov/choices/bus and scroll down for a link to your local transit agency.