**Oregon Transition Podcast**

**Season 1 Episode 1: What is Transition?**

**Nicole Perdue, host:** What does transition mean to you?

**Unidentified:** You’re giving to life what you wanted life to give to you. So, if you want to be successful that means you start trying really hard.

**Josh Barbour, host:** This is Josh.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** And this is Nicole and you're listening to the Oregon Transition Podcast.

**Josh Barbour, host:** Brought to you by the TTAN, The Transition Technical Assistance Network and professionals across the state.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** We’ve got you covered from Portland to Ontario, from Hood River to Klamath Falls, from Seaside to Burns, and everywhere in between.

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**Nicole Perdue, host:** In this episode, we’re going to talk about what transition means.

**Josh Barbour, host:** The Transition Technical Assistance Network interviewed people across the state and asked them the question what is transition? We interviewed teachers, students, parents, and Vic Rehab counselors.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** Really whoever would talk to us *[laugh]*

**Josh Barbour, host:** Whoever would talk to us.

**Josh Barbour, host:** We asked the question “what is transition?” and the answers we got were really unique.

**Unidentified:** I’m Shy. I’m 18. Transition means that you’re like getting over your fear and transitioning into a different lifestyle.

**Lon Thornburg:** So, what does transition mean to me? Hmmm. I think it means any time in your life where you're changing from one thing to another like it could be when you're going from high school or college or college to a job or job to job or from single to get married. Transition happens our whole life and it won't stop until we're in the grave.

**Boone:** My name is Boon. I'm 20 years old and I'm from Brownsville, Oregon and to me transition means an opportunity to start, to start anew.

**Unidentified:** Transition is at the root of our work regarding transitioning students from the school environment into the work environment.

**Noah:** I'm Noah and I'm 19. I think transition means to me is you're becoming you know like a

new person you know. So instead of the old you, you’re a new, you. *[laughs]*

**Unidentified:** Transition means moving into something new and into maybe something uncertain but taking risks and finding opportunities.

**Ashley:** My name is Ashley and I'm 17 and what transitioning means to me is getting ready for the future.

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**Josh Barbour, host:** So, Nicole it sounds like transition can mean a lot of different things. Let me ask you. What does transition mean to you?

**Nicole Perdue, host:** Josh it really is a hard question to answer. The meaning of transition can vary depending on what region you are in, what age you are, what profession you’re in. Transition for me is, is really supporting a student or an individual from getting from one step to another. Why don't we talk to some transition state leaders about what their perspectives on transition are.

**Acacia McGuire Anderson:** I’m the employment first coordinator with the state of Oregon which was a position that was created by the executive order, executive order 1304 in 2013.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** That is Acacia McGuire-Anderson with the Office of Developmental Disability Services who Josh had the pleasure of interviewing.

**Josh Barbour, host:** Yeah. So, I asked Acacia what is transition?

**Acacia McGuire Anderson:** It means that people have the opportunity to really go to work like anybody else. And those families and individuals who have fought years and years to get integrated classrooms and years and years to get this opportunity can actually see it happen. So, I’m excited for the future that it’ll just be the expectation from 5 forward people will be talking about what they want to do when they grow up and when they graduate. There really will be an opportunity to go to work. So, I guess transition is really a cool thing because of super hopeful and I don't want to lose sight of that.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** Acacia reflected, I think, a lot of what you'll be hearing when professionals talk about what transition means to them and it's really at the heart of what they do. It’s at the heart of their work. It's about making sure that these students all have the opportunity to work and about how Oregon as a state is moving forward in that quest.

**Heather Lindsey:** My name is Heather Lindsey. I'm with the Oregon Department of Education.

**Keith Ozols:** Hi my name is Keith Ozols, workforce, and youth manager for Vocational Rehabilitation.

**Josh Barbour, host:** We were able to catch up with Keith and Heather at a conference last fall and talk to them about transition.

**Heather Lindsey:** What transition means to me is successfully bridging from school to employment, independent living and becoming your own self advocate sharing what works, what doesn't work. Very person centered and being able to be successful in community collaboration and also employment, specifically post-secondary education as well.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** And Keith what does transition mean to you?

**Keith Ozols:** Transition to me is... change. And change can be a scary thing, it can be an exciting thing. It can be both of those things at once and so to me transition is something that our team, our schools, our programs like VR, we are all there to help people through that change. To make it less scary to make it more successful and to me I, I love to see the successful transition when people can go through that point of change and growth where they get to that place where they have reached a new destination. Either employment or post-secondary education. They’re going to school where they are doing something that is exciting for them, and they've made that process of change happen and I just think that it's wonderful to be part of this process.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** And this is Sally Simich with Department of Education

**Sally Simich:** So, transition is not a subject. I think we all think of it as this subject area like history, English, math. It isn’t.

