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**ABSTRACT**

Developed as part of a project to encourage state-wide collaborative agreements between education and rehabilitation agencies involved in the transition of blind and visually handicapped students (ages 16-25) from school into the work force, the report describes 18 programs diverse in location, design, funding, philosophy, and administration that facilitate this transition. Some programs are based in agencies and schools for blind and visually impaired persons, while others are university or public school based. Individual programs are described under the following headings: "Toward a State Transition Plan" (Arkansas); "Project Work Ability" (California); "Factors in the Development of Rural Transition Programs" (Maryland); "Community-Based Training: A Component of Career Education for Deaf-Blind Youth" (Massachusetts); "Royal Maid Collaborates" (Mississippi); "Agreement of Cooperation" (Nebraska); "Youth in Transition, Inc." (Nevada); "A Career Awareness Experience--Adventures to the Future" (New York); "Summer Employment in Industry" (New York); "Lifeprints" (Oregon); "Mobile Work Crews" (Oregon); "State Transition Coalition" (Oregon); "Technical Assistance as a Catalyst for Staff Training and Supported Work Program Development" (Tennessee); "The Industrial Enclave" (Texas); "Don't Give Those Kids Fish! Teach 'em How to Fish!" (Texas); "Project STEER" (Virginia); "Supported Employment" (Virginia); "Career Awareness and Work Experience" (Washington). Under each heading is a lead question which is answered in the program description. (DB)

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# COLLABORATIVE PLANNING: TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK

## PROGRAMS IN PRACTICE

ED288266

NATIONAL LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE  
FOR PERSONNEL IN EDUCATION  
AND REHABILITATION OF THE  
BLIND AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

Sponsored by  
 The American Foundation  
for the Blind

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Rehabilitative Services  
United States Department of Education

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Transition From School to Work

PROGRAMS IN PRACTICE

Edited by

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The American Foundation for the Blind  
15 West 16th Street  
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October, 1986

**COLLABORATIVE PLANNING: TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK  
PROGRAMS IN PRACTICE**

**National Leadership Institute for Personnel in Education  
of the Blind and Visually Handicapped**

Sponsored by the American Foundation for the Blind. Funded in part by the Rehabilitation Services Administration, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, United States Department of Education, Grant #G028400018. The articles in this manual have been edited by project staff, Kathleen Mary Huebner and Frank Simpson, Project Co-Directors, and Ferne K. Roberts, Project Coordinator. No permission is required for duplication of this document. If selected sections are reproduced, please cite the American Foundation for the Blind as the source. Two of the articles contained within are direct reprints for which permission was obtained to present in this publication, they should be cited appropriately.

PROGRAMS IN PRACTICE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	vii
Toward a State Transition Plan (Arkansas)	1
How can a state transition team mobilize support for transition activities which will lead to a collaborative state plan?	
Project Work Ability (California)	15
How can a state-level initiative to increase the employability of handicapped high school students effect meaningful transition programs at a local level?	
Factors in the Development of Rural Transition Programs (Maryland)	23
Is there a comprehensive overview of identified key factors for developing transition programs in rural areas?	
Community-Based Training: A Component of Career Education for Deaf-Blind Youth (Massachusetts)	35
Have you ever wondered if, and if so, how a residential school for the blind developed and implemented a career education/work experience program within the community?	
Royal Maid Collaborates (Mississippi)	45
How can a variety of state and local resources be mobilized to increase the independence and employability of legally blind youth and adults?	
Agreement of Cooperation (Nebraska)	54
Is there a state transition team that has developed and implemented a state-wide transition agreement?	

## Table of Contents

<b>Youth in Transition, Inc. (Nevada)</b>	64
Has any state transition team developed a state-wide system for the inclusion of transition advocates as participants in the IEP process?	
<b>A Career Awareness Experience Adventures to the Future (New York)</b>	71
Have you wondered what an effective approach might be to provide blind/visually impaired students with opportunities to meet and interview adult role models who represent many different careers?	
<b>Summer Employment in Industry (New York)</b>	83
Have you wondered how private industry and a state agency could collaborate to provide vital work experiences for visually handicapped college students who are about to enter the labor market?	
<b>Lifeprints (Oregon)</b>	89
Have you wondered if there is a publication available specifically for blind/visually impaired youngsters which networks people and routinely presents articles written by blind/visually impaired individuals describing their career choices, job roles, and responsibilities?	
<b>Mobile Work Crews (Oregon)</b>	99
What is a mobile work crew, how is it developed, how does it work and can blind/visually impaired individuals participate?	

Table of Contents

State Transition Coalition (Oregon) 120

How can a state transition team serve as a catalyst to get diverse organizations and agencies to plan together to improve state transition services?

Technical Assistance as a Catalyst for Staff Training and Supported Work Program Development (Tennessee) 126

Have you ever wondered how you could use consultation and technical assistance to provide staff training and program development in the supported work model for multihandicapped individuals?

The Industrial Enclave (Texas) 133

Have you wondered how it might be possible to assist blind/visually impaired persons who are working in a sheltered workshop environment transition into a competitive employment setting while continuing to give them on-going job coaching and support?

Don't Give Those Kids Fish! Teach 'em How to Fish! (Texas) 151

Can problem solving skills be taught and applied to the process of transition from school to work?

Project STEER (Virginia) 161

Have you wondered how a state-wide effort could facilitate effective integration of visually impaired students into mainstream vocational education programs and ultimately into employment?

## Table of Contents

**Supported Employment (Virginia) 168**

Have you wondered how it might be possible for severely multi-handicapped blind/visually impaired persons, who need very concentrated on-the-job training and continuing intervention and support, to be placed and successfully work in competitive employment situations?

**Career Awareness and Work Experience (Washington) 177**

Have you ever wondered how you might start a work experience program that will demonstrate to blind and visually impaired students that work is in their future?

**Conclusion 187**

## INTRODUCTION

In developing this project we have had the opportunity to gather information on several programs and practices which we are sharing with you. The programs are quite diverse but all have common characteristics.

They represent collaborative efforts, often innovative, that facilitate the transition of disabled youth into appropriate adult environments. The programs described are diverse by not only location but also by design, funding, philosophy, and administration. Several are based primarily in agencies and schools for blind and visually impaired persons, while others are university or public school based.

It is hoped that in reviewing the brief descriptions of these programs you will identify models which, with modification, can be useful as you seek to refine your action plan and continue to work on behalf of blind and visually impaired youth in your state.

Many individuals contributed to this publication. Contributors and authors are not only recognized here for the information and articles they provided but also for their efforts in facilitating the transition of blind and visually impaired youth to adult environments.

TOWARD A STATE TRANSITION PLAN

Arkansas

Question: How can a state transition team mobilize support for transition activities which will lead to a collaborative state plan?

## Overview

- I. Type of Transition Model:  
Collaborative State-wide Planning
- II. Target Population:  
Public and residential school students who are blind or visually impaired.
- III. Collaborative Features:
- A. Agencies - Residential Schools, Public Schools, Division of Services for the Blind, Arkansas Council of the Blind, Arkansas Association for Visually Impaired Children and Youth, National Federation of the Blind, Arkansas Lighthouse for the Blind, Lions Club, Arkansas Department of Education.
  - B. Consumers - A parent and an adult consumer are active members of the state transition team.
  - C. Private Employers -  
NA
  - D. National Organizations - American Foundation for the Blind, Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired.
- IV. Local/Municipal Resources:  
Currently being explored
- V. On-going Support Systems:  
Currently being explored
- VI. State/Local Laws/Regulations:  
Currently being explored
- VII. Funding Sources:
- Start-up - AFB Southeast Regional Office  
American Council of the Blind
  - Continuation - Currently being explored
- VIII. Contact Persons:
- |                            |                               |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Debbie Waller              | Leonard Ogburn                |
| Director of Rehabilitation | Superintendent                |
| Arkansas Enterprises for   | Arkansas School for the Blind |
| the Blind                  | 2600 W. Markham               |
| 2811 Fair Park Blvd.       | Little Rock, AR               |
| Little Rock, AR 72204      | (501) 371-2109                |
| (501) 664-7100             |                               |

## TOWARD A STATE TRANSITION PLAN

### Arkansas

Question: How can a state transition team mobilize support for transition activities which will lead to a collaborative state plan?

Answer: Debbie Waller, Director of Rehabilitation at the Arkansas Enterprises for the Blind, describes how a new transition team got things going in record time.

The original four-member Arkansas state transition team was formed in January, 1986, at the national Leadership Institute, for professionals in education and rehabilitation of the blind and visually handicapped, sponsored by the American Foundation for the Blind. That team included the superintendent of the school for the blind, the youth services counselor of the state division of services for the blind, a visually handicapped adult and the parent of a visually handicapped student. When they returned to Arkansas the team added two additional members to broaden the points of view and expertise -- a state department of education outreach person, and the director of rehabilitation of a private rehabilitation agency for the blind.

One of the first steps the team took was identification of the key transition issues in Arkansas.

1. Career awareness/education training for visually impaired children from birth through 25.
2. The need for students to utilize more community resources for apprenticeship and career exploration.

3. The need for blind children and their parents to continually have complete information on what's available.
4. The need for housing and transportation.
5. The need for development of a state plan to serve severely and profoundly multihandicapped visually impaired students during the transition period.
6. The need for vocational and placement counseling for visually impaired children who attend public school.
7. The need for a liaison between employers and students/disabled persons -- a job development person.
8. The need to facilitate the movement between residential and day programs.
9. The need for the Arkansas Lighthouse for the Blind to serve the lower functioning client and to encourage transition for employees as they are ready to enter the mainstream of competitive employment.

Taking all of these needs into consideration, the team set the goal to develop a statewide plan among agencies, parents and consumers to address the transition needs of blind and visually impaired students.

At the first team meeting, held on February 7, 1986, representatives were identified from all interested organizations in Arkansas and asked to participate on a task force to explore existing transition services and plan for improving these

services. Eleven people from education and rehabilitation agencies, representatives from the American Council of the Blind, Arkansas Association for Visually Impaired Children and Youth, and the Lions Club, accepted membership on the task force.

After a discussion of the team's training at the Leadership Institute and the identified needs, each task force member addressed what their agency program or organization was doing to meet the transition needs of student/clients in Arkansas. Each task force member was then assigned to one of four committees which had been established to concentrate on specific areas.

These committees and the needs they addressed were:

Housing and Transportation - Need #4

Job Development - Needs #5, 7, 2 and 9

Transition Information Network - Needs #3 and 8

Career Education - Needs #1 and 6.

