The Role and Impact of Vocational Rehabilitation in Inclusive Higher Education for Students with Intellectual Disability and Autism

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Think College is a national organization dedicated to developing, expanding, and improving research and practice in inclusive higher education for people with intellectual disability.

www.ThinkCollege.net
The Think College website is a trusted source for information, training, and resources related to inclusive higher education for students with intellectual disability. The website includes:

• A searchable program directory to learn more about available college options
• A resource library that includes published research as well as field-created tools and resources
• Online learning modules on a variety of topics
• Research to practice briefs, e-newsletters, and journal articles
• Topical information on the critical issues
• A policy and legislation clearinghouse

College Options for Students with Intellectual Disability
Growth in Number of Inclusive Postsecondary Education Programs in the U.S.

Source: Think College Programs Database

All TPSID Sites 2010–2015

www.thinkcollege.net
NCC Data on 2010-2015 TPSID Programs

- 2,245 students attended programs at 58 campuses implementing 27 model demonstration grants
- There were over 23,000 enrollments into courses
- Overall, 45% of all course enrollments across the 5 years of data collection were in inclusive classes
- 846 students worked in a paid job while also attending the program
- Nearly 1,500 students (68%) participated in pre-employment career development activities, e.g. internships, service learning
- Over 1,000 students earned a credential upon exiting

(Grigal, Hart, Smith, Domin, & Weir, 2016)

Paid Employment at Exit Trends

- Employment Trends for adults with ID (Source: National Core Indicators)
- Student with a paid job within 90 days of exit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Employment Trends</th>
<th>Student with a paid job</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) on Vocational Rehabilitation Practices for Youth and Young Adults NIDDLR (2014-2019)

- Partners
  - TransCen, Inc.
  - University of Maryland-College Park
  - Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

For more information: http://vrpracticesandyouth.org

Phase I: Secondary Analysis

Research Questions

- RQ1 - what is the frequency of interaction and role of VR agencies partnering with IHEs serving students with ID/A? Do these differ based on the characteristics of the IHE or program (type of college, length of program, level of course access, and types of supports provided)?

- RQ 2 – What partnership attributes (role of VR, frequency of interaction, type of college) between TPSID programs and VR agencies are related to positive outcomes for students (for example, attainment of a postsecondary credential; employment; independent living)?
Study Sample Description

- 734 students with ID and/or Autism who attended TPSID Programs in 2015-16
- Of 52 campuses, 40 partnered with VR (12 did not)
- 606 students at VR Partner Programs, 128 at non-VR partner programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Attributes</th>
<th>Partnered with VR (n = 606 students)</th>
<th>Did not partner with (n=128 students)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
<td>53.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>11.0%*</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>70.6%</td>
<td>82.8%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-White</td>
<td>29.4%*</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African-American</td>
<td>16.8%*</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American-Indian of Alaska Native</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dually enrolled students</td>
<td>23.2%*</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Frequency of interaction of VR agencies partnering with IHEs to serve students with ID/A

- **Annually**: 4.0%
- **Bi-annually**: 2.5%
- **Quarterly**: 7.5%
- **Monthly**: 7.5%
- **Weekly**: 2.5%

Role of VR agencies partnering with IHEs serving students with ID/A

- **Direct service to TPSID**: 67.5%
- **Career dev./emp.**: 45.0%
- **Project advisory committee**: 42.5%
- **Consultant**: 35.0%
- **Team/Consortia member**: 32.5%
- **Participates in PCP**: 30.0%
- **Training to TPSID students**: 27.5%
- **Recruitment/Outreach**: 25.0%
- **Provides training to TPSID staff**: 5.0%
- **Transportation for students**: 5.0%
- **Other**: 5.0%
Some considerations

- VR is partnering with IHE’s serving students with ID and Autism
- RSA 911 data for 2014 indicate 1,730 individuals with ID and/or autism exited VR in 2014
- What percentage do the TPSID students represent?
- The role of VR and frequency of interaction varies
- TPSIDs have higher levels of collaboration than programs nationally
- Does more interactions equate to:
  - Stronger partnerships?
  - Different services?
  - Better outcomes?

VR Financial Support for Students

- VR-Partnered Program: 24.1% used VR funds to pay tuition, 31.2% used VR funds to pay other expenses
- Non-Partnered Program: 6.3% used VR funds to pay tuition, 7.8% used VR funds to pay other expenses
State Guidance Examples

- The Department of Vocational Rehabilitation covers the costs and fees of students with ID dually enrolled in college and university programs operated under the TPSID program as long as a student meets eligibility criteria.


- Kentucky established a VR funding category called Post-Secondary Transition Program to fund student employment services. The policy only applies to approved Comprehensive Transition Programs (CTPs).


Its not just about the $\$

- Engagement & connection with student
- Engagement with program/IHE staff/peers
- Understanding of course impact on career choice and path
- Use of campus/program resources to support employment
- Building higher expectations

It's not just about the $$
"With some of students with more significant disabilities, the family and DD and VR are saying they’re not competitive and we’re saying bring them to us and we’ll prove that they are.”

Some considerations

- Funding guidance varies between states and in some cases counselors
- If policies limit funding to CTPs, then dually enrolled students cannot receive support
  - Will this change with Pre-ETS?
- Impact of credential on funding determinations
Inclusive course access based on VR partnership status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Partnered with VR</th>
<th>Did not partner with VR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“VR’s more interested in paying for specialized courses at this point, and we’re more interested in not having any.”

TPSID Program Staff
“You know a fast closure isn’t necessarily the best use of this college experience. It really does take more flexibility and time for a better employment outcome.”

TPSID Program Staff
Employment & career development engagement by VR partnership status

Employment outcomes by VR partnership status
Who gets employment services and when?

- Some programs focus on academics early in the program and build toward employment.
- The greater the number of years in the program, the greater employment outcomes.
- Are the students in unpaid CDE or having no Employment or Career development starting later?
- What is the role of VR at exit?

“We have families who never have heard of any of the services. They don’t know about VR, they don’t know about waivers, they don’t know about outside case management for our community service system.”
**Project UNITE (Plotner et al, 2015)**

- Defines the exit planning process
- Identifies and defines roles
- Provides suggested exit planning activities


**Credential attainment by VR partnership status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>VR-Partnered Programs (n=231 students)</th>
<th>Non-Partnered Programs (n=49 students)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Earned at least one credential before exiting</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate for TPSID students granted by TPSID</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate for TPSID students granted by IHE</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate available to all IHE students</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate for TPSID students issued by LEA</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Challenges

- Lack of uniform or consistent guidance
- Job oriented courses
- Low expectations
- Focus on closure vs quality

Recommendations

- Consider the impact of Pre-ETS for dually enrolled students
- Share assessment data
- Share internships/work study
- Connect the dots between courses and job skills
- Establish relationships and communicate regularly
- Involve VR counselors in assessment and planning, build investment student success and program success
- Share effective strategies with other IHEs
Want to learn more?
www.thinkcollege.net

Need Advice? Think College can help...
thinkcollegeTA@gmail.com

thank you!

http://www.thinkcollege.net/dcdt-conference-materials