

Tips on Core Competencies for Transition Service Providers

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September
2012

To be effective, a transition service provider working with young people with mental health difficulties will develop competencies focused on:

1. Partnering with youth and young adults

- Views youth and young adults as strong and capable people.
- Is optimistic, shows empathy, and builds warm relationships.
- Engages young people as partners in planning, using, and giving feedback on services.
- Assists young people to make thoughtful choices, follow through on responsibilities, take risks, and learn.

2. Promoting recovery

- Knows about mental illness, coping skills, services, medications, recovery resources, self-help, accommodations, and advocacy and provides accurate information to young people and families.
- Identifies and challenges stigmatizing situations and creates opportunities to overcome barriers.
- Encourages youth and families to

invite representatives of consumer-run organizations to Individualized Education and Individualized Transition Planning meetings.

3. Supporting empowerment

- Advocates with young people and families for policies and procedures that respect individual rights and promote self-determination.
- Creates opportunities for young people to have choices and to take responsibility for their own decisions.
- Coaches young people to be effective self-advocates.

4. Engaging in partnerships with providers of other services and collaborating to bridge service gaps

- Forms partnerships with family members and service providers in relevant agencies to meet the transition goals of young people.

- Knows about services, programs and policies, and informal supports and resources available in the community and is skilled in assisting young people to meet their needs.
- Communicates with and forms relationships with service providers from relevant agencies and organizations to develop and achieve individualized transition plans.
- Collaborates with service providers across systems to assist young people to achieve their goals.

5. Providing individualized, developmentally appropriate services

- Knows about youth and young adult brain development and the social and emotional development of young people.
- Matches individual preferences, interests, and needs to developmentally-appropriate supports and services, regardless of age restrictions.

6. Meeting needs in key areas of living

- Collaborates with young people to meet their needs for education,



Supporting Youth Empowerment

His mentor coaches Jon about speaking at his upcoming IEP meeting with an awareness of Jon's emotional and social development. Together they create a list of things Jon wants to talk about at the IEP. They do a role play to practice answering questions from the IEP team. His mentor attends the meeting as a support, and encourages Jon to speak for himself. Afterwards, they celebrate the successful IEP meeting.

employment, friendships and peer support, parenting support, safe and stable housing, income, participation in community life, and well-being in the context of relevant policies and programs.

- Knows about policies and supports in all areas of living, obstacles to success, and strategies for young people to achieve their goals.

7. Using evidence-supported practice and individualizing interventions

- Knows about practices and programs with evidence that they lead to positive outcomes for young people.
- Incorporates evidence-supported



practice according to the needs and preferences of the young person.

- Seeks resources and expertise to provide trauma-informed care to youth who have experienced traumatic events.
- Takes account of culture and environment in deciding about the use of evidence-supported practices and programs to meet the needs of young people with mental health difficulties.

8. Promoting support from family, peers, and mentors

- Assesses young people's wishes and encourages family members, peers, and mentors to provide support in ways preferred by the young person.
- Promotes, maintains, and (if appropriate) rebuilds family support and other supports to achieve young people's goals.
- Supports youth desires for romantic relationships and warm relationships with friends and others who believe in them.

9. Meeting the needs of diverse young people

- Appreciates and respects cultural and ethnic differences in goals, family involvement, and community life.

- Takes account of culturally-formed beliefs about mental illness, help-seeking, and healing practices in planning services.
- Communicates effectively with, and is responsive to the preferences of, diverse young people and families.
- Includes cultural factors in assessment and incorporates the roles of family and other natural supports in interventions.

10. Evaluating and improving services

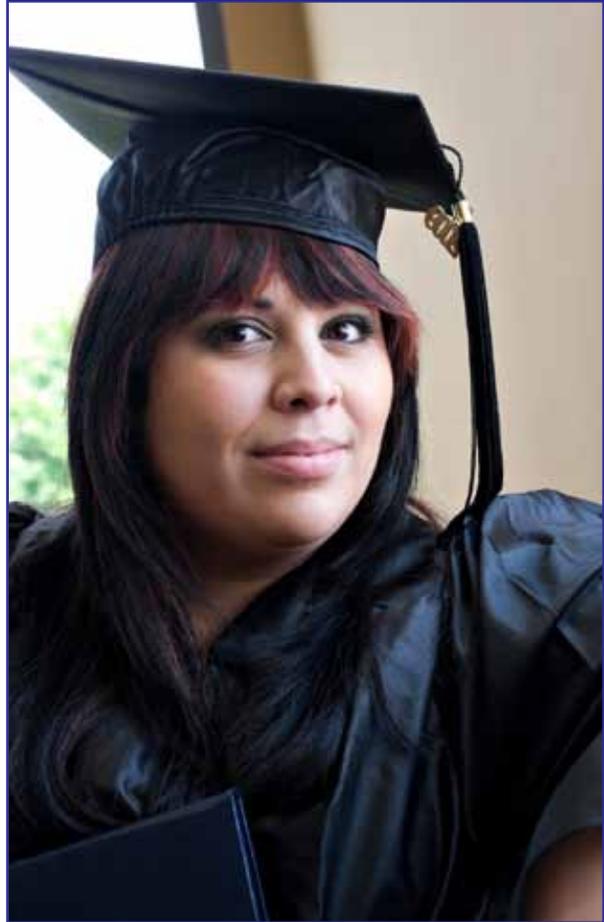
- Seeks feedback from young people and (when relevant) their family members about the acceptability and effectiveness of services.
- Uses feedback from stakeholders to improve services.
- Participates in program evaluations and research to improve services.

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Young People

A vocational rehabilitation counselor serving many Native youth learns about an evidence-supported program developed by a Native American community to assist with employment readiness. He shares the information with the young people, their families, and their tribal council. He works with them as they adapt the program to their needs and preferences.

Partnering with Youth and Young Adults

A transitional living support worker assists Lupe, a young Latina who is hesitant about attending a 4-year college, to visit the campus. She supports Lupe in developing an academic and financial plan for post-secondary education. She connects Lupe with student advisors at the college and introduces her to a mentors' group of the Latino students' association. The worker actively seeks feedback from the young woman during the process to increase the effectiveness of her services.



A more detailed version of this document is available at:

www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pdf/projPTTC-Compiled-Core-Competencies.pdf



Tipsheet produced by Pathways Transition Training Collaborative, Research and Training Center for Pathways to Positive Futures, Portland State University, Portland, OR.

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Project funded by National Institute of Disability and Rehabilitation Research, United States Department of Education, and the Center for Mental Health Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, United States Department of Health and Human Services (NIDRR grant H133B090019).