



# **Developing Self-Determination and Career Readiness Skills Through Individualized Learning Plans**

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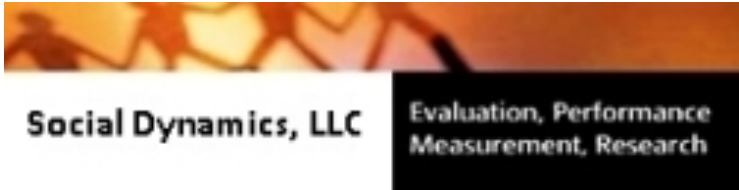
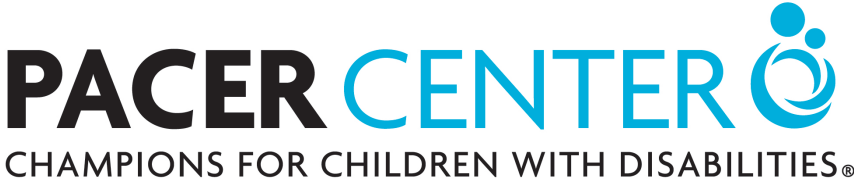
**National Collaborative Workforce & Disability for Youth**

**BOSTON  
UNIVERSITY**

# Who We Are

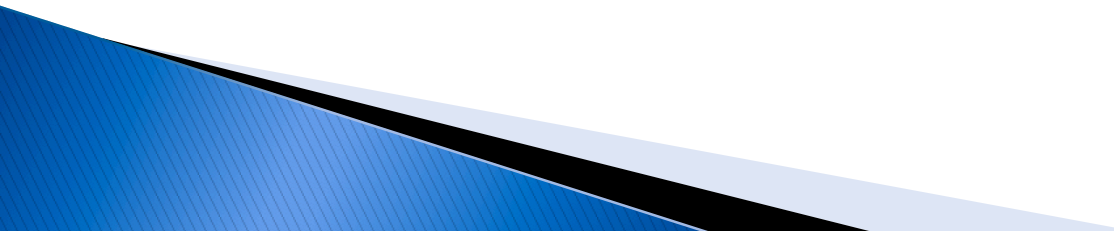
- ▶ National Collaborative on Workforce & Disability for Youth
- ▶ A national technical assistance center
- ▶ Focus on needs of ALL youth, including youth with disabilities and other disconnected youth to
  - Improve state and local policy
  - Strengthen workforce development service delivery
  - Improve competencies of youth service professionals
  - Engage youth and families
- ▶ Supported by Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor

# Research Partners



# Who am I?


## Past

- ▶ Former Director of Wisconsin Careers and Director of Career Development Research in WCER
  - ▶ Former Associate Professor in Educational Psychology at UW Milwaukee
  - ▶ Worked closely with Milwaukee Public Schools - MPA, South Division/North Division HS on intervention work; afterschool programming; Former Board President of the Latino Community Center
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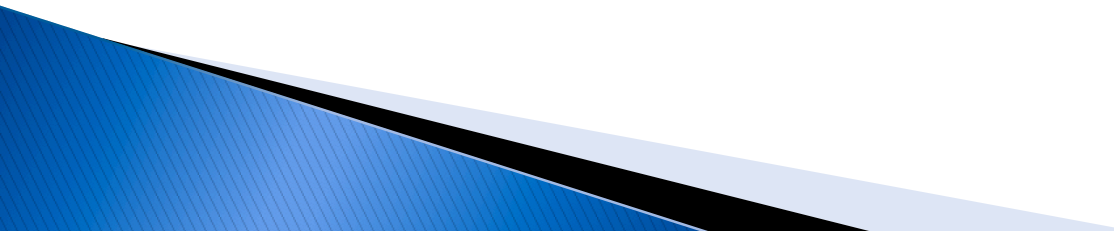
# Now?

- ▶ Associate Dean for Research and Professor, Boston University 's School of Education
- ▶ PI on this longitudinal study of ILPs that began in 2005 and will continue another four to five years with funding from a cooperative agreement that is sponsored by ODEP in the U.S. Dept. of Labor and awarded to the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth

# Research Underlying Presentation

- ▶ Correlational and mixed methods strategies to identify college and career readiness pathways
  - ▶ Interviews with students to identify career readiness processes
  - ▶ Established a study group of schools in four states: educators, families and students participated in surveys and focus groups
  - ▶ 50-state web review of ILP purposes and implementation strategies
  - ▶ In-depth conversations with select state and district/school officials
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# Questions Guiding Our ILP Research

- ▶ Should ILPs be considered a promising practice for developing college and career readiness?
  - ▶ Are students with disabilities participating in ILPs?
  - ▶ Should ILPs be considered a promising practice for college and career readiness among students with disabilities?
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# Transition IEP Kohler & Field (2003)

1990 and 1997 IDEA amendments:

Transition IEP must establish a plan for transition services that are aligned with the student's self-defined post-school career and life goals.

