Enhancing Successful Transitions to Adulthood for Young Adults with Psychiatric Disabilities

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Emphasis on Transition-Age Youth in State VR Agencies, 2004-2006

- 26% - State VR plan contains goals & plans related to youth
- 76% - State has VR counselors with dedicated transition caseload
- % counselors w dedicated transition caseload
  - 0% 24% (12)
  - 1-10% 41% (20)
  - 11-20% 20% (10)
  - 21+% 14% (7)
- Effort has shown some success - aggregate cross-disability, post-school employment rate 2-5 years after school exit rose about 9 percentage points from late 1980s to 2003 (NLTS)
State VR & Youth with Psychiatric Disabilities

- RSA 911 data indicate that transition age youth (ages 14-24) were 1/3 of all the eligible clients whose cases were closed in 2011.
- After youth with learning disabilities, youth with psychiatric disabilities were the next largest group within the youth category, accounting for 16% of total closures.
- The success rate for youth with MH problems (45%) was significantly lower than almost any other disability or age group.

Marrone & Taylor, 2013; Berry & Caplan, 2010

SSI & Transition to Adulthood

- Poor outcomes for youth on SSI prior to age 18
  – by age 19-23 years only 22% were employed, and 39% had dropped out of school (Loprest & Wittenburg, 2007)
- More positive outcomes for youth entering the SSI rolls at 18-19 years of age
  – better employment outcomes than any other age group, followed by those 20-35 years of age when they enter the rolls (Ben-Shalom et al., 2012)
Research on Transition Age SSDI Beneficiaries

- Young adults with disabilities enroll in employment services at much higher rates than older groups of workers.
Research on Transition Age SSDI Beneficiaries

- In the first 5 years after enrollment, young adults are more likely to enter their trial work period than older groups of workers.
- In the first 5 years after enrollment, young adults more likely than older workers to have cash benefits suspended or terminated due to work.

DI beneficiaries suspended or terminated for work 5 years post-award by age group

Multivariate Analysis of Positive Vocational Outcomes Among DI Beneficiaries

- *Younger age at award* associated with higher probability of achieving positive service engagement & work outcomes within 5 years after DI award.
  - e.g., compared to beneficiaries age 50–57, those age 18–24 are 20.4% points more likely to have started their Trial Work Period.
- In addition, the probability of achieving the milestones is increased by having a *greater number of years of education*. 
30 Occupations with Largest BLS-Projected Percentage Employment Increases, 2010 - 2020

• 17 require Associates degree or above
• Of those that pay above the median annual wage of $33,840, all require an AA, BA, or advanced degree
• Of those that pay below the median, the average annual salary is $25,340

Lockard & Wolf, 2012

SSA’s Youth Transition Demo Model Components

• individualized work-based experiences
• youth empowerment
• family supports
• system linkages
• social & health services
• SSA work incentive waivers
• benefits counseling

Rise of “New Capitalism”

• increased competition, often leading to closures, takeovers or mergers, with consequent shedding of labor (increased lay-offs and unemployment)
• volatility of markets, requiring adaptability of workers to adjust to new skills needed to provide new products and services
• more efficient use of labor by employers to reflect fluctuating patterns of demand, involving increased use of temporary and other forms of non-standard labor

Sennett (1998)
Usefulness of transition concept?

- Early adulthood now characterized by multiple transitions, or shifting, between full time, part-time, temporary work & self employment; unemployment; education; travel; breaks for motherhood; & other domestic labor
- Transitions have become differentiated & individualized. The notion of a collective “transition” into the work force no longer applies due to plural education options & precarious labor market.

Bradley & Davadason, 2009; Goodwin & O'Connor, 2005

Typology of career trajectories, young adults age 20-34 (Bradley & Davadason, 2009)

Shifting - frequent changes between work statuses & jobs
Sticking - pursuit of single type of job or career
Switching - after some time in a particular occupation, making a conscious choice to change direction
Settling - After a period of shifting, making a conscious choice to pursue a single occupation or career

Mostly low wage jobs, hi family interdependence, attitude of “internalized flexibility” allows for optimism

U.S. Labor Force Mobility – 1st 12 years after entry into the LF (Fuller, 2008)

- By 12th year after labor-market entry, men average 6.4 employer changes while women average 5.7
- Men are laid off & discharged more often than women, while women more often experience family-related quits that are followed by unemployment
- Job changing positively impacts wages earlier in careers but not later in careers
- In the 1st 5 years of a job, each year of tenure increases wages by 2% but this stops after 5 yrs
- Lay-offs, discharges & family-related separations associated with lower wages
- Workers with high mobility see wage advances from job changes eroded by decreases in job tenure
- Marriage & family depress women’s earnings, not men
KEYNOTE ADDRESS SLIDES

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