TRAVEL TRAINING:
AN EXPLORATION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION FOR SUBURBAN STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

A Thesis
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ABSTRACT

High school students with disabilities, like most teenagers, envision a life of independence after high school including the ability to go to college, work or travel. Yet many students with disabilities will never be able to drive a personal vehicle, thereby blurring those visions with the reality of their dependence on others to get to their destinations. Travel training, a process of learning how to use local public transportation, has the potential to increase the mobility, freedom and opportunities of students with disabilities through enhancing independence and self-advocacy skills. For students with disabilities living in suburban areas, public transit routes are not as plentiful and frequent as in urban areas, making the training more challenging, yet no less important, in its potential to reduce the potential of unemployment and increased isolation for students with disabilities when high school ends. This study provided eight weeks of travel training to high school students in a suburban environment to measure its impact on students’ with disabilities perceptions of independence, self-confidence and self-advocacy. Training included in-class units on personal safety, map and schedule reading, trip planning and preparedness, followed by a field trip using public transportation. The training enhanced the decision-making and self-advocacy skills of the students. Exploratory interviews revealed ethnographic themes of need for acceptance by society, prejudice, post-secondary education, and desires for typical independent lifestyles.
Dedicated to my husband Thom, my son James,

my sisters and my parents
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank my advisor, Dr. William Bauer, for his support and encouragement in making this thesis possible, and his understanding in my vision of the scope of education extending beyond the classroom walls – onto a bus.

I thank my friend Millie Waterman for her insight into education from an advocate’s perspective, and her passion for excellence in education.

I am grateful to Dr. Jackie Hoynes, Dr. Joseph Spiccia and Mrs. Nancy Hackney of Mentor High School for their leadership and participation in all aspects of my studies.

I extend a special thank you to my husband Thom for his endless patience and support.
VITA

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PUBLICATIONS

Research Publications

1. www.ohiolink.edu/edt  Travel Training: An Exploration of the Importance of
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2.

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Fields: Business Management, Education, Disabilities, Transit
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In 2006, Americans used public transportation for over 10 billion passenger trips, setting a new historical record and indicating its practicality, accessibility and economic value as a transportation choice (Miller & Williams, 2007). However, for many students with disabilities, public transit access is generally a necessity more than a choice. The level of transit service available and access to that service has a direct impact on opportunities for education, employment, recreation and independent living for students with disabilities who cannot drive personal vehicles. Access to public transit can enhance the freedom and mobility of students with disabilities and provide opportunities for full societal participation.

High school junior and seniors with disabilities share with their classmates typical teenage desires for mobility and independence. They want to go places that allow them to socialize, to participate in activities, and to have fun. They want to explore and have control over their ability to come and go to most places. They want to spend time with peers – and time away from everyone. It is a time of becoming self-directed and testing independent decision making while there is still the safety net of being at home. High school students are experiencing transition to adulthood. They are exploring options for post-secondary education, vocational training or entry directly into the workforce. For students with disabilities who do not drive, access to public transportation can play a significant role in the attainment of their goals.
Travel training can provide a student with disabilities the mobility and decision-making skills they need to join their peers in all societal settings – at school, at movies, at parties, at sports venues or at work. It is the process of teaching an individual how to use public transportation and it is most often conducted in small groups or on a one-to-one basis (Myers, 1996). Students with disabilities are taught by a person thoroughly familiar with the transit system who has been trained to accommodate their individual learning needs based on age, physical and cognitive ability, language or culture (Groce, 1996). For students with disabilities, travel training can provide a bridge from the educational environment to the future.

Two primary pieces of legislation provide the basis for linking travel training and public transit use to education. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), originally titled the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 or P.L. 94-142, (Groce, 1996) mandates that each student with a disability is to receive an education in the least restrictive environment, and includes a provision for each child to have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Parallel to the belief that students should be educated in the least restrictive environment, the American Disabled for Accessible Public Transportation (ADAPT) argued that public transit access should not segregate people with disabilities from the general population (Pfeiffer, 1990). ADAPT’s protests and advocacy efforts paved the way for the development and passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, a civil rights law that provides societal access for all Americans with disabilities (Simon, 1996). Specifically, Title II of the ADA requires that transit systems are accessible to persons with disabilities, including buses and railcars (Groce, 1996; Simon, 1996). Much like the historic institutionalization of
persons with disabilities restricted their access to education, prior to the passage of the ADA only about 18% of 450 public transit systems offered any level of accessible fixed route transit service, leaving many people with disabilities with no transit options (Pfeiffer, 1990). The provision of travel training as a transition service for students with disabilities meets the inclusion and least restrictive environment goals of both pieces of legislation.

Statement of Problem

Several challenges exist for suburban students with disabilities to access public transportation compared to those in urban environments. Public transportation service levels differ substantially – suburban systems tend to offer fewer local fixed routes and less thorough geographic coverage than their urban counterparts. The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) reports that more than two-thirds of the residents of small urban or rural communities either have no access to public transit or below average transit services (2003). For students with disabilities in suburban areas, fixed route transit services may not exist near their home, school or other key destinations, challenging their freedom of independent travel and increasing their risk of isolation from other teens (Lemon & Lemon, 2003).

Suburban infrastructure differences also create barriers to public transit use by students with disabilities. Many housing developments are sprawled by design resulting in the absence of sidewalks, crosswalks and other infrastructure amenities vital to effective public transit service. The barriers created by the lack of these structural amenities severely limit opportunities for students with disabilities to navigate in their
own community. They also restrict community access to the elderly, parents with children in strollers, and those who enjoy walking and biking. The provision of accessible public transportation to serve those who cannot drive in a suburban area has often been traded-off for increased personal space and privacy.

Citizen knowledge of how to use public transit is more limited in suburban environments as many suburbs were settled with the express intent of being removed from all things urban. However, as suburbs grow and become urbanized, so does the need for public transit as the population becomes more diverse and socioeconomically stratified. Suburban residents tend to be auto-dependent; therefore, they have never used public transit. This general citizen lack of knowledge and use of public transit makes it difficult for them to understand its importance to fellow citizens, especially those of lower income levels or citizens with disabilities. Even in comfortable suburban environments, unemployment, lack of education or training, and isolation are among the top issues facing students with disabilities – and access to public transportation can provide relief from these socioeconomic challenges.

Paternalistic attitudes toward people with disabilities provide perhaps the greatest barrier to public transit use by students with disabilities. These attitudinal barriers exist within society and at the family level. In their research among individuals with cognitive disabilities, Wehmeyer and Garner concluded that an individual’s environment and support system can be more limiting in their ability to exert control over their own lives than their disability (2003). Many people, including family members of students with disabilities, have difficulty understanding current advocacy efforts of focusing on an individual’s abilities and the creation of least restrictive environments in all aspects of
life. A sociopolitical philosophy of a disability has emerged that places the emphasis not on the medical diagnosis, but the functional relationship one has with his or her environment (Altman, 2001). This philosophy stands in sharp contrast to many deeply ingrained beliefs that a medical diagnosis is the basis for a disability and the person with the disability is to be pitied. These attitudinal barriers bring to light a dichotomy about suburban quality of life. Suburban citizens seek amenities of more personal space and restricted access. Yet for their children with disabilities, they create a more restrictive, isolated life and impede their ability to pursue independent lives.

