

Post High Experience

Transition Matters: Connecting Youth with Disabilities to Work and Community Experiences

Erik Carter, Ph.D., Associate Professor,
Department of Special Education at
Vanderbilt University

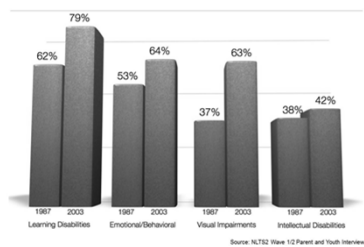
The Aspirations of Youth on the Edge of Adulthood



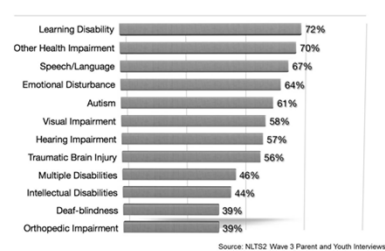
Living “Rich & Envable” Lives



Worked for Pay Since High School (up to 2 years out)



Employment Status After High School (up to 4 years)



[illegible]

...to 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 further education, employment, and independent living...**

How Do Young Adults with Significant Disabilities Fare?

The Early Years After Exiting High School



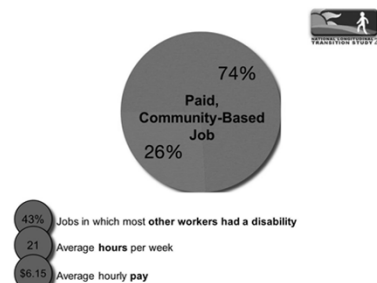
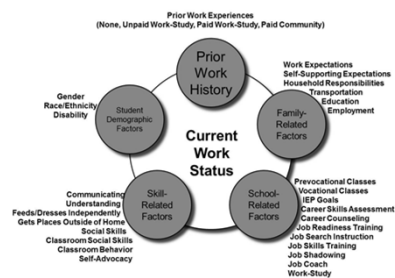
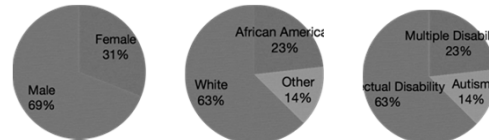
National Longitudinal Study
of Youth-2

