

Improving Employment Outcomes for Adolescents and Adults with Neuro-Cognitive-Behavioral Deficits

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Overview

- Consequences of disability in terms of participation
- Value of employment for people with disabilities
- Federal and state laws around education, employment, and community access
- Special issues in transition
- Agencies and services involved in vocational rehabilitation
- How vocational rehabilitation works in neuro-rehabilitation

Educational Consequences of Disability

- Designation as special education student has severe consequences
- High school students with disabilities are half as likely to graduate
- Students with disabilities are a third as likely to complete post-secondary education

Employment Consequences of Disability

- 78% of people with disabilities are not in the workforce
 - In our survey: 70% (now 60%) of people with MS
85% of people with SCI
 - 13% unemployment rate
- Higher for people of color and certain disabilities
- Most people with disabilities would prefer to work
- Most people with disabilities can work

Economic Consequences of Disability

- Families with a person of working age with a disability are 3 times more likely to live below poverty level
- When that person is of color, the family is 4 times more likely to live below the poverty level.

Value of Employment

- Money!
- Benefits!
- Calvinism
- Identity
- Social interaction
- Social role definition
- Structure
- Experiencing competence
 - Social
 - Task

Barriers to participation

- Functional limitations associated with disability
- Economic disincentives related to benefit systems
 - SSI, SSDI, Medicare, Medicaid, LTD
- Psychosocial limitations associated with individual and social attitudes
- Environmental inaccessibility

Education Law

- Section 504 of the Rehab Act
 - Equal access to education with reasonable accommodation for all children with disabilities
 - Least restrictive environment
 - Covers all educational settings receiving federal dollars
 - Includes a 504 plan
 - Essentially “early civil rights law”

Education Law

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
 - Grew directly out of Washington State Law and first enacted as PL 94-142
 - Covers students through high school who
 - Require modifications of curriculum and/or instruction (over and above reasonable accommodations)
 - Requires an Individualized Education Plan

Education

- Requires that the “local education agency” ensure that services necessary to accomplish the goals of the IEP are available (but not necessarily pay for – school is last dollar resource in many instances)
- IEP can include “related services” such as PT, OT, speech, psych, as well as “consultative services
- Schools typically default to the school psychologist but with advocacy from parents, schools may pay for neuropsych eval. Schools are not required to accept private neuropsych, esp. in lieu of school psych

Issues in schools

- Schools often very wary of outside evaluations
 - Often feel that evaluators don't understand school systems
 - Complain that recommendations are un-realistic
 - This becomes more acute when there is a history of struggle between parents and schools

Transition from school

- Deciding when to tip the balance on the IEP from acquiring academic skills to mastering IL and employment
- Decisions about graduation
- Choosing environments to approximate the real world

Transition from school

- Focusing the IEP
- Integrating the adult service system into IEP
- Negotiating who pays for what
 - IDEA requires school to pay for what is necessary to achieve FAPE, not what is best
 - Voc Rehab pays for what is best for the individual to achieve employment goals

Transition to world after K-12

- Assessing potential for post-secondary
 - Community college tryouts
 - CC placement exams
- Vocational evaluation
 - Neuropsych eval!
 - Functional vocational assessment
 - Situational assessment
 - Real work for real pay
- Community living, independent mobility

Rehabilitation Act

- Includes Section 504
- Authorizes the federal state vocational rehabilitation system with \$ 4 federal dollars for each \$1 state
- In majority of states, combined blind and general agencies
- In Washington and a minority of states, separate Department of Services for the Blind

Other vocational rehabilitation programs

- VA
- Worker's comp
- Merchant Marine
- Railroad
- Etc.
- "Community Rehabilitation Programs"

Americans with Disabilities Act

- Prohibits discrimination in employment against qualified individuals with disabilities
 - Disability interferes with participation in one or more major life area
- Who can do the essential functions of the job
- With or without accommodation
- Without undue hardship to the employer

Public Vocational Rehabilitation

- Eligibility
- Services
 - Vocational Evaluation
 - Counseling and Guidance
 - Education and Training
 - Placement
 - Retention
 - Assistive Technology
 - Medical Restoration
 - Independent Living

UW Services

- Inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation counseling
 - Usually paid for by health insurance
 - Sometimes by DVR, employer, School district, etc
- Community Rehabilitation Program provides job coaching, situational assessment, etc.
 - Usually paid for by DVR, employer, school district, self-pay

Preparing for Employment

- Selecting a path
- Training and Education
- Situational assessment
- Increasing endurance
- Enhancing employability

Job Placement

from Robert Fraser, Ph.D.

- Advisement model
- Job Clubs
- Direct Placement
- Supported Employment
 - Enclave
 - Integrated
 - Less intrusive
- Sheltered Employment

Job Coaching

- Getting to work
- Learning the job
- Teaching psychosocial variables
- Making accommodations
- Training coworkers and supervisors
- Ongoing situational assessment and curriculum revision

Supporting Employment

- Careful appraisal of individual with disability
- Task analysis including cognitive and social demands
- Creating an individualized training curriculum
- Assume an ecological approach with a psychoeducational focus
 - Manipulate environmental variables
 - Focus on antecedents
 - Manipulate instructional prompts
- Build in support for follow-up

Special Issues

- Job Retention
- Career Advancement
- Employer Incentives
- Transitions
- Unpredictable function

Accommodations

- Environmental accessibility
- Transportation
- Personal factors
 - Mobility
 - Pain and fatigue
 - Sensory
 - Affective
 - Cognitive
 - Social/behavioral

Additional Case Studies

- Carpet layer
- Cabinet maker
- Department Chairman
- Surgeon
- Special issues in MS
 - Using the language of fatigue
 - “Too much water under the bridge”
 - CEO non-profit

Critical Elements

- Interdisciplinary neuro-rehab team
 - Neuropsych
 - Rehab counseling
 - Speech Path (usually)
 - OT/PT (as necessary)
 - MD (as necessary)
 - Community behavioral specialist/job coach
 - Requires community-based assessment and intervention
 - Requires followup