

Quality Improvement Project Work Plan: Supported Employment Educational Campaign

Florida Quality Council

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Delmarva Foundation
Florida Statewide Quality Assurance Program



 apod
agency for persons with disabilities
State of Florida

Project Vision

Create an education campaign to promote confidence and demand for supported/competitive employment.

Potential strategies:

- Create a community educational forum for family members and individuals to learn about and discuss employment, its impact on quality of life, and to discuss fears, benefit impact, and success stories.
- Create a community educational forum for potential employers.
- Create a supported employment ambassador program. Match ambassadors to community employers to find out what a business needs and convey SE program alignment with needs; make referrals.
- Create a Q&A video about supported employment illustrating how different parties overcame fears and barriers. Interview individual, family, employer, and provider. Post to waiverprovider.com site, DF site, and APD, etc.

Supported Employment Defined

In Florida, supported employment services are defined as competitive employment, which may be performed on a full-time or part-time basis, in an integrated setting, for which an individual is compensated at or above minimum wage but not less than the customary wage, and at a level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work that is performed by trained, non-disabled individuals.



Supported Employment Training is Required

Agency providers are required to attend 12 hours of pre-service training and 8 hours of annual in-service training related to supported employment. Agency employees and independent vendors and solo providers enrolled after March 01, 2004 are required to attend 18 hours of pre-service training prior to assuming job responsibilities and 8 hours of annual in-service training.

Training will include the approved curriculum entitled, “Supported Employment and Natural Supports, A Florida Training Curriculum, 2001 Edition”, or an equivalent training curriculum, as approved by APD.

Individual vendors must attend at least one supported employment related conference or workshop prior to certification and 8 hours of annual in-service training related to supported employment. Proof of annual or required updated training shall be maintained on file for review.

Quality Council educational campaign could become a certified training.

Breadth of Education Campaign Issues

- Transportation
- Benefits, i.e., work incentives
- Support for employment (e.g., supported employment provider assistance)
- Fears and experiences of real people, families, employers
- School to work transition programs
- Working age adults service plan goals
- Stories of success (e.g., Marc Gold's "Try Another Way", video stories with assistance from Aaron N. at waiverprovider.com for use of equipment)
- Business networking (e.g., Chamber of Commerce meetings)
- Self employment (e.g., Spotlight Studios artists)

Education Campaign Components

- Print media
- Online posted content
- Video stories
- Facilitated meetings
- Webinar(s)
- Combination of above
- Other



QI Project Work Plan Steps*

- Name QI project & identify Workgroup members.
- State problem & how improvement will be measured.
- Brainstorm possible interventions, potential barriers & methods to minimize the barriers.
- Select intervention strategies & how data will be collected.
- Apply intervention(s).

QI Project Work Plans (continued)

- Re-measure & analyze changes.
- Determine if intervention(s) or other reasons for change.
- Decide if intervention(s) should be continued/not. If yes, then decide how often to re-measure and evaluate.
- Disseminate findings widely – even if interventions were not as successful as desired.

Supported Employment Education Campaign Work Plan

Tasks/ Action Items	Person Responsible	Due Date
Determine vision, scope of issues to address, audience & products (print, meeting agendas, video, multi-pronged, etc.)		
Research similar education campaigns targeted to families and individuals		
Determine final set of campaign elements (video, Chamber of Commerce meetings, self advocate meeting, family support meeting, etc.).		
Propose connection with “Supported Employment and Natural Supports, A Florida Training Curriculum.”		
Develop guidebook/instruction for consistent implementation of campaign. Package campaign elements.		
Conduct pilot campaign session to target audience(s), collect feedback, revise campaign based on feedback.		

Resources (p. 1 of 4)

1. Georgia Statewide Quality Improvement Council's Supported Employment brochure and guide for families and individuals (draft May 2012). Handout.
2. Supported Employment Leadership Network (SELN) resources:
 - <http://www.seln.org/about/41> (includes Marc Gold's video)
 - http://www.seln.org/images/stories/site_documents/employment_first_list_4-12_SELN.pdf
3. Example video success stories from MFP website: <http://www.mfp-tac.com/Videos.aspx>
4. Video equipment resource on from Aaron at WaiverProvider.com site: <http://www.waiverprovider.com/supportedemployment.html>
5. Missouri DD agency SE initiatives presented on Money Follows the Person webinar 6/5/2012 including employment specialists, collaboration with key agencies, and community relationships to meet the employment needs of business owners. Contact: Nancy Nickolaus, Director of Employment and Training, Missouri Department of Mental Health-Division of Developmental Disabilities, nancy.nickolaus@dmh.mo.gov

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6. The Riot!, a free self advocacy newsletter published quarterly online. Issues on employment useful for educational campaign:
 - July 2011 issue “Real Jobs for Real Pay”: http://www.theriotrocks.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Riot_Issue_July_2011_FINAL.pdf
 - October 2011 issue “Ready, Aim, Fire” http://www.theriotrocks.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Riot_Issue_Oct_2011_FINAL.pdf

7. Benefit information: Social Security website for advice on work incentive programs: www.ssa.gov/work. Work incentives help you keep as many benefits as possible while you work. Without work incentive programs, your SSI, SSDI and Medicaid benefits will change based on how much money you earn from work. Rules for SSI and SSDI are different and complicated. Contact a Work Incentive consultant for advice. Programs to ask about:
 - **Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS)**. This plan let’s you save money to reach a career goal without losing money from your SSI or SSDI check.
 - The **Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE) allows young people in school to keep some or all of their earnings without losing money from their SSI checks.**

8. Spotlight Studios, self employed artists with I/DD selling work: <http://www.theriotrocks.org/spotlight-studios>

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9. Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) new report on employment and outcomes with state snapshots. Florida's snapshot is on pages 121-126: <http://statedata.info/statedatabook/>
10. *Segregated and Exploited: The Failure of the Disability Service System to Provide Quality Work*, report by National Disability Rights Network. Identifies barriers to employment that people with disabilities face, dispels myths about their capability to be fully employed and equally compensated. Contains policy recommendations and action steps for states and federal government:
<http://www.ndrn.org/images/Documents/Resources/Publications/Reports/Segregated-and-Exploited.pdf>
11. Washington Initiative for Supported Employment: <http://www.theinitiative.ws> is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to expanding employment opportunities for people with DD. Consultants work with private businesses, county governments, school districts, social service providers, and families to offer equitable employment through Innovation, Training and Technical Assistance. Link to video stories of employment:
<http://www.youtube.com/user/WiSeMovies>

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Expanded definition: Supported employment services provide training and assistance in a variety of activities to support recipients in sustaining paid employment at or above minimum wage unless the recipient is operating a small business. The supported employment provider assists with the acquisition, retention or improvement of skills related to accessing and maintaining such employment or developing and operating a small business. With the assistance of the supported employment provider, the recipient is assisted in securing employment according to their desired outcomes, including the type of work environment, activities, hours of work, level of pay and supports needed. Supported employment is conducted in a variety of settings, to include work sites in which individuals, without disabilities, are employed. Supported employment includes activities needed to sustain paid work at or above minimum wage for recipients receiving waiver services, including supervision and training. This training can focus on both the recipient's needs, as well as providing consultation to the employer to enhance supports natural to the workplace rather than imposing paid supports.