Employment Outcomes for Youth and Young Adults with Disabilities

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Current Research Findings in Secondary Transition

David W. Test, UNC Charlotte

What Do We Know and How?

- 1985-2000 “Best Practices” based on descriptive follow-up studies, case studies of states and local education agencies with exemplary programs, literature reviews, stakeholder questionnaires, and concept mapping
- Findings were related to:
  - How to structure programs
  - What skills to teach
  - What services appear to lead to better outcomes

What Do We Know or How?

- 2000-now “Evidence-Based Practices”
  - Evidence-Based Practices based on experimental (group and single subject) research
    - Test, Fowler, et al. (2009) identified practices for teaching students skills
    - Cobb et al. (2013) found CBI leads to improved employment outcomes
  - Evidence-Based Predictors of improved PSO based on correlational research (Test, Mazzotti, et al., 2009)

Summary of Practices

- Reviewed experimental research to identify evidence-based practices in secondary transition
- Identified 63 instructional practices
- Developed over 75 Research to Practice Lesson Plan Starters

Taxonomy Category	Evidence-Based Practices	Research to Practice Lesson Plan Starters
Student Focused Planning	6	9
Student Development	56	98
Family Involvement	1	0
Program Structure	9	9

Student Focused-Planning

Evidence-Based Practices (1)

1. Published Curricula to teach student involvement in the IEP

Research-Based Practices (1)

1. Self-Advocacy Strategy to teach student involvement in the IEP

Promising Practices (4)

1. Whose Future Is It Anyway? to teach student knowledge of transition planning
2. Check and Connect to teach participation in the IEP meeting
3. Computer Assisted Instruction to teach participation in IEP process
4. Self-Directed IEP to teach student involvement in the IEP meeting

In-School Predictors by Post-School Outcome Area

Predictor	Education	Employment
Career Awareness*	X	X
Community Experiences*		X
Exit Exams/High School Diploma Status		X
Inclusion in General Education	X	X
Interagency Collaboration	X	X
Occupational Courses*	X	X
Paid Employment/Work Experience*	X	X
Parental Expectations	X	X
Parental Involvement		X
Program of Study	X	X
Self-Advocacy/Self-Determination	X	X
Self-Care/Independent Living	X	X
Social Skills	X	X
Student Support	X	X
Transition Program	X	X
Vocational Education*	X	X
Work Study*	X	X

Implications for Research

- Need for new longitudinal data (correlational and experimental)
- All research must be “high-quality”
- Focus on hard-to-study areas:
  - Family involvement
  - Interagency collaboration
- Focus on scaling-up and sustaining what we know works
- Continued research on cost of doing nothing

Implications for Policy

- Hold school systems accountable for the outcomes (both educational and occupational) of all their students SPP/APR Indicators 1, 2, 13, & 14 are already in place
- Coming: WIOA performance measures, high school MTSS measures, Early Warning Systems, State Longitudinal Data Systems
- If this happens, maybe all the calls for "seamless transition" will finally be heeded

Implementing Evidence-Based Practices: Model Demonstration Projects

Marlene Simon-Burroughs, Office of Special Education Programs

Model Demonstration Projects…

Take an intervention for which there is some evidence of efficacy in a research context and learn-by-doing what it takes to “install” it in a real-world setting with real-world practitioners.

Important questions are…

- Can practitioners learn the intervention and implement it with fidelity?
- What supports are needed to establish that learning and quality of implementation?
- Are the outcomes achieved in a more controlled setting replicated in the MDP context?
- Is the intervention sustained after the MDP finishes its work and what conditions support that sustainment?

Juvenile Justice Re-Entry Model Demonstration Projects

Develops, adapts, refines, and evaluates models for facilitating the successful reentry of youth with disabilities from JJ facilities into education, employment, and community programs. Features include:

- Integrated transition services;
- Individualized aftercare including intensive educational interventions;
- Interagency collaboration;
- Professional development and ongoing coaching; and
- Monitoring youths' progress.

