

Abstract

Preparing students for adult life is a widely researched topic (Kraemer & Blancher, 2001) and includes areas such as community living (Chadsey-Rusch et al., 1996), self-determination (Wehmeyer, Garner, & Yeager, 2006), and maintenance of physical health (Modell & Valdez, 2002). In particular, the ability to acquire meaningful employment is central to promoting successful outcomes for students with disabilities (Benz, Lindstrom, & Yovanoff, 2000; Benz, Yovanoff, Doren, 1997; McMahan & Baer, 2001). In spite of this, data suggest that 54% of high school graduates with disabilities work in segregated environments (Kraemer & Blacher, 2001). Additionally, outcomes for adults with disabilities have traditionally been characterized by unemployment, low pay, job changes, limitations in independence, and few social opportunities (Patton, Cronin, & Jairrels, 1997).

Because experiences to develop work skills and preferences are critical to the transition process, providing transition students with multiple opportunities to sample jobs and learn skills in real situations is essential (Wood & Test, 1997). Work-related skills, such as interacting with coworkers, maintaining appropriate work place behavior, and developing physical stamina to work for several hours at a time, are necessary and best taught through real work experiences (Moon & Inge, 2000). At the same time, instruction that is implemented directly in the work site can incorporate many of the above-mentioned functional skills.

Time-management, such as the ability to follow a schedule and complete job tasks within a specified time, is a crucial skill necessary for successful functioning at work (Sowers, Rusch, Connis, & Cummings, 1980). This presentation, based on the presenter's recent research will center on the importance of teaching strategies in community-based employment settings to assist with time-management during the transition years to improve job retention upon adulthood.

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