



Quick Facts About MAPS: MAKING ACTION PLANS for STUDENTS

What is MAPS?

MAPS is a student and family centered planning tool based on the McGill Action Planning System (Marsha Forest and Evelyn Lusthaus, 1987).

The student, family, key school personnel and others are invited to a MAPS meeting to share information to generate a complete picture of the student and create an Action Plan to address identified goals.

MAPS can focus on a variety of topics, which include:

- * Planning an educational program or addressing a particular educational issue,
- * Planning for transitions between grade levels or into adult life,
- * Planning for increased participation in leisure or community based activities,
- * Bringing team members up to date.

At the MAPS meeting, a facilitator places five sheets of large chart paper, one at a time, on an easel or wall for everyone to see. Participants contribute thoughts as desired, to each of the following categories, one category at a time, and their ideas are recorded on the chart papers:

1. **History** *Relevant family, health, and educational background*
2. **Who is (the student)** *What are the students' interests, strengths, likes/dislikes.*
3. **Dreams** *What are the dreams, hopes and goals for the student?*
4. **Fears** *What are fears for this student, the things we want to avoid*
5. **Needs** *What is needed to be put in place in order to achieve the dreams and goals?*

The MAPS meeting typically takes about 1½ hours and is meant to be informative, creative, free flowing, and non-judgmental. Families are often invited to share information first.

After the MAPS information is gathered, a facilitator assists the team in creating an Action Plan based on mutually agreed upon goals. The Action Plan describes what needs to be done, by who and when. Action Plans can be developed the same day as the MAPS meeting or at a later date, as determined by the team.

MAPS is most useful when there is a plan for reconvening on a regular basis to review and update the Action Plan. The number of follow-up meetings and people involved should be part of the MAPS meeting discussions.

Why would a family be interested in MAPS?

The MAPS process provides an opportunity for families and students to share important information with the school team and encourages family and student participation in the decision making process related to educational planning.

How does the Vermont I-Team assist a school team with MAPS?

The Vermont I-Team is available to provide facilitation, guidance and leadership for a school team to complete a MAPS. School teams can request assistance with MAPS from the I-Team after completing the [I-Team Request for Technical Assistance form](#).