ABSTRACT
        This report describes a pilot program of the New
South Wales (Australia) Department of Education to develop community
transition teams as part of an effort to provide transition education
to people with disabilities. The project is based on a model
developed in Oregon and stresses assisting each community to work
cooperatively to assess local needs (as distinct from individual
student needs), to identify gaps in service provisions, and to
promote comprehensive planning and effective service delivery. A
five-phase approach was implemented and evaluated: (1) team building,
(2) needs assessment, (3) program planning, (4) program
implementation, and (5) evaluation of annual accomplishments. The
model has proven successful, with establishment of 10 local teams.
The project identified such issues as determining who takes
responsibility for providing a needed service, difficulties in
establishing a community identity and good working relationships, the
need to involve high school personnel more, and the importance of
developing networks within and between community transition teams.
Appendices provide formats for needs assessments and identification
of top priority standards for both 1989 and 1990. (Contains 13
references.) (DB)

Transition Education

A pilot program for students with disabilities in transition in
the NSW Department of School Education

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Community
Transition
Teams

A Research and Development Report

Vivienne C. Riches & Trevor R. Parmenter
Macquarie University
1991

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Community Transition Teams: A research and development report

Introduction

It is now recognised that past failures to achieve smooth transition from school to successful community independence has been partly due to the lack of collaboration and co-ordination between the schools and the many other community agencies and organisations involved in the lives of persons with disabilities.

Several studies have identified this lack of collaboration and cooperation as significant. A three year national study in the U.S.A. (Cox, 1984) highlighted the importance of inter-agency co-operation, and noted the prevalent lack of long term planning between agencies and the public school system in terms of vocational training placements and independent living for people with disabilities. The study also found that virtually no follow-up of graduates with disabilities was done to ensure a match between the services provided by the schools and the students' post-school experiences. The conclusion was that the organisational structure to bring together the schools and appropriate community agencies was not in place, or was insufficiently utilised.

In the Australian context the transition to post school opportunities and the actual outcomes for people with disabilities have been of concern to educators and parents. A post school options study (Parmenter & Knox,1989) found there were severe limitations in the post secondary schooling options available to people with disabilities. Most individuals were tracked into sheltered employment where wages and promotional opportunities were minimal, and information and cooperation between different agencies and departments were spasmodic .

This report recommended that there was a need for greater cooperation and co-ordination between agencies concerned with meeting the needs of young people with disabilities. This cooperation and coordination was seen as critical to avoid duplication of services and also to ensure that all areas of the young person's life be met. (Parmenter & Knox,1989, p. 47)

Co-operation between generic and specialist agencies was also recommended, to promote a sharing of and growth of knowledge on the part of parties from quite different backgrounds, while also ensuring that the young person with a disability would receive the specialist support required in the environment of a generic, community-based organisation.

Typically, service organisations have considered that education authorities should bear the responsibility for the task of developing a young person's skill and knowledge, but as Parmenter (1986) pointed out, for students with disabilities, an inter-agency approach involving all sectors that will be eventually involved in the transition process should begin while students are still at school.

The importance of shared responsibility among relevant service agencies and organisations to ensure the best quality and most appropriate services are provided for the young person with a disability has been widely established. (Will, 1984; Johnson, Bruininks & Thurlow, 1987; Hardman & McDonnell, 1987; Parmenter & Knox,1987). The challenge has become how best to bring the dream to reality.

Long range planning began In Oregon in 1984, to develop new policies and procedures to improve transition services. Halpern (1985), found that links between Oregon's secondary special education programs and community agencies were poor. Only 10 percent of school administrators indicated the existence of formal agreements, and less than 50 percent indicated that informal agreements existed with adult service agencies concerning the transition needs of students with disabilities. Furthermore, while 60 percent of teachers stated that other agencies had been contacted concerning transition services, only 20 percent of parents acknowledged ever receiving such services.

Oregon gained State level support for its transition policy, and sought a broad base of participation at the local level in order to provide a mechanism for change. The result was the development of the concept of the local community transition team, with representation from schools, adult agencies and service providers, parents and advocates actively concerned with and/or involved in providing services to people with disabilities. Between 1986 and 1988, 23 transition teams were established in the state of Oregon. The model proved so successful that several other states also adopted this initiative.

Community Transition Teams are locally controlled bodies whose purpose is to discover and implement new and better ways of providing secondary special education and post school services for students with disabilities, as they make the transition from school into the community.

Concurrent with Oregon's initiative, the state of Minnesota was similarly committed to the concept that improvements in transition education would only result from systemic statewide planning and policy development that could clearly articulate the direction for needed change. A number of initiatives were consequently taken, including the establishment of a State Transition Interagency Committee in 1984, the establishment of an Interagency office on Transition Services within the Minnesota Department of Education in 1985, and the passing of transition legislation in 1987 creating Community Transition Interagency Committees statewide and improving transition planning for students with disabilities.

This legislation helped emphasise the responsibility of the local community in participating in systematic change and improvements in transition services for people with disabilities. This, as in Oregon, was to be accomplished by Community Transition Interagency Committees (CTIC) developing a community plan, that included a mission statement, goals and objectives and an implementation plan that would be evaluated annually.

By late 1990, Minnesota reported 70 Community Transition Interagency Committees were operating throughout the state, the focus of each Committee being to improve outcomes for people with disabilities in employment, home living, education and recreation (Institute of Community Integration, 1990).

Accomplishments of these teams have been wide ranging, and include team building and creating effective structures to address specific goals; preparing resource directories; sponsoring agency fairs; publicity activities, sponsoring of workshops for parents, teachers and agency staff; implementation of a state wide post school follow up system; co-ordinating expanded community transport options; improved integrated recreational and adult learning opportunities; recommendations for improved residential options; increasing employer awareness and job opportunities and

coordinated increase in post secondary options (Institute of Community Integration, 1990).

The experiences in Minnesota have resulted in the conclusion that effective interagency cooperation

> "is an evolutionary process that takes time; time to develop working relationships, time to attain legitimacy within the community, and time to organise and implement goals. Then once this change is taking place, it needs continued attention and support to protect and maintain achievements and make further progress." CTIC 1990.

N.S.W. Transition Education Model

In 1989 the N.S.W. Department of School Education initiated its pilot transition project for students with disabilities. The aim of transition education was to provide opportunities and experience to people with disabilities that will facilitate and enhance their outcomes in employment, residential environment and friendship networks and interactions.

In recognition of the vital role of inter-departmental and interagency cooperation and collaboration at a local as well as at the state and federal levels, the establishment of community transition teams was included as an essential feature of the N.S.W. Transition Education Model.
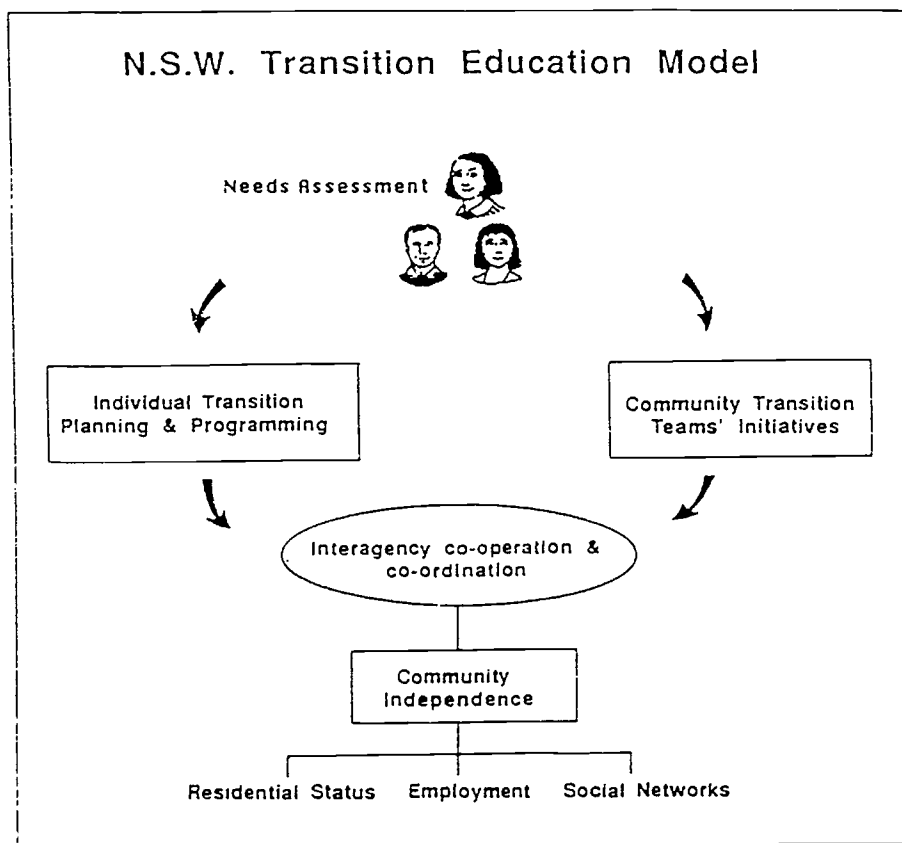
Figure 1: NSW Transition Education Model of Operation

NSW Community Transition Team Model

The community transition team concept that originated in Oregon, USA acknowledged that the building of community transition teams is a process and not a single event. Five distinct phases are involved in this process: team building, needs assessment, program planning, program implementation, and evaluation.

Phase	Task
Team Building	Identify Members
Needs Assessment	Identify Priorities
Program Planning	Develop Annual Plan
Program Implementation	Implement the Annual Plan
Evaluation	Examine how the Plan is Working
	Examine Outcomes
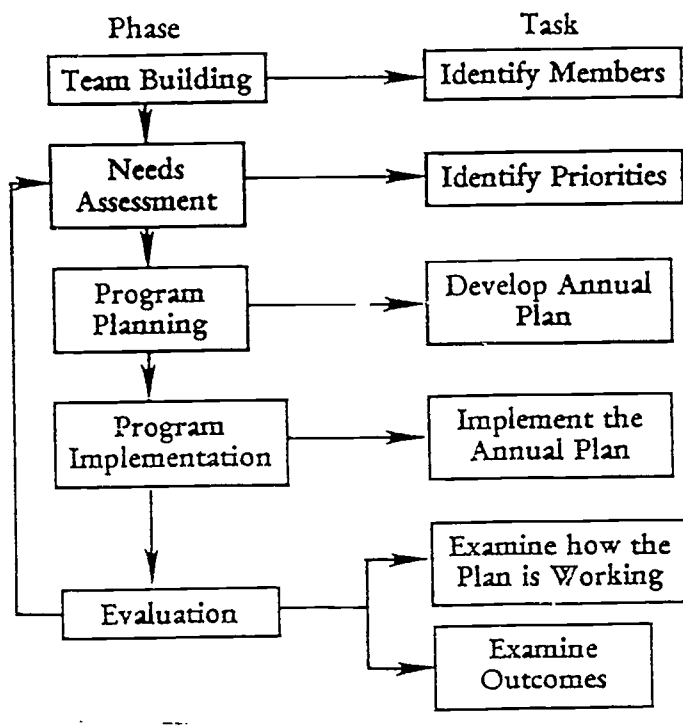
Figure 2: Community Transition Team Model (Halpern & Nelson, 1988)

The NSW pilot project adopted the basic Community Transition Team model (Fig 2), and the establishment of community teams within the pilot areas began in 1989. Initial contact and leadership has been provided by the N.S.W. Department of School Education (DSE) and the Unit for Rehabilitation Studies (URS), Macquarie University, until each local team has been formed (the first 3 Phases in figure 2 above). Once the team has been formed with its first annual plan in place and its own team leaders, the role of the Department of School Education has changed to one of participation at the local level. The role of the URS has also changed to that of providing information and technical assistance where required and assisting each team with its evaluation of annual accomplishments.

