

Monday Bulletin on

Services to Youth

To Coordinate... To Enhance... To Serve... Through Communication...

MiConnections

MiConnections is Michigan's High School/High Tech initiative, funded through a federal grant* awarded to Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth-Rehabilitation Services. MiConnections offers a model for programming and service delivery based on evidence-based practices called the **Guideposts for Success**. The overall goals of MiConnections are:

- o To increase high school graduation rates
- o To increase enrollment in training programs and college
- o To improve employment outcomes of youth with disabilities

MiConnections' affiliated demonstration sites include Kent County, Ingham County, the Saginaw/Bay/Arenac/Midland Consortium, and Hannahville Indian Community/Menominee County. Many other locations are adopting the program model. Local site activities focus on career development, education, training, employment, leadership and opportunities for personal growth.

You will read more about the model and the five guideposts in the 2006 Monday Bulletin series. Also visit the MiConnections web site at:

www.miconnections.org

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GUIDEPOSTS for SUCCESS

Except from The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability

NCWD/Youth has identified Guideposts for Success based on what research tells us that all youth need to transition to adulthood successfully. The Guideposts provide a:

- Statement of principles;
- Direction that will lead to better outcomes for all young people; and
- Way to organize policy and practice.

Who should use the Guideposts and how?

Youth and families should look for programs and activities that provide these features. Youth with disabilities should use the Guideposts in developing any individualized plans, such as Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), Individualized Plans for Employment (IPE), and service strategies as required by the Workforce Investment Act.



Administrators and policy makers may use the Guideposts in making decisions regarding funding, in setting and establishing local priorities related to transitioning youth, and in evaluating the work of agencies supported by that funding.

The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth) has been created to help state and local workforce development systems improve outcomes for youth with disabilities. Housed at the Institute for Educational Leadership in Washington, D.C., NCWD/Youth is composed of partners with expertise in disability, education, employment, and workforce development policy and practice.

More about the Guideposts on Page Two

Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth- Michigan Rehabilitation Services
Archive issues are at our web site: www2.mrs.state.mi.us/transtions

Guideposts for Success: Quality Youth Transition Services

Transition from youth to adulthood is an awkward period in life; it presents challenges for almost every young person today. Youth with disabilities, indeed all vulnerable youth, may need extra supports throughout their transition period in order to make informed choices and become self-sufficient adults.

An extensive literature review of research, demonstration projects and effective practices covering a wide range of programs and services---including lessons from youth development, quality education, and workforce development programs---has identified core commonalities across the disciplines, programs and institutional settings. The review also points out that no one institution or organization can provide the full range of services; thus, highlighting the interdependence of agencies that requires communities, states, the federal government and multiple organizations at all levels to collaborate with one another in order to help assure quality transitions for all youth.

The applicable literature suggests that all youth need:

- Access to high quality standards-based education regardless of the setting;
- Information about career options and exposure to the world of work; including structured internships;
- Opportunities to develop social, civic, and leadership skills;
- Strong connections to caring adults;

- Access to safe places to interact with their peers; and,
- Support services and specific accommodations to allow them to become independent adults.

There are five categories, called Guideposts for Success, which can help steer families, institutions and youth themselves through the transition processes. These Guideposts are built on the following underlying assumptions:

- 1) Highest expectations for all youth, including youth with disabilities;
- 2) Equality of opportunity for everyone, including nondiscrimination, individualization, and inclusion and integration;
- 3) Full participation through self-determination, informed choice, and participation in decision making;
- 4) Independent living, including skill development and long term supports and services;
- 5) Competitive employment and economic self sufficiency, even if with supports, is everyone's life goal; and,
- 6) Transition planning is individualized, person-driven and culturally and linguistically appropriate.