Purpose of the Study

This research is to focus on the abilities of students with disabilities – and their ability to learn and use suburban public transit to enhance their personal feelings of confidence in pursuing goals of mobility and independence. The researcher measured the impact that travel training can have on a suburban student with disability’s self-perceptions using a survey method and t-test treatment for quantitative study. The research included a qualitative component using a grounded theory approach that originated from an ethnographic study design that explored the cultural perceptions of suburban students with disabilities regarding the value and importance of public transportation in their daily lives and future plans.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Public transportation is a key element in the quality of life for all persons with disabilities, especially high school students as they consider future educational, vocational and recreational opportunities. In 2002, the American Public Transportation Association reported that of the 54 million Americans with disabilities, a lack of effective transportation options contributed to the staggering reality of a 75% unemployment rate and a 35% rate of community disengagement. The fact that the majority of individuals with disabilities still lack knowledge and training about how to use their public transit system contributes to these levels of unemployment, disengagement and the resultant levels of poverty (Myers, 1996).

In a study of low-income status persons with disabilities, poverty emerged as a first concern; the second issue was the interconnectedness of issues of employment, housing, healthcare and transportation for people with disabilities (O’Day, 2005). American households with middle-incomes spend approximately 22% of their income on transportation; for those in the lower socioeconomic levels, which would include individuals with disabilities who are unemployed and the underemployed, this expenditure jumps to 42% (American Public Transportation Association, 2003). Against the backdrop of these grim realities for students with disabilities, access to public
transportation can translate into freedom, mobility, inclusion in community, and opportunities for success and independence (Myers, 1996).

In both urban and rural environments, many students with disabilities will never have the opportunity to drive personal vehicles due to physical, visual or cognitive disabilities (National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities, 1996). This fact, in turn, will force them to choose between a life of dependency on the goodwill of family, friends and neighbors – or one of independence that first requires them to learn about transportation options (Myers, 1996).

The importance of a student with disabilities learning to use public transportation can be viewed as a parallel to the importance of inclusion of children with disabilities in traditional educational settings. Access to both education and transportation is viewed as a civil right (Pfeiffer, 1990) and both should be provided in the least restrictive environment. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 mandates that public transit systems only lease or purchase accessible vehicles for the same reason education should be offered in the least restrictive environment – access translates into freedom to be integrated into an individual’s environment, not segregated from it (Simon, 1996).

The Role of the Individualized Education Plan

For students with disabilities, access to public transportation training can be included in the student’s IEP (Groce, 1996). When a student with a disability enters the education system, skills that will enhance the child’s abilities to succeed in both the educational and societal environments are incorporated into his or her IEP (Groce, 1996). Purposeful movement refers to a student’s ability to move independently and safely
through home, school and neighborhood environments (Groce, 1996). Basic purposeful movement skills include using a telephone, carrying and using keys effectively, navigating through a school or other building, appropriately asking for assistance and becoming aware of one’s environment (Groce, 1996). From the age of 16, the IDEA calls for the student to be engaged in the annual review of his or her IEP as it directly affects their future and that services that will improve their transition into life post-high school be addressed (National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities, 1996; Wehmeyer and Gragoudas, 2004; Wehmeyer, Palmer, Soukup, Garner & Lawrence, 2007). Transition services are a coordinated set of activities designed to develop life skills that will prepare young people with disabilities to participate in everyday community life, including higher education, employment, independent living and recreational engagement (Groce, 1996).

Closely tied to the success of transition services is a student’s level of self-determination. “Self-determination refers to the right and the capacity of an individual to exert control over and direct their lives (Wehmeyer, 2004).” Self-determination is not necessarily a function of how much a student with a disability can do on their own, but how much a student can make or cause things to happen in his or her own life (Wehmeyer & Garner, 2003). In studies that measured the impact of levels of self-determination among students with cognitive disabilities in high school and one year after high school, students with higher self-determination scores were more likely to have preferences for living outside of the family home, to be employed and to have checking accounts (Wehmeyer, 2004; Wehmeyer & Gragoudas, 2004).
Travel training is a natural progression along the continuum of the development of purposeful movement and self-determination for students with disabilities within an educational setting. Travel training is the term given to an intensive, short-term instruction designed to teach students with disabilities how to navigate and use public transportation safely and independently throughout the fixed route system (Groce, 1996; Easter Seals Project ACTION). It allows a student with a disability to acquire transportation skills he or she will need in a post-secondary environment thereby improving the student’s transition into the workforce, college or the community (Groce, 1996). Travel training focuses on outcomes of equal opportunity, full participation in society, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency – four outcome goals of the IDEA (Turnbull, Turnbull, Wehmeyer & Park, 2003).

Travel Training as a Transition Skill

The New York City Board of Education Travel Training Program, established in the 1970-71 school year, was an early leader in travel training for students with disabilities that began as an outgrowth of an occupational training program for students with mild to moderate disabilities that did not have school bus transportation (Groce, 1996). Following the success of the occupational training program, travel training began to be offered to a wider variety of students with disabilities (Groce, 1996). The logical place for travel training to occur is in the public school system as a school can plan and deliver instruction on a continuum over several years (Groce, 1996). In the 1990’s, promoting self-determination as a function of transition skills for students with disabilities became a best practice (Wehmeyer, 2004). Transition skills should enhance
self-determination by promoting the student’s involvement in goal setting, problem solving, decision-making and self-advocacy skills (Wehmeyer, 2004). Travel training meets those requirements.

Travel training programs include both classroom and hands-on training with flexibility in curricula to meet the diverse goals and needs of the individual students with disabilities (Myers, 1996). A student with a disability should have developed skills in personal awareness, awareness of environment and an ability to recognize and respond to danger prior to beginning a travel training program (Groce, 1996). Curricula for training students with cognitive disabilities tends to be more detailed, repetitious and extensive than training for students with physical disabilities, whose training often has a greater focus on self-assertiveness (Voorhees, 1996). Travel trainers provide communication to students’ parents via phone calls, emails or notes during travel training programs (Groce, 1996). To further alleviate parental anxiety and reinforce training, travel trainers can also offer parental workshops (Groce, 1996).

Travel training programs typically run between 6 and 13 weeks, with an option for periodic follow-up or refresher sessions (Groce, 1996). Skills learned during travel training include, but are not limited to: crossing streets safely, recognizing and avoiding dangerous situations, maintaining appropriate behavior, boarding the correct bus, recognizing and disembarking at the correct destination, trip planning and preparedness, making decisions, initiating actions, following directions, and recognizing the need for assistance and asking appropriate people to provide it, dealing with strangers, and handling unexpected situations such as missing a bus or getting lost (Groce, 1996). Students are required to practice the skills they learn before they travel independently.
Travel Training

(Groce, 1996). By focusing on self-determination enhancement during travel training, trainers help students to integrate their disability into their self-image in a positive way – it becomes about what the student can do, not their limitations (Hehir, 2007). Travel training can also prepare students with disabilities to navigate public transportation systems in other areas, thereby enhancing education, career and travel opportunities.

The Value of Transportation Independence

High school students, both with and without disabilities, all fit the functional model of self-determination – “to act as the primary causal agent in one’s life and make choices and decisions regarding one’s quality of life free from undue external influence or interference” (Wehmeyer & Bolding, 2001). However, due to patterns of learned helplessness, students with disabilities may not be aware of how to change their situations (Wehmeyer, 2001). Travel training can empower students with disabilities by integrating them with others from a wide variety of backgrounds as they go to school, work or recreate within their communities (Lemon & Lemon, 2003). As these interactions increase, students with disabilities begin to live lives more closely aligned to people in all walks of life – they will spend time with some people who are very different from themselves in language, culture or background, and they will spend time with others with whom they share commonalities (Lemon & Lemon, 2003). The individual student with a disability gains access to society with transportation independence; society gains involved citizens (Groce, 1996).

