**Small Group Discussion Questions- Student Version**

**Future Plans:**

* 1. **What are you thinking about for your college major/profession? Why?**
  2. What qualities about yourself do you think will appeal to your future employers?
  3. Tell us about any paid or volunteer work experiences you have had. How have those experiences helped you develop professional skills?

**Student Comments/notes/follow-up:**

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**Interacting with Others**

1. **Is it hard or easy for you to meet new people? Why?**
2. What ideas can you share for making new friends and building existing friendships?
3. What things can you do to best get along with your teachers and classmates?
4. When you envision going to college, are there things that are concerning to you or might interfere with your success?

**Student Comments/notes/follow-up:**

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**Goal Setting and Attainment**

1. **What goals would you like to accomplish over the next year?**
2. **Based on how you answered the last question, which of these responses below best describe you?**
3. I am aware of what I would like to accomplish, I have a plan, and I feel motivated to reach my goals.
4. I am aware of what I would like to accomplish, but I do not have a specific plan in place to accomplish my goals.
5. I am starting to think about what I would like to accomplish, but I am unclear of how to prioritize or where to start.
6. I do not have any specific goals that I would like to accomplish, and the thought is overwhelming.
7. I do not feel as though I should be focusing on college prep at this point in my high school career.

\*\*Helpful tip: <http://disability.illinois.edu/beckwith-residential-support-services-nugent-hall/getting-started-nugent-hall/prospective-student>

Click on the link, scroll down to the “high school mentoring program”, and click on the link for the Transition Guide for Students and Families.

For additional transition information, please go to: <http://disability.illinois.edu/thinking-about-illinois/transitioning-college>

* 1. What long-term goals do you have related to employment and/or education?
  2. What challenges can you foresee related to these goals? What resources can help you overcome potential challenges?

**Student Comments/notes/follow-up:**

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**Strengths and Limits**

1. **What comes easy for you in school and life?**
2. What things are hard for you in school and life?
3. How would people close to you, such as your parents/guardians or friends, describe your strong points?

**Student Comments/notes/follow-up:**

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**Disability Awareness**

1. **How does your disability impact your daily life?**
2. What potential challenges related to your disability do you see as you transition to post-high school life?
3. What services/resources are you already aware of that may assist you with building independence?

**Student Comments/notes/follow-up:**

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**Persistence:**

1. **Tell us about a time in which your persistence paid off (e.g.- accomplishing a task/goal that you initially struggled with)**
2. Please read the following paragraph:

Parodied in one SpongeBob Squarepants episode about a snail race. While SpongeBob and Squidward bring normal snail pets, Patrick brings a rock. It predictably doesn't move while the other snails race forward, but Gary (SpongeBob’s snail) went berserk and runs out of the race line and injures himself in the end, while Squidward's snail (who's close to winning) runs to Gary instead to help him. While everyone (including the spectators) is distracted with the 2 snails, it then cuts to Patrick's rock somehow crossing the finish line.

This SpongeBob episode is a parody of the famous fable about the tortoise and the hare. What is the moral of this parody and the original fable?

**Additional advice:**

Have you ever heard anyone say… “haste makes waste” or “patience is a virtue” Hopefully you may now be starting to think how important “Patience” is.

* Regardless of the individual obstacles that we each face, the way to increase our chances for success is to be patient and if that isn’t something that comes easy to you, who do you respect that could help you to learn how to become more patient?
* Trust me, the sooner you try to be more patient as you deal with various tasks, or even before responding to another person, the happier you’ll be.
* Once you get in the habit, I bet it won’t take you long to see a difference which will give you more confidence/motivation to keep it up.
* I understand that because of past experiences as it relates to school in general, certain subjects or even considering college; that you may feel overwhelmed, discouraged, anger, resentment, embarrassed or something else… hopefully a bit more positive If not before, hopefully after today you will.

**Student Comments/notes/follow-up:**

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**Student Involvement in IEP**

1. **Are you an active participant in the creation of your IEP/504 Plan?**
2. Would you like to become a stronger self-advocate? If so, what are some ways that you could build these skills?
3. What plans have you discussed in your IEP related to the upcoming post-high school transition?

**Additional advice:**

**IEP** - Navigating a world that doesn’t quite fit the way your mind works can be frustrating at times, but that is why it is important to be involved in with your IEP/504 plan. At this point, you should have an idea of the types if things you need to do/have in place to succeed in particular classes or situations. It is important for you to make sure that those have been discussed and are included in your plan.

* Maybe what has worked in the past isn’t anymore, or maybe your priorities have changed… have you told this to anyone? Your plan can be updated.
* Being aware of how you think through a situation, learn, move your body, when you have the most energy, how to manage your energy… are all important for you to be aware of and consider in your plan.
* Paying attention to these signals can help you to succeed because we often overlook when it’s time to take a break, have a snack, take a nap, or perhaps try again another day.
* But if we didn’t overlook it, would that make a difference in how we respond to a situation, or figure out something that is hard?
* You might not be realize it, but taking the time to be more self-aware will also help you feel more in control, learn who you are and realize what you want.
* It is one way for you to gain a sense of independence.
* However, if this isn’t something that you do, you may need to ask for help in figuring out what those signals are and how to respond to them, which is fine, because that is one goal of the IEP… to help you learn these things about yourself to increase your success and independence.

**Student Comments/notes/follow-up:**

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**Support Community**

* 1. **Tell us about supportive people/groups that are currently part of your life.**
  2. What additional supports would you like in place to assist with post-high school transition to employment and/or college?
  3. Do you feel that it is difficult to learn about or access community resources?

**Student Comments/notes/follow-up:**

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