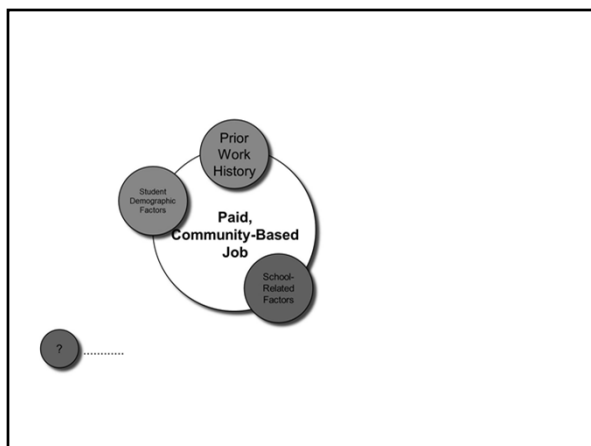
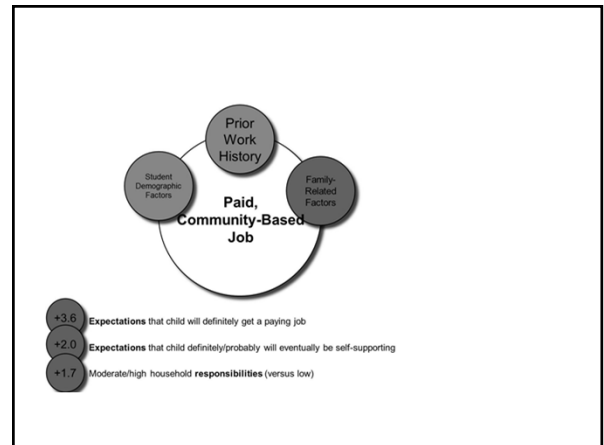
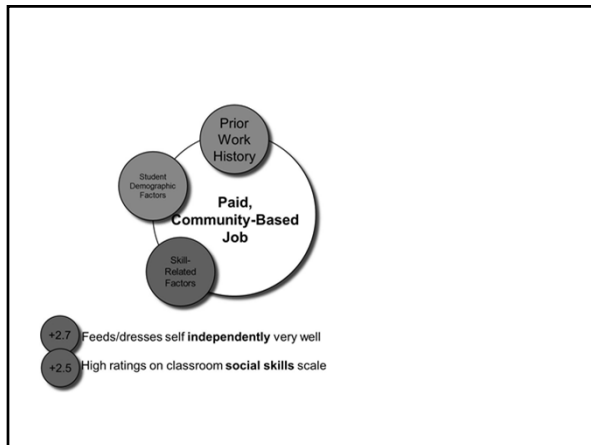
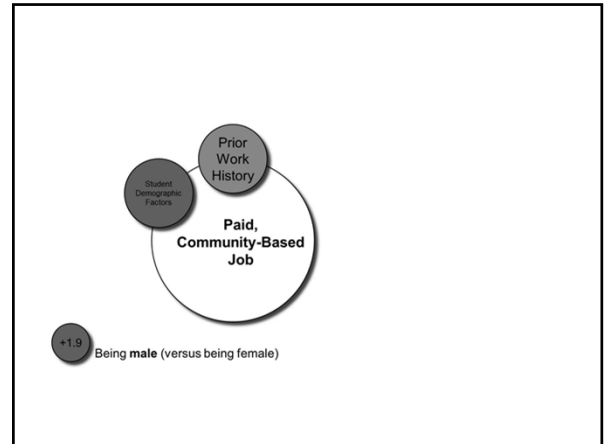
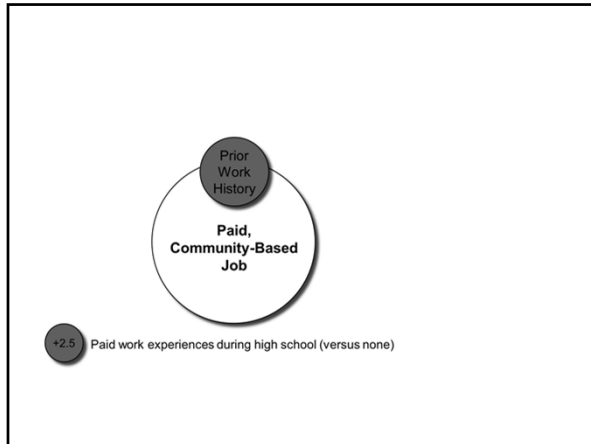


Carter, E. W., Austin, D., & Trainor, A. A. (in press). Predictors of postschool employment outcomes for young adults with severe disabilities. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*. doi: 10.1177/1044207311414680

Young Adults with Significant Disabilities

- Students with intellectual disability, autism, or multiple disabilities
 - Eligible for the alternate assessment in place of mandated standardized assessment
 - Parents reported particular challenges in functional skills indicators
- 1510 students in Wave 1; 450 left school by Wave 3 or 4



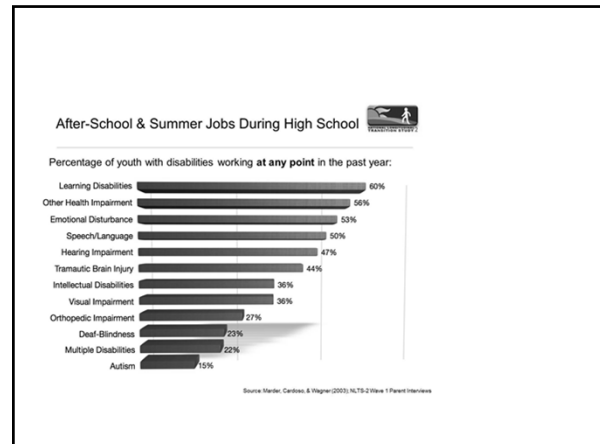


Rethinking Middle School and High School Experiences

Adolescence as a Critical Juncture

Table 1. Availability and Accessibility of Career Development Activities for Youth With Disabilities