Transportation independence enhances self-determination. Consequently, it becomes a driver to combat the paternalism that has plagued the lives of high school
students with disabilities (Hehir, 2007). In her article submitted to *Transition Summary*, April Myers, writes of her teenage years, “I wanted more independence. I became a rebellious teenager, depressed because my disability seemed to be determining my future” (Myers, 1996). After learning to navigate the Washington D.C. transportation system, she stated, “It is difficult to imagine the importance of the power of independent travel. Now, instead of waiting for someone to volunteer to assist me with achieving my goals and being restricted by the availability of their time, I had the power to move around as I wanted” (Myers, 1996). These statements reflect the value of transportation independence in the lives of students with disabilities. Public transportation for students with disabilities is important as they will rely on it to go to work, school, shopping, medical appointments and recreational destinations (1990, Pfeiffer).

**Rationale for the Study**

High school students with disabilities are typical teenagers in terms of their desires for independence, acceptance and inclusion. However, many students with disabilities will never be able to drive a personal vehicle, thereby creating a barrier to their ability to join other teenagers in typical activities. Travel training offers access to a wide range of destinations and activities to students with disabilities. Through legislation such as the IDEA and the ADA, travel training can be provided as a transition skill to students with disabilities at no cost to the student.

A great deal of research has been conducted about the impact of self-determination skills in producing positive adult outcomes in students with disabilities. Transition skills, which require self-determination, are vital to helping students with
disabilities succeed post high school. Travel training incorporates goal setting, problem solving, decision-making and self-advocacy skills needed for successful transition to adulthood. However, research specific to the outcomes of travel training for students with disabilities is lacking.

In a system as large as the New York City Schools, in 1996, the school board received 800 referrals for travel training (Groce, 1996). Of those 800, 700 received individual assessments and 560 of those had the basic skills required for travel training (Groce, 1996). Approximately 300 students from the original 800 referrals received one-on-one travel training (Groce, 1996). The success rate for students who received the training was 85 percent learned to travel on public transportation safely and independently (Groce, 1996). The gap between the number of students referred and the number who received training was attributed to lack of response or lack of parental consent (Groce, 1996). This gap perhaps is an indicator of the attitudinal barriers that still exist for students with disabilities. The statistics were also collected only six years after the passage of the ADA, leaving open the possibility that the New York City transit system had not been fully accessible as the ADA only mandated that systems purchase accessible vehicles at the time of replacement – and the average life span of a city bus is 12 years.

For students with disabilities in suburban environments, research on the impact of travel training could not be discovered. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between the provision of travel training to suburban students with disabilities and student self-perceptions of mobility and independence. The study will also explore
students with disabilities stories regarding their ability to participate in typical teenage activities and visions of future independent lifestyles.

Research Questions

Does travel training for students with disabilities in a suburban environment improve their self-perceptions of independence? Does travel training in a suburban environment meet the needs of students with disabilities to join their peers in educational, recreational or work settings?

What are the experiences of suburban students with disabilities regarding isolation from peers, public and family perceptions of their abilities, and experiences as a teenager? How does the experience of travel training change a student with disabilities goals for post-secondary studies?
CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This research focused on the abilities of students with disabilities – and their ability to use public transit to enhance their personal feelings of confidence in pursuing goals of mobility and independence. The researcher measured the impact of travel training in enhancing perceptions of independence of students with disabilities in Lake County, Ohio – a suburban/rural county northeast of Cleveland, Ohio. The study explored participant perceptions regarding the value and importance of public transportation in the daily lives and future planning of students with disabilities. The study resulted in both quantitative and qualitative reports regarding the importance of public transit options for suburban students with disabilities.

Population

The sample consisted of one class of students in a suburban school district enrolled in a class for development of life skills. Mentor High School in Lake County, Ohio was the study site. Participants consisted of a convenience sample of 15 students enrolled in transitional classes. The sample included 12 students with learning/cognitive disabilities and three students with orthopedic and communication disabilities. Primary partners in the research were Mentor High School, and Laketran, the regional transit authority of Lake County, Ohio. Partners for the field trip portion of the research were Scores Fun Center in Painesville, Ohio and Chic-fil-A food service at Great Lakes Mall in Mentor, Ohio.
Mixed Method

The study had both quantitative and qualitative components. The study began with students in the class participating in a pre-treatment survey to identify their existing levels of self-confidence with regard to understanding and using local public transit. The survey gathered information on variables including gender, age, post high school goals regarding college, work or independent living and previous experience using public transit via local fixed routes or paratransit services. The survey also measured student perceptions of the value of learning to use public transit to achieve self-sufficiency goals.

The researcher provided to the class weekly travel training classes for eight weeks. This training included an introduction to public transit with the viewing of the Hallmark film, Riding the Bus with My Sister. The weekly class sessions included navigational training using a system map, time management using a bus schedule, environmental barrier analysis awareness, self-organization using a travel checklist, trip planning and self-advocacy training skills for communicating with bus drivers. Each week the educational technique of scaffolding was used to review what the students had learned the previous week and set the stage for new concepts or skills to be added that day. For the basis of the weekly curriculum, the researcher adapted materials used in urban environments published by Easter Seals Project ACTION (2005), The Kennedy Center (1993), and the National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (1996). Laketran’s system map and route schedules were used for the planning of local trips.
Training concluded with an off-site experiential session with the origins and destination being determined by student consensus, thereby enhancing use of self-determination skills. The students completed a post-treatment survey immediately after the experiential trip to measure changes in perceptions of independence. The data was analyzed using SPSS.

A qualitative component of the study produced a micro-ethnography that reveals the shared behaviors and beliefs of suburban students with disabilities. Interviews were conducted with all students to reflect the diversity in perceptions from students with varying disabilities. These interviews explored the importance of public transit to suburban students with disabilities and the barriers they feel hinder their ability to be fully integrated into suburban culture.

**Timeline**

- **January 2- January 14, 2008**: Meet with schools to discuss research goals and methodologies, propose treatment dates for 2008, define protocols for protection of student identity, develop test instruments
- **January 4 – January 18, 2008**: Parent letter to introduce researcher, explain study goals and methods, answer questions, obtain permissions for student participation
- **January 23, 2008**: Administer pre-treatment survey
- **January 23 – April 9, 2008**: Conduct in-class travel training
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<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Activity Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>April 16, 2008</td>
<td>Off-site field trip and administer post-treatment survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 9- April 16, 2008</td>
<td>Conduct qualitative interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 17-April 28, 2008</td>
<td>Prepare report</td>
</tr>
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CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The study produced quantitative and qualitative results. Quantitative measures were obtained from the pre and post treatment surveys. These surveys gathered data on age, gender, grade level and post secondary goals. The tests asked participants to rate their level of experience using public transportation based on frequency of use to school, work, shopping or recreational destinations. Based on this experience the test also asked participants to indicate their level of confidence in performing basic transit skills such as knowing which bus to board, knowing how to pay a fare, comfort level in asking the driver for assistance and knowing when to deboard from the bus. To measure participant’s self-perceptions of independence, a Likert Scale rating was used to determine level of agreement or disagreement with statements relating the perceived value of learning to use transit on independence, getting to work, going out with friends and managing a schedule.

Qualitative data was gathered from individual interviews with participants asking about their future goals and current struggles as a student with a disability. Participants were also asked to comment on the difficulty or ease of field trip experience, and what would be their next destination using public transit. The interview process produced a snowball sampling as participants encouraged their teacher and aides to participate in brief qualitative interviews as well.
**Quantitative Results**

Participants in the study included six females and nine males. All females were ambulatory and classified with learning/cognitive disabilities. Six of the male participants were classified as having learning/cognitive disabilities and three with orthopedic and communication disabilities. Participants were in grades 10 through 12, with the mean grade level being 11.27. Participant ages varied from 16 to 19 years of age with a mean age level of 17.4 years.