Aim

The major emphasis in establishing Community Transition Teams is to assist each community to work co-operatively to assess local as distinct from individual student needs, to identify gaps in service provisions and to promote comprehensive planning and effective service delivery for all students with disabilities in the area.

The major focus of all local community team activity is to promote and enhance community independence for all students with disabilities in a number of major life areas, including continuing education and employment, residential environment, social and interpersonal networks, transportation, and recreation and leisure opportunities.

METHOD
Phase 1 : Team Building

The first task in forming a community transition team involves determination of the team structure including choice of geographical boundaries, size and location of team, and representation of various groups.

Participants in local Community transition teams include representatives from both government and non government areas and team membership aims to reflect and represent the multi-dimensional nature of the community and the services available within it. Members can include:

- students and adults with disabilities
- parents
- advocates
- special education teachers
- regular education teachers
- school principals
- vocational rehabilitation counsellors
- mental health professionals
- vocational training and placement representatives

- employment service specialists
- TAFE and community college representatives
- residential service providers
- therapists
- private industry representatives
- employers
- service club representatives

Several schools catering for students with disabilities had been designated for inclusion in the project in each selected pilot area. The feeder areas for these schools were examined and contact made with as many organisations and individuals as possible to determine the most workable geographic area and to identify the relevant people to be invited to attend the initial interest meeting.

Once relevant prospective team members were identified in each area, invitations to attend a briefing meeting to explain the concept and gain co-operation and commitments to proceed were sent from the Department of School Education . Wherever possible public notices were also placed in newspapers and appropriate publications inviting all interested consumers, parents and service providers to attend.

At these initial meetings a brief summary of Transition Education, its aims, philosophy and background was presented and clarification of the current project and its aims was provided. Explanation was also made concerning the two pronged approach within schools and communities, with emphasis placed upon the need for all to co-operate in order to establish effective school based initiatives and local Community Transition Teams. The steps involved in the first three phases of establishing the local Community Team were explained and discussed, and a general invitation was given to all interested parties to participate.

Phase 2: Needs Assessment

The needs assessment is structured around the concept of program standards or goals that may be targeted for program improvement. The tool used initially was a slightly modified version of a questionnaire designed and constructed by Halpern at the University of Oregon (Halpern & Nelson 1988). A second, more drastically revised form was used in the second year of the project. The format, which is entirely based on self evaluation requires all team members to rate each standard according to :

a) attitude - how important or relevant it is considered and
b) current status - to what extent it is being addressed in the local community.

Each standard is rated using a four point rating scale (0 - 3) for both attitude and current status. These scores are then summed and the relative importance of and extent to which the standard is currently being addressed within the community can be calculated for all respondents. This allows the assessment to be locally referenced to the needs of the individual community, and provides a basis for subsequent planning efforts.

The overall aim is :

- to look carefully at the educational programs available to secondary education students
- the impact these programs have on students
- what happens when students leave school
- what resources are available in the community to assist students with disabilities

Categories included are:

- curriculum and instruction
- coordination and mainstreaming
- transition
- documentation
- administrative support
- adult services

The first teams established in 1989 were asked to attend a second meeting to complete the Needs Assessment. At this meeting the scoring procedure was explained and individuals were given the chance to clarify wording of questions. Additional forms were distributed for individuals who could not attend this meeting, to be completed by the set deadline.

By the second year of the project , many of the new areas coming on line had specifically requested and lobbied to be involved in the project and more information about the concept and role of community transition teams was made available. As most of the new areas were in country regions, increased travel time and costs were incurred. Consequently it was decided to trial the needs assessment form being completed at the briefing meeting rather than hold a separate meeting for this purpose.

Difficulties with length and language in the initial needs assessment form in 1989 also resulted in a subsequent substantial revision of the form. Teams established in 1990 were therefore asked to complete a revised version of the Needs Assessment Form at the first meeting. Provision was made for individuals who could not attend the meeting to complete and return the Needs Assessment by a set date. All completed forms for each area were collected and scored independently by staff of URS, Macquarie University, and/or the Department of School Education.

Priority Standards

Once the opinions of the individual team members had been statistically summarised in terms of the top 20 priorities (1989) or top 10 priorities (1990), a further priority planning meeting was held in each area to determine, from the needs identified, those of highest priority.

The aim of the Priority Meeting was to identify the top three or four priority standards that the community transition team agreed to address in the coming year. In determining which of the standards to address, consideration was given to issues of control, timeliness, people and impact.

These were defined as :

Control : Sufficient control and authority would be available through the team to address this standard effectively.

Timeliness: This standard would be very timely with respect to broad support from service providers, administrators, parents and students.

People: Skilled people would be available in the school, adult service agencies or community to address this standard effectively.

Impact : This standard would make a greater contribution toward improvement of transition services than most of the other standards being considered.

Some teams worked in one large group to determine their priorities while other teams initially divided into smaller groups to discuss and debate the issues, and then resumed as one forum to report back and reach consensus on the standards to be addressed.

Phase 3   Program Planning

The aim of the program planning phase is the development of an annual plan that relates to the priority standards the team wishes to address. The planning process allows team members who represent various agencies and perspectives an opportunity to collaborate and co-operate together while working for a common goal. The result is a written plan of action to be implemented, which summarises :

- the priority standards to be addressed;
- the objectives to be addressed for each priority area;
- for each objective, a set of tasks, timelines, resources, intended outcomes and persons responsible;
- a time / task calendar for the year;
- a budget if applicable;
- team leadership and
- dates and details for future team meetings.

Program planning occurred for each team at a full planning day set aside for the purpose.   Attendance was voluntary and open to all interested parties.   A small number of teachers from the selected pilot schools were provided release from schools and government departments and service providers also requested release for staff to attend the full planning day.   Parents and adults with disabilities were also encouraged to attend.   Costs for the venue, lunches and refreshments were met by the Department of School Education.

Overall leadership throughout the planning day was provided by the staff of DSE and URS, although many of the small group sessions enabled information exchange to occur and local leadership to emerge. A structured format was followed for the day, involving participants in the development of the annual plan. Teams were encouraged, during this process, to reassess and modify as necessary the arbitrary geographical boundaries in use to date.

Teams determined suitable meeting venues, times and dates for the next half year, and an executive committee was established. Copies of the resulting annual plan were typed up and distributed to all participants following the planning day.

Phase 4 : Implementation

Program implementation occurs once the annual plan has been formulated. The strategies employed have depended heavily upon the objectives and tasks set by each team. Most often subcommittees were formed during the planning day to address specific objectives. These subcommittees met on a regular basis to accomplish their set tasks and then report progress, difficulties and results back to the full transition team meetings. Full meetings generally were scheduled to occur on a regular basis e.g. quarterly.

URS and DSE staff have attended several subcommittee meetings on invitation, and as many full team meetings as possible. Several forms of data collection have been used to assist in determining areas of success, implementation problems arising, issues being addressed and operational problems encountered by the various Community Transition Teams. Data collection forms have included meeting minutes, observational data and monitoring of specific inquiries and requests.

Phase 5: Evaluation of Annual Accomplishments

In the program evaluation phase, the annual plan is evaluated to determine whether or not the objectives and tasks were met according to plan, and whether or not the written objectives were appropriate or needed modification.

Evaluation occurs at the end of each year of operation. The evaluation examines both process information and outcomes. The evaluation itself becomes the foundation for the next annual plan - thus it is an on-going process.

Three teams had been operating for fully twelve months by the end of 1990 and each of these teams was assisted by URS staff to complete an evaluation of annual accomplishments. The format, which involved a review of the written annual plan, was prepared by the URS and circulated to each team's executive and subcommittee leaders in advance.

A full team meeting was then held as an afternoon/evening meeting of longer duration than usual, at which time the review of the annual plan was completed by the team members present, and new standards and objectives chosen for action in the coming year. Teams were given the opportunity to reassess both the process as well as the products achieved. A new executive or management committee was also elected at this meeting and meeting dates for the coming year determined. Evaluation meetings were followed by a dinner or social gathering for those able and willing to stay.

Results

The first three Community Transition Teams listed below were established and fully operating by the e..1d of 1989, and by early 1991, ten distinct Community Transition Teams had been established or were in the final planning stages of establishment. These teams were located within seven of the ten education regions of New South Wales :-

- Orange Community Transition Team (Western Region)
- Hills District Community Transition Team Metropolitan West Region)
- Western Sydney Community Transition Team (Metropolitan West Region)
- Inner City West Community Transition Team (Metropolitan East Region)
- Shoalhaven Community Transition Team (Southern Region)
- Coffs Harbour/ Bellingen Community Transition Team (Northern Region)
- City of Bankstown Community Transition Team (Met South West Region)
- Hunter Community Transition Team (Hunter Region)
- Kempsey Community Transition Team (Northern Region)
- Hastings Community Transition Team (Northern Region)

The inclusion of the remaining three N.S.W. Department of School Education regions into the Transition Education Project in 1991 will also involve the establishment of at least one Community Transition Team in each of these regions during 1991 {i.e. North West Region -Tamworth, the Riverina Region -Wagga and Metropolitan North region -Northern Beaches}.

Each phase has posed its own problems and challenges, some of which have been specific to certain localities while others have been found to be more broadly based.

Phase 1 : Team Building

The first difficulty encountered in the establishment of each Community Transition Team has been the determination of the most appropriate geographical boundaries to ensure adequate representation while retaining a local community focus and input.

Initial identification of relevant key players in each community relied heavily upon local contacts and networks. In many cases and particularly for the first teams established, these proved exceedingly difficult to locate. Organisations and groups were found to have very limited collaboration and cooperation in place, school personnel had few contacts, and often networks that did exist relied heavily on individuals who may/ may not have been correctly identified. Not surprisingly then, criticisms were occasionally made that some relevant players had not been contacted. Wherever this occurred, attempts were made to establish personal contact and include them in the team.

The later teams to be established were greatly assisted by the presence of locally based DSE transition co-ordinators, who proved invaluable in identifying and contacting personnel and encouraging participation. Participating schools also encouraged parents to attend the Community Team briefing meetings. Considerable interest was expressed and attendance at meetings, although varying between areas and at different stages of the establishment process, reflected a wide cross section of organisations and service providers, as well as parents and persons with disabilities. Numbers attending establishment meetings are documented in Table 1.

