

Slide 1

Presentation title: VR Counselor Information & Awareness of Transition Practices

Slide text: Presenters:

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Slide image 1: RRTC logo

Slide image 2: NTACTION logo

Slide 2

Slide title: Purpose of presentation

Slide text:

- Describe results of studies on Information and Awareness of State Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors regarding transition practices under WIOA
- Describe NTACTION, WINTAC, Y-TAC resources and technical assistance supports related to WIOA and Pre-ETS.

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Slide title: SVRA Counselor's & WIOA: 2 Phases

Slide text:

- Two-phase study conducted under the auspices of the VR/RRTC Youth (www.vrpracticesyouth.org)
- Purpose: To generate information from a national sample of state VR counselors regarding perceptions of implementation of transition practices under WIOA

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Slide title: Research Questions

Slide text:

- Phase 1: What are the perceptions of state VR agency counselors regarding transition-related practices regarding importance & preparation?
- Phase 2: What strategies and challenges do a sample of SVRAs identify in implementation of transition practices under WIOA?

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Slide title: Phase 1: Online Survey of SVRA

Slide text:

- We identified 15 SVRAs from the pool of those with > 62% successful closure rate from national analyses conducted by MPR (Honeycutt et al., 2013)
- We invited the VR State Directors of the 15 States to participate
- 13 States responded to the 1st invitation
- Response rate varied from .04 to .71 (n=625*)
- Overall response rate = .38 (n = 532)

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Slide title: State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency Response Rate

Slide image: This is a pie chart that depicts the # of respondents from each of the 13 State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies in the study. Illinois, Iowa and Minnesota had the highest response rate to the survey.

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Slide title: Methods: What did we do (Phase 1)

Slide text:

A brief survey (sensitive to response burden) of 35 items was developed

- Of major interest was 20-item scale of transition practices of VR counselors (derived from Plotner (2012) with expert input)
- Other survey items included: perception of barriers, agency tenure, proportion of youth caseload, educational background, CRC credential etc.
- For the 20 transition practices, we solicited feedback from two perspectives
 - How important is this activity for your work
 - How prepared are you to perform this activity

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Slide title: Transition items clustered into 3 groups

Slide text:

- Pre-employment Transition Services (7 items), including:
 - Vocational assessment
 - Work-based learning
 - Paid employment
 - Self-advocacy/vocational & social skills training
- VR Collaboration (7 items), including:
 - Collaboration with LEAs
 - Participation on Inter-agency teams
 - Outreach to Families
 - Employers, Workforce Centers & Adult service agencies
- VR services related to Transition (6 items), including:
 - IPE development
 - Benefits counseling
 - Early VR case initiation
 - Post-secondary education counseling
 - Barriers

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Slide title: Results

Slide text:

1. Descriptive information on means for counselor perception of importance and preparation for the paired items on the transition practices scale

2. Description of what factors – such as case percentage or tenure – affected perceptions of preparation to perform transition-related practices

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Slide title: Results: Demographic/Background

Slide text:

- Gender: 77% female
- Highest Degree: 90% have MA or better
- CRC: 45%
- Degree earned: 58% Rehab counseling
- We also looked at agency tenure & caseload proportion serving transitioning youth
 - Majority (75%) had at least 50% TY caseload
 - About half > 5 years at VR agency

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Slide title: VR Counselor Tenure in Agency

Slide image: This slide is a pie chart showing the job tenure of the VR counselors in the study. It shows that the majority of counselors had more than 5 years of experience in the state VR agency.

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Slide title: How Important is this Transition Activity?

Slide column 1: Highest Means (>3.7) were*:

- Job exploration counseling
- Securing work-based learning experiences
- Partnering with CRPs
- Conducting career & vocational assessments
- Securing workplace readiness training

*from 1 – 4 with 4 the highest: BOLD denotes Pre-ET

Slide column 2: Lowest Means were*:

- Conducting/arranging Self advocacy training
- Attending IEP meetings
- Attending/providing Person-centered planning
- Involving employers in the transition process
- Collaborating with LEAs on Summary of Performance Indicators

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Slide title: How Prepared are You to Perform the Activity?

