

Kentucky Post School Outcomes Center

2016
Annual Report

Introduction

The Kentucky Post School Outcomes Center (KyPSO) is the Kentucky Department of Education's contractor for the collection of postschool outcome data. This includes the federal requirement for indicator 14 under IDEA as well as other postschool outcome data that are necessary and appropriate to improve transition services for youth with disabilities throughout the state of Kentucky. Data are collected through the Youth One Year Out (YOYO) former student interview developed by KYPSO and administered by district level personnel who are trained by KYPSO. The YOYO pre-populates with demographic information provided by the state and asks a series of questions related to postschool employment and education, factors contributing to a student's personal experiences, involvement with agencies, living arrangements, community engagement, and general feedback regarding how their high school prepared them for adult life. All former students who exited public high schools in Kentucky during the 2015-16 school year and had IEP's in place at the time of exit were attempted to be interviewed. Because the YOYO include student identification numbers KYPSO is able to link findings from the YOYO to other databases to identify malleable factors related to post school success.

Response Rate and Representativeness

The response rate for the 2016 YOYO was 59%. Previous administrations of the YOYO have had response rates between 58% and 60%, and we believe that this is a good rate for a telephone interview given to young adults. KYPSO has worked in the past year with the Department of Education as well as school districts to stress the importance of collecting more accurate and up-to-date contact information for exiting students. Doing so will help in alleviating what interviewers report is the leading cause of not being able to conduct interviews, which is not being able to contact for students.

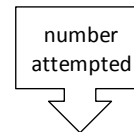
KYPSO tracks representativeness of the YOYO by comparing our target population (all eligible former students) to those that responded to the interview. The chart below displays how close these two groups were for several important subpopulations. Respondents were fairly representative of the population in terms of gender and disability type, however African-Americans and dropouts were underrepresented. Contacting dropouts has consistently been a problem when collecting postschool outcome data. Because the interview is voluntary for former

students there is no way to compel dropouts to respond. Improving contact information will be one potential way of improving responses on dropouts, however it is likely that persons who exited high school by dropping out are less willing to be contacted by their former school district to complete an interview. Recent changes in the state’s law which prohibit students from dropping out of school before the age of 18 will likely decrease the number of dropouts in our population. Still, it is important when reviewing YOYO data to keep in mind that dropouts were underrepresented and therefore the data presented is representative of a sample that is likely to have better outcomes than the overall outcomes of the full population.

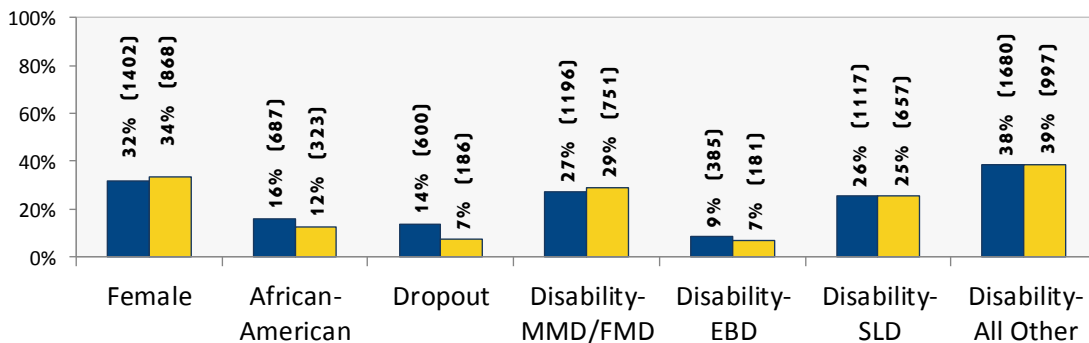
Representativeness YOYO 2016

This chart looks at different categories to see if the proportions in the target group (the people we wanted to interview) are similar to the proportions in the respondent group (the people we actually interviewed).

For example, there were 4378 former students who had IEPs, of which 600 were dropouts (14%); there were 2586 actual interviews of which 186 were dropouts (7%). Ideally, the two columns should be within 3% of each other. If they are very different, the people who responded may not be a good representation of our actual population.



■ KENTUCKY TARGET GROUP 4378
 ■ KENTUCKY RESPONDENTS 2586



Indicator 14

Federal data collection requirements mandate that states report the “percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEP’s in effect at the time he left school, and were:

A. Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school.

B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.

C. Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school” (20 U.S.C. 1416(a) (3) (B).

Definitions

A). Enrolled in higher education means youth have been enrolled on a full- or part-time basis in a community college (2-year program) or college/university (4- or more year program) for at least one complete term, at any time in the year since leaving high school.

B). Competitive employment means that youth have worked for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others who are nondisabled for a period of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes military employment.

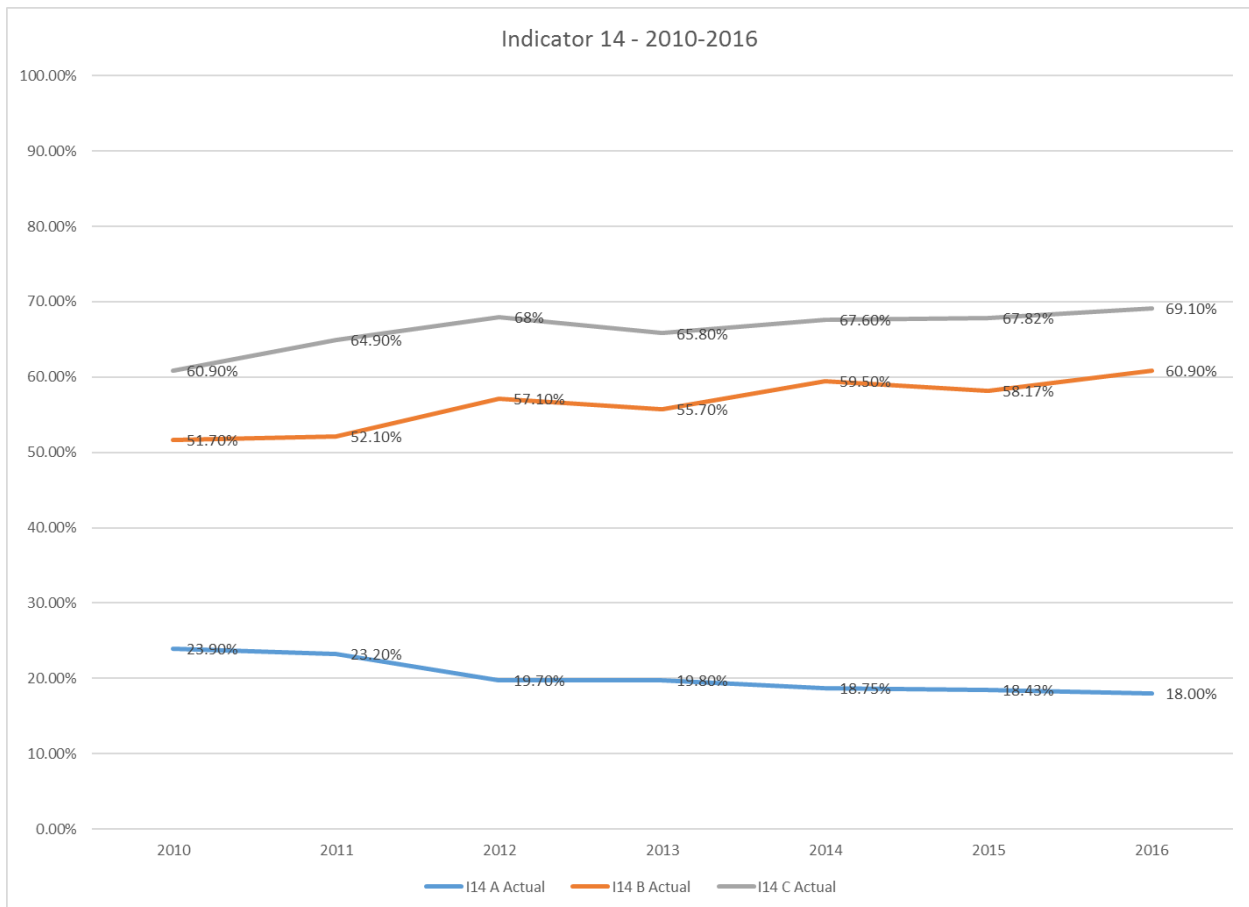
C). Enrolled in other postsecondary education or training means youth have been enrolled on a full- or part-time basis for at least 1 complete term at any time in the year since leaving high school in an education or training program (e.g., Job Corps, adult education, workforce development program, vocational technical school which is less than a 2-year program).

Some other employment means youth have worked for pay or been self-employed for a period of at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes working in a family business (e.g., farm, store, fishing, ranching, catering services, etc.)

"Former students who received special education" are defined as those students, with IEPs, who exited school one year prior with a standard diploma, a certificate of attainment or alternate diploma, dropping out, or aging out.

2016 YOYO data, based on 2586 respondents show a rate of 18% for Indicator 14A, 60.9% for 14B, and 69.1% for 14C. The chart below shows how Indicator 14 data have changed since 2010. 14A, which is solely higher education has seen a slow but steady decrease over this time.

14B, which includes competitive employment has improved over this time period. 14C has remained consistently between eight and 10 points higher than 14B, which indicates that approximately 10% of former students with IEP's go on to noncompetitive employment or postsecondary education that is not a two or four-year college or university within one year of leaving high school. Over 30% of former students report being unengaged in any postschool outcome related to education or employment.



KYPSO believes that it is important to examine the intersection of these two important dimensions of postschool success. The chart below shows how education and employment outcomes intersect. One can see again that 18% of former students went on to higher education, but also that many (218) were at the same time competitively employed. Adding in those who were employed non-competitively (33) one can see that over half of those former students who

have gone on to higher education are employed in some manner. Alternatively, we can see that the majority of those who are competitively employed are not in any school or training program. The implications for this are clear: if a young person is planning on furthering their education after leaving high school, instructional personnel should bear in mind that they will be working in some capacity as well. For those with employment as their primary postschool goal it is more likely that they will not additionally be pursuing education after high school.

| KENTUCKY - 2016 YOYO (2014-2015 school leavers) | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| | Competitive Employment | Other Employment | Not Employed | Education Totals ↓ |
| Higher Ed | 218 (8.4%) | 33 (1.3%) | 215 (8.3%) | 466 (18.0%) |
| Other Ed | 86 (3.3%) | 6 (0.2%) | 93 (3.6%) | 185 (7.2%) |
| Not in School/Training | 1024 (39.6%) | 111 (4.3%) | 800 (30.9%) | 1935 (74.8%) |
| Employment Totals ⇨ | 1328 (51.4%) | 150 (5.8%) | 1108 (42.8%) | 2586 (100.0%) |

Disaggregated Outcomes

Whenever possible KYPSO aggregates findings by demographics of interest. The following charts consider five non-mutually exclusive outcomes: higher education, other education, competitive employment, other employment and nonengagement. A respondent can, and often does, get counted in both an educational and employment outcome. When examining outcomes by gender we can see that females fare slightly better in terms of educational outcomes while males fare considerably better in terms of employment outcomes. Largely driven by the differences in employment outcomes, females are 9% more likely to be not engaged one year after exiting high school. We cannot tell from our data whether differences in employment outcomes are related to the types of jobs that are available, the type of training that young persons are receiving or some other set of factors. Over two thirds of the former students in our population are male.

Engagement Categories by Gender: Kentucky

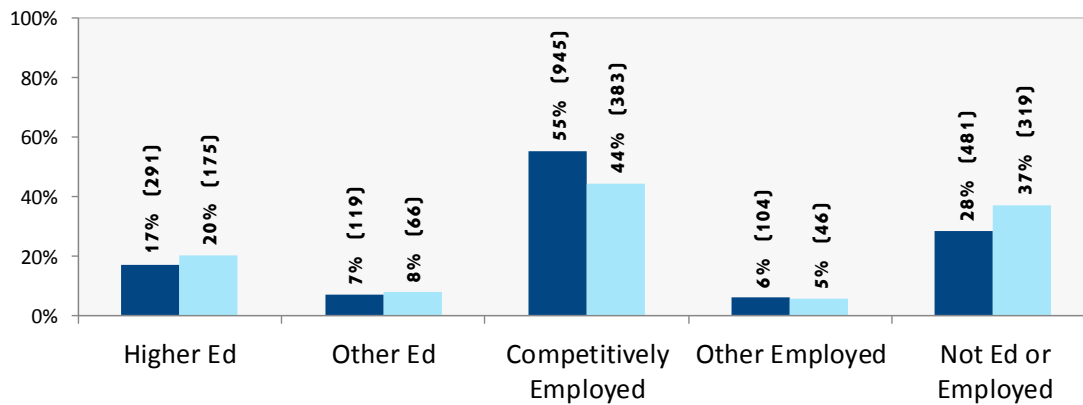
YOYO 2016

■ Who Was Asked: All respondents.

This chart compares outcomes for females to outcomes for males, for all of Kentucky [respondents can be in education and employment categories].

number asked
↓

■ MALE 1718
■ FEMALE 868



There is little difference in employment outcomes based on ethnicity, however both African-American and Hispanic students outperform white students in terms of higher education. Hispanics in particular have very high outcomes in this category (37%). Higher education rates for African-Americans have exceeded those of Whites for students with IEP's exiting in Kentucky ever since the YOYO first began. KYPSO staff have attempted to isolate the cause for this and have yet been able to do so. One potential hypothesis is that African-American students are over identified for special education and thus have outcomes more representative of students without IEP's. However, our attempts to analyze this have not shown a correlation between identification rates at the district level and outcomes. Further, the phenomenon seems to be specific to higher education as employment levels are nearly identical. Not surprisingly, nonengagement rates for whites are the highest (32%) while rates for African-Americans are 27% and the rate for Hispanics is the lowest at 20%. There were not enough former students of other ethnicities to be included in this chart.

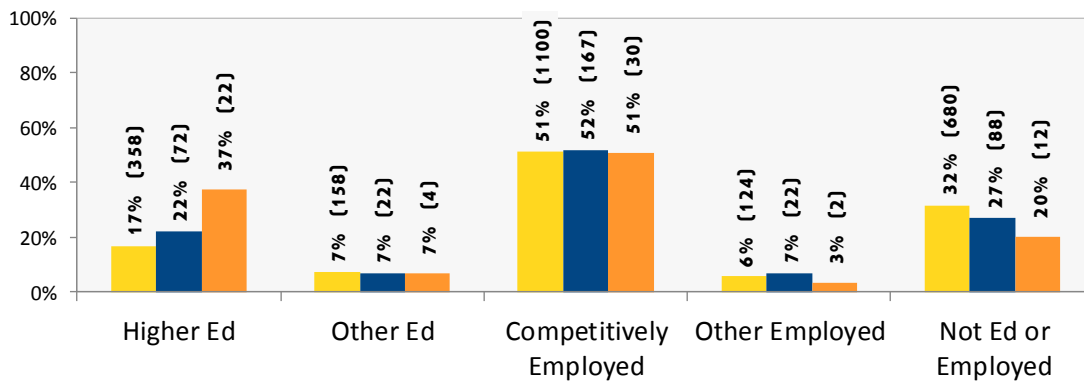
Engagement Categories by Ethnicity: Kentucky

YOYO 2016

■ Who Was Asked: All respondents.

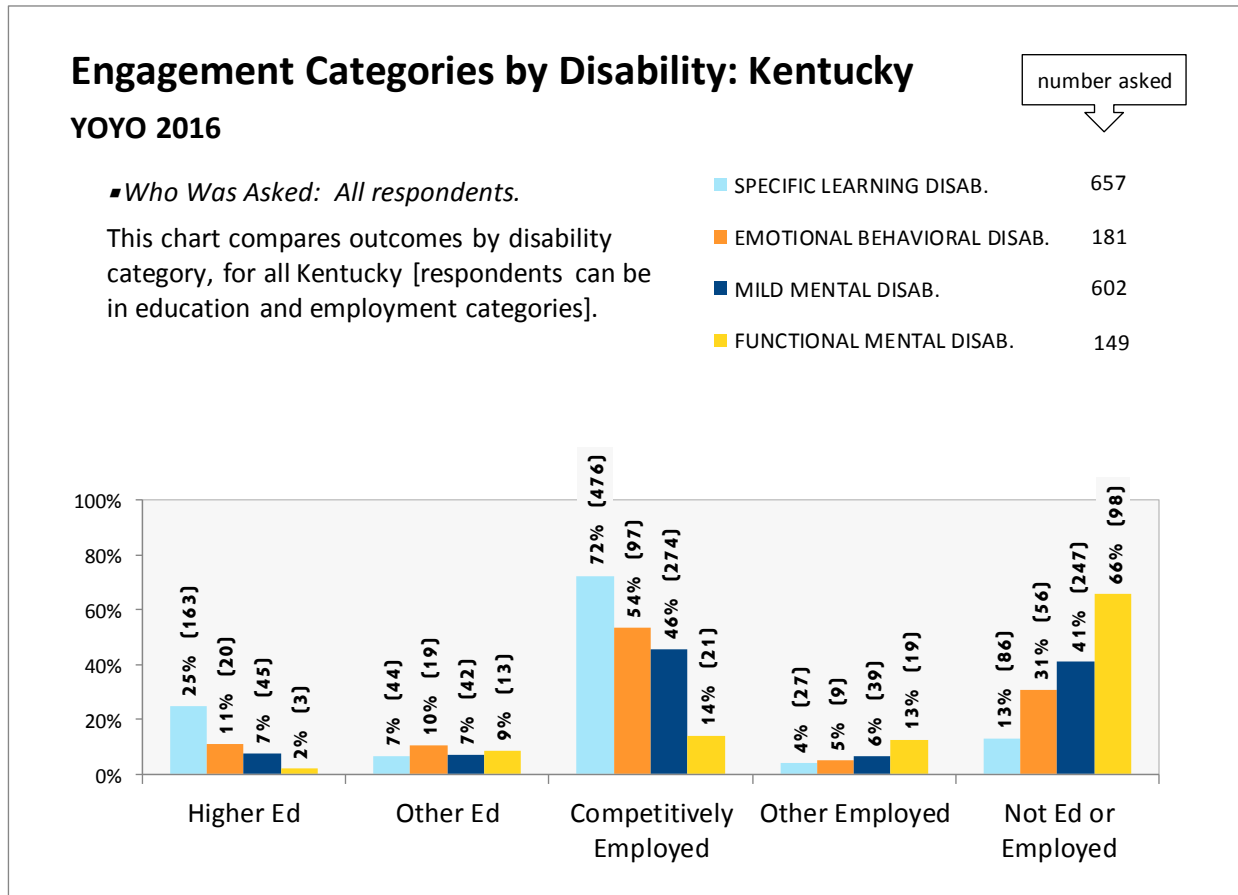
This chart compares outcomes for whites, blacks, and hispanics, for all Kentucky [respondents can be in education and employment categories].

| Ethnicity | number asked |
|--------------|--------------|
| WHITE | 2145 |
| BLACK/AFR-AM | 323 |
| HISPANIC | 59 |



Differences in outcomes based on a former student's primary disability classification are striking. Due to space limitations we have only included four disability types in the chart below. Students with Specific Learning Disabilities fare better in terms of with higher education and competitive employment, and are the least likely to be not engaged. Students with Functional Mental Disabilities fare poorly in both higher education and competitive employment. They are however the most likely to engage in "other employment" which is often based in a segregated setting. Two thirds of students with FMD are not engaged in any educational or employment outcome. Although the numbers for students with FMD enrolled in higher education are discouragingly low it is important to note that there are some students with this disability that have managed to enroll in higher education. Perhaps the most interesting disability is autism. In terms of higher education persons with autism have among the best outcomes (25.3%). However, rates for competitive employment among respondents with autism are among the worst at 18.7%. For most disability types these two outcomes are positively correlated with each other, for persons with autism the opposite is true. Persons with orthopedic impairments follow a similar

pattern with 30.8% going on to higher education while only 23% going on to competitive employment. Persons classified as having multiple disabilities have poor outcomes on both dimensions (8% higher education, 14% competitive employment). Respondents classified as having “Other Health Impairments” have generally positive outcomes (23.4% higher education, 59% competitive employment). Most other disability types have too few respondents in order to make meaningful inferences about their outcomes.



A final way in which KYPSO disaggregated outcomes is based on manner of exit. Because students who exited by aging out and those who exited by receiving alternate diplomas are indistinguishable based on our data we combine them into a single category. It is fair to assume that all members of this group are on the alternate diploma track. It is not surprising that those who graduated with a regular diploma have the best outcomes. Students who exited high school by dropping out are obviously very unlikely to enroll in higher education, but have considerably higher competitive employment rates than those who exited from the alternate diploma track. Two thirds of students on the alternate diploma track are unengaged a year after exiting high

school. These trends have remained in place for several years, but we anticipate changes in next year's data based on the state's new regulations concerning dropout age.

Follow-Up Questions Related to Employment and Unemployment

One of the strengths of the YOYO is that it allows us to probe deeper into a young person's outcomes. We recognize that according to the federal definition a person could be considered employed (either competitively or noncompetitively) if they worked for 90 days since leaving high school even if they did not remain employed until the time of the interview. For those respondents who indicated that they had been employed since leaving high school we asked if they were still working. 88% of those who responded that they had been working since high school were still employed at the time of interview, meaning that 54% overall were working for pay at that time.

Much of a young person with a disability's ability to find and maintain a job can be dependent upon employment supports. We asked respondents who indicated that they have been employed since leaving high school whether or not they received any of the following support/accommodations at their job: Job Coach; Personal Assistant; Special Equipment; or other accommodations. 12% of the respondents who had been employed indicated that they had used a job coach. Very few indicated the use of a personal assistant or special equipment. 12% of respondents indicated "other" supports which include family members, employer/supervisor, OVR specialist, supported employment, social worker, other employees, and support from on the job training. Many respondents stated that they did not require any supports, while some reported that they were not aware employment supports are an option or available to them.

We also asked respondents who had been employed how interesting they found their job. 62% indicated that they found it very or somewhat interesting, while only 12% indicated that they found it not very interesting or not interesting at all.

For those students who indicated that they had not been employed since exiting high school we asked them two additional questions: What are the reasons for not working now, and what accommodations would have made work possible. The first item allows interviewers to check all from a list of pre-coded responses or to select "other" and write a response in a text box. The most common precoded response was that a respondent was looking for a job (25%). 12%

indicated that they did not want to work. 9% listed health concerns. 8% responded that they were afraid to lose benefits, while another 8% listed transportation issues. 6% indicated that they lacked skills for employment, 5% said that they needed help finding a job, another 5% indicated that a lack of childcare was preventing them from working in 4% indicated that they lost their job. Other reasons for not working included problems related to their disability or health, incarceration or legal problems, currently in school or in a job training program, currently looking for a job, lost job due to various reasons, currently pregnant or parenting, volunteering, and attending adult day programs. A significant number of respondents indicated disability or health as a reason for not working, which suggests that parents and students may not be aware of employment possibilities for individuals with disabilities or do not have the resources and supports for accommodations needed to work as a valuable member of their community. Further education and supports may be needed at the secondary education level to encourage parents and young people with disabilities to transition to employment after graduation.

When asked what accommodations would have made it possible for them to work, the most common response was assistance with transportation. Respondents also reported that they could benefit from services that focus on job search, job training, job placement, job coaching, supported employment, career counseling, specific disability/health status related supports, and childcare.

Another question we asked was whether respondents contacted the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation since leaving high school. For respondents who contacted OVR, we asked what kind of help they were getting. The majority of respondents who contacted OVR reported receiving assistance with finances (24%) and pre-employment services (26%) such as career counseling, job search, and job placement. Other assistance received from OVR included: job coaching, job training, supported employment, assistance with postsecondary education, and accommodations. Results indicated that only 16% of respondents contacted OVR. Given that a significant number of respondents indicated that they could benefit from resources and supports (e.g., assistance with job search, job coaching) that would have made it possible for them to work, it is unclear why they have not accessed these services from OVR. More education and communication about OVR with students and parents may improve utilization of OVR services.

Follow-Up Questions Related to Postsecondary Education

For respondents who indicated that they had gone on to some form of postsecondary education we ask them what type of school or training program they had enrolled in. The highest number (40%) indicated that they had enrolled in a two-year college. Another 25% indicated a four-year college. 12% indicated enrollment in a Vocational School. 5% indicated that they were enrolled in some type of short-term program, while 1% indicated that they were pursuing some form of adult education or GED. Many respondents indicated some “other” type of program that include military training, on the job training, and short-term training programs related to law enforcement, rescue, and firefighting.

We also asked what degree they expected to get when they were finished with school. 29% indicated a Bachelor’s degree and 25% indicated that they were pursuing an Associate’s degree. 17% indicated that they were in a certificate program, while 9% indicated that they were not degree seeking, including those who were auditing classes.

In order to look at aspects of college life for those who were attending postsecondary education we asked additional questions. When asked what, if any, problems they have faced in their postsecondary school/training program, 48% of the respondents reported that they did not experience any problems. However, 15% of respondents stated that they had academic problems (e.g., difficulties with coursework); 11% reported that they had difficulty accessing needed supports (e.g., transportation, accommodations, financial aid); and 7% had adjustment problems (e.g., stress management, social interactions). Other noted difficulties included health or disability related issues, coordinating services, using technology, and large class sizes. These difficulties may have been mitigated by supports from disability services coordinators. Yet, only 45% of those who are going on to postsecondary education had contacted their Disability Services Coordinator. This number has been going down slightly over the years that we have been measuring it, and we believe it is an important indicator for educators to be aware of. There are obvious incentives for a young person to not disclose their disability on a college campus, however it is important to realize the services and accommodations that may not be available to someone who chooses not to do so. We also asked young people who are enrolled in postsecondary education where they live when their school is in session. 66% indicated that they live with their family. While it is tempting to believe that “going to college” involves a residential experience whereby young persons may learn valuable social skills including

independent living while in a relatively safe environment, educators should be aware that for two thirds of this population their residence is likely the same as it was while they were in high school.

For students who did not go on to postsecondary education we followed up by asking what the reason was for not continuing their education. 39% responded that they just did not want to, while another 28% indicated that they had found a job. Small but significant numbers noted expense and the need to take care of their family, while very small numbers indicated that there were not enough supports or that they were not accepted. 7% indicated that they did not know why they did not go on to postsecondary education. 22% responded with “other” reasons. Other reasons for not enrolling in postsecondary education included problems related to their disability or health, currently taking time off from school but plan to enroll in school soon, lack of GED or high school diploma, looking for a job, pregnant or parenting, and legal problems. Similar to employment options, more accommodations and supports may be needed to increase enrollment in postsecondary education. Additionally, mentorship and encouragement from teachers and counselors during high school may improve self-efficacy and increase young people’s interest in pursuing higher education. For respondents who indicated that they were neither employed nor enrolled since exiting high school we asked them what it is that they do on most days. This open ended questions revealed the following patterns of responses: engage in various hobbies, do chores, spend time with family and friends, do unpaid work, care for a child or other family members, look for jobs, attend adult day program, go to appointments for health or disability services, and spend time at home. A large number of respondents reported doing unpaid work that included babysitting, volunteering, and helping friends and family with their work, such as farming. One area of concern is the significant number (15%) of people who reported “stay at home” or “spend time at home.” Spending most of the time at home without engaging in any activities may have a negative impact on their quality of life. This finding suggests that more effort toward improving community participation is essential.

Community Participation

KYPSO has long wanted to be able to get a firm grasp on a young person’s level of community participation. Two items that we think are relevant are whether or not a young person has a driver’s license, and whether they are registered to vote. 51% of our respondents indicated that

they did have a driver's license, while 54% indicated that they were registered to vote. Although the national trend for young persons with driver's licenses has been dropping for years, the rate of our respondents is well below the overall national average (with and without disabilities) of 69% (Sievak and Schoettle, 2016). Our population may be ahead of the general population in terms of voter registration however, as Kentucky's general population of 18-24 year-olds report a 42% registration rate (US Census Bureau, Current Population Survey 2014). While our population may be less engaged than their non-disabled peers, our data suggest that they are not less interested. We also asked respondents where they lived for most of the past year. The vast majority (77%) indicated that they live with their family. 6% indicated that they live with a spouse or partner. 4% indicated that they live with friends, while another 4% indicated that they live alone. 6% indicated that they lived most of the previous year and a college dormitory. 1% each indicated that they lived in a foster/group home, or a shelter/correctional facility.

