TRANSITIONS RTC
THE LEARNING & WORKING DURING THE TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD
REHABILITATION RESEARCH & TRAINING CENTER
YOUNG ADULTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS: BARRIERS TO AND FACILITATORS OF SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT

Jonathan Delman
Lisa M. Smith
Jennifer Whitney
Amanda Costa
Tania Duperoy
Workshop objectives

By the end of this workshop participants will be able to:

• Identify barriers to successful employment for young adults with mental health conditions
• Identify factors leading to successful employment
• Describe benefits of Transition Age Youth working in “peer” positions
“Transition Age Youth” (TAY)

- **TAY**: Ages 16-30 with serious mental health condition
- 6-12% of young adults (2.4 - 5 million individuals) are TAY
- Same hopes and dreams as other young adults
- Continuous process of rapid change
Developmental turbulence

- Emotional
- Housing
- Educational
- Family and relationship
- Financial
- Health/ Social Service
- Detainment
Importance of “work”

A majority of TAY want to work
But experience high rates of unemployment.

Employment Positive effects
  • Self-esteem
  • Development of a valued societal identity
  • Increased social contacts

Unemployment negative effects
  • Socioeconomic economic status
  • Less likely to receive social support
  • Stress
Barriers to Successful Employment

- Employment inexperience
- Underdeveloped social skills (e.g., soft skills) and confidence
- Low expectations for working and self-sufficiency
- Workplaces that are unprepared to “hostile”
- Undesirable adult” focused vocational services
- SSI/SSDI disincentives
- Transportation
Insufficient vocational services

- Addressing job search anxiety
- Competitive work
- Not just finding, but holding the job
- Role of supported education
- No major model is truly career focused
  - Developing a “vocational identity”
- Good programs inaccessible to most
Job finding and maintenance facilitators

* Working competitively prior to illness

- Developmentally appropriate vocational supports
  - Employment specialist expertise with TAY world
  - With other TAY
  - Supported education linkage

- Social skills training

- Care integration (eg., IPS)

- Job search anxiety - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy?

- Pre-job search period (resume, interview skills)

- Social Security guidance
Workplace facilitators

- Prepared employer
- Staff role identification (trial and error)
- Supervision- individualized
- Strengths-based
- Reasonable Accommodations
- Adult Mentoring
Benefits of TAY working in “peer” position

- Job set-aside
- Opportunity to give back
- Specialized training
- Sensitive employers
- Possible career ladder
References