Activities	Schools Offering (%)	Youth With Severe Disabilities								Youth With EBD							
		In Schools Offering the Activity (%)								In Schools Offering the Activity (%)							
		None	Few	Some	Most	M	SD	None	Few	Some	Most	M	SD	None	Few	Some	Most
Career interest assessments	91.2	3.4	20.7	31.0	44.8	2.2	0.9	0.0	3.3	23.3	73.3	2.7	0.5				
Tours of colleges or technical schools	85.3	28.0	40.0	16.0	16.0	1.2	1.0	3.4	37.9	34.5	24.1	1.8	0.9				
Job-shadowing programs	82.4	16.0	48.0	12.0	24.0	1.4	1.0	7.1	50.0	35.7	7.1	1.4	0.7				
Interviewing or resume-writing practice	76.5	4.3	30.4	39.1	26.1	1.9	0.9	0.0	30.8	38.5	30.8	2.0	0.8				
Speakers brought in from local businesses	76.5	13.6	59.1	0.0	27.3	1.4	1.1	11.5	38.5	19.2	30.8	1.7	1.1				
Career exploration courses	73.5	9.5	52.4	9.5	28.6	1.6	1.0	0.0	32.0	36.0	32.0	2.0	0.8				
College fairs or college days	73.5	26.1	43.3	17.4	13.0	1.2	1.0	16.0	44.0	28.0	12.0	1.4	0.9				
Tours of local businesses or industries	73.5	0.0	31.8	45.5	22.7	1.9	0.8	0.0	37.5	41.7	20.8	1.8	0.8				
Career or job counseling	70.6	4.5	18.2	18.2	59.1	2.3	1.0	0.0	4.2	29.2	66.7	2.6	0.6				
Career aptitude assessments	70.6	4.8	47.6	23.8	23.8	1.7	0.9	0.0	20.8	29.2	50.0	2.3	0.8				
Apprenticeship programs	70.6	68.2	22.7	4.5	4.5	0.5	0.8	25.0	62.5	12.5	0.0	0.9	0.6				
Paid or unpaid internships	67.6	35.0	30.0	20.0	15.0	1.2	1.1	19.0	61.9	19.0	0.0	1.0	0.6				
Job fairs or career days	64.7	10.5	26.3	26.3	26.9	1.9	1.1	0.0	27.3	26.4	26.4	2.1	0.8				
Tech-prep programs	64.7	15.8	68.5	10.5	5.3	1.1	0.7	4.5	40.9	45.5	9.1	1.6	0.7				
Career or job resource center for students	61.8	5.3	57.9	15.8	21.1	1.5	0.9	4.8	38.1	38.1	19.0	1.7	0.9				
Written career plans	58.8	0.0	27.8	27.8	44.4	2.2	0.9	0.0	5.0	30.0	65.0	2.6	0.6				
Cooperative education programs	52.9	46.7	33.3	0.0	20.0	0.9	1.2	27.8	38.9	16.7	16.7	1.2	1.1				
School-based enterprises or businesses	52.9	11.8	52.9	11.8	23.5	1.5	1.0	22.2	50.0	22.2	5.6	1.1	0.8				
Job placement services for students	44.1	0.0	46.7	26.7	26.7	1.8	0.9	7.7	46.2	38.5	7.7	1.5	0.8				
Mentorship programs with employers	34.4	11.1	77.8	0.0	11.1	0.8	0.6	20.0	80.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.4				



