Transition Strategies: Adult Education & GED Completion to What?

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Objectives

- Transition Research
- Understand Needs from Perspective of Learners
- Examine Ways of Providing Meaningful Services
Exploring Transitions

• Respond to this scenario:
  • You are an adult education student about ready to take your final GED test
  • The next step is transition to postsecondary school or work
  • What transition services have you received during the time you have been enrolled in the adult basic education program?
  • What transition services do you wish you would have received as a part of your adult basics education program?
  • What transition services do you think you will need as you leave the adult basic education program?
Defining Transition

• What does the term transition mean?
• Is there a difference between Transition & Referral?
• Describe the difference...
Transition Definition

- Transform
- Evolve
- Progress
- Advance
- Grow
- Achieve
Transition is

- Setting Goals
- Solving Problems
  *AND*
- Knowing How to Adjust!
Some Facts of the Matter

• Approximately 1/3 of Special Education Learners who have Learning Disabilities Leave High School before Graduation

• Numerous Adults who have Learning Disabilities enroll in
  – Literacy Programs
  – Adult Secondary Education Programs
  – Adult Education & Basic Skills Programs
  – GED Completion Programs
More Facts

• Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2003) Mandates Transition Planning

• Transition Planning for Adult Learners
  – Not Required

• Adult Learners
  – Frequently unexposed to Services & Resources
Numerically Speaking

• US Department of Education
  – 1.5 Million Adult Learners in ABE/ASE Programs

• Research Finds
  – 25 – 80 Percent Incidence of Learning or Cognitive Disabilities

• Potential Adult Learners who have Learning or Cognitive Disabilities enrolled in ABE/ASE
  – 350,000 to 1,000,000
Secondary Transition Outcomes

• Completion of Specific Transitional Steps at Secondary Level Results in
  – Positive Post-high School Outcomes
    • Higher Self-Determination Skills
    • Advancement toward Independence
    • Longevity in Postsecondary Activities
  – Substantially Higher Demonstrated Outcomes in Postsecondary Activities than Those Who Do Not Receive Transition Services
Without Transition Plans

• Learners who have Learning & Cognitive Disabilities Experience *Less Positive* Outcomes than Their Peers who do not have Learning or Cognitive Disabilities

• Learners who have Learning Disabilities experience a 94% Dropout Rate in before the end of the first year of enrollment in
  – Vocational, Technical & Postsecondary Institutions

(RSA 1998)
What Gets in the Way

- Poor Self-advocacy Skills
- Low Self-esteem
- Poor Self-Determination Skills
- Negative Messages
- Lack of Self-knowledge
- Feelings of Hopelessness
- Avoidance of Success
- Lack of Understanding of Disability
- Inability to Seek Resources
- Underdeveloped Problem Solving Skills
Effects of Underlying Deficiencies of LD & ADHD in Postsecondary Learning Environments
• **Perceptual Impairments**
  – Auditory Attention
  – Visual Figure-Ground
  – Visual-Motor
• **Language Processing Disorders**
  – Receptive Language
  – Expressive Language
• **Skill Deficits**
  – Reading Disorders
  – Difficulties Writing
  – Math Problems
Effects

• **Time Management Troubles**
  – Temporal Problems – Spatial/Time
  – Inefficient Study Habits
  – Prioritization
  – Impractical Approaches

• **Disorganization**
  – Selecting classes/courses
  – Loose structure
  – Purchasing text, supplies, etc.
  – Whole to part

• **Distractibility**
  – Incomplete assignments
  – Concentration
  – Short-term v.s. long-term
• **Impulsivity**
  – Sacrificed quality
  – Reactions
• **Social Skills**
  – Deep Loneliness
  – Interpersonal Skills
• **Emotional Issues**
  – Shame
  – Low self-concept
• **Fear of Failure**
  – Risks
  – Measuring up
• **Fatigue**
  – Chronic Exhaustion

Transition – A Moment in Time
Make-up of a Transition Plan

- Activities & Services Directly Linked to
  - Learner Needs
  - Learner Goals
    - Education beyond secondary
    - Training
    - Working
  - Authentic Exploration
  - Resource Access
  - Daily Living Skills
  - Free Time
Seven Critical Beliefs

• Integration
• Independence
• Participation
• Productivity
• Dignity
• Variety
• Choice
Critical Skills

- Understand Disability or Learning Differences
- Self-awareness - be able to Describe
  - Strengths
  - Limitations
- Know when to Disclose or Self-advocate
- Have appropriate Documentation if needed
- Develop Self-worth & Self-acceptance
- Know the options & utilize choice making skills
Postsecondary Skills Needed

- Learning & Teaching Styles
- Planning & Anticipation of Needs
- Study Techniques
- Basic Life Skills
- In-class Time & Teacher Contact
- Class & Classroom Size
- Facilities
- Homework
- Feedback
- Grading
- Learning Environment
- Requirement of self-reliance
Transition to Work

- Temperament
- Learning & Training/Work Styles
- Work skills
- Academic skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Communication
- Executive functioning
- Basic Life Skills & Self-care
- Planning & Anticipation of Needs
- Work tolerance
- Job Interests & Passions
- Disclosure
- Accommodations
The Study

• 10 individuals
  – 3 men & 7 women
• All diagnosed with Learning Disabilities
  – Many with multiple disabilities
• All Achieved GED

• Outcomes & Activities Post-GED of Candidates with Learning Disabilities...
Preliminary Data

• Transition services, for the most part, were not available or provided formally; however in certain situations informal assistance was provided

• Participants strongly upheld the relativity & perceived value of transition planning & assistance during adult literacy, basic education skills or GED programs
Themes from Current Literature vs. Preliminary Data Collected

- Goal Oriented Behaviors ✓
- Self-directed & in Control
- Mentors ✓
- Self-determination Skills
- Obtains Accommodations
- Compensatory Strategies ✓
- Completed Responsibilities ✓
- Decision-making Abilities ✓
- Communication Skills ✓
- Career Exploration
- Knowledge, Skills, Abilities
  - Postsecondary Education
  - Career/Technical Education
  - Training & Work
- Involvement in Planning
- Authentic Exposure

- Independence – Self-sufficiency
- Confidence
- Tenacious
- Emotionally Adjusted
- Socially Adjusted ✓
- Resilience & Persistence ✓
- Referrals & Contacts
- Bridges & Navigational Supports
- Relationship Development ✓
- Financial
- Poverty Barriers
- American’s with Disabilities Act
- Disclosure

CASAS National Summer Institute 2009
Transition

- We must stop talking about Transition as a Separate Activity – a Bridge

- Multi-faceted
  - Multi-level
  - Requires Balance & Support

- It is a Continuing Supported Integration of Development
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