Table 1: Numbers Attending Community Team Establishment Meetings

Area	N Briefing	N Priority	Planning day
Orange-Western Region	36	16	24
Hills - Met West	63	33	41
Inner City West - Met SE	22	24	24
Western Sydney - Met West	29	70	37
Shoalhaven - South Coast	38	25	25
Newcastle - Hunter	30	57	57
Coffs harbour - North Coast	35	31	31
Kempsey - North Coast	*37	*23	20
Hastings - North Coast	*37	*23	30
Bankstown - Met SW	31	31	31

* Joint Meeting

Attendance at the briefing meeting at Coffs Harbour, for example, consisted of 9 Department of School Education personnel, 9 parents, 4 members of local Service Clubs and 13 representatives from other government and non government organisations including specialist employment services and organisations, Tafecom, Family and Community Services (FACS), Developmental Disabilities Service (DDS), the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service (CRS), Further Education Training and Employment (FETE) and Community Transport . As with all teams to date, the involvement of business personnel was very limited.

Most of those attending came following some form of personal contact or invitation. Some difficulties in co-ordinating suitable times for the range of people and organisations involved have been experienced, and two reports from parents (Bankstown and Shoalhaven) have indicated that insufficient notice of the briefing meeting had been given, which may have reduced parent numbers in these cases.

In some communities there appeared to be distrust and even conflict between different agencies, organisations and/or parents, while in other instances private agendas have surfaced. However, working through these challenges has constituted a significant part of the process of team building.

The choice of venue has also been an important factor. Attempts were made to utilise valued community facilities, but difficulties were initially experienced in finding suitable venues with wheelchair access in some towns (e.g. Shoalhaven and Kempsey).

In all instances persons attending the briefing meetings expressed interest and support for the project and endorsed the concept of forming a local community transition team. In each case plans were made for the establishment process to continue at the speed designated by those in attendance at the meeting and dates were set at these meetings accordingly. Those attending the Western Sydney Briefing for example requested that no further meetings (e.g. Needs assessment or priority meetings) be held until sufficient time elapsed for further notices to be published in relevant newspapers.

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The subject of geographic boundaries did not generally cause concern at this point, except in the case of Kempsey / Port Macquarie, where issues such as the distance between the towns and the desire for separate services indicated strong support for the establishment of two separate teams rather than one team servicing the whole area. In response to this, a separate meeting time was made to address the complex issues involved.

Phase 2: Needs Assessment Results

Attendance at the needs assessment meetings (held in the first four pilot areas only) varied, and usually included quite a few individuals who had not attended the briefing meeting. Information therefore had to be presented again before the needs assessment could be completed. Numbers completing the original needs assessment in the first four areas has been presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Return Rates for Original Needs Assessment Forms 1989

Area	Number
Orange - Western Region	17
Met West - Hills	38
Inner City West - Met SE	23
Western Sydney - Met West	*35

* Additional 13 incomplete

Those completing the needs assessments in each area represented a wide cross section of different organisations, service providers and interest groups concerned with all disabilities, in addition to some parents and consumers.

Difficulties were encountered with the length of the questionnaire and the wording of some of the items, which definitely affected the numbers of those completing and/or returning the form in some areas. Problems in completion however can also be attributed to a lack of knowledge within the community about the facilities and services that are being offered and that can be offered.

Members of the first two teams established at Orange and the Hills all completed and returned the form at the needs assessment meeting, but some commented that they had found it difficult for the reasons mentioned above. A number of service providers and teachers from the Inner City West Team at their meeting, expressed grave concern that parents and persons with disabilities to whom they wanted to give the needs assessment would not be able to fill it in because of the terminology and jargon involved. Shortly thereafter a group of over 70 people, meeting at Western Sydney, experienced severe difficulty with the language and length of the form , and many parents in particular were unable and/or refused to complete it.

Consequently the form was substantially revised. The length was reduced by cutting the number of items from 70 to 36 standards, and language simplified as much as possible while still trying to retain the meaning of the standards. The modified Needs Assessment was administered to 6 teams during 1990. No complaints were received about length or language problems from these teams. (See Table 3 for return rates and Appendix 2 for the revised form).

However the number of persons completing the needs assessment at or following the briefing meeting for each of the pilot areas established in 1990 was very small, and perhaps indicates that the provision of another meeting specifically for the needs assessment, although time consuming, does provide individuals with a chance to consolidate information and commitment and increase the numbers participating.

Table 3: Return Rates for Revised Needs Assessment Forms 1990

Area	Number
Shoalhaven - South Coast	18
Newcastle - Hunter	20
Coffs harbour - North Coast	8
Kempsey - North Coast Hastings - North Coast	*20
Bankstown - Met SW	14

A more disturbing problem, and one which undoubtedly had been enmeshed in the length and language difficulty argument concerns the lack of information and knowledge currently experienced by parents, consumers and service providers alike. Knowledge of what is happening within schools, with curriculum and instruction, as well as what services are available in the community is important for accurate and meaningful assessment.

Individuals completing the needs assessment in all areas have encountered problems because they lacked information and knowledge about:
   a) Issues relevant to the school e.g. curriculum and instruction; documentation and co-ordination and mainstreaming
   b) The transition education program and its operation and/or
   c) The provisions and service options available within the local community , knowledge of possible alternatives and the resulting service gaps

The scoring procedure requested that where insufficient knowledge of the current situation exists, that that part of the rating be left blank rather than be guessed at. This enables the importance of the standard to be rated by everyone but allows the current status to be rated only by those who do know the situation. The large number and clustering of blanks in certain sections on completed forms reveals the fact that, across the board, school personnel, parents and post school providers have been largely isolated and unaware of service provisions and the issues involved outside their own domains. Perhaps not surprisingly then, one of the standards consistently appearing as a priority from the needs assessment across all pilot areas has been the need for better access to information and co-ordination of information at all levels.

Priority Standards

All Needs Assessment forms (both original and modified versions) completed in each area were scored independently and the sum totals for each standard listed in priority order. The top 20 (1989) or top 10 (1990) standards identified in each community from the needs assessment were those which the community team members considered to be both
   a) critical, *and*
   b) not being adequately addressed/achieved in the community.

Appendix 2 presents the top 20 priorities (approx) identified by each of the first four community transition teams established in 1989 using the longer original version of the needs assessment. Appendix 3 presents the top 10 priorities (approx), identified by each of the six Community Transition Teams established in 1990 using the modified needs assessment format.

A wide range of standards was selected by the various communities involved, although a number of standards appeared consistently across all communities. Each of the six major categories included in the needs assessment was represented, although the most number of standards selected and the highest number of responses came consistently from the adult services category (See Table 3, figures 3 and 4).

Table 3: Priority Standards Identified by Teams established 1989 and 1990

Categories on Needs Assessment Forms	N Standards 1989	N Selected 1989	Total Response 1989	N Standards 1990	N Selected 1990	Total Responses 1990
Curriculum and Instruction	18	9	15	9	6	8
Co-ordination & Mainstreaming	10	7	13	3	2	2
Transition	11	8	14	8	6	14
Documentation	10	3	8	5	2	2
Administrative Support	5	2	3	2	1	1
Adult Services	16	11	26	9	9	36
Total	70	40	79	36	26	63

Amongst the four original teams established in 1989, as many as 41 of the 70 possible standards (59%) were rated as a priority by at least one team. Moreover 11 of the possible 16 standards within the adult services category were selected, with a total of 26 responses (37%) nominating these standards as critical and needing attention.
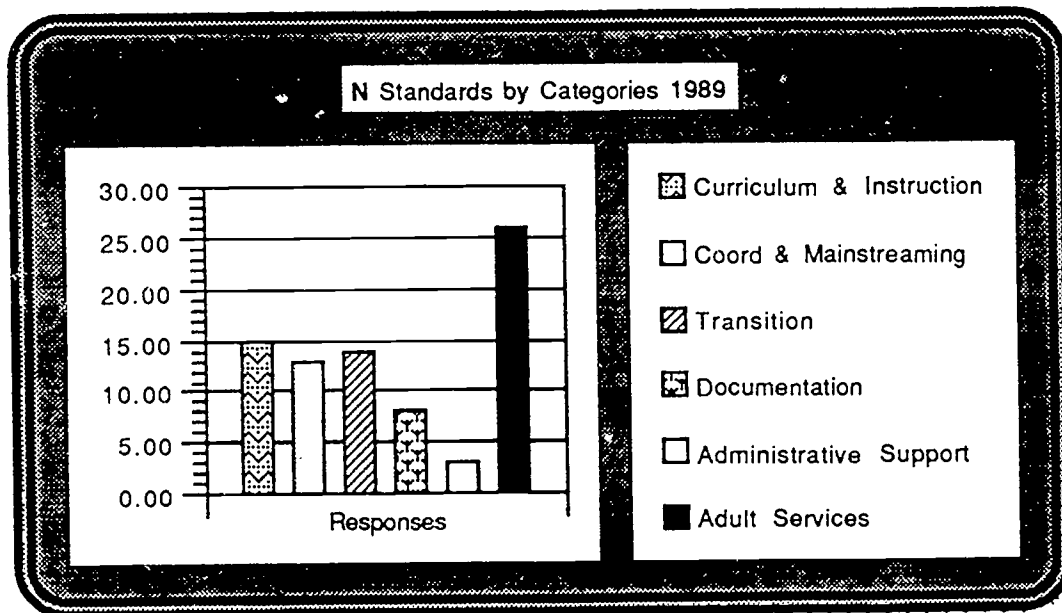
Figure 3: Number of Responses within each Category rated as priorities by Community Transition Teams established 1989

Of the six teams established in 1990, 26 of the 36 standards (72%) were nominated as priorities by at least one team, and selected standards within all categories on the Needs Assessment were again identified as priorities. The highest number of responses (36 or 57%) related to standards from the adult services category, where every one of the nine standards was identified as a priority by at least one team (See table 3 and figure 4).
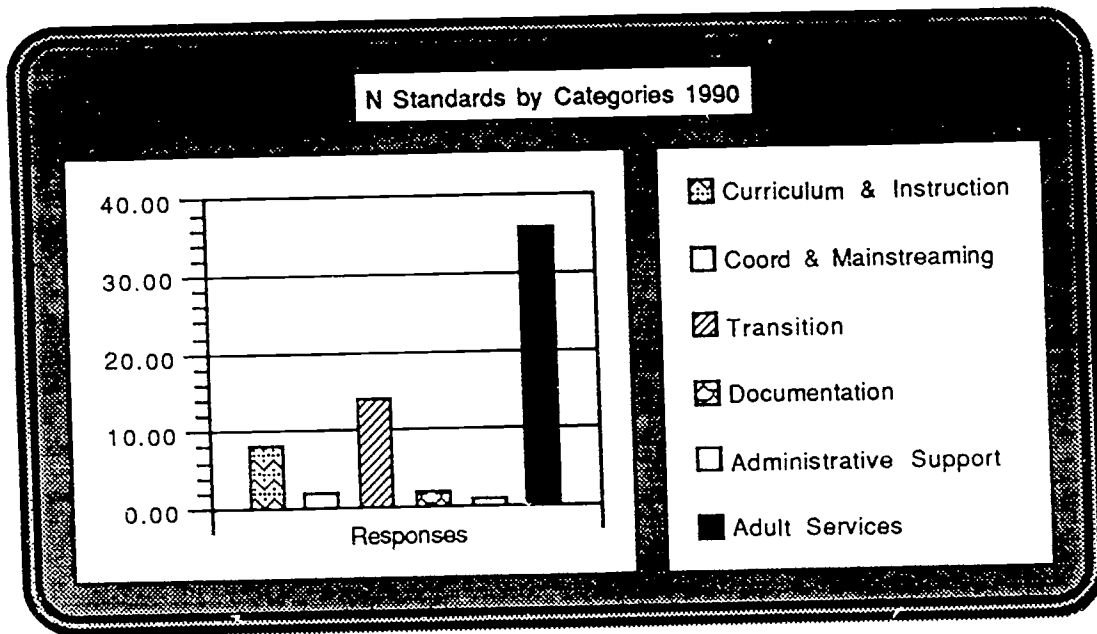
Figure 4: Number of Responses within each Category rated as priorities by Community Transition Teams established 1990

Standards Selected for Action

Numbers tended to diminish at the priority meeting, to such an extent that for the teams established in 1990 - 91 the priority meeting was disbanded and this activity occurred as one of the first tasks of the planning day. Reasons for the decline in numbers is not altogether clear, although the time of the meeting (generally 4.00 - 5.00 pm) and the number of meetings held within a relatively short time span may have been contributing factors.