Team members and task force members were informed of the upcoming AER conference whose theme was Collaborative Planning: Transition from School to Work; and, the Career Awareness Workshop to be held for professionals, students and parents. Each member was encouraged to participate in both programs. The task force also selected a co-chairman to help assume the responsibility for coordinating activities.

In May 1986, the state conference for the Association for the

Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired met in Little Rock with 95% of their membership present. The keynote speaker was Dr. Kathleen Huebner, Co-Director of the AFB Transition Project and AFB National Consultant in Education who addressed the conference theme Collaborative Planning: Transition from School to Work. Other presentations of note included a panel of task force members addressing WHAT WE ARE DOING TO FACILITATE TRANSITION, JOB COACHING, COLLEGE AS A STAGE IN TRANSITION, and THE USE OF A SUPPORTED WORK MODEL FOR TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK.

The following weekend, a Career Awareness Workshop was held at Arkansas Enterprises for the Blind with 125 people in attendance. The planning of the workshop was coordinated by Libby Swindle, state team member and Youth Services Counselor for the Division of Services for the Blind. The American Foundation for the Blind provided \$1,500 through their regional office in Georgia and Regional Consultant, Oraien Catledge. The American Council for the Blind (ACB) contributed \$100 toward refreshments. Frank Simpson, Co-Director of the AFB Transition Project and National Consultant in Employment, also helped in the organization of the workshop and provided the keynote address CAREER CONCERNS. The agencies which played key roles in the planning were:

Division of Services for the Blind  
Arkansas Enterprises for the Blind

Arkansas School for the Blind  
Educational Services for the Visually Impaired  
Arkansas Association for Visually Impaired Children  
and Youth, Inc.  
Arkansas Council of the Blind  
National Federation of the Blind  
American Foundation for the Blind

Students and their parents along with professionals in the field of work for the blind (education and rehabilitation) were invited to participate in the workshop. Each individual received an invitation and was asked to fill out a pre-registration form. They were asked to select three career categories which they wished to learn more about in concurrent sessions on Career Information Sharing. (See attachment 1 at end of the article.) In these sessions, 21 blind or visually impaired adults shared information regarding their careers. The occupational categories they represented included managerial, computers, communications, sales, manufacturing, services/repair, teaching, counseling, homemaker and services for severely/profoundly handicapped youth in transition. Each presenter filled out an information sheet which included their name, title of position, job duties, education and training, previous work experience, visual functioning, special aids and adaptations, personal qualities needed for job and personal job search experience. (See attachment 2 at the end of the article) This information will be

printed in a booklet along with a summary of the workshop and distributed to students and their parents. If they wish to contact any of the presenters to discuss their professions further, all presenters have made themselves available to conference participants. Leonard Ogburn moderated a group of five students who told of their transition process from residential to public school, from high school to college and from college to work. The afternoon's final presentation was an update on activities occurring in this area regarding transition. With the money remaining at the end of the workshop the team is considering sending out a quarterly newsletter to students and parents, keeping them up-to-date on what services are available to their children.

The key factor which appears to be greatly facilitating the efforts of the state team and task force is the fact that we have the support of the leaders and professionals in both public and private rehabilitation, public and state school education, consumer groups, parents and students.

A number of the state team and task force members participated in the National AER conference and were able to attend a number of sessions on transition. The next step is to reconvene and assign each task force member specific projects which will help in research and implementation of future steps for transition in Arkansas which will, hopefully, evolve into a well defined state plan for services for those in transition.

## CAREERS FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

May 17, 1986

TO: Parents and Students

FROM: Career Workshop Sponsors:  
 Division of Services for the Blind  
 Arkansas Enterprises for the Blind  
 Arkansas School for the Blind  
 Educational Services for the Visually Impaired (ASB)  
 Arkansas Association for Visually Impaired Children  
 and Youth, Inc.  
 Arkansas Council of the Blind  
 National Federation of the Blind, Arkansas Chapter  
 American Foundation for the Blind

DATE: April 10, 1986

SUBJECT: A Special One-Day Workshop for Parents and Students  
 Regarding Careers and Transition to Work/Higher  
 Education

-----  
 Are you interested in career information for the visually  
 impaired? If yes, please mark your calendar to join us Saturday,  
 May 17 for a Special Career Workshop from 9:00 a.m. until 4:30  
 p.m. at Arkansas Enterprises for the blind, 2811 Fair Park  
 Boulevard, Little Rock, Arkansas. You will have the opportunity  
 to hear visually impaired adults discuss their jobs and the  
 training which led to their employment, as well as teenagers  
 discussing their interests and career plans. Time will be set  
 aside for one-to-one discussions with the presenters.

Frank Simpson, National Consultant on Employment with the  
 American Foundation for the Blind, will be our special guest and  
 will present information on career opportunities and transi-  
 tioning from school to work or higher education. Oraien  
 Catledge, also with the Foundation, will share career information  
 as well. Susan Chapman, Arkansas Department of Education, will  
 discuss training opportunities for children who are multihandi-  
 capped.

Informational sessions for parents of children of all ages are  
 planned, as well as sessions for interested students. The  
 workshop registration form is enclosed, which must be completed  
 and returned by Wednesday, May 5, 1986. We are sorry, but no  
 babysitting is available.

Also, on the agenda is the annual business meeting of the  
 Arkansas Association for Visually Impaired Children and Youth,  
 Inc.

We look forward to seeing you May 17 at Arkansas Enterprises for  
 the Blind. If you have questions regarding the workshop, please  
 contact:

Mary Anne Tomlin	Division of Services for the Blind	371-2587
Bob Brasher	Educational Services (ASB)	371-5710
Sue Nestrud	Arkansas Association for Visually Impaired Children and Youth	664-3670

LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED

-----  
This special workshop is sponsored by the above agencies and organizations with financial assistance from the American Foundation for the Blind, Inc.

## CAREERS FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

## REGISTRATION FORM

This is a special one-day workshop for parents and students interested careers for the visually impaired to be held Saturday, May 17, 1986 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Arkansas Enterprises for the Blind, 2811 Fair Park Blvd., Little Rock Arkansas.

PLEASE COMPLETE A FORM FOR EVERYONE ATTENDING AND RETURN BY WEDNESDAY, MAY 5 TO:

Mary Anne Tomlin  
Division of Services for the Blind  
P.O. Box 3237  
Little Rock, AR 72203

-----  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
-----

Please check (x) three of the following of interest to you, as well as placing an A in one additional box which you would choose as an alternate selection.

<input type="checkbox"/> Managerial	<input type="checkbox"/> Computers
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Sales
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing
<input type="checkbox"/> Service/Repair	<input type="checkbox"/> Teaching/Counseling
<input type="checkbox"/> Homemaking	<input type="checkbox"/> Severe/Profound (Multihandicapped)

Please check one of the following. "I best fit the following category":

Parent of a visually impaired child (If checked, age of child \_\_\_\_\_)

Professional (teacher, counselor, other \_\_\_\_\_)

Visually impaired student (age \_\_\_\_\_, grade: \_\_\_\_\_)

Family member

Friend

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

-----  
.....NO REGISTRATION FEE

.....FREE LUNCH TO PARENTS, FAMILY MEMBERS AND STUDENTS

.....NO BABYSITTING

April

Dear

We are pleased that you will be sharing information about your career with visually impaired teenagers and parents of visually impaired children during the Careers For The Visually Impaired Workshop on Saturday, May 17, 1986. It will be held at Arkansas Enterprises for the Blind, 2811 Fair Park Blvd., in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Three forty-five minute sessions have been scheduled during which you will be providing information about your career with small groups of parents and teenagers. The first session will begin at 10:45 a.m. and the third will conclude at 1:30 p.m. There will be a break for lunch.

In your presentation, please include the following information:

- what you do in your present job
- adaptive equipment used in your job
- education and training
- previous work experiences
- how you became interested in your career/why you choose your present job.

Also, include any other information that you feel would be beneficial to a visually impaired child in preparing for and choosing a career. Please allow time during each session for an informal question and answer period.

Information on the workshop is enclosed. Please feel free to attend any sessions that you would like.

Lunch will be provided. Please let us know if someone will be accompanying you so that we can make reservations for lunch. Also, for out-of-town presenters, bus fare or mileage at the rate of .21 per mile will be reimbursed. Cab fare in the Little Rock area will be reimbursed for all presenters.

If you have questions concerning your presentation or the workshop, please contact any of the people listed below.

Mary Anne Tomlin	Division of Services for the Blind	371-2587
Bob Brasher	Educational Services ASB)	371-5710
Sue Nestrud	Arkansas Association for Visually Impaired Children and Youth	664-3670

The workshop is sponsored by Division of Services for the Blind, Arkansas Enterprises for the Blind, Arkansas Association for Visually Impaired Children and Youth, Arkansas Council of the Blind, National Federation of the Blind, Arkansas Chapter, and the American Foundation for the Blind.

We appreciate your participation in the workshop and look forward to seeing you on May 17.

Sincerely,

Program Planning Committee

Workshop Sponsors

/st

CAREERS FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

NAME:

PRESENT POSITION:

JOB DUTIES:

EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCES:

VISION:

DIAGNOSIS:

VISUAL FUNCTIONING (Light perception, read regular or  
large print, etc.):

PERSONAL JOB SEARCH (How you got your present job):

Will you consent to having parents of visually impaired children  
or visually impaired teenagers contact you for additional  
information after the workshop?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please include your address and/or phone number.

ADDRESS:

PHONE NUMBER:

PROJECT WORK ABILITY

California

Question: How can a state-level initiative to increase the employability of handicapped high school students effect meaningful transition programs at a local level?

## Overview

- I. Type of Transition Model:  
Work Experience
- II. Target Population:  
High School juniors and seniors
- III. Collaborative Features:
  - A. Agencies - Public schools, local rehabilitation agencies, California Department of Education and state employment agencies. (See item V below.)
  - B. Consumers - Students and Parents
  - C. Private Employers - Business and industry employers cooperate with Work Ability staff
  - D. National Organizations - not applicable
- IV. Local/Municipal Resources:  
Local and municipal resources are utilized as appropriate for each Work Ability student.
- V. On-going support systems:
  - A. Community-Local and district school personnel.
  - B. Administrative - The State Education Department which includes both Special Education and Vocational Education; The State Department of Rehabilitation; and The Employment Development Department signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 1984 which established a state-level system for coordination and collaboration.
- VI. State/Local Laws and Regulations:  
Project Work Ability is the entity through which certain Federal allocations to the state are utilized, i.e., funds from the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA).
- VII. Funding Sources:
  - A. Start-up: State funds
  - B. Continuation: State, local school districts, local state employment offices, local rehabilitation agencies, and federal funds.
- VIII. Contact Person:  
Ms. Gail Zittel  
Program Administrator, Employment Preparation Division  
California State Department of Education  
721 Capitol Mall  
Sacramento, CA 95814-4785  
916-324-3643

## PROJECT WORK ABILITY

### California

Question: How can a state level initiative to increase the employability of handicapped high school students effect meaningful transition programs at a local level?

