Translating Evidence Based Practices into Outcomes for Transition-Aged Youth Receiving SSI

Capacity Building Institute
May, 2018
Learning Objectives

Understand the overall PROMISE project scope.

Learn how PROMISE globally is making an impact through:
- Communication
- Technical Assistance
- Capacity Building

Reviewing why evidenced-based practices matter: Maryland and New York.
- Interagency Linkages
- Paid and Unpaid Employment
- Benefits Counseling
- Family Engagement
PROMOTING THE READINESS OF MINORS IN SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME: FEDERAL AUTHORITY

APPROPRIATIONS

1. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 (P.L. 112-74) provided funds for activities to improve the outcomes of child SSI recipients and their families.

2. The 6 Model Demonstration Projects received a total of approximately $229 million for 5 years.
FEDERAL PARTNERS

INTERAGENCY

U.S. Department of Education

U.S. Social Security Administration

U.S. Health & Human Services

U.S. Department of Labor

Association for University Centers on Disabilities (National Technical Assistance Center)

PROMISE Model Demonstration Projects (MDPs)

Mathematica Policy Research (National Evaluator)
**PROMISE**

- Strong partnerships to coordinate services across state agencies
- Services and supports to improve education and employment outcomes for SSI youth and their families:
  - Case management
  - Benefits counseling and financial literacy training
  - Career and work-based learning experiences
  - Parent training and information

**Personal Barriers**

- Low familial expectations for youth’s education and employment
- Low levels of motivation and self-confidence
- Fear of benefit loss and confusion about financial options
- Insufficient advocacy for school or work-related supports and accommodations
- Limited education and skills demanded by employers
- Limited work experience

**Environment**

- Inadequate disability and employment services and supports
- Fragmented and uncoordinated system of supports
- Disincentives for productive activities in SSI and other programs
- Employer attitudes towards persons with disabilities
- Economic and labor market environment
- Societal perceptions of disability

**Education, employment, and financial security of SSI youth and their families**

**Key Outcomes**

**Short-Term**

- Holistic assessment of youth and family needs
- Increased coordination and use of services
- Parental training
- Financial planning
- Higher parental expectations for youth’s education, employment, and self-sufficiency
- Improved self-determination
- Educational progress
- Work-based experiences
- Employment credentials of parents

**Long-Term**

- Increased educational attainment of youth
- Improved youth and parent employment outcomes
- Reduced household reliance on SSI and other public programs
- Higher total household income and improved economic well-being

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RESEARCH DESIGN

POPULATION

1. Target Population: Youth, 14-16 years of age, enrolled in the SSI program through the Social Security Administration and their families

2. Six grant awardees were required to recruit 13,172 participants for the study (all MDPs were required to recruit 2,000 participants, except CA – 3,172 participants); recruitment ended on 4.30.16 and all MDPs met or exceeded their enrollment targets (total enrollment- 13,444/102%)

3. Experimental Research Design: RCT used to test interventions to predict positive outcomes for SSI eligible youth. The control group continues to receive typical services available to them in their state.
PURPOSE

COMPETITIVE GRANT AWARDS

1. Six grants were awarded in FY2013 for 5 years to implement Model Demonstration Projects (MDPs) to promote positive outcomes for children who receive SSI and their families.

2. PROMISE aims to encourage new ways of providing support and to build an evidence base on the effectiveness of promising interventions related to the transition from school to postsecondary education and employment.

3. The AUCD PROMISE TA Center was awarded in FY2014.

www.promisetacenter.org
PROMISE MDP CORE FEATURES

REQUIREMENTS

• **Develop partnerships** with multiple state agencies and organizations

• **Provide services and supports** which include:
  - case management
  - benefits counseling and financial capability services
  - career and work-based learning experiences, to include paid employment in integrated settings
  - parent training and information

• **Participant outreach and recruitment**

• **Provide technical assistance and training** to include professional development for stakeholders
PROMISE PARTICIPANTS

RURAL AREAS: ENCOMPASSES ALL POPULATION, HOUSING, AND TERRITORY NOT INCLUDED WITHIN AN URBAN AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Rural Participants</th>
<th>Total Participants</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>1040</td>
<td>56%</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASPIRE</td>
<td>582</td>
<td>1033</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>1467</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>996</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>1018</td>
<td>37%</td>
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</table>
## PROMISE PARTICIPANTS

### URBAN AREAS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Urban Participants</th>
<th>Total Participants</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>1040</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASPIRE</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>1033</td>
<td>44%</td>
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<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>1295</td>
<td>1467</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>996</td>
<td>55%</td>
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<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>1078</td>
<td>1078</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>1018</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>URBAN</strong></td>
<td><strong>RURAL</strong></td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Students and families frequently changes addresses and phone numbers.</td>
<td>▪ Evidence based practices typically developed in resource rich areas</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Robust system of supports can work at cross-purposes.</td>
<td>▪ Choices and opportunities in more remote areas differ from urban areas, both state and non-profit services and resources</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Infrastructure is formal, rigid, difficult to navigate, and in “silos”.</td>
<td>▪ Infrastructure less formal/siloed, connected, and collaborative.</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Transportation is available, but safety is a concern.</td>
<td>▪ Unemployment rates and opportunities differ</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ Sparsity of public transportation in rural areas</td>
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What has PROMISE done?