While incorporating the selection of priorities into the planning day meant numbers did not diminish, it also did not facilitate team building prior to the planning day to the same extent. This team building process is critical, since invariably initial meetings have consisted of many individuals working in the disability field who had had little to no previous contact with each other, despite the fact that they work in related fields and/or live in the same geographic area. Sufficient time is therefore required for these individuals to exchange information about their own services, experiences and needs, and to build relationships and trust to enable them to work together.

The exception to this was in the case of Kempsey and Port Macquarie. These two country towns are approximately 50 kilometres apart, and although they represent two distinct communities, they often share the same government and non government services and/or personnel. Original plans were to combine these communities in one community transition team, however there was divided opinion on the matter.

Consequently needs assessment results were examined separately to estimate the priorities perceived by both communities, and a separate meeting was held following the briefing meeting to communicate these results, to discuss the issue further and determine the most appropriate strategy. The resulting decision was to trial the establishment of two distinct transition teams, but with an overarching management committee consisting of equal representatives from both teams who could coordinate on issues as and when necessary.

Results from the needs assessment were examined and each of the ten teams had the opportunity to add to or modify the standards with the highest ratings before narrowing the selection down to a workable number for inclusion in their annual plans.

Those standards actually targeted for action are summarised in Figure 5 and Table 4. The majority related to the provision of adult services, two dealt with transition (# 34/17 and # 49/25) and one standard (vocational training #5/3) was concerned with school curriculum in combination with adult service provisions in the employment field.
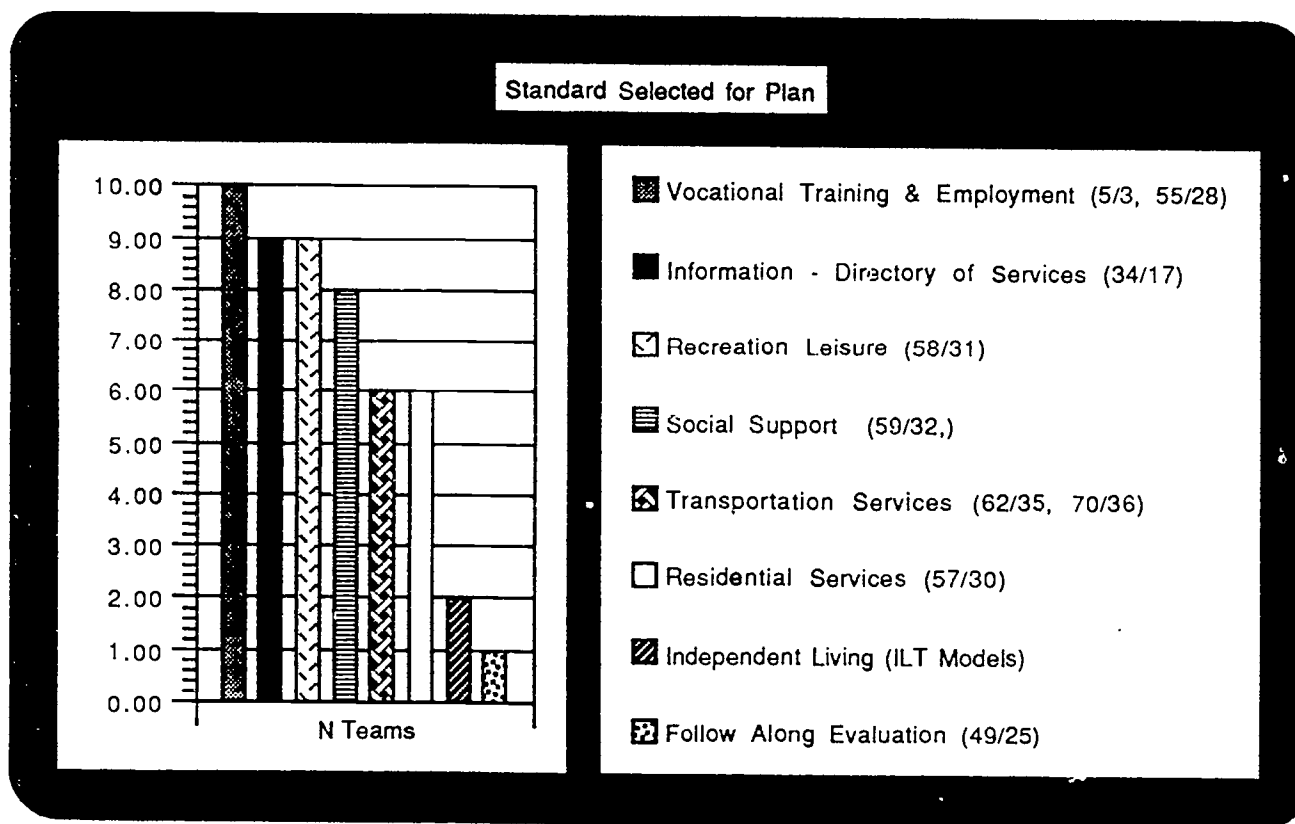
Figure 5: No. of Teams Selecting Standards for Annual Plans in 1989 - 1990

Most community transition teams generally turned attention to the post school/adult service area, where the need for extended and additional services was often seen as paramount. In some cases however this occurred as a reflection of the composition of the team, while in some cases team members felt uninformed and/or unable to tackle issues arising at the school level. Since individual transition planning was being established within the pilot schools, many teams also decided to wait until evaluation results of this process were forthcoming before considering this specific area.

All ten community teams selected school and post school programs in the vocational training/employment area as a top priority for action. The fact that all ten communities included this area highlights the importance attributed to the provision of adequate vocational training programs and real employment options for people with disabilities.

Table 4: Standards Selected for Inclusion in Annual Plans 1989 - 1990

Standard	Teams selecting for Annual Plan
# 34/17: Directory of Services Information exists on the exact type and nature of community services currently available to special education students and graduates.	Hills Inner City West Orange Western Sydney Shoalhaven Bankstown Hunter Coffs Harbour Hastings
# 5/3 Vocational training opportunities include a range of options which are matched properly to the local job markets and provide participants with employment opportunities when completed, and/or **# 55/28: Employment** High quality services and opportunities are available which address the employment needs of school leavers with disabilities	Hills Inner City West Orange Western Sydney Shoalhaven Hunter Bankstown Coffs Harbour Kempsey Hastings
# 59/32 : Social Support and # 58/31 Leisure High quality services and opportunities are available which address the social support and leisure needs of school leavers with disabilities.	Hills Inner City West Orange (2) Hunter Bankstown
# 58/31: Recreation and Leisure High quality services and opportunities are available which address the recreation and leisure needs of school leavers with disabilities.	Western Sydney
# 62/34 + 70/36 : Transport Transportation needs of school leavers with disabilities are addressed by high quality services and opportunities which have adequate and timely referral and eligibility determination procedures operating.	Hills Inner City West Western Sydney
# 57/30 : Residential Services High quality services and opportunities are available which address the residential needs of school leavers with disabilities	Inner City West Hunter Western Sydney
Combination # 57/30,58/31, 59/32, 62/34 High quality services and opportunities are available which address the residential , leisure, social support and transportation needs of school leavers with disabilities	Shoalhaven Bankstown Hastings
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the independent living needs of people with high support needs.	Orange Coffs Harbour Kempsey
# 49/25: Follow Along Tasks Procedures exist for conducting systematic follow up evaluations on the community adjustment and the impact of transition programs and services for students with disabilities who leave school.	Hills

Numbers represent standard numbers per old needs assessment form/new form

Nine of the ten community teams selected the information area (# 34/17 from the transition category) as requiring attention. Objectives were either to supplement and coordinate better information on disabilities within existing information services, or to establish an efficient and effective method of providing up to date information on services to students in transition, their parents and the community.

The only other standard selected outside the adult services category and chosen by the Hills Community Transition Team was Standard 49/25. " *Procedures exist for conducting systematic follow up evaluations on the community adjustment of students with disabilities who leave school either by graduation, by dropping out, or by ageing out.*" Other teams were concerned about this issue but determined not to include it in the action plan for the first year of operation.

The remaining standards and objectives selected all related to examining and improving service provisions for people with disabilities in the areas of social support, recreation and leisure, residential facilities, respite care, transportation, and independent living / non-vocational options for people with high support needs.

Phase 3   Program Planning

Eight Community Transition Teams had completed their first annual plans by the end of 1990, while the remaining two teams - Kempsey and Hastings (Port Macquarie) had each completed their plans by early 1991.

A wide range of agencies and organisations as well as community members were represented at each annual planning day. Attendance at one city based Community Transition Team planning day for example included 5 school personnel; 5 parents; 10 employment agency specialists (government and non government); representatives from 7 agencies specialising in the disability field (Crippled Childrens' Association.; Downs Syndrome Association.; See Organisation; Forsight Foundation; Care Force; Catholic Family Welfare; HADPAC) and 1 Council representative.

Composition of country teams have followed similar patterns, and have included representatives from the Department of School Education concerned with the education of students with hearing impairment, visual impairment, physical disabilities and intellectual disabilities; TAFE Disability consultants; representatives from the Departments of Further Education, Training and Employment (FETE); Industrial Relations, Employment Training and Further Education (DIRETFE); Family and Community Services (FACS); Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS) and Employment, Education and Training (DEET); as well as Home and Community Care workers; Employment Placement Specialists; specific service organisation personnel e.g. local Sheltered Industries and service providers; and representatives from Peak Disability Groups.