Answer: Gail Zittel, Administrator with The California Department of Education, and her colleagues representing regular education, vocational education, rehabilitation, and employment development have converted a state initiative into an action plan which currently involves 8,000 disabled high school students in an employment preparation program.

Project Work Ability represents an initiative by the State of California to increase the employability of handicapped high school juniors and seniors through vocational training and work collaboration (March, 1984 - Memorandum of Understanding among the State Department of Education (SDE) which includes both Special Education and Vocational Education; The State Department of Rehabilitation (SDR); and The Employment Development Department (EDD)]. While this formal agreement establishes a state-level system for coordination and collaboration, Project Work Ability focuses on the development of local initiatives with school districts and the business communities throughout California. Project Work Ability was also designed in anticipation of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) as a mechanism for accessing funds.

## Planning

Leadership at both the state and local levels is a critical factor in the success of this program. During the initial two years of this project state-level staff were in the position of leadership in selling the concept of Work Ability while local community leaders refined the concept and initiated program efforts. As a result of their initial successes in training and placing students in employment, school district staff, rehabilitation personnel and parents have further developed the essential local leadership and have sustained their enthusiasm. This emergence of local leadership committed to the concept of work as a primary experience is critical to any local initiative.

The administrative staff of Work Ability recognized the need for Project Work Ability when we reviewed the post-school employment status of special education students. One major factor in their lack of ability to access the competitive labor market was their limited access to vocational services while in high school. Statistics from CETA programs also reflected dismal participation by many handicapped adults, another indication of non-participation in the work force.

In California we have at least 18,000 handicapped students that leave high school each year. The rehabilitation and employment personnel are insufficient in numbers to meet the vocational planning and placement needs of this diverse group of high school

students. We knew the schools had many resources and interested staff. It became clear that we needed to have vocational placement services in the schools available to handicapped students. Our job became one of convincing school districts to work with local community agencies and employers. In 1982 we set up the first local agreement on employment with funds being provided for student stipends.

#### Programming

Special education teachers are taking on a more active role in training and placing high school students ages 16-22 years in work experience education in private sector sites. The amount of training and time at the actual site varies dependent on each student's needs. Vocational teachers, counselors, and regular education teachers, with the administrative support of superintendents and school boards, are providing other critical transition services. The employer provides on-going supervision which would be provided to any worker. These services are being coordinated with local community agencies, service groups, and businesses. Duplication of services is being identified and eliminated.

Public information on the local project is a critical element. Students and their families can be your best advocates. This brings recognition not only to the local efforts but to the need for employment opportunities for handicapped students. Featuring

local employers in newspaper articles and television spots is particularly effective. We in education need to constantly remind ourselves that employers need qualified workers and that schools can be as a viable source of workers. CETA projects targeted public sector employment, Project Work Ability targets private sector employment.

Involvement of a local school district in Project Work Ability is not automatic. There is an application process which requires the signatures of the superintendent of schools, local state-office director of employment services, and local state-office director of vocational rehabilitation. We also look for signatures of local parents and business groups endorsing the application. When reviewing applications we first look at the documented needs of local students and the ability of the proposed site to dispense stipend payments to students. Critical is the level of involvement of the local business community and how the school will utilize existing staff to implement the project. The actual paid work experience in the community is the primary learning environment around which the application is structured for all students.

#### Target Population

Project Work Ability is a generic program that includes students with all disabilities. It is geared toward meaningful education through work experiences. Primarily, we place emphasis on students in their last two years of high school. However, students do start at an earlier age if it is determined that they

are potential school dropouts. The program is geared to each student's individual needs. Family involvement is critical with parents providing input.

Currently eight thousand disabled high school students in California participate in Project Work Ability. During the first year 39 students were blind or visually impaired out of approximately 1900 students participating. We realized that we should emphasize the involvement of sensory impaired students. As a beginning, the Los Angeles Unified School District was selected as a site for Project Work Ability targeting only students who are blind or visually impaired.

A teacher of blind and visually impaired students in this district was assigned full-time to Project Work Ability. She works actively with students and local employers to secure after-school jobs. This requires a special emphasis and a need to be aware of employment issues unique to blindness. This teacher, like other teachers, uses employed blind and visually impaired adults as resources. Presently, other districts also have integrated more blind or visually impaired students into Work Ability as the program has expanded.

#### Summary Comments

We have many individual success stories. During our first year we had an 81 percent success rate which is defined as students

either working or returning to school. Students have increased their self-confidence and their hope for the future as employed adults. Schools are providing work readiness and work experience activities, as well as other support services. The districts can be rural, urban, large, or small and be successful. Teachers, with support from their local administrators and Work Ability staff have taken on new responsibilities as job trainers and job developers. Teachers are using the community and the work-site as a learning/teaching environment. From our experience thus far, it is obvious that we need to modify existing curricula to meet the transition needs of disabled students. We have stressed the development of social and personal skills in all of our readiness activities. This requires an on-going emphasis in the classroom and at home.

It is recommended that support from the state level be secured to initiate and continue a program of this type. While local funds and resources are helpful, state funds are critical to initiate these local projects.

Work Ability is expanding. It is exciting and those involved continue to be enthusiastic. Many more disabled students would become adult workers enjoying the benefits of full-time employment, if they could participate in Project Work Ability.

Excerpted with permission from: Zittel, G. (1985) Project Work Ability: State of California, Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness, 79,10.

FACTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL TRANSITION PROGRAMS

Maryland  
by  
Joyce K. Beam

Question: Is there a comprehensive overview of identified key factors for developing transition programs in rural areas?

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## FACTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL TRANSITION PROGRAMS

Maryland  
by  
Joyce K. Bean

Question: Is there a comprehensive overview of identified key factors for developing transition programs in rural areas?

Answer: Yes, Joyce Bean, from The Charles County Board of Education in Maryland has published such an overview in the Rural Special Education Quarterly.

### Factors in the development of rural transition programs

The transitioning of handicapped students from school to adult life has become a national priority. Obstacles to successful transitioning are found mainly in the areas of existing gaps in interagency cooperation, lack of in-school work-related programs, and insufficiency of follow-up services. In addition, problems unique to rural areas confront the disabled person. These problems include: mismatch of curriculum content to life in rural areas; lack of transportation systems; limited employment opportunities; and higher costs of related services as compared to urban areas, due in part to travel requirements and limited personnel resources.

According to a 1984 study by the American Council on Rural Special Education (ACRES), only 14% of rural disabled students who had exited high school were in postsecondary job training programs, while 23% were in integrated employment settings. The largest percentage (63%) were placed in segregated settings such

as sheltered workshops, group homes, institutions, or with parents (Helge, 1984).

Unfortunately, only 58% of the rural communities surveyed had a job training program designed for disabled post-secondary students. "These findings serve to emphasize the serious significant national problems related to transition from school to working life for rural students with disabilities" (Helge, 1984, p.2).

In an attempt to explore solutions to problems in developing rural transition services, a more comprehensive definition of transition including the areas of leisure, housing, and personal-social skills must be employed. Emphasizing these skill areas in school-based settings will facilitate transition and help to ensure a productive adult life. Presenting skills related only to success in the employment area does not ensure that daily living and survival skills will be mastered (Edgar, 1985).

#### Curriculum content

Reviewing the past fifteen years, much attention has been focused on appropriate content curriculum for disabled youth. The need for functional academics, career education, and vocational education has been emphasized. Many advocates of the career education approach recognize the similarities between the

transition approach and sound curriculum leading to independent and satisfying lives for the disabled (Brolin, 1985).

Rural secondary programs must adopt, if they have not done so already, the philosophy of career education, vocational training, and work-related experiences for young adults. Transition programs should be attuned to the specific needs of clients in their rural setting. Key components of such a program would include:

- . Identifying competencies needed for success in the rural setting
- . Matching the secondary school curriculum to available employment opportunities
- . Identifying adult service providers and incorporating the "how to" of accessing services for parents and students into the school program.
- . Implementing a work program which uses placements within the community vs. those simulated in school experiences
- . Conducting instruction whenever possible in community-based settings.

Results from a study by Hasazi, Gordon, and Roe (1985) indicate that educational and vocational experiences do influence employment status following graduation or exit from school. The study's findings support the inclusion of these components in students' IEPs, and subsequently, their individualized transition plans.

### Collaboration of resources

The responsibility for ongoing transitional and supportive services extends beyond the public school to include other adult service providers. Coordinated efforts among rehabilitation services, social service agencies, day programs, vocational training facilities, and transportation providers are essential, particularly in sparsely populated areas. This cross-agency planning and cooperation is an effective management vehicle for responsible fiscal programming (Greenan, 1980; La Cour, 1982) and reduces costly duplication of services.

Although federal legislation has actively advocated the development of formalized cooperative agreements, the impact of agreements which currently exist may have little or no effect on local planning. Attitudinal barriers and differences in definitions and funding priorities among agencies severely inhibit cooperative transition efforts. With the premise that individual transitional planning efforts commence for handicapped youth at ages 14-16, cooperation among agencies becomes a critical issue.

In areas where formal or informal agreements have been explored, a local coordination team may be established to explore the transition issue. Representatives from the previously mentioned service providers, public schools, parents, and employers should aggressively explore the issues facing disabled adults in the community. Emphasis should be placed on information exchange in

the areas of services provided, eligibility requirements, and individualized planning procedures of the respective agencies (Wehman, Kregel, and Barcus, 1985). A productive outgrowth of this exchange would be the eventual development of formalized cooperative agreements detailing parameters of service delivery. Development of such a team should enhance the quality of services provided and reduce the gaps presently experienced by clients and parents pursuing adult services.

