

FAMILY FORUM: POST-SCHOOL PLANNING FOR YOUNG ADULTS

- **Welcome!**

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- **Community Support Network**



Agenda

- **Provide a brief overview of the post-secondary options**

- **Discuss basic eligibility requirements for services**

College requirements

- **Answer participants' questions**

TYPES OF POST SCHOOL OPTIONS



- Employment
- Pre-vocational training programs
- Day Habilitation programs
- Volunteer opportunities
- Custom-designed options through Self-Direction
- Trade schools
- Continuing education coursework
- Inclusive postsecondary education programs

College

What Skills Are Needed to Prepare for Employment?

VOCATIONAL SKILLS

- Work readiness
- Interview and job search skills
- Social and communication skills
- Task analysis
- Career choice
- Safety

Pre-Vocational Skills

- Time management
- Problem solving
- Critical thinking
- Personal hygiene and appearance
- Responsibility and integrity
- Attitude and demeanor

Adult Career and Continuing Education Services Vocational Rehabilitation (**ACCES-VR**)

- **Pre Employment Transition Services** (PreETS) for students ages **14–21** who are either **potentially eligible or eligible** for ACCES-VR services
- Job Exploration, Counseling, Work-Based Learning Experiences, Counseling on Opportunities for Enrollment in Postsecondary Education, Workplace Readiness Training, and Instruction in Self-Advocacy
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- **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services**
- Vocational guidance and counseling
- Community work experiences
- Assessment for career planning
- Job development
- Supported employment
- Training (**vocational**, college)

- ACCES-VR is a state agency that provides services to assist individuals with disabilities **achieve their career goals**
- Eligibility:
- Person has a **physical or mental impairment**
- The impairment is **an impediment** to employment
- Person **can benefit from VR services** to achieve employment
- Person **requires VR services** to achieve employment
- Person **intends to work**

Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)

- A NY state organization that provides services directly as well as **through a network of nonprofit service providing agencies**, to people with developmental disabilities, including **intellectual disabilities, Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Prader-Willi Syndrome and other neurological impairments**
- Prioritizes individual choices, needs, and desires **in making decisions**
- The **Front Door** is the way OPWDD **connects people to the services** they need and want
- The **Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver** is the Medicaid program that provides opportunities for adults and children with intellectual and developmental disabilities to **receive services in their own home or community**



OPWDD & Care Coordination

- Making contact with a **Care Coordination Organization (CCO)** is an important step in the process.
- A CCO can help you **apply for OPWDD eligibility and Medicaid** and can help you plan for and access OPWDD services.
- If your family member is found OPWDD eligible, and if you need the support of care management, you will be assigned a **Care Manager** from the CCO you select.
- Your Care Manager will help you to develop a **Life Plan** with the individual and connect you to the OPWDD services you need.
- In some communities, where available, you may be referred to a **Non-Medicaid Service Coordination (NMSC) Agency** instead of a CCO (for individuals and their families that are not eligible for Medicaid.)

OPWDD Employment Training and Supports

- **Prevocational Services**
- **Pathway to Employment** is a **time-limited service** helps an individual to identify job interests and goals, try various jobs to determine which tasks and work atmosphere are liked best, and learn work-related social and communications skills
- Includes **support and training** related to the ability to **obtain and retain employment**, **excluding training on job tasks**
- **Community Prevocational Services**
- Help people learn **social and communication skills** related to work, task completion, time management, problem solving, **following directions and safety skills** that will increase their independence in the community
- **Employment Training Program (ETP)**
- Provides opportunities for individuals to **gain real work experience** and **attend job readiness classes** to build success. The goal of the ETP internship is to assist individuals in **obtaining employment** in the community and **earning at least minimum wage** at the completion of the internship
- **Supported Employment (SEMP)**
- Provides **supports needed to maintain a paid competitive job** in the community, typically, **after a person has received supported employment services** funded by **ACCES-VR** and the person **requires limited job coaching** to successfully **maintain employment**

OPWDD Day Services/Programs

Day Habilitation/Day Services

- Can assist people **to acquire, retain or improve** their self-help, socialization and adaptive skills, including communication, travel and other areas in adult education, appropriate behavior, greater independence, community inclusion, relationship building, self-advocacy and informed choice
- People accessing day habilitation **often contribute to their communities through volunteer work**
- Takes place outside your home usually at a
- **Certified Site** or
- **Community-based Site** : Day Hab Without Walls (WOW)

