

# Mental Health & Transition Age Youth: Preparing for the Future



Tips and Resources for  
Youth Development Professionals  
working with youth, their families, and  
IEP teams

# Today's Webinar

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- Scheduled from 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
- NOTE: If you are unable to listen to the Webinar through your computer speakers you may dial into the Webinar using the phone number listed in the GoToWebinar control bar.
- Participants are muted
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# Evaluation Survey and Certificate of Attendance

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- A link to the on-line evaluation survey will be emailed after the presentation today
- Please complete evaluation surveys by July 24. Certificates of Attendance will be emailed in return the week of July 27.
- If participating as a group, select one person to email [Jennifer.Thomas@pacer.org](mailto:Jennifer.Thomas@pacer.org) a list of group participants after the presentation concludes today.

# Optional: Question and Answer

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1. Type your question in the white box on your screen
2. When text is entered, a “send” option will activate
3. Click send
4. Senders of questions are anonymous and will not be identified.

# Mental Health & Transition Age Youth: Preparing for the Future

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**Tips and Resources for Youth Development Professionals in  
working with youth, their families, and IEP teams**

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*PACER's Children's Mental Health & EBD Project*

# What we will cover...

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1. Introducing PACER's Children's Mental Health and Emotional or Behavioral Disorders Project
2. The Impact of Mental Health and Behavioral Needs and Challenges for Youth – Resources and Perspectives
3. Transition – Special Education and the IEP
4. Putting it all together – Practical tips

# Introducing...



## Children's Mental Health and Emotional or Behavioral Disorders Project

*Inspiring Opportunities*

**Supporting, educating and promoting** understanding in the community so that children and youth with mental health challenges can experience success.

[Learn more](#)



*"PACER gave me information,  
confidence and hope to help my  
son with mental health needs!"*  
- parent

[www.PACER.org/cmh/](http://www.PACER.org/cmh/)

# PACER's Projects

## Categories/ Programs at PACER



[www.PACER.org](http://www.PACER.org)



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# Youth: Moving towards independence and adulthood



# Consider the statistics ...

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- 1 in 5 people of working age have a mental illness
- Most mental illnesses are mild or moderate but usually start early in life (around 15 years old)
- The employment rate of persons with a mental illness is around 55-70%
- People with a mental illnesses are typically twice as likely to be unemployed as people with no disorder
- Workers with a mental illness are absent from work for health reasons more often than other workers (32% vs.19%)

*(OECD's Mental Health and Work Review - [www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org))*

## More statistics ...

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- Workers with a mental illness do not take more sick leave but instead may be underperforming in their jobs (74% reduced productivity compared to 26% of workers without a mental illness)
- 50% of those with a severe mental illness and 70% of those with a moderate mental health challenge do not receive any treatment
- Most who do receive treatment get it through a non-specialist who may not be trained enough to be able to treat mental illnesses adequately

Source: [www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org)

## The Impact of Stigma

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“ Once you're labeled as mentally ill, and that's in your medical notes, then anything you say can be discounted as an artifact of your mental illness.”

*Source: Hilary Mantel - Author*

# The Power of Resiliency

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I think one thing is that anybody who's had to contend with mental illness - whether it's depression, bipolar illness or severe anxiety, whatever - actually has a fair amount of resilience in the sense that they've had to deal with suffering already, personal suffering.

- Kay Redfield Jamison, PhD Clinical Psychologist

- <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/k/kayredfiel679287.html#pPlwVwJdFft9zhG7.99>

# Some resources:

## Youth-Driven, Person-Centered, Cultural-Competence

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- Article: “Tips for Teachers & School Staff from Students with mental health and behavioral challenges” & others:  
<http://www.pacer.org/cmh/resources/publications/>
- National Bullying Prevention Center – [www.pacer.org/bullying](http://www.pacer.org/bullying)
- Make it Okay Campaign – [www.makeitokay.org](http://www.makeitokay.org)
- Youth Move - <http://www.youthmovenational.org>
- Teen Health and Wellness -<http://www.teenhealthandwellness.com>
- Action Planning for Wellness & Recovery (SAMHSA) -  
<http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Action-Planning-for-Prevention-and-Recovery-A-Self-Help-Guide/SMA-3720>
- It's My Choice (workbook)/ MN Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities  
<http://mn.gov/mnddc/extra/publications.htm>
- Cultural Competence – Mental Health America (fact sheets, resources) -  
<http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/issues/cultural-competence>

# Wellness (SAMHSA's 8 Dimensions of Recovery)

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- **Physical**- exercise, eating and sleeping well
- **Emotional**- coping effectively with life challenges
- **Social**- connecting with others and developing a support system
- **Occupational**- getting personal satisfaction through work
- **Intellectual**- being creative and expanding knowledge and skills
- **Financial**- finding satisfaction in your financial situation
- **Environmental**- finding a pleasant stimulating environment that supports well-being
- **Spiritual**- expanding your sense of purpose and meaning in life

<http://www.samhsa.gov/wellness-initiative/eight-dimensions-wellness>

“Work is a vehicle for recovery.”