Business/industry/citizen advocacy

Deinstitutionalization has had a profound effect on our communities. Handicapped adults who previously resided in institutions are returning to their homes or community group residences. While the intentions and outcomes of persons advocating this movement are beyond reproach, there has been serious neglect in cultivating awareness and involvement among potential employers and the community at large regarding these new community members. Employers lack information regarding the potential of the disabled as workers and incentives for hiring the handicapped. Businesses and employers in general need to see themselves not only as potential employers of the handicapped, but as a contributing part of community-based instruction with the local education agency. The involvement of employers on a local coordination team will facilitate exchanges of information and enhance the acceptance of disabled adults within the community both as employees and as consumers.

Trends in future employment opportunities will create new opportunities for the disabled. The number of workers employed in the manufacturing industry has decreased, while the number of workers in service occupations continues to rise. It has been predicted that by 1995 there will be 28.5 million people employed in service occupations. Only 22 million workers will be in the manufacturing industries. A case in point -- McDonald's Corporation now employs more workers than United States Steel. In many instances, these "trends" already exist in rural areas, where small businesses and service are the sole employers.

The disabled adult of tomorrow must be prepared for careers in the service industry. Careful study of local needs should be undertaken to determine specific vocational training skills to be taught. The employment community should not be encouraged to hire disabled adults out of a sense of charity. Through increased public awareness and education, employers may learn to view the disabled as a viable alternative to fulfill their employment needs.

#### Family input and support

The involvement and active participation of parents in the transition process cannot be overlooked. Frequently, parents and/or guardians are confused concerning adult services for their young adult. There is a need to review with parents the services available as well as the criteria for these services. Involving

adult service providers in annual admission, review, and dismissal (or IEP) meetings will assist parents and educators in planning the individual transition plan prior to school exit. There remains a need to educate parents in viewing their handicapped child as a productive working adult. Many parents are not aware of the employment potential of the disabled and are fearful of the child learning or working in a community-based setting. Social Security Insurance and Social Security Disability Insurance are seen by some parents as reasons not to participate in career-based training curricula. Threat of loss of funds may outweigh the potential benefits of competitive employment.

One solution to these problems is the development of parent support groups. Information concerning transition and employment goals should be presented to the parent by the time the student reaches 16 years of age. Content of the parent education activities should be based on problems and concerns identified through needs assessment activities (Wehman, Kregel, and Barcus, 1985). By the time a handicapped student reaches adolescence, parents should be aware of services and curriculum emphasis within the school setting leading toward successful transition.

Parents visits to existing day programs and group residential homes should be encouraged. This process may alleviate some misconceptions and fears of parents concerning adult service providers. This firsthand experience and information gathering

should assist parents in actively participating in the development of their child's transition plan.

### Summary

Rural and urban areas are facing the transition issue as our disabled youth exit the public school system. Productive adult life for the handicapped and the creation of positive attitudes by the community towards these adults are common goals in all geographic locations. The disabled youth or adult in a rural area faces problems which must be addressed at the local level. Specific questions need to be addressed by education, business and parent, and citizen groups, and a needs assessment should be developed to aid in the transition process. Possible avenues for improved service delivery need to be explored as a collaborative community effort.

The following areas need particular attention and should be fully explored before transition programs are implemented:

- . Does the school curriculum realistically prepare the student for adult life in this community in terms of leisure, housing, and employment?
- . Are there existing vehicles for cooperative service delivery by adult service providers?
- . Who is responsible for follow-up services to both the disabled adult and the individual's family?
- . Have community members been made aware of the needs of the

disabled adult in the areas of employment, housing, leisure, and personal-social experiences?

- . Have parents been provided the necessary information to assist the student and adult in identifying transition needs and subsequently developing the transition plan?

Disabled youths and adults will face many unforeseen challenges as they exit the school program. We as service providers must develop transition programs with realistic goals and coordinated community services to assist them in reaching their full potential. The future holds promise for the disabled if we can overcome existing barriers to a fully mainstreamed adult life. This is the challenge facing advocates of the handicapped.

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#### COMMENTS

by

Simpson, Huebner, and Roberts

The factors which challenge us in the provision of transition services for handicapped students in rural areas are magnified for rural youngsters who have a low-incidence disability such as blindness/low vision. Therefore, Beam's article is particularly relevant. The five identified key components of an effective transition program for rural students are critical for blind/visually impaired students. The last two -- implement work program placements within the community instead of simulated experi-

ences, and conduct instruction in community-based settings -- support traditionally recommended teaching strategies to effect meaningful learning experiences for blind/visually impaired students. It is through realistic experiences which take place in natural settings that blind/visually impaired students can not only learn concepts and skills but also, and perhaps most importantly, recognize when, where, and how to transfer what they have learned to new situations.

Beam's article further confirms the need for transition teams, individual transition plans, collaboration, employer and parent involvement and self-help groups. Transition is a process of living and therefore participation in the process by all available resources, organizations, and individuals must be aggressively sought, encouraged, and maintained.

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COMMUNITY-BASED TRAINING: A COMPONENT OF  
CAREER EDUCATION FOR DEAF-BLIND YOUTH

Massachusetts

Question:        you ever wondered if, and if so, how a  
                          dential school for the blind developed  
                          implemented a career education/work  
                          experience program within the community?

## Overview

- I. Type of Transition Model: Community-Based Work Experiences
- II. Target Population: Deaf-Blind Adolescent Students of Residential Schools
- III. Collaborative Features:
- A. Agency: Perkins School for the Blind
  - B. Consumers: Deaf-Blind Residential School Adolescents
  - C. Private Industry: Restaurants  
Cemetery Greenhouse  
Bank  
Bakery  
Hotel  
Racquetball Club  
Commercial Laundry  
Catering Service
  - D. Adult Service Agency: Massachusetts Commission for the Blind:  
As students have graduated or "aged out" of the educational program, Perkins vocational and transitional staff have worked closely with staff from the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB) to assist students to find and maintain jobs in their home areas.
- IV. Local/Municipal Resources: Chambers of Commerce are a frequent source of business listings within the student's home area. Many deaf-blind students are unable to safely utilize public transportation. Within the Metropolitan Boston area the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) has initiated a specialized service called "The Ride" which provides door-to-door transportation for those not able to use the regular public transit system.
- V. On-Going Support Services: Provided by vocational instructors to students on-site while still involved in vocational training. MCB is responsible for providing continued support after client is employed full-time.
- VI. State/Local Laws and Regulations: U.S. Department of Labor; State Department of Labor.
- VII. Funding Sources: Start-up: U.S. Department of Education, Special Education Department.
- Continuation: Included in general tuition.
- IIX. Contact Person: Betsy L. McGinnity, Deaf-Blind Vocational Coordinator  
Perkins School for the Blind  
175 North Beacon Street  
Watertown, MA 02172 (617) 924-3434, ext. 519

COMMUNITY-BASED TRAINING: A COMPONENT OF  
CAREER EDUCATION FOR DEAF-BLIND YOUTH

Massachusetts

Question: Have you ever wondered if, and if so, how a residential school for the blind developed and implemented a career education/work experience program within the community?

Answer: Betsy McGinnity, the Vocational Coordinator, and her colleagues in the Deaf-Blind Department at Perkins School for the Blind, have developed and implemented Project Advance. Through the efforts of all individuals involved, including the students, twenty-six deaf-blind adolescents are working part-time in community-based work sites.

Introduction

Since 1980, Project ADVANCE, an innovative vocational model project has been providing vocational training to a group of deaf-blind adolescents at the Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown, Massachusetts. It is funded by the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education. In order for these students to effectively make the transition from school to work, the training that occurs during the students' formal education must be practical and prepare them for real job options; and the planning must include the schools, the students, the parents and adult service agencies.

Legislation and the acceptance of the concept of normalization have changed our expectations of what these students will do as adults. Now, as the "rubella wave" students prepare to leave the educational environment, they and other deaf-blind youngster need appropriate work and living options.

Our experience with deaf-blind students has proved to us that they are capable of learning a great deal. The major obstacle students faced in the past, in developing appropriate work behaviors and attitudes, was that the training occurred outside of the actual work setting. The performance expectations for the students consequently were those of the teacher not of the employer. Therefore, Project ADVANCE opted to develop a variety of community-based training sites.

#### Project Advance

Currently Project ADVANCE is serving twenty-six deaf-blind adolescents in fifteen different work sites. These work sites can be loosely categorized into four different vocational options: competitive; student operated small business; sheltered enclave within industry; and sheltered employment. Within each option the skill level and degree of independence required vary greatly. But, in general terms, the more competitive the option, the more demanding the requirements.

Project ADVANCE training has three phases. The initial phase involves active training on job tasks and work behaviors, and helps the student set up functional relationships with the people in the work place. During this time the teacher is on site working with the student and co-workers. The intermediate phase requires that the teacher become less directly involved with the student but be available to intervene and assist with problem

situations. A major focus of this phase is to transfer supervisory responsibilities from the teacher to the employer/supervisor. In the final phase the teacher's main function is to provide follow-up and assist the employer, co-workers and students in working through problems at the work site.

#### Competitive Work Sites

Of the 26 students in Project ADVANCE, 65 percent receive vocational training in a competitive setting. With this option, after a training period, the student works independently at the work site. Daily supervision is primarily the responsibility of the employer. Students work part-time (3-15 hours a week) performing the job responsibilities listed on the following chart.

In some settings the students earn the minimum wage or more while in other businesses the students qualify for a Special Worker's Certification. Their wages are based on their own production and take into account their versatility and any necessary modifications in job responsibilities which they may require.

Project ADVANCE is involved with only a small aspect of career education, that is, to offer deaf-blind students the opportunity to explore and experience paid employment on a part-time basis while they are still in school.

Part-Time Job Responsibilities

<u>Job Title</u>	<u>Type of Business</u>
Food Preparer *	Soup & Salad Restaurant
Service Personnel *	Fast Food Restaurant
Greenhouse Laborer	Cemetery Greenhouse
Coin Teller/File Clerk *	Savings Bank
Food Preparer	Restaurant
Laundry Worker	Restaurant
Baker's Assistant	Industrial Bakery
Dishwasher *	Racquetball Club
Locker Room Maintenance Worker *	Racquetball Club
Laundry Worker *	Commercial Laundry
Food Preparer	Catering Service

Notes

Minimum wage \*

### Student Operated Business

The student operated business is based on the principles set forth by Minnesota Diversified Industries and other industries for the handicapped. It provides janitorial services, i.e., cleaning hallways and staircases of apartment buildings and picking up litter and debris on sidewalks. The students are supervised by project staff and perform many aspects of the job independently. The teacher provides quality control and supervises high risk situations, i.e., collecting litter in heavily traveled areas. Some of the students assist in ordering supplies, managing student payroll and billing. The six students who are employed in this business (2 hours a week) earn the minimum wage.

