Best Practices in Training Service Providers in Transition Competencies

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Agenda

- Overview of *Promoting Positive Pathways to Adulthood* online training modules and training toolkit and evaluation.
- Sharing of experiences and perspectives of team leader participants.
- Overview of findings of *Supporting You in Supporting Youth* national study of training needs.
- Review of studies of effective training strategies.
- Discussion of implications for future training.
- Q & A
Pathways Transition Training Partnership

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**PPPA** is a research-tested program offering ten one-hour online modules and a toolkit of practice exercises that:

- strengthen staff’s skills in identifying youth, young adult, and family strengths,
- result in service providers working with young people in culturally responsive ways that:
  - strengthen their sense of empowerment and competence,
  - build or strengthen relationships with allies and supporters, and
  - ultimately work toward wellness and self-determination.
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The Pathways Transition Training Toolkit

• The Toolkit offers:
  – Scenarios,
  – Video segments,
  – Role plays,
  – Discussion questions, and
  – Debriefing guides to apply new learning to real-life situations.

• Presents team-based practice exercises.

• Teams select exercises that represent similar situations to those experienced in their program.
• Recruited 19 organizations with teams of at least 4 service providers willing to participate in PPPA.

• Teams randomly assigned to Group 1 (10 teams—online only) or Group 2 (9 teams—online + toolkit practice activities)

• Measured outcomes using the Transition Service Provider Competency Scale, and scores of the Knowledge Test at end of each module. Group 2 completed brief survey on practice activities after Module 5 & 10.

• Our analysis compared outcomes for participants who completed Modules 1 through 10 and the study surveys at Baseline and after the completion of Modules 5 and 10.
PPPA Study Results

• Both groups improved significantly in their assessment of their own self-efficacy in delivering transition services from baseline to Module 10. Group membership did not have an effect on their self-efficacy.

• Both groups increased their knowledge of transition services, with Group 2, (online + team-based activities) showing significantly greater increases of knowledge than Group 1 (online only).

• For Group 2, participants had higher knowledge scores related to more completed activities.

• Activities considered to be more interesting, engaging and culturally relevant were rated more highly for practicing needed skills and for their application to transition work.
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Past Chair of North Carolina Community of Practice for Youth and Young Adults in Transition
Supporting You in Supporting Youth -- Goals

- To discover: "What are the training needs and preferences of transition service providers who serve young people with mental health difficulties?"
- To explore preferred training modalities.
- To understand their major barriers to participating in training.

- To guide development of training resources to improve transition supports to young adults with mental health needs in the transition years.
Participants in SYSY National Survey

- 254 service providers from 39 states and the District of Columbia completed the survey.
- Most participants provided mental health, family support, transition planning, and/or youth advocacy services.
- Participants worked with transition aged young people an average of 12.7 years, and in their current position for 4.7 years.
- The majority were female, college graduates; the median age was 40-49 years.
- Most indicated they were non-Hispanic White (69.8%), with 8.7% identifying as Black or African American, 7.9% as Hispanic/Latino, 5.9% as mixed race, 3.7% Native American, and 3.7% Asian/Pacific Islander.
Competency Training Needs

• About half of the service providers indicated that training was “needed” or “very much needed” in:
  – employing trauma informed principles to guide work,
  – engaging youth by understanding youth culture,
  – promoting natural supports, and
  – using culturally responsive practices.

• More than 2/3rds reported at least a “moderate” level of training need for:
  – applying positive youth development principles,
  – helping young people navigate transitions,
  – supporting youth empowerment,
  – collaborating with peer support providers, and
  – using technology to communicate with youth.
Skills Training Needs

• Over 40% reported that they “needed” or “very much needed” skills training in:
  – collaborating with providers to access resources for youth,
  – advocating for program improvements,
  – increasing youth-driven practice in their organizations,
  – supporting young adult peer support providers, and
  – employing ethical principles to guide the use of technology for communication.

• Nearly 60% indicated a “moderate” or greater level of need for training in:
  – responding to workplace stress by applying self-care principles,
  – clarifying their role in interdisciplinary teams, and
  – using supervision to support their work.
Participants’ Training Modality Preferences

• Most preferred:
  – *face to face workshops* (64.5%),
  – *training led by young adults* (54.8%),
  – *conferences* (45.6%),
  – *guidance from a specific cultural group* (43.5%), and
  – *on the job coaching* (38.5%).

• Somewhat preferred:
  – *videos* (53.6%),
  – *learning communities* (51.4%),
  – *webinars* (44.4%), and
  – *self-paced online training* (39.1%).

• Least preferred:
  – *podcasts* (48.6%).
Training Barriers Mean Scores

Note. Scale ranges from 1 = “none at all” to 5 = “a great deal.”
What is known about effective training strategies?

Principles of adult learning suggest that learning occurs when participants...

• are highly motivated to learn,
• can devote time and energy to learning, and
• are actively engaged in the learning process.

And:

• when learning builds on what is already known,
• if the content is presented in meaningful ways,
• if the person’s stage of professional development, learning style, and preferred learning modality are taken into account (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; Trotter, 2006).
Effective training promotes understanding of the community context and users by:

• Preparing service providers to apply their knowledge and skills with the types of young people and in the situations they will encounter in practice (Hoge, Huey, & O’Connell, 2004).

• Including service users’ voices to increase understanding of young people’s needs, goals, and preferences (Brennan, Jivanjee, Grover, & Youth MOVE Best Practices Committee, 2017).
Training Modalities

• While face-to-face workshops and conferences are popular, they is little evidence that they lead to knowledge transfer (Burke & Hutchins, 2008).

• Online training is growing in popularity as a cost-effective, accessible, self-paced, and convenient approach and there is some evidence of positive outcomes but concerns about accountability (Harned et al., 2014; McMillen et al., 2016).

• There are added benefits from multi-component training programs, especially if they include coaching (McCay et al., 2017).
Knowledge Transfer

• Incorporates high-quality coaching to provide opportunities to observe and practice new skills, and receive detailed feedback (Beidas & Kendall, 2010; Lyon et al., 2011).

• Occurs in a supportive context, where:
  – training goals and content are consistent with organizational goals; with
  – supervisory support and reinforcement of new skill; and
  – appropriate changes in accountability structures (van Zyl, Antle, & Barbee, 2011).
Supporting Learning on the Job

• Promote acceptance, respect, and trust.
• Create opportunities for coaching and learning.
• Identify participants’ learning goals.
• Facilitate constructive feedback.
• Promote reflection and group interactions so that participants:
  – Learn from each other,
  – Are able to integrate their new learning with prior experiences, and
  – Increase their effectiveness in working with youth and families (Gururaja, et al., 2008).
Wrapping up

Q & A

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References


References


References


To learn more

• To access the Promoting Positive Pathways to Adulthood (PPPA) online training modules for service providers:
  • [https://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pathways-transition-training-partnership#](https://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pathways-transition-training-partnership#)

• The Pathways Transition Training Toolkit is available for free download:
  • [https://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pathways-transition-training-toolkit](https://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pathways-transition-training-toolkit)
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