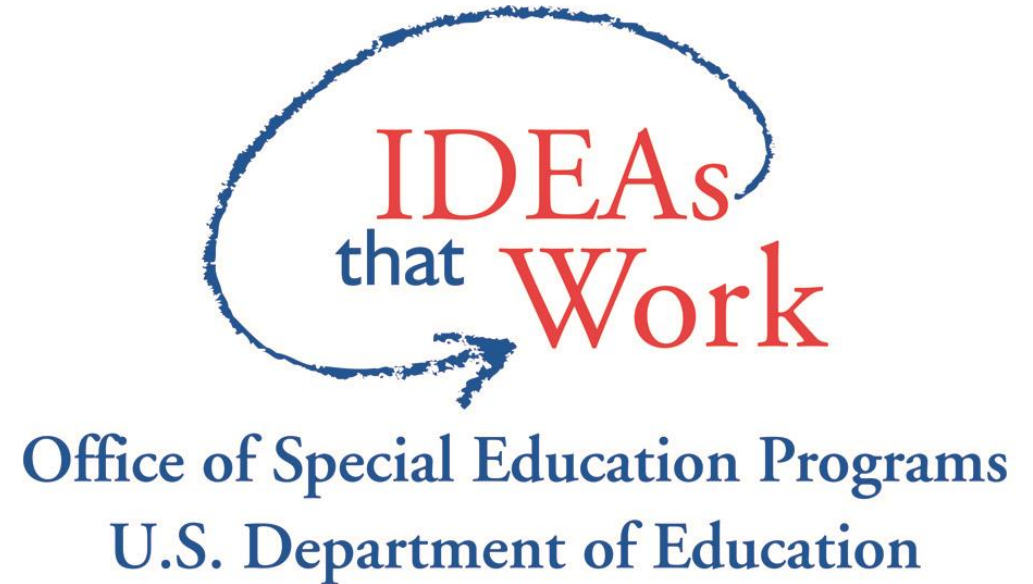


# Welcome!

*We will begin shortly*



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# What is a Parent Training and Information Center (PTIC)?

## Family Matters PTIC



## Family Resource Center on Disabilities



# Key Questions to Ask to Improve Your IEP

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Using the Charting the LifeCourse Framework to Drive Student-Centered Planning



# Presentation Objectives

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- Explore how asking strategic questions helps shape both short-term progress and long-term goals like independence, work, and meaningful inclusion
- Learn how to use the LifeCourse domains and The Integrated Supports Star in IEP and Transition planning
- Increase confidence in asking questions that promote collaboration and progress



# Charting the LifeCourse Overview

- LifeCourse focuses on life stages and domains
- Encourages vision-driven planning across all settings
- Supports whole-person thinking, not just school goals

**Charting the LifeCourse (CtLC)** tools and mission align closely with the **IEP process** and **student outcomes** because they are both rooted in *person-centered planning, future-focused decision-making, and collaboration between families, students, and professionals.*





# Start with a Vision

- What does my child/student want for their life?
- How are we helping them build toward a good life?
- Are we keeping the long-term trajectory in mind?
- How are we avoiding over-reliance on programs/waivers and tapping into community and relationships?

**What does it mean to live a  
GOOD LIFE?**



# Consider the CtLC Life Domains

CtLC  
includes  
6 life  
domains:

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**Daily Life & Employment**

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**Community Living**

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**Social & Spirituality**

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**Healthy Living**

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**Safety & Security**

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**Advocacy & Engagement**

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***Does the plan you  
are building at  
school via your  
IEP address all of  
these needs?***



# Questions About Strengths and Present Levels

**Charting Focus:** Life Domain – Daily Life & Employment  
**Questions:**

- What are my child's strengths?
  - How does environment shift my child's strengths? Home versus school? Classroom versus lunchroom?
- What are my child's preferences and frustrations?
- How are these reflected in present levels and goals?
- How does this translate to real-life employment participation in school that aligns with my student's needs and interests?