### Industrial Enclave

One work placement, an industrial bakery, qualifies as a sheltered enclave within industry. Five students are employed as production assistants. Although they perform fewer job functions than other employees with the same job title, the students work in the same production area. These students qualify for Special Worker's certification and earn 50 percent of minimum wage.

### Sheltered Workshop

Lastly, seven project students work in three area sheltered workshop/work activity programs (4-8 hours a week). After an initial training period students work independently at the

worksite and supervision is primarily the responsibility of the workshop staff. Students are paid at piece work rate.

In many instances students work at more than one job and get experiences in different vocational options. There is a temptation simply to say that the most capable students (by educational standards) are the most successful in competitive job settings. However, there are too many exceptions to validate this concept since the work requirements, from both interpersonal and production perspectives, vary significantly across both sheltered and non-sheltered work environments. For example, competitive placement in a very small business may require that a student interact with only one co-worker while a sheltered workshop setting could require more numerous interactions with co-workers.

#### Social Skills and Employer Relationships

Success as a student does not ensure success as an employee. Employers state clearly that people most often lose jobs not because they lack skills but rather because they have poor work behaviors and attitudes. Since most of the jobs we have accessed are entry level, unskilled or semi-skilled positions, the students have learned the job tasks rapidly. Generally, instructors train the students on site in specific skills, e.g., to operate the industrial dishwasher or to cut lemons. Tasks are broken down into small steps to facilitate learning. The real

focus of the training is on communication, problem solving, resolving conflicts and learning to be flexible. Project ADVANCE teachers work with co-workers and employers on these issues almost as much as with the students. For both groups the real key to success is in learning to deal with each other.

#### Communication Skills

For co-workers and employers the initial training period can be uncomfortable. Establishing effective methods of communicating with the students is a major hurdle to be overcome in alleviating the awkwardness. The form that communication takes is highly individualized. Note writing, manual alphabet, sign language, adaptive hearing aids, gestures and writing in the palm are some of the methods used.

#### Summary

During the course of the project students have developed positive perceptions of themselves as capable, productive wage earners. In fact, most of the people who interact with them at school, work, and home view them as more than just "students". These students are rapidly approaching adulthood, and there are viable vocational alternatives that should be made available to them. A small percentage could be employed competitively if appropriately trained on the job. The majority of these students will continue to need some support after the age of twenty-two if they are to locate a new job or require re-training. Transportation will

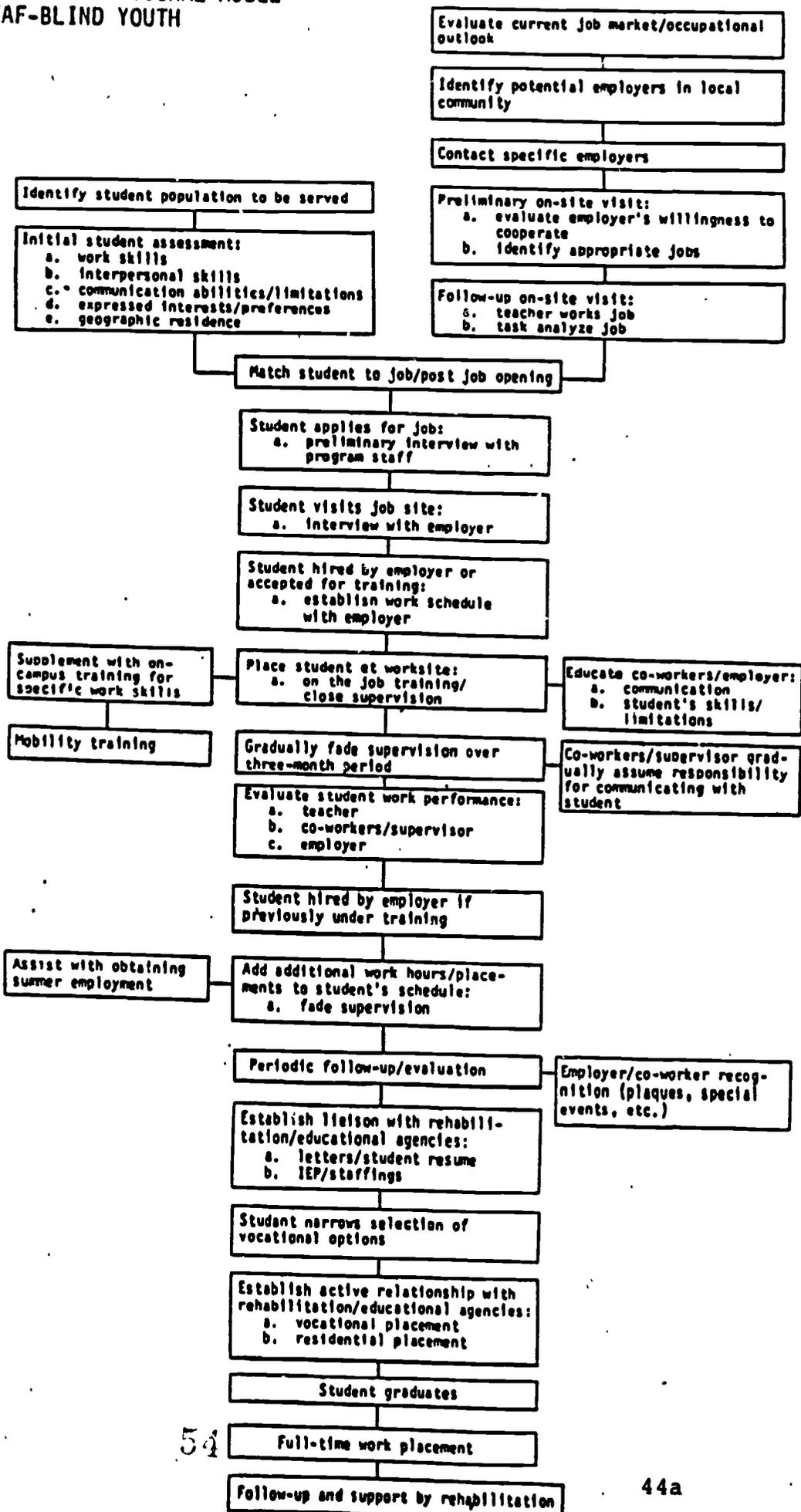
often continue to be a problem and solutions will have to be individualized.

The majority of the deaf-blind students will need a more sheltered option. Sheltered workshops may be appropriate for some, but certain competitive jobs, client-run businesses, and sheltered enclaves within industry are also possible work options. The major focus of a community-based vocational program is the provision of all these options to deaf-blind students. The chart on the next page presents the steps followed in Project ADVANCE to help students achieve skills which will enable them to work full-time after they leave school.

This article is excerpted with permission from:

McGinnity, B.L. (1985). Community based training. Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness, 79, 466-467.

**COMMUNITY-BASED VOCATIONAL MODEL  
FOR DEAF-BLIND YOUTH**



ROYAL MAID COLLABORATES

Mississippi

Question: How can a variety of state and local resources be mobilized to increase the independence and employability of legally blind youth and adults?

## Overview

- I. Type of Transition Model:  
Three models: Satellite Workshop, Vocational Orientation and Experience (VOE-PRO) and Group Home Services
- II. Target Population:  
Legally blind and multihandicapped adults
- III. Collaborative Features:
  - A. Royal Maid Association for the Blind; Ellisville State School for the Mentally Retarded; Hudspeth Retardation Center; the Mississippi Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind; Mississippi Employment Services; and the Copiah Lincoln Junior College all cooperated to develop and sponsor various components of the three models.
  - B. Consumers - Involved in all program components.
  - C. Private Employers - Students with VOE-PRD are placed with local employers.
  - D. National Organization - National Industries for the Blind.
- IV. Local/Municipal Resources - Involved, as needed, for individual clients.
- V. On-going Support Systems:
  - A. Community - As appropriate for individual clients.
  - B. Administrative - Agencies listed in III.A. will continue to collaborate on the three models.
- VI. State/Local Laws and Regulations:  
All clients must be referred by the Mississippi Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind. VOE-PRO participants must be certified as eligible for Job Training Partnership ACT (JTPA) funds by the Mississippi Employment Services
- VII. Funding Sources:
  - A. JTPA funds; Ellisville State School; Royal Maid; Hudspeth Retardation Center; HUD funds; Mississippi Vocational Rehabilitation; and Developmental Disability Funds have all contributed to the present programs.

B. Royal Maid and Ellisville State School will continue support and will seek other funds as necessary.

VIII. Contact Person:

Mr. Billy Sparkman, Director  
Rehabilitation Services  
Royal Maid Association for the Blind  
P.O. Drawer 30  
Hansen Road  
Hazlehurst, MS 39083

## ROYAL MAID COLLABORATES

### Mississippi

Question: How can a variety of state and local resources be mobilized to increase the independence and employability of legally blind youths and adults?

Answer: The Royal Maid Association for the Blind has demonstrated the feasibility of collaborating with other agencies to meet the assessed needs of legally blind youth and adults.

The Royal Maid Association for the Blind, Inc., has taken the lead in collaborating with several other agencies to develop three model projects: A Satellite Workshop Program; Group Home Services; and the Vocational Orientation and Experience Program. After the Satellite Workshop Program was initiated in 1979, other unmet needs were identified and the two other programs were developed.

#### Satellite Workshop Program

In 1979, Ellisville State School for the Mentally Retarded had identified and verified through vocational evaluations that a number of residents who were legally blind had the potential to develop work skills. As a state retardation center, Ellisville State School provided all medical, housing, transportation, therapy, and food services needed by residents. The missing element was a work program. Rather than establish its own production and marketing system it chose to join resources with Royal Maid.

Royal Maid, as a sheltered workshop for the blind doing government contract work through the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Law, is required to have at least 75% of the hours spent in direct labor performed by workers who meet the federal definition of legal blindness. Establishing a work activity center at Ellisville State School added additional hours of labor toward insuring compliance with the 75/25 requirement. But, Royal Maid could not financially afford nor did it possess the expertise to establish the network of support services needed to meet the needs of the severely impaired blind people targeted to receive the work activity center services.

