

HEATH Resource Center at the National Youth Transitions Center Newsletter

National Clearinghouse on Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Disabilities
Winter/Spring Edition 2011



HEATH Resource Center at the National Youth Transitions Center



Since 2000, the **HEATH Resource Center** has served as a national clearinghouse on postsecondary education for individuals with disabilities, managed by **The George Washington University Graduate School of Education and Human Resources**. Now, **The HSC Foundation** has partnered with the George Washington University to expand the content of this resource and to designate it as the official site of The HSC Foundation's **National Youth Transitions Center**.
<http://www.hscfoundation.org/aboutus/publications/NYTCbrochure.pdf>

New Announcements!!!

2011 Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students with Disabilities

The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Defense, made available the 2011 Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students with Disabilities database. This resource is intended to assist federal and private-sector employers in hiring workers with disabilities. The more than, 2,200 candidates in this year's database represent all academic backgrounds and are working toward, or recently earned, associate, bachelor's, master's, doctoral and law degrees. Federal officials can visit: <http://www.wrp.gov> to register and search independently for candidates who meet their hiring needs. Private-sector employers can search the program's database through ODEP's National Employer Assistance and Resource Network by making a toll-free telephone call to 866-327-6669 or filling out a request form at: <http://www.earnworks.com>

NCES Releases Data on Transition from High School to College and Work

This new set of Issue Tables describes the transition of high school career and technical education (CTE) participants into postsecondary education and the labor market during the first two years after high school graduation (from 2004 to 2006). For the transition to postsecondary education, the tables include information on postsecondary enrollment in general; enrollment in 4-year institutions; immediate, full-time enrollment; persistence; and the relationship between CTE coursetaking in high school and postsecondary field of study. For students who did not enroll in postsecondary education, the tables look at employment and unemployment rates, wages, full-time employment, and the relationship between CTE coursetaking in high school and occupation. These tables are a product of the National Center for Education Statistics at the Institute for Education Sciences, part of the U.S. Department of Education. To view the tables, please visit: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2011234>

New Youth-Created Videos on Transition

The project, Innovative Partnerships for Advancing Youth Employment, provided a paid internship opportunity for students with disabilities to make six short films that addressed transition issues for youth with disabilities. Throughout this process students were exposed to the technical skills needed for high growth industries such as digital media, communication and computer based careers. This innovative PACER project was funded by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, through its Vocational Rehabilitation Services branch, provided technical and financial support for this project, using federal economic stimulus funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. This was a creative collaboration of the postsecondary programs of Bemidji State University and South Central College, the Bemidji and Mankato Workforce Centers, and the Minnesota Valley Education District and Bemidji High School. to view the videos go to: <http://www.youtube.com/user/pacercenter>

Recent Legislative News!!!

Rosa's Law

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced that President Barack Obama has signed into law Rosa's Law, which will change references in federal law from "mental retardation" to "intellectual disability," and references to a "mentally retarded individual" to an "individual with an intellectual disability."

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/pcpid/>

Awards to Help Students Living with Intellectual Disabilities Transition to Post-Secondary Education

Education Secretary Duncan announced the award of \$10.9 million for 28 grants under two new federal programs that create opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities to attend college. The new federal programs include the Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) and a new coordinating center to support these TPSID grantees. Grantees will create or build on programs that focus on academics and instruction, employment and independent living, as well as provide individualized supports and opportunities for students to be involved in college experiences with their peers without disabilities.

<http://tinyurl.com/3adjdov>

Celebrating 35 Years of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

In 1975, the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142) guaranteed access to a free, appropriate, public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment to every child with a disability. This year, the [Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services](#) (OSERS) is celebrating the 35th anniversary of the [IDEA](#).

For more information about the IDEA and other laws visit [Disability.gov's](#) Education section and [Disability.Blog](#).

Twenty-First Century Communications & Video Accessibility Act

President Barack Obama signed into law S.3304, the [Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010](#). This new law will make it easier for people who are deaf or blind to access the Internet, smart phones, television programming and other communications and video technologies. The law will also make sure that emergency information is accessible to individuals who are blind or have low vision.

President Obama signed the law after his [remarks](#) on the impact of the Act on people with disabilities and the enactment of [Rosa's Law](#). Read Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman [Julius Genachowski's statement](#) about the new law. For more information read [What S.3304 Does For Us](#) from the Coalition of Organizations for Accessible Technology.