See the Guideposts and Indicators after Save the Dates



Personal Data Wizard

This web site was developed by the Transition Specialist of the Humboldt County Office of Education in California. It provides numerous tools to help students with a range of transition activities including creating resumes, cover letters, and or household budgets, as well as help them identify employment preferences and interests. The Personal Data Wizard features an online interest assessment for students to identify their career interests and a bank of more than 500 photos of work activities allows students to identify their employment preferences by clicking on the photos of the jobs they prefer. Any school can purchase access codes for a group of students that may be used even after they exit school. In addition, schools are able to customize and post materials to the web site that are relevant to their own communities or schools. For only \$1/year, any student across the country can access the site. There are more than 10,000 registered users, and the site can serve an unlimited number of students.

Visit the site at - www.hrop.org/wizard

From: REFERENCE POINTS: www.pacer.org/tatra/

NCLD-YOUTH Web Site

The National Consortium on Leadership and Disability for Youth (NCLD-Youth) has launched its web site at <http://www.nclid-youth.info> .

NCLD-Youth is a youth-led resource, information, and training center for youth and emerging leaders with developmental disabilities, housed at the Institute for Educational Leadership and funded by the Administration on Developmental Disabilities. The project is led by the next generation of young leaders with disabilities-- taking a positive development approach to working with the next generation of disability community leaders, and developing materials to better prepare them for the transition to adulthood, and leadership.

Systems Improvement Site

The new National Alliance on Secondary Education and Transition (NASSET) web site contains the **National Standards and Quality Indicators: Transition Toolkit for Systems Improvement.** www.nasetalliance.org

Youth Influence Law

YLF Success in W.V.

Youth leaders with disabilities across the country are letting America know they want to learn their history! Based on the research done in the field of youth development/youth leadership, youth with disabilities need “an understanding of disability history, culture, and disability public policy issues as well as their rights and responsibilities” in order to successfully transition to adulthood.

Projects such as the state youth leadership forums (YLF) taking place in 23 states around the country (including Michigan), the National Youth Leadership Network (NYLN), and the 15 youth resource information and training centers all work on helping youth and emerging leaders with disabilities access this critical information.

Last summer, a very exciting development occurred when West Virginia had their first YLF. A mock legislative session was conducted as part of the YLF experience. YLF participants used the actual House chambers for the exercise and Speaker of the House, Bob Kiss, was present to oversee the proceedings. Youth proposed that the “Justin and Yoshiko Dart Disability History Week” bill would dedicate the third week in October (Disability Employment Month) as Disability History week, to educate all children in public schools about the importance of the disability civil rights movement. Speaker Kiss was so impressed with the preparation and presentation of the mock session that he agreed to sponsor a real bill, which has been passed by the House and Senate. The Governor approved the bill on March 29, 2006!

For more on the successful bill see: http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Text_HTML/2006_SESSIONS/RS/BillInformation.cfm?input=4491

SSA: New Disability Determination Process

On March 28, Commissioner Jo Anne B. Barnhart announced that the final rule establishing a new disability determination process is now on public display at the Office of the Federal Register. The new process, built upon Social Security’s electronic claims process, will shorten decision times and pay benefits to people who are obviously disabled much earlier in the process.

To learn more, please visit www.socialsecurity.gov/disability-new-approach.

To view the press release visit www.socialsecurity.gov/pressoffice/pr/DSI-pr.htm.

Apply Now!

Pine Lake Experience

Two week-long sessions: July 16 & July 23

An exciting summer program opportunity for career conscious students, the Pine Lake Experience is designed for high school students with disabilities who are interested in career exploration. Campers will explore their interests, strengths, and vocational opportunities along with developing team building and recreational skills. Campers will get hands-on experience in many of the Michigan Career and Technical Institute’s (MCTI) vocational training departments. This program also offers a variety of recreational opportunities including swimming, boating, archery, crafts, fishing, and bowling. An overnight tent camping is also offered.

MCTI is located on Pine Lake east of Plainwell, Michigan. The MCTI campus includes 70 acres surrounded by the quiet, peaceful shores of Pine Lake. MCTI is a division of Michigan Rehabilitation Services under the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth.

Contact for more information:

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Transportation and Youth/Adults with Disabilities

For youth with developmental and other disabilities, the opportunity to acquire knowledge, skills, and experience in using public transportation as well as other transportation options is key to preparation for adult community living. “Impact: Feature Issue on Meeting Transportation Needs of Youth and Adults with Developmental Disabilities” is a new publication from the Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota that offers strategies for meeting these and other transportation needs of youth and adults with disabilities. This summer issue of the quarterly newsletter is available online at <http://ici.umn.edu/products/newsletters.html#various>.

It’s also available in print by contacting the Institute’s Publications Office at 612/624-4512 or publications@icimail.umn.edu; the first print copy is free and each additional is \$4.

Save the Dates • Events & Training

Date	Training or Event	Location
April 19, 2006; 8:00 – 3:15 p.m.	ASSESSMENT FOR TRANSITION PLANNING: TOOLS FOR THE TASK This workshop will present an array of commercially available assessments (formal and informal) but will focus primarily on informal assessments. \$ 15.00 Please contact Beth Jarve at 989-667-3228 or jarveb@baisd.net	Bay-Arenac ISD Educational Service Center Academy Room 4228 Two Mile Road Bay City, MI 48706
May 9, 2006 2:00-2:45 P.M. ET	“FUNDING THE TRANSITION TO MEANINGFUL ADULT ROLES” WEBCAST Sponsored by T-TAP and Worksupport.com. For more information go to http://www.worksupport.com/training/viewUpcomingWebcasts.cfm	Webcast
May 11-12, 2006	MIAHEAD SPRING CONFERENCE Information and registration online at: http://www.mi-ahead.org/	Radisson Hotel 111 N. Grand Avenue Lansing, MI 48933
May 23, 2006 2:00- 2:45 P.M. ET	“ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION TO EXPAND INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT: LESSONS LEARNED” WEBCAST. Sponsored by T-TAP and Worksupport.com. For more information go to http://www.worksupport.com/training/viewUpcomingWebcasts.cfm	Webcast
May 26, 2006	MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL INITIATIVE PROMISING REDESIGN PRACTICES CONFERENCE \$50.00 per person, Teams of 3 or more \$40.00 per person MDE Promising Practices Action Team Co-Chairs Wayne Rietberg wrietberg@bcpsk12.net Gail Shenkman shenkmg@dearborn.k12.mi.us	Dearborn High School 19501 Outer Drive Dearborn, MI 48124
June 13, 2006 2:00- 2:45 P.M. ET	“ACHIEVING CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES USING DIVERSIFIED FUNDING” WEBCAST Sponsored by T-TAP and Worksupport.com. For more information go to http://www.worksupport.com/training/viewUpcomingWebcasts.cfm	Webcast
August 15, 2006 2:00 - 2:45 P.M. ET	“JOB RESTRUCTURING/JOB NEGOTIATION” WEBCAST Sponsored by T-TAP and Worksupport.com. For more information go to http://www.worksupport.com/training/viewUpcomingWebcasts.cfm	Webcast
October 22-24, 2006	LDA FALL CONFERENCE Call LDA for more info at 1-888-597-7809	Michigan State University Kellog Center E. Lansing, MI

Please forward or print this bulletin for others.

E-mail your contributions or ideas for “Monday Bulletin on Services to Youth” to
Lynn Boza: bozal@michigan.gov or call 517/241-3957.

Views expressed in Monday Bulletin articles are not necessarily the views of the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth nor Michigan Rehabilitation Services.



GUIDEPOSTS FOR SUCCESS

General Needs

Specific Needs

1. School-Based Preparatory Experiences

In order to perform at optimal levels in all education settings, all youth need to participate in educational programs grounded in standards, clear performance expectations and graduation exit options based upon meaningful, accurate, and relevant indicators of student learning and skills. These should include:

- academic programs that are based on clear state standards;
- career and technical education programs that are based on professional and industry standards;
- curricular and program options based on universal design of school, work and community-based learning experiences;
- learning environments that are small and safe, including extra supports such as tutoring, as necessary;
- supports from and by highly qualified staff;
- access to an assessment system that includes multiple measures and,
- graduation standards that include options.

In addition, youth with disabilities need to:

- use their individual transition plans to drive their personal instruction, and strategies to continue the transition process post-schooling;
- access specific and individual learning accommodations while they are in school;
- develop knowledge of reasonable accommodations that they can request and control in educational settings, including assessment accommodations; and
- be supported by highly qualified transitional support staff that may or may not be school staff.

2. Career Preparation & Work-Based Learning Experiences

Career preparation and work-based learning experiences are essential in order to form and develop aspirations and to make informed choices about careers. These experiences can be provided during the school day, through after-school programs and will require collaborations with other organizations. All youth need information on career options, including:

- career assessments to help identify students' school and post-school preferences and interests;
- structured exposure to post-secondary education and other life-long learning opportunities;
- exposure to career opportunities that ultimately lead to a living wage, including information about educational requirements, entry requirements, income and benefits potential, and asset accumulation; and,
- training designed to improve job-seeking skills and work-place basic skills (sometimes called soft skills).

In order to identify and attain career goals, youth need to be exposed to a range of experiences, including:

- opportunities to engage in a range of work-based exploration activities such as site visits and job shadowing;
- multiple on-the-job training experiences, including community service (paid or unpaid) that is specifically linked to the content of a program of study and school credit;
- opportunities to learn and practice their work skills ("soft skills"); and,
- opportunities to learn first-hand about specific occupational skills related to a career pathway.

In addition, youth with disabilities need to:

- understand the relationships between benefits planning and career choices;
- learn to communicate their disability-related work support and accommodation needs;
- learn to find, formally request and secure appropriate supports and reasonable accommodations in education, training and employment settings.

<p>3. Youth Development & Leadership</p>	<p>In order to control and direct their own lives based on informed decisions, all youth need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mentoring activities designed to establish strong relationships with adults through formal and informal settings; • peer-to-peer mentoring opportunities; • exposure to role models in a variety of contexts; • training in skills such as self-advocacy and conflict resolution; • exposure to personal leadership and youth development activities, including community service; • opportunities that allow youth to exercise leadership and build self-esteem. <p>Youth with disabilities also need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mentors and role models including persons with and without disabilities; • an understanding of disability history, culture, and disability public policy issues as well as their rights and responsibilities.
<p>4. Connecting Activities</p>	<p>All youth may also need one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mental and physical health services; • transportation; • tutoring • financial planning and management; • post-program supports thorough structured arrangements in postsecondary institutions and adult service agencies; • connection to other services and opportunities (e.g., recreation). <p>Youth with disabilities may need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • acquisition of appropriate assistive technologies; • community orientation and mobility training (e.g. accessible transportation, bus routes, housing, health clinics); • exposure to post-program supports such as independent living centers and other consumer-driven community-based support service agencies; • personal assistance services, including attendants, readers, interpreters, or other such services; and • benefits-planning counseling including information regarding the myriad of benefits available and their interrelationships so that they may maximize those

	benefits in transitioning from public assistance to self-sufficiency.
5. Family Involvement & Supports	<p>All youth need parents, families and other caring adults who have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High expectations which build upon the young person’s strengths, interests, and needs and fosters their ability to achieve independence and self-sufficiency; • Been involved in their lives and assisting them toward adulthood; • Access to information about employment, further education and community resources; • Taken an active role in transition planning with schools and community partners; • Access to medical, professional and peer support networks. <p>In addition, youth with disabilities need parents, families and other caring adults who have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of their youth’s disability and how it affects his or her education, employment and/or daily living options; • Knowledge of rights and responsibilities under various disability-related legislation; • Knowledge of and access to programs, services, supports and accommodations available for young people with disabilities; and, • An understanding of how individualized planning tools can assist youth in achieving transition goals and objectives.

Source: NCWD/Youth (see www.ncwd-youth.info)

For research citations and further information about how to use these **Guideposts for Success** to build successful transitions for youth contact:

National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth
1-877-871-0744
1-877-871-0665 (TTY)
www.ncwd-youth.info

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