The combination of resources was a natural and necessary act required to make needed services available. As its contribution, Ellisville State School made available staff positions, buildings and maintenance services, all of which it would have incurred anyway, along with the myriad of professional services provided by the center. Royal Maid provided wages and fringes for the workers, manufacturing equipment and materials, marketing techniques, and administrative expertise.

As the program grew, a larger facility was needed. At this time, Mississippi Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind was approached by Ellisville State School and Royal Maid to request an establishment grant to renovate an old dormitory ward. This partnership resulted in a modern industrial facility to house the

approximately 40 work activity center workers.

On campus two programs, one serving deaf-blind youth through age 21 and the other providing evaluation services for multihandicapped blind people, requested and received services from the work activity center. Both programs felt their residents needed exposure to an actual work setting in order to evaluate and develop work skills.

In 1985, Hudspeth Retardation Center identified approximately 25 residents who qualified for work activity center services.

Again, Royal Maid combined resources and initiated a second work activity center along the same pattern as the Ellisville center. Currently, there are eleven workers in this program.

#### Right to Succeed--Group Home Services

After the Satellite Workshop Program was underway it became evident that several residents had advanced beyond the work activity center level and could progress to the main Royal Maid facility in Hazlehurst. But, while work skills had progressed, these residents did not possess independent living skills which would allow them to function within a dormitory or residential living program. A group home service had to be developed.

Ellisville State School and the State Department of Mental Health through the Developmental Disabilities Program leased a home within the Hazlehurst community. Developmental Disability funds

and client rental fees covered the costs for rent, utilities, and food for the home. Ellisville State School made staff positions available to provide houseparents to supervise the program and Royal Maid provided the on-site supervision. The first home served six developmentally disabled legally blind adult males and proved very successful. Even with the severity of handicaps faced by this population, several of the residents gained the independent living skills required for the community and moved into housing with only minimal or no routine assistance.

In 1982, a group of concerned individuals from within the human services field identified a need for additional group homes in Mississippi. Part of this identified need was to upgrade the group home for males in Hazlehurst and to establish a group home for females. This group became incorporated as Right to Succeed, a private non-profit organization, and applied for a HUD loan. In 1984, the sites were selected and purchased, and the homes were constructed. Community donations were solicited to furnish the homes and tenant rents combined with Section VIII Rental Subsidy through HUD covered the mortgage payments and utility costs. Commodity foods and food stamps helped with meal cost and Developmental Disability funds were used to lease a vehicle and pay operating costs. The Hudspeth Retardation Center took over the coordination and staffing of the two Hazlehurst homes, known as Alpha I and II. Indirectly, Mississippi Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind training fees paid to trainees at Royal

Maid, helped to provide the tenants with funds to pay their rent which is based upon a formula developed by HUD.

The Alpha Home program serves six males and six females all of whom are legally blind developmentally disabled adults.

#### Vocational Orientation and Experience Programs

For legally blind persons who live in the community and who need a boost in self-confidence and in labor-market skills an adult education program was organized. The Vocational Orientation and Experience Program (VOE-PRO) combines the resources of Mississippi Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind, Mississippi Employment Services, Copiah Lincoln Jr. College, and Royal Maid to provide a three-month program designed to give clients on-the-job work experience, employability/life skills, and basic related studies. The program utilizes JTPA funds, channeled through Copiah Lincoln Jr. College, to provide an instructor/placement counselor, classroom equipment, training materials, and coordination of hands-on experience training. All clients must be referred by the Mississippi Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind to Royal Maid for rehabilitation services and must be certified by JTPA as eligible by the Mississippi Employment Services.

The following curriculum is offered with each client selecting the work experience area(s) which best meets his or her needs:

**I. Work Experience Areas**

- A. Cafeteria Employee
- B. Maintenance Operator
- C. Custodial Service
- D. Warehousing Operations
- E. Vehicle and Motorized Equipment Maintenance
- F. Office Skills
- G. Dormitory (Hotel) Supervision and Maintenance
- H. Aide to the Handicapped (Supervisory Skills)
- I. Recreational Service;
- J. Production Line Skills

**II. Employability/Life Skills**

- A. Career Planning Skills
  - 1. Personal assessment
  - 2. Career information
  - 3. Career decision
- B. Job Seeking Skills
  - 1. Job hunting
  - 2. Resume
  - 3. Cover letters
  - 4. Completion of job application
  - 5. Interviewing (role playing)
- C. Job Effectiveness Skills
  - 1. Job attitude
  - 2. Job success
  - 3. Personal economics

**III. Basic Related Studies**

- A. Basic Reading
- B. Basic Math

The overview format is not appropriate for this activity.  
However, the contact person is:

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AGREEMENT OF COOPERATION

Nebraska

Question: Is there a state transition team that has developed and implemented a state-wide transition agreement?

## AGREEMENT OF COOPERATION

### Nebraska

Question: Is there a state transition team that has developed and implemented a state-wide transition agreement?

Answer: Yes, Nebraska! Mark Demuth, chairperson of the team offers suggestions.

### Agreement of Cooperation

An exchange of information between the state transition teams of Nebraska and Pennsylvania led, within six months, to the completion and implementation in Nebraska of an Agreement of Cooperation between the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) and the Department of Public Institutions, Division of Rehabilitation Services for the Visually Impaired (SVI). The Pennsylvania transition team brought a copy of its state's cooperative agreement to the National Leadership Institute for Personnel in Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Handicapped, sponsored by the AFB Collaborative Planning Transition From School to Work project, in January, 1986. The Nebraska Transition Team asked for a copy which they took home as an example of the kind of agreement they hoped to have in their state.

While the Nebraska team was at the Institute it developed an Action Plan in which one goal was to: "Improve Communication in order to assist all visually impaired individuals through formalized interagency agreements to culminate in a state-wide

transitional plan." Back at home the team reviewed the Pennsylvania agreement and rewrote it seven times during negotiations with the two cooperating state agencies, NDE and SVI. In June representatives of these two agencies signed the Agreement of Cooperation which went into effect August 1, 1986.

The chairman of the Nebraska Transition Team, Mark Demuth, Consultant in the NDE, in thinking of other states that want to develop collaborative state transition agreements, suggests: that everyone "bring all the cards to the table at the beginning...because holding back concerns or issues slows the process." That the people involved "agree to disagree--stay away from philosophy battles that...will not be solved by the agreement; don't attempt to change anyone's mind." The suggestions illustrate the advantage of finding areas of agreement and using them as first steps in an action plan.

The Nebraska Transition Team has established goals for dissemination of information about the Agreement of Cooperation and its implications so that the effective date will not be a mere note on the calendar. The Agreement of Cooperation follows.

AGREEMENT OF COOPERATION  
between the  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
and the  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS  
DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

This Inter-Agency Cooperative Agreement is made this first day of August, 1986, by and between the Department of Public Institutions, Division of Rehabilitation Services for the Visually Impaired, hereinafter referred to as RSVI, and the Department of Education, hereinafter referred to as NDE.

WHEREAS, the administrative agencies of the state have the responsibility to develop practical and efficient means for coordination of their work; and

WHEREAS, the two agencies welcome the opportunity to cooperate with each other to fulfill their individual interests and responsibilities with respect to the maximum independence and effectiveness of visually impaired and deaf-blind individuals; and boundary overlaps are to be resolved in the interest of the individual being served; and the spirit of cooperation rather than the letter of rights and responsibilities should always prevail with the interest of the individual upper most; and

WHEREAS, there presently exists no agreement between the two agencies and whereas their needs to be close coordination of services to assist visually impaired and deaf-blind students in a smooth transition into Rehabilitation Services from RSVI;

IT IS THEREFORE AGREED BETWEEN THE PARTIES AS FOLLOWS;

I. PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this agreement is to outline the responsibilities and activities of the agencies represented in order to coordinate the programs and services available to visually impaired and deaf-blind birth to age 21 individuals. This purpose shall be accomplished by:

- A. Encouraging and assisting RSVI and NDE in working together, on an individual case basis, during all phases of student/client service.
- B. Providing encouragement to RSVI and NDE for cooperation in the development of combined programs.

- C. initiating and monitoring the recommended services that are mutually agreed upon.
- D. Assuring a continuity of educational planning and formalized rehabilitation services to prepare the student client to enter their chosen vocation.
- E. Providing direction to RSVI district offices, school districts and other agencies for the implementation of this agreement.
- F. Identifying gaps in the service system that prevent the timely transition from school to the workplace and developing programs on both an experimental as well as permanent basis that would effect that transition.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS, DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

RSVI is a governmental entity whose activities are oriented to assisting visually impaired and deaf-blind individuals to achieve the maximum of effectiveness in dealing with their environment: physical, social, personal, and vocational.

- A. Services are devised and provided on an individualized basis, taking into account all relevant circumstances that affect the individual, including age, location, visual condition, abilities and disabilities.
- B. RSVI works with the individual, family, school and other community ties evolving a plan of action to identify and realize a life goal, including, when appropriate, a vocation.
- C. In the period of life prior to the meaningful identification of a vocational goal, RSVI cooperates with the family, the school and other community entities to provide counseling and training services that will maximize the visually impaired and deaf-blind individual's ability to cope effectively with their environment. This includes counseling with families, consulting with schools, and, when requested or when the services are not otherwise available, provide training in mobility and other alternative skills for dealing with the environment.
- D. When the individual is approaching an age when the identification of vocational pursuits becomes part of the educational process, RSVI can, upon request, provide early career exploration, vocational choice and career

planning services to individuals, either in a school setting or otherwise.

- E. At or near the time of completing a secondary education program, RSVI can undertake formal processes for determining eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services. In the event the individual is determined to be eligible, an Individualized Written Rehabilitation Program (IWRP) will be completed, detailing the services to be provided toward the achievement of the identified vocational goal. Financial assistance may be available to students pursuing a post-secondary educational program.

### III. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

#### A. Special Education Office

1. To maintain a count of students birth to 21 years of age who by reason of their physical defects (i.e., a visual or combined visual and hearing disability), are unable to attend regular public school classes without assistance, are not physically adapted to hold full-time membership in regular school facilities, or who, in order to profit from regular school instruction, need facilities and procedures not available in the regular public school classes attended by physically normal children.
2. To assure a free, appropriate public education program in accordance with federal and state law and regulation.
3. To provide for the effective and efficient delivery of the program through the provision of: direct support services to educators of the visually handicapped; coordinated in-service training programs in conjunction with the NDE Learning Resource Center for the Sensory Impaired (LRCSI) and Nebraska School for the Visually Handicapped (NSVH) for teachers and other appropriate school personnel serving the visually handicapped, and parents; appropriate materials through the LRCSI; informal assessment of visual handicaps and technical assistance when requested which consists of: monitoring verification; assisting school districts in developing and providing appropriate educational programs; assisting school districts in locating alternative educational placements if the district is unable to provide an appropriate educational program; demonstrating teaching techniques; and,

assisting in identifying other appropriate resources.