PROJECT SUMMER Educators • Youth • Employers • Families

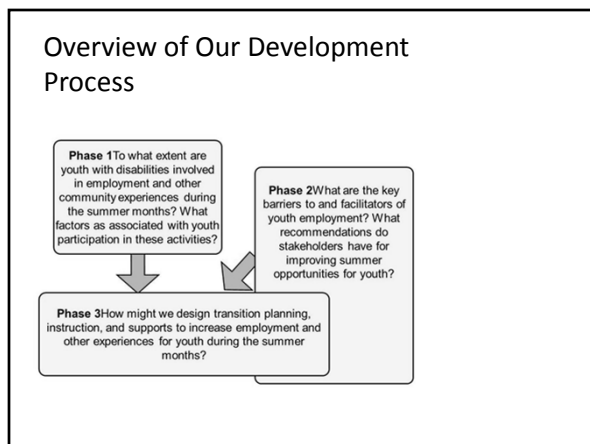
Improving Employment and Community Participation for Youth with Disabilities

ies NATIONAL CENTER FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION RESEARCH

Support for this research was provided by the **National Center for Special Education Research** (R324S060023)

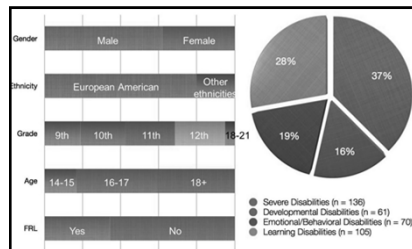
The (Untapped) Possibilities of Summer Employment

- It is what youth do...
- More job openings
- Academics vs. work
- Reduces learning loss
- Provides earlier work experiences
- Provides more work opportunities



Project Summer: Phase 1 Descriptive Study

Participating Students with Disabilities

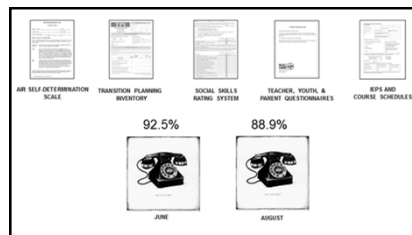


Participating Schools

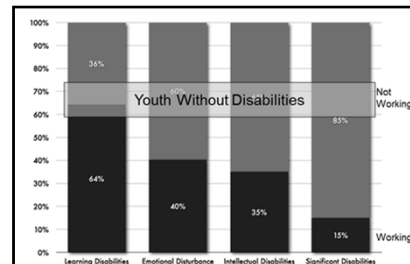
- 34 high schools
 - Rural (27%)
 - Suburban (35%)
 - Large or mid-sized (38%)
- Average enrollment: 1329 students (SD = 629)
- Free and reduced lunch: 26.3% (SD = 22.4%)
- Students with disabilities: 15.7% (SD = 8.5%)



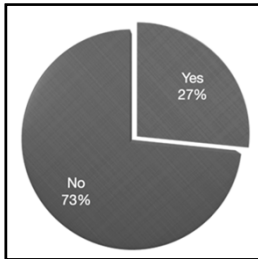
Data Collection



Summer Employment Experiences



Are the Summer Months Part of Transition Conversations?



Have you had discussions with this student about the upcoming summer?

Project Summer: Phase 2 Stakeholders' Perspectives



Obtaining Stakeholder Perspectives

- **Teacher Interviews**
 - Fourteen teachers from 10 high schools participated in structured, individual interviews describing (a) their experiences helping youth find summer jobs, (b) barriers to youth employment, and (c) perceptions of youth and family roles in planning and implementing summer activities.
- **Parent Interviews**
 - Seven parents of youth with EBD or ID were interviewed individually, sharing their expectations of schools and their children.

Obtaining Stakeholder Perspectives

- **Youth Interviews**
 - Focus group interviews included 16 youth with disabilities who were asked about their summer activity preferences, intentions to work, and expectations of parents and teachers.
- **Employer Surveys**
 - Surveys of 135 chambers of commerce and employer networks about the acceptability and feasibility of partnering with high schools.

Obtaining Stakeholder Perspectives

- **Employer Focus Groups**
 - Focus group interviews were held with employers in three communities to (a) describe their experiences working with youth with disabilities, (b) identify factors that impede or facilitate this work, and (c) discuss the roles of families and schools in collaborative efforts.
- **Community Connector Interviews**
 - Twelve community connectors participated in individual, semi-structured interviews, sharing their perceptions of intervention effectiveness and identifying facilitators and barriers to youth employment.

