Dream Big! Plan Smart:
A guide to transition from school to work
A Collaborative Partnership Among the Following Agencies

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Our Goals for today are:

- To share a best practices in Transition related to employment for people with disabilities.
- To discuss ways in which this practice can impact on the post secondary outcomes of youth exiting the school system.
What happens to our children after High School?

- Until recently we never knew......
We can expect children with Deaf Blindness will:

- NOT go on to participate in post secondary education
- Experience high rates of UNEMPLOYMENT
- Have limited community experiences
A Closer look

WORK EXPERIENCES

- 8% are in competitive or supportive employment
- 82% are unemployed

“Real work for real pay is not being considered as a possible outcome for the majority of youth who are deaf – blind” - Petroff
A CLOSER LOOK

- TRANSITION PLANNING
  - 40% have no written transition plan
  - 23% never engaged in formal transition planning
  - Only 40% of students and/or parents interests and preferences were identified as a component of transition planning
  - Only 12% engaged in Person Centered Planning
What do young adults value?

- Want to be more involved in decisions that effect their lives
- Want to be perceived by others as being capable and independent
- Want to be given the dignity of risk
- Want to contribute and be a part of mainstream society
What challenges do Youth Face?

- Perception of employers about people with disabilities
- Transportation
- Limited community experiences
- Social life and relationships
- Communication Barriers
CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT

Customized Employment is a strategy that provides persons with disabilities an alternative to traditional, competitive jobs. Customized employment relies on a negotiated rather than a competitive approach to employers.
Four key elements to success:

1) Meeting the job seeker’s *individual* needs and interests.
2) The use of a *representative* to assist and potentially represent the individual.
3) **Negotiating** successfully with employers
4) Building a system of *ongoing supports* for the job seeker
Individualization:

- The job seeker drives the Customized process.
- The customized plan is based upon experiences, goals, interests and abilities.
- A good place to start is to ask the question, of who is this person really…?
Representation:

- The person who assists in identifying the job seekers strengths, interests and goals.
- This representative considers employment opportunities from the job seeker’s perspective.
- The representative is NOT the decision maker.
- Who might be a good representative?
TEACHERS:
- Connect learning to real life experiences
FAMILIES
Friends:
Community
Discovery:

Now that you have established a body of information about the job seeker's goals, experience, abilities, and interests, you have the foundation for the next step.
Negotiation:

- Build a knowledge base about the company
- Staffing needs
- Establish relationships
- Determine if there is an opportunity for work
- Develop job proposal
- Establish negotiating points
Ongoing Supports

- What type of accommodations and supports?
- Transportation
- Environmental concerns
- Communication
- Adaptive equipment
- Natural supports
Blend of strategies:

1) Supported employment services
2) Supported entrepreneurship services
3) Individualized job development
4) Job carving and restructuring
Beliefs and Assumptions for Transitioning Youth  Jerry Petroff, Ph.D. 1999

- All students should leave school equipped to be successful, interdependent adults.
- Adult life is more than work and care.
- All students can and have the right to become adult citizens of their community.
- Each student’s voice must guide the transition process.
Beliefs and Assumptions for Transitioning Youth  Jerry Petroff, Ph.D. 1999

- Families are a critical component to the planning and success of any youth’s transition from school to adult life.
- Each family has its own unique culture that must be respected as a factor in the planning and support of youth in transition.
- Quality of life is defined by the individual.
So what can you do?

- Let educators, civic organizations, and others know of your interest in bringing school-to-work opportunities to your community.

- Volunteer to help build the system and keep it going!
So what can you do?

- Urge your employer, place of worship or community organization to provide work experience for students and volunteer to be a mentor or supervisor for them.

- List 10 places in the community you frequent. These are all potential sites!
So what can you do?

- Help your children understand the relationship between learning and earning. Teach them that doing a job well counts, both in school and on the job.
- Encourage local schools and employers to require and reward achievement!
- Parent planning booklet
- Student planning booklet
And remember...

“The rung of a ladder was never meant to rest upon, but only to hold up a person’s foot long enough to enable him to put the other somewhat higher.”

- Aldous Huxley

Dream BIG! Plan Smart!
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