Learn more about other communications technologies and telecommunications subjects, including the [711 dialing code](#) for access to Telecommunications Relay Services, on the [FCC's website](#). Read and comment about the FCC's work in advancing accessible technologies on [Disability.Blog](#).

For more information visit [Disability.gov's Technology](#) section and the Accessibility and Innovation Initiative on [BROADBAND.gov](#).

Graduation Requirements and Diploma Options: What Families Need to Know

This article was published in the December 2010/January 2011 issue of *Our Children*, the National PTA Magazine. Reprinted with permission from the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth.

By: Mindy Larson, Curtis Richards, and Joan Wills

Every parent wants to see his or her child successfully complete high school. Therefore, caring adults in students' lives need to understand the changing landscape of graduation requirements and diploma options to ensure students graduate prepared for college and careers.

States have been making widespread revisions to graduation requirements and curricula since the 2005 National Education Summit on High Schools, when governors, business leaders, and educators came to a consensus that schools must do a better job of preparing students for success in both college and careers. The impetus for change stemmed from concerns about high dropout rates, low achievement scores, and reports from postsecondary institutions and employers that too many high school graduates lacked college- or career-readiness. To ensure all students complete high school ready to enter postsecondary education and the world of work, states are implementing various high school reforms including:

- Increasing academic standards for all students;
- Conducting statewide and local district reading and math proficiency testing;
- Requiring students to identify career and postsecondary goals in their first year of high school, or earlier, and develop individual learning plans aligned with those goals; and

- Developing exit exams linked to a student's eligibility to receive a high school diploma.

Parents and families have a key role to play in helping students understand the new graduation requirements, define college and career goals, and choose a pathway to earning a diploma that is relevant to students' goals and meaningful to employers and postsecondary institutions. For parents of students with disabilities, it is especially critical to understand the differences between the standard diploma and any alternatives offered by the school and to make informed decisions about the student's program of study.

Reforms focused on college readiness

To ensure the standard high school diploma has meaning for postsecondary institutions and employers, most states have been adopting higher academic standards to prepare students for college-level work without needing to take remedial courses. As a result, the number of credits and type of courses students must take to obtain a standard high school diploma has changed in most states. According to a survey of state education policies, 28 states currently require high school students to earn between 21 and 24 credits to obtain a standard diploma. The required courses in these states typically include four credits in English/language arts, three to four credits in mathematics, three to four credits in social studies, and two to four credits in science. States also are requiring students to take and pass specific courses in a given discipline—for example, passing Algebra II is increasingly required to graduate. The rigor of courses is also increasing.

Currently, 25 states require students to pass exit exams to receive a standard diploma. Almost all exit exams test student proficiency in both math and English; some also test social studies and science knowledge. While each state currently has its own academic standards and exams, efforts are underway to develop and adopt common standards and assessment tools across states. Supported by the National Governors Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the National PTA, the Common Core State Standards Initiative (www.corestandards.org) is led by 48 states, two territories and the District of Columbia, which have joined together to develop standards for English/language arts and mathematics for

kindergarten through grade 12. Each is determining individually how to implement and assess student knowledge based on the standards, but, most are collaborating on the development of improved common assessments. For the first time, those using the common assessment tools will use 12th-grade tests, a practice that could become a graduation requirement.

Understanding diploma options

Recognizing that some students may exceed minimum graduation standards while others may fall short, states are experimenting with an array of diploma options (see Table 1, "Description of Diploma Options"). Some states offer special diplomas, often called honors diplomas, to students who take the most rigorous course work, achieve a high grade-point average, or post high scores on state exams. Other diploma options, sometimes called alternative diplomas, are designed for students with disabilities who receive special education services, students who fail exit exams, and students who do not take the required core courses. Included among these alternative diploma options are certificates of completion, IEP/special education diplomas, and occupational/ vocational diplomas.

States vary in the allowances they make for students with disabilities to receive a standard diploma. Some make no allowances at all, while others reduce the number of credits a student needs, offer alternate courses that can be used to earn required course credits, lower performance criteria, or permit the IEP team to make allowances and grant extensions, and other adjustments.

Parents and students need to look at what alternative diploma options mean in the eyes of future employers and postsecondary institutions. Alternative diplomas typically are viewed as being based on less rigorous academic standards than, and therefore not equal to, a standard high school diploma (See Table 2, "Advantages and Disadvantages of an Alternative Diploma"). This could make it more difficult for a student to obtain a job or be admitted to his or her postsecondary school of choice.

Table 1. Description of Diploma Options

Diploma Option	Description
Honors diploma/diploma of high distinction	Students must achieve at a high academic level. Often this diploma requires a certain grade-point average (GPA).
Standard diploma	A student must complete a certain number of credits and obtain a minimum GPA to receive a diploma.
Certificate of completion/attendance	This option, for students who have not received the grades necessary to obtain a standard or honors diploma, demonstrates that a student completed a set number of classes or that a student qualifies for a diploma because of sufficient attendance in a set period of time.
Certificate of achievement	This option demonstrates that the student has achieved a certain level of performance. This type of diploma certifies that the student was present and performed to the best of his or her ability but did not attain the necessary grades and/or credits to obtain a standard or honors diploma.
IEP/special education diploma	This is an option for students receiving special education services and those who have an IEP. Requirements are usually set by the student's IEP team and are therefore unique to each student.
Occupational diploma	For students who are enrolled in vocational programs, this type of diploma certifies that a student has demonstrated a specific level of competence in an occupational area.

Reforms focused on career-readiness

The adoption of career-readiness as a goal alongside college readiness during the aforementioned 2005 education summit was a momentous and unprecedented act. Since the summit, states and territories have implemented new policies and promoted school practices that ensure all students are career-ready upon graduation.

To help students make informed career decisions, schools are recognizing the need to provide comprehensive career navigation services starting no later than middle school by which students:

- Complete career assessments to clarify their interests, values, and skills;
- Learn about a wide range of career options and pathways;
- Develop the soft skills, such as dependability, integrity, and other work-related personal attributes, employers expect all new employees to have;
- Gain workplace skills through internships, summer jobs, volunteer work, and job shadowing; and
- Set personal career goals and develop a plan to accomplish them.

While schools typically have some guidance services, some states are requiring schools to be more intentional in educating students about career choices and pathways. One strategy adopted by about half of all states is the individual learning plan, also called a graduation plan, student success plan, or curriculum plan. An individual learning plan typically documents a student's:

- Career interests;
- Goals for postsecondary education, training and employment;
- Courses he/she will take to meet graduation requirements and achieve personal goals; and
- Other activities and services planned to help the student succeed.

Some states require that students create an individual learning plan in order to graduate from high school while other merely encourage it. The plan usually is developed during middle school or at the beginning of high school. Parents are key partners in developing these plan; some states require parents to approve the plan before it becomes official. The plans are intended to be revisited and revised throughout the student's high school years to track progress and address changes in interests and goals.

Another strategy states are using to promote career-readiness is requiring a certain number of career course credits to be completed before a student can graduate. For example, Delaware requires students to earn three credits through preplanned, sequential courses associated with their chosen career path.

Many schools are restructuring courses to add information about career pathways to curricula. Schools are also incorporating more work-based learning activities into classes that teach students academic and career-readiness skills. Work-based learning strategies are especially common in school districts struggling with high dropout rates and significant numbers of students who are behind in the credits. Recognizing the need for multiple pathways to graduation, these districts are using work-based learning strategies, such as career academies and career-themed or technical schools to teach core academic course content in a more engaging way. Multiple pathways strategies also include providing smaller and more personalized learning environments and flexibility in the structure of the school calendar such as nontraditional school hours, extended class periods, and longer school years. Parents of students who are significantly behind in credits or at risk of dropping out should inquire with their school district to find out if similar school models are available.

Table 2. Advantages and Disadvantages of an Alternative Diploma

Diploma Option/Policy	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Certificate Options.</p> <p>Certificates for attendance, completion, achievement, etc. are available to all students.</p> <p>Requirements can vary considerably, and may or may not</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains the integrity of the requirements for earning a standard diploma. • Provides other exit options for students not meeting the requirements for a standard diploma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides exit document that may or may not be useful for entering postsecondary schooling or gaining employment. Little is known about the value of these options. • Flags those students receiving

allow students with IEPs to meet them in different ways.		special education services.
Special Education Diploma. Diploma or certificate available only to students with IEPs. This type of diploma typically is added to other options for non-IEP students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes that students with disabilities may be working on different standards from other students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not promote access to the general education curriculum.