Post high school options included going to college, going to technical school, going to job training other than technical school, or going directly to work. Forty percent of the participants indicated they planned to continue on to college, 33 percent indicated going to job training other than technical school, 20 percent planned to go to technical schools and 6.7 percent planned to enter the workforce directly after high school. Of the 14 participants that indicated continuing education or training, 79 percent indicated planning to work part time while continuing their education.

The study measured the participants’ perceptions of the value of learning how to use public transportation. Table 4.1 displays the pretest and post test mean values for four values related to self-determination – feelings of independence, ability to plan and manage time, getting to work independently and ability to recreate with friends.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Measure</th>
<th>Time of Measure</th>
<th>Mean (M)</th>
<th>Standard Deviation (SD)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning how to use public transit helps me to be independent</td>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>.828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post test</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>.617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning how to use public transit helps me to plan my schedule</td>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>.900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post test</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>.910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning how to use public transit helps me to get to work on my own</td>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>1.163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post test</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>1.113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning how to use public transit helps me to do things with my friends</td>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post test</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>1.100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 Mean values of self-determination factors from pretest and post test

The greatest increase in mean value was in the perception of public transportation’s impact in being able to recreate with friends, an important factor in teenage life. Increases in mean values were also recorded in perceptions of knowledge of public transportation affecting the participants’ ability to be independent, get to work on their own and plan their schedule, with mean value increases of 0.27, 0.26 and 0.07, respectively. The increase in these values would indicate a positive experience with learning how to use public transit.

At the onset of the study, 100 percent of the participants had never used Laketran’s local fixed routes to go to school. Some participants had limited experience using public transportation to get to other destinations. Approximately 33.3 percent of the participants indicated they used public transit to do things with friends “sometimes”; 13.3 percent indicated they used transit “sometimes” for shopping; and 6.7 percent indicated they used transit to get to work “sometimes” or “always.”
One element of learning a new skill is a change in level of confidence as a skill increases. An evaluation of the changes in mean values of confidence levels of transit skills shows an increase in confidence as new and more complex skills were introduced in the class. Table 4.2 shows changes in confidence levels for transit skills associated with competence in using public transportation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Measure</th>
<th>Time of Measure</th>
<th>Mean (M)</th>
<th>Standard Deviation (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in which bus to board</td>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>.724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post test</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>.632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in knowing how to pay fare</td>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post test</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>.507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in asking driver for assistance</td>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>.775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post test</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>.743</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confidence in knowing where to deboard</td>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>.915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post test</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>.816</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 Changes in confidence levels of transit skills

These changes in confidence in skill levels indicate a positive experience learning to use public transportation. The greatest gains in confidence were in skills defined as knowing which bus to board and knowing how to pay a fare with mean value increases of 0.73 and 0.60, respectively. However, as the post test was administered immediately after the field trip experience, consideration must be given for a halo effect (Thorndike, 2005) in participant responses. Validity of responses would be improved if the post test
was given several weeks following the field trip. However, due to the time limitations of the school year, the post test had to be administered on the day of the field trip.

**Qualitative Findings**

Individual interviews with students, conducted at the end of classes and on the day of the field trip, revealed a wide range of future career interests, a shared pain, and a commonality of typical teenage interests and behaviors.

**Theme One**

*Students have interests in continuing education and/or training*

- “I want to go into oceanography because I like the water and it’s not as difficult as marine biology.”
- “I want to work on engines, especially BMWs, Hondas or Chevys.”
- “I want to go into graphic design or be an artist. I like drawing.”
- “I want to be like Miss Melissa (personal care attendant of another student). I want to help students with disabilities. I want to take child care first then maybe go on to be a nurse.”
- “I’d like to go to training to work in an office – maybe shredding.”

The researcher engaged the participants in discussions about the types of careers they wanted to pursue and the obstacles they felt stood between them and their goals as students with disabilities. Students with learning/cognitive disabilities, especially those interested in college, expressed concern about keeping up with higher level demands and challenges. One participant said, “Last year I was put in a regular class and I couldn’t handle it. I get nervous in big groups.”
Theme 2

_Students felt mocked by family and peers_

- “Well, other kids make fun of me. I just ignore them.”
- “When I get nervous, I stutter and my cousin makes fun of me – it hurts.”
- “My sister says you guys are different and you’re never going to function in life.”

Participants poignantly shared stories of pain, usually in the form of mockery from family and other students. Participants indicated differences in ways of coping with mockery. Male participants most often commented that they just ignored it, but it still hurt their feelings and they expressed frustration with general impatience with students with disabilities. When asked how they thought students with disabilities should be treated, one male participant responded, “We should just be treated like other people.” The pain for females was more visible, as some had tears in their eyes during their interviews.

**Other Comments**

In spite of the shared pain of the participants, all were optimistic about their future and expressed typical teenage interests in getting to recreation destinations first when asked where they might take transit to next. Next destination responses included Captains Stadium (minor league baseball), Walmart and the mall, Malley’s Chocolate Store, the Cleveland Zoo, Lake Farmpark, bowling and laser tag, Borders, and to visit grandma.

Participants were asked to talk about the easiest and most difficult aspect of using transit. As the route utilized was a busy one, several participants commented that finding
a seat was the greatest challenge. Another expressed concern about feeling uncomfortable about other passengers being delayed to allow time for wheelchairs to be being secured. Overall, participants felt well prepared for the trip. Most included the word “fun” in their descriptions of what was easy about the experience. Other positive comments included that it was comfortable, it was interesting to see all the different stops, it gets you from point A to point B, it was useful and it was good to get outside and just go to a destination without relying on someone else.

When asked to reflect and comment on the class experience, most participants simply expressed their thanks for the opportunity to learn more about transit. One male participant commented, “The class helped me a lot to understand it [transit] more and I would take this class again if I had the opportunity.” Another said, “It was very helpful. I needed a lot of help like getting to know everything. I didn’t know it [the bus] came every hour. I noticed a lot of bus stops are pretty close together. That makes it easier to get to them.”

The interviews were extended to include the work-study coordinator, a class aide and a personal care attendant. The work-study coordinator commented, “I love this service. One of the greatest obstacles for my students is often the lack of access to a local fixed route and the lack of familiarity with how to use public transit in a community where most people drive. We also need more north-south routes, but the big obstacles are familiarity and accessibility.” As observers during the eight week training, class and personal aides gained an appreciation for the challenge the participants had engaged in during the study. One noted, “This program was really great. We got here [Scores Fun Center] quick and safe. I think the students really enjoyed it because they planned it on
their own. It gave them independence. But, I think it was hard for them – the planning-understanding the planning process was hard, but they did it. It was a great experience and I think we’ll use it more often.”
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION

The quantitative and qualitative data indicate success in using the travel training curriculum developed to enhance the self-determination skills of students with disabilities by enhancing their confidence in public transit skills. However, there are factors that need to be considered for future studies. The research was originally intended to be conducted within a single nine-week grading period. Due to weather conditions in northeast Ohio, two snow days delayed research training as did one week dedicated to the Ohio Graduation Tests (OGTs). Research was further extended due to spring break. In planning this type of research study additional time and flexibility should be built in for circumstances such as the aforementioned ones. Due to the extension into the end of the school year, the post test was administered immediately following the field trip. This may affect the validity of the data as there was no lapse in time between the field trip and the post test to measure retention of knowledge over time.

The convenience sample size of this research was 15 students, generally considered to be too small of a sample size to apply findings to the entire population. However, due to the reality that students with disabilities need higher levels of individual attention, the group size was large for a single researcher. Future research may be improved by studying several smaller class groups instead of a single larger group.
Many suburban transit systems have limited local fixed routes. In such cases, consideration should also be given to teaching students with disabilities how to access and use paratransit services, or alternative forms of transit such as taxis.