# Data and Progress Monitoring

**Charting Focus:** Life Domain – Lifelong Learning

## **Questions:**

- What does the data show about growth or gaps?
- How does progress monitoring inform service changes?
- Are goals helping us stay on the desired life trajectory/path?

***Always ask:***

- ***What data is being collected?***
- ***Who is responsible for collecting it?***
- ***How often will we review it?***





# Examples of Data

## Type of Goal

Reading

Behavior

Social Skills

Transition

## Data Schools Might Collect

# of words read correctly per minute,  
test scores, reading logs

Number of times a student calls out,  
how often they use a calm-down  
strategy

Observations of peer interactions,  
teacher checklists

# of job readiness tasks completed,  
steps in a career exploration project



***What might be barriers to getting accurate data?***



# Data Drives Change

- **Decisions Are Made Based on the Data**

**If your child is *making progress*—great!**

**If your child is *not progressing*—the IEP team might:**

- Adjust the goal
- Try new teaching strategies
- Add or change services
- Give more support



***The IEP is living document.  
The best way to breath air  
into it is by asking the right  
questions.***

# Using Charting the LifeCourse to Guide Questions

The Charting the LifeCourse (CtLC) Life Domains can guide IEP teams in asking well-rounded questions that consider all areas of a student's life, such as daily living, employment, social connections, and community involvement.

Using these domains helps families and educators create IEP goals that are more person-centered and aligned with the student's vision for a meaningful life.

EXPLORING LIFE POSSIBILITIES   DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY SPECIFIC								
	Daily Life & Employment	Community Living	Healthy Living	Safety & Security	Social & Spirituality	Advocacy & Engagement	Supports to Families	Integrated Supports
Innovative Life Options	New ideas; things that someone has tried, and you replicate or adapt for your own needs; things that haven't been thought of yet or tried.							
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Micro-enterprises</li> <li>Careers</li> <li>Competitive employment</li> <li>College or tech school</li> <li>Supported employment</li> <li>Job coaches</li> <li>Volunteering</li> <li>Inclusive college programs</li> <li>Online classes or training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-ops</li> <li>Adapted living space</li> <li>Environmental technology</li> <li>Shared living/ host family</li> <li>Companion living</li> <li>Public transportation</li> <li>Home ownership</li> <li>Independent Living Center</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gym membership</li> <li>Community Health Centers</li> <li>Health fairs</li> <li>Family practice providers</li> <li>In-home or community based therapies</li> <li>Family member or school staff implements therapy</li> <li>Tele-Medicine</li> <li>Personal fitness devices or apps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supported decision making</li> <li>Limited/ joint bank account, automatic bill pay, personal contract, agency agreement</li> <li>Personal contract/agency agreement</li> <li>Personal safety devices</li> <li>Remote monitoring</li> <li>Special Needs Trust</li> <li>Abuse/neglect hotlines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Friendships</li> <li>Dating/ relationships</li> <li>Parks and Recreation</li> <li>Inclusive faith community</li> <li>Service/social club/groups</li> <li>Special Olympics</li> <li>Line passes</li> <li>Social groups</li> <li>Video chat or calls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voting</li> <li>Neighborhood group or organization</li> <li>Self-Determination</li> <li>Visiting your legislator</li> <li>Self-Advocacy groups</li> <li>Advocacy training</li> <li>Legislative advocacy events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social Media</li> <li>Technology</li> <li>Blogs</li> <li>Family &amp; friends</li> <li>Parent-to-parent/Peer Support</li> <li>Face-to-face support groups</li> <li>Online Support Groups</li> <li>Sib-shops</li> <li>Sibling networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exchange networks</li> <li>Time banks</li> <li>Human service co-ops</li> <li>General education</li> <li>Self-Directed Supports</li> <li>55 follows the person</li> <li>Technology/ Doorbell or home security camera</li> <li>Able Accounts</li> </ul>
Traditional Life Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sheltered workshops</li> <li>Day habilitation</li> <li>Work Crews or Enclaves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institutions</li> <li>Intermediate Care Facility (ICF)</li> <li>Group Homes</li> <li>Independent Supported Living (ISL)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Center-based therapies (PT, OT, Speech, etc)</li> <li>Specialized or institutional medical care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full or limited guardianship</li> <li>24 hour paid staff and supervision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Separate or special church service</li> <li>Special group outings &amp; activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paid advocate or having someone else advocate on your behalf</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institution or center based support group</li> <li>Intensive all-day parent training</li> <li>Disability specific groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Systems supports only</li> <li>Provider and agency staff</li> </ul>

