

The Transition Assessment and Goal Generator (TAGG; Martin et al., 2015) is an online, norm-referenced assessment designed to evaluate non-academic behaviors predictive of postsecondary education and employment outcomes for transition-age youth with disabilities. To meet the standard for transition assessment established by federal district courts, at least one assessment used in a student's transition assessment battery needs ample supporting validity (Prince, et al., 2014).

Validity refers to the extent to which an assessment measures what it is designed to measure. This information may be included in the assessment's technical manual, examined in published research studies, or incorporated within theory that supports interpretation of the assessment's results. Modern validity conceptualization (AERA et al., 2014) relies on studies examining:

- Test content
- User responses to assessment items
- Internal structure of the assessment
- Relations to other variables, such as family income
- Consequences of testing

The TAGG's ample evidence supports use of the assessment across four of the five validity constructs; no studies have yet been undertaken to examine the consequences of using the TAGG or any other transition assessment tool.

What is the TAGG?

The TAGG is an online transition assessment that assesses postsecondary employment and education skills of individuals with mild to moderate disabilities. TAGG items come directly from research identifying specific student skills and behaviors associated with or predictive of post-secondary education and employment of former high school students with disabilities.

The TAGG assessment consists of Professional, Student, and Family versions. The 34-item assessment measures student performance across eight constructs: (a) knowledge of strengths and limits, (b) disability awareness, (c) persistence, (d) interacting with others, (e) goal setting and attainment, (f) employment, (g) student involvement in the Individualized Education Program (IEP), and (h) support community. The TAGG automatically provides a norm-based graphic profile, present level of performance statement, lists of strengths and needs, and suggested IEP annual transition goals based on the identified greatest student needs.

What the Research Says

Martin and McConnell (2017) suggest six questions that will aid IEP teams in choosing a transition assessment with ample validity evidence (see Table 1). Ample validity evidence exists to support using the TAGG as a transition assessment with transition-age youth with disabilities. Table 1 describes selected supporting evidence for the TAGG.

Table 1*Validity Evidence of the TAGG*

Question	Evidence
What is its purpose?	The TAGG developers designed the assessment to evaluate non-academic behaviors predictive of postsecondary education and employment outcomes.
Who was the assessment designed to be used with?	The assessment is designed for use by transition-age youth with disabilities, their parents, and educators. The assessment is appropriate for all students with disabilities identified under the 13 disability categories of IDEA (2004) who plan to become employed. Users may choose to complete the TAGG in English, Spanish, and Chinese (Traditional and Simplified), listen to the instructions and items read to them in English or Spanish, or watch and listen to American Sign Language (ASL) videos depicting the TAGG instructions and TAGG items.
Where did the assessment items come from?	The TAGG measures essential self-determination skills and other non-academic behaviors that research has identified as predictive of post-high school education and employment outcomes (McConnell, et al., 2013).
Will the results be understandable and useful to identify strengths, needs, or interests?	The TAGG provides a norm-based graphic profile, written present level of performance statement, lists of greatest and relative strengths and needs, and suggested IEP annual transition goals, which may be copied and pasted directly into the relevant sections of students' IEPs.
Do the results of this assessment vary depending upon students' gender, race or ethnicity, or family economic status?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ McConnell et al. (2017) examined the influence of gender upon TAGG scores and found no significant statistical differences on assessments completed by students and educators. Results from assessments completed by family members indicated extremely small gender differences indicating family members scored females slightly higher than males. ▪ McConnell et al. (2015) examined the impact of grade point average (GPA) and time in general education environment upon students' TAGG results. The results indicated neither GPA nor time spent in general education impacted overall TAGG results. ▪ Hennessey et al. (2020) studied the impact of family socio-economic status, parental education level, and employment status upon TAGG results. Results indicated family level of education and employment had little to no impact on TAGG scores. The student and family TAGG versions showed no differences associated with families' socio-economic levels. The results of the professional version completed by special educators did vary somewhat by the families' socio-economic levels, with scores slightly higher for students from families with higher socio-economic backgrounds.
Does other validity evidence support the use of this assessment?	<p>Numerous studies examined TAGG results and strongly support its use as a transition assessment for transition age youth with disabilities. In addition to evidence already mentioned, one study examined TAGG's predictive validity, and another examined the TAGG's factor structure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Burnes et al. (2018) examined post-high school outcomes of former students with disabilities who completed the TAGG while attending high school. The former high school students with higher TAGG scores had better post-high school further education and employment outcomes. ▪ Hennessey et al. (2018) examined the TAGG's factor structure fit and psychometric properties in a three-year nationwide study of all three TAGG versions (parent, professional, and student). The results provide strong evidence of construct validity and reliability for the three versions. The factor structure also matched the TAGG's original theoretical framework. Results indicate good internal and test-retest reliability.

Guidelines for Practice

The TAGG is designed to be completed annually by the student and the student's parent and special educator. Annual completion of the TAGG will enable the IEP team to measure progress as well as to identify emerging needs. At a minimum the developers recommend the TAGG be completed by the student and the student's special educator. If students need assistance to understand the meaning of a word or phrase instructors are encouraged to provide students with explanations and support to answer all of the items. Students may switch between the ASL, reading, and audio versions as needed while answering the items.

Additional Resources

Good instruction follows good assessment, and educators need to create opportunities for students to learn and practice needed skills. Educators may download a pictorial guide to determine lesson packages to teach skills specific to student needs at tagg.ou.edu/tagg/tagg-files/flyer.pdf.

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