(Earning a living: work, mental illness and recovery- Michael J. Cohen, Dartmouth Psychiatric Research Center)



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# Understanding Transition

# Transition - Definitions

## Dictionary:

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1. the act of passing from one state or place to the next
2. an event that results in a transformation
3. a change from one place, state, subject or stage to another
4. a musical passage moving from one key to another
5. a passage that connects a topic to one that follows

**By any definition, *transition is movement***

# Transition in Special Education

Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)

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“ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living”

(34 C.F.R., 300.1 (a))

# When is Transition?

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## Under IDEA (Special Education):

- Beginning not later than the first IEP that is in effect when the child is in 9<sup>th</sup> grade (or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team) and updated annually.
- Services continue until graduation, or until the child turns 21. In MN, until July following the 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.

# Transfer of Rights

*(When the youth turns 18 years old)*

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Beginning at age 17, the transition IEP must include a statement that the youth has been informed of the educational planning rights that transfer to the youth at age 18

- Notification continues to youth and parents
- All other rights transfer to the youth
- These rights are given to all youth, including those in separate sites (school or non-school)

# Goals and Needs:

## Why transition matters

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### The transition IEP must include:

1. Appropriate measurable postsecondary **goals** based on age appropriate transition assessments related to:
  - a. Training,
  - b. Education
  - c. Independent living skills (where appropriate)
  
2. Statement of **transition service needs** that focuses on courses of study, such as:
  - a. participation in advance placement
  - b. vocational education program, etc.

# Transition Services:

## Why transition matters

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Student needs, preferences, and interests are very important. IEP teams should include this information in:

- **Instruction**
- **Related services**
- **Community experiences**
- **Employment and other post-school adult living objectives**
- **If appropriate, daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation**

# Transition & the IEP Team

## (Individualized Education Program)

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### Who is on the IEP team?

- Student (must be invited – 9<sup>th</sup> grade; transfer of rights age of majority – age 18)
- Parents
- Regular education teacher
- Special education teacher
- District representative
- Someone to interpret evaluation results
- Others with special knowledge or expertise



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**"I have not been handicapped by my condition. I am physically challenged and differently able."**

*Source: Janet Barnes - recognized as the longest living quadriplegic incomplete (Guinness World Records)*

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# Putting It All Together: Practical Tips and Strategies

# Understanding Behavior

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1. Behavior has meaning and is an attempt to communicate a need
2. We need to understanding the meaning of behavior in order to respond effectively

# Let's not assume we know the 'why's' of someone's behaviors

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- How someone views challenging behavior also determines what the person wants to do about it
- Different ideas about what causes challenging behavior may lead to different kinds of interventions
- Personal experience and training impact ideas about how to manage or change challenging behavior

# Understanding Mental Health and Behavior

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Many experiences can impact mental health and behavior:

- Family relationships and experiences
- Experiences with culture & diversity
- Socioeconomic experiences
- Impact of traumatic events
- Health challenges / Disability

# Understanding Mental Health and Behavior

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Paying attention to the basics of daily life can help us feel well\*:

- Good nutrition
- Adequate sleep
- Balanced play and work
- Consistent lifestyle
- Safety

\* KEEP IN MIND: When the youth is not taking care of daily needs, it may also be a sign that additional support and assistance is needed (talk about the current plan together, and find out what type of support is needed)

# Tips to improving our response to challenging behavior

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Develop good communication skills with the youth and other collaborators:

- Be a good listener
- Offer to work together
- Don't get discouraged by challenges when they arise
- Understand your belief system when they arise
- Understand the impact of experiences on youth and behavior
- Focus on the positives and proactively work towards reducing barriers

# One quick tip

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Ask the “can’t” question





## 3 Scenarios:

# What we can do when the plan isn't working

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- 1. Darryl is 16 years old.** As part of his transition IEP goals, Darryl meets with school staff to help him explore career options for post-high school. When they meet, Darryl says the school won't help him, and that he just wants 'to leave this place [school]'.
- 2. Kiley is 20 years old** with a transition IEP through her school district. Kiley needed to be hospitalized because of increased challenges with depression symptoms and when she discharged from the hospital, she refused to return to the transition program.
- 3. DeShawn is 19 years old** and has been working at a grocery store for two months. Recently, he was bagging groceries when something happened that made him angry. DeShawn walked off the job, and a co-worker overheard him mumbling something she thought was threatening. DeShawn was written up for the incident, and he now will not agree to return to work.

