

Reframing the Disability Lens To Increase Economic Stability for Youth and Families Webinar # 3

The Power of Education to Move the Needle & Family Engagement

Ellie Hartman, Wisconsin PROMISE

Jade Gingerich, Maryland Department of Disability/MD PROMISE

The contents of this presentation were developed under a grant from the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Cooperative Agreement H418P130007. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the US Department of Education and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.



Webinar Series



Webinar topics:

- Overview
 - Engagement
 - Work Incentives/Benefits Counseling
 - Nonobvious Disabilities/Disclosure
 - Customized Employment: Overcoming Barriers to Work and Work Based Learning
-
- Key elements: Webinars, Tools, Templates, Resources, Q/A for Guiding Discussion
 - Recommended Approach: State or local teams comprised of representatives of human services agencies and disability agencies such as vocational rehabilitation, and workforce development (e.g., labor). Opportunity to integrate into other efforts such as 2 GEN, TANF State Plans and others
 - Link to supporting materials: www.mdtransitions.org link to APHSA

Introduction

- PROMISE: Large scale national research grant with over 13,000 youth on SSI and their families recruited to improve educational and employment outcomes.
- California, Maryland, Arkansas, Wisconsin, ASPIRE (CO,AZ,SD, ND, MT, UT), and New York.
- Demographics included significantly high representation of minorities in each site—Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans



Demystifying Education

- Not all students on SSI receive Special Education Services
 - Those that do have an Individuals Education Program (IEP), which is reviewed annually.
- Parents should be supported to attend the IEP meetings. Youth also should be encouraged to participate.
- Starting at age 16 (14 in some states) the IEP is to include a *Transition Plan*.
 - This is an important opportunity to learn about opportunities for work experiences and training, as well as what options the youth has after they leave school.

Reminder



Youth will have a redetermination at age 18 and may lose eligibility for SSI so engaging in transition planning and work experiences are critical.



Taking advantage of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) provided through Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is also important.



To locate your state VR go to:

<https://askjan.org/concerns/State-Vocational-Rehabilitation-Agencies.cfm>

<https://rsa.ed.gov/> and select “About Your State” and select from the map.



And check out Webinar 5 which has more information on Pre ETS and eligibility.



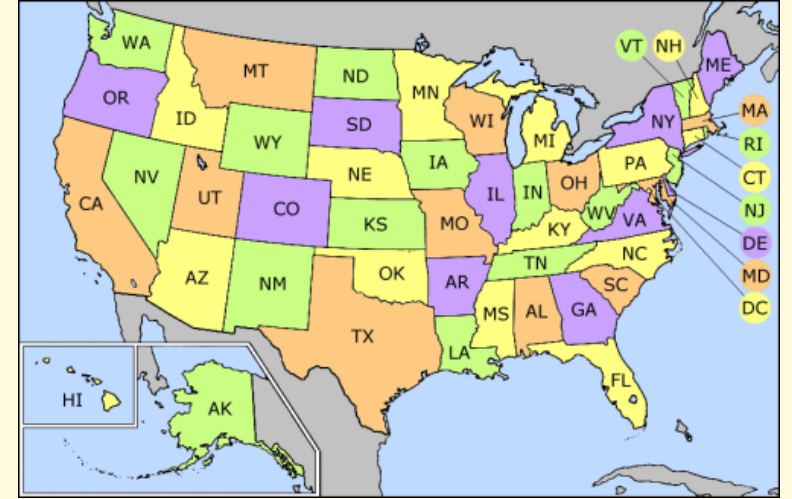
Education Fact Sheet

- Intended to help social services staff understand how schools support students with disabilities, in order to support parents and youth to get the maximum benefits from education and to advocate on their behalf.
- Schools report a large number of families, particularly those in poverty, face challenges to participating in school-related meetings and ultimately do not engage in these meetings and other opportunities.
 - Facilitating that engagement or getting consent to attend the meetings could positively impact the student's educational outcomes and ensure they exit school linked to post school services that will ultimately result in employment.

Resources in Your State

- Parent Training and Information Centers

- In every state
- Purpose: to provide free information and training to families of kids from birth to age 26 who have a disability. They can also provide information and training to workers supporting families of kids with disabilities in poverty as well as kids in foster care with disabilities.



