

Youth Transition Practice Group
May 20, 2009
Notes

Present

Facilitators: Pam Stoika, Joan Ketterman, Amy Whitehead

Participants: Keith Braunreiter, Krista Shallenberger-Burton, Brad Thompson, Sue Volz-Nett, Bill Helm, Peggy Schrabec, Glen Sallows, Mary Cimbalk, Ann Dybik

Notes

1) Definition of Practice Group

The group came up with some key elements for the definition for this Practice Group. It should include all aspects of transition including the transitions from school to work, independence, medical decision making, living arrangements, sexuality, legal, social and family supports. The words adolescent and relationships should be there since young adulthood is all about relationships.

The facilitators will draft a definition and send it out for input.

2) Name of Practice Group

The group discussed the name of this Practice Group and felt that it was confusing so we chose to rename it: Youth Transition and Young Adult Issues.

3) Discussion of issues related to youth transition

Role of school personnel in providing information to families: First possible intervention; need referral mechanisms; let family know where they can turn to; need collaboration to give families information. In Pewaukee, several school districts pool their resources to invite key experts into speak to parent groups on specific topics. Role of IEP team in making sure that parents get the information that they need. There are transition checklists (and Opening Doors booklets) out there but parents don't always get them. It is a patchwork approach with pockets of best practice and lack of standardization across the state. Even though there is a transition page in the IEP, the quality of how this is used varies. Twenty percent of the school districts are audited each year and transition is an area where problems consistently arise. Need for information to be regionalized.

We need a DPI representative on this Practice Group.

Theme: How to consistently get good information to families.

Transition is bigger than work experience, but in some school districts that is the main focus of transition. There may be reasons for this, for example in Dane County, the work in high school directly correlates to the work a student obtains post-high school because of an interagency agreement. Parents are being told that their children are ready to graduate at 18 and then the student doesn't have anywhere to go once they leave. Group discussed transition issues around graduation. At UW Stout high school students can take classes (Al Noll has more information on this). Families should know that starting at age 14, the IEP can include social and other skill goals related to transition. DVR doesn't come early enough. Job placement- Schools are getting better but carefully looking at job skills as well as the skills to live life independently is critical. Mary mentioned a class in

her district which addresses all of these transition skills and she will send us the information on this. It could be a model for others to replicate. We should look at how to utilize all possible school resources (e.g., school psychologists, counselors, nurses) not just special education resources. Mentorship is needed. How do we help parents see that their child can be successful not just academically but also socially. We need a list of what is supposed to happen at transition according to DPI.

Theme: The student has individual interests and others should help the student to identify these. We should give energy to helping the youth figure out what he/she wants.

4) Prioritizing and Action Steps

Equal access to best practices with standardization across the board.

Lots of pockets of best practice, how do we share these models.

Action Step: Invite DPI to the table

Preparing youth to be self-advocates

Action Step: Share models of curriculum, checklists and other transition resources.

5) Next Steps

Next Meeting: June 15, 8-9am, teleconference (Amy will send out the call-in information)

Brian Johnson from DPI has agreed to join our call.

Amy will ask Steve Gilles from DPI if he can join as well.