



MRDD Futures Implementation Phase One Progress Report Deliverable 5

Implementation Team:

Empowering People

Description of Deliverable:

A regional model to support young adults to successfully transition from school to work has been developed to be pilot-tested.

Primary Futures Recommendation:

3. Meaningful employment

Related Futures Recommendations:

1. Expand self-determination
25. Data-driven analysis

Associated Products:

- A. A document that describes model and pilot plan.

A description of a regional model to improve transition from school to work outcomes is attached. ODMRDD partnered with the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission, the Ohio Department of Education, The Ohio State University Nisonger Center, the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence, and the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council in developing this pilot program.

- B. Additional resources will be secured for employment supports.

In July 2008, ODMRDD secured new additional funding totaling \$500,000 from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services through a Medicaid Infrastructure Grant beginning in 2009. This grant will support employment options related to the Ticket To Work program. Due to renewed focus on employment, it was possible for ODMRDD to take advantage of funding for new initiatives. Continuing funding may be available in the future.

Next Steps:

- A. The model school to work transition program will be piloted in a region and then be available for statewide implementation.
- B. A survey of employment needs and goals for individuals with developmental disabilities will be conducted to determine options and opportunities for future programs supporting employment. This will serve as a platform to support necessary funding and policy changes related to employment for individuals with disabilities.
- C. "Employment kits" containing information about employment supports and benefits will be developed to assist individuals, families, and county boards of MRDD.
- D. An evaluation of the Medicaid Buy-In (MBI) program will be conducted to identify barriers to access and participation, and look for ways to remove them. A campaign to publicize MBI also will be developed.
- E. A model for regionally active Business Leadership Networks will be developed.

Pilot for Transition from School to Adulthood

Utilizing Customized Employment and Cross-Agency Collaborative Funding to Improve Outcomes for Youth with Developmental Disabilities

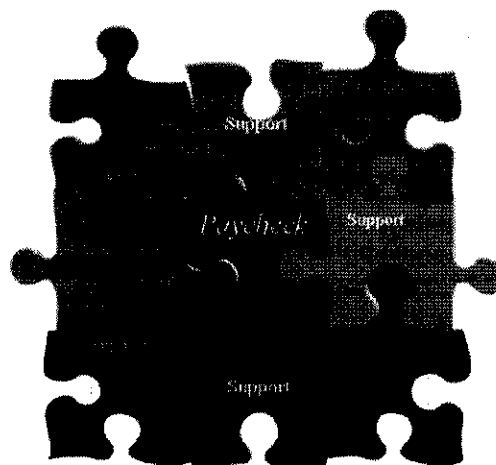
Issue:

The MRDD Futures Committee recommended that opportunities for meaningful employment be increased for individuals with developmental disabilities. Based on data from the 2005 County Board (CB) Cost Report, there were a total of 30,738 adults enrolled in CB adult programs. Of this number, only 7,153, or 23%, were part of some level of community employment. A large proportion of Ohio's youth with developmental disabilities transition from school to workshops or segregated facilities/day programs to "get ready" for employment. However, research has shown it is unlikely that an individual entering a sheltered workshop will ever enter competitive employment. Nationally less than 8% of students with a disability exit school with a job or are enrolled in post-secondary education. These poor post-secondary outcomes are linked to the lack of vocational preparation, transition planning, and linkages to adult services and supports prior to graduation. Youth with significant disabilities and families have trouble navigating the difficult and confusing transition between the education and adult/employment systems. In addition, they are often not aware or given the opportunity to explore non-traditional employment approaches.

The Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI) conducted Transition to Adulthood focus groups across Ohio. Results from these focus groups highlighted ways to improve services:

- Look at the students as individuals. Try to create a transition program that suits the individual's interests
- Expand the vocational options so that those that wish to go a vocational route have more to choose from
- Build relationships between the school and agencies early
- Need individualized job placement that builds on strengths
- Parents need to be informed

To improve outcomes for youth with developmental disabilities a model will be developed for replication that will provide a seamless system of transition services from the education system to either a job, the support to acquire one, or the means to produce income utilizing customized employment and cross-agency collaborative funding. The model will be piloted in two Ohio school districts, one in a rural area and the other urban.