Further, these self-defined post-school career and life goals should evolve from the student's growing awareness of their interests, skills, and values.



# Discussion: What information are families getting about...

- Transition IEPs?
- Career development opportunities?
- Work-based learning opportunities?
- College planning?

# Problems Identified in GAO Report

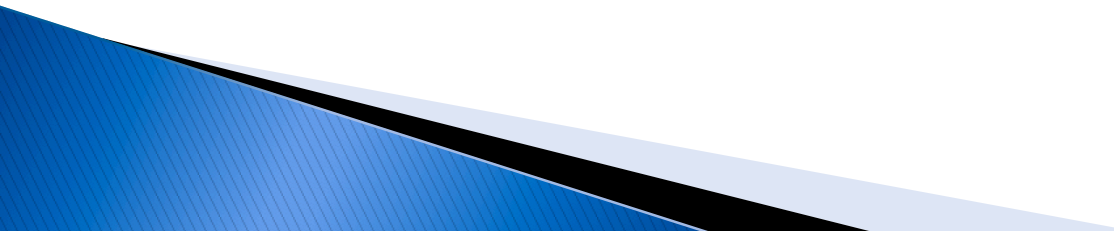
- ▶ Lack of cross-sector support to provide transition services
- ▶ Lack of access to work-based learning opportunities
- ▶ One-stop job centers lacking the skills to work effectively with youth with disabilities
- ▶ Rehabilitation services managing long wait lists by deferring services to youth with disabilities
- ▶ Misinformation among families about how SSI eligibility and health care access will be impacted by employment
- ▶ Lack of attention to transportation needs to support access to work and work-based learning opportunities

U.S. Government Accountability Office. (2003, July). Special education: Federal actions can assist States in improving postsecondary outcomes for youth (GAO-03-773). Washington, DC: Government

# NSTTAC Best Practices

- Current field of transition research focused primarily on establishing evidence-based life skills training
- Self-exploration and career exploration skills are rarely addressed in the literature.

## Our ILP Research...

- ▶ Students with disabilities who were highly motivated to attend school were less ready for post-school transitions.
  - ▶ Educators were less certain on how to support students with disabilities around career concerns.
  - ▶ It is not clear what career development information and experiences students with disabilities are receiving, especially those with significant disabilities.
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# Quality Learning Environment Needed to Promote Transition and Career Readiness...

- Strong academic preparation
- Career development and work-based learning
- Connecting activities
- Youth development and leadership activities
- Family engagement in career exploration

# Self-determination as a critical outcome


- If successful in providing youth with a quality learning environment for promoting transition readiness
- Youth will be able to express a choice among a range of viable and attractive options (i.e., volition).

Wehmeyer, M. L. (2005). Self-determination and individuals with severe disabilities: Re-examining meanings and misinterpretations. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 30, 113-120.

# Nature of ILPs

- States are increasingly mandating that all middle and high school youth develop and annually update a personalized career and education plan (i.e., individualized learning plan)
- Purpose of the plan is to
  - Enable youth to identify career and life goals based on an examination of their interests, skills, and values and an examination of their career opportunities
  - Develop a course-taking plan that is aligned to those goals
  - Identify post-secondary training and/or education intentions that are aligned to those goals

# What is a Quality ILP?

- ▶ A document consisting of a youth's:
    - Course taking and post-secondary plans aligned to career goals and
    - Documentation of the range of college and career readiness skills he/she has developed.
  - ▶ A process for developing
    - Self-exploration,
    - Career exploration, and
    - Career planning and management skills
- 



# Kentucky - ILP Components

1.

- ➔ ILP Homepage
- ➔ Career Cruising
- ➔ Careers that Interest Me
- ➔ Schools that Interest Me
- ➔ Scholarships & Financial Aid
- ➔ Assessment Results
- ➔ Goals & Plans
- ➔ Activities & Experiences
- ➔ Awards & Recognitions
- ➔ Course of Study
- ➔ Learning Services
- Special Tools:
- ➔ Resume Builder
- ➔ Printer-Friendly Version
- ➔ Go to KHEAA.com
- ➔ Logout

➤ Welcome Amanda

➔ ILP Completion Status View Details

0% 20 40 60 80 100%

Last Logon: 1/24/2013 3:08:00 PM

📁 Inbox For: Amanda Johnston

Sender	Subject	Date
Welcome!	<a href="#">Welcome to Your ILP!</a>	9/1/2006

👤 Quick Links

🔗 Suggested Links

2.