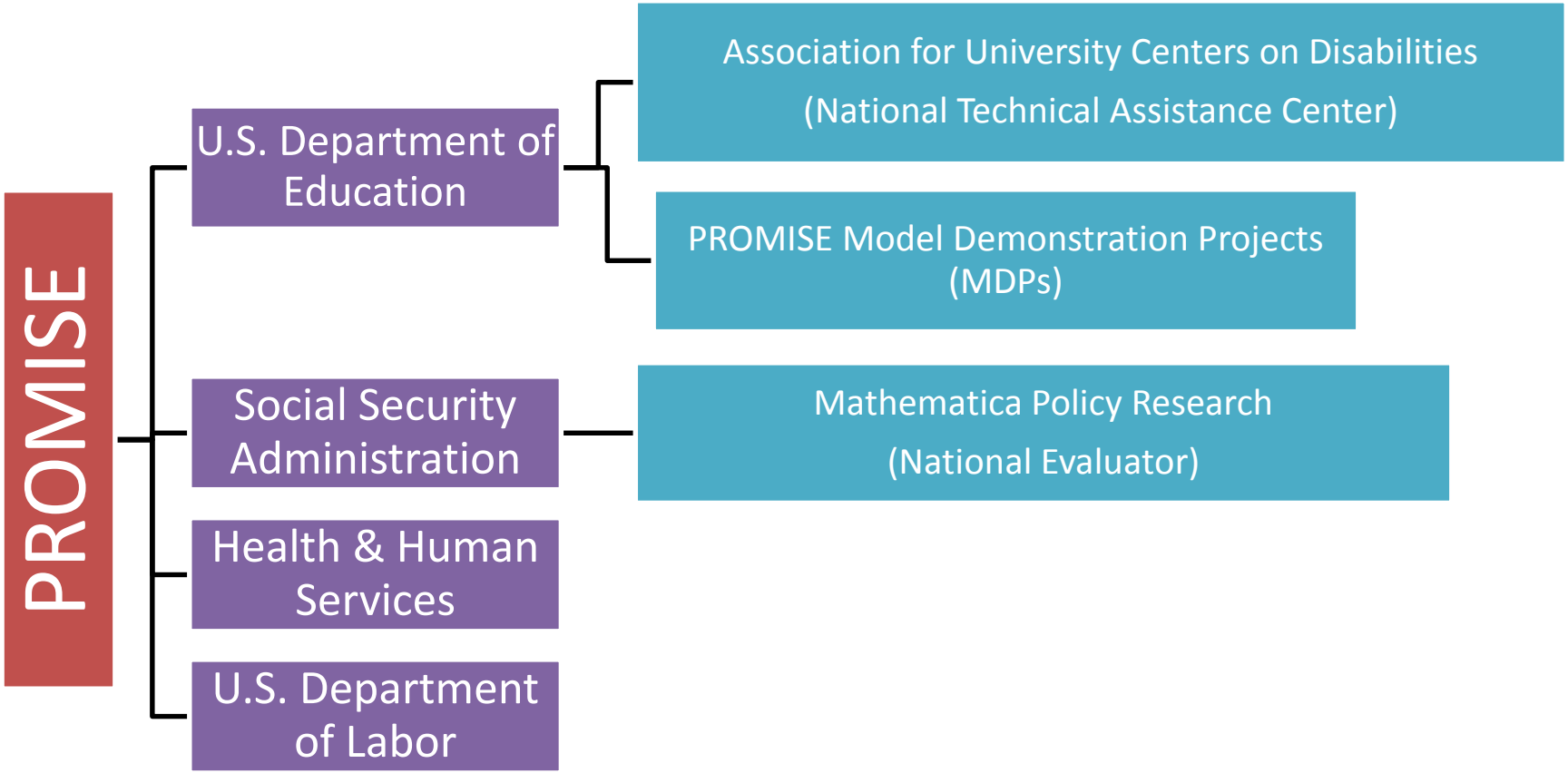
Re-Entry from Juvenile Justice Model Demonstration Grantees