1. Contributed to **better understanding** and research regarding youth with disabilities who are in poverty

2. Further **refined** promising **practices** around key areas and interventions that other practitioners working across a variety of settings including schools and providers can learn from as well as determining areas where additional study is needed

3. **Identified gaps** in the current “system” of supports that is available to students and families.
PROMISE *ing* Practices: Communication

Making the time to meet in-person, build and maintain relationships (Immersed Community Supports)

Incorporation of a “PTA” model to encourage ongoing engagement – *service fairs, talent showcase, and social events*. 

PROMISE connects with existing community networks including local schools, agencies and organizations, as well as regional or state level agencies

Utilization of remote and distance platforms for training and service delivery, after relationships are established. (*examples include Phone, Email, Web meetings, Social media, etc.*)

Surveying youth and families to determine the best delivery model (season, date, time, location)
PROMISEing Practices: Fidelity and Technical Assistance

Each PROMISE project has strict technical specifications for each service provided, regardless of location of the service.

Consistent scopes of work, fidelity checklists, etc. are used within each project.

Training and technical assistance to ALL stakeholders, including community leaders.

Frequent communication with and reporting by contracted providers.

Using Data to change behavior – Recruitment and Employment.

Development of materials like “Case Management Field Guide” to provide the roadmap to supporting the youth – CQI process throughout the project.
PROMISEing Practices: Capacity Building

PROMISE advisory committees include representation by area, not only service

Development and facilitation of community-based resources; ‘seeding’ of existing services,

Assisting local services to build capacity through the logical partner (school, VR, etc.)

Development of resources and tools that will be continued beyond PROMISE – the Work Incentive Navigator (NY).
Worth noting

All youth receive SSI (Supplemental Security Income), meaning many of their household incomes are less than 100% FPL

Not all youth have IEPs or 504 Plans
Utilizing community knowledge increases overall willingness of youth and families to participate in PROMISE.

Community Based/Need to meet families where they are literally and figuratively.

Natural supports higher in youth employment in rural areas.

Higher rates of youth employment in rural areas than urban areas.
The Balancing Act

Engagement

Movement
Evidence Based Practices
Maryland:
• Schools in rural areas were far more likely to be engaged and had more knowledge of youth and partners than in urban areas. MD Department of Disabilities facilitated agency linkages (VR, DD, BHA, MSDE and others) at state level including development of an online tool.

New York:
• Utilization of the NYESS system to create the “conversation”. Partnership between Office of Mental Health and Department of Labor; now extended to Developmental Disabilities, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Health.

Interagency Linkages
Paid/Unpaid Work Experiences*

Maryland:
- Employment as an intervention as well as an outcome.
- Youth showed a strong interest in paid work and employers were interested in hiring them or offering experience.
- Need for staff training/capacity building, as well as strong ongoing focus on quality and performance outcomes.
- Positive Personal Profile.

New York:
- Getting providers to support youth in un-paid experiences is difficult.
- Gap that exists between utilization of Career Planning & Preparation and Paid Work

*(Carter, Austin, & Trainer, 2012; Gold, Fabian & Luecking, 2014)*
Benefits Counseling*

Maryland:

- A trust relationship must exist before talking about personal finances and public benefits.
- More interest in financial education, benefits counseling required a much stronger level of engagement.

New York:

- On-site, come to us services, do not work for providing benefits counseling to this population.
- Less curriculum based, and more “coaching” or specific issue focused. NYS – using this to develop the Work Incentives Navigator.

Note: No one, educators or others, should perpetuate the myth that individuals with disabilities will lose benefits if they can’t work. https://www.ssa.gov/work/WIPA.html *(Wittenburg, et al. 2007).
Parent Center Administration Focus Group

Conducted Tuesday, April 17th, 2018 to answer two primary questions:

*Did the intervention result in improved practices and policies at the state, regional and/or local levels?*

*Did the intervention result in improved education, employment and/or economic outcomes for SSI youth and/or their families?*

*Conducted with administrators and lead managers from three regional parent centers*
Top Three Challenges

CONNECTING
- Engagement
  - Students
  - Families

COMMUNICATING
- Partnership
  - Service Providers
  - Schools

CAPACITY
- Consistency
  - Service Providers
  - Rural Setting
Organizational Impact

Service Expansion

Outreach Strategies

Population Expansion

Expanded Partnerships

Cultural Sensitivity

Expanded Community
Shift from Light to Intense Supports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier I</th>
<th>Tier II</th>
<th>Tier III</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resource line / I&amp;R</td>
<td>Multiple interactions</td>
<td>Case tracking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational workshops</td>
<td>Outcome tracking</td>
<td>Longitudinal coaching / 1:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ongoing relationship</td>
<td>Customized coaching</td>
<td>Onsite advocacy / support</td>
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Evidence of Positive Partnerships with Schools

“Partners don’t see us as adversaries”

“Partners invite us in, give out our flyers, refer parents to us, send home our rack cards in backpacks, and link to our website”

“We’re both on the same page, bottom line is the kid”
New Relationships

- Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Projects & SSA
- Community Centers / Libraries
- Array of Service Providers
- State Vocational Rehabilitation Program and Others
- Local Education Agencies
Preparing Parent Centers to Work Effectively with SSI Youth/Families

Dedicated staff

Train staff on fidelity and intervention guidelines

Equip family coaches to do needs assessments

Clarity regarding roles and responsibilities

Establish people and data to support the work

Know your demographics

Wrap services
Discussion and Questions
Contact Information

To learn more about the six PROMISE Initiatives, see http://www.promisetacenter.org/promisemdps

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