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Youth Transition:
The Growing Role of Centers for Independent Living

Overview of Youth Transition at CILs
Overview of Youth Work and Mentoring

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Presenters:

Seth Hoderewski & Joe Michener

Kimberly Tissot & Charlie Waters

Sierra Royster & Kings Floyd

Seth Hoderewski & Joe Michener Lehigh Valley CIL's (Allentown, PA) Transition Programs

Core Services

- Most (or all) of LVCIL's young-adult population uses our Core Services – IL skills (group and individual), peer support group, social clubs (e.g. CommUnity Club), etc.

- LVCIL's addition of transition-focused programming for young adults started from inquiries (I&R) from parents and young adults seeking services.

- Core Services are integrated and integral to all supplemental services.

S2L and RWLV

- School 2 Life (S2L) and Real World Lehigh Valley (RWLV) – where it all began!

- Received a grant in 2008 from the PA Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC) to work with 25 young adults (ages 14-21) on transition-related skills.

- Spent the first year of the grant networking and developing program.

S2L and RWLV, cont'd.

- For the S2L portion of the program, young adults meet one to two times a month to participate in various activities, at LVCIL or in the community, to develop independent living and other skills.

- For the RWLV, young adults attend programming three days a week for six weeks to work more intensively on transition-related skills.

- One-on-one case management and support for parents is also provided.

- Now a fee-for-service program, which we will discuss in more detail later in the training.

Career Path

- The success of S2L and RWLV, and the need for more services (done in the "CIL" way) for young adults in our area, motivated LVCIL and Voc Rehab to partner and create the Career Path program.

- Initial funding through an Innovation and Expansion grant from Voc Rehab to start the program in 2011.

- In the first year, LVCIL worked with 50 young adults (ages 18-25, who are out of school) to provide supported employment services, including a unique element called Skills Training (eight-week intensive program to develop work-essential skills).

Career Path, cont'd.

- Other services include:
  - Person-Centered Planning
  - Community-Based Work Assessments
  - Job Development
  - Job Coaching, and Extended Services (i.e. Job Coaching beyond initial training period)
  - Other activities (social, etc.)
- Now a fee-for-service program, which we will discuss in more detail later in the training.

LIFE

- Living Independently for Everyone (LIFE) is a program for students (any age, but in school) to receive support and training in multiple areas.

- Started in 2012 and meant to supplement services provided by the student's school, funded by the school.

- Students may attend a couple hours a week or every day.

Project SEARCH and VIP

- Through Voc Rehab, LVCIL partnered with the local Intermediate Unit (IU - unique to certain areas) in 2013 to support students in Project SEARCH to obtain and maintain competitive employment after graduation.

- Developed into the Vocational Independence Program (VIP) in 2015, also partnered with Voc Rehab and the IU, but LVCIL staff work side-by-side with IU staff to support nine students on site at a local business during the school year.

LCCC SEED

- Success, Engagement, Education and Determination (SEED) is a program for 20 college students (any age) to receive support for IL and vocational skills on campus at a local community college.

- Partnered with the Lehigh Carbon Community College (LCCC), and supported initially (2014) by a grant from the PA Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC), but now moving to fee-for-service.

Pre-Employment Transition Services

- Through WIOA funding, LVCIL has partnered with Voc Rehab (fee-for-service) this past year to provide the following services to students (ages 16-21, in school):
  - Group presentations to students at their schools.
  - Development of and support on paid work experiences.
  - Development of and support on job shadowing experiences.

Pre-Employment Transition Services, cont'd.

- Currently in negotiations with Voc Rehab to expand these services to include:
    - S2L
    - RWLV
    - Individual Skills Training
    - Independent Community Travel Training
    - Person-Centered Planning

TEP

- LVCIL received an Innovation and Expansion grant through Voc Rehab (WIOA Pre-ETS funds) this past year to start the Transition Experience Program (TEP).