Careers Main Assessments Careers Schools Employment ILP Sea

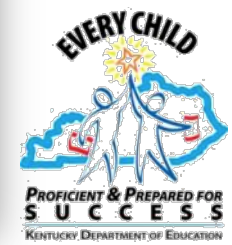
## Explore Careers

Search for Careers  
Enter a career name:

➔ Search by Index	Use the alphabetical index to quickly find the careers you're looking for.
➔ Search by School Subject	Pick a school subject and see which careers it leads to.
➔ Kentucky Career Clusters	Explore occupations using Kentucky Career Clusters.
➔ Search by Cluster	Select an occupation cluster and explore the careers within it.
➔ Career Selector	Search for careers based on a variety of criteria.
➔ Military Careers	Learn more about occupations in the military.
➔ Explore Industries	Explore labor market trends and how businesses are grouped.

3.

- ➔ Personal Information
- ➔ Citizenship & Residence
- ➔ Background
- ➔ Academic History
- ➔ College Information
- ➔ Interests & Talents
- ➔ Military Service
- ➔ Corporate & Volunteer Experience
- ➔ Start Over
- ➔ View Results



**Quality ILPs help students develop career-readiness skills in three areas:**



# Transition to Employment

- Completing a career assessment is not enough, youth with disabilities were more likely to be engaged in future work when they:
  - Received access to a paid work experience while in high school
  - Had employment goals in their transition IEP
  - Had identified post-secondary goal in their transition IEP

Karpur, A., Brewer, D., Golden, T. Evidence from the NY State program on transition to adulthood for youth with disabilities: Comparative analysis with national data.

# ILPs and IEPs

- ILPs offer a method for ensuring that youth with disabilities are actively participating in the design of their transition plan
- ILPs mobilize a whole-school method for increasing access to career development opportunities
- Encourage schools to work across departments so that general educators and school counselors are more involved in IEP programming
- Ties together all of the IEP accommodations, school reform efforts for improving academic outcomes, and keeps the eye on making it relevant and meaningful