Link: <https://www.lifecoursetools.com/lifecourse-library/exploring-the-life-domains/>

# Measurable Goals and Benchmarks

- **Charting Focus:** Life Domain – Daily Life & Community Living  
**Questions:**

- Are goals SMART and realistic?
- Are we preparing for future independence or self-direction?
- Can we include functional goals that help with real-life tasks?



SMART goals are clear, specific goals that are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic, and **T**ime-bound



# Services, Supports & the Integrated Star

- Are we using all types of supports—personal, relationship-based, tech, community?
- How do these services work together?
- Is my child receiving support that builds long-term capacity?
- Are we becoming familiar with what formalized support we can tap into long-term?



# Inclusion & Participation

- How is my child included with peers?
- Are they meaningfully participating in clubs, field trips, and non-academic activities?
- What supports help inclusion feel meaningful?
- What types of relationships are being built between my child and her peers?
- How does your child show you that they FEEL included?





# Questions When There Are Challenges

- How is the team, including family, proactively addressing challenges?
- What strategies support regulation or behavior? What triggers have been identified?
- Are we using Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)?
- Is there training or support that can be provided to the classroom teacher to support the process?
- Are there tools within the school environment that might be useful that we have not tapped into?
- What strategies have worked for other students with similar needs?

# Preparing for Transition

- Is my child exploring post-school options?
- Are we beginning to develop a comprehensive and personalized plan that includes community partners? Formalized programs? Employment support? Relationships? Interdependent Living opportunities?
- Is my child learning and regularly self-advocacy and daily living skills in all environments?



# Family Perspective in the IEP

- How are family concerns and priorities included?
- How do Goals and Objectives in the IEP align with the home environment and routine?
- Are we identifying what works at home to replicate in school?
- Is the IEP responsive to our cultural values and experiences?
- Can family and student describe the what and why of the IEP?





# Example: Family Perspectives and CtLC

In many cultures, **interdependence within the family**—rather than independence—is deeply valued. Young people with disabilities may be expected to stay close to family, help care for siblings or elders, and participate in shared family decision-making.

## How CtLC Tools Can Help Identify and Use This Value:

- Using the **Life Trajectory Tool**, the family and student can express a vision that includes:
- Living at home or nearby
- Contributing to the family through a caretaking or support role
- Prioritizing family cohesion in work, social, or transition plans

## How This Value Can Inform the IEP:


- **IEP Transition Goal:** The student will participate in a family-based cooking business one day a week as a vocational training experience.
- **IEP Team Supports:** Connect student to entrepreneurship training, provide communication supports for customer interactions, and align academic goals with business planning or budgeting.

# Putting It All Together – Sample Scenario

**Student:** Sam, Age 12

**Concern:** Sam is struggling to engage with peers and is mostly supported in a separate classroom. His family wants him to be more included in general education settings.