- Students in their last year of high school (ages 16-21) attend the program every school day for nine weeks onsite at a local college (Cedar Crest College).

- After the nine-week session, students receive support to pursue post-secondary education or to obtain competitive employment.

Leadership In Schools

- Funded by the Pennsylvania Disabilities Council
- Focused on Leadership skills for all students in PA
- Created website with standards-aligned resources for teachers
- Information and resources for students and parents
- Statewide contest
- Outreach and presentations to students and teachers
- Pennsylvania Youth Leadership Network (PYLN) – A network of groups from around the state with students with and without disabilities working together on leadership and civic goals

More Transition Services…

- Have You Thought About Life (HYTAL)
- Lehigh Valley Transition Options Team (LTOT)
- Waiver Supports Coordination
- Road 2 Graduation (R2G)
- Outreach and Presentations
- Community group involvement (SLT, Employment Coalitions, etc.)
- Advisory Board involvement
- Pennsylvania Youth Leadership Network (PYLN)

More Transition Services…cont'd.

- Adaptations
- Transition Advocacy
- #iwanttowork
- CommUnity Club
- Transition and Employment Club
- Volunteers

Kimberly Tissot & Charlie Waters
ABLE SC (Columbia & Greenville, SC)

Able South Carolina

- Kimberly Tissot, Executive Director and Charlie Walters, Director of Transition Programs
- A South Carolina Center for Independent Living with a 23-county serving area
- Most of our youth programs allow us to work statewide
- Our focus is to provide one-on-one services & changing the culture around disability via advocacy and collaboration
- 43 staff members
- Over 30 funding sources

Able SC's Values

- **Values:** Non-negotiable principles that we will not compromise that guide our decision-making.

- **Empowerment** – We don't reach goals for individuals; we teach the skills that allow them to do for themselves.

- **Inclusion** – We advocate for individuals with disabilities to be included in integrated environments in the classroom, employment, housing, leadership roles, and in discussions that impact their lives and the disability community.

Able SC's Values, cont'd.

- **Independence** – Individuals with disabilities should have the right to control their own lives and make decisions about what's best for them. We believe every individual can be independent.

- **Equality**– We advocate for equal rights and access, not special treatment.

- **Disability Pride** – "Disability" is not a negative word. It means we are more adaptable. We are proud of who we are, and the barriers we have overcome have only made us stronger.

Youth Served

Youth-driven IL now accounts for the majority of the services provided——

- 2016: 696 between the ages of 5-24 (56%)
- 2015: 713 between the ages of 5-24 (59%)
- 2014: 157 between the ages 5-24 (26%)
- 2013: 135 between the ages 5-24 (21%)

EQUIP

A leadership program for youth (age 13-28)

- Run by young adults
  - Funding to bring standout leaders on staff
- Peer to peer skill development in self-advocacy, communication, and related skills
- Reached 9,210 youth and other community members last year
- Stakeholders

EQUIP, cont'd.

Multiple Components

- Regional and online monthly "hangouts" (6 regional, 1 online)

- Summer Series

- Professional development and mentorship for leaders

- Service on boards and committees (currently 15)

- Training for families, professionals and other youth

Youth Leadership Forum

- The SC YLF is open to young adults with any type of disability who are juniors, seniors, or recent high school graduates.
  - 4 day, 3 night leadership experience
  - Collaborates with multiple agencies to assist with recruitment, staffing, etc.
  - 25 youth with disabilities attend the Forum
  - SC YLF Alumni Association
  - Forum run and led by a majority of youth with disabilities

South Carolina
Youth Leadership Forum

Youth Leadership Forum, cont'd.