_Extended Outlook_

Travel training is traditionally provided in a one-on-one environment. Long-term goals of this research include the development of a model program that teaches travel training for students with disabilities in small groups, with an option for extended training on an individual basis. To that end, an invitation to receive individual travel training over the upcoming summer from Laketran, the partner transit agency, was extended to each student participant.

A staggered approach of introducing travel training in a small group, then transitioning to one-on-one learning to reinforce specific skills on an individual basis may produce the most lasting effects. For suburban students and educators, learning to use transit in a small group may prove to be less intimidating for them and more acceptable to parents. Once a basic level of confidence is achieved in the small group setting, the individual training can further enhance self-determination skills. The qualitative report provides insight that validates the need for public transportation for students with disabilities. It can provide local, state and federal funding partners, the transit industry, advocates, service providers, community planners and fellow citizens with a vision of an accessible future as envisioned by our future – our children.
Future Implications

Very little research has been published regarding the impact of travel training for students with disabilities. This valuable service is of growing interest across the country. Transit agencies see the benefit of local fixed route use reducing the burden of paratransit costs, and schools need to be accountable for preparing students for post high school education and life. The question arising is who should provide the service and how should it be funded? This research can add to the existing body of knowledge and aid in the development of best practices that can be applied across systems.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has grant funding available through its New Freedom program for services that go above and beyond the requirements of the ADA. However, the grants are limited to services to adults with disabilities. Therefore, students with disabilities under the age of 18 would not qualify for services in those grants. Policymakers should give consideration to revising these programs to include high school students with disabilities in the mix for those qualified for services. Teaching children to use transit while still in school increases the chances of them becoming regular transit users before they become isolated in their homes post high school.

Research studies in the field of travel training should be promoted to communities not only to raise awareness of the needs of citizens with disabilities, but those of lower socioeconomic status as well. The continuous rise in gasoline prices from 2007 until the present will present an escalation in the affordability of personal transit for disadvantaged citizens of all abilities. Travel training can help communities meet the transportation
needs of all citizens and increase the efficiency of local transit systems through increased capacity.

Travel training partnerships between schools and transit agencies are needed, especially in suburban areas where most adults drive private vehicles. Transit systems should train outreach staff in disability education issues thereby bringing both transit expertise and sensitivity to the table for training. School systems should challenge all teachers and aides of students with special needs to learn and participate in travel training to ensure their competence in preparing these students for post high school options and independent lifestyles.
APPENDIX

FORMS AND CURRICULM MATERIALS
Travel Training: An Exploration of the Importance of Public Transportation for Suburban Students with Disabilities
Researcher: Jessie Guidry Baginski

Curriculum Week 1
January 23, 2008

This week:
Turn in permission forms
Pretest of transit experience
Watch Riding the Bus with My Sister

Next week:
Discussion of disability legislation
Preparing to ride the bus
Skills needed to ride
Homework assignment
Consent for Participation in Social and Behavioral Research

Project Title: Travel Training: an Exploration of the Importance of Public Transportation for Suburban Students with Disabilities

Principal Investigator: Jessie Guidry Baginski

I consent to my (my child’s) participation in research being conducted by Jessie Baginski of Marietta College/Laketrans and her assistants.

The following information is being provided to help you decide whether you (your child) wish to participate in this study. You are free to decide not to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty.

The purpose of this study is to determine if travel training (learning to use public transit) will affect suburban students with disabilities decisions about life goals after high school. The study will also develop a suburban cultural view of social life and opportunities for students with disabilities.

At the onset of the study, students will be given a brief survey to measure current transit knowledge and feelings of independence, autonomy, and social comfort. As a group, the students will receive four weeks of in-class bus familiarization and travel training to learn how to read maps, schedules, and plan trips along with bus safety and etiquette. At the conclusion of the training, students will plan two group outings to community destinations, such as work or recreation destinations. One trip will immediately follow the in-class training, the other will be later in the school year. Following the training and each trip, students will be given a follow-up survey for comparison to the initial survey.

Students will also be interviewed to talk about their experiences with transit and how it relates to the lifestyle of a student with a disability. These interviews will be compiled into a composite of experiences of suburban students with disabilities. Photos and video may be used to document students’ demonstration of applying the skills taught.

You should always feel free to ask questions about the study before participating or during the study. I would be happy to share the research findings with you after the research is completed. Your name will not be associated with the research findings in any way, and only the researcher and school personnel will know your identity. To protect the privacy of the students, each student will be given an alias within the researcher’s journal and database. Photos and video, if used, will use alias names.
There are no known risks/discomforts with this study. The expected benefits of this study are that your (your child’s) confidence in pursuing independent life skills will be enhanced. If this study is later submitted for publication, a by-line will indicate the participation of the school system.

This research has been approved by Marietta College Human Subjects Committee (HSC#08-009). If you need information or have any concerns about research subjects’ rights, please contact Dr. Jennifer McCabe, Marietta College Human Subjects Committee Chair at 740-373-7894 or email Jennifer.McCabe@marietta.edu.

Please sign this consent form acknowledging that you understand the nature and purpose of this study. You will be given a copy to keep.

I know that I (or I for my child) can choose not to participate without any penalty to my child. If I agree to participate, I (or I for my child) can withdraw from the study at any time, and there will be no penalty.

- I consent to the use of videotapes. I understand how the tapes will be used for this study.
- I consent to the use of photographs. I understand how the photographs will be used for this study.

I have had a chance to ask questions and obtain answers to my questions. I can contact the investigator, Jessie Baginski, at 440-350-1008 or 440-283-9888.

I have read this form or have had it read to me. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Print the name of the Participant: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________

Participant Signature: ________________________________

Parent Signature: ________________________________

Contact Information
Principal Investigator
Jessie Baginski
Jb003@marietta.edu
440-283-9888
440-350-1008

Faculty Advisor
Dr. William M. Bauer
bauerm@marietta.edu
740-376-4768

Human Subjects Rights
Dr. Jennifer McCabe
Jennifer.McCabe@marietta.edu
740-373-7894
Travel Training: An Exploration of the Importance of Public Transportation for Suburban Students with Disabilities

Researcher: Jessic Guidry Baginski
440-283-9888 or jh003@marietta.edu

About the Researcher

Jessic Guidry Baginski has been involved in the advancement of people with disabilities for more than 10 years through her work at the Society for Rehabilitation, Laketrans and the Ohio Governor's Council on People with Disabilities. Of special interest has been the empowerment of youth with disabilities to live richly engaged lives in careers or settings of their choice. To this end, she was a founding committee member of the Ohio Governor's Council Youth Leadership Forum, a week-long personal advocacy and leadership forum held each summer in Columbus, Ohio. She has remained actively involved in the selection and ongoing mentoring of new and previous delegates, as well as annually providing facilitation and staff training, and leading the "transit and mobility choices" session. Her service on the Governor's Council also provided her with a wide network of disability advocates with whom she remains connected.

Since October of 2000, she has served as the Director of Communications at Laketrans, the regional transit authority for Lake County, Ohio. Laketrans is recognized for its excellence in service to just over one million passengers each year. Baginski was a member of Lake County's team for Easter Seals Mobility Planning Institute in 2006. She currently oversees the development and implementation of Laketrans's newly established travel training program.

In October of 2007, Baginski received recognition from the American Public Transportation Association for the Red Hot Stops event, held in July 2006. Red Hot Stops was a bus-training event for women of the local Red Hat Societies—women over the age of 50. The event turned out more than 460 participants and is the largest known single bus-training event in transit history.