<https://www.parentcenterhub.org/find-your-center>

Identify and Connect



Recruitment and Enrollment

April 2014 to April 2016

2,000 teenagers (14-16) receiving SSI and their families

Youth receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Social Security Disability Determination
Family Income Deemed Low Enough

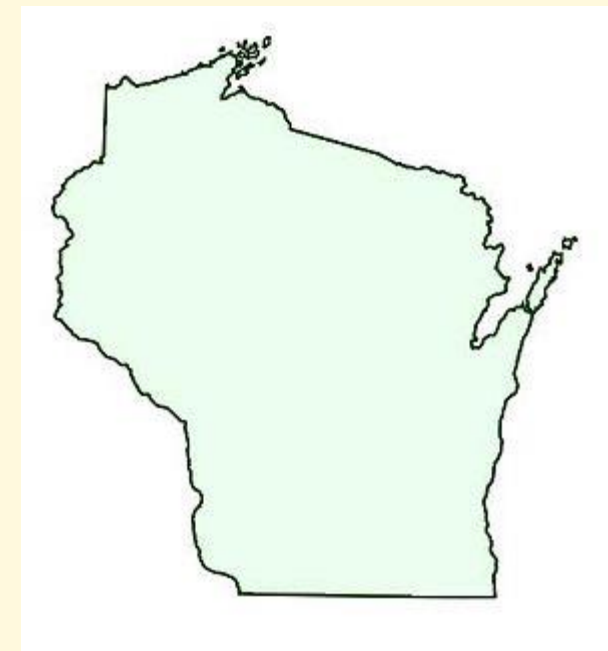
Early Intervention – Youth

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
College and Career Ready Individual Education Programs (IEPs)
Post-secondary Transition Plans (PTPs)
Academic Career Plans (ACPs)
School Social Workers;
School Nurses; School Homeless Liaisons

Role of PROMISE Intake Coordinators and Community Networking

Program Outreach/Wisconsin

- Schools
- Child Welfare Case Managers (1500)
- Mental Health Case Managers (50)
- Children's Long Term Care case managers (400)
- Mailings and PSAs to Milwaukee Hunger Task Force and Milwaukee Housing Authority
- Wisconsin Works (W2/TANF)
- Clinics and Hospitals
- Local SSA offices
- Long term care, mental health, and juvenile justice programs



Community Outreach

- Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education Training & Support (WI-FACETS) <https://wifacets.org/>
- Wisconsin Statewide Parent Educator Initiative (WSPEI) <https://wspei.org/>
- Parent to Parent of Wisconsin <https://p2pwi.org/>
- Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/cyshcn/index.htm>
- Wisconsin Community Action Programs (WISCAP) <http://wiscap.org/>
- Local Community Programs (some examples)
 - YMCAs
 - Boys and Girls Clubs
 - Our Next Generation <https://ongkids.org/>
 - Running Rebels <https://runningrebels.org/>
 - Urban Underground <https://www.urbanunderground.org/>
 - Community Centers and Churches

Wisconsin PROMISE : Enrollment Demographics

- Primary Disability Type
 - Mental Health/Behavioral: 34%
 - Intellectual/Developmental: 30%
 - Other: 25%
- Race/Ethnicity:
 - African American: 49% (78% in Milwaukee)
 - White: 36% (8% in Milwaukee)
 - Hispanic: 10% (11% in Milwaukee)
 - Primary English Speaking: 95% (92% in Milwaukee)
- Gender: Male: 67%
- Family Households
 - Most single-parent households: 66% (77% in Milwaukee)
 - Most low income: 70% < \$25K a year (75% in Milwaukee)

Wisconsin PROMISE Services

- Enrolled 2,024 youth ages 14, 15, and 16 receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and their families
 - Half received services as usual
 - Half received **Wisconsin Promise Services** through **DVR** with **interagency Resource Teams** for at least 2.5 years
 - Employment Services (at least one paid job)
 - Work Incentives Benefits Counseling
 - Financial Coaching
 - On the Job Social Skills Training
 - **Family and self-advocacy training**
 - Health Promotion



From Training to Support

- Family Advocacy group trainings and self-advocacy online trainings
 - Low attendance
- Need for support to connect to resources

Transform from a model of Training to Family Peer Support

- Wisconsin PROMISE Family Advocates
 - Help identify and navigate supports
 - Increase expectations of what is possible
 - Work, integration, increased independence, living
 - Help youth with self-advocacy
 - One on one family support; When and where families are at

PROMISE Family Advocates

- Hired for lived experience
 - Worked with a coach to fill in content
- Family members of youth with disability
- One FA was bilingual
- Peers of Promise participants
- 5 of the 10 were Promise parents
- Flexible scheduling: available evenings and weekends
- Flexible meeting locations: people's homes, library, fast food restaurants, parks, school
- Cultural competence
- Personal experience/empathy
- Trained in Trauma Informed Care and Motivational Interviewing





As the family advocates see it...