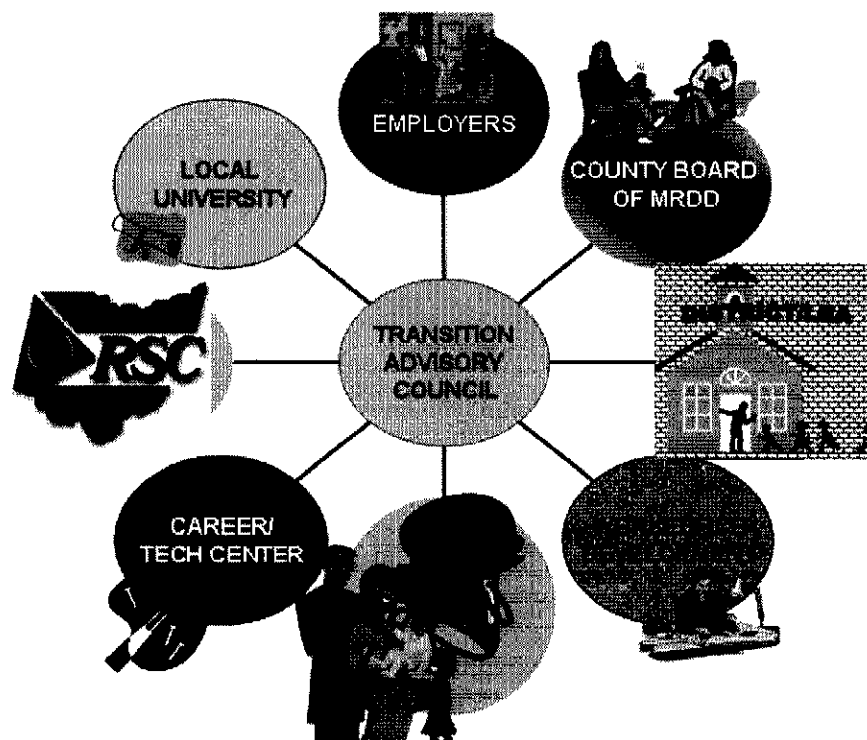


Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities
Pilot for Transition from School to Adulthood
Utilizing Customized Employment and Cross-Agency Collaborative Funding to
Improve Outcomes for Youth with Developmental Disabilities

Strategy:

Transition Advisory Councils (TAC) will be formed with the commitment to improve transition outcomes for youth with developmental disabilities through the use of customized employment and cross-agency collaborative funding. The TAC will be comprised of the following local partners: School District/Local Education Agency (LEA), Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission, County Board of MRDD, families, students, employers, local university, and other necessary local partners. The TACs will:

- Determine the method to implement "Individualized Career Planning Model" as described in this document.
- Participate in cross training and have access to resources on relevant topics including: Social Security Work Incentives, Medicaid Buy-in, Ticket-to-Work, self-employment, asset development, Medicaid waivers, and system eligibility requirements.
- Identify system barriers and when possible, the means to remove these barriers. For example, if an ODMRDD rule is a real barrier to collaborative funding, the TAC will ask ODMRDD to waive the rule for participating individuals.
- Develop solutions to critical transition issues such as job loss, lack of funding and resources, volunteer experience, leap from "job planning to career planning," ensure that career planning is completed at least annually to ensure the individual is in the best job or looking for "next best job," supports for individual while not on the job or producing income.



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Customized Employment is a practice defined by the U.S. Department of Labor:

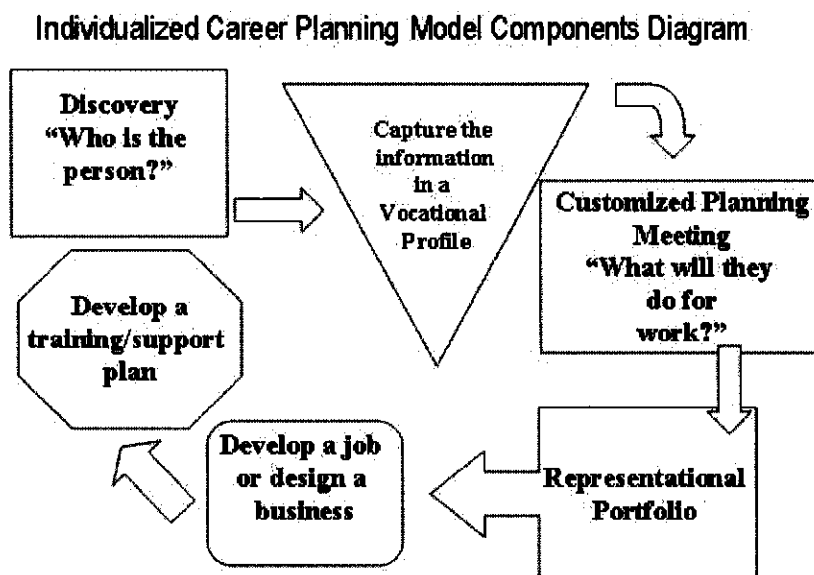
"Customized employment means individualizing the employment relationship between employees and employers in ways that meet the needs of both. It is based on an individualized determination of the strengths, needs, and interests of the person with a disability, and is also designed to meet the specific needs of the employer.

It may include employment developed through job carving, self-employment or entrepreneurial initiatives, or other job development or restructuring strategies that result in job responsibilities being customized and individually negotiated to fit the needs of individuals with a disability.

Customized employment assumes the provision of reasonable accommodations and supports necessary for the individual to perform the functions of a job that is individually negotiated and developed." (Federal Register, June 26, 2002, Vol. 67. No. 123 pp 43154 - 43149)

Many states have explored the alternatives to traditional employment that comprise customized employment to increase and improve the economic participation of people with developmental disabilities. These alternatives include supported employment, self-employment, supported entrepreneurship, job carving and restructuring, development of micro-boards and micro-enterprises, paying employers to provide supported employment, and the use of personal agents, individual vouchers, training accounts, and personal budgets.

The state of Montana developed and implemented the "Individualized Career Planning Model" depicted below.



Ellen Condon - University of Montana's Rural Institute on Disabilities

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Ohio's pilot will implement this Model specifically designed to overcome programmatic and funding challenges and promote customized employment. The Model has proven effective at employing students with developmental disabilities, including those with autism, through the use of Social Security Work Incentives, which are under-utilized and can be highly effective. Due to the creation of early linkages, agencies, schools, and students will work collaboratively to fund supports to achieve better quality outcomes. Students will have real jobs or the means to earn income prior to graduating and plans to maintain this support upon graduation.

Resources:

- National Center on Workforce and Disability
<http://www.onestops.info/i.php?i=1>
- Griffin Hammis Associates, LLC
<http://www.griffinhammis.com/>
- U.S. Department of Labor on Customized Employment
<http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/custom/index.htm>
- Training and Technical Assistance for Providers
<http://www.t-tap.org/>
- "Individualized Career Planning Model"
http://ruralinstitute.umt.edu/transition/art_Careerplanningmod.asp