Introduction to Self-Determination

Being self-determined means acting or causing things to happen as you set and work toward goals in your life.
Self-Determination is a dispositional characteristic manifested as acting as the causal agent in one’s life. Self-determined people (i.e., causal agents) act in service to freely chosen goals.

People who are causal agents make, or cause, things to happen in their lives. They are “goal chasers.”

Shogren et al., 2015

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Self-Determined Action

- Volitional Action: Self-initiated and enables a person to act autonomously
- Agentic Action: Self-directed in service of a goal
- Action-control beliefs: Enacted with a belief that change will occur

Skills associated with Self-Determined Action

- Choice making
- Decision making
- Problem solving
- Goal setting and attainment
- Planning
- Self-management
- Self-advocacy
- Self-awareness
- Self-knowledge

How many of your students would benefit from instruction in one or more of these areas?
When student self-determination is promoted, they achieve:

**OUTCOMES**

- Greater academic achievement
- Increased postsecondary outcomes
- Progress in general education curriculum
- Academic goal attainment
- Postsecondary education
- Employment
- Community Participation

Shogren, Palmer, Wehmeyer, Williams, et al., 2015
Shogren, Wehmeyer, Palmer, Rifenbark, & Little, 2015
Wehmeyer, Shogren, Palmer, Williams-Diehm, Little, and Boulton, 2012

Greater academic achievement
- Progress in general education curriculum
- Academic goal attainment

Increased postsecondary outcomes
- Postsecondary education
- Employment
- Community Participation

IN PRACTICE

Self-determination

- Teaching the skills associated with self-determination
- Providing supports and accommodations as necessary
- Providing opportunities to use and practice these skills

Choice making
- Decision making
- Problem solving
- Goal setting
- Planning
- Goal attainment
- Self-advocacy
- Self-monitoring
- Self-awareness
- Self-knowledge

Context, Intervention, and Measures

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**INTERVENTION CONTEXT**

- **State-wide efforts to enhance transition outcomes for students with intellectual disability**

**Transition outcomes**
- State-wide efforts to enhance transition outcomes for students with intellectual disability

**Competitive employment rates**
- Only approximately 10% of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities are competitively employed in the United States (Butterworth, Hiersteiner, Engler, Bershadsky, & Bradley, 2015)

**Role of self-determination**
- Skills associated with self-determination are critical for more positive postsecondary transition outcomes (Shogren, Wehmeyer, Palmer, Agran, Mithaug, & Martin, 2000)

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**THE SELF-DETERMINED LEARNING MODEL OF INSTRUCTION (SDLMI)**

Teaching model that enables teachers to teach students to:
- Make choices and decisions about setting a goal
- Develop action plans for academic goals
- Self-monitor and self-evaluate progress toward academic goals
- Adjust the goal or plan

**SDLMI: ROLES**

- **Teacher**: Facilitator, Instructor, Advocate
- **Student**: Self-Directed Learner, Active Learner, Self-Advocate

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Teachers can use the SDLMI in a variety of settings with a variety of goals:
- Academic goals in general education classes
- Employment goals at job sites
- Community living goals in the community

Guided by **Student Questions** as teachers meet **Teacher Objectives** and uses **Educational Supports**

The amount of time it takes depends on the supports each student needs.
Meet Alissa

What is my goal?
Practice skills I can use as a teaching assistant

What is my plan?
Contribute as a leader during small group work in my U.S. History class

What have I learned
I can ask my classmates questions or talk to them about their work like a teacher

STUDENT OUTCOMES EXAMPLE

“My student is age 19, has ASD and requires support throughout the day in all areas.

Through multiple SDLM/GAS cycles, he has narrowed his expressed interest in employment, specifically working in a gym, cleaning and organizing the equipment.

The goal sheets allowed the process of identifying and exploring each element of the experience to be broken down and the appropriate educational supports to be provided at each step. The organized and consistent process worked great with his learning style and he now is able to use the process of setting a new goal and assessing his knowledge of where he is and what he needs to learn to meet the goal consistently.

It looks at this time like he will be working at an area gym, and having a career experience that he designed!!

Whose Future Is It?
Wehmeyer & Palmer, 2011
IMPLEMENTATION

**Year 1**
- 184 students with intellectual disability aged 13 to 20 years
- 40 special education teachers
- 16 instructional coaches
- 21 school districts within state

**Year 2**
- 340 students with intellectual disability aged 10 to 21 years
- 64 special education teachers
- 15 instructional coaches
- 17 school districts within state
MEASURES

- Self-Determination Inventory: Student Report (SDI:SR) and Parent/Teacher Report (SDI:PTR; Years 1 & 2)
- Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS; Years 1 & 2)
- SDLMI Fidelity Checklist (Years 1 & 2)
- Transition Empowerment Scale (TES; Year 1)

RESULTS:

RESULTS: YEAR 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>n</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal 1</td>
<td>47.40</td>
<td>[43.53, 51.26]</td>
<td>123</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 2</td>
<td>51.20</td>
<td>[48.68, 53.73]</td>
<td>83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 3</td>
<td>49.54</td>
<td>[43.37, 55.71]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 4</td>
<td>47.50</td>
<td>[40.00, 55.26]</td>
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### Results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>n</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Transition Empowerment Scale</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>[3.33, 3.76]</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>[3.81, 4.16]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Sample size is indicative of any one time or for results seen across.