Despite the diversity of backgrounds, participants in all ten teams have proven very willing to work together and have volunteered time, information and resources to assist in both developing and implementing the annual plans.

Planning occurred to identify the specific objectives and tasks which would be required to each priority standard selected. The planning stage examined the actions and strategies required to achieve the objectives, and target dates were recorded together with names of volunteers or persons assigned to each task. Subcommittees were then formed with a chairperson to oversee each objective.

The later teams to be established were encouraged to formulate a mission or vision statement, and this process itself has proved a useful exercise for the team members in identifying and clarifying the general scope and purpose of the community transition team.

Costs for the establishment of the teams have been minimal, and usually involved the hire of the venue for the initial briefing meeting and planning day. These initial and non-recurrent costs were met by the Department of School Education.

At the completion of each planning day, a written annual plan had been compiled, which was typed up and distributed to all team members as quickly as possible. Copies are available on request.

Phase 4 : Program Implementation

All ten teams have been meeting on a regular basis, usually every two to three months, while subcommittees meet as frequently as necessary, depending upon the tasks involved. Attendance numbers have fluctuated, but the number of participants attending general meetings for the first four teams established and operating fully twelve months has ranged from 8 to 25. The average attendance for these four teams is 16. The largest team at Western Sydney has averaged 19, and the smallest team in the Inner City West has had an average attendance of 12.

Individual team members have sometimes changed with inevitable job changes, but the range of organisations involved in each team has continued and in some cases grown. Included are usually representatives from local councils, departments and agencies concerned with provision of services in the educational (secondary and tertiary), vocational, residential, recreational, social and interpersonal and transport arenas, in addition to members of peak support groups, parents and consumers.

Full team meetings have generally focussed upon progress reports from subcommittees regarding the tasks and activities as designated in the annual plan, and have provided opportunities for information exchange and discussion of local issues and concerns. Avenues for widening the role of these full team meetings may need to be explored, and methods may be required to involve newcomers to the scene who though keen, often feel ignorant of the background and direction the team is taking and need information to help them assimilate into the team.

In the case of the first teams established, a chairperson or team leader was appointed on a voluntary basis, to coordinate and be responsible for convening full team meetings and encouraging and supporting the subcommittees to work towards their set targets. Experience has shown that this leadership position is vital to maintaining a sense of vision and purpose for the community team, and for stimulating involvement, but that shared responsibility is also necessary.

Consequently all teams have developed or are in the process of moving towards establishing a management structure consisting of a chairperson, a secretary, a treasurer and a school coordinator whose position ensures the linkage between the community team and the local schools. Some teams have also appointed a public relations officer to promote a high media profile regarding the local transition team's existence and activities, and/or the positive outcomes achieved, for example in the employment of people with disabilities.

Phase 5: Evaluation of Annual Accomplishments

By the completion of 1990, three Community Transition Teams had been in operation for fully twelve months, and by May,1991 ali four original pilot community transition teams had been operational for twelve months or more. These teams in the Hills District, Orange, Sydney's Inner City West (ICW) and Penrith, later renamed Western Sydney, were assisted by URS staff to complete their evaluations of annual accomplishments at full team meetings as reviews became appropriate.

Individual team reports of annual accomplishments have been prepared and are held by the teams involved. The following results summarise outcomes according to team accomplishments, difficulties encountered and structural review.

Within the accomplishments section, achievements by the various teams have been presented according to the standards and objectives targeted in the annual plan. Additional accomplishments which were spin off activities not initially planned but which developed out of need or as a consequence of members involvement and activities in sharing information, liaison and cooperation, have also been included.

Some common difficulties were experienced, particularly in terms of getting teams operational and in determining appropriate responses once data had been collected. However a number of difficulties were local and/or specific to certain objectives and tasks, and as such required local solutions.

Teams also reviewed team membership and structure issues and some commonalities and differences have appeared between the teams.

5.1 Community Transition Team Accomplishments

Standard # 34/17: Information
Information exists on the exact type and nature of community services currently available to special education students and graduates.

All four community transition teams (CTT) selected the information area as requiring attention. Most communities felt that there was either a lack of information available, or that information, if available was not comprehensive and was difficult to access, particularly for parents and people with disabilities. In consequence these communities set themseives a major task to develop and distribute a comprehensive directory of services, a task which generally required considerable effort and coordination between services and organisations.

- The Hills CTT developed, produced and launched a directory of services for people with cisabilities that identifies and describes existing services, provides referral and eligibility procedures and will be regularly updated. Printing and production costs were met by the Baulkham Hills Shire Council. Hard copies are being sold at a nominal price and the information base is computerised. Hard copies of the directory have been distributed widely throughout the district and to other community teams around NSW, as well as to Sweden, Yugoslavia and the USA.

- The Orange CTT developed, produced and launched an inter-agency directory which is to be updated annually. Hard copies have been made available to consumers, parents and service providers for a nominal fee;

- The Inner City West (ICW) CTT has been developing both a comprehensive and an abridged version of a directory of services which can be translated into relevant languages for the region's heavily ethnic population. Production, distribution and launch details are well under way;

- Western Sydney CTT has developed a computerised service manual and draft hard copy which geographically covers four Local Government Areas. Printing and distribution strategies are still in the process of being confirmed;

- A funding submission for a comprehensive Resource and Education Service for people with disabilities in Western Sydney has been prepared and is currently being presented for consideration to a Commonwealth Government Department;

- Other Hills CTT activities in the information area included a survey of parents of pupils in the Hills Transition Pilot Schools to discover and identify services actually being accessed. Additional services discovered were forwarded to the Directory of Services subcommittee for inclusion in the next updated directory; and

- Parent awareness and support for the program has been further encouraged through information presented by Hills CTT members to a parent support group in the district regarding innovative programs such as the Transition Program;

- The Orange team organised and held a Support Agencies Information Night where information was given on local support agencies that have tended in the past to be fragmented. This was well attended by service agencies, parents and representatives of people with disabilities;

- The ICW CTT gathered information on numbers of school students with disabilities in the Inner West which was shared with current locally based Adult Service Agencies to assist in future planning.

Standard # 5/3: Vocational training opportunities include a range of options *which are matched properly to the local job markets and provide participants with employment opportunities when completed, and/or*
Standard # 55/28 Employment: High quality services and opportunities are available which address the employment needs of school leavers with disabilities

All four teams had targeted one or both of these standards for action in their annual plans, and each team had active subcommittees to address these issues. The actions taken varied considerably, depending upon the specific needs and interests of the communities concerned.

- The Hills CTT collated information regarding job market opportunities and worked with key community organisations to lend support to relevant funding proposals;

- The same team developed a strategy for obtaining commitments from new employers;

- Liaising through the Hills CTT, school personnel and a job placement agency streamlined referral procedures and fostered a better understanding of the roles of the school and the job placement agency;

- The Orange CTT collected relevant data and made a successful submission to a Government Department for a Workplace Officer to assist in extending employment options for people with disabilities. The Workplace Officer has been employed and is currently operating in this position, and has joined the local Community Transition Team;

- A new Adult / Transition Program was developed and run at Orange TAFE called "Getting Employed, Staying Employed". Copies of this course were distributed to the schools for possible inclusion in school curriculum;

- A small business venture initiated through the transition project for students with severe intellectual disability was supported by the Orange Community team; and

- A team member produced a short paper on employer misconceptions towards employment of persons with disabilities;

- The ICW CTT gathered information and subsequently prepared and distributed a paper reporting on existing employment and training issues affecting people with disabilities in Sydney's Inner West; and

- New work experience options were established between a special school and an employment agency through contacts made in the ICW Community Transition Team, and one student was offered a permanent job in 1991;

- The Western Sydney CTT identified competitive and supported vocational services and resources in the Western Sydney area, together with client groups and numbers being serviced. Identification of service gaps is currently being addressed;

- Competitive and supported employment agencies in Western Sydney have combined through the transition team to promote employment of people with disabilities via the development and production of a glossy brochure, aimed at employers;

- Greater liaison and communication has been encouraged between vocational service groups in the Western Sydney region and a new initiative of the team has been the planning and production of a quarterly newsletter. Additional plans include the holding of a Disabilities Exposition in the region.

Standard # 59/32 : Social Support and # 58/31 Leisure
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the social support and leisure needs of school leavers with disabilities.

Three community teams had targeted objectives within the social support and leisure area for team action. All teams determined that this was a vital area, but some felt they did not have the resources or the time needed for tackling it at this point. There also appeared to be some confusion as to what social support is and what models and methods are available for furthering such support.

- The Hills CTT identified resources to be added to the Directory of Services and then developed a questionnaire regarding the use of existing facilities to gain a clearer understanding of consumer needs. The return rate for the questionnaire was 40 percent;

- One school in the Hills District launched a curriculum initiative in the living skills area for students with high support needs. This included the planning and implementation of a leisure activity, and involved developing personal leisure diaries and social network diaries (user friendly). This curriculum was subsequently extended and used with a junior class of students with mild intellectual disabilities;

- The Orange CTT identified and reviewed current social support services available for people with disabilities in the Orange area. Social support was considered vital and the decision was made to include an objective to promote this in the next annual plan;

- The ICW team spent some time investigating the area, defining social support and examining different models and methods for providing such support. No report was available at the time of the evaluation.

Standard # 58/31: Recreation and Leisure
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the recreation and leisure needs of school leavers with disabilities.

The Western Sydney CTT identified specific recreation and leisure objectives to be addressed in their annual plan, but some spin off activity also occurred because of the networking engendered by the community team meetings.

- The Western Sydney CTT identified recreation and leisure services and resources and this information was forwarded for inclusion in the service manual. Gaps in services and resources are currently being investigated and strategies for addressing these gaps are being sought;

- Members of the ICW CTT established new links between a special school and a local community recreation/leisure service, enabling parents and students with disabilities both information and access to these service.

Standard # 62/34 + 70/36 : Transport
Transportation needs of school leavers with disabilities are addressed by high quality services and opportunities which have adequate and timely referral and eligibility determination procedures operating.

Three of the teams included objectives in their annual plans regarding transport issues for people with disabilities. However difficulties were quickly encountered by several of the subcommittees who have recommended that in some instances paid personnel need to be employed to address the complex issues involved. Only the Western Sydney CTT has carried out extensive work in this area to date.

- The Hills CTT gathered information on existing public transport services in the Hills District;

- The ICW CTT gathered information and prepared and distributed a report detailing transport issues and some recommendations for Sydney's Inner West;

- Western Sydney CTT identified and compiled information on transport options including public bus companies, train services, general taxis and specialised disability transport available to school leavers with disabilities within the four local government areas. Local bus companies were surveyed and it is now possible to map a chart of suburbs and companies servicing them, identifying overlaps in service, train stations serviced and interlocking services/routes. The availability of transport to specific venues was assessed;

- Students with disabilities attending TAFE and nine Western Sydney High Schools who were anticipating leaving school in 1990 were surveyed as to their transport needs. The survey did not include a school for students with severe/moderate intellectual disability. Over 70 percent of the 45 respondents were using and/or planned to use public transport. A need to teach timetabling skills was identified.

