



Maximizing the Day: Building Independence Through Functional and Academic Skills

Presenters: Ali Sweitzer, Metro Region Behavior Specialist, Jen Quaranta, Southeast Region Coordinator, and Teri McGill, Metro Region Coordinator

Date: November 19, 2025

Time: 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Location: ESU #3

Fee: \$25 (Includes lunch, beverage, snack, and materials are provided.)

Audience: This workshop is for Upper Elementary, Middle School, High School, Resource Teachers, SLPs, Counselors, Psychologists, Transition Teachers/Staff, and Parents of students who would benefit from life skills instruction.

Description:

Participants in this workshop will gain an understanding of the importance of beginning with the end goal in mind to develop effective and meaningful programs for students with complex needs. We will envision where we want our students to be in five years, establish broader objectives, and break these down into smaller, actionable goals to create a structured path for learning and skill development. We will explore various curricula and strategies that support academic growth, social skills, life skills, and career readiness for students from upper elementary through age 21.

Dr. Peter Gerhardt emphasized, "Everyone is capable of living and working in the community with the proper supports, and no one should have to earn the right to be in the community." Participants will leave with the belief that all students are capable of community integration and with practical strategies to continue building meaningful programs for their students.

Participants will:

- Be able to articulate why starting with the end outcome in mind is essential for creating meaningful programs for students with complex needs.
- Recognize the importance of identifying long-term visions for their students and break them down into achievable short-term goals to facilitate effective learning and skill development.
- Learn about various curriculums and strategies that support academic, social, life, and career readiness skills for students from upper elementary through age 21.
- Gain insights from Dr. Peter Gerhardt's work on community inclusion, learn strategies to ensure all students can live and work in the community with appropriate supports, and develop plans to implement this in educational programs.
- Leave with practical techniques to design and implement meaningful and supportive educational programs for students with complex needs, aligning with the vision of community inclusion and participation.

Registration deadline is 1 week prior or when registration is at capacity.

Please log into your IRIS account or create a new one (if you do not have one) [HERE](#).

Once an account has been created, you can login and register for this workshop.

[Click Here to Register](#)

If you need assistance or have questions, please contact Amy Harvey at aharvey@esu3.org.

**Please note that if you register and do not attend, or your cancellation is not received three business days in advance, you are still liable for full payment.*



ASD Network Metro Region Training



The contents of this workshop were developed under a grant from the Nebraska Department of Education, IDEA Parts B and C from the U.S. Department of Education; however, this content does not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. No federal funds used for food/drinks.