



Ready, Set, Go

Success for All

An e-Newsletter linking people and resources to support quality practices in the education of all students

A photograph of a young man in a wheelchair on a basketball court. He is wearing a dark jacket and is holding a basketball with his right hand. In the background, another person in a red shirt is visible, and the court's structure is partially seen.

EMPOWERING YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES:

FOSTERING COMPETENCE, AUTONOMY, AND RELATEDNESS
THROUGH SELF-DETERMINATION AND THE USE OF
HIGH-LEVERAGE PRACTICES.

As educators, we must consider students' fundamental needs when developing self-determination skills, which includes competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Self-determination involves the ability to make choices, set goals, and take actions that lead to achieving those goals. These principles can profoundly impact students' academic success and well-being. According to a study by Ryan and Deci (2000), students are more likely to engage in learning activities and take on challenges when these needs are met. Using evidence-based High Leverage Practices (HLPs) to build students' competence, autonomy, and relatedness can improve outcomes for students on their journey to becoming self-determined individuals (McLeskey, 2017).

Competence refers to a student's belief in their own abilities to succeed academically (Ryan & Deci, 2017). When students feel competent, they are more likely to engage in learning activities and take on challenges. As educators, it is our responsibility to create an environment that fosters competence. We can achieve this by providing clear

learning goals ([HLP #12](#)), constructive feedback ([HLP #8 & #22](#)), and opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning.

“One instance that having confidence in a skill helped me solve a problem I had was using organizational skills to develop a weekly schedule for my task completion. Having this ability to schedule my time was incredibly important for making sense of the workload I was given.” - (Scarpa, 2022)

Autonomy refers to a student's sense of control over their own learning (Ryan & Deci, 2017). When students feel like they have a say in their own education, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated. As educators, we can foster autonomy by providing choices and opportunities to support student's independent decision-making abilities. This can include letting students choose their own topics for assignments or allowing them to choose how they will present their learning.

“Before starting my studies at Liberty, I called the school to start the process of getting my accommodations in place for me all on my own.” - (Cesar Dulanto III, I'm Determined Youth Leader, personal communication, March 30, 2023)

Relatedness refers to a student's sense of belonging in the classroom (Ryan & Deci, 2017). When students feel connected to their peers and their teacher, they are more likely to engage in learning activities and participate in class discussions. As educators, we can foster relatedness by creating a positive classroom culture ([HLP # 7](#)) that values collaboration and inclusivity (<https://highleveragepractices.org>).

“As I began the new process at Norfolk State University, I found out my own college friends are all freshmen that have different personalities who get along with me as “I am considered different” than all of them. The relatedness in my NSU group is that all of them care about me and support me along the way.” - (Talia ThomasI, I'm Determined Youth Leader, personal communication, March 30, 2023)

Let's get ready to create classrooms that prioritize competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Incorporating these principles into our classrooms can have a profound impact on our students' learning and well-being. By prioritizing these needs, we can create an environment where students feel empowered to take control of their own learning and build meaningful connections with their peers.

Get **Ready**

Be ready to foster competence by providing clear learning goals and constructive feedback.

- One tool that allows students to speak about their goals is [I'm Determined's Goal Plan](#)
- [HLP Highlight Tool - HLP 11: Identity and Prioritize Long- and Short-Term Goals](#)

- [HLP Highlight Tool - HLP 8 & 22: Provide Positive and Constructive Feedback to Guide Students' Learning and Behavior](#)

Be ready to promote autonomy by offering choices and opportunities for student decision-making.

- [Providing Multiple Opportunities to Respond by Kaimuki Middle School](#)
- [HLP Highlight Tool - HLP 18: Use Strategies to Promote Active Student Engagement](#)
- [ConnectABILITY - Visual Support Builder](#)

Be ready to foster relatedness by creating a positive classroom culture that values collaboration and inclusivity.

- [HLP ighlight Tool - HLP 7: Establish a Consistent, Organized, and Respectful Learning Environment](#)
- [HLP ighlight Tool - HLP 3: Collaborate with Families to Support Student Learning and Secure Needed Services](#)
- Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center's [Transition Guide for Families of Youth with Disabilities](#)
- [Family and Student Engagement Skills Checklist](#)

Get Set

Set learning in motion by using teaching strategies that prioritize competence, autonomy, and relatedness, such as project-based learning and student-centered instruction.

- I'm Determined's [Problem Solving video case study and Character Cards](#)

Set reasonable expectations for student achievement while allowing for flexibility and individualized learning paths.

- [HLP Highlight Tool - HLP 6: Use Student Assessment Data, Analyze Instructional Practices, and Make Necessary Adjustments that Improve Student Outcomes](#)
- [Quality Indicators for Delivering Specially Designed Instruction](#)

Go

Empower students through competence, autonomy, and relatedness.

- [Self-Determination Learning Model of Instruction Teacher's Guide](#)
- I'm Determined's Video Series: [Student Involvement in the IEP Process](#)

Use Self-Determination to support the transition planning process.

- [VCU Center on Transition Innovation: Get Ready for Your Career](#)
- [VCU Center on Transition Innovation: Get Ready for Your Career Facilitator's Guide](#)
- [VCU Center on Transition Innovation: Transition Assessment Process](#)

References

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This e-Newsletter is a collaborative effort of the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Training and Technical Assistance Centers (TTACs) at George Mason University and James Madison University. This issue was prepared by the staff at the VDOE TTAC at James Madison University. For questions about content, please contact Kandy Grant, grantkb@jmu.edu, **Jarrold Hobson**, hobsonjd@jmu.edu, **Jesse Rodriguez**, rodri3jm@jmu.edu, or **Jill Shifflett**, shifflijm@jmu.edu.

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