What families can do

In light of the changing requirements for high school graduation, PTAs need to help families become proactive and informed to ensure students will graduate both college- and career-ready. Following are some practical suggestions to make to your school's families:

Become fully informed

- Seek clear information about high school program options and graduation requirements no later than middle school.
- Request regular updates on your child's progress towards a standard high school diploma or alternate exit credential.
- Inquire whether an individual learning plan (ILP) is required in your state.
- Inquire about career and technical program options and their alignment with professional and industry standards.
- Communicate with teachers about course expectations and how they relate to rigorous academic standards.
- Learn how to interpret the school's online report card on their Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), the number of teachers who are "highly qualified," and data about school attendance, dropouts, and graduation rate.

Provide ongoing support to your child

- Support your child by making sure he or she attends school every day and completes all assigned homework.
- If individualized learning support is needed, help your child access services provided by the school or community organizations.
- Discuss your child's strengths and interests with him or her, and explore together possible career and education goals for after high school.
- Ensure your child is taking the courses needed for entry into the postsecondary education program or career path of his or her choice.
- Accompany your child on postsecondary campus and program visits.
- Emphasize that education is key to achieving dreams and future economic security.
- Discuss the consequences of important educational decisions, such as graduation and diploma options.
- Partner with the school to develop an individual learning plan, if required.
- Reinforce development of a positive work ethic by helping your child set goals, complete assignments, manage time, meet high expectations, and persist through challenges.

Get involved in education advocacy

- Speak up for what your child needs to succeed by insisting that teachers hold your child to high expectations in rigorous content at every opportunity.
- Request flexibility to address individual student concerns. Communicate with teachers and other school staff about your child's individual interests, dreams, and concerns.
- Request that teachers inform you of any concerns about behavior or academic progress.
- Demand that schools provide curriculum and program options based on a universal design of learning experiences, including differentiated instruction to teach in different ways to suit students' learning styles, and targeted interventions, if needed. Seek help, if needed, through school and community organizations, including the state and local PTA, parent information and resource centers (PIRCs), and family engagement specialists.
- Encourage schools and community organizations to sponsor afterschool and summer programs that will provide opportunities for hands-on and work-

based learning outside the classroom and exposure to mentors and role models.

- Advocate for improving inadequate programs and adding missing services at school board meetings, and legislative budget hearings.
- Volunteer to serve on school improvement teams or advisory boards, perhaps through your PTA, to contribute family perspectives.

Finally, to stay informed on the latest happenings on Capitol Hill and to learn more about important legislative issues affecting families, schools, and communities, join the PTA Takes Action Network at PTA.org/takesaction.

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IEL houses the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth), a youth technical assistance center funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy. Parts of this article were adapted from resources published by the NCWD/Youth through a grant/contract/cooperative agreement from the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (Number #OD-16519-07-75-4-11). For more information and other resources, contact the Collaborative at (877) 871-0744, contact@ncwd-youth.info, or www.ncwd-youth.info.

New Transition Resources

Guide for High Schools on Creating Job Shadowing Opportunities for Youth with Disabilities

"How to Build Partnerships for Career Exploration: Using Job Shadowing to Explore the World of Work" is a guide for high schools on how to collaborate with a postsecondary institution or other organization to plan and carry out a job shadow day. The guide describes the preparation tasks needed at the high school and at partner sites, provides details for the job shadow day and for follow-up activities, and includes a task timeline helpful as a planning tool. It is part of a series of resource guides from the Monadnock Center for Successful Transitions (MCST). Available in pdf (617 KB, 130 pp).

<http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/Transition/BUILDPartnershipsforCareerExploration.pdf>

Helping Families Prepare for the Future: 2008-2009 Outcome Data from Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Parent Information and Training Programs

This publication summarizes the work of parent information and training programs funded by the U.S. Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to "provide training and information to enable individuals with disabilities, and the parents, family members, guardians, advocates, or other authorized representatives of the individuals to participate more

effectively with professionals in meeting the vocational, independent living, and rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities." The data in this report were collected by parent centers conducting RSA-funded parent training and compiled by the Technical Assistance on Transition and the Rehabilitation Act (TATRA) Project. Available in pdf (901 KB, 26 pp).

