



Transition Support Services: A Policy Brief

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Team Project Abstract
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Background: Transition Support Services are set plans for individuals with disabilities that aid their movement from high school to post school. They are based on one's needs, preferences, strengths and interests. These can include vocational services, independent living skills, employment, postsecondary education, community involvement and adult services.

Objectives: To develop a policy brief that summarizes: A) barriers to successful post-school transition of individuals with IDD, B) components of successful transition programs, and C) program recommendations based on evidence-based interventions to overcome those barriers.

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

Community Partner(s): The team met with the following members of the Community Support Network (CSN) at WIHD: John Maltby, MS, Director; Naomi Brickel, Program Coordinator; and Nicki Turano, LCSW, Service Coordinator.

Progress to Date: Based on our literature review, we have found that barriers to successful transition include a lack of self advocacy skills, a lack of career/vocational services, a lack of family involvement/community supports, low expectations by parents/teachers, and stringent eligibility requirements. The team identified successful transition curriculums, such as Individualized Learning Plans (ILP), Project SEARCH, and THINK COLLEGE. Successful evidence-based interventions include the Marriott Foundation's Bridges from School to Work Program, Supportive Employment Services, and Working at Gaining Employment Skills (WAGES). Best practices for transition programming involve student focused planning, student development, interagency collaboration and family involvement. Examples of each of these evidence-based practices include: systematic and age appropriate assessments, student participation, career/vocational curriculum, structured work experiences, teacher knowledge of strategies, transition coordinator on staff, positive parental expectations, and parent/school collaboration.

Conclusions: Based on progress to date, policy recommendations are as follows: A) start transition planning early, at least by 14 years of age, B) promote vocational training and work experiences, and C) consider transition counselors to help achieve collaboration.

Next Steps: In order to more fully develop these recommendations, we suggest examining local programs at WIHD that are designed to improve transition outcomes; critically evaluating existing literature on successful programs; and conducting research on the programs considered best practices.