

Thrive in Transition: Creating a Toolkit for Optimizing Occupational Therapy Practice in Transition Programs

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Background

- Transition programs cater to young adults aged 18-21 with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD)
- Offer tailored support and resources to aid participants in transitioning from school to post-school life.
- Services: vocational training, job placement assistance, life skills development, access to community resources, work-based learning, community-based instruction, and academic support.
- 45.8% of working people with a disability were employed¹.
- 13% of NJ former students with disabilities are engaged in productive activities².

Literature Review

The literature highlights factors influencing successful program implementation:

- Parent/ guardian involvement^{3,4}
- Individual-level factors⁵⁻⁷
- Integration of vocational rehabilitation with special education^{8,9}
- Internal and external barriers¹⁰

Problem Statement

There is limited guidance on how to effectively promote independence and prolonged outcomes beyond the program, as noted by stakeholders.

Aim/ Purpose

- Identify facilitators and barriers to successful transition program implementation in NJ
- Develop a transition-toolkit for occupational therapists who work with adolescents and young adults with ID/DD.

Project Overview

Observe varying transition programs serving 18-21 youth with ID/DD

Determine facilitators and barriers

Develop toolkit

Disseminate results

Findings

Facilitators

Career planning/ exploration

Opportunity for employment skill development

Student autonomy

Motivated staff and involved families

Availability of support services

Barriers

Difficulty with in-class support

Limited resources

Lack of

- Student motivation and interest in participation
- Uniformity in policy
- Adequate funding
- Individualized decision making
- Staff training

Implications and Take-Home Points

- Advocate!
- Need for universal training & OTs as part of interdisciplinary teams
- Difficulty with post-graduation outcome sustainability
- Change approach when working with this population. See toolkit for suggestions.

QR Code to Toolkit



QR Code to References