<http://www.pacer.org/tatra/pdf/RSA%20Book%202010lowres.pdf>

Insulating the Education Pipeline to Increase Postsecondary Success

The first in the Forum for Youth Investment's new "Ready by 21, Credentialed by 26" series, this issue brief explores why postsecondary completion is an important goal and how the United States is faring. It identifies partners that need to be mobilized and policy approaches that need to be enacted to increase completion rates and help more young people successfully transition to adulthood. Available in pdf (342 KB, 7 pp).

[http://forumfyi.org/files/RB21_Credentialed-by-26_Brief-1\[1\].pdf](http://forumfyi.org/files/RB21_Credentialed-by-26_Brief-1[1].pdf)

Tools and Training for Volunteer and Service Programs Involving Students with Disabilities

The Corporation for National and Community Service's Resource Center offers this list of resources and links to methods for including people with disabilities in national service programs, including accessibility

assessments, mentoring, special education students as camp counselors and many other ideas.
<http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/practices/topic/152>

Transition Trek Game Updated

The updated Transition Trek Game, from the Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights (PACER) is an educational board game that helps youth and young adults plan for life after high school by drawing cards with questions related to careers, independent living, and self determination and seeing how their answers make progress on the board. PACER's order form is available in pdf (100 KB, 1 p).
<http://www.pacer.org/publications/OrderForm.pdf>

Postsecondary Education and Students with Intellectual, Developmental, and Other Disabilities (Autumn 2010/Winter 2011)

Even though the majority of high school students with disabilities identify participation in postsecondary education as a goal for their adult lives, only about 3 in 10 have taken classes since completing high school (National Longitudinal Transition Study-2). And among those with the lowest rates of participation are students with intellectual disabilities. The Institute on Community Integration's "Impact: Feature Issue on Postsecondary Education and Students with Intellectual, Developmental and Other Disabilities," explores what we know, and what we still need to know, about supporting increased participation of students

with disabilities - especially those with intellectual disabilities - in postsecondary education, and why that participation is important.
<http://ici.umn.edu/products/impact/233>

Achieve's Closing the Expectations Gap 2011

In February 2005, the National Governors Association and Achieve co-sponsored the National Education Summit on High Schools, and Achieve and 13 states launched the American Diploma Project (ADP) Network to challenge states to work together to align high school expectations with the expectations of postsecondary institutions and employers. Each year, Achieve conducts a survey of all 50 states and the District of Columbia on key college- and career-ready policies, including aligning standards, graduation requirements, assessments, and data and accountability systems with the expectations of postsecondary institutions and employers. In 2011, Achieve reports increasing use of Common Core Standards, more requirement of college- and career-ready curricula for graduation, and more use of assessment of such curricula.

<http://www.achieve.org/ClosingtheExpectationsGap2011>

Alliance for Excellent Education's Meeting the Challenge: The Role of School Leaders in Turning Around the Lowest-Performing High Schools

The Alliance for Excellent Education's policy brief, "Meeting the Challenge: The Role of School Leaders in Turning Around the Lowest-

Performing High Schools," examines lessons from New York City's decade-long work to improve secondary level teaching and learning. It highlights the central role of school leaders and districts in creating high school learning environments that can engage and support students with widely divergent learning needs, and gives policy recommendations for the design of coherent systems to build human capital and foster the conditions for high school transformation. Available in pdf (417 KB, 19 pp).

<http://www.all4ed.org/files/MeetingTheChallenge.pdf>

Facts from NLT2: The Secondary School Experiences and Academic Performance of Students with Hearing Impairments

The U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES) has released "Facts from NLT2: The Secondary School Experiences and Academic Performance of Students with Hearing Impairments," using data from the National Longitudinal Transition Study 2 to examine the secondary school experiences and academic achievement of students with hearing impairments who received special education services. A gap exists between the academic achievement of youth with hearing impairments and their peers in the general population. The report examines outcomes from key areas, including students' experiences in general education academic courses and non-vocational special education courses, accommodations, supports, services provided to students, and academic achievement.