Slide column 1: Highest Mean (>3.4) were*:

- Developing an IPE prior to school exit

- Initiating VR case referral prior to school exit
- Offering/arranging for Post-secondary ed counseling
- Participating in IEP meetings
- Offering/conducting job exploration counseling

*on a scale from 1 – 4; BOLD denotes pre-employment transition service

Slide column 2: Lowest Mean (<2.9)* were:

- Securing paid work experience prior to exit
- Securing/providing self-advocacy training for youth
- Collaborating with workforce centers (AJCs)
- Collaborating with LEAs on Summary of Performance Indicator
- Involving Employers in transition

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Slide title: Summary of Importance X Preparedness

Slide graph: This is a bar graph that shows the differences in mean scores between VR counselors perceptions of the Importance of a pre-employment transition service for youth and their preparation to perform it. All of the Importance means are higher than the preparation means for the pre-employment transition services. The largest difference is between counselors' perception of the importance of providing work-based learning experiences (3.6 mean) compared to their preparation to do it (2.9 mean).

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Slide title: Conclusions of Phase I

Slide text:

- VR counselors perceived all of the transition-related practices as at least Important to their success with the transitioning youth population
- Need for training evident in gap between importance & preparedness: WBLEs – paid & unpaid
- More specialized the caseload on students & youth, higher perception of preparedness, even accounting for tenure

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Slide title: Limitations to Phase I

Slide text:

- Our response rate is an estimate since we do not know the # of VR counselors in the specific agency with transitioning youth on their caseload
- Sample may be biased as those counselors most motivated may be those who responded to the survey
- Our survey did not tap into ALL transition practices; follow-up interviews will identify additional ones

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Slide title: Phase 2 of VR Counselor Study

Slide text:

- To understand implementation strategies and barriers for state VR Counselors implementing practices under WIOA
- We conducted 27 structured interviews with VR counselors from 7 state agencies

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Slide title: Method

Slide text:

- Invited respondents from Phase I to participate in brief structured telephone interview
- Selected 7 of the original 15 states who had the highest response rate to Phase 1
- Of 47 potential participants; 27 were interviewed across 7 state VR agencies

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Slide title: Methods: Interview Protocol & Analyses

Slide text:

- Designed a draft protocol to be reviewed by key informants (VR Counselors) & modified
- Final interview protocol had 10 questions; 8 of which addressed WIOA implementation issues
- Team of 3 researchers coded interviews, identified themes, arrived at consensus
- This report focuses on WIOA-related questions

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Slide Title: Theme 1: WIOA Changed the Role of VR Counselors

Slide text:

- Majority (85%) of respondents noted that WIOA had shifted their roles
- HOW did WIOA change your role?
 - Increased frequency and intensity of engagement with local schools and school districts
 - Increased the time devoted to forming and maintaining partnerships (with schools, families, community agencies)
 - In the delivery of pre-employment transition (2 cited most frequently)
 - Job exploration counseling
 - Counseling for post-secondary options

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Slide title: Theme 2: Perceived Challenges to WIOA

Slide text:

- Increased caseload burdens (more paperwork, more time needed)
- Serving youth could come at the expense of adult consumers on caseloads
- Transportation barriers for students – cannot use Pre-employment Transition funds for transportation; particularly a challenge for WBLES in rural areas
- Restrictions on subminimum wage = more students with significant disabilities seeking VR services
- Insufficient referral sources (community providers)

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Slide title: Theme 3: Strategies to Address Barriers

Slide text:

- Time and caseload management (flexible office hours to meet students & parents)
- Co-locate services (workforce centers or schools)
- More affirmative outreach strategies to students and families to engage them in the VR process
- Engaging students with VR in school facilitates the transition prior to exit

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Slide title: Take-Aways from Both Studies

Slide text:

- Consider specialized pre-ETS caseloads = better preparation & fewer barriers to service
- Need for focus & additional training on implementation of work-based learning experiences – paid & unpaid
- Transportation is a huge barrier in delivery of pre-employment transition services, particularly WBLES
- Capacity building of community providers for Pre-employment transition services

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Slide title: References

Slide text:

- Honeycutt, T., Thompkins, A., Bardos, M., & Stern, S. (2015). State differences in the vocational rehabilitation experiences of transition-age youth with disabilities. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 42(1), 17-30.
- Neubert, D., Luecking, R., & Fabian, E. (2018). Transition practices of vocational rehabilitation counselors serving students and youth with disabilities. *Rehabilitation Research, Policy & Education*, 32 (1), 54-65.

