Promoting Success

Higher Education for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

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What do you know? What do you think?

- College for students with intellectual/developmental disabilities
- Postsecondary opportunities in NC
- Your professional role/responsibility related to students with I/DD attending college
Objectives

• Learn about higher education opportunities for students with IDD
• Obtain information about program options
• Understand the role of educators for effective transition outcomes
• Apply strategies to support students with I/DD who want to attend college
Definitions

Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (IDD):
Significant learning & cognitive disabilities that affect a student’s opportunity to access standard courses without educational supports
– Services under IDEA through age 21
– Accommodations/alternative assessments
– Alternative diploma track

Postsecondary Education (PSE):
Education after high school; “college experience” has not been available to these students until recently
What has changed??

- Higher Opportunity Act
- National Coordinating Center
- Core standards for inclusive programs
- Model Demonstration Sites
- Certified Transition Programs

= a national movement in education reform
What about North Carolina?

- Institute of Medicine Task Force
- Systems changes
- Capacity building
- Increased awareness
- Parent and student expectations
- Professional development
NC Postsecondary Education Alliance

EDUCATORS, AGENCY REPS, LEGISLATORS, YOUTH LEADERS & FAMILIES WORKING TOGETHER

*Collaboration with College Foundation of NC

Increasing options & opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities

- Capacity Building
- Employment
- Independent living
- Quality of life
- Policy and system change
College Outcomes

Principles /values:
- Person-centered planning
- Support self-determination
- Inclusive social opportunities

Structure:
- Course access w/accommodations
- Individualized support (coach, mentor)
- Work-based learning
- Ongoing evaluation
Believing In Achieving

Inclusive Higher Education

Alignment with College Systems & Practices

Academic Access

Career Development

Coordination & Collaboration

Ongoing Evaluation

Campus Membership

Self-Determination

Sustainability
Programs in North Carolina

- 1 program in 2009
- 2013: 10 programs
- 4 in universities
- 6 in community colleges
Programs in NC: universities

- UNCG: Beyond Academics
- Western Carolina University: University Participant (UP)
  - model demonstration site
- Appalachian State: Students with Diverse Abilities (SDAP)
  - satellite
- UNC-CIDD: LEND Advocate Trainee
  - Graduate program
NC Community College Programs

- Alamance CC- “Career College”
- Central Piedmont CC
- Cleveland CC- “Connexions”*
- Randolph CC- “Career College”
- Western Piedmont CC- “Access to College Experience” (ACE)*
- College of the Albemarle (PACE)*
  * satellite programs through WCU
Evidence from the Field

Does higher education make a difference?
Integrating Evaluation and Program Development

- Evaluate the impact of the program on students, families, faculty, and campus life
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the program

Our findings:
- Personal development of students
- Faculty and campus support for inclusion
- Increased and improved employment opportunities
Faculty Survey

Many students with IDD can benefit from a college experience with adequate supports.
Paid Employment

- Youth who participated in PSE were 26% more likely to leave Vocational Rehabilitation with paid employment
- Earned a 73% higher weekly income
- Individuals need greater access to PSE supported by Vocational Rehabilitation

Data Set: RSA 911
Predictors of Employment

- The only post-high school transition goal that was a predictor of employment for students with ID was having the goal of attending a two or four year college.

- 11% of students with ID had this goal

(Grigal, Migliore & Hart, 2011)
Impact on Postsecondary Education

Youth with IDD whose parents expected they would be employed were 28 times more likely to have enrolled in PSE after leaving high school than youth whose parents did not expect employment.

(Papay, 2011)
Impact on Employment

Youth with IDD whose parents expected they would be employed were 58 times more likely to be employed 2 years out of high school than youth whose parents did not expect they would be employed.

(Papay, 2011)
NCPSEA Summit Evaluation 2013

Resources and information needed:
- Capacity building; continue Summits
- Regional implementation groups
- Business leadership involvement
- Community College systems change
- Collaboration of schools/agencies
From (typical) college students:

- “Everyone deserves a chance to learn and to have a job. High School doesn’t do that. I want to see this grow.”
- “I’ve learned not to make assumptions about what they can or cannot do. It’s changed this campus.”
- “As much as they learn, we also learn. If we could translate that into the community, the world would be a better place.”
Myths

• **College is a privilege and not a right**

• **Students with IDD would be uncomfortable in college courses and on campus**

• **Postsecondary education goals are always a part of transition planning**

• **Professors are not likely to accept these students in their classes**
Myths

• College sounds great but not for my kids-they are (fill in derogatory label of choice)
• These students would “take up” the space & resources for better-qualified students
• People with IDD can’t really benefit from college
• Students with IDD will change the rigor of courses & have a negative effect on peers
Transition Core Concepts:

• Include all perspectives, disciplines, and organizations that will impact the student
• Self-determination should be the foundation for transition planning
• Interagency collaboration is essential
• Transition should be viewed through a cultural lens

The Association of University Centers on Disabilities  2013
www.aucd.org
College as a goal for students with I/DD

What is your role?
What do you know?
What do you think?

- At what age should students think about college?
- How can educators raise awareness about PSE for students with IDD?
- What are the challenges for students with I/DD?
- What is your role/responsibility toward these students?
Questions and Discussion
Postsecondary education is a most important key to shaping a new reality for people with disabilities. It has the exciting potential to create a future based not on low expectations, the can’ts and shouldn’ts, but on the high expectations of productivity and personal and economic freedom.
Resources

www.cidd.unc.edu/psea - NC Postsecondary Education Alliance: programs, Summit highlights, newsletters

www.thinkcollege.net - College options for people with disabilities

www.cfnc.org - College Foundation of NC: disability rights and PSE programs; parent information

www.nsttac.org - The National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center builds capacity for transition outcomes

tnpsealliance.org - Alliance for the advancement of PSE opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities