

# Learning, Working, Living In the Community

*presented by:*

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## Middle School

- Functional academics
- Job sampling
- Navigating the school environment
- Community based instruction

## High School

- Time to get serious! 4-7 years left of entitled services
- Need to ensure academics are functional and applicable
- Early on in the high school years: job sampling
- Move on to job matching and training
- Community based instruction is critical to success
- Whenever possible, secure a job and transition to:
  - Post-21 service provider
  - Family

## Community Based Instruction

- Teaching functional, life skills within the real-world environment

## Community Based Instruction

- IEP-goal driven
- Occurs in community settings
- Generalization
- Appropriate for all students on the autism spectrum

## Community Based Instruction

- Low student-to-teacher ratio
- Frequent opportunities
- Focus on functional life skills

## Community Based Instruction

- Navigating the environment:
  - Parking lots
  - Crossing the street
- Social skills
  - Greetings
  - Personal space

## Community Based Instruction

- Using public transportation
- Eating out
- Purchasing

## Challenges to Community Based Instruction

- Scheduling
- Transportation
- Costs
- Staffing

## Types of Employment

### **SECURED EMPLOYMENT**

- Segregated
- Focus on group learning
- Builds basic skills
- Unpaid / Minimal Pay Training
- Train first, then provide work
- Behavioral Supports

### **SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT**

- Community integration
- Ongoing job support
- Wages & benefits
- Place first, then train
- Flexible, wide ranging supports
- Choice Making
- 'Safety net'

### **COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT**

- Fully integrated into 'general work force'
- Requires specialized skills
- Faded supports
- Natural supports / Natural Consequences
- Choice making
- Offers employment supports as needed

## **Qualities of a Flexible Employment System**

### *An established continuum of services*

- Ability to move within the system
- Focus on functional skill training
- Provides a “safety net” for every individual
- Provides broad-based staff training
- Provide an appropriate level of individual support

## **Assessing the Market**

- Economy
- What’s hot, What’s not
- New businesses
- Kinds of jobs needed
- Can they be modified
- Business mindset
- Do your homework

## Impact on Employment Choices

Characteristics	Impact on Employment Choices
Impaired ability to communicate	Jobs with few communication requirements. Job coach assistance and training communication skills
Difficulty handling change	Jobs that present few daily changes. Supervision and behavioral interventions available to support participant.
Rituals and compulsions	Jobs that are repetitive. Job requiring attention to detail.
Sensory issues	Jobs that limit sensory stimulation
Visual motor and motor impairments	Job which require less accuracy Jobs which allow for free movement
Behavioral challenges	Jobs which allow for implementation of behavioral interventions

## Marketing Characteristics as Employment Strengths

Characteristics	Employment Strengths
Nonverbal	Won't disrupt fellow co-workers with idle chit chat.
Social Skills	Stays focused on work. Doesn't waste time.
Sensory Characteristics	Likes working alone in quiet office.
Difficulty Handling Change	Comes to work on time. Takes breaks at right time.
Rituals & Compulsions	Excellent attention to detail.

## Networking Building Relationships

- Parents
- Staff
- Chambers of Commerce / Rotaries
- Business Fairs & Trade Shows
- Colleges & Trade Schools
- Business Advisory Councils

## A Business Model

- Changing the “help us” perspective to a “we can help you” perspective
- Providing both job coach and client necessary training
- Understanding the “culture” of the perspective employer
- Marketing
- “Customer Service” attitude

## Business Advisory Council

*The BAC is a group of local employers and leaders from business and industry, who promote employment opportunities for people with disabilities. The group works in partnership with entities that provide direct assistance to people with disabilities and serves as a link between these organizations, workers with disabilities, and the workplace.*

## Components of a BAC

- Marketing
- Advisement
- Networking
- Community Awareness
- Education
- Fund Raising
- Supports

## Skill Acquisition Social Skills

### Socially Acceptable

- Good hygiene
- Appropriate eating skills
- Social courtesies
- Awareness of others
- Waiting skills

### Sociability

- Initiating interactions
- Maintaining interactions
- Social problem solving

## Skill Acquisition Communication

- Requesting wants and needs
- Indicating dislike, refusal
- Asking for help
- Gaining adult attention
- Teaching spontaneity

## Skill Acquisition

### Activities of Daily Living

- Self-care
- Domestic
- Finance

## Skill Acquisition

### Leisure Skills

- Listening to music
- Using computer
- Art
- Word searches
- Puzzles

## Residential Models

- Campus housing
- Group homes
- Supervised apartments
- Supported living
- Independent living

## Participation In the Community

- Purchase of services and goods:
  - Shopping
  - Medical visits

## Recreation and Leisure

- Movies
- Bowling
- Library
- Fitness gyms
- Museums
- Local fairs
- Concerts

## Community Give-Back

- Adopt-A- ...
- Community clean-up
- Volunteerism
- Good will gestures:
  - Holiday cookies for neighbors
  - Thanksgiving dinner for nursing home residents