- Arizona State University – Project RISE
- University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration – MAP Project
- University of Oregon – Project STAYOUT

PROMISE

(Promoting the Readiness Of Minors In Supplemental Security IncomE)

Federal Partners



Population

- Youth, 14-16 years of age, enrolled in the supplemental security income (SSI) program through the Social Security Administration
- Six grant awardees will recruit 13,172 participants for the study (each MDP will recruit 2,000 participants , except CA will recruit 3,172 participants)
- Half of the participants (6,586) will receive an intervention protocol developed from research that predicts positive outcomes for SSI eligible youth
- Half of the participants will be in a control group and receive the typical services available to them in their state

PROMISE Project Sites

- ASPIRE: Arizona, Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Utah
- Arkansas
- California
- Maryland
- New York
- Wisconsin

Interventions

- PROMISE MDPs include customized interventions
- MDPs <u>must</u> also provide:
  - Partnerships among State agencies responsible for programs that serve the target populations
  - Family outreach, recruitment, and involvement
  - Case management
  - Benefits counseling
  - Career and work-based learning experiences
  - Parent/guardian training and information

Use of Individualized Learning Plans and Access to Work-based Learning

Scott Solberg, Boston University

ILPs as a Current Practice to Support Transition

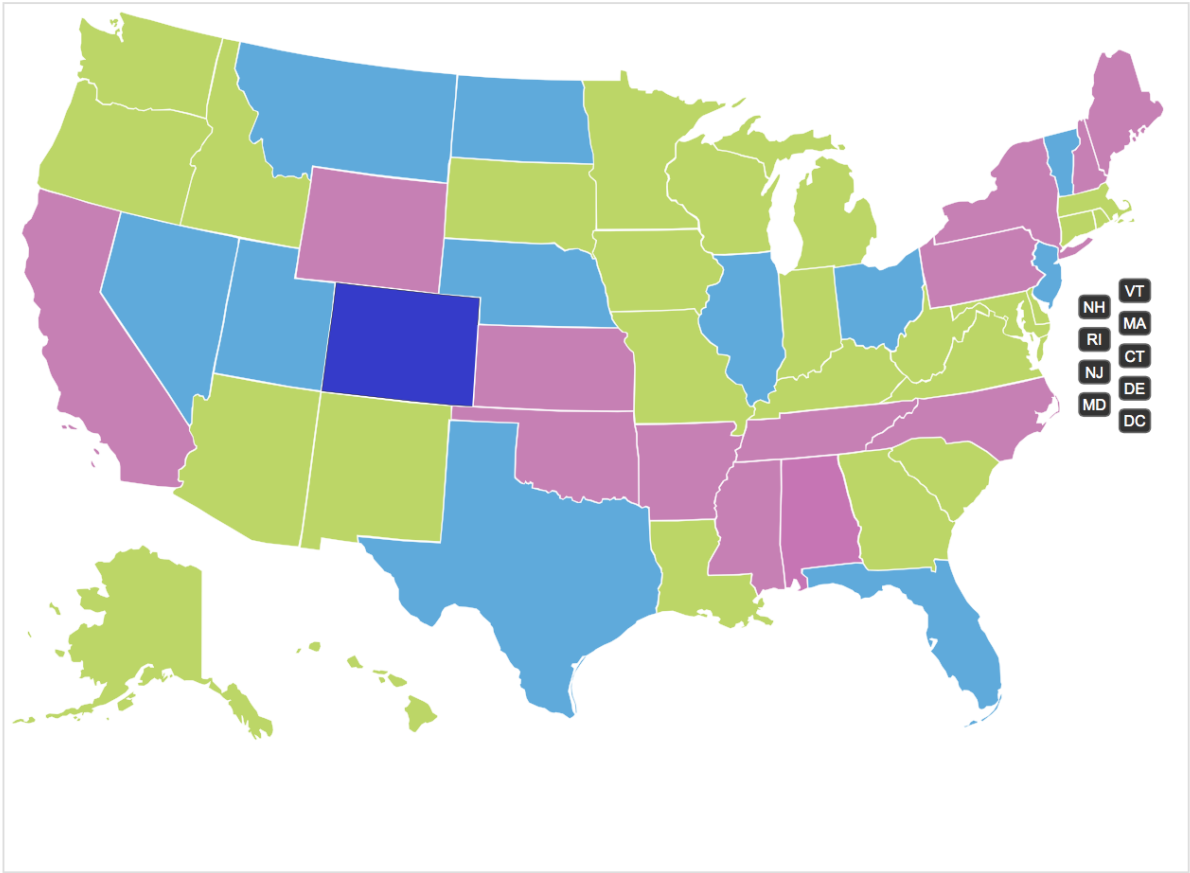
- Nature of ILPs
- ILPs and Work-based Learning
- Using ILPs to drive transition plans in IEPs

