

FY17 Best Practice Summary Post-secondary

Parent Mentors are successful in engaging families as they support their student explore post-secondary options. Parent Mentors encourage families to be better informed and engaged in the process of transition and skill building in order to support their child meet IEP, academic, and personal goals that lead to their greatest level of success.

Evidence Statements: *Parent involvement has a positive impact on post-secondary outcomes for individuals with disabilities.*

Source: CEC's DCDT Fast Facts *When families stay engaged in a young person's education, social and community activities, the young person is more likely to complete high school, participate in post-secondary education and is more likely to be employed.* **Source:**

NCWD – Youth *If youth have access to mentors and role models who help them through a coordinated and progressive series of activities and experiences, allowing them to exercise leadership and build self-esteem, then the youth will gain skills and competencies to help them to direct and control their own life.* **Source: NCWD – Youth**

Objective: Improve post-secondary outcomes for students with disabilities

Vital Behaviors:

1. Family and student will use a self-determination checklist to identify tasks to complete and report regularly their progress
2. Family and student will utilize the results of a transition checklist to complete work-readiness exercises, regularly reporting efforts
3. Family and student will use a graduation timeline as a guide to track individual activities student needs to complete
4. Student will be supported by family or community mentor to explore transition options, regularly reporting progress
5. Family and student will select ___ areas of need from a transition activity list to complete, regularly reporting progress
6. Family and student will complete a vision sheet related to their interest, strengths, and challenges, identify task to complete, regularly reporting progress

21 Parent Mentors engaged families in order to improve post-secondary outcomes for students with disabilities in FY17.

184 Families and their partners were targeted in initiatives related to improving post-secondary outcomes in FY17.

86% of Parent Mentors met the end-of-the-year goal they set related to improving post-secondary outcomes in FY17.

Parent Mentors reported success in using the following processes in training and supporting their target groups:

- Email, Phone and One on One Contacts
- Home Visits
- Conferences to include the following topics:
 1. Self Advocacy Skills
 2. Creating a Post Secondary Path
- Question and Answer Workshop
- Hands On Activity/Group Sessions to include the following topics:
 1. How To Complete A Job and College Applications
 2. Passport to Success/Transition Notebooks
- Information Workshops to include the following topics:
 1. Graduation Requirements
 2. Testing Accommodations
 3. Project Search
 4. College and Career Related Applications/Interviews

Parent Mentors are successful in using tools and resources while training and supporting families and teachers:

- Transition Notebooks and Portfolios
- Transition Skills Lists
- Daily Independent Living Skills Checklist
- Monthly Independent Living Skills Checklist
- Calendars
- ASPIRE Tools
- Person Centered Planning

Parent Mentors are successful in partnering with stakeholders seeking to improve post-secondary outcomes:

- RESA and GLRS Consultants
- High School Educational Evaluators
- Career Assessment Information Centers
- Local Universities
- CTI and CTAE Staff
- SPED Administrators and staff
- Transition Coordinator

Parent Mentors promoting improved post-secondary outcomes reported these challenges and solutions:

- Families who were not able to attend the trainings were trained by contacting parent by phone or home visit
- Low parent participation was addressed through one on one contacts
- When a partner was unable to assist with data collection as planned another partner filled in to assist Parent Mentor in supporting the families
- Families struggling to complete vital behaviors were offered extra practice sessions

Parent Mentors observed the following while supporting families seeking improved post-secondary outcomes:

- Improved academic achievement, behavior, and attendance
- Improved transition planning that was realistic and achievable
- Improved communication between teachers and families
- Increased attendance at IEP and Transition meetings
- Families became aware of child's future plans through new conversations they had not previously had
- Greater collaboration happening among stakeholders
- Improved student confidence, personal/professional skills, and higher expectations
- Students meeting and reporting achievement of goals
- Increased number of students employed due to involvement in skill building initiatives (ex: Project Search)
- Students completing college and career related applications (ex: FASFA process completed)
- Families have greater awareness of the resources and college/career options impacting their child's future

It is the recommendation of Parent Mentors who have focused on improving post-secondary outcomes that you:

- Start early in the year building relationships with families, school personnel, and community members
- Seek buy-in of essential partners to work with you and the families that need support
- Create more opportunities to network with other families to help new families have success
- Work with 9th grade families so that most of the goals will be completed by 12th grade
- Set clear expectation so that families you are working with understand the commitment involved in learning a new skill and accomplishing goals that you will support them in accomplishing
- Utilize bound activity books or toolkits for families so that shared work does not get lost and students have a place to refer when they are planning and creating new goals
- Encourage and support students as they utilize skills in and outside of school setting
- Identify barriers that keep families from participating and address solutions individually if necessary