Visiting programs/what to look for:

- Engaged participants
- Engaged staff
- Staffing ratio
- Age range of participants
- General ability level/behavior of participants
- Cleanliness, lighting, size of space, noise level
- Environmental conditions (near busy streets, rural, type of neighborhood)
- Posted emergency procedures/protocol

Considerations in Choosing a Day Habilitation Program

PROGRAMS

- Does the program have a certain **mission**?
What is the process to apply? **Is there a wait list?**
- What is the direct care staff-to-client ratio? (The number of direct care staff members there at one time, helping participants.)
- What **experience/training does the staff have** with my child's disability and needs?
- **How far** is the program from home?
- Does the program **offer any transportation**? In rural areas especially, programs might be spread out.
- If they have job skills services, can they show you any of the technology or **course descriptions**?

ACTIVITIES

- **How many people attend** the program?
- What do the people who attend **do during the day**? (activities? therapies? Is there more than one activity choice at a time?)
- Can participants **go on outings**? Are there some who never leave the site?
- Are all activities **physically accessible**, such as for a wheelchair? Including the building, the program's van, and places they go on outings.
- Does the program **pay participants to work** on projects? If so, is it minimum wage?
- Are lunch or **snacks provided**?
- Can my child get **help with personal hygiene/toileting**? What happens if they are ill?

OPWDD Option for Self-Direction/Self-Directed Services

- **Self-Direction** gives individuals the chance to choose their own services so they can live the life they want and have more control over how they want to structure their life
- **Have increased flexibility to choose:**
 - the right supports
 - the staff you want to work with
 - a schedule that works best for you
- **Things you can self-direct:**
 - where you live
 - how you spend your days
 - what you do in your spare time
 - how you stay healthy and active
 - your relationships with family and friends
 - who you hire to assist you



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Other Vocational Program Options

- **Trade Schools** - A viable alternative to the traditional, four-year bachelor's degree, many programs can be completed in one year or less
- **BOCES Adult Career and Technical Education programs**
- **BOCES Continuing Education programs/courses**
- **Project SEARCH**
 - A unique **employment training program** for individuals with developmental disabilities
 - Over **9 months**, M-F, 9am-3pm interns **learn skills “on the job,”** fully immersed in the business setting, rotating through **3 internship placements across multiple departments**, with a daily a **classroom component** to directly **support skill development**
 - Participants **work towards employment in entry level competitive jobs** using transferrable skills
 - WIHD/CSN also provides **on-going training and counseling** to assist interns and their families **navigate the systems for adult supports**

Inclusive Postsecondary Programs- in the Hudson Valley

- Think College www.thinkcollege.net

- Programs that offer an **alternative admission process**, and/or **additional supports** so that the **unique needs of students with intellectual disability** can be met. Students typically earn a general certificate of completion or a more career-focused certificate rather than a degree

- Manages the only **national listing of college programs** for students with I/DD in the US

- Pleasantville Laboratory School
Community College

Westchester

- College Steps (New York)
Community College

Rockland

- The BRIDGES Program-Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP)*
Orange

SUNY

- Think Ahead Program-Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP)*
Dutchess

SUNY

- A Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP) is able to provide federal financial aid

Which Options are Best for your Young Adults?

General Considerations:

- What will a **typical day/week look like** if employment/volunteering is less than full-time?
- What **level of support** is needed?
- Would your family/young adult **benefit from OPWDD's Self Direction services**-are you ready to take on finding and coordinating the needed support, services, opportunities and programs?

General Considerations:

- Do they **have a desire** in obtaining job skills so they can work
- Are you aware of **any special** interests that can lead to a job or volunteer position?
- Have they had **any previous volunteer or paid work experience?**

Preparation is Key

Does Your Young Adult...

- Follow basic verbal, written, or visual instructions?
- Know what independent living skills they need to work on? (i.e. laundry, personal hygiene, cooking, dressing)
- Have basic skills such as counting money, making change, shopping for items from a list or using money to negotiate public transportation?
- Practice interpersonal skills, such as greeting strangers appropriately and maintaining eye contact?
- Have the social skills to maintain/develop new friendships?
- Use effective strategies for coping with stress?
- Make daily choices?
- Tell others what they like/don't like, in an appropriate way?
- Know what support they need to complete tasks?
- Practice telling others about their disability and what helps them learn?
- Ask questions at home, in school and in the community?
- Know what to do in emergency situations?