B. Nebraska School for the Visually Handicapped

Service provided to students attending NSVH may include:

1. Pre-vocational training in Industrial Arts, Home-making and Business Education;
2. Classes in mathematics, laboratory sciences and other prerequisites for college entrance for pupils needing more intensive instruction than may be available in the local district;
3. Activities in independent living, cooperative vocational instruction and career education;
4. Facilitation of the school-to-work transition process; and
5. A plan for transition into each pupil's secondary educational program.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIVITIES OF BOTH AGENCIES

A. Interagency Referral and Referral Information

The NDE shall refer to RSVI the names of school districts who by Verified Child Count have students with verified visual impairments.

Information packets will be disseminated to the above named school districts in like numbers, including transition activities, NDE Special Education Office, DPI Rehabilitation Services for Visually impaired and Nebraska School for the Visually Handicapped information.

The parents or guardians of the individual student/client has the opportunity of completing the referral card to obtain further information.

Any mutual exchange of information between the respective agencies (RSVI district offices, school districts and other agencies) shall be identified as confidential in keeping with each agency's policy and shall not be forwarded without the expressed written consent of the individual or his/her parent or guardian (if the student/client is a minor).

RSVI will forward a detailed written response (white

case) to the respective school districts regardless of the outcome of the referral.

If RSVI is unable to provide services, it will specify the reasons and list alternative service providers, when possible. If RSVI is able to provide services, the school districts and RSVI may arrange an informative meeting to orient the referred individual and parent or guardian to available services from both agencies.

Referral shall be provided without regard to race, sex, religion or disability.

B. Education/Rehabilitation Individualized Plan/Program

The Individual Education Plan (IEP) shall conform to requirements as prescribed in statute, rule and procedure.

The Individualized Written Rehabilitation Program (IWRP) shall likewise conform to the requirements governing its development and implementation.

No later than the final school year of a client/student, the RSVI Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor shall develop a suitable IWRP implemented upon termination of school program (with input from the referring agency) which shall specify the services, the financial participation of individuals and their families (when appropriate) and the person or facility responsible for providing the services.

When services are being provided simultaneously by RSVI and the school district, close coordination and cooperation among both parties will be essential.

C. Implementation of the Agreement

A State Transition Team shall be formalized to implement this agreement.

In-service training of staff of both agencies shall be conducted, as needed, to achieve full understanding of this agreement and to further develop sound working relationships.

V. AMENDMENTS

Either parties to this agreement may initiate amendments to the Agreement. Such amendments will become part of the Agreement upon the signature of both parties.

VI. EFFECTIVE DATE AND TERM

The Agreement shall be effective on August 1, 1986, or at such later date on which all necessary signatures to this agreement have been obtained and shall be reviewed by September 30th of each year.

VII. TERMINATION

Either party may terminate this Agreement by giving at least sixty (60) days written notice to the other party.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

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YOUTH IN TRANSITION, INC.

Nevada

Question: Has any state transition team developed a state-wide system for the inclusion of transition advocates as participants in the I2P process?

Overview

As indicated in the following article, the activities of the Nevada Transition team are currently in abeyance while they wait for an official decision regarding articles of incorporation.

For further information contact:

Mr. John Orr, Assistant Chief  
Bureau of Services to the Blind  
Department of Human Resources  
505 E. King Street, Room 502  
Carson City, Nevada 89710  
(702) 885-4444

YOUTH IN TRANSITION, INC.

Nevada

Question: Has any state transition team developed a state-wide system for the inclusion of transition advocates as participants in the IEP process?

Answer: Yes, John Orr, Assistant Chief, Bureau of Services to the Blind, describes one approach as envisioned by the Nevada Transition Team.

Note: Although the Nevada state-wide transition plan, Youth in Transition, has not yet been fully implemented, as explained below, it is presented in this manual because of several unique features.

The Nevada plan to enhance the transition of blind and visually impaired individuals from the work of school to the world of work involves several interrelated developments including the following:

1. incorporation of the state transition team as a non profit corporation;
2. establishing corporation chapters replicating the state-wide team model in the major urban centers;
3. developing cooperative agreements with appropriate state-wide agencies;
4. replicating the state-wide agreements among the chapters and local service and interest organizations;
5. adding consultants/advisors to the chapters and team(s);

6. applying for operational financial support to appropriate funding sources;
7. training team members in the philosophies, practices and procedures of IEP development;
8. actively participating in IEP development conferences on local levels; and
9. early identification of blind and visually impaired youth.

These steps are dependent upon prior or concurrent accomplishment of related steps. For example, incorporation is a condition to making application for operational financial support.

1. Incorporation: Arrangements have been made with a Carson City attorney to incorporate the state team as Youth in Transition, Inc., a Nevada non-profit corporation. The purpose of the corporation is: "To coordinate, support and encourage the successful transition of blind and visually impaired Nevada youth from the world of school to the world of work." This step is considered mandatory to allow the group to apply for financial aid from agencies, foundations and community service organizations. At this writing, incorporation has not been concluded. The first board of directors of the corporation will be the original members of the transition team.

2. Chapters. Because incorporation has not been completed,

the corporate chapters in the major urban centers have not been officially established. Participants have, however, been recruited. Each chapter will be composed of a rehabilitation specialist, an educator, a parent, and a visually-impaired youth. The purpose of each local chapter will be to enhance the transition experience on the local level for every blind or visually impaired youngster in the community.

3 & 4. Cooperative Agreements. Because the organization of Youth in Transition, Inc., has not been completed, formal cooperative agreements cannot be executed. Commitments have been received from both the Bureau of Services to the Blind (BSB) and the Nevada Division of Special Education.

5. Consultants/Advisors. On the state-wide level the state team has added the following experts to assist us in making Youth in Transition, Inc. an effort of the highest degree of quality:

Mervin J. Flander, Chief, Bureau of Services to the Blind  
Jane Early, Administrator, Special Education Division  
Donny Loux, Chief, Rehabilitation Planning, Research and  
Program Development

6. Financial Support. This step necessarily is dependent upon incorporation. Funding, although very little is required, is needed for operational expenses to coordinate the formation of local chapters and participation in individual IEP developments. Commitments for support have been made from BSB Grant & Gift

Account, from Special Education, and from the Developmental Disabilities Council.

7. Training. In late summer of 1986, all team members were trained in the IEP process. Training was conducted by educators and parents familiar with the process.

8. IEP Participation. When the 1986 school year begins team members will attend every IEP conference held to develop a plan for blind and visually impaired youth. Attendance is for the purpose of supporting the parent and child, for advocating their rights and entitlements, and for encouraging a comprehensive IEP which considers academic, social and vocational factors.

9. Early Identification. In cooperation with several organizations (AFB, Nevada Council of the Blind, National Federation of the Blind of Nevada, the Committee of Blind Vendors, and Nevada Rehabilitation Planning, Research and Program Development) the Bureau of Services to the Blind is surveying all blind and visually impaired persons in the state to assess service needs. A major component of this survey, which is being distributed to 3000 Nevadans in large print, braille or recorded form, is designed to assess the needs of pre-school and school-age individuals. Another benefit, of course, will be to expand the number of youngsters known to the Bureau. This information will be shared with Youth in Transition, Inc. allowing for follow-up by team members. Also, the corporate name was specifically developed to be non-threatening, in the belief that

pediatric ophthalmologists and optometrists will be more easily encouraged to refer a parent to Youth in Transition, Inc. than to services identified by the word "blind." This notion has been discussed with pediatricians and their response has been optimistic. Our goal is to establish a registry of blind and visually impaired youth, to be maintained by our group rather than a government agency.

Note: Although the Nevada transition model, Youth in Transition Inc., is not fully operational at the time of publication, the organization of state-wide transition services is not stalled. It appears to the AFB project staff that the components of the model can be rapidly implemented once incorporation is granted or can be modified and implemented even if incorporation is ruled out.

A CAREER AWARENESS EXPERIENCE  
ADVENTURES TO THE FUTURE

New York

Question: Have you wondered what an effective approach might be to provide blind/visually impaired students with opportunities to meet and interview adult role models who represent many different careers?

## Overview

- I. Type of Transition Model:  
Career Awareness
- II. Target Population:  
High School Students  
Parents  
Adult Role Models  
Professionals
- III. Collaborative Features:
  - A. Agencies - Public Schools  
Board of Cooperative Education Services  
Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped  
Private College
  - B. Consumers - Students  
Parents  
Adult Role Models
  - C. Private Employers - N/A
  - D. National Organizations - American Foundation for the Blind
- IV. Local/Municipal Resources:  
Private Colleges
- V. On-Going Support Systems:
  - A. Community - Local and district schools
  - B. Administrative - N. Y. State Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped
- VI. State/Local Laws and Regulations  
N.A.
- VII. Funding Sources:
  - A. American Foundation for the Blind
  - B. Registration fees from parents, students and professionals
  - C. N. Y. State Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped

VIII. Contact Persons:

Mary Ann Bonner  
Children's Consultant  
Commission for the Blind & Visually Handicapped  
175 Fulton Avenue  
Hempstead, NY 11550  
516-538-7070

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175 Fulton Avenue  
Hempstead, NY 11550  
516-538-7070

A CAREER AWARENESS EXPERIENCE  
ADVENTURES TO THE FUTURE

New York

Question: Have you wondered what an effective approach might be to provide blind/visually impaired students with opportunities to meet and interview adult role models who represent many different careers?

Answer: Mary Anne Bonner and Andrew Pasternak of The New York Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped developed and implemented a career awareness day for blind/visually impaired students, their parents and professionals.

Introduction

"ADVENTURES TO THE FUTURE" provided the first opportunity for fourteen year old, visually impaired Bobby to meet blind and visually impaired adults who had "made it" -- teachers, a vending stand operator, medical technicians and a computer programmer.

On that special day in May, Bobby asked Carla Kennedy, a nuclear medical technologist, if she told people she was blind before administering services. She laughed, "They can usually tell from the thick lenses I wear" (American Foundation for the Blind, 1984-85, p. 6). Most patients are more interested in her expertise than her vision. During another conversation with a man who is totally blind, Bobby and his father were equally impressed to hear how this individual did his job as a planner, consultant, and administrator at IBM. With information gained through personal contacts with three adults "who have made it", Bobby with his father has been growing more excited about the

chances of finding a career to match his many talents. After all, those visually impaired high achievers who showed up at "ADVENTURES TO THE FUTURE" were once Bobby's age. And they too had dreams (American Foundation for the Blind, 1984-85, p.6).

#### A Career Awareness Day Concept

"ADVENTURES TO THE FUTURE" was jointly sponsored by the New York State Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped (CBVH); Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) III, Suffolk County; V.I.P. (Visually Impaired Program); Adelphi University; and the American Foundation for the Blind. The training seminar was designed to improve transition from school to work for blind and visually impaired youth who live on Long Island, New York.

The primary focus was to provide high school age students and their parents with opportunities to interact with employed adults who are blind and visually impaired. In addition, local rehabilitation and special education staff were available to not only facilitate the various activities but also, provide information to students and their families.

Visually impaired youth on Long Island were eager to meet with adults with similar disabilities who had "made it" in the world of work. This need is not unique to these youngsters. The Research and Training Center in Blindness and Low Vision (Mississippi State University) has documented this need through a

national survey study. (Career Development Needs of Blind and Visually Impaired Students, April 1986, Mississippi State University, R & T Center). Being able to ask questions about the use of technology, public transportation, and rehabilitation services; relationships with sighted co-workers; and, disclosure of disability on the resume, is critical to youngsters concerned about their future. All such questions need to be answered not only by professionals or parents but also by employed adults who have similar disabilities.

#### Preparing for the Training Seminar

In preparation for the seminar, rehabilitation representatives from CBVH met with local itinerant teachers to discuss the agenda and review the unique career development needs of visually impaired youth. This provided an opportunity to share ideas and strengthen working relationships.

Worksheets were developed for distribution to the students prior to attending the one-day seminar. These worksheets were designed to have students reflect on their own family's work history, develop an awareness of and stimulate an interest in specific careers. Another worksheet was on career development rights and responsibilities, such as rights related to the need for career information; equal access to vocational training opportunities; and access to appropriate technology and work-study experiences.

Personal responsibilities were to be identified and noted by each student. This later formed the basis for discussions between teachers and students.

The CBVH staff identified ten employed adults who are blind/visually impaired to be resources for the students and their families. Rehabilitation staff of the Long Island CBVH contacted these selected adults to: discuss the purpose of the career seminar; provide an outline of how each small breakout session was to be conducted; and, share guidelines on types of career information to be presented. These adults were willing to participate and eager to share their individual career development experiences and strategies. The individuals selected represented careers in nuclear medical technology, computer programming, employment counseling, teaching, administration, social work, vending stand operations, and industrial work.

Prior to the training seminar the rehabilitation counselors of the Long Island office of CBVH, in cooperation with adult role models who were leading the small group sessions, developed a one-page work profile which included present position, job duties, career paths, visual status, special aids or appliances used on the job, personal qualities needed on the job, and personal job search experiences. Each job was then coded by the appropriate Dictionary of Occupational Title number and additional reference sources were identified.

Eight job profiles were compiled into a booklet entitled "A Sampler of Career Choices for the Visually Impaired." The introduction reflects the perspective of the local rehabilitation staff:

What types of work can visually impaired people do?

We have never been able to answer this deceptively simple question without asking the inquirer a dozen questions to clarify what he means!

Several of our former clients have generously shared their work profiles so that we can learn what they do...how they prepared to work...their strengths...and how they compensate for their visual impairments.

We are here to assist you prepare for your career. This booklet was available for each student to take home as a resource.

#### A Career Awareness Day

The format for the day was designed to give each student maximum time with the adult leaders. Each student self-selected and pre-registered for three small group sessions which were one hour in length. Other time was spent in an opening general session, a luncheon, and a closing panel session. Parents accompanied their children.

Each breakout session had 10-15 persons attending with the adult role model as the principal speaker and a moderator from CBVH. Prior to the training seminar, moderators met with speakers to discuss general topics to be covered. While speakers' styles

varied, they all presented themselves as being in charge of their careers. In addition to specific information about their jobs they shared: personal experiences about mobility; options and methods used to travel to and from the job; how, when, and why they informed co-workers of their visual impairment; and job accommodations. Questions from the students frequently focused on types of personal/social encounters faced daily at work whereas parents frequently requested information about specific job requirements. General sessions balanced the small workshops. The luncheon was particularly effective in providing both parents and students with the opportunity to interact with each other, the speakers, and other professionals. The American Foundation for the Blind film "Employed Ability" was shown to give a broader perspective of employment options and stimulate future discussion.

This approach not only provided specific career information but also promoted attitude change. A positive change is most likely to occur through interactive and direct experiences. Feedback from both students and their parents indicated that positive changes occurred based on their interaction with the adult speakers. How to sustain and build on this change remains a challenge. New networks among students, parents, and professionals were initiated. Also, several of the speakers who met each other for the first time discussed their future roles as resource persons. With this nucleus of individuals future

seminars can be facilitated. While actual costs for this seminar were minimal (\$300), planning required a substantial commitment of staff time. This was essential not only for designing the seminar, but also for coordination, planning, materials preparation and, organization of the facility.

The Second Year :

"ADVENTURES TO THE FUTURE" was not only an exciting experience for the students but also a motivating one for the planners and adult role models. As a result a second year activity has taken place and possible third year plans are under consideration.

For the second year activity the focus was on skill development and the day was entitled "On Your Mark! Get Ready! Get Set! Go!" Although the format was similar to year one it differed in that professional educators and rehabilitation counselors co-facilitated sessions with adult role models. Naturally the focus changed, moving from career awareness to skill development. The four workshops were (1) "On Your Mark"--Career Exploration; (2) "Get Ready"--Self-Awareness; (3) "Get Set"--Decision Making; and (4) "Go"--Pulling it Together. Students were provided with a workbook, prepared by the workshop developers, which contained exercises to be completed for each workshop.

In the career exploration workshop the following concepts and

activities were presented: gathering information through brainstorming, interviewing, and written information; occupations and job exploration; interview guidelines to use in seeking career/job related information; and an introduction to written resources on career information. In the self awareness workshop the focus was on individual roles, interests and abilities. The decision-making workshop addressed types of decisions, vocational decision-making, and the meaning of decision-making for the individual. In the final workshop on pulling it together the students considered what to include in their own Individual Written Rehabilitation Plan (IWRP). Plans for the third year are still being formulated.

#### Conclusion

This experience has served to motivate and educate the students, parents, professionals, and adult role models. This project is fun, challenging at times, and replicable. But, most of all it can be an effective way to assist blind and visually impaired students expand their awareness of future career options and develop readiness skills as they take an active role in their own transition from school to work.

### References

American Foundation for the Blind, (1984-1985) Annual Report, New York: American Foundation for the Blind.

Bonner, M.A., Pasternak, A., Simpson, F. "ADVENTURES TO THE FUTURE", Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness. December 1985, pp. 7-9, 468-70.

Career Development Needs of Blind and Visually Impaired Students. (1986). Mississippi State University Rehabilitation and Training Center. April .

Spungin, S., 1983, "Career development in an educational context" in Rehabilitation Research and Training Center in Blindness and Low Vision, Proceedings of the McFarland Seminar. Arlington, VA: Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired.

SUMMER EMPLOYMENT IN INDUSTRY

New York

Question: Have you wondered how private industry and a state agency could collaborate to provide vital work experiences for visually handicapped college students who are about to enter the labor market?

## Overview

### I. Type of Transition Model:

Industry - Agency Collaboration

### II. Target Population:

Legally Blind College Students

### III. Collaborative Features:

- A. Agency - New York State Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped, White Plains Office, Westchester County, New York.
- B. Consumer - Blind and visually handicapped college students.
- C. Private Industry - IBM Summer Employment Program, Westchester Employment Office, White Plains, N.Y.

### IV. Local/Municipal Resources - As needed by individual students.

### V. On-going Support Systems:

Program is dependent on continuation of collaboration between IBM and the New York State Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped.

### VI. State/Local Laws/Regulations:

U.S. Department of Labor Guidelines

### VII. Funding:

Program is financially dependent on the continuation of the IBM summer employment program.

### VIII. Contact Persons:

William L. Kane  
District Office Manager  
Commission for the Blind and  
Visually Handicapped  
200 Mamaroneck Avenue, Room 603  
White Plains, N.Y. 10601  
(914) 946-1698

Paula T. Carroll, Manager  
Summer Employment Program  
IBM  
Westchester Employment  
Office  
12 Water Street  
White Plains, N.Y. 10601  
(914) 993-7803

## SUMMER EMPLOYMENT IN INDUSTRY

New York

Question: Have you wondered how private industry and a state agency could collaborate to provide vital work experiences for visually handicapped students who are about to enter the labor market?

Answer: William L. Kane, District Office Manager in Westchester County for the New York State Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped, describes the collaboration between his office and the IBM Summer Employment Program.

In December, 1983, IBM and CBVH entered into an agreement to cooperate each year in the referral and acceptance of highly qualified college students who are legally blind into IBM's on-going Summer Employment Program.

Since 1984, as the result of collaboration between the IBM Westchester County Summer Employment Program and the Westchester District Office of the New York State Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped (CBVH), ten legally blind college students have worked for one summer at IBM. The students were selected from a total of 18 candidates who were referred to IBM by CBVH. All have worked in positions related to their interests and college courses.

For the past three years, staff of the IBM Summer Employment Program and staff of the White Plains Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped have met and agreed upon guidelines for referring appropriate candidates to the work program and upon

follow-along supervision. The following factors have contributed to the high rate of placement of CBVH students:

1. Pre-screening by CBVH counselors of applications, and a fact sheet which included a review of each applicant's independent mobility skills and communication skills.
2. Review of all referrals by coordinators in IBM and CBVH.
3. Open communications concerning skills of each applicant.
4. Supportive services available, when necessary, by CBVH and staff.

Each year IBM Westchester appoints a new coordinator of the Summer Employment Program. Schools and community groups are contacted to locate suitable candidates for summer employment. The Program often receives over 5,000 applications for 800 positions. There is an incentive program to encourage IBM managers to provide summer employment; any manager who requests help has an opportunity to also place a handicapped summer employee at the expense of a separate special fund set up by the corporation.

Visually handicapped students have held positions in two types of programs at IBM facilities in Westchester County and Greenwich, Connecticut -- preprofessional and administrative.