



Travel Training Activities

Each travel training service is unique. However, according to Easter Seals Project ACTION, major training activities typically include:

- ◆ assessment
- ◆ trip planning
- ◆ familiarity of the environment
- ◆ travel instruction plan development
- ◆ strategies of instruction, including-
 - crossing streets
 - using public conveyor systems
 - boarding, riding, and exiting vehicles
 - handling emergencies

Watch the video 'Road to Travel Independence' at www.frederickcountymd.gov/index.aspx?NID=224 to view individuals with disabilities using TRANSIT Services of Frederick County.

This fact sheet and others can be found at www.mdeid.org and www.mdworkforcepromise.org.

Questions?

Contact Maryland Department of Disabilities

Travel Training

Overview

Transportation provides access to opportunities such as employment, education, and

recreation. Learning to use fixed route public transportation provides individuals with disabilities the independence to participate in these activities. Individuals can learn to use public transportation through travel training, a short-term comprehensive one-to-one instruction provided by qualified personnel. It teaches the skills and techniques necessary to negotiate public transportation in a safe and independent manner. The instruction is individualized to the person's needs and abilities and is taught in the natural environments in which the individual plans to travel.

Travel skills are learned while following a particular route, generally to school or a work site, using the safest, most direct route. The travel trainer is responsible for making sure the learner experiences and understands the realities of public trans-

Benefits of Travel Training

- ◆ On an individual level, traveling becomes more spontaneous and flexible because trips do not need to be scheduled in advance as with family, friends, or paratransit (an alternative form of transportation that does not follow fixed routes or schedules).
- ◆ A sense of independence and empowerment can develop as the person has the freedom to choose how and when to travel.
- ◆ The ability to travel independently and at will provides individuals with increased opportunities for employment, education, and social activities.
- ◆ Transportation is a key component to ensuring access to employment training and jobs. Lack of transportation is a major barrier to employment success, as choices for suitable employment are limited by the availability of accessible transportation. As individuals learn to use the fixed-route system, they have more employment options to consider.
- ◆ Traveling on fixed-route allows more flexibility in work schedules and enables the individual to travel to and from work without support.
- ◆ People who travel on the fixed-route system, in most instances, are able to get to their place of employment on time. Unlike paratransit, if an individual misses the bus, another one will be coming.
- ◆ In many cities, paratransit systems experience capacity constraints, which make trip scheduling during peak travel hours difficult.

An Effective Travel Trainer

- ◆ Keeps safety as the foremost concern.
- ◆ Is sensitive to learning needs, styles, and patterns.
- ◆ Involves the learner in planning his or her own travel training program.
- ◆ Structures lesson-plan sequence so that each succeeding task is built upon previous success.
- ◆ Keeps the training steps short and simple.
- ◆ Checks in to see that the learner understands by asking for restatement or demonstration.
- ◆ Takes cues from the learner as to the speed and conditions of training.
- ◆ Uses the learner's natural supports to reinforce skill attainment and provide encouragement.
- ◆ Ensures travel training is a positive learning experience.
- ◆ Makes proper use of motivators to encourage independent travel.
- ◆ Communicates a positive attitude, regardless of level of success during the travel training lessons.
- ◆ Fosters independence, but remains an advocate.
- ◆ Incorporates humor and makes the learning proc-

Passengers' Rights

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has granted certain rights associated with the use of public transportation. Under the ADA, passengers with disabilities have the right to:

- ◆ Use any public bus or rail system.
- ◆ Apply for paratransit service if fixed-route transportation cannot be used.
- ◆ Receive transportation route and service information in an accessible and useable form.
- ◆ Use a wheelchair or mobility aid, provided the device meets the ADA's definition of a common wheelchair.
- ◆ Find all lifts and other accessible equipment in good working order.
- ◆ Have stops, major intersections and transfer points announced by the driver.
- ◆ Travel with a personal care attendant.
- ◆ Travel with a service animal.
- ◆ Receive courteous, respectful service and be allowed ample time to get on and off the vehicle.
- ◆ File a complaint if these rights are violated.

Resources

Maryland Department of Disabilities
Voice: 1(800) 637-4113
www.mdod.maryland.gov

Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council
www.mdsilc.org

Maryland Transit Administration
Voice: (410) 539-5000 / 1(866) RiDE - MTA
www.mtmaryland.com

NICHCY
Travel Training for Youth with Disabilities
Voice: 1(800) 695-0285
www.nichcy.org

Project ACTION
Voice: (202) 347-3066 / 1(800) 659-6428
www.projectaction.easterseals.com

Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority
(202) 962-1234

Where to Access Training

Contact your local transit agency:

- ◆ www.mtmaryland.com/resources/transitlinks/mdlocaltransitsystems/index.cfm

Contact the Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority for Metro Orientation Sessions:

- ◆ 202-962-1558

Contact your local Center for Independent Living:

- ◆ Eastern Shore Center for Independent Living, Inc. Cambridge, MD
Phone: 410-221-7701 TTY: 410-221-5140
- ◆ The Freedom Center, Inc., Frederick, MD
Phone: 301-846-7811 TTY: 711
- ◆ Independence Now, Inc., Riverdale, MD
Phone 301-277-2839 TTY: 711
- ◆ Resources for Independence, Inc., Cumberland, MD
Phone: 301-784-1774 TTY: 711
- ◆ Southern Maryland Center for Independent Living, Charlotte Hall, MD
Phone: 301-884-4498 TTY: 711

Public and private schools, independent trainers, State agencies (i.e. Maryland Department of Disabilities, Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration, Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services) and community service providers either offer travel