- Four Western Sydney Community Transport groups were surveyed and service provisions and service gaps were identified. Data revealed that only 2 percent of community transport is used by people under 25 years of age;

- Supported employment agencies were surveyed re the transport needs of their clients and deficiencies were identified in their ability to provide travel training;

- Contact points for gaining information and filing complaints re transport in Western Sydney were identified and shared with community team members;

- The transport subcommittee of Western Sydney CTT has also actively lobbied for a modified vehicle (Hi-Ace) for Penrith; examined access on State Rail; prepared a letter to the Minister for Transport re a Disability /Access 008 number for public transport users; liaised extensively with several community transport services and investigated wheelchair transport capabilities amongst a community transport group.

Standard # 57/30 :   Residential Services
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the residential needs of school leavers with disabilities

Two communities targeted objectives in residential services for action during 1990.

- The ICW CTT gathered information and developed strategies to address residential issues for people with disabilities. This area has been targeted for continued and concentrated action in the 1991 annual plan;
- Western Sydney CTT developed a data base outling current available residential services in the Penrith, Blacktown, Hawkesbury and Blue Mountains Local Government Areas;
- The same team has partially developed a data base outlining client groups and numbers receiving residential services within the four nominated LGAs.

Independent Living: *High quality services and opportunities are available which address the independent living needs of people with high support needs*

- The Orange CTT collected information on different models and sources of funding for addressing the community independence objectives of people with disabilities unable to compete in the job market.

Standard # 49/25:   Follow Along Tasks
Procedures exist for conducting systematic follow up evaluations on the community adjustment and the impact of transition programs and services for students with disabilities who leave school.

- The Hills CTT developed and field tested a follow along questionnaire to evaluate the community adjustment and the impact of the transition program for students with disabilities who have left school.

5.2 Difficulties Encountered
A number of difficulties were encountered by the Community Transition Teams in attaining the targets set in their annual plans. Some of these difficulties were specific to a team and / or an objective, but several were common problems.

The extensive work done to date by all teams in collecting information and data has increased knowledge and understanding and will in many cases serve as a springboard from which to plan on an ongoing basis. The advances and changes that are being achieved have to be seen as an ongoing process, not an event for the year. In many cases the time required to collect the data has been significant , and often much more than originally envisaged. This time factor has often meant heavy workloads for already busy people, and has been a frustration to some. The dividends from such labour is still in many instances to be seen.

One fairly widespread problem has been insufficient numbers of people for the number of tasks set. Teams had been quite ambitious in the number and complexity of the objectives written in their annual plans. Not surprisingly, where five separate subcommittees were established within one team, occasionally one subcommittee was found unable to achieve its targets. In such cases those subcommittees determined over commitment by certain members, fluctuating attendance at meetings and insufficient numbers as major contributing causes.

High turnover of service personnel was a particular feature in the inner city area but has been noted in several areas. An estimated 1/3rd of all team members in the Inner City West CTT left their positions within the 12 month period of operation. In some cases the incoming staff member attended the team meetings, but this was not always the case. Consequently all teams have found that staff turnover has meant there has to be periodic reviews of membership and frequent attempts to expand the base of the team. Three teams have identified this issue as a major and ongoing objective to be addressed in their second year of operation.

Several objectives were quite complex and required extensive ongoing cooperation and collaboration. For example the development of a proposal for an alternate model of service delivery for students with high support needs, or transport objectives that were hampered by the lack of a coordinated mechanism across the public and private transport sectors. Determination of team members to persevere on such complex tasks requires not just enthusiasm and commitment, but often the involvement of personnel who feel competent in the area and have sufficient knowledge and expertise to provide the needed direction and skill. Such personnel were not always available.

In addition, the more complex the problem, the more essential it is that individuals working on the problem are going in the same direction, are clear about what they are trying to achieve and are using the same methods and strategies. In one or two cases the personnel who attended the annual planning day and had major input into an objective were not the same individuals who subsequently formed the subcommittee and had responsibility for the carriage of the plan. Where this occurred there was some confusion over the original intentions changes in tasks for various reasons and confusion over the expectations of subcommittee members.

The most common difficulty experienced across the teams related to inability to meet the set timeframes. In many instances this was due to unrealistic expectations as to how long tasks would take to complete, particularly in the gathering and checking data stages for service directories, service provisions and service gaps.

The role of school personnel in the community teams has varied dramatically both between and within teams. There does not appear to be any general pattern, as enthusiastic staff from various high schools and special schools have been intimately involved in their teams, whilst staff from some schools appear not to have participated.

The reasons for non participation have included the unsuitability of meeting times set, and involvement in other commitments, but a surprising and disconcerting finding amongst a few school staff was their lack of interest because of their failure to perceive the direct relevance of the community transition team's activities to the school. The emphasis upon post school options has no doubt influenced this perception, and suggests that further exploration and attention by community transition teams to standards relating to school curriculum and instruction at the secondary level may be well worth pursuing.

Students from schools represented have in the main benefited directly, with increased access to services, better information and direct liaison with organisation staff. Schools that have not participated may not have enjoyed these benefits, and occasional frustration has been expressed by some community personnel who desire to work specifically with school personnel and increase the links already begun.

Other more specific and idiosyncratic difficulties relating to particular objectives have been experienced, for example incomplete information returned in surveys etc. In the main teams have been able to solve these problems or where necessary make modifications to their plans.

Efforts to address some of the above issues have resulted in some teams planning to lessen the number of objectives to be addressed at any one time in 1991 - 1992, and so consolidate efforts while sharing the burden of extra work more evenly.

5.3 Team Structure

Team members attend on a voluntary basis, in their own free time, and as previously mentioned, are often individuals who already have heavy work commitments. Inevitably the blend of leadership skills, complimentary personalities, relevance of objectives and tasks to personal interests and shared enthusiasm have and will continue to have distinct effects upon attendance and continued commitment and success.

For these first four teams established, the responsibility for overall leadership had generally fallen to one individual who in each instance has contributed significantly to the success of the team. However the demands placed upon these people made it obvious that such leadership should be shared, and each team has subsequently, at their evaluation meetings, elected a committee to share the load.

All four teams appear to have established a working geographical area and base, and no concern was expressed at this time about the need to modify these areas.

Most teams have felt the need for creating a distinct identity and have chosen names and developed letterheads to reflect this. Costs for the ongoing running of the teams e.g. for postage and phone calls have to date been kept to a minimal and have generally been met by team members themselves and/or out of an establishment grant of several hundred dollars per team from the Department of School Education. Regular meeting venues have been obtained which meet access requirements and are rent free.

Some office support has proved necessary, in some cases for preparing documents and submissions, in other cases for typing up and distributing minutes of meetings and advance notices of future meetings and events. Teams have solved this issue in various ways, through the provision of voluntary resources available to the particular community. A range of government and non government offices, staff and parents have volunteered assistance in this.

The time chosen for full team meetings appears to be critical for attendance and poses a problem still being addressed by many teams. The use of the 4.00 - 5.00 pm time slot which had initially been selected by most teams appears to suit service providers and some school staff, but not parents, particularly parents who have students with disabilities still living at home. Meetings held during the day excluded teaching staff who cannot leave lessons, and people with disabilities and parents who are studying

and/or working. Evening meetings however often fail to suit service providers who do not necessarily live within or even close to the geographic area. Some teams are coping with this difficulty by trialing different meeting times and/or by rotating time slots.

Concern was expressed by all four teams that team membership, while diverse, should be further broadened. In particular, people with disabilities themselves, parents and employers were considered key players whose contribution could and should be further extended. Teams have set objectives accordingly and will attempt to increase both the numbers and range of members involved during the coming year.

Observation of team meetings disclosed the fluctuating nature and seasons of the group process operating, such that for each team, some meetings appeared dynamic, creative and effective while others lethargic, or lacking clear direction or leadership. Commitment is required to persevere through the more difficult times which are inevitable in any group process. Several suggestions have been made however that some full team meetings could be targeted for specific purposes, such as key speakers addressing topics relevant to the community and information being supplied to target audiences.

Discussion

The process model trialed in the establishment of NSW Community Transition Teams has to date proved successful, as ten local teams are currently functioning within the state and four have completed their first full year of operation. A detailed flowchart depicting the critical steps involved has been presented in Figure 6.

A significant number of initiatives have been taken by those community transition teams in their first year of operation, while a number of data collection activities provide a springboard for further planning and activity.

A common response to the identification of needs and gaps in post secondary service delivery has been the planning and/or development of submissions for funding bodies to extend services or create new services within the designated areas. Teams have recognised the importance of having members involved who have the requisite skills to plan and assist in submission writing so that chances are maximised for achieving government support for projects. However there is a danger in assuming that government funding is the only course of action available. It is recognised that the funding bucket is not limitless, and one of the strengths of the community teams may be their ability to work together to discover alternative and innovative solutions at the local level. The range and number of new initiatives and achievements already begun bears witness to this potential.

One concern being raised and investigated by several teams is the issue of incorporation. In many instances teams have collected data and identified areas where services need to be extended and/or new services established to fill gaps in service delivery. As already indicated, once these deficiencies have been identified, teams have generally been keen to prepare funding submissions and to work towards promoting these services. In cases where no appropriate organisation or agency exists to run such a service, some community transition teams are being placed in the position of either having to locate a suitable auspicing body or of taking steps to incorporate and provide the service itself.

Phase 1: Build Team → Determine Team Structure → Membership → Hold Briefing

Phase 2: Assess Needs → Complete Needs Assessment → Analyse Results → Determine Community Priorities

Phase 3: Develop Annual Plan → Develop Mission Statement → Finalise Team Structure → Determine Boundaries → Set Meeting Dates

Set Objectives → Determine Tasks → Choose Strategies → Set Target dates → Secure Personnel

Phase 4: Implement Plan → Full Team Meetings → Subcommittee Meetings

Phase 5: Evaluate Accomplishments → Review Team Structure → Membership → Annual Achievements → Review Community Needs → Develop New Annual Plan

NSW Community Transition

Figure 6: NSW Community Transition Team Process

Where direct service provision (e.g. for employment, residential services etc.) is involved, this position may place team members in difficult and conflicting situations, since they may then be employed by a competing agency. The function and role of the local community transition team in these cases needs to be clearly identified and clarified. A representative and accredited transition project management structure that can provide policy and guidance on these types of issues has become an urgent priority.

The establishment of a community identity and community cooperation is not automatic, and geographical boundaries have not always proved the best criteria for delineating a community. Many teams in both city and country areas have experienced difficulties in determining their boundaries, particularly when students with disabilities in transition travel across areas to access services, and when service personnel are shared across communities. Some service providers have also found themselves involved in more than one community team, in particular those in Western Sydney and the Hills District, and in Kempsey and Port Macquarie.

Smaller communities face the problem of retaining their own identity but chancing powerlessness by remaining separated from larger active communities nearby. This is a problem still to be solved as more communities come "on line" across the state.