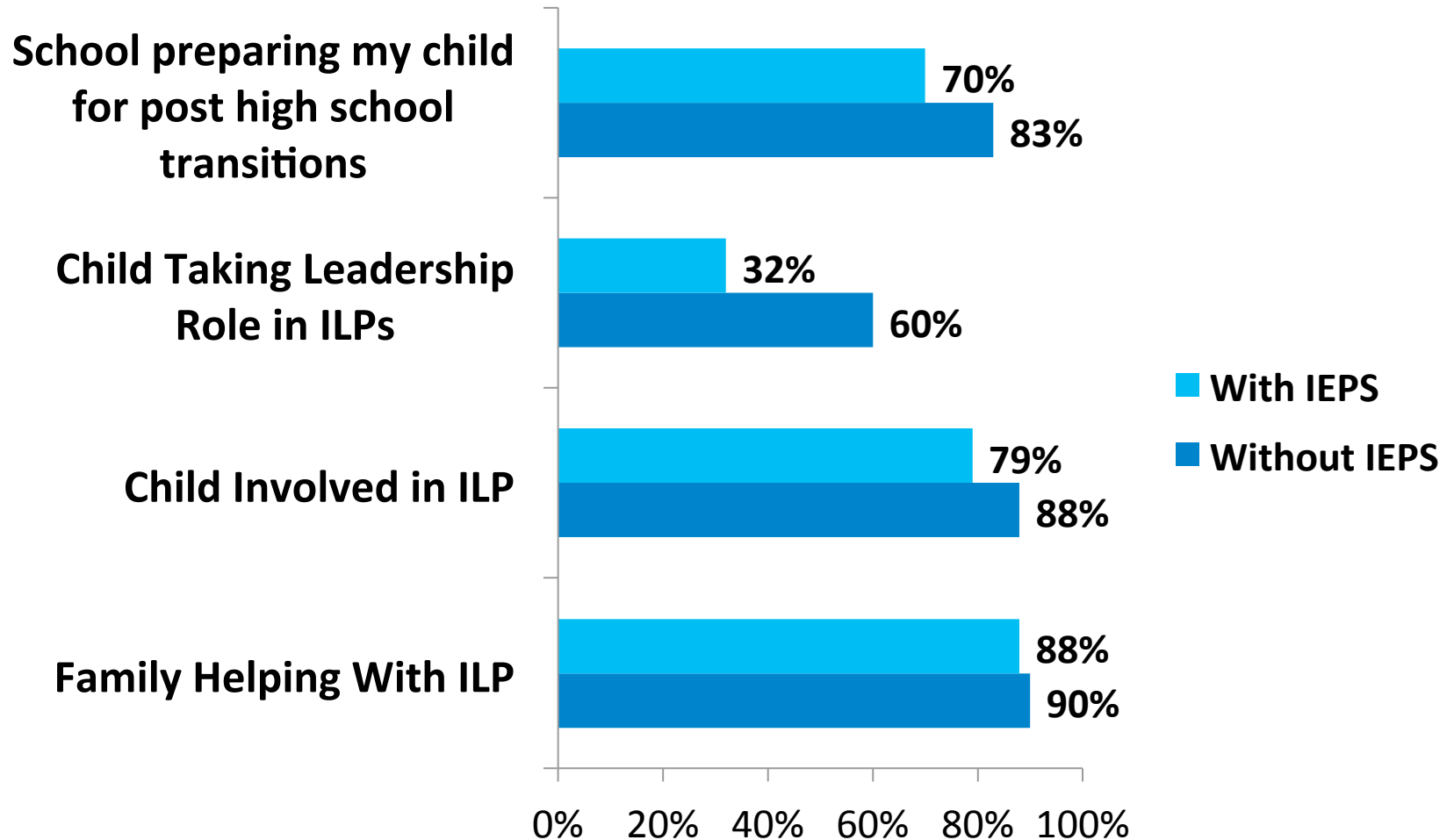
# Promising State ILP Practices

- Cross-department cooperation at the state level between education agencies such as special education, school counseling, career and technical education
- Cross-sector engagement between education, higher education, and labor departments

# Implementation Challenges

- Accessibility of assessment tools within online career information systems
- Schools not engaging families effectively in the ILP process
- Gaining whole-school buy-in for ILP implementation
- Lack of ILP related professional development for educators
- Cost of career information systems
- Lack of access to work-based learning opportunities

# ILP Reactions from Families



Altarum (2011). Parent and educator perspectives on ILPs: Final recommendations  
From a four state report. Report available from Altarum.

# Family ILP Experiences

“[This school] really seems focused on launching adults as opposed to getting through a curriculum...”

Altarum (2011). Parent and educator perspectives on ILPs: Final recommendations From a four state report. Report available from Altarum.