It’s actually how to I move through life. How do I go through the changes that I’m going to encounter? How do I know how to get the answers to a question I may have? How do I talk to a stranger? How do I explain what I need to be able to do something? And how do I actually understand the things I’m learning in school are going to lead to employment.

How do I get to those places and so transition is embedded into everything we do, all day long at school. We just call out certain sections on an IEP that say tell us about this transition plan. But truly if we were to include everything we do in transition on a daily basis at high school, middle school, and elementary school, it would be a book because there are, you know it’s an endless possibility about how you’re going to design a transition plan for a student. So, you truly want to be looking at what that student wants to do. Where are they going to go and what type of instruction are they going to need to get there?

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**Nicole Perdue, host:** We just heard from all these people. And they're from VR, they’re from ODE and they're from ODDS.

**Josh Barbour, host:** I think we should say...

**Nicole Perdue, host:** All the acronyms!

**Nicole Perdue, host:** So, what do the acronyms stand for Josh?

**Josh Barbour, host:** VR is Vocational Rehabilitation. ODDS is Office of Developmental Disability Services and ODE is Oregon Department of Education.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** So, we talked to all of them though.

**Josh Barbour, host:** We talked with all of them and it’s paramount that agencies are communicating with each other. Agencies don't work in silos. We need to communicate with each other to make the transition happen as a team.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** And we are, we are.

**Josh Barbour, host:** We are.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** And that’s what the TTAN is about. And that’s what this podcast is about. It's about taking from all these different departments about what they're doing with transition and making sure that we're spreading the word across Oregon.

**Josh Barbour, host:** Right. And each agency is going to have their own unique perspective on what transition is. And if we work together it’s going to make the transition easier, and more effective for all students.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** Great, well I can't wait to go down that journey and that path with you. Let’s get it done.

**Josh Barbour, host:** Let’s get it done. Woo Hoo! But before we go down that path, we need to have a commercial break.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** Yay commercials.

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***[Commercial]***

**Josh Barbour, host:** This week’s sponsor is the 2018-2019 Oregon Transition Resource Handbook.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** Wait, wait, wait what’s the Oregon Transition Resource Handbook, it sounds amazing!

**Josh Barbour, host:** It is amazing. It’s a handbook that goes through the transition page on the IEP. It goes from IEP requirements to assessment all the way through the rest of the transition page. Really helpful for teachers, administrators, YTP specialists, and anyone that works with transition age students.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** So, if I’m a teacher or YTP Specialist, or one of those people that could benefit from having this amazing resource. How do I get one?

**Josh Barbour, host:** You can ask your Transition Network Facilitator. They have boxes of these. And so, contact your Transition Network Facilitator and request as many copies as you want.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** How much do they cost, Josh?

**Josh Barbour, host:** It’s free.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** It's free! I'm going to go get a whole box full. Are they online too? **Josh Barbour, host:** They are online. You can find them at triwou.org.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** I bet if you check the Transition Podcast Facebook page that they are on that too. Right at Oregon Transition Podcast at Facebook.com?

**Josh Barbour, host:** Absolutely.

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**Josh Barbour, host:** Nicole you and I can’t get all over the state.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** No, we definitely can’t.

**Josh Barbour, host:** So, we rely on our colleagues and friends of the pod. **Nicole Perdue, host:** Friends of the pod… Like Pod People!?

**Josh Barbour, host:** Pod people? It’s not a horror movie.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** Okay so you just mean people that contribute and that like what we’re doing.

**Josh Barbour, host:** Yes.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** Friends of the Pod, got it.

**Josh Barbour, host:** So, Toni Depeel interviewed Michael Salitore from Molalla River School District and Molalla River School District is about 45 minutes from Portland in Clackamas County.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** So, friend of the pod, Toni Depeel, who is also the pre-ETS coordinator for Portland metro area and surrounding is going to talk to Michael about what transition is.

**Toni Depeel:** Hi, can you tell me your name?

**Michael Salitore:** Hi Toni, Michael Salitore. I’m the director of special education in the Molalla River School District.

**Toni Depeel:** Can you just tell me what you think transition is?

**Michael Salitore:** What transition means to me is really the cornerstone of any special education program. I believe that outcomes and results are what drive work for which we should be accountable to. And I would say the Lane v. Brown suit really change the climate in the state of Oregon to, to a better position districts to have clear outcomes as our focus and I believe that transition, I believe that it should be the cornerstone of developing a robust Continuum of Services from the time children enter school with the idea that we have to prepare them and we have an obligation to prepare them for life after school and isn't that the point.