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncser/pubs/20113003/>

Youth with Autism and Vocational Rehabilitation

As increasing numbers of youth with autism are accessing Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services, it is important to understand how they are using these services and the relationship of these services to outcomes and costs. This Research to Practice Brief from the Institute on Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts explores the differences in VR services received by youth with autism compared to youth with other disabilities. Researchers identify services that are most closely associated with an employment outcome for youth with autism, and determine what percentage of people from this group are receiving these successful services. Major findings show that youth with autism are more likely than youth from other disability groups to receive assessment, job-placement, and on-the-job support services, and that receipt of services such as these are associated with an employment outcome.

http://www.communityinclusion.org/article.php?article_id=309

KASA Fact Sheets for Youth with Disabilities, Written by Youth with Disabilities

Kids as Self-Advocates (KASA) offers over 60 fact sheets written by youth with disabilities on its Advisory Board and by youth writers from its network.

<http://www.fvkasa.org/resources/index.php>

NIH Research Results for the Public

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) medical research results are described in fact sheets written for the public and available on the NIH Web site. Individuals can also sign up to receive regular e-mail updates on NIH research results.

<http://www.nih.gov/about/researchresultsforthepublic/index.htm>

SSA "What's New in 2011?" for Work Incentives Provisions

The Social Security Administration has released guidance for 2011 regarding changes to the benefits rates and maximum earnings that apply to Work Incentives provisions. Each year, the SSA provides its Red Book reference guide, to assist professionals and programs in understanding work incentives for persons with disabilities and how to implement them. While the 2011 Red Book is not yet available in Spanish, the English "What's New in 2011?" is available in pdf (621 KB, 64 pp).

<http://www.ssa.gov/redbook/index.htm>
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Adult Autism and Employment

This guide produced by the University of Missouri for vocational rehabilitation professionals, includes a synthesis of existing literature, promising practices, and previously unpublished insights and suggestions from a national expert on autism & employment. To access the guide go to <http://www.dps.missouri.edu/Autism/Adult%20Autism%20&%20Employment.pdf>

Measuring the Outcomes of Job Seekers Living with I/DD in the Vocational Rehab Program

Most people living with intellectual or developmental disabilities aspire to gainful employment. To assist them with this goal, state Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies offer employment-development services that are based upon Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs). This Data Note explores how many individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities progressed from application to eligibility to IPE development and services, and how this figure varied across states.

http://statedata.info/datanotes/datanote.php?article_id=306

Supporting Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders: Quality Employment Practices

This issue brief from ICI explores employment issues for persons living with autism spectrum disorders and provides helpful strategies for supporting professionals. For more information go to

http://www.communityinclusion.org/article.php?article_id=266

Future Conferences and Webinars

March 1, 2011

Using Data to Align Resources to Create a Comprehensive Learning System 1:00-2:00 pm Eastern (Webinar)

American Youth Policy Forum will present a webinar on how outcome management systems support city and district efforts to build a system of comprehensive services to ensure all students are on track to graduate. Presentations will include findings from research and descriptions from two communities that have built an information management system to support the development and sustainability of a comprehensive learning system for all students. These systems align the resources of both the school district and community providers to support educational opportunities both during school hours and beyond.

<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/933051152>

March 14-15, 2011
Ready by 21 Institute
Washington DC

The Forum for Youth Investment will offer a Ready by 21 Institute in Washington DC, March 14-15, 2011. The Institute will explain the research behind Ready by 21, and the tools and resources for stakeholders to put its concepts for broad partnerships, ambitious goals, data collection, and bold strategies into action to improve children and youth's readiness to succeed as adults. For more information and to learn how to apply to attend, contact Kiley Bednar, Program Manager with the Forum at Kiley@forumfyi.org or 202-207-3722.

March 18, 2011
School Response Conference
Orlando Florida

Members of the school safety threat prevention and preparedness community are invited to attend the School Response Conference (SRC). SRC 2011 is a sub-conference of the World Response Conference on Global Outbreak 2009 which was telecast live by Homeland Security Channel and featured on ABC 13. The one-day conference will run from 7:00 AM-5:00 PM. Topics covered will include school violence, school shootings, bullying, dating violence, vandalism, gang activity, alcohol and drugs, bomb threats, child abuse, catastrophic events such as terrorist attacks, and technological intrusions. The conference brochure is available in pdf (2.63 MB, 6 pp).

