

Talking Points for Inclusive Postsecondary Education Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability

Postsecondary education (PSE) programs provide opportunities for youth with intellectual disability to develop employment skills and become less dependent on family and public supports.

- Youth with intellectual disability who participate in PSE and vocational rehabilitation are 26% more likely to exit with paid jobs than those who don't pursue PSE.

PSE programs are effective at helping students with intellectual disability find meaningful, competitive employment.

- 76% of students who completed a Transition and Postsecondary Program for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) in 2016-2017 had a paid job, had participated in career development, or had done both by the time they graduated.
- 61% of students who completed TPSID programs had a paid job 1 year after exit
- The 39% of students who were not working 1 year after exit were engaged in a range of experiences including unpaid career development, looking for work, and attending further postsecondary education
- Of the students employed at exit, 90% were in jobs that are integrated and in the competitive labor market.

PSE programs increase people's wages and help them achieve financial stability.

- Youth with intellectual disability who complete PSE programs earn 73% more income than those who do not.
- 78% of youth with intellectual disability who have completed PSE programs and found employment are paid at or above the minimum wage.

PSE programs offer a path to productivity and self-sufficiency for many people who've never had opportunities for employment before.

- 52% of employed TPSID graduates never had a paid job before enrolling in their program.

PSE programs promote inclusion of people with intellectual disability in society.

- 90% of TPSID students who are employed upon graduation enter jobs that are fully integrated and in the competitive labor market.
- PSE programs with residential campuses expose students with intellectual disability and individuals without intellectual disability to each other, helping to build personal and professional connections.

Possible state actions:

- Create a pilot program to provide PSE to students with intellectual disability.
- If a pilot program already exists, fund expansion to a consortium approach involving several colleges in the state.
- Open up state college grant and loan programs to people with intellectual disability, or create a specialized state scholarship program for students with intellectual disability.
- Explore use of lottery or other state funding as sources for scholarships.
- Provide support to institutions of higher education so that inclusive PSE programs can be created and sustained.
- Create a permanent commission or board to ensure the quality of PSE programs that support students with intellectual disability.