Obtaining Stakeholder Perspectives

- **Community Conversation Events**
 - 350+ members from each of seven communities took part in World Café conversations focused on how their community might increase employment opportunities for youth with disabilities.
- **School Administrators**
 - 34 high school administrators provided insights into the career development programming offered by and accessed in their school.

Teachers in Need of "Community Connections"?

- Recognized the value of summer employment
- Identified avenues through which youth employment might be supported
- It will take more than teachers, who have much on their plates already
- Needed strong partners in the community who knew the "business world" well



Chambers of Commerce as Natural Supports

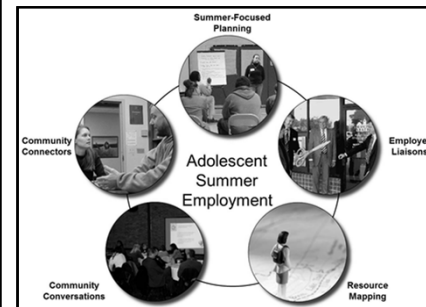
	Youth with Disabilities	Youth
...co-sponsor a job fair	35.6%	55.4%
...co-sponsor a job shadowing day or career exploration event for youth	50.0%	58.4%
...help match youth to job openings in the community	27.1%	46.3%
...create a directory of employers with jobs or internships available to youth	35.0%	51.4%
...provide feedback to teachers on their career development/vocational programs	43.1%	55.9%
...offer mock interviewing or resume writing practice for youth	40.0%	53.8%
...include information about the school's vocational program on our website/newsletters	71.9%	76.6%
...help raise funds for the local high school(s) to expand their employment programs	22.0%	20.6%
...invite guest speakers from the high school to talk about the employment needs of youth at one of our meetings	59.3%	63.6%
...offer "job shadow" experiences to youth	56.9%	75.0%
...provide paid or unpaid work experiences for youth	38.7%	52.9%
...speak to other employers about their positive experiences hiring youth	50.9%	58.0%
...meet with schools to talk with youth about what businesses are looking for in employees	43.1%	63.2%
...develop on-the-job training programs	22.8%	26.1%
...the benefits of hiring youth	55.0%	54.4%
...tax incentives for hiring youth	45.8%	-
...ways to recruit youth as employees	48.3%	51.5%
...supports provided by schools to employers who hire youth	50.0%	46.3%

*Somewhat or very feasible

Efficacy of Combined School & Community Strategies



Carter, E. W., Trainor, A. A., Ditchman, N., Swedeen, B., & Owens, L. (2009). Evaluation of a multi-component intervention package to increase summer work experiences for transition-age youth with severe disabilities. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 34, 1-12.



Strategy #1 Community Conversations



Challenge: Engaging the Community

Bringing New Voices to the Conversation

- High School teachers
- Local employers
- Youth
- Parents
- Chamber of Commerce (Dir. & members)
- Boys and Girls Club
- Directors of Pupil Services
- Job coaches and employment specialists
- Arc
- Residential support providers
- County Social Services Departments
- Creative Care Options
- Div of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
- Habitat for Humanity
- State Assembly Representatives

Bringing New Voices to the Conversation

- Transitional Living Facility
- State MIG Project Representatives
- Center for Career Dev & Employability Training
- Youth Services Programs
- High School Administrators
- Community Access Program
- Social Workers
- Mental Health Center (Hospital)
- Department of Human Services (county)
- Renewal Unlimited, Inc (community non profit)
- Asst Dean for Student Services (university system)
- Renewal Youth Garden Proj (nonprofit community)
- Social Security Administration
- Supported employment providers
- School board members
- Newspaper reporters