Jessic Baginski is currently working on her Master of Arts in Education at Marietta College in Marietta, Ohio. During the course of her studies at Marietta College, she has focused on educational leadership and Lake County schools have been the topic of several papers and projects. The strength of the relationships established during her professional experience and her academic pursuits has opened the doors for this proposed research. This research will demonstrate a unique proactive approach to empowerment of students with disabilities through a partnership between a suburban transit agency and a school district.
Travel Training: An Exploration of the Importance of Public Transit for Suburban Students with Disabilities

PRETEST

About Me and My Future Plans

Name: ________________________________

___ Male  ___ Female

___ Age

___ Grade Level

After high school, I plan to go (check only one):

___ to college  ___ to technical school  ___ to specific job training  ___ directly to work

If I am going to school or training, I plan to work part-time as well  ___ yes  ___ no

For each statement, place a check mark in the box that matches the answer that best describes your feelings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I think learning to use public transportation will help me to:</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Do not agree or disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be more independent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn to manage my money</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn to plan my schedule</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to do things with my friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to live on my own</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to go to work on my own</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to go to college, technical school or training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### My Experience on Public Transportation

For each statement, place a check mark in the box that matches the answer that best describes your feelings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I have used Laketran’s Routes 1-6 to go to:</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To do things with Friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For each statement, place a check mark in the box that matches the answer that best describes your feelings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I have used Laketran’s Dial-a-Ride (door to door) service to go to:</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To do things with Friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For each statement, place a check mark in the box that matches the answer that best describes your feelings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When riding the bus on my own, I am confident about:</th>
<th>Not at all confident</th>
<th>Somewhat confident</th>
<th>Very confident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowing how to get to the bus stop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing which bus to get on</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much my fare will cost</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to pay my fare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to request assistance from the driver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing where to get off the bus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requesting the driver to announce my stop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following bus rules</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transferring to another bus if needed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Travel Training: An Exploration of the Importance of Public Transportation for Suburban Students with Disabilities
Researcher: Jessie Guldry Baginski

Curriculum Week 2
January 30, 2008

Review of last week:
Pretest of transit knowledge and experience
Discussion about Riding the Bus with My Sister movie

This week:
Discussion of disability legislation
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and IEP goals

Discussion about preparing to ride the bus
Discussion about skills needed to ride the bus

Homework:
- Destinations page- bring back to class next week
- Bring ID

Next week:
Learn to read system map
Find destinations on the map
Figure out which routes can get us to a destination
Learn to read a route timetable
Travel Training: An Exploration of the Importance of Public Transportation for Suburban Students with Disabilities
Researcher: Jessie Guidry Baginski

January 30, 2008

Introduction to Travel Training

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) – Civil rights law passed in 1990 that ensures access to individuals with disabilities to employment, state and local government programs and services, businesses, telecommunications, and transportation.

Travel training in a students IEP—as part of the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), a student can have included in his/her IEP (Individual Education Plan) the goal of learning to use public transportation. This is an important skill as students move from high school to adulthood where they may choose to continue onto college or other job training, enter the workforce, participate in recreational activities, and pursue independent living.

Discussion:

How do you think your life would be different without the ADA?

Why do you want to learn to use public transportation?
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Researcher: Jessie Guidry Baginski

Preparing to Ride the Bus – What do I need to know?

**Destination** – the place I am going to
- Where is it located?
- What is the address?
- Does it have a website?
- Is there a bus stop near my destination?

**Timing**
- What time do I need to be there?
- How long will I be there?
- What time do I need to be at my next destination?

**Bus Stop**
- Where is the bus stop located?
- Is there a shelter or a bench at the stop?
- Is there information at the bus stop about my bus?
- Can I identify a bus stop sign?

**Weather**
- What will the weather be like on the day I am traveling?
- Do I need special clothing or accessories such as a coat, gloves or an umbrella?

**Costs**
- **Fare** – how much will it cost me to ride the bus.
- **Exact change** – the correct combination of bills or coins needed to pay for a single fare.
- **Fare card** – a punch-card that allows me to ride the bus two or more times. This card has value until all the rides have been used. It should be kept in a safe place.
- Do I need other money with me?
Travel Training: An Exploration of the Importance of Public Transportation for Suburban Students with Disabilities
Researcher: Jessie Guidry Baginski

Preparing to Ride the Bus – What skills do I need to have?

**Directions**
Can I identify north, south, east and west on a map?
Do I know which in which direction I am travelling?

**Landmarks** – an easy to recognize object that serves as a guide.
What are some landmarks that I am familiar with along the way to school each day?
What makes a good landmark for me?

**Talking to Others**
Do I know who is a stranger to me?
Are there strangers who I can feel safe talking to?
Do I respect the personal space of other people?

**Asking for Help**
Do I know how to ask for assistance politely?
Who should I ask for help when riding the bus?

**Carrying ID**
Why should I carry ID with me?
Should I carry other written information?
Travel Training: An Exploration of the Importance of Public Transportation for Suburban Students with Disabilities
Researcher: Jessie Guidry Baginski

Bring back to class on February 6!

Your name: ________________________________________

#1 List 2 to 4 different ways you can get around Lake County with assistance from others:

________________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________

#2 List 2 to 4 different ways you can get around Lake County on your own:

____________  __________  __________  __________

#3 List 6 places you would like to go in Lake County.
   If the destination has a website, write it on the space next to it.
   Put a star by your top three choices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Website (if available)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>www____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>www____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>www____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>www____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>www____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>www____________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#4 Bring a photo ID to class. This can be your Mentor student ID.

Vocabulary words to remember for next week:
Destination – place where you are going to
Fare – cost to ride the bus to one destination
Fare card – a card that allows you to ride two or more times
Landmark – an easy to recognize object that serves as a guide
Travel Training: An Exploration of the Importance of Public Transportation for Suburban Students with Disabilities  
Researcher: Jessie Guidry Baginski

Curriculum Week 3  
February 6, 2008

Review of last week:  
Short quiz on key terms and learning objectives  
Collect homework with destinations

This week: Obtaining Destination and Transportation Information

Destinations  
Let's list at the places you said you would like to go on your homework sheets

System map  
Map legend

Look up locations on the map  
Accessibility  
Getting information about destinations

Homework:  
Complete sheet to get detailed information about operating hours of at least two destinations.  
Bring back to class next week.

Next week:  
Review system map  
Begin planning a trip to one of the classes top destinations  
Landmarks
Travel Training: An Exploration of the Importance of Public Transportation for Suburban Students with Disabilities

Researcher: Jessie Guadry Baginski

Finding Destinations on the Map

Mentor High School
First find the city
find Mentor
Second, find the nearest main road
find route 615
Search along the main road until you find the area of your destination.
Is your destination indicated by a symbol on the legend?
Circle or mark where your destination is on the map.

Can I get there on public transit?
Look around your destination for a colored line indicating a public transit route.
Which route is closest to your destination?
Routes can be identified by a number or a color.

Let’s find these three destinations on our maps:
Great Lakes Mall
Fairport Harbor Beach
Downtown Willoughby
Travel Training: An Exploration of the Importance of Public Transportation for Suburban Students with Disabilities
Researcher: Jessie Guidry Baginski

Week 3- Homework Sheet
Bring back to class on February 13!