<http://events-exhibitions.info/BrochureDelegatesSR C-SB.pdf>

May 5-6, 2011
Breakthrough Strategies to Teach and Counsel Troubled Youth Seattle, Washington
(Workshop)

Youth Change Workshops will sponsor "Breakthrough Strategies to Teach and Counsel Troubled Youth," in Seattle, WA, May 5-6, 2011, a workshop on solutions to turnaround problems like violence, apathy, truancy, defiance, ADD, school failure, bad attitudes, and poor motivation. A special focus will be on children with challenges and disabilities. The workshop is for teachers, youth workers, counselors, psychologists, court workers, social workers, justice workers, foster parents, and school administrators. There is no registration deadline but early registration is encouraged. Financial Aid is offered, plus \$50

college credit and free CEUs are available. The workshop will be repeated in Portland, OR, October 13-14, and is also available on DVD. <http://www.youthchg.com/>

Southwest Conference on Disability Seeks Proposals for 2011 on Inclusion

The 2011 Southwest Conference on Disability (October 5-7), on "Inclusion: How We All Fit Together," is seeking proposals which explore topics related to advancing inclusion for people with all types of disabilities. Sessions may focus on such topics as innovative policies at any level of government that promote inclusion; programs and services that increase inclusion or technology as a tool to increase inclusion. Sessions may address these or similar issues in one or more topical areas, such as independent living; behavioral health; housing; health, physical activity and nutrition; the built environment and universal design; employment; and others. Deadline for proposals: May 20, 2011. <http://cdd.unm.edu/swconf/>

New Financial Aid & Scholarship

HEATH Resource Center Financial Aid Information 2009-2010

While education beyond high school in the United States is optional, it has become a necessary investment in future

employment and life satisfaction for many people. Most, however, cannot afford to make this investment without some outside monetary assistance. Over the years, public and private sources of money have been developed specifically to meet this need. As increasing, but limited, amounts of money have become available, a standardized method of determining eligibility has evolved to promote equitable distribution of student financial aid. www.heath.gwu.edu

2011-2012 Counselors & Mentors Handbook on Federal Student Aid

This [guide](#) has information on federal and non-federal student aid programs, how financial need is determined for students who may have expenses related to their disability, information for students with intellectual disabilities (page 9), the application process and tips for completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. For more information visit this link: http://www.disability.gov/education/financial_aid/loans

The Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation: Public Policy Fellowship Program 2010-2011

The Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation seeks exemplary professionals and/or family members of persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities who are currently working or volunteering in the field of inclusive services and supports for people with intellectual and developmental

disabilities for an intensive one-year Public Policy Fellowship in Washington, DC. The purpose of the Fellowship is to prepare both early career and veteran leaders be leaders in public policy in their home state and/or nationally. The program provides a one-year full-time exposure to the federal public policy making process, and includes a stipend and modest relocation expenses.

Deadline: March 15, 2011

<http://www.jpkf.org/>

Disaboom Scholarship Directory

Disaboom recently launched a scholarship directory for students with disabilities, listing over 125 scholarships.

<http://www.disaboom.com/scholarships>

Federal Student Aid Grant Program Fact Sheet

Disability.Gov has created a fact sheet that provides an overview of the major federal student aid grant programs. The federal government provides grant funds for students attending colleges, including career colleges and universities. Grants, unlike loans, do not have to be repaid. (A Spanish version is

at: <http://tinyurl.com/yz2zheg>.)

Available in pdf (1 page, 164 KB).

<http://tinyurl.com/yfbe5tb>

Funding Education Beyond High School

The US Department of Education's *Guide to Federal Student Aid (2009-2010)* provides information for students and families on applying for federal student aid to pay for post-secondary education. This guide explains the application

Portions of this newsletter were excerpted from the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition E-News, which can be found at <http://www.ncset.org/enews/> and from the Division of Career Development and Transition Email Blast, which can be found at <http://www.dcdt.org/>.

process, the various federal loans, grants, and work-study programs available, and how to apply for them. Education creates opportunities and is an important step toward success. Available in pdf (64 pages, 2.95 MB).