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**Josh Barbour, host:** We talked with state leaders, we talk to administrators. Now let’s talk with individuals that provide direct services to students.

**Yesenia Robinson:** I’m Yesenia Robinson and I am a youth transition specialist at Crater High School. I've been in this position for almost 1 year.

**Cindy Cameron:** So, Yesenia, what does transition mean to you?

**Yesenia Robinson:** Transition means moving from one stage to another successfully. **Desiree Berry:** I’m Desiree Berry and I’m a YTP Specialist at Bend Senior High School **Nicole Perdue, host:** What does transition mean to you?

**Desiree Berry:** Transition to me is whatever the next is for these students. So, transitioning from high school to the next part of their life that could be college, that could be work, that could be exploring what they want to do, sometimes they don’t know. So just transitioning from high school to the next part of their life.

**Chris Perry:** My name is Chris Perry. I am an Employment Specialist and I work at Dirkse Counseling and Consulting.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** What does transition mean to you?

**Chris Perry:** Well, there’s the obvious definition of changing from one state to another. But I think as far as the seamless transition program is concerned, what transition means to me is being able to shift from childhood to adulthood. There's a lot of students who when they are aging out of the program or 21 which means they're already adults because they live at home, because they have all of the love and support from their families, many of them still consider themselves children and this is one of the biggest steps to move into adulthood

**Nicole Perdue, host:** It's great to be able to hear directly from people who work with students across the state about what transition means and how we’re all on the same wavelength.

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**Nicole Perdue, host:** Josh, you were a transition teacher for a long time what does transition mean to you?

**Josh Barbour, host:** Transition to me is working with and helping a student identify his or her strengths, interests, preferences or needs and helping the student identify goals and deciding steps to reach those goals. And when we’re working with students on their goals it is also identifying the proper or the appropriate agency support, involving the parents and making a plan.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** Speaking of families and parents, we actually spoke with Roberta Dunn, the Executive Director of FACT Oregon. Roberta is also a parent who has first-hand knowledge of how transition services worked for her son, and she was kind enough to share her story.

**Roberta Dunn:** I know that I'm still in the throes of transition so to speak because my son is 25 and so while we finished school it's still a process, it's… it’s moving parts and pieces. I would say that transition and that in a sense of that 17, 18 year old time, you are as a parent preparing for the idea that the child you’ve been pouring into is now becoming an adult and hopefully moms and dads are at the same time thinking how can they support their son or daughter being an individual. Someone that is independently making the choices, the best that they can with the support you might need to offer but really appreciate their self-determination. that’s all swirling around in your head philosophically. That’s all swirling around in there but at the same time you are having to activate and instigate a lot of different processes. That is probably the most overwhelming part of the transition.

**Josh Barbour, host:** Not only did Roberta talk to us about transition. She also spoke to us about for 25-year-old son, Todd, who has been successfully employed for the last 3 years.

**Roberta Dunn:** For Todd, when we first were asking Todd what he wanted to do when he grew up, you know what did he want to do post school. He always said he wanted to be a chef and I wasn’t quite sure whatever it's going to look like because I still didn't trust him with a knife. *[laughs]*

But he maintained he wanted to be a chef so we supported him in exploring what it’d look like to work in the food industry and so when Todd started to do vocational exploration, when he started to do work experience through his transition programming, all of that we tried to really get him the most exposure as possible in food preparation and restaurants sort of stuff and now flash forward Todd is on his third year working at Buffalo Wild Wings. He works in the kitchen, and he also does some general cleaning they call them the high touch points so he’s responsible for making sure the high touch points are wiped down and then he does prep for those little veggie boats when you order your wings. And he’s gotten a lot of compliments from his general manager on how efficient and effective he is in making the veggie boats.

And so, Todd’s in the kitchen. I guess the reason I spend any time I'm on that is just an idea that started with Todd expressing to us what he thought he would be good at and what he was interested in.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** After hearing about Todd, we knew we had to ask to be a part of this episode.

**Josh Barbour, host:** Nicole had the opportunity to meet up with Todd during his lunch break and was joined by his twin brother, Jay.

**Todd Dunn:** Hi. So, my name is Todd, and we are at Buffalo Wild Wings.

**Jay Dunn:** Jay Dunn and I’m Todd’s brother.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** What do you do here at Buffalo Wild wings?

**Todd Dunn:** I clean and I do the veggies.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** What is your favorite part about working here?

**Todd Dunn:** My favorite part, well I'm not that picky about it.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** Not that picky about it and kind of like all the stuff? **Todd Dunn:** Yeah.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** How do you get along with the other employees here?

