

## Lesson Plan- Unit 2: Classroom Lesson 1

Subject/Course	Secondary Transition – Self-Determination and Advocacy		
Topic:	Self-awareness and Self-advocacy		
Lesson Title:	The Legalities		
Level:	9-12	Lesson Duration:	15-20 minutes

### Lesson Objectives:

- The students will learn how systems and protective laws change when you leave high school and enter the “adult world”.
- The students will learn about the American’s with Disability Act (ADA) and how it impacts them.

### Summary of Tasks/Actions:

1. Discussion of disability: Some disabilities are visible which means they can be seen by others (for example, if you use a wheelchair or the service of a guide dog), while some disabilities are hidden (such as learning disabilities, ADD/ADHD, epilepsy, depression, or bipolar disorder).

Some people are born with disabilities while others acquire their disabilities later in life.

- Believe it or not, the term “disability” is not easily defined. Disability is defined one way for students up through twelfth grade, and in a different way for individuals in postsecondary education and the work world.
- **The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA defines “disability” for young people up through twelfth grade.** Further, the IDEA identifies 13 categories of disability. These federal categories help states to determine who is eligible for special education supports and services in public schools.
- **The IDEA mandates that young people with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). This means that if you are receiving special education services the services, supports, and accommodations you need will be provided at no cost to you.**
- While you are in elementary or secondary school, a team of people works on your behalf to make sure that you receive the most appropriate education. At least once a year, this team (including you and your parents) meets to make sure that you are showing progress and receiving the needed accommodations to be successful in your classes. An Individualized Education Program (IEP), a set of personal goals and objectives, is developed for the next school year based on the meeting’s conversation and your plans for the future. **While you are in school, there is no need for you to ASK for accommodations because the IDEA says they must be arranged and provided for by the team of people working on your behalf. In other words, you are not required to self-disclose your disability in order to qualify for the supports and services available.**

- **However, after high school, the only way you will receive accommodations you might need is to ask for them yourself.** This is why we're making such a big deal about being self-determined. Remember, if you received supports in high school, it is probably due to family members and professionals making decisions (with and for you) based on the laws surrounding IDEA (the law that created the special education system that exists today) and you didn't need to request the supports. The laws protecting you while you are in elementary and secondary school are laws around an entitlement system. The focus remains on your disability and what the best educational program should be based on your strengths and needs. The services provided to you may change over time depending on a lot of factors, including your progress and new federal policy initiatives. Essentially, the process remains the same from year to year and you meet every year with your family and professionals to establish a plan for the next year.

#### ADA Definition of Disability:

- When you graduate or exit from the public school system, the way you are defined as a person with a disability changes as do the laws that protect you and provide for the accommodations you may need to be successful in postsecondary institutions or in the workplace. While IDEA is the law that seemed to protect you while you were in school, other laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Workforce Investment Act, and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act protect you when you exit school and enter college, adult education, and work world.
- A person qualifies as having a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) if they meet at least one of the following three conditions:
  1. A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (such as walking, talking, seeing, reading, learning, working, etc.);
  2. A record of such impairment (for example, people with a history of cancer or mental illness);
  3. A perception by others as having an impairment (such as a person with a disfiguring facial scar, or a person rumored to be HIV positive).
- When you exit school and enter college, adult education, or the world of work, the only way you can receive the accommodations you need is to ask for them yourself. That is why it's important to understand yourself, your disability, and your accommodation needs for both postsecondary settings and work. It is also important to understand the laws that protect you in case you decide to disclose your disability. The purpose of the ADA is to extend to people with disabilities civil rights protections similar to those already available to people on the basis of race, color, national origin, and religion through the Civil Rights
- Act of 1964. ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in five general areas:
  1. Private sector employment
  2. Activities of states and local governments
  3. Places of public accommodation
  4. Transportation
  5. Telecommunication services
  - 6.

Once you graduate or exit high school, you are no longer ENTITLED to services and supports; rather, you become ELIGIBLE for adult services and supports based on your particular situation, your disability, and your ability to disclose necessary information.

**Materials/Equipment:**

- Worksheet Unit 2 Classroom Lesson 1.

**References:**

- *The 411 on Disability Disclosure – A Workbook for Youth with Disabilities*. National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability (NCWD) for Youth. <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure>