



Transition e-News

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If you would like to submit an article or information on an upcoming event for future newsletters, please contact Linda Maitrejean at lindam@cesa11.k12.wi.us.

Spotlight News

Wendi Dawson Joins DPI



Wendi Dawson joined the Special Education Team at the Department of Public Instruction on April 25, 2011. Wendi will be taking over as the Transition Consultant after the retirement of Steve Gilles. Wendi joins DPI after years of services at CESA 5 as Transition Coordinator and Assistant Director of Special Education. Wendi received her Master’s Degree from UW-Madison in Education Leadership and Policy Analysis, licensed as a Director of Special Education and Principal and her Bachelor’s Degree from UW-Oshkosh licensed in Cross-Categorical Special Education and Cognitive Disabilities. Her contact information at DPI is: Wendi.Dawson@dpi.wi.gov Office: 608-266-1146.

Articles of Interest

Mobility Management in Wisconsin

by Jen Ledin, Transition Coordinator, CESA #12

People who face transportation disadvantages have different challenges in accessing services. These challenges can be further impacted by geography. For the past several years, Federal, State and local governments, and community-based organizations have responded to the challenge by creating specialized programs to meet particular transportation needs. However, most of these are human service programs that fund limited transportation services to provide eligible participants with access to particular services, such as job training, health care, senior centers, or rehabilitation programs. This continues to leave gaps in transportation services and barriers to transportation options.

One of the responses to this continuing issue is the New Freedom Program, which grew out of the New Freedom Initiative under Executive Order 13217, “Community-Based Alternatives for Individuals with Disabilities”, on June 18, 2001. The goal of the New Freedom Program is to provide tools to assist people with disabilities who work to be integrated into the workforce and society, including a plan to help reduce barriers to transportation services and increase options available. The WI Dept. of Transportation is coordinating the use of the New Freedom funds.

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Articles of Interest

Wisconsin Post High School Outcomes Survey: At-A-Glance

by Mary Kampa, Project Director

Every district in Wisconsin is required to participate in a post high school outcomes survey at least once within a five year period. The Wisconsin Post High School Outcomes Survey / Indicator 14 assesses the outcomes of youth with disabilities one year after leaving high school, and considers outcomes of employment and participation in higher education and other types of postsecondary education or training. This At-A-Glance Report further describes the post high survey and Indicator 14, and provides information on the major outcomes, state targets, and levels of engagement for the 2010 survey year, and can be viewed at

http://www.posthighsurvey.org/documents/2011/WPHSOS_AtAGlance2010_12Feb2011.pdf.

Please visit the Wisconsin Post High School Outcomes Survey at <http://www.posthighsurvey.org> for past survey reports, survey tools, and transition-related resources.

Trauma Informed Care Tip Sheets from the Safe Start Center

Safe Start Center is offering the following downloadable resources on trauma informed care for children exposed to violence and their families (<http://www.safestartcenter.org/resources/tip-sheets.php>):

- Tips for Parents and Other Caregivers
 - Tips for Child Welfare Staff
 - Tips for Early Childhood Providers
 - Tips for Engaging Men and Fathers
 - Tips for Domestic Violence and Homeless Shelters
 - Tips for Teachers
 - Tips for Agencies and Staff Working with Youth
 - Tips for Agencies Working With Immigrant Families
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2010-2011 Indicator 13 Trainings

by Kim Swenson, CESA #11 RSN Project Director

Indicator 13 is one of those compliance indicators that our state, in its Annual Performance Report (APR), must report to the federal government. Since 2005-2006 school districts in the Procedural Compliance Self-Assessment cycle have been responsible for providing the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) with the information. Those 86 districts included in the cycle annually are representative of districts across the state. Each district participated once in the 5 year cycle, 2005 through 2011, with the exception of Milwaukee, who participates annually. As a state, compliance scores have increased from 7% in 2005-2006 to 75% in 2009-2010. 2010-2011 compliance data was not reported in the APR due to collection requirement changes.

Beginning with the new self-assessment cycle in 2011-2012, Indicator 13 data will be collected and reported annually by all Wisconsin school districts. The checklist elements will stay the same with a reporting date of November 15, 2011. Instructions for reporting this data will be posted on DPI's website in August for school staff to access.

For the past 2 years DPI, Wisconsin Statewide Transition Initiative (WSTI) and Regional Service Network (RSN), a grant funded project, have collaborated to bring Indicator 13 ITV presentations across the state at no cost. Paul Sherman, DPI Consultant, and Linda Maitrejean, WSTI Project Director, co-present the day long sessions. Paul covers the compliance aspects of Indicator 13 while Linda offers effective practice strategies. The afternoon is dedicated to IEP review with immediate answers to questions by Paul and Linda. This year, a total of fifty-one trainings have been held throughout the state reaching two hundred eighty-five participants. At the time of this writing there are an additional fourteen sites scheduled in May. Go to <http://www.wsti.org> and scroll down the homepage to Upcoming Events for locations and dates. The 2011-2012 school year will bring additional trainings in September and October so check back often.

Articles of Interest

Healthy Transitions Initiative

Seven states were selected to receive 5-year grants to assist in the provision of developmentally appropriate services to young people with mental health needs, aged 14 to 26. Wisconsin is the recipient of one of these grants. The state Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and Wraparound Milwaukee are working together to develop a model program that can result in dissemination about evidence-informed services.

While the Wraparound Milwaukee project, called OYEAH (Older Youth and Adult Heroes), provides a scale of services that are neither needed nor available in most other counties, the project can inform practices in both the adult and child mental health systems in Wisconsin.

At present, WSTI and HTI are working together to provide training and resource information to both educators and mental health professionals. In the past 18 months, over a thousand people have attended breakouts at conferences and other training events addressing issues pertinent to young people of transition age. Emphases include better understanding of the resources from various systems (education, mental health, vocational rehabilitation, housing, etc.), building collaborations, enhancing skills for youth self-determination, supporting families of young people in transition. The project includes a focus on identifying opportunities and barriers to transition—optimizing the former and mitigating the latter whenever possible.

For more information, contact Sally Raschick, Healthy Transitions Project Director at the Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. She can be reached at 608.261.9313 or sally.raschick@wisconsin.gov.

Mobility Management in Wisconsin

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New Freedom funds have been used to establish Mobility Managers throughout the state. This Mobility Management program has the following focus:

- To manage and deliver coordinated transportation services to customers, including older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals with lower incomes
- To focus on meeting individual customer needs through a wide range of transportation options and service providers
- To focus on coordinating these services and providers in order to achieve a more efficient transportation service delivery system for public policy makers and taxpayers who underwrite the cost of service delivery

There are 57 Mobility Managers located statewide. Those who are funded by the New Freedom Act emphasize service for people with disabilities, regardless of the trip purpose. Therefore, these transportation systems go beyond those typically provided by programs that focus primarily on transportation for medical and other appointments. The programs being developed by these Mobility Managers include paratransit, volunteer driver programs, demand-response programs, vouchers, vehicle loan and repair programs, and transit education and training programs.

Mobility Managers can provide the following services:

- Assessment of the individual customer's transportation needs to help them get where they need to go, when they need to get there
- Information/education about existing providers of transportation services in their areas through:
 - One-stop call centers
 - Provision of information on a variety of transportation options in their area or adjacent counties
 - Working directly with callers to arrange for or schedule rides
 - Referring callers to transportation provider(s) in the area, if appropriate

A list of Mobility Managers statewide is available through this link:

<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/docs/mobility-managers.pdf>

A statewide resource map of transportation providers is being developed and will be available on the WSTI website by the end of June. For specific county information, contact your local Mobility Manager or county Human Services office or local ADRC (Aging and Disability Resource Center).

Articles of Interest

Social Security Testing New Ways to Return Workers with Disabilities to the Workforce

by Jennifer Neugart, W - DHS



The Social Security Administration (SSA) recently announced the beginning of the Benefit Offset National Demonstration (BOND) project. BOND is a special project that will test a new way to treat earnings for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries. SSA's goal is to find out how disabled beneficiaries respond to rule changes that allow them to keep more of their benefits while trying to return to work.

Under current program rules, individuals who receive SSDI benefits generally lose their entire monthly cash benefit if their earnings exceed \$1000 per month after using up a nine-month trial work period (TWP). SSA pays benefits through the TWP and for an additional three months. If the worker continues to earn over the \$1000 monthly limit in gross wages, SSA suspends benefit checks.

The BOND program provides randomly chosen SSDI beneficiaries with a gradual reduction of benefits (\$1 for each additional \$2 earned over a yearly threshold of \$12000)—thus eliminating the “cash cliff” currently in effect. Those eligible for the benefit offset will be able to earn more from work and keep some of their disability benefits. SSA will continue to provide Medicare coverage to BOND participants earning over the limit.

Many SSDI beneficiaries worry about losing their cash benefits if they earn too much money. Congress has asked SSA to test policy changes to encourage workers with disabilities to return to gainful employment. SSA will randomly select SSDI beneficiaries in 10 sites around the country for the BOND project. The test will run from 2011 until September of 2022. Individual participants can only participate in the BOND test for five years.

SSA has established a BOND office in Brookfield. The BOND office works with local agencies to explain BOND. If you are a SSDI beneficiary who receives a BOND notice in a letter or a phone call, be sure to contact BOND. If someone in your family receives a notice or call, encourage that person to respond. You can call toll-free:

Voice: 1-877-7BOND09 (1-877-726-6309)

TTY: 1-877-7BOND90 (1-877-726-6390)

You can call the nearest BOND office at 1-262-789-2745 or 1-855-791-0088.



Upcoming Events

National Institute of Financial and Economic Literacy

The National Institute of Financial and Economic Literacy, born and based in Wisconsin, is offering three week-long courses for teachers this summer in Madison:

- Paychecks, Financial Contracts and Entrepreneurship, June 20-24
- Investor Education, Economics and Insurance, July 11-15
- Credit and Money, August 1-5 (includes trip to Chicago financial district)

The group says its lesson plans align with Wisconsin's standards for Personal Financial Literacy, as well as those of the National JumpStart Coalition. A \$225 fee for each class includes lodging and meals. Another \$375 buys graduate credits.

For more information, visit: http://www.wdfi.org/yymm/semandevents/education_series.htm.

Upcoming Events

Community of Practice on Transition June Meeting

This FREE meeting will focus on helping students with disabilities transition from high school to post-secondary education. This meeting is intended for students with disabilities, family, high school special education staff, post-secondary educators and disability staff, state agency personnel and community-based agency representatives.

June 16, 2011

9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. (2 separate events; attend one or both)

Carroll University
Center for Graduate Studies
2410 Davidson Road
Waukesha, WI

Register at <http://www.wsti.org/event.register.list.php>

Morning session: Representatives from community & technical colleges, and 4-year private and public universities will share common practices, expectations and procedures for students with disabilities. They will also highlight some of the differences between institutions and share how students with disabilities can make informed choices about their higher education promoting a smooth transition to college. The various practice groups will also report on their activities. The meeting will be facilitated by the Post Secondary Practice Group and WI AHEAD in the morning.

Afternoon session: A community conversation will be held to explore how our state can increase post secondary options for young adults with intellectual disabilities. A Think College Representative will give a nationwide overview regarding post secondary experiences of these students. The discussion will be used to inform a state plan for Wisconsin. Sponsored by The Waisman Center and Think College.



Youth Updates

Youth In Partnership with Parents for Empowerment (YiPPE)

When the Youth In Partnership with Parents for Empowerment (YiPPE) program began 5 years ago, it was out of a need to get families information when they needed it in order to make a smooth transition into adulthood. YiPPE takes a functional approach to transition while using best practices of family involvement and youth development to help families through the transition process by focusing on four major life areas: employment, education, community living and health. The National Standards and Quality Indicators inform us that family involvement in their child's education is recognized by many as the single most important factor in school success and achievement. In order for family members to participate beyond their own child, they need opportunities to develop their leadership skills. For youth, we know that youth development and leadership activities lead to higher school achievement, more active community participation, better self-advocacy skills, and a smoother transition to adulthood (Scales and Leffert, 1999). Since YiPPE began, dozens of families have gone through the program and gained leadership skills, learned strategies for a successful transition, obtained valuable resources and prepared to "let go." Youth have increased their self-confidence and self-esteem, had numerous opportunities to develop their self-advocacy and leadership skills and express their goals for the future.

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Youth Updates

Youth In Partnership with Parents for Empowerment (YiPPE)

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One family who has gone through the YiPPE experience is an excellent example of the YiPPE process and a successful transition. Emily and her mother, Lori, attended YiPPE three years ago. They were like most families who attended the program - unsure of what the future holds, what resources are available to them and how to bridge the gap between Emily's goals and those her mother had for her. But things started to change for them as they attended the 5 weekend sessions. Emily came to YiPPE after she had just graduated from high school and was getting started in college. She had many interventions before attending the program, but the greatest impact YiPPE had on Emily was giving her confidence, which increased her self-determination, self-advocacy and leadership skills. Emily was at a point where until she believed in herself and thought she could be successful, nothing would change.

At YiPPE and through her many home and academic experiences, Emily learned more about her strengths and weaknesses. We spend a lot of time on this area because it is critical for all youth to know what they are good at to build their self-confidence and help them with employment options as well as what they need to spend some time working on. Emily identified that she is very organized at home and school, she's outgoing (although she admits she's a little shy at first), she's a good student who turns in homework and projects on time, and she's independent in taking the bus to school and living in the dorms. Some of her weaknesses are time management; money handling; some daily living activities like laundry, cooking and cleaning; and taking notes and tests in school. During the program, she also helped develop her leadership skills by assisting other youth participants in thinking about their strengths and weaknesses.

At YiPPE, she also learned more about her disability. We talk about other notable figures who have disabilities that didn't let it get in the way of their achievements and we talk about how having a disability is only one aspect of who they are, but one they should be proud of. When Emily was younger, she didn't want people to know how much she struggled so after she graduated from high school, she thought she didn't need to worry about it anymore. Now, it's the first thing she tells her professors when she advocates for what she needs. Today, Emily says, "my disability is not who I am, but has defined my path in life..."

One of the main things that helped promote Emily's self-confidence and independence is her love of sports, especially swimming, soccer, and figure skating. In college, she managed the volleyball and softball teams. She practiced the self-determination skills she learned at YiPPE through role playing a variety of situations youth may find themselves in and expressed her desire to not just manage, but to be part of the team and play soccer. She is now on the team and has many friends who are very accepting of who she is.

Another major area that Emily and her mom worked on during YiPPE was health. This is one area that many families overlook in the transition process. We work with families on taking small steps to help the youth take more control of their own health care. For example, the first time a youth calls to make their own doctor appointment, mom or dad may be on the phone as well for support and as a back up. Emily now makes her own doctor's appointments, which includes finding out when her mom is available because she provides transportation. She recently began medication which she is now able to handle independently.

In college, Emily needs accommodations to be successful. She has learned to initiate contact with the disability services office and provide them with her documentation of disability and to discuss her specific needs. She has also used her advocacy skills by talking to her professors at the beginning of each semester to introduce herself and let them know what accommodations she needs. Previously, she didn't want anyone to know she had a disability and was too shy to take these steps to get the help she needs to be successful.

Emily learned many life skills at college. She lived in the dorms and became more aware of daily living skills that she needed to work on, such as laundry and cleaning. Her mom hadn't taught her these skills because she never envisioned a time when she would live on her own...until YiPPE. Returning home for the summer, her mom noticed that she was much more independent in doing her own laundry, cooking, cleaning, etc. Lori's advice to other parents is, "to give them experiences so they can know the possibilities." This helped Lori to prepare her daughter and herself for when the time came for Emily to leave home. Looking back, Lori says, "I was my daughter's biggest barrier. I didn't want her to be hurt if she wasn't successful...We must allow our young adults to have a voice."

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Youth Updates

Youth In Partnership with Parents for Empowerment (YiPPE)

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Every year, Emily does something new that shows her mom how independent she is (living in the dorm, taking the bus). Currently, Lori has a car for her, but Emily doesn't have her driver's license yet. Lori decided that if Emily doesn't get the license soon, she'll sell the car. Before YiPPE, Lori would get very upset about these kinds of situations, but now she has learned to set the boundaries, allow Emily to choose and to live with the choices she makes.

Emily and her mom have used many resources over the last few years to help Emily reach her goals. Most of these were resources they discovered through the YiPPE program including Person-Centered Planning, the Pathways to Independence Mobilizing for Employment training, the Discovery process, WSTI, The Abundant Community by John McKnight, Think College, and many resources from the Natural Supports Project through the Waisman Center.

Some of the greatest takeaways for Lori and Emily from the YIPPE program were allowing Emily to try new things, finding the information they needed to make informed choices about the future and having higher expectations for her future. The most difficult part for Lori has been 'letting go' by allowing Emily to make decisions for her future and stepping back on a daily basis. It's okay for our young adults with disabilities to experience both the successes and the failures through experience. In Emily's family the role of the parent becomes less hands on and more of a supportive role based on her strengths as well as her weaknesses.

Emily has been home this past academic year and is keeping busy with the changes that occur in life. She's continuing her education in town and will transfer to UW-Whitewater in the fall of 2011 where she believes that she will get the support that she needs at a four year college to pursue her dreams of obtaining a degree. This is another exciting, new challenge she is looking forward to knowing that her family continues their support of her abilities, not her disability.

WSTI Website Resources

Transition Resource Directory

Transition Services are provided by local and statewide agencies and are listed by County. Check it out at <http://www.wsti.org/trd.php>

Transition Topics A-Z

A complete list of transition topics can be found on the WSTI website at http://www.wsti.org/transition_topics.php.