**Todd Dunn:** Really good.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** Really good. What do you think about your brother working?

**Jay Dunn:** I think it’s awesome. When he was down in Eugene, we sat down and his goal was to work in a restaurant but in Eugene it just wasn’t happening to the point where we sat him down and were like what about a grocery store, what about you can still work with food, but he was adamant. Restaurant or bust, so he’s working in a restaurant.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** What do you like about your job?

**Todd Dunn:** I just, just I get I have friends here. I also have friends that eat food here. **Nicole Perdue, host:** You have friends who work here and friends who eat here? **Todd Dunn:** Yeah.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** Ok. And why is working important to you?

**Todd Dunn:** Because I need money and some hours.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** Ok. You like to have the money. Is there anything fun you like to do with your money? Like what do you do?

**Todd Dunn:** Sometimes I eat out, or go on trips, or go to concerts.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** Ok.

**Josh Barbour, host:** It's great to hear Todd’s story and it's great to hear that he continues to work at Buffalo Wild Wings.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** Yeah, it sounds like it’s something he really loves and isn’t that the goal of transition to get students into jobs that they love and that they want to do.

**Josh Barbour, host:** Absolutely. It’s all about matching their preferences, interests, strengths and needs for that job.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** Says the teacher again and again. *[laughs]*

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**Nicole Perdue, host:** I think our next, we're still talking with Roberta, but now she's going to talk a little bit more about when to start transition and know how to go about things, right?

**Josh Barbour, host:** Yeah. Todd is 25 now and he's been working at Buffalo Wild Wings for a couple of years, and we asked her when she started this process.

**Roberta Dunn:** I was very fortunate in that when my son was little, I met other parents that had children that experienced disability in a similar way as my son did. I watched them dream big dreams with their sons and daughters and watched what they did to do it and I honestly started to think about what adult life would look like for my son when he was little, and I'd encourage parents to do the same. It’s never too early to start dreaming a bigger dream for what your adult life will look like for your son or daughter.

The first thing I'd recommend to a parent is they explore and get a better understanding of what Vocational Rehabilitation can do and what that role might be. And if their son or daughter is someone eligible for Developmental Disability Services, I’d encourage them to have a conversation with their services coordinator now on what Adult Services might look like to support employment and independence to the greatest extent because I think sometimes we mistakenly think that it's all about getting a job, but a job is one piece of a whole life, and so a parent has to start thinking back when they are junior or senior what that full life might look like and what supports and what partners they might need to have in order to make that happen.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** I really love that Roberta was talking about how it's never too early to start talking about transition. She started thinking about these things when Todd was really young, and I know that's not always the case for every parent.

**Josh Barbour, host:** Right. Talking about transition when they are young and in elementary school, I think is really important because it plants the seed that that work is possible. Work is out there and anyone to work.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** If you don’t have any conversations early it doesn’t mean that you shouldn’t.

**Josh Barbour, host:** Families are not alone. There are provider agencies that support families through the transition process.

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**Josh Barbour, host:** Thanks for joining us and thanks for being one of our pod people!

**Nicole Perdue, host:** One of our amazing pod people! Make sure to subscribe for episodes wherever you found this one. We look forward to talking to you in the future.

**Josh Barbour, host:** The Oregon Transition Podcast is brought to you by TTAN, the transition technical assistance network including partners with Oregon Department of Education and Vocational Rehabilitation.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** All views and opinions expressed on this podcast belong to the individuals and do not necessarily reflect our sponsoring agencies.

**Josh Barbour, host:** This podcast was produced by

**Nicole Perdue, host:** Nicole Perdue

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**Nicole Perdue, host:** Nicole Garcia

**Josh Barbour, host:** Peter Fitzgerald

**Josh Barbour, host:** and the Podfather, Lon Thornburg.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** With additional interviews provided by the TTAN network.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** This week’s music is provided by Boon Richter, transition student out of Brownsville, Oregon.

**Josh Barbour, host:** For questions and comments or just to connect with us, email Oregontransitionpodcast@gmail.com.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** And for latest OTP updates, like us on Facebook at Oregon Transition Podcast.

**Josh Barbour, host:** Please contact us for transition questions, episode ideas, and music submissions.

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**Nicole Perdue, host:** This kind of a tough question but what does transition mean to you? **Todd Dunn:** Like am I…..It means...I am the boss of me.

**Nicole Perdue, host:** You’re the boss of you. Can I just give you a high 5 for that one? *[high five]*

**Nicole Perdue, host:** That's a fantastic answer. I love that answer so much.