Your name: _____________________________

#1 List the ways you can find information about a destination:

____________________________________  __________________________________

#2 Using one of the ways you listed above, get the following information on these two places. The Great Lakes Mall has been done as an example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination name</th>
<th>Great Lakes Mall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street Address</td>
<td>7850 Mentor Ave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City and zip code</td>
<td>Mentor 44060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone number</td>
<td>440-255-6900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td><a href="http://www.simon.com">www.simon.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Hours of operation| Monday-Saturday  
                     9 am – 9 pm  
                     Sunday Noon – 6 pm |
| Days they are open | Monday - Sunday |
| Is there a cost to get in? | No |
| Is it accessible to enter? | Yes |
| Are restrooms accessible | Yes |
| How I found my information | Website, email and phone call |

Vocabulary words to remember for next week:
Accessible – easily approached and entered by everyone, including people who use wheelchairs
System map – a map that shows all of the public transit routes in a community
Legend – a guide that tells you what the symbols on a map mean
Travel Training: An Exploration of the Importance of Public Transportation for Suburban Students with Disabilities
Researcher: Jessie Guidry Baginski

February 6, 2008
Quiz from concepts of January 30

Circle the correct answer

True False 1. The Americans with Disabilities Act ensures that all people with disabilities have access to buildings, education, jobs and public transportation.
True False 2. Travel training is a process to learn how to use public transportation
True False 3. Public transportation in Lake County, Ohio is called Laketran.
True False 4. I should consider the weather before I plan to travel

Matching. Write the letter of the item in column A that best matches the description in column B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column A</th>
<th>Column B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. destination</td>
<td>_____ type of personal identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. landmark</td>
<td>_____ how much it cost to ride the bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. fare card</td>
<td>_____ a number I should have in my cell phone – means “In Case of Emergency”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. ID card</td>
<td>_____ a familiar object or building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. fare</td>
<td>_____ place I am going to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. ICE</td>
<td>_____ a ticket that allows me to ride the bus more than one time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Circle four things that could be landmarks when riding the bus:

Great Lakes Mall Willoughby Arabica
Mentor High School someone walking a dog
a stop sign Mentor Public Library
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Researcher: Jessie Guidry Baginski

Curriculum Week 4
February 13, 2008

Review of last week:
Review key terms and learning objectives
Collect homework with destination details

This week: Finding Destinations on a Map and Reading the bus schedule – Part 1
Destinations that coincide with community landmarks
Review of system map and routes
Directional thinking

Look up locations on the map- Great Lakes Mall and Scores Fun Center

Using destination information about hours of operation, plan destination arrival and departure times
Apply this knowledge to trip planning using the route timetable

Homework:
Practice using a trip planning worksheet

Next week:
Review trip planning from landmark to landmark
Plan a trip to destinations between landmarks on a map
February 13, 2008

Review of last week
Top destinations:
Scores Fun Center (Painesville)
Hometown Buffet (Mentor)
Starbucks (Willoughby)
Malley’s Chocolates (Mentor)
Lake Farmpark (Kirtland)

Destination - place I am going to

Finding Landmark Destinations on the Map

- Great Lakes Mall in Mentor and Scores Fun Center at the Painesville Shopping Center
- Great Lakes Mall

1) find Mentor 2) find Great Lakes Mall

Scores Fun Center at Painesville Shopping Center

1) find Painesville 2) find Painesville Shopping Center

Highlight both locations on your map.

Determining which Bus Routes Connect Destinations

Route – 1) The path of bus travel on a regular schedule; and 2) a way or road for travel.
System Map – A map that shows all of the transit systems fixed routes. Laketran’s routes each have a different color.
Legend – A box on the map that describes the symbols found on the map.

Look at your two highlighted destinations. Is there a colored line that connects the two?

What color is it?
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Researcher: Jessie Guidry Baginski

Determining Our Direction of Travel

**Direction** – the line or direction of travel. Terms used are most often the points of a compass – North, South, East or West. In Lake County, Lake Erie is always to our north.

From Mentor to Painesville, in which direction will we travel?

From Painesville to Mentor, in which direction will we travel?

**Reading a Route Map**

Look at the Route 1 – the Red Line – Schedule. The schedule contains a map of where this route travels and a timetable.

**Timetable** – A list of major stops along a route and the times the bus stops at those key locations.

**Departure Point** – The place where we will begin our trip and board the bus.

**Destination or Arrival Point** – The place where we are going to and where we will get off the bus.

To plan our trip departure and arrival times, we need to take a few steps that are outlined in a trip planning worksheet.

Step 1: Complete the form with the time we would like to arrive and the address of our destination.

Step 2: Determine which route can take us to our destination.

Step 3: Look at the schedule of the bus route that can take us to our destination.

Step 4: Find our landmark bus stop – or the nearest one to our destination – on the timetable.

Step 5: Find the time that the bus will stop at our destination’s bus stop closest to our desired time – but always earlier than desired, especially if for work. Highlight this time on the timetable.

Step 6: Find the landmark stop nearest to our departure point on the timetable.

Step 7: Now trace a line from the highlighted time of our arrival stop back to when that trip would elapse our departure point. This tells us when we must be at the bus stop.

**Remember public transit buses cannot wait for you – you must be at the stop when the bus arrives!**

Now let’s do the same for the trip home.

**Week 4- Homework Sheet**

*Bring back to class on February 20!*
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Researcher: Jessie Guidry Baginski

Curriculum Week 5
February 20, 2008

Review of last week:
- Review key terms and learning objectives
- Collect homework – practice trip planning worksheet

This week: Route Identification and Reading the bus schedule – Part 2

- Destinations that fall between community landmarks
- Review of system map and routes – finding the closest landmark to determine approximate bus stop times
- Directional thinking
- Look up locations on the map

Using destination information about hours of operation, plan destination arrival and departure times
Apply this knowledge to trip planning using the route timetable

Next week:
- Video – Route to Freedom
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Researcher: Jessie Guidry Baginski

Trip Planning – Part 2 Destinations between Landmarks

Let’s look at the planning sheet for a more complicated trip.

We are planning to travel from Great Lakes Mall in Mentor to Malley’s Chocolates in Mentor.

Determining where along a route or road a location may be.

1) Look at the numbers of the addresses if they are on the same street. What do we know about address numbers?

2) What are ways we can find a location on a map?
   - website, web-based map searches such as Google Maps, phone call to business

3) Look at the major intersections closest to our destination.
   - Intersection – Where two or more roads cross.
   - Major Intersection – one where two or more high-traffic roads meet or cross. These are usually shown as lines on street maps that are darker than most streets.

4) Looking at the Google Map provided, between what intersections is Malley’s Chocolates located?

5) Highlight this area on your system map.

What route connects our two locations?

Let’s look at the timetable for Route 1. Which of the major intersections shown on the maps are also listed on the Route 1 timetable? Which are closest to Malley’s?

Looking at the stops listed just before Malley’s Chocolates and just after, we can approximate our arrival time, then determine our departure time.
Are there other things I’d like to do close by?

As you plan your trips, you can also plan to save time and money by doing other things in the same shopping center or area.

What other things are close to Malley’s that might be of interest to us?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination name</th>
<th>Great Lakes Mall</th>
<th>Malley’s Chocolates</th>
<th>Family Karate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street Address</td>
<td>7850 Mentor Ave</td>
<td>8920 Mentor Ave</td>
<td>8901 Mentor Ave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City and zip code</td>
<td>Mentor 44060</td>
<td>Mentor 44060</td>
<td>Mentor 44060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone number</td>
<td>440-255-6900</td>
<td>440-974-1440</td>
<td>440-255-7300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of operation</td>
<td>Monday-Saturday 9 am – 9 pm</td>
<td>Monday - Saturday</td>
<td>Monday-Saturday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days they are open</td>
<td>Monday - Sunday</td>
<td>Monday - Saturday</td>
<td>Monday - Saturday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a cost to get in?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes for classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it accessible to enter?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are restrooms accessible</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How I found my information</td>
<td>Website, email and phone call</td>
<td>Website and phone call</td>
<td>Website and phone call</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Curriculum Week 6
March 19, 2008

Review of last week:
Trip Planning is not as easy as it sounds!