HEADING TO COLLEGE



Major Differences from High School

• Students with Disabilities

- Are no longer “entitled” to an education. Must meet the same admission criteria, standards of behavior and performance demanded of everyone (be “Otherwise Qualified”)
- Are responsible for making sure they get a good education and needed services. Must self-identify/disclose their disability to the disability services office and provide disability documentation
- Must be prepared to discuss accommodations with instructors when necessary and seek assistance if needed
- Must self-select courses, manage course conflicts, determine if they have prerequisites or alternates if the classes are closed. Students must seek help from an academic advisor and make arrangements to meet with teachers outside of class-time

• Colleges

- Civil rights laws ensure the same access to activities, materials and services that all students have
- Are not required to fundamentally alter curriculum, tests, assignments or provide services of personal nature (1:1 aides), only accommodations
- Have no legal responsibility to identify students with disabilities or involve parents in decision-making
- If students are not making satisfactory progress they may become ineligible for financial aid and eventually be dismissed from the college

Preparation is Key

Does Your Young Adult...

- Know what skills they need to work on?
- Know what information they need?
- Know who can help them to prepare?
- Have academic survival skills? (able to balance multiple demands, time management, note-taking, study skills)
- Practice telling others about their disability and what helps?
- Ask questions at home, in school and in the community?
- Use a daily/weekly/monthly planner?
- Have basic independent living skills to live away from home?
- Use effective strategies for coping with stress?
- Have a strong commitment to completing a college degree?

The College Search/What's the Best Fit?

- Majors/degree tracks/available/certificate programs
- Level of Support-comprehensive LD services
- Finances, scholarships, any fees in addition to tuition for services provided by a highly specialized service program
- Extracurricular activities
- College/Class Size, Location, Accessibility
- Professors (adjuncts, recent grad students, tenured faculty)
- Assistive technology
- Housing options
- Surrounding community/Medical resources
- Transportation



Sources of Disability Documentation



- **A Student's Self-Report** •The student is a vital source of information regarding how he or she may be limited by an impairment
- Students can **expect discussions** about the need for accommodations; experience of disability, barriers, and effective and ineffective accommodations
- **Observation and Interaction**
- The impressions and conclusions formed by higher education disability professionals during interviews and conversations with students
- Looking for the connection between the **impact of the disability**, the **described barrier**, and the **requested accommodation**
- **Information From External or Third Parties** • May include educational or medical records, reports and assessments created by health care providers, school psychologists, teachers, or the educational system
- Colleges may request **within reason**, additional documentation of a **diagnosed disability** and the **impact** it has on learning. Families are responsible to **obtain and pay for** any needed evaluations

Accessing Accommodative Services

- ✓ Accommodations from high school do not automatically transfer to a college setting
 - ✓ IEPs and 504 Plans no longer exist after students graduate from high school
 - ✓ Requesting accommodations is voluntary
 - ✓ No deadline to request accommodations
 - ✓ No cost to the student
- If eligible, the student will pick up an “Accommodation Letter” which only identifies the approved accommodations, not the disability (which is confidential)
 - Student must understand how instructors will be informed of approved accommodations and can choose whether to use them or not
 - May be required to request a new accommodation letter at the beginning of a new semester



Examples of Reasonable Accommodations

- Extended test time (up to double time)
- Separate testing location
- Use of computer (spell check)
- Use of calculator
- Books in alternate format
- Use of assistive technology
- Access to class notes (note taker)
- Recording lectures
- Priority registration

- Students must be able to meet the **TECHNICAL standards** of a profession- therefore some accommodations may not be able to be provided



Adult Career and Continuing Education Services

-Vocational Rehabilitation (**ACCES-VR**)

- ACCES-VR is a state agency that provides services to assist individuals with disabilities achieve their career goals
- **Individuals working toward a college degree may be eligible for:**
 - Financial assistance with tuition, fees, books and other college expenses
 - Technology to help an individual succeed in school
 - Individualized academic supports
 - Opportunity for ongoing professional guidance
 - Guidance in finding and supporting work experiences and internships
- **Financial Need** - ACCES-VR does not charge for any VR services. Funding for some services is based on a student's or their family's financial need. You may be asked to contribute to the cost
- **Comparable Benefits** - The student will be asked to apply for all available benefits (i.e. financial aid including TAP and PELL grants) that may help reduce the cost of the service

Thanks for Participating It's Never Too Late or Too Early to Start Planning!



Planned Transitions are Smooth Transitions!

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