 **CtLC Tool Used: Integrated Supports Star + Life Domains**


- The team and family use the **Integrated Supports Star** to explore supports Sam needs for inclusion:
  - **Personal Strengths:** Friendly and interested in video games
  - **Relationships:** One peer buddy who likes the same games
  - **Technology:** Visual schedule on iPad
  - **Community-Based:** After-school gaming club
  - **Eligibility-Based:** Social skills group with SLP
-  **How It Informs the IEP:**
- **IEP Goal:** Sam will engage in structured and MEANINGFUL peer interactions (e.g., greetings, asking/answering questions) during group activities in the general education science class with 80% success in 4 out of 5 observed opportunities.
- **Support Plan:**
  - Weekly speech-language therapy in-class coaching
  - Peer buddy program participation
  - Use of visual conversation starters on iPad
- **Outcome Focus:** Supports full participation in the **Daily Life & Employment** and **Social & Spirituality** domains.




# Putting It All Together – Sample Scenario

**Student:** Jasmine, Age 16

**Concern:** Jasmine and her family want her to live with support in her community and get a job after graduation, but they're unsure how to start.

 **CtLC Tool Used: Life Trajectory + Exploring Life Domains Worksheet**

- The team works with Jasmine and her family to map out a **Life Trajectory**:
  - **What Jasmine wants:** A part-time job at a beauty salon, live near her sister, have friends, and go to church.
  - **What she wants to avoid:** Living in a group home far from family, doing nothing during the day.
-  **How It Informs the IEP:**
- **IEP Goal:** Jasmine will identify and practice three job-related tasks aligned with her interest in the beauty industry (e.g., towel folding, product organization) during her vocational training program.
- **Transition Services:**
  - Community-based vocational placement through STEP
  - Worksite visits to local salons
  - Begin person-centered planning with Independent Service Coordination (ISC)
- **Outcome Focus:** Supports the **Community Living, Daily Life & Employment, and Advocacy & Engagement** domains.



# Putting It All Together – Sample Scenario

**Student:** Adam, Age 9

**Concern:** Adam is frequently sent out of class due to outbursts and difficulty following routines. His parents feel he is misunderstood and want more proactive supports.

 **CtLC Tool Used: Life Domain Exploration + Integrated Supports Star**

- The IEP team uses **Exploring Life Domains** to understand Diego's school and home experience:
  - **Daily Life:** Struggles with changes in schedule, thrives on structure
  - **Healthy Living:** Takes ADHD medication, sleeps inconsistently
  - **Safety & Security:** Feels unsafe when yelled at
- The **Integrated Supports Star** helps the team see where natural supports (e.g., classroom routines, fidget tools) can supplement formal supports.

 **How It Informs the IEP:**

- **IEP Goal:** Adam will use a self-regulation strategy (e.g., deep breathing, break card) to respond to frustration in the classroom, with adult support, 80% of the time across a 4-week period.
- **Support Plan:**
  - Visual schedule and sensory breaks integrated into classroom
  - Behavior intervention plan developed with input from family
  - Weekly check-ins with the school counselor
- **Outcome Focus:** Supports the **Healthy Living, Safety & Security**, and **Daily Life & Employment** domains.



# Final Takeaways

- LifeCourse helps frame questions in the context of a *good life*
- Every IEP is a step on the trajectory—ask if it's moving the student forward
- Collaboration grows when families are confident and prepared



# Resources

- Family Matters Parent Training & Information Center (FMPTIC): [www.fmptic.org](http://www.fmptic.org)
- Charting the LifeCourse Tools: [www.lifecoursetools.com](http://www.lifecoursetools.com)
- Illinois State Board of Education – Special Education: [www.isbe.net](http://www.isbe.net)
- Wrightslaw (Special Education Law & Advocacy): [www.wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com)
- Understood.org: [www.understood.org](http://www.understood.org)
- Disability Rights Illinois: [www.disabilityrightsil.org](http://www.disabilityrightsil.org)
- PACER Center – Family Advocacy: [www.pacer.org](http://www.pacer.org)



Want to see a quick video on CtLC in schools?: <https://youtu.be/NfCw3by0fVk>

**Please take our short survey before you  
leave. We NEED your input.**



Questions