# Making a Plan with Darryl

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1. Scheduled to meet with Darryl and the IEP team
2. IEP team members made sure to be familiar with Darryl's educational needs found in his special education evaluation as well as his IEP
3. During the meeting, discussed Darryl's progress and took notes with Darryl about his concerns
4. Brainstormed how to adjust the IEP so that it worked better
5. Agreed on a plan and to meet again in 6 weeks to discuss how Darryl was progressing on his goals

# Written Plans Matter!

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## Examples of plans (related to transition and post-high school vocational services):

- **Individual Education Program (IEP)** – Education based. Should begin focusing on transition goals at the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade year, and should include course work and activities to meet goals in employment, postsecondary education, and/or independent living.
- **Individual Service Strategy (ISS)** – Used by workforce development youth programs to plan activities and track results. Can involve employment, education, and personal development goals. Similar to other plans in the “Where are we now and how do we get to where we want to go?” approach.
- **Individual Plan for Employment (IPE)** – Used by Vocational Rehabilitation as a written plan outlining a person’s vocational goal and the services needed to reach that goal.

# Written Plans Matter!

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## Examples of Plans for mental health services and supports:

- **Mental Health Crisis Plan** – Best practices crisis plans are written with the individual or by the individual with the support of others who would assist in a time when there is risk for harm to self or others; at these times, the plan describes steps taken by others to assist the individual in being safe and accessing any immediate need such as medication, mental health assessment, or a first-responder to assist with transport to the hospital.
- **Treatment Plan** – Used by clinical mental health professionals to clarify goals, progress, needs, and diagnoses.
- **Case Plans/Service Plans (through County-based services)**– Written together with the individual and others by a case worker/case manager providing service coordination, monitoring, and planning (for example - disability services – mental health, developmental disability, waiver services).

# Other Types of Documentation to Know

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- Screenings– Examples: developmental, medical, mental health, chemical use, educational needs, etc. Screenings can inform us whether additional assessment / evaluation is needed.
- Evaluations/Assessments – Examples: special education evaluation (educational); neuropsychological evaluation; psychological evaluation; diagnostic assessment / DA (there are 3 types); mental health / chemical use; etc. Evaluations and assessments provide us with more comprehensive information to help with identifying areas of need / provide access to possible needed services / supports

**PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION / PHI** – Know what records are part of a youth's PHI (medical / mental health records); and know what records are needed and not needed as part of a student's educational or work records.

# Making a Plan with Kiley

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- Meeting with Kiley and parents to identify concerns and needs
- Connecting Kiley and parents to mental health resource and support options for Kiley's mental health needs
- Connecting Kiley and parents with vocational support options for young adults with disabilities
- Connecting Kiley with peer support and social opportunities
- Setting a follow up meeting to talk about progress and needs

# Is lack of motivation happening?

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From a different perspective: What are the barriers?

- Previous experiences
- Challenges with chronic symptoms
- Stigma
- S/he may not yet have found a “hook” for a job or the process isn’t engaging

# Making a Plan with DeShawn

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1. Scheduled to meet with DeShawn
2. Discussed DeShawn's progress and took notes with DeShawn about his concerns
3. Brainstormed how to adjust DeShawn's service plan so that it worked better
4. Agreed to meet again after 4 weeks or sooner if needed



# Better Outcomes: That's the Goal!

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- PACER is here as a resource
- YOU can make a difference to youth
- the more you know about the framework of your service (special education & transition IEP, for example), the greater you'll be able to navigate the options that come with that service
- Work together with youth to discover any barriers to plans that aren't working
- Know the value of plans and written documentation and how to make them relevant to youth
- Meet as a team, and prioritize the youth's involvement, understanding, and development of the goals that lead to supports and services that can work

# Let's Support Youth!

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# THANK YOU!

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