<http://tinyurl.com/yk7uot7>

NASFAA and Casey Family programs: Guide to Financial Aid Assistance to Students from Foster Care and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

This guide provides information for those who help youth from foster care and unaccompanied homeless youth to secure financial aid for postsecondary education or training programs. It describes how to respond to new FAFSA questions 55-60 that will determine federal financial aid status for these students. A section on sensitive communications is also included. This guide will be useful for financial aid professionals, independent living coordinators, guidance counselors, financial aid counselors, social workers and advocates who are helping youth to secure the maximum allowable financial aid.

www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/ProvidingEffectiveFinancialAid.htm

School Grants, College Scholarships, Financial Aid and More

This website provides essential information to obtain school grants to make education affordable. It highlights different types of grants, their sources

and how to apply for them. It is designed to be user friendly for everyone.
<http://www.schoolgrantsblog.com/>

Do Something: Seed Grants

Do Something Seed Grants can aid project ideas and programs that are just getting started, to jump-start programs and realize ideas for the first time; or projects that are already developed and sustainable and moving toward the next steps of the project and organization as the project expands. Maximum award: \$500. Eligibility: U.S. or Canadian citizens aged 25 or under. Deadline: ongoing.
<http://www.dosomething.org/grants/faq>

Disney Friends for Change Grants

The Disney Friends for Change program will award fifty \$500 grants for youth-led projects around the world to help the environment on Global Youth Service Day (April 15 - 17, 2011). Deadline for applications: March 10, 2011.
<http://sparkaction.org/resources/50646>

Scholarships and Internships for Latino Students with Disabilities

The World Institute on Disability (WID) has a five-year grant to establish the National Technical Assistance Center for Latinos with Disabilities living in the United States, through Proyecto Vision. Proyecto Vision's website has a list of scholarship opportunities for college students who are Latino and who are living with disability.

<http://www.proyectovision.net/english/opportunities/scholarships.html>

The Washington Center Scholarship

The Washington Center Scholarship for Students with Disabilities funded by the AT&T Foundation and HSC Foundation, these awards provide housing assistance in varying amounts (up to a full housing scholarship) to competitively selected students who self-identify as having a disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Priority consideration is given to undergraduate students; however, Postgraduate Program applicants may be considered.

<http://www.twc.edu/node/8142#disabilities-scholarships>

Yamaha: Young Performing Artists Program

The Yamaha Young Performing Artists Program (YYPA) recognizes outstanding young musicians from the world of classical, jazz, and contemporary music. Each year, the YYPA Finalists are invited to perform at the Music for All Summer Symposium held in late June. Maximum award: \$5,000 in retail credit towards a professional model Yamaha instrument, as well as a series of clinics and master classes with renowned artists to help winners launch their music career. Finalists also receive a professional recording of their performances and national press coverage. Eligibility: musicians ages 16-21. Deadline: March 15, 2011.

<http://tinyurl.com/4ca3h55>

Featured Websites!

Vocational Rehabilitation Service Models for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders

A new web site focuses on issues and strategies for improving employment outcomes for individuals with autism spectrum disorders. It features resources developed by the Vocational Rehabilitation Service Models for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders project that began in October 2008. This project has also developed a service provider directory intended to help consumers and families initiate contacts with the vocational rehabilitation system by providing contact information for state agency lead counselors for individuals with ASD. For more information go to <http://autism.sedl.org/>

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<http://www.schoolgrantsblog.com/>

SmartBrief on EdTech

"SmartBrief on EdTech" is a daily e-newsletter for education stakeholders with an interest in education-technology and using it in local schools and school districts.

Portions of this newsletter were excerpted from the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition E-News, which can be found at <http://www.ncset.org/enews/> and from the Division of Career Development and Transition Email Blast, which can be found at <http://www.dcdt.org/>.

<http://www.smartbrief.com/edtech/index.jsp?campaign=2010trialday1>

Youth-Led, Youth-Focused Website Launches to Support Teens and Young Adult with Mental Health Challenges

Voices4Hope is a website created by a group of young adults with mental health challenges that work in the Transitions Research & Training Center (RTC). The goal of this site is to connect young adults with mental health challenges across the country so they can talk to each other about things that are important to living happy and independent lives.

Visit the Voices4Hope website at <http://voices4hope.wikispaces.com>.

Learn more about Transitions RTC at <http://www.umassmed.edu/cmhsr/TransitionsRTC.aspx>.

Real People Real Jobs: Stories from the Front Line

The Institute for Community Inclusion's Real People, Real Jobs website is a growing catalogue of employment success stories. The site features a wide range of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities working in paid jobs in their communities. Through their stories, these individuals are spreading the word about the full range of employment opportunities and support options available. The website is designed to broaden perceptions about what is possible for people with disabilities, their families, and front-line employment support professionals. To read their stories go to <http://www.realworkstories.org/>