What is an ILP?

- States use different names – Student Success Plan in CT, Individual Career & Academic Plan in CO, many more
- 37 states and DC require or encourage ILPs
- ILPs typically begin in middle school
- Purposes:
  - To personalize learning
  - To develop college and career readiness
  - To prepare early to meet graduation requirements
- Long history of individualized plans in Special Education
- Not the same as an Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Which states require or encourage using ILPs?

ILP Policy Map: http://www.dol.gov/odep/ilp/map/



Colorado's Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) is mandated by the state. It includes all students, 9th - 12th grade.

States with mandated ILP in use | No ILP in use | States with ILP in use, but no mandate

What is a Quality ILP?

- A **document** consisting of:
  (a) course taking and post-secondary plans aligned to career goals; and

  (b) documentation of the range of college and career readiness skills that the student has developed.

- A **process** that enhances the relevance of school and out-of-school learning opportunities, and provides the student access to career development opportunities that involve building skills in self exploration, career exploration, and career planning and management.

Quality Career Development

- Develops Competency Skills Related to:
  - **Self Exploration** - Exploring their personal interests, skills, values to better understand themselves
  - **Career Exploration** - Learning about various career options using online career information AND hands-on activities (meeting employers, job shadowing, career mentors, work experiences, etc.)
  - **Career Planning & Management** - Defining own goals & plans for pursuing careers, postsecondary ed, & other life goals; Developing career & college readiness skills; Making informed decisions about secondary courses, in & out-of-school activities and postsecondary ed

Impact

- ILPs and work-based learning
- ILPs and IEPs

Current Practices Needing Further Study

- Technology that can facilitate process
- Cross-sector and regional collaboration models
- PD and related strategies for building whole school implementation

State Level ILP Challenges

- Lack of communication materials to explain purpose and value of ILPs to different stakeholders.
- Lack of accountability systems for measuring ILP impact and ROI.
- Lack of evidence-based grade-specific ILP curriculum that includes measurable benchmarks.

District/School Capacity Development Challenges

- Lack of leadership support for establishing whole-school buy-in
- Dearth of staff knowledgeable about career development
- General and special education educators need clarification as to their respective roles and responsibilities for engaging in ILPs.
- Many transition staff do not understand how ILPs complement and support IEPs.

Web-based ILP Challenges

- Lack of connectivity between web-based career information and student information systems in order to evaluate quality ILPs against academic outcomes
- Many states are not providing an online career information system with ILP ePortfolio for all residents.
- Inaccessibility of assessment tools and career information for students with significant disabilities.

Challenges to Engaging Families in ILPs

- Families need access to the online resources and ILP activities.
- More family related ILP activities need to be available.

Addressing Challenges

- Established a state leader network to discuss career development implementation

- Policy brief is being used by states to organize state-wide implementation design
  - AZ – cross-sector team and work-teams
  - WI – PD development for whole school implementations
  - CO – Restart of program based on using professional learning community model

Recommendations for Future Collaborations

- Scale state leaders network to create a national coordinating council similar to NOICC
- Prescribe cross-sector collaborations within each state
- Support regional collaborations that connect LEAs, CBOs, and employment sector to leverage access to work-based learning opportunities

Thank You!

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