



SEEING THE BIG PICTURE:

Connectivity, Community,
and Creativity

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**If you begin
to feel like
this...**



The Magic Word Is...



Disclaimer:

If something is said today that is ???, the magic word is ouch. I just ask that you please explain your "boo-boo".

Think about your child/family member/friend. If you could create the ideal environment for them, what would that look like?

Consider instruction, communication, and extracurricular activities.



Compared to their typical peers, how does the environment measure up? How does it benefit your own child?

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HOW DO WE SHIFT CONVERSATIONS SURROUNDING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM?



Who do we need to talk with (connectivity)?



What do we need to talk about (creativity)?



What can we take away from the conversations (community)?

Our conversation will be covering these topics today.

Who do we need to talk with?

- Students
- School Board Members
- All teachers
- Related service providers
- IEP team members
- School administrators
- Community partners (businesses, faith-based institutions, employers, etc.)
- Family
- College students
- Legislators



Based on their ability, students present their IEP strengths, areas of concern, and how the disability affects access to gen ed curriculum, parents will reach out...a lot, keep communication open

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Update the Operating System



Tending to your child's needs is similar to accessing the new features of phone. You must install for updates if service begins to decline. If all else fails, see the owner's manual (the parents/caregivers).

What happens when there is a meltdown? Malfunction? Return to the Owner's Manual (The parent or guardian) They are well-equipped to explain what works.

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What do we need to talk about?

- What does your child's future look like?
- Appropriate placement (scheduling)
- Building relationships
- Inclusion
- Sensory sensitive environments
- Job opportunities
- Being in places where they are "seen"
- Advocacy
- Support Groups



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Future - goals, college, career, entrepreneurship

Placement - HS Academies, blended/general education classrooms, college TN Inclusive Higher Education Program

Sensory sensitive environments - Jumpy places hours, Chuck E. Cheese, Cornerstone Church (Nashville), NFL football games, Flight Simulation on airlines

Job opportunities - HS internships, Day Center employment

Advocacy - even though it sounds cliché, what is your why?

Support Groups - If you build it, they will come

Being in Places Where They're Seen



Whether verbal or nonverbal, your child can give you all the information on what they need to succeed. Carve out some time to learn their fascinations, triggers, motivators, etc. Attend informational sessions, not just on subjects related to where your child is currently, but where their future is headed.

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Joseph's village

Top left - his PK class

Bottom left - presenting information about his internship at his exhibition

Top right - his village that attended the exhibition

Bottom right - his village that attended his baptism

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS AND KEEP THE CONNECTIONS



Remember the picture from the slide before? This is his teacher from that class. She reached out to feature Joseph and his journey/school experience in a textbook for future special education teachers.

What can we take away from the conversations?

- Who can assist?
- What is the process?
- Where are the resources/opportunities?
- Why am I missing out?
- How can we promote the need for more opportunities?
- When is the best time to advocate?



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Who can assist - start with those that believe they can

what is the process - storytelling ability

where are the resources - everywhere, keep your eyes and ears open, if it is not there, figure out how to create it

why am I missing out - Where are you? Don't be easily offended

Promote the need for more - prove that it is needed

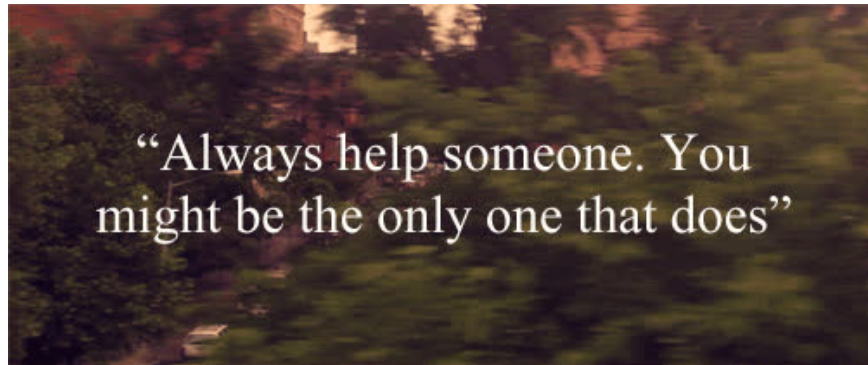
When is the best time to advocate? All the time

SEEING THE BIG PICTURE



- Participation in all classes and extracurricular activities
- Internships
- Informational sessions on transitions (grade levels, tiers, schools)
- Accessible postsecondary opportunities
- Social/emotional growth
- Access to conferences

EMBRACE FOR IMPACT



(Story of car wreck) Less damage is done when you loosen control. Let go. Share the responsibility. When you are advocating for your children, it creates a domino effect, passing on to other members of your friends, family, faculty, staff.

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Coincidence is God's way of staying anonymous. ---Albert Einstein

*Opinions expressed are solely my own and do **not** express the
views or opinions of my employer.*

Joseph's story
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EVERY CHILD NEEDS A CHAMPION!

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Happy: Joseph's Journey

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