This week: Video: Route to Freedom
Watch video of class in New York City as they went through travel training.
For next week, think about the similarities and differences between this class and yours.

Homework:
Think of three ways this class was like your class.
Think of three ways they are different.
Would you like our class trip to become a video?

Next week:
Final preparation for field trip.
March 19, 2008

Review of last week—trip planning takes work!

Travel Training in an Individual Education Plan (IEP)—individual or group training that teaches a student how to use public transportation. This allows the student to become more independent and reach other goals such as going to work, college, training and recreational destinations. It is also important to help students manage time and money.

Video: Route to Freedom

Enjoy this video of a New York City Class as they learn many of the same skills we have been learning these last few weeks.

Make notes on your homework sheet about how our class and environment is similar to theirs and how we are different.

Environment— the area where we live, work and go to school. Can be described as a natural resource (clean air, water, etc.) or as a neighborhood (city, suburb, country).

Similarities—ways in which two things are alike. For example, both of my dogs have tan fur and brown eyes.

Differences—ways in which two things are different. For example, one of my dogs is big and one is medium sized; one has a long tail, the other has almost no tail.
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Researcher: Jessie Guidry Baginski

Week 6- Homework Sheet
Bring back to class on April 9!

Your name: ____________________________

Thinking about the Road to Freedom video, list ways our class and the class in New York City are similar and ways we are different.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarities</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did you like this video? Why or why not?

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________
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Researcher: Jessie Guidry Baginski

Curriculum Week 7
April 9, 2008

Review of last week:
Discuss Route to Freedom video
Turn in permission slip for trip on April 16

This week: Final Preparation for April 16 Trip

Trip planning worksheet- review and complete
Review Fares
Personal checklist

Homework:
For trip bring ID, weather appropriate clothing, fare card

Next week:
Trip and Post-test

April 9, 2008

Final Trip Plans
Fare- cost to ride the bus one way
Where to find fare information
Fare Card - a ticket that allows you to prepay for more than one ride
Laketran 10-ride ticket
## TRIP PLANNING WORKSHEET
FOR USING FIXED-ROUTE TRANSIT

### DAY OF THE WEEK
- Sunday
- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday
- Saturday

### GETTING THERE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starting Address/Intersection:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Destination Address/Intersection:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to depart after:</td>
<td>I want to arrive by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route Number:</td>
<td>Location of Bus Stop:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Boarding Time:</td>
<td>Scheduled Arrival Time:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

### GETTING BACK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starting Address/Intersection:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Destination Address/Intersection:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to depart after:</td>
<td>I want to arrive by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route Number:</td>
<td>Location of Bus Stop:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Boarding Time:</td>
<td>Scheduled Arrival Time:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

For assistance call 1.888.LAKETRAN or visit www.laketrans.com

THINK LAKETRAN
## Personal Planning Checklist

### Trip Planning
- Let someone know when you are traveling and the times you expect to return.
- Avoid difficult streets, poor sidewalk conditions, deserted areas, and poorly lit areas if you travel after dark.
- Review a street atlas to be sure you know how to get to your destination.
- Use bus or system maps when planning your route.
- Practice your route and give yourself plenty of time to avoid a stressful trip.

### Transit Schedules
- Prepare your Laketran Trip Planner using bus schedules before leaving.
- Always carry a schedule or phone number to your transit system while traveling.

### Waiting
- Plan your waiting time based on weather conditions, personal health, traffic, and transfer points.
- Plan for possible detours, sidewalk closures, other construction.

### Consider your Challenges
- Plan not to do too much.
- Evaluate your physical and mental health limits.
- If necessary, travel with a friend.

### Accessibility of the Route
- Intersections
- Curb cuts and obstacles
- Construction
- Hills
- Sidewalks or other pedestrian walkways (Check condition of pavement)

### Access to Destination
- Bathrooms, entrances, steps
- Elevators, escalators

---

**LAKETRAN**

*There When You Need Us*
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Researcher: Jessie Guidry Baginski

Curriculum  Week 8
April 16, 2008
Field Trip
Great Lakes Mall to Scores Fun Center

While at Scores, each student will be interviewed about their experience.

Post-test will be given during lunch at Great Lakes Mall.

Hand out student summer individual training invitation.
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POST-TEST

About Me and My Future Plans

Name: ______________________

____ Male  ____ Female

____ Age

____ Grade Level

After high school, I plan to go (check only one):

____ to college  ____ to technical school  ____ to specific job training  ____ directly to work

If I am going to school or training, I plan to work part-time as well

____ yes  ____ no

For each statement, place a check mark in the box that matches the answer that best describes your feelings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I think learning to use public transportation has helped me to:</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Do not agree or disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be more independent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn to manage my money</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn to plan my schedule</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to do things with my friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to live on my own</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to go to work on my own</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to go to college, technical school or training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
My Experience on Public Transportation
For each statement, place a check mark in the box that matches the answer that best describes your feelings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have used Laketran’s Routes 1-6 to go to:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To do things with Friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For each statement, place a check mark in the box that matches the answer that best describes your feelings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have used Laketran’s Dial-a-Ride (door to door) service to go to:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To do things with Friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For each statement, place a check mark in the box that matches the answer that best describes your feelings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When riding the bus on my own, I am confident about:</th>
<th>Not at all confident</th>
<th>Somewhat confident</th>
<th>Very confident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowing how to get to the bus stop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing which bus to get on</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much my fare will cost</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to pay my fare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to request assistance from the driver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing where to get off the bus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requesting the driver to announce my stop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following bus rules</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transferring to another bus if needed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Travel Training: An Exploration of the Importance of Public Transportation for Suburban Students with Disabilities
Researcher: Jessie Guidry Baginski
440-283-9888 or jhg003@marietta.edu

Update on Travel Training:
Your son or daughter has participated in a travel training program at Mentor High School to improve their independent living and mobility skills. Some of the topics/skills we have covered include:
- Destination information fact finding – addresses, hours of operation, etc.
- Bus stop finding and safety practices
- Preparing for travel in weather (rain, snow, etc.)
- Fares for riding the bus
- Reading the system map, understanding the map legend, and finding locations
- Planning a trip using the bus route schedules
- Use of landmarks when planning a trip and riding the bus
- Appropriate behaviors using transit
- Asking for help – from driver, police, etc.
- Carrying ID and emergency information

We have completed the group training with our trip to Scores Fun Center for bowling using Route 1 from Great Lakes Mall to Scores.

We will also have a brief training on how to schedule Dial-a-Ride, Laketrans’s door-to-door service for destinations not along fixed routes. That training will conclude with a trip to Lake Farm Park on May 14.

Travel training is best remembered when taught one-on-one. Laketrans would like to extend to you and your son or daughter individual training during the remainder of this school year and in the summer. This service is free and can assist your child in strengthening their planning skills for using public transportation.

We usually spend 1-3 hours for a session with a student planning and practicing getting to and from specific destinations, such as for work, recreation or school. If you’d like for us to meet with you and your child to plan for additional travel training sessions, please complete the form below, or call me at 440-283-9888 or email jhg003@marietta.com.

It has been a pleasure to work with your son or daughter. A supportive community can help them realize their dreams and ambitions – and I am proud to be a part of that community.

Sincerely,
Jessie Baginski

____ Yes, I’d like to look into individual travel training for my child.

Please contact me at (440) _______. The best time to reach me is ___ am or ___ pm.

Student’s name: ___________________ Parent’s name: ___________________
BIBLIOGRAPHY