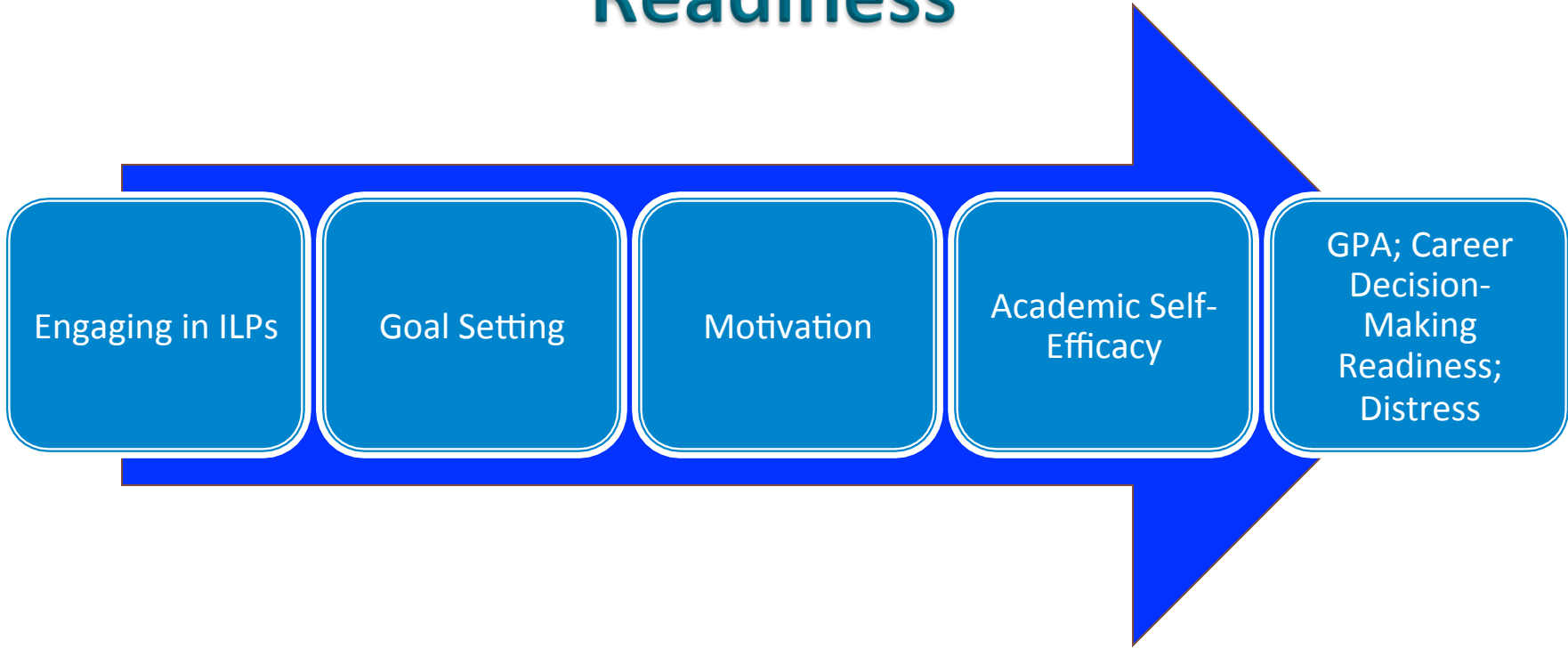


# Family ILP Experiences

“It gave [my daughters] a sense that they had chosen [these courses], that they had decided this, that they had set goals around this...”

Altarum (2011). Parent and educator perspectives on ILPs: Final recommendations From a four state report. Report available from Altarum.

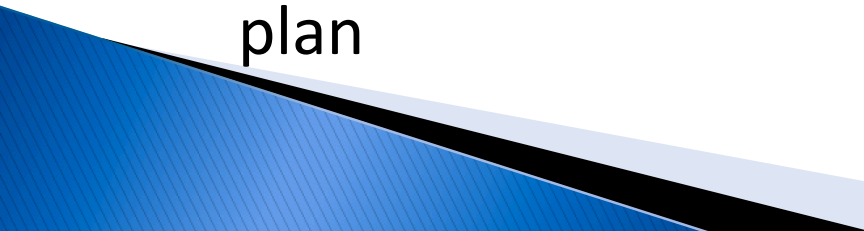
# ILP Pathway to College and Career Readiness



# Discussion

What does “career ready” mean to you?

# Becoming Career Ready is a Student Who is Able to:

- ▶ Identify one or more careers of interest
  - ▶ Clearly describe plans to pursue the careers of interest
  - ▶ Connect career plans to personal interests, skills and values
  - ▶ Identify how current courses relate to career plan
  - ▶ Articulate skill and entry requirements for their careers
  - ▶ Engage in additional learning opportunities
  - ▶ Describe their needed skills & future development plan
- 

# Recommendations for Family Support Networks

- Develop family- friendly ILP communication materials and host ILP webinars that are focused on families
- Provide ideas for how schools can more effectively engage families in ILPs
- Advocate that vendors enable family participation in their child's ILP and to allow for parallel ILP activities at home
- Use the Guideposts for Success to create a “checklist” of questions that families can ask schools in reference to whether quality transition support is being offered

# Get a seat on the state multidisciplinary task force!

- Ensure that ILP implementation strategies provide the accommodations necessary to enable students with significant disabilities to participate effectively
- Ensure that web based career information systems adhere to universal design principles
- Ensure that ILP documents make it clear that ILPs are for “all students”
- Encourage the design and implementation of demonstration projects that incorporate family participation in ILPs

# Offer Professional Development to Families that Enable Them to...

- ▶ Advocate that their school begins ILPs in middle school or later elementary
- ▶ Provide family access to their online career information system
- ▶ Request to see the ILP “curriculum” and to advocate that it describe target skills related to self-exploration, career exploration, and career planning and management
- ▶ Advocate for establishing whole school buy in by incorporating ILP activities into advisory periods
- ▶ Advocate for using ILPs to provide the basis for annual student-led parent-teacher conferences

# Materials

- NCWD/Youth [www.ncwd-youth.info](http://www.ncwd-youth.info)
- NCWD/Youth ILP Materials [www.ncwd-youth.info/ilp](http://www.ncwd-youth.info/ilp)
- ILP How-to-Guide [www.ncwd-youth.info/ilp/how-to-guide](http://www.ncwd-youth.info/ilp/how-to-guide)
- ILP Policy Brief  
<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/ilp/produce-college-and-career-ready-high-school-graduates>





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