Naturally the process of developing good working relationships between the various groups or parties involved requires time and sensitivity. People with disabilities, parents and service providers can have quite different orientations and expectations and these all have to be considered for the teams to have ongoing value and relevance to all the parties involved. Team membership has to date been strongly influenced by the predominance of service providers, who have found the community transition teams providing them with a useful and effective method of networking and enjoying the cooperation and collaboration so frequently desired. As teams broaden their bases in terms of membership, new challenges will have to be faced, but new opportunities may also be created.

The heavy focus on the adult service area has in a few instances meant the lesser involvement of some high school personnel who have not perceived the community transition team as being directly relevant to them. Lack of employers and business personnel has been noticeable and may continue to be a feature of the teams unless employers have a personal interest and unless new strategies can be developed to attract their involvement. People with disabilities themselves have also not been strongly represented to date, and the attraction of these key personnel to local teams will no doubt change their focus to some extent. Attention to problems and issues other than post school service provisions may need to be carefully examined by individual teams so that the needs and interests of all the players can be considered.

Changes in personnel have already occurred and turnover of staffing has been significant in some areas. These changes have had implications for community transition teams as new team members who were not involved in the annual plan have come, sometimes with new and different ideas which do not always match those set down in the original plan. Commitment to certain objectives in the annual plan has also been found to vary, depending upon the participants own interests and concerns. The task of steering such teams is not easy but those involved have been quick to affirm the importance and the benefits attached to this endeavour.

Networking within teams has been fostered, while informal networking between various community transition teams has also occurred. A number of team leaders and designated team members have made telephone and/or personal contact with members from other teams to discuss issues and to share information and resources on methods of functioning and strategies for achieving objectives.

This important communication function has in many instances been stimulated by the attendance at some community team meetings by representatives from external parties such as URS staff, and/or central office Special Education Transition personnel. While communities need to tackle their own problems their own way, nevertheless they can often feel isolated and impotent, and have generally sought and welcomed such external involvement for the extra information and input provided. Such involvement has also provided a support role and linkage between the various communities, enabling common themes and solution to problems to be shared and assisting to break down feelings of ignorance and isolation. Many teams have indicated the importance and relevance of such input and communicated their desire for its continuance.

The establishment of a networking structure between the communities might therefore be a significant area to investigate in terms of how best to provide ongoing information flow and technical support. The provision of annual or six monthly team leader meetings and training sessions appears essential, and would be a small price to pay for the support of community teams that are in essence totally voluntary and cost free.

Conclusion

The enthusiasm and support given by people from many different agencies and quarters to the concept and practice of working together through community transition teams has so far been very encouraging. The results of these efforts are beginning to impact the local communities and hopefully the lives of people with disabilities who are in transition and beyond. A key to continued sussess may well be the ability of the overall management structure to provide critical support and guidance to these teams.

Communities have been keen to participate and three additional teams are already being planned or are in the first stages of the establishment process. As with any endeavour, there have been obstacles and difficulties encountered in the outworking of this initiative, but the community transition teams have provided in many instances the first real opportunities for all parties concerned at the local level to plan and work productively together. The process model involving the mechanism of a needs assessment, annual planning and review has demonstrated that persons with different perspectives can work successfully towards achieving common goals in creating greater life opportunities for people with disabilities.

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Appendix 1: Original Needs Assessment Format

Reprinted with the permission of
Professor A.S. Halpern,
University of Oregon,
1991.

Proposed Standards for Evaluating the Quality of Secondary Special Education, Transition and Adult Service Programmes
Information

Name   :   _____   Date   :   _____

Transition   Team   Location   :   _____

Agency   Affiiiation   :   _____

Parent of a child with a disability :   Yes   No

Employer of a person with a disability :   Yes   No

Proposed Standards for Evaluating the Quality of Secondary Special Education, Transition and Adult Service Programmes
Information

For each standard listed below, indicate the value you attach to this standard and the extent to which your programme is meeting the standard. As in the following example, circle one number only for each scale.

Transition team members have the mild manners of Clark Kent, the endurance of King Kong and the humour of Phyllis Diller.

Value					Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

Curriculum and Instruction

1. Students with disabilities have complete access to the regular academic curriculum

Value					Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

2. Students with disabilities have complete access to remedial academic instruction.

Value					Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

3. Students with disabilities have complete access to the regular careers curriculum.

Value					Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

4. Students with disabilities have complete access to specialised vocational instruction.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

5. Vocational training opportunities include a wide array of options, which are properly referenced to the job markets that will be available when training is done.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

6. Community based instruction is available as one option within the vocational curriculum.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

7. One component of community based instruction in the vocational curriculum is actual job experience.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

8. Students with disabilities have complete access to specialised instruction in independent living.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

9. Community based instruction is available as one option within the independent living curriculum.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

10. Students with disabilities have complete access to specialised instruction in social/interpersonal skills.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

11. Community based instruction is available as one option within the personal/social curriculum.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

12. Procedures have been developed for placing all students properly within the array of curricular opportunities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

13. Procedures exist for securing parent involvement in instructional placement decisions for their child with a disability.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

14. Instructional procedures for students with disabilities include a systematic component that deals with maintenance and generalisation of student learning.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

15. Curriculum materials used with special education students are age appropriate.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

16. Procedures exist for regularly receiving and reviewing new curricular materials that are relevant to secondary special education.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

17. Procedures exist for evaluating the impact of the curriculum in terms of student learning outcomes.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

18. Specific programmes exist for facilitating the social integration of all students with disabilities, especially those with severe disabilities who otherwise would have little opportunity for integration into the regular school programme.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

Co-ordination and Mainstreaming

19. Students with disabilities have opportunities to learn prerequisite entry skills that are needed for participation in the regular vocational curriculum.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

20. Teachers of regular academic courses are provided with assistance in adapting their instruction in order to meet the needs and entry skills of students with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

21. Teachers of career (TAFE/other agencies) courses are provided with assistance in adapting their instruction in order to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

22. Negative attitudes of regular academic and career education teachers toward special education are acknowledged, when such attitudes exist and specific activities are undertaken to change such attitudes.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

23. One or more people are specifically designated to co-ordinate the relationships between special education and the regular academic programme.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

24. One or more people are specifically designated to co-ordinate the relationships between special education and the career courses organised by TAFE/other agencies.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

25. Collaborations between special education and the regular academic programme are formalised in a written agreement.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

26. Collaborations between special education and the career courses in TAFE/other agencies are formalised in a written agreement.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

27. Procedures exist for evaluating the effectiveness of programme co-ordination efforts between special education and the regular academic and career programmes.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

28. Procedures exist for securing parent involvement in monitoring and evaluating school programmes for their child with a disability.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

Transition

29. Transition goals are addressed as part of the planning process for students with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

30. Employment objectives are addressed in the transition planning process, when appropriate.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

31. Independent living objectives are addressed in the transition planning process, when appropriate.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

32. Social/interpersonal objectives are addressed in the transition planning process, when appropriate.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

33. Post secondary educational objectives are addressed in the transition planning process, when appropriate.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

34. Information exists on the exact type and nature of community services currently available to special education students and graduates.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

35. Collaborations between special education and relevant adult agencies, for the purpose of transition services, are formalised in a written agreement.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

36. One or more persons are specifically designated to co-ordinate the transition related activities of schools and adult service agencies.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

37. Procedures exist for securing parent involvement in the transition planning process for their child with a disability.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

38. Procedures exist for securing parent involvement in the transition implementation process for their child with a disability.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

39. Procedures exist for evaluating the impact of transition orogrammes and services.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

Documentation

40. Demographic information (age, gender, ethnicity and type of disability) is available for special education students currently enrolled in regular (academic and career) and special education programmes.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

41. Individual Educational Plans routinely exist and include information on academic objectives for students with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1 ·	2	3

42. IEPs routinely include information on career objectives for students with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

43. IEPs routinely include information on independent living objectives for students with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

44. IEPs routinely include information on social/interpersonal objectives for students with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

45. Transition activies are documented through the utilisation of a formal Individualised Transition Plan (ITP).

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

46. ITPs are developed no later than Year 8 and are reviewed at least annually.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

47. Well defined criteria exist for determining who may receive a school certificate and/or a certificate of attainment.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

48. Demographic information (age, gender, ethnicity and type of disability) is available for special education students with respect to the manner in which they exit from school (graduate with school certificate, graduate with certificate of attainment, drop out, age out).

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

49. Procedures exist for conducting systematic follow up evaluations on the community adjustment of students with disabilities who leave school either by graduation, by dropping out, or by ageing out.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

Administrative Support

50. The school special education co-ordinator, the school principal and the regional special education consultant are all supportive of secondary special education programmes.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

51. Work load assignments to teachers include adequate time to prepare lessons.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

52. Procedures exist for using aides and volunteers effectively within the instructional programme.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

53. Appropriate in-service training is regularly provided to personnel who are responsible for secondary special education.   .

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

54. There is a discrete Regional Special Education Committee, consisting of school staff, community agency representatives, parents, students, former students and employers, which meets regularly to monitor, evaluate and recommend improvements for the secondary special education programme.

Value					Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

Adult Services

55. High quality services and opportunites are available which address the employment needs of school leavers with disabilities.

Value					Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

56. High quality services and opportunities are available which address the income maintenance needs of school leavers with disabilities.

Value					Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

57. High quality services and opportunities are available which address the residential needs of school leavers with disabilities.

Value					Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

58. High quality services and opportunties are available which address the leisure needs of school leavers with disabilities.

Value					Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

59. High quality services and opportunities are available which address the social support needs of school leavers with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

60. High quality services and opportunities are available which address the adult education needs of school leavers with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

61. High quality services and opportunities are available which address the health care needs of school leavers with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

62. High quality services and opportunities are available which address the transportation needs of school leavers with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

63. Referral and eligibility determination procedures are adequate and timely for employment services that are available to school leavers with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

64. Referral and eligibility determination procedures are adequate and timely for income maintenance services that are available to school leavers with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

65. Referral and eligibility determinaticn procedures are adequate and timely for residential services that are available to school leavers with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

66. Referral and eligibility determination procedures are adequate and timely for leisure services that are available to school leavers with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

67. Referral and eligibility determination procedures are adequate and timely for social support services that are available to school leavers with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

68. Referral and eligibility determination procedures are adequate and timely for adult education services that are available to school leavers with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

69. Referral and eligibility determination procedures are adequate and timely for healtb care services that are available to school leavers with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

70. Referral and eligibility determination procedures are adequate and timely for transportation services that are available to school leavers with disabilities.

Value				Current Status			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

Appendix 2:
Needs Assessment
Modified Version used 1990

Proposed Standards for Evaluating the Quality of Secondary Special Education, Transition and Adult Service Programmes
Information

For each standard listed below, indicate the value you attach to this standard and the extent to which your programme is meeting the standard. As in the following example, circle one number only for each scale.