- Team facilitator
- Connector
- Mediator
- Teacher and Mentor
- Supporter and Cheerleader
- “I am anything they need me to be.”

Family Advocate Support

- 958 Families referred to Family Advocacy
 - 27,880 total activities between the family advocate and the family, averaging 29 activities per family (including attempts to contact)
 - 9,484 total service hours, an average of 10 service hours per family
 - 2,753 total travel hours, an average of 2.9 hours of travel per family
 - 597 met with a family advocate
 - 414 completed Family Advocacy modules



Topics Addressed

- 11,887 Relationship Building
- 1,947 Cold Case engagement
- 3,029 Self-Advocacy training
- 1,113 Self Advocacy and Relationship Building
- 823 Relationship Building and Cold Case Engagement
- 623 Housing/Food/Clothing/Transportation
- 216 Housing/Food/Clothing/Transportation and Relationship Building
- 213 Individual Education Programs (IEPs)
- 212 Addressing Employment Barriers and Concerns
- 164 Technology check-ins
- 135 Self-Advocacy and cold Case engagement
- 121 Creating a Positive Description
- 112 Creating a Positive Description and Identifying Interests



Employment Outcomes



- Percent employed during the PROMISE service period: April 2014 to September 2018
 - Treatment - 67% (UI)
 - Control - 57% (UI)
 - Control with no DVR case - 51% (UI)

**Of Note: 78 (8%) Promise Youth Earned Substantial Gainful Activity*

- Family Advocacy Impact
 - Of 414 youth who completed Family Advocacy Modules – 75%
 - Family Advocacy Modules
 - Employment Planning for Families
 - Overcoming Barriers to Employment
 - Transitioning to Adulthood
 - <https://beforeage18.org/family-advocacy-training/>

Community Leadership Projects

- 97 PROMISE youth and family members; 87 goals identified
 - Community Integration - 44
 - Employer Outreach - 32
 - Career Exploration - 30
 - School/Training - 26
 - Transportation - 13
 - Apprenticeships/Internships - 12
 - Supported or Customized Employment - 11
 - Entrepreneurship - 10
 - Benefits (Social Security and Medical) - 5
 - Housing - 5
 - Assistive Technology - 3
 - Asset Development (Financial Planning) - 2



Sustain: Targeted Outreach, Family Empowerment Services, Interagency Resource Teams

- Better targeted outreach and engagement with diverse students receiving SSI through inter-agency collaboration can improve student engagement in services, and ultimately improve their postsecondary outcomes.
- Family Engagement leads to empowerment
 - Increase use of services and systems
 - Improved outcomes
 - Reduces cost over long term because reduced reliance on public benefits and increase tax revenue
- **[Wisconsin PROMISE cost-benefit analysis and sustainability framework.](#)** (Anderson et al., 2019)
- **<https://promisewi.com/success/>**

Sustainability through Resources

- Youth Transition Guide <https://beforeage18.org/transition-guide/>
- Family Advocacy Modules <https://beforeage18.org/family-advocacy-training/>
- Self-Advocacy Modules <https://beforeage18.org/self-advocacy-training/>



Impact of Family Empowerment



More PROMISE Video Stories available at: <https://promisewi.com/videos/>

Engagement Best Practices

- **Highly intensive** approaches worked best
 - In-person contacts
 - Individualized approaches
- Experienced & persistent staff
 - Experience working in field of human services (e.g., education, social work)
- Maintain constant contact with participants
 - In-person is best, but calls, texts, cards also effective
- Build trust with youth and families crucial
- Meet in a place that is convenient for the youth/student
 - Home, school, public library
- Follow through
 - Do what you say you are going to do in a timely way



Unpacking the Toolkit

- Fact Sheet: What is an IEP
- Fact Sheet: Engagement Tips Engagement Postcard
- Family/Youth Goal Template
- Resources (where to get more information and training)
- Questions to stimulate state and local discussions

www.mdtransitions.org



Appreciation and Contact Information

- Special thanks to: APHSA, Conference Edge staff and Maryland team
- Jade Gingerich, MD PROMISE Project Director/Director of Employment Policy, Maryland Department of Disabilities
Jade.Gingerich@Maryland.gov
- Ellie Hartman, Ph.D., BCBA-D, Employment Data Coordinator and Steward, Workforce Data Integration System (WDIS), Department of Workforce Development (DWD),
Ellie2.Hartman@dwd.Wisconsin.gov



Maryland
DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITIES

