Planning for your IEP Meeting

Mateo, today we're going to focus on starting preparation for your next Individualized Education Program meeting. Also known as the IEP.

This is an important year for you, Mateo. We are starting to plan for your transition from high school to college or a career.

This is pointless! I never get to make the decisions anyways. My parents and the school always end up having the final say. No one cares what I think.

Mateo, having an active part in your IEP meetings is important. Your IEP is supposed to help you.

I don't even know what it is. Besides—my parents always do the IEP with the school anyways.

I don't get how the IEP is supposed to help me. I don't even know what it is.
Well...an IEP stands for an individual education plan written for public school students between the ages of 3 to 21. By law, it helps students who've identified with a disability, like a severe mental health condition, ADHD or autism, receive special education services to help them achieve their educational goals.

Transition plans are a big part of the IEP, and they address your specific needs to meet your post-high school goals.

A transition plan includes your goals for after high school, like going to college or finding a job. Then it helps you identify what resources or help you might need to achieve those goals.

It can even help you find adult services if you want to wait on furthering your education or getting a job.

Think of the IEP as your train ticket to wherever you want to go.

That sounds lit, but my parents told me I would just go on disability after high school, and I don’t even know what I want to do after I graduate.

Mateo, you are smart and gifted young man. I have no doubt that you can do whatever you put your mind to. How about we work on the IEP together, and explore some of your school and work interests?

Okay, I think I’d like that.

**Acknowledgements**

- This info-comic is based on work by the Translating Evidence to Support Transitions (TEST) team (NIDILRR Grant number 90DPO0080). Find out more about this project at umassmed.edu/TEST.
- Need a more accessible document? Read the comic transcript.
- Read the You Got This: Taking a Leadership Role in Your IEP Meeting Tip Sheet.
- Download other Tip Sheets from the Translating Evidence to Support Transitions (TEST) team on their Tip Sheets Page.

The contents of this tip sheet were supported in part under grants with funding from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR), United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this tip sheet do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, or HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

This publication can be made available in alternative formats upon request through TransitionsACR@umassmed.edu.

This is a product of Psychiatry Information in Brief. An electronic copy of this comic can be found at: https://escholarship.umassmed.edu/pib/vol18/iss18/8.