



University of Kentucky  
Human Development Institute  
UCEDD

Virginia Commonwealth University  
Rehabilitation Research Training Center

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RESEARCH PARTNERS IN A STUDY  
REGARDING PRE-ETS SERVICES OF  
TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH WITH  
SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES

# Purpose of the research study

- Use knowledge translation (KT) methods to develop and deliver a toolkit for VR counselors providing Pre-ETS to students with significant disabilities age 14 to 16.
- The study is framed using a KT model, Graham and colleagues (2006) "Knowledge-to-Action" process. Identifying the problem, modifying what we know to the local content, evaluating barriers and facilitators, creating and modifying interventions, monitoring the process and evaluating the outcomes.
- Effects of knowledge translation methods on VR counselors providing Pre-ETS to YWD 14-16 years of age

# 5-year study examining the effects of knowledge translation methods on VR counselors providing Pre-ETS to youth with significant disabilities 14-16 years of age

**PHASE 1:** Knowledge Inquiry. Interview groups of students w/dis & families, educators & providers, and VR counselors on their experiences with Pre-ETS to obtain feedback that will build strategies for toolkit (To date: 26 interviews conducted in KY). **Need 4 more families to participate.**

**PHASE 2:** Knowledge Synthesis. Pre-ETS services in job exploration, workplace readiness, and work-based learning provided to a cohort of YWD across 2 years.

**PHASE 3:** Knowledge Tools/Products. Toolkit developed based on data collected in Phase 1 & 2 of study. Data collected on use and effectiveness of toolkit with VR counselors.

# Phase 1: Preliminary Findings: students & families

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## BENEFITS

Provides opportunities earlier to learn about employment, have experiences

Students have benefitted from job experiences

Sets up students for success and helps integrate into the community

Creates better alignment of ARC/IEP goals

## CHALLENGES

Services too generic, lacks attention to students' specific disabilities

Lack of time spent with students

Lacks communication with VR

When school is out, services stop, students stop jobs or have transportation issues

# Phase 1: Preliminary Findings: educators

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## BENEFITS

Majority of educators familiar with pre-ets  
See real benefits for students with dis  
Important to start early with employment opportunities  
Some indicate they are collaborating well with VR and vendors  
Have been creative especially with COVID

## CHALLENGES

Lack of transportation for opportunities in the community  
Lack of businesses and resources esp within rural communities  
Lack of staff to be effective in providing services  
Lack of time for student to participate in a variety of experiences

# Phase 1: Preliminary Findings: OVR Counselors

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## BENEFITS

Helps students start earlier in setting transition goals

Provides more time to discuss employment career/employment opportunities

More focused on quality than quantity

Helps students be more successful

Provides services to pre-VR caseload

## CHALLENGES

Need more buy-in from schools and families to conduct activities

Lack of time for participating in a variety of experiences

Lack of or limited opportunities for these student's specific disabilities

Need more training and professional development in meeting needs of younger SW significant disabilities

# Findings across all interviews

- See benefits in starting early to increase students' skills, knowledge and understanding of employment
- More opportunities for younger students with significant disabilities
- More time is needed to provide opportunities to build skills
- Increase communication across schools, VR, and families
- Provide training for professionals working with younger students in career related planning and providing activities.

# For more information

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