A surprisingly low number (17%) indicated that they worked with someone from an employment agency such as OVR. It may be the case the young persons simply do not know who it is that they are working with, but this low number suggests that exiting students would benefit from increased level of involvement with support personnel.

The YOYO also included others questions about life after high school. One of the questions asked respondents to name the most important thing during high school that helped with their life after high school. The majority of respondents stated that their teachers (33%) and classes (34%) were most helpful. The results indicated that vocational school classes appeared to be of significant importance. Other responses included: vocational rehabilitation and work related programs, extracurricular activity (e.g., sports, ROTC), specific skills (e.g., social skills, time management, advocacy), social interaction, accommodations, and extra help in classes.

Part of the YOYO involves the interviewer having the opportunity to share information with the respondent. We ask that interviewers note at the end of the interview what it is that they have shared. 47% indicate that they have shared information about Vocational Rehabilitation. This is encouraging, not only because it is hopeful that these young persons will then get the supports that they may be lacking, but because it indicates that school systems and their personnel are still invested in their former students with disabilities. Another 19% of interviews ended with the interviewer giving information about their special education transition consultant, which KyPSO

recommends is the go to resource when an interviewer is unsure where to direct a respondent. 7% of interviews provided information about supported employment, while smaller numbers gave information about the Michelle P waiver or Medicare/Medicaid. 12% gave “other” information, which included employment (e.g., Job Corp, Kentucky Career Center), Disability Coordinator at secondary schools or colleges, Kentucky Department of Education, specific programs at colleges and universities, disability related services and providers, GED related services, community resources (e.g., child care, housing assistance), and the interviewer’s contact information.

Several quotes from respondents provided additional insight into the transition experience of youth with disabilities are presented below:

“The OVR counselor contacted him for several months after leaving school and offered help.”

“Attempted to work with OVR after he graduated but received a lot of negativity from the counselor. She did not support the student attending college which was disappointing to the parents.”

“It costs less for me to not work and stay at home with my child than for me to pay a babysitter [in order to work].”

“[The student is] active in church three days a week and participates at a local church camp. He listens to music and helps around the house.”

“[The student] waited to find the right program. [The student] is planning to start EMT classes in the fall.”

Conclusion

Given the number of years for which we have consistent data we are able to speak with greater certainty about developing trends. It is increasingly clear that young persons are more and more likely to go on to competitive employment outcomes while they are somewhat less likely to go onto education outcomes. Although we do not place a value judgment on choosing one path over the other, we do believe that it is important to note that we have heard anecdotal reports indicating low expectations regarding the ability of students with disabilities to pursue higher education by many members of society, including educators. While our data demonstrates great

disparities in educational outcomes we believe that it also shows that higher education is possible and often desired by young persons. Disparities exist in other outcomes as well and we are hopeful that this report highlights some of these and will allow educators to make informed decisions to help students succeed. KyPSO staff are available to work with districts, co-ops and the state to identify best practices based on data.

We are hopeful that improved contact information will increase both our response rate and the ability to be representative of our population. We must recognize however that we are all limited by the quality of contact information that districts collect. We also recognize that many students do change contact information and often simply do not wish to be contacted by their former school. Encouraging district personnel to make an effort to get the most appropriate contact information, including information from emergency contacts can only help to increase the interviewer's ability to successfully complete an interview.

KYPSO is in the process of refining its reporting system, and next year will be able to offer an online interactive system for districts to view their data. We also intend to offer a statewide interactive system which will be open to the general public. We believe that our data is relevant to many agencies and organizations throughout the state, and while we already make every effort to keep all stakeholders and potential stakeholders informed of our findings, the ability to customize searches should make it possible to increase knowledge, coordination, and planning for successful transitions of students with disabilities throughout the state.

Although our data are unique to the state of Kentucky many of the best practices related to secondary transitions hold true throughout the United States and elsewhere. We have been praised by our national partners as being among the most innovative in terms of data collection and reporting. We rely heavily on the National Technical Assistance Center for Transition (NTACT) for our knowledge regarding best practices. We have a great deal of expertise both within KYPSO and HDI at working with schools and school systems, as well as other stakeholders and hope that we will continue to have opportunities to work at all levels to improve transition outcomes for students exiting high school with disabilities.