Transition team members have the mild manners of Clark Kent, the endurance of Cliff Young and the humour of Paul Hogan.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Crucal	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

Curriculum and Instruction

1. Students with disabilities have complete access to the regular academic curriculum.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

2. Students with disabilities have complete access to specialised vocational instruction.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

3. Vocational training opportunities include a wide range of options, which are matched properly to local job markets and provide participants with employment opportunities when completed.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

4. Students with disabilities have complete access to specialised teaching in independent living skills.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Crucal	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

5. Students with disabilities have complete access to specialised teaching in social/interpersonal skills.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Crucal	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

6. Teaching methods for students with disabilities involves a step by step approach that deals with both the continuance and application of learned skills across a number of community environments.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Crucal	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

7. Curriculum materials used with special education students are age appropriate.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Crucal	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

8. Methods exist for evaluating the impact of the school curriculum in terms of student learning outcomes. i.e. how successful are the programs.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Crucal	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

9. Specific programmes exist to allow for social integration of students with disabilities with regular school classes, especially those with severe disabilities.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Crucal	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

Co-ordination and Mainstreaming

10. Teachers of regular mainstream classes are provided with assistance and support in adapting their teaching methods to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

11. Vocational trainers are provided with assistance in adapting their teaching in order to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

12. Methods exist for evaluating the effectiveness of programme co-ordination efforts between special education and the mainstream teachers and career vocational programmes.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

Transition
(From School to Community and Employment)

13. Employment objectives are addressed in the transition planning process, when appropriate.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

14. Independent living objectives are addressed in the transition planning process, when appropriate.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

15. Social/interpersonal objectives are addressed in the transition planning process, when appropriate.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

16. Post school educational objectives are addressed in the transition planning process, when appropriate.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

17. Information exists within the community on the exact type and nature of community services currently available to special education students and graduates.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

18. One or more persons are allocated the specific role of co-ordinating the transition related activities of schools and adult service agencies within the community.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

19. Methods exist for involving parents in the transition planning process for their child with a disability.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

20. Methods exist for evaluating the impact of transition programmes and services.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

Documentation

21. Information required for planning and follow up (age, gender, ethnicity and type of disability) is available for special education students.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

22. Transition activities are documented through the development of a formal Individualised Transition Plan (ITP).

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

23. ITPs are developed no later than Year 8 and are reviewed at least annually.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

24. Well defined criteria exist for determining who may receive a school certificate and/or a certificate of attainment.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

25. Methods exist for conducting systematic follow up evaluations on the community independence of students with disabilities who leave school.

Attitude					What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0		0	1	2	3

Administrative Support

26. Methods exist for using aides and volunteers effectively within the teaching program.

Attitude				What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

27. Appropriate in-service training is regularly provided to personnel who are responsible for students in transition.

Attitude				What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

Adult Services

28. High quality services and opportunities are available w ich address the employment needs of school leavers with disabilities.

Attitude				What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

29. High quality services and opportunities are available which address the income maintenance needs of school leavers with disabilities.

Attitude				What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

30. High quality services and opportunities are available which address the residential needs of school leavers with disabilities.

Attitude				What is Happening Now			
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
3	2	1	0	0	1	2	3

31. High quality services and opportunities are available which address the leisure needs of school leavers with disabilities.

	Attitude		
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
3	2	1	0

What is Happening Now			
Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
0	1	2	3

32. High quality services and opportunities are available which address the social support needs of school leavers with disabilities.

	Attitude		
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
3	2	1	0

What is Happening Now			
Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
0	1	2	3

33. High quality services and opportunities are available which address the adult education needs of school leavers with disabilities.

	Attitude		
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
3	2	1	0

What is Happening Now			
Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
0	1	2	3

34. High quality services and opportunities are available which address the health care needs of school leavers with disabilities.

	Attitude		
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
3	2	1	0

What is Happening Now			
Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
0	1	2	3

35. High quality services and opportunities are available which address the transportation needs of school leavers with disabilities.

	Attitude		
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
3	2	1	0

What is Happening Now			
Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
0	1	2	3

36. Referral and eligibility information is adequate for all community services that are available to school leavers with disabilities.

	Attitude		
Critical	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
3	2	1	0

What is Happening Now			
Completely Achieved	Mostly Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
0	1	2	3

Appendix 3: Top Priority Standards - Community Transition Teams 1989.

Priority Standards	Hills	Orange	Inner City	West	Western Sydney	Total
Procedures exist for conducting systematic follow up evaluations on the community adjustment of students with disabilities who leave school either by graduation, by dropping out, or by ageing out. (#49)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	4
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the social support needs of school leavers with disabilities. (#59)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	4
Procedures exist for evaluating the impact of transition programs and services. (#39)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	4
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the employment needs of school leavers with disabilities. (#55)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	4
Teachers of regular academic courses are provided with assistance in adapting their instruction in order to meet the needs and entry skills of students with disabilities. (#20)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	4
Vocational training opportunities include a wide array of options, which are properly referenced to the job markets that will be available when training is done. (#5)	✓	✓	✓		✓	3
ITPs are developed no later than year 8 and are reviewed at least annually. (#46)	✓	✓	✓	✓		3
Specific programs exist for facilitating the social integration of all students with disabilities, especially those with severe disabilities who otherwise would have little opportunity for integration into the regular school program. (#18)	✓	✓	✓	✓		3
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the transportation needs of school leavers with disabilities. (#62)	✓		✓	✓	✓	3
Teachers of career (TAFE/other agencies) courses are provided with assistance in adapting their instruction in order to meet the needs of students with disabilities. (#21)	✓	✓		✓	✓	3
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the income maintenance needs of school leavers with disabilities. (#56)	✓	✓		✓	✓	3
Information exists on the exact type and nature of community services currently available to special education students and graduates. (#34)	✓	✓		✓	✓	3
Procedures have been developed for placing all students properly within the array of curricular opportunities. (#12)		✓	✓	✓	✓	3
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the residential needs of school leavers with disabilities. (#57)		✓	✓	✓	✓	3

Statement					Value
Negative attitudes of regular and career education teachers towards special education are acknowledged, when such attitudes exist and specific activities are undertaken to change such attitudes (#22)	✔			✔	2
Referral and eligibility determination procedures are adequate and timely for employment services that are available to school leavers with disabilities. (#63)	✔		✔		2
Transition goals are addressed as part of the planning process for students with disabilities. (#29)	✔		✔		2
Referral and eligibility determination procedures are adequate and timely for transportation services that are available to school leavers with disabilities. (#70)	✔	✔	✔		2
There is a discrete Regional Special Education Committee, consisting of school staff, community agency representatives, parents, students, former students and employers, which meets regularly to monitor, evaluate and recommend improvements for the secondary special education program. (#54)	✔	✔	✔		2
Students with disabilities have complete access to specialised vocational instruction (#4)	✔				1
Referral and eligibility determination procedures are adequate and timely for income maintenance services that are available to school leavers with disabilities. (#64)	✔				1
Procedures exist for evaluating the impact of curriculum in terms of student learning outcomes (#7)	✔				1
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the leisure needs of school leavers with disabilities. (#58)	✔				1
Transition activities are documented through the utilisation of a formal Individualised Transition Plan. (#45)		✔			1
Community based instruction is available as one option within the independent living curriculum. (#9)		✔			1
Work load assignments to teachers include adequate time to prepare lessons. (#51)		✔			1
Procedures exist for securing parent involvement in the transition planning process for their child with a disability. (#37)		✔			1
Referral and eligibility determination procedures are adequate and timely for residential services that are available to school leavers with disabilities.ß (#65)		✔			1
Employment objectives are addressed in the transition planning process, when appropriate. (#30)		✔			1
Procedures exist for securing parent involvement in the transition implementation process for their child with a disability. (#38)		✔			1
Students with disabilities have complete access to the regular careers curriculum. (#3)			✔		1
Students with disabilities have opportunities to learn prerequisite entry skills that are needed for participation in the regular vocational curriculum. (#19)			✔		1

Statement					
Independent living objectives are addressed in the transition planning process, where appropriate. (#31)			✓		1
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the adult education needs of school leavers with disabilities. (#60)			✓	✓	2
Students with disabilities have complete access to specialised instruction in social/interpersonal skills. (#10)				✓	1
Procedures exist for evaluating the effectiveness of program coordination efforts between special education and the regular academic and career programs. (#27)				✓	1
Community based instruction is available as one option within the personal/social curriculum. (#11)				✓	1
One or more people are specifically designated to coordinate the relationships between special education and the career courses. (#24)				✓	1
Collaborations between special education and the career courses in TAFE / other agencies are formalised in a written agreement. (#26)				✓	1
Post secondary educational objectives are addressed in the transition planning process, when appropriate. (#33)				✓	1
Total	20	18	21	20	79

Appendix 4: Top Priority Standards - Community Transition Teams 1990

Priority Standards	Shoal-haven	Hunter	Coffs Harbour	Kempsey	Hastings	Bankstown	Total
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the employment needs of school leavers with disabilities. (#28)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the income maintenance needs of school leavers with disabilities. (#29)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6
Information exists within the community on the exact type and nature of community services currently available to special education students and graduates. (#17)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	5
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the residential needs of school leavers with disabilities. (#30)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	5
One or more persons are allocated the specific role of coordinating the transition related activities of schools and adult agencies within the community. (#18)	✓	✓			✓	✓	4
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the social support needs of school leavers with disabilities. (#32)		✓		✓	✓	✓	4
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the adult education needs of school leavers with disabilities. (#33)	✓		✓	✓	✓		4
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the leisure needs of school leavers with disabilities. (#31)	✓	✓			✓		3
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the transportation needs of school leavers with disabilities. (#35)	✓		✓			✓	3
Referral and eligibility information is adequate for all community services that are available to school leavers with disabilities. (#36)	✓	✓				✓	3
Vocational training opportunities include a wide range of options, which are matched properly to local job markets and provide participants with employment opportunities when completed. (# 3)			✓	✓		✓	3
High quality services and opportunities are available which address the transportation needs of school leavers with disabilities. (#34)			✓	✓			2
Methods exist for evaluating the impact of transition services and programs. (#20)		✓					1
Methods exist for conducting systematic follow up evaluations of the community independence of students with disabilities who leave school. (#25)		✓					1
Student with disabilities have complete access to specialised vocational instruction (#2)			✓				1

Statement							
Student with disabilities have complete access to specialised teaching in independent living skills (#4)			✓				1
Students with disabilities have complete access to specialised teaching in social interpersonal skills (#5)			✓				1
Teachers of regular mainstream classes are provided with assistance and support in adapting their teaching methods to meet the needs of students with disabilities. (#10)						✓	1
Methods exist for evaluating the effectiveness of program coordination efforts between special education and mainstream teachers and career and vocational programs. (#12)				✓			1
Transition activities are documented through the development of a formal Individualised Transition Plan (ITP). (#22)				✓			1
Independent living objectives are addressed in the transition planning process, when appropriate.(#14)					✓		1
Employment objectives are addressed in the transition planning process, when appropriate. (#13)					✓		1
Curriculum materials used with special education students are age appropriate. (#7)					✓		1
Teaching methods for students with disabilities involves a step by step approach that deals with both the continuance and application of learned skills across a number of community environments. (#6)					✓		1
Methods exist for using aides and volunteers effectively within the teaching program. (#26)							1
Methods exist for involving parents in the transition planning process for their child with a disability. (#19)	✓					✓	2
Total	10	10	11	11	10	11	63