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RESEARCH & TRAINING CENTER FOR PATHWAYS TO POSITIVE FUTURES

Innovative Approaches to Supporting Young Adults to Take Charge of Their CAREER VISIONS



Welcome!

Your presenters are:

Adrienne Scavera: graduate student, research assistant/participant, mental health consumer for over a decade, and otherwise employed person.

Jo-Ann Sowers: Principal Investigator of Career Visions, and long-term commitment to helping people with disabilities to have the same career opportunities as other people in their communities.



Outline of Presentation

- Introductions
- Career Exploration Activity
- Personal Experience in Career Visions
- Career Visions Process
- Results and Discoveries
- Debrief and Discussion





Why Are You Here?

Interested in finding or maintaining employment?

Interested in helping others find or maintain employment?

Interested in career development?

Miscellaneous or not really sure?





Rationale

- Estimate: between 70% and 80% of adults with mental health diagnoses are unemployed.
 - largest and most rapidly growing subgroup of Social Security recipients.
- The National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS) found that only about 63% of students who received special education services for an “emotional” disability had held a job in the four years after leaving high school.



Career Visions

- The Career Visions Project intervention is an adaptation of a model and guide developed by Dr. Michael Wehmeyer called the Self-Determination Career Development Model (SDCDM).
- We have adapted the SDCDM to focus on the unique issues experienced by young adults, between the ages of 20 and 30 years and who have mental health diagnoses.



The Career Visions Purpose

Purpose: To help young adults with significant mental health challenges to not get caught in long-term unemployment, Social Security, and the mental health system.

Goal is **not immediate employment** but **career planning self determination**.





Why do you think unemployment for young adults with disabilities is so high?





- Developmental stage of “emerging adulthood” (Arnett, 2004) when the expectation is to more fully adopt independent adult roles.
- Most “typical” young adults begin to seriously think about, plan for and take steps that will establish their career path.
- Lack of available role models/mentors
- Disruption of mental health diagnosis receipt
- “Treading water” since leaving high school and/or the child system





Challenges for this Emerging Adult

- Very limited work experience
- Mental health problems
- Lack of self-determination
- Very fearful
- Unsure of what steps to take



Impact of Career Visions on My Life

- Teaching Assistant for upper level undergraduate courses
- Accepted into selective graduate school
- Employed fulltime in the field while in grad school
- Not afraid of resumes!
- Occasionally known to use phone
- Conducted four informational interviews
- Financially independent
- Quality of life is improved
- Sense of purpose
- Graduate Research Assistant (highly sought after position)
- Asking for help when I need it
- Helping others with career plans
- Currently speaking in public

Challenges still exist, but I am prepared for those that arise.



Who Participated in Career Visions?

- We outreached to community mental health agencies, colleges, and any community organizations where young adults may be present.
- The participants have diverse backgrounds and experiences including how long they have used mental health services, the types and numbers of mental health diagnoses they have received, their educational and work histories, and other life challenges they have experienced including with drug and alcohol and with criminal justice system.



The Three Phases of Career Visions

PHASE 1:

What jobs are a good fit with my interests, talents and preferences?

PHASE 2:

What is my plan?

PHASE 3:

What have I achieved?



Key Questions

<i>Phase 1</i> <i>What careers and jobs are a good fit with my interests, talents and needs?</i>	<i>Phase 2</i> <i>What is my plan?</i>	<i>Phase 3</i> <i>What have I achieved?</i>
1. What are my interests, strengths, & preferences? 2: What are possible jobs that reflect my strengths and interests? 3: What do I know about each now? 4: What must change to get the job and career I want? 5: What Is My Career Goal?	6. What is my plan to reach my goal? 7. What actions can I take to reach my career or job goal? 8. What resources can I use? 9: What could keep me from taking action? 10: What can I do to remove these barriers?	11: What actions have I taken? 12: What barriers have been removed? 13: What has changed to enable me to get the job and career I want?



Time and Energy Commitment

- 2 hour meetings about once a week with a Career Guide for 12 sessions (about 3 months)
- Final 9 months: meet with Career Guide twice a month (may be adjusted due to need)



Feedback from Participants: Most Useful Aspects of CV

- Clarifying job goals that are a good fit
- Consistent/regular meetings to talk about progress and new steps
- Developing a plan with specific steps
- Learning how to research careers on the web and conduct informational interviews to learn about jobs
- Learning about and utilizing resources/supports
- Learning how to write a resume to deemphasize work history gaps
- Learning about issues of disclosure, rights under the ADA, and accommodations



Preliminary Findings

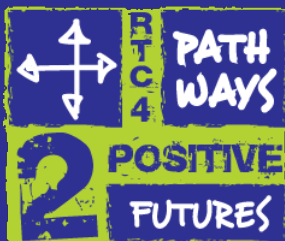
The young adults in the full Career Visions program have made **significant gains in career planning self-determination, engagement, and self-efficacy.** The control group has not.

Most of the young adults have indicated that the program is **useful.**



Overall, participants expressed **increased hope** in the future and **confidence** in their ability to obtain and maintain the type of job they would like to have.





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