Note: At end of year, more than 50% of the responses were exceeding for SDI PTR items 10–14, all questions in the action-controlled beliefs subscale.

### Difference scores for outcome measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>ΔY</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>99.4% Confidence interval of ΔY</th>
<th>LL</th>
<th>UL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDI SR - Overall score</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>-0.34</td>
<td>92.02</td>
<td>-0.68</td>
<td>0.66</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDI SR - Vocational action</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>85.05</td>
<td>-1.28</td>
<td>1.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDI SR - Agentic action</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>82.54</td>
<td>-0.85</td>
<td>1.84</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDI SR - Action-controlled beliefs</td>
<td>-0.39</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>-1.31</td>
<td>80.64</td>
<td>-1.18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transition Empowerment Scale</td>
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<td>0.07</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>84.87</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
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<td>Teacher**</td>
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<td>SDI PTR - Vocational action</td>
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<td>0.39</td>
<td>3.30</td>
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<td>0.20</td>
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<td>SDI PTR - Agentic action</td>
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<td>0.55</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>177.10</td>
<td>0.15</td>
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* p < 0.00; the Bonferroni adjusted statistical significance level for multiple tests

![Graph showing Teacher or Student Objectives](image.png)
RESULTS:

YEAR 2

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Lower CI</th>
<th>Upper CI</th>
<th>χ2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall score</td>
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<td>[56.45, 70.78]</td>
<td>[64.25, 75.54]</td>
<td>62.22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voluntary action</td>
<td>63.15</td>
<td>[57.51, 67.87]</td>
<td>[65.66, 75.14]</td>
<td>63.84</td>
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<tr>
<td>Actionable items</td>
<td>63.91</td>
<td>[59.38, 68.94]</td>
<td>[65.33, 71.37]</td>
<td>69.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Actionable beliefs</td>
<td>65.02</td>
<td>[60.69, 69.35]</td>
<td>[66.98, 72.26]</td>
<td>75.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>53.56</td>
<td>[48.21, 58.91]</td>
<td>[53.27, 58.91]</td>
<td>52.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer action</td>
<td>49.85</td>
<td>[44.95, 54.50]</td>
<td>[49.25, 59.00]</td>
<td>49.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Actionable items</td>
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<td>[45.88, 53.92]</td>
<td>[51.34, 55.20]</td>
<td>48.71</td>
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<tr>
<td>Actionable beliefs</td>
<td>57.60</td>
<td>[52.73, 62.47]</td>
<td>[58.26, 62.94]</td>
<td>70.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: CI = confidence interval; SDI BR = Self-Determination Inventory: Self-Report; SDI PR = Self-Determination Inventory: Parent-Teacher Report.
Teacher Reflections on Positive Outcomes

Goal setting and attainment
- Students learned that they can set personal goals and follow a set process to achieve them.
- Students are becoming more self-directed, deciding what they want to work on for goals.
- Our students are using skills and strategies learned to achieve their individual goals throughout their school day, in a variety of settings.
- Helping the students create goals to help each student with their future.

Decision-making
- More decisions are being made.
- Students are part of the decision process and take more ownership of their goals.
- Students are becoming more self-directed, deciding what they want to work on for goals.

Ownership
- Students are part of the decision process and take more ownership of their goals.
- Seeing students start to understand that they can have more agency over their own lives.

Self-awareness, disability awareness
- Increased vocabulary in terms used on Phase sheets. For the first time, interest in their IEPs and disability awareness.
- The students are becoming more aware of themselves and their disability.

RESULTS
Teacher Reflections on Positive Outcomes

Motivation
- Reflection of what the student is truly motivated about and want to continue to learn about
- Intrinsic motivation

Self-advocacy
- Our students are beginning to self-advocate for themselves within all classes throughout our school building

Implications

Self-determination and goal attainment
- Results suggest importance of individualizing interventions to teach skills associated with self-determination
- Student perceptions of self-determination
- Changes may take longer (i.e., several years) to occur
- SDLMI implementation fidelity
- With training and coaching supports, teachers can implement the SDLMI with fidelity
IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

Transition-related goals
- Examining type and quality of goals set, and linkage between goals and long-term outcomes targeted.

Teacher roles
- Exploring teachers’ roles in supporting self-determination.

Longitudinal outcomes
- Analyzing longitudinal outcomes for students exposed to different interventions.

Questions?

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Questions?

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