- Connects with legislators and experiences public transportation

- Speakers within the disability community

- Self-Advocacy, leadership, employment, mentoring, confidence building

- History of SC YLF with parent organization; transitioned to Able SC 2 years ago

South Carolina
Youth Leadership Forum

Mapping Your Future and Empowering a Future

- Statewide transition conferences
  - One day for educators, VR staff and transition professionals; the second day for family and youth
  - Focuses on empowerment, disability rights, community resources that promote independence, successful transition stories, and raising expectations
  - Collaborate with P&A, FCSC, DOE, TASC, I'm Determined
  - Mapping Your Future was SC's first transition conference in 2013

Pre-Employment Transition Services

- Equips students with the tools and confidence to be successful as they get ready for life after high school

- Work-Readiness Training

- Self Advocacy

- Career Exploration

- Post-Secondary/High Education Exploration

- Funding by SC Commission for the Blind, not our state's VR

Capable
+ READY!
TYING CAREER SKILLS TO FUTURE SUCCESS

Administration on Community Living— Youth with DD/ID Focus

1. **Equip high school students, and those who recently exited, to enter competitive employment**
   - Establish procedures for collecting student employment data.
   - Implement an employment model and peer mentoring program based on current successful practices.
   - Initiate a social media campaign to engage youth discussion regarding disability in employment.
2. **Accomplish cross-system implementation of Employment First principles**
   - Instill Employment First training across service systems.
   - Launch a statewide campaign to improve perception of disability in employment.

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Independent Living Research Utilization

SOUTH CAROLINA
EMPLOYMENT FIRST
INITIATIVE

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Administration on Community Living Youth with DD/ID Focus, cont'd.

3. **Conduct benefits trainings to dispel myths regarding working and benefits**

- Provide supports for employers to promote hiring and retention of persons with disabilities.
- Offer employer trainings about best practices in inclusive employment.
- Implement a targeted campaign to improve employer perceptions of disability.
- Publish a listing of supports for employers.
- Host an employer summit to promote inclusive workforce development.

SOUTH CAROLINA
EMPLOYMENT FIRST INITIATIVE

SC Parent Training and Information (PTI) Center—Family Connection of SC

PTIs are parent-led organizations

- Able SC implements the youth component of the PTI grant
  - Provide self-advocacy training
  - Provide IL skills to youth
  - Provide training to parents re: disability rights/self advocacy
  - Co-facilitate parent/youth advisory council
  - Free to Be Me
- Provide TA for parents WITH disabilities

School Visits

Able SC is actively involved with several school districts in South Carolina.

- We provide disability pride, self-advocacy, employment and independent living skill-building opportunities through engaging, interactive activities and discussion with peer mentors in the classroom.

  * Promote independent living, disability awareness, inclusion in general education classes, self advocacy, peer mentoring and collaboration among agencies (I&R)

* Success after high school for youth is directly linked to the above services. CIL services help bridge the research to practice gap!

One-to-One Youth Skill Building

- Our Independent Living Specialists work one on one with young adults throughout the Midlands and Upstate on consumer-directed independent living goals, such as directing their own IEP, employment preparation, cooking, budgeting, securing transportation and affordable housing, and much more.

- We have youth-focused independent living specialists.

Supported Decision Making

- Inform individuals and families about their options, including using a combination of supports (like representative payee, Power of Attorney, Able Savings accounts, etc.), and assist individuals and their families with creating and implementing a Supported Decision Making agreement.

- Goal is to prevent unnecessary guardianships which strips individuals of their rights and independence.

The South Carolina
Supported Decision Making
PROJECT

Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA)

- Benefits Counseling—a transition essential!

- For individuals ages 14-full retirement age, who receive or are entitled to SSA benefits, typically Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

- The services include: A review of the individual's benefits; Discussion of current and future impact of employment; Comprehensive written outline of options available to support informed choice.

- Youth focus and collaboration with schools and transition professionals.

Community Leadership Academy (CLA)

- Training in leadership and professionalism towards serving on boards, committees, and other community roles.

- Teaches individuals how to use their disability voice on boards, committees, and councils (i.e. ADA, inclusion, disability awareness).

Professional Development/Technical Assistance

- Empowering a Future
- Technical assistance for professionals in Supported Decision Making, Student-Led IEPs, Disability Sensitivity, and Disability Rights.
- Providing consultation regarding the accessibility of school buildings, including playgrounds.
- Serve on transition teams via TASC
- Fee for services
- All Able SC staff are required to get 18 hours of professional development to increase knowledge

ALL other Able SC services are inclusive to youth!

Other Able SC Transition Programming

Southeast ADA Center – State Affiliate

- Develops disability rights training for school system

Community Leadership Academy

- Training in leadership and professionalism towards serving on boards, committees, and other community roles

SC Disability Employment Coalition – Project RISE

- Transition to Careers

Overview of Youth Work and Mentoring

Sierra Royster
Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL)

Sierra Royster

- Youth Programs Coordinator
- Previous CIL Youth Outreach and Advocacy Specialist, Director of Programs at the local CIL in Raleigh, NC.
  - During my time there:
    - Youth Staff of 7
    - School program, youth group, Youth Leadership Forum, Mental Health Youth Group, LGBTQ+ Group, healthy relationship class, Consumers, and more.

Sierra Royster, cont'd.

- Previous Statewide Independent Living Council Member
- Previous APRIL Board Member, Youth Seat
- APRIL Youth Peer-to-Peer Mentor
- NC Education and Employment Advisory Committee
- SCAP Member

Youth Programs

- APRIL Youth Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Program
  - Topical Trainings
- APRIL Youth Steering Committee
- APRIL Youth Advocacy Committee
- Pipeline Grant-Advisor
- Youth Involvement in AgrAbility
- APRIL Annual Youth Conference

APRIL's Youth Peer-to-Peer Mentoring

- 2 youth peer mentors come to your CIL, SILC, or YLF for a 2-day in-person individualized trainings.

- A training to discuss your program, goals, ideas, see and participate in activities that you can use, and set goals for post training.

- Have support from the mentor(s) for up to a year after.

- Have access to the collected materials, activities, tips, best practices, and more on the following topics:

  - Recruitment, retention, IL history and philosophy, transportation, sexuality, …

- Free topical trainings for a year after the mentoring.

How APRIL can help you after this

- We are here to assist CILs in problem solving issues related to youth.

- Offering APRIL Youth Peer-to-Peer Mentoring.

- Getting youth engaged at the national level to learn skills and to make system change. To have an opportunity to lead trainings and workshops.

- Topical Trainings every other month a chance to learn and then have an open discussion on the topic.

Overview of Youth Work and Mentoring

Kings Floyd
National Council on Independent Living (NCIL)

NCIL & HSC's Youth Transition Fellow

- The Youth Transition Fellow (YTF) is a position sponsored by the HSC Foundation and housed at NCIL.

- The fellow's 15-month term includes organizing the NCIL Youth Caucus.

- Working with CILs and Youth Transition Coordinators to develop youth programming locally.

- Maintaining the Greater Washington Internship Coalition.

- Advising the National Disability Mentoring Coalition.

NCIL Youth Caucus

- Made up of over 100 NCIL youth members.
  - Monthly phone calls to discuss issues, movement agendas, local and national updates
  - Co-chaired by NCIL Youth Fellow and Youth Caucus elected official
  - In-person meeting during NCIL Annual Conference

Developing/Supporting New Core Service

- Part of the YTF's position is knowing what CILs are doing in regards to WIOA's new core service.

- That means being able to help CILs develop/maintain youth curriculum/ support.

- Conducting monthly Youth Transition Coordinator Calls.

Greater Washington Internship Coalition

- A group of internship programs working to include young people with disabilities based in the greater Washington, DC area.

- Over 40 organizations of different tracks involved.

- Both paid & unpaid internships.

- http://www.gwicinternships.org/

ILRU Resources

- Extensive resources from archived webinars, on demand video trainings, and publications are available for CILs at

  - http://www.ilru.org/topics/youth-transition

- Or search "youth" in the search box at cil-net.org

- Or click on "youth transition" in the Browse By Topic box.

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