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Slide title: Questions or comments

Slide text: Ellen Fabian
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Slide title: Overview of TAC Resources and Technical Assistance Centers
Slide image 1: NTACTION logo
Slide image 2: WINTAC logo
Slide image 3: Y-TAC logo

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Slide title: NTACTION's purpose
Slide text:

- Assist:
 - State Education and Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies,
 - Local Education Agencies,
 - VR Service Providers
- To implement evidence-based and promising practices
- ensuring students with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities,
- graduate prepared for success in postsecondary education and employment.

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Slide title: NTACTION team
Slide text:

- PLUS cast of many content experts
- Collaboratively funded by OSEP & RSA
- January 1, 2015 - December 31, 2019.

Slide image 1: University of Oregon logo
Slide image 2: Western Michigan University logo
Slide image 3: UNC Charlotte logo
Slide image 4: University of Kansas logo
Slide image 5: TransCen logo
Slide image 6: University of Central Florida logo
Slide image 7: human figures standing in a group

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Slide title: Identify Resources, Tools, and Professional Development
Slide image 1: NTACTION logo
Slide text: <https://www.transitionta.org/>
Slide image 2: Screen shot of the NTACTION website along with an access link.

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Slide title: Identify Resources, Tools, and Professional Development

<https://www.transitionta.org/>

Slide text:

- Presentations & Webinars
- Annotated Bibliographies
- Data Tools/ Toolkits
- Lesson Plan Library
- Practice & Predictor Descriptions
- Quick guides

Slide image: NTACTION logo

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Slide title: Identify Resources, Tools, and Professional Development

<https://www.transitionta.org/>

Slide text:

- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis technique
- Resource/Activity Mapping and Flow of Services
- Alignment/Coordination of planning (IEP, IPE, ISP)

Slide image: NTACTION logo

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Slide title: Reference Document

Slide text: Cross-Walk of Resources for Implementation of the Five Pre-ETS Priority Areas

- <https://transitionta.org/system/files/events/Cross-Walk%20of%20Resources%20for%20Implementation%20of%20the%20Five%20Pre-ETS%20Priority%20Areas-6-18%20%281%29.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=1468&force=0>
- <https://transitionta.org/video/1468>

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Slide title: Identify Resources, Tools, and Professional Development

Slide text 1: <http://www.wintac.org/>

Slide image 1: WINTAC logo

Slide image 2: This slide contains a screen shot of the NTACTION website along with an access link.

Slide text 2: <https://explore-work.com>

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Slide title: Identify Resources, Tools, and Professional Development

Slide text 1: <http://iel.org/vryouth-tac>

Slide image 1: YTAC logo

Slide image 2: This slide contains a screen shot of the Y-TAC website along with an access link.

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Slide title: Explore how educational and post-school performance indicators, goals and desired outcomes intersect

Slide image 1: Youth working

Slide image 2: This slide addresses how the IDEA SPP – Indicators and the VR Performance Indicators are aligned in supporting successful transition outcomes for students and youth.

- IDEA Part B Indicator 13 & VR Performance Indicators 4 and 5 enhance Transition Planning
- IDEA Part B Indicator 14 & VR Performance Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4 address improving post-school outcomes for students and youth with disabilities
- IDEA Part B Indicators 1, 2, 13, 14 & VR Performance Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 expand opportunities for students and youth with disabilities to achieve competitive, integrated employment (CIE)

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Slide title: Identify methods to connect with TA Centers to enhance education and employment opportunities for students and youth

Slide image: Three levels of supports offered through the RSA Funded Technical Assistance Centers NTACTION, WINTAC, Y-TAC:

Universal TA:

- Website Toolkits and Resource Guides
- Live and On-demand Webinars
- Regional Listening Sessions with States
- FAQs

Targeted TA:

- Respond to States individual questions
- One time individualized -
- training needs/requests
- policies/procedure review
- Review agreements or MOUs with education agencies or external partners

Intensive TA

- Intensive, sustained relationship with a state to include a series of activities designed to reach a valued outcome and result in changes in policy, program, or practice.
- May involve one or multiple on-site visits

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Slide title: Thank You for Participating in Today's Discussion

Slide image: Questions

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Slide title: Contact Information www.transitionTA.org

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Slide image: NTACTION logo