

THE TRANSITION JOURNEY

The School to Work Journey for Kