



Center for Workers with Disabilities

a technical assistance center of APHSA

**CWD Member Inquiry
Youth-Oriented Work Incentives Counseling
November 2013**

Inquiry:

Your colleagues in Massachusetts are seeking to learn from other states/projects that provide youth-oriented work incentives counseling. The WIPA project in Massachusetts has brought on a Youth CWIC and would like to connect with other WIPA projects that have experience providing WIPA services to youth and learn about their successes, challenges, promising practices, and other experiences.

Responses:

California

The Irvine Unified School District in Southern California has been fortunate enough to have CWICS on staff since 2003 and this has been one of the best resources ever. We are a Ticket-to-Work Employment Network and are a California PROMISE Initiative Site.

Irvine Unified School District

Iowa

Although we have provided WIPA services to youth, we have not had a specific project or funds to target this population in the past. We have presented to Transition Boards, at parent/teacher nights and Transition conferences but it is a struggle for us to reach out to this population sometimes just because during this phase of their life parents are assisting them to get on benefits and they are on information overload.

Iowa Workforce Development

Minnesota

The Minnesota Disability Benefits 101 site has a youth transition/training tool kit for partners to use to help incorporate benefits planning into transition work. This youth-friendly tool kit includes a facilitator guide and activity workbook. Visit http://mn.db101.org/partners_3.htm. The MN DB 101 site also has a section dedicated to young people and benefits, with the theme of getting a "Smart Start." Visit <http://mn.db101.org/mn/situations/youthanddisability/>.

Oregon

The Work Incentive Coordinators who have been around for a few years have provided information and referral to the youth transition programs around the state and/or have provided benefits counseling services to those students who were seeking employment. We're sending out a survey to our WICs

asking them to share their experiences, issues, and solutions while working with the youth transition programs around the state.

WIN's [Oregon's Work Incentives Network] interaction with the youth transition programs around the state was limited when WIN became a VR-only funded program. WIN is providing information about work incentives available to youth during outreach presentations, but we haven't been able to provide benefits counseling services unless they are connected to VR.

We've begun discussions with VR's YTP [Youth Transition Program] project officer and VR administration on ways WIN and YTP might better work together. Now that the students in the YTP program will have a connection to VR, WIN can serve them again. [For more information on YTP, visit <http://www.ytporegon.org/>]

Oregon Department of Human Services, Vocational Rehabilitation

Pennsylvania

AHEDD has been operating work incentive counseling directed to transition-aged youth through foundation grants in the Philadelphia region for a few years. We called the program Managing Your Benefits for Employment Success & Transition (MY BEST). Enclosed is a brochure and an evaluation for our grant from Kessler Foundation.

One of the biggest challenges is getting the attention of high school leadership and special education transition staff so that work incentive counseling can be provided to parents and students at a relatively early age. In order to jump start the Kessler grant, we used the TTW database to do direct marketing, but unfortunately, this database does not include anyone younger than 20. Even after providing in-service training to special education staff, if we get any referrals, they are students who are graduating within a few months. We would like to be engaging students at age 16 or earlier.

AHEDD

<http://www.ahedd.org/index.html>