



Transition Support Services: A Policy Brief

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Background

Transition Support Services:

- Are set plans for individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD) that aid their movement from high school to post-school
- Are based on one's needs, preferences, strengths and interests
- Include vocational services, independent living, employment, postsecondary education, community involvement & adult services

Objectives

To develop a policy brief that summarizes:

- 1) Barriers to successful post-school transition of individuals with I/DD
- 2) Components of successful transition programs
- 3) Recommendations based on evidence-based interventions to overcome those barriers

Next Steps

Based on progress to date, policy recommendations are as follows:

- 1) Start transition planning early, at least by 14 years of age
- 2) Promote vocational training and work experience
- 3) Consider transition counselors to help achieve collaboration

In order to more fully develop these recommendations:

- 1) Examine local programs at WIHD that are designed to improve transition outcomes
- 2) Critically evaluate existing literature on successful programs
- 3) Conduct new research on programs considered best practices

Community Partners

The team met with the following members of the Community Support Network (CSN) at WIHD:

John Maltby, MS, Director • Naomi Brickel, Program Coordinator • Nicki Turano, LCSW, Service Coordinator

Problem Statement

Individuals with disabilities are less likely to:

- Attend post-secondary schooling
- Have a paying job
- Live independently
- Have a checking account in their name
- Be productively engaged in their communities

While initiatives to increase employment of youth with IDD have been developed, it is important to continue to identify strategies to optimize transition into independent life.

Methods

- All team members conducted searches of pertinent literature and other resources to identify evidence to support both barriers and recommendations

Progress to Date

Barriers to successful transition:

- Lack of self advocacy skills
- Lack of career/vocational services
- Lack of family involvement/community supports
- Low expectations by parents/teachers
- Stringent eligibility requirements

Successful evidence-based interventions:

- Marriott Foundation's Bridges from School to Work Program
- Supportive Employment Services
- Working at Gaining Employment Skills (WAGES) Curriculum
- Individualized Learning Plan (ILP)
- Project SEARCH
- THINK COLLEGE

- Intra/interagency collaboration
- Teacher knowledge of strategies
- Transition coordinator on staff
- Formal & informal relationships
- Appropriate funding & staffing

Interagency Collaboration

- Positive parental expectations
- Parents/school collaboration
- Educate families about important issues
- Quality of life issues
- Parent training/information centers

Family Involvement

Best Practices For Transition Programming

Student-Focused Planning

- Systematic, age-appropriate assessments
- Identified strengths/preferences/needs
- IEP goals – relevant and comprehensive
- Skills needed to achieve goals
- Active student participation

Student Development

- Assessment of interests/strengths
- Life skills instruction
- Career/vocational curriculum
- Structured work experiences
- Support