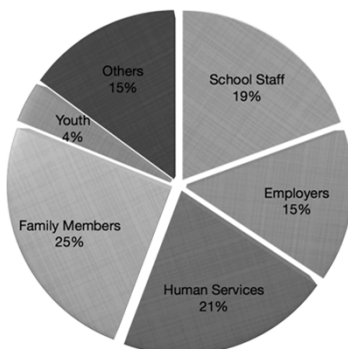
Bringing New Voices to the Conversation

- Citizen Advocacy (nonprofit)
- Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
- Community Art Centers
- YMCA
- Director of Special Ed Services
- State Representative
- School District Parent Liaison
- County Fine Arts/Adaptive Programs
- Mayor
- Assistant to the mayor
- University Extension
- State Rehabilitation Council
- Job Developers (CEO)
- High School Transition Coordinators
- School and Community Recreation Programs
- Professional Life Coach
- Family Support Center

Bringing New Voices to the Conversation

- University graduate students
- County Time Bank
- UCEDD
- Disability Services (universities)
- United Cerebral Palsy
- Autism Society for Greater Madison
- Epilepsy Foundation
- District Alderperson
- Department of Health and Family Services
- Cooperative Educational Service Agencies
- Parent Education Liaison
- Area Rehabilitation Centers
- Youth and Parents in Partnership
- Elementary teachers

Bringing New Voices to the Conversation



Structuring Engaging Conversations

6:00-6:15 Welcome

- Attendees settle into seats (perhaps after getting food and/or drinks).
- The facilitator/host introduces purpose of event and outlines the conversation process.



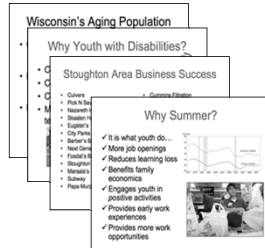
6:15-6:35 Round 1: Conversation about question #1

- The facilitator poses question to group and encourages attendees to participate in discussion with others at the table.
- This question is designed in advance by the facilitators to elicit solutions, strategies, and resources that address the topic.
- The designated "table host" initiates the conversation and writes down key points made during the discussion.
- This discussion lasts 15-20 minutes.



What Background Information Do We Provide?

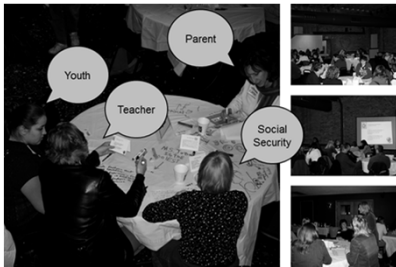
- Overall project goal
- Contributions of employment to youth development
- Changing demographics of communities
- It can be done...and everyone else is doing it



Questions That Matter



A Glimpse of the Conversations



Structuring Engaging Conversations

- 6:35-6:55 Round 2: Conversation about question #1
- After 15-20 minutes of discussion, everyone except the table host moves to a different table and continues the discussion about the same question for another 15-20 minutes.
- 6:55-7:15 Round 3: Conversation about question #2
- The facilitator poses a new question that encourages attendees to consider what they might do to resolve the issue, or what the group can do to create change in their communities.
- After the three rounds of discussion, each participant will have personally met and shared ideas with as many as 12-18 other people.



A Glimpse of the Conversations



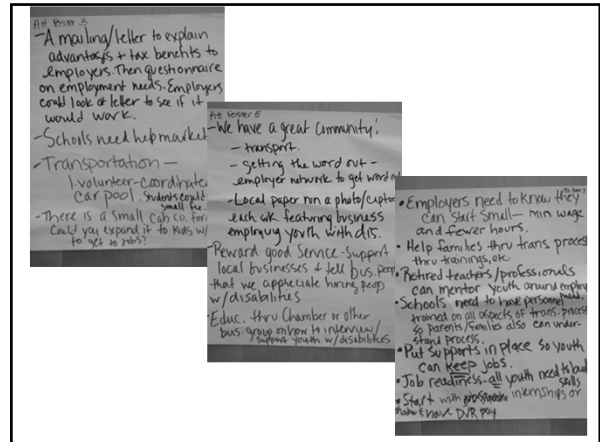
Structuring Engaging Conversations

- 7:15-8:00 Harvest
- A large-group discussion of the best ideas, resources, and strategies is held. Ideas are posted on a large poster-sized piece of paper for the group to see.
 - In most situations, the facilitator or another organizer shares the key points of the conversation via e-mail with the attendees at a later date.



Gathering Ideas

- Group Share
- Place Mats
- Table Cloths
- Conversations Before and Afterwards
- Follow-up Conversations



Reporting Back & Next Steps

Businesses

Issues

May not be aware of how or why to hire individuals with disabilities

Concern about high training costs or high turnover

Solutions

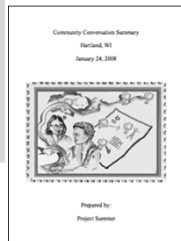
Introduce businesses to hiring individuals with disabilities and resources through the Chamber of Commerce newsletter and website links. Ask businesses to sponsor new employees.

Highlight local businesses that employ individuals with disabilities, and encourage those who do to join the Chamber if not already a member.

Place information regarding hiring youth with disabilities on the Chamber of Commerce website.

Utilize media, including links from Chamber website, newspaper and newsletter articles that highlight businesses or issues and solutions, cable access television.

Give presentation to Chamber and businesses by teachers, parents, students, businesses already employing individuals with disabilities.



AC Batting 1,000

5th Annual Fond du Lac AgriFest

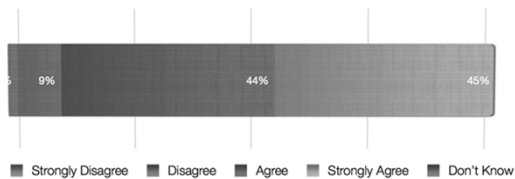
Wanted: Summer employees!

Businesses need good employees. Youth with disabilities need jobs. Fond du Lac High School and its business partners are looking for employers who need summer workers. Employers that hire teens with disabilities can receive tax incentives and support from businesses and agencies. For information, contact Fondy High representative Judy Gobel, (920) 968-4700, ext 3803; Bonnie Badura of Bob and Bonnie's Donuts at (920) 923-4321, or Michael Schaefer of Schreiner's Restaurant, (920) 922-0590.

MD scholarship deadline April 4

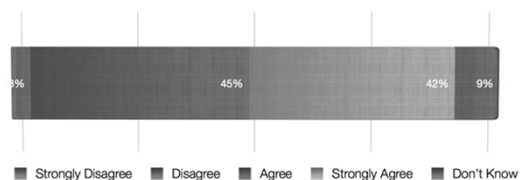
What Do People Think About the Conversation?

Tonight, I learned about resources, opportunities, or connections in my community that I previously did not know about.



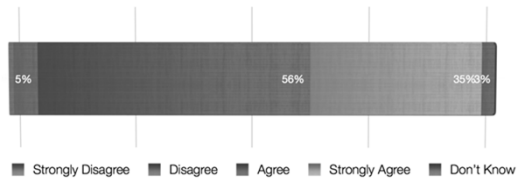
What Do People Think About the Conversation?

Tonight's conversation will contribute to better employment opportunities for youth with disabilities in my community.



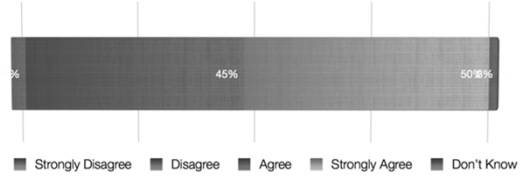
What Do People Think About the Conversation?

I was able to identify things I could do to enhance the employment opportunities for youth with disabilities as a result of this conversation.

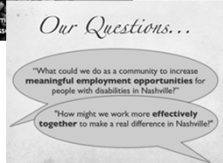


What Do People Think About the Conversation?

The conversation this evening improved my perception of the capacity of our community to improve work outcomes for youth with disabilities.

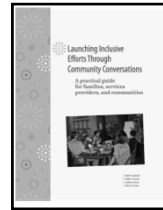


Other Examples: Nashville Community Conversation



Hosting Your Own Community Conversation

<http://www.waisman.wisc.edu/naturalsupports/resources.php>



•Carter, E. W., Swedeen, B., Cooney, M., Walter, M., J., & Moss, C. K. (in press). "I don't have to do this by myself?": Parent-led community conversations to promote inclusion. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*.
 •Carter, E. W., Owens, L., Swedeen, B., Trainor, A. A., Thompson, C., Ditchman, N., & Cole, O. (2009). Conversations that matter: Expanding employment opportunities for youth with significant disabilities through community conversations. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 41(6), 38-46.

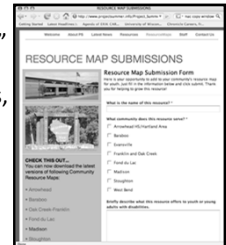
Strategy #2 Resource Mapping



Mapping a Community


- Community conversations feed the map
- Seed the map with an initial structure and content
- Survey the community
- Make it a "living" or "evolving" document
- Has to be informed by parents, teachers, others who know about opportunities that exist in the community

www.waisman.wisc.edu/projects/summer



Strategy #4

Community Connectors



Strategy #5 Employer Liaisons



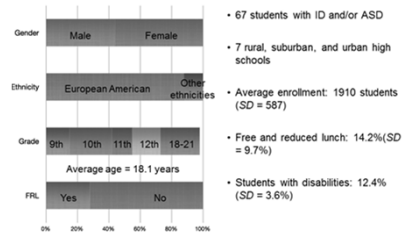
Employer or Community Liaisons



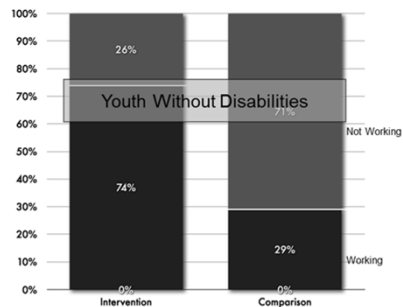
Intervention Evaluation



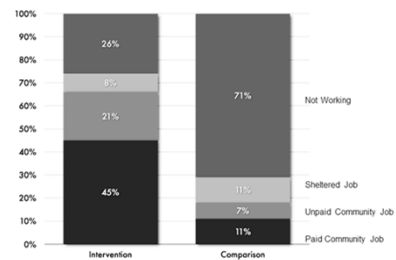
Students with Significant Disabilities



Employment Outcomes for Youth



Employment Outcomes for Youth



Employment Outcomes for Youth

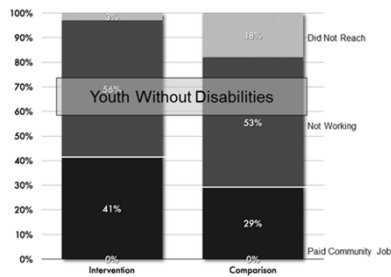
	Intervention Youth
Hourly Pay	\$6.53
Average Hours	11.7
Checked on?	88%
Started in Spring?	46%

Breadth of Employment Connections

- Clearing
- Childcare
- Food Service
- Clerical
- Animal Care
- Grounds Maintenance
- Lawn Mowing
- Computers
- Other



Outcomes for Students with Emotional Disturbance



Where Might We All Go From Here?



Partners in this Work

Audrey Trainor, Beth Swedeen, Colleen Moss, Molly Cooney, Yun-Ching Chung, Lynn Sisco, Ching-Ting Hsin, Leah Zimmerman, Martha Walter, Ye Sun, Ashleigh Johnson, Nick McLain, Mohammed Saleem, Samantha Schomberg, Matthew Pesko, Danielle Pelsue, Branden Jones, Jennifer Dalsen, Lissa Brown, Dana Brickham, Orhan Cakiroglu, David Riddler, Tracey McLeod, Zainab Al-Khabbaz, Odessa Cole, Alicia Hoffman, Diane Austin, Shane Smith, Nancy Molfenter, Katherine Weir, and Margaret Mbeseha



erik.carter@vanderbilt.edu