



Peer Tutoring and Student Goal Setting

Helping Students Become More
Self-Determined!



Goal Setting and Students with Significant Disabilities

- Students with significant disabilities often have not received instruction in setting goals for themselves, and in monitoring and evaluating those goals.
- Students may not know how to set goals, how to choose strategies to reach goals, or how to evaluate whether they have attained their goals
 - (Copeland & Hughes, 2002)



The Role of Peer Tutors

- Peer Tutors can assist with teaching students with disabilities how to set and attain their own goals.
- They can also draw from their own experiences in learning to set goals for *themselves*.



One Example of Using Peer Tutors to Teach Goal Setting

- Middle School Peer Tutors Successfully Taught Students with Severe Disabilities To *Self-Monitor* and *Increase* Their Rates Of General Class Survival Skills (e.g., in class and in seat when bell rings, bring appropriate materials, ask and respond to questions)
 - (Gilberts, Agran, Hughes, & Wehmeyer, 2001)



Goal Setting as a Part of an Instructional Practice

- Goal setting can be especially effective if used as part of a total package in which peer tutors assist in (always under the supervision of teacher):
 - Providing direct instruction
 - Making accommodations
 - Monitoring and evaluating the attainment of the goals that student has selected



Tips for Goal Setting

- An ongoing process – when goal has been achieved, go onto a new one!
- Goals must be realistic (the purpose of a goal is to reach it!)
- Goals should be of short duration – at least initially. It is important to experience success.
 - (from Vanderbilt University, “Peer Buddy Manual”)



Goal Setting and Monitoring Steps...

- It can be helpful to include the student's self-evaluation of strengths and challenges as a starting point for setting goals.
- Identify the goal (it's OK to formulate your goal with the assistance of someone else) – examples:
 - Come to class with all materials
 - Complete all assignments each day
 - Be ready to work and at your desk when the bell rings



Steps in Goal Setting – continued

- Identify the steps or strategies to attain your goal – what will you do to achieve it?
- Identify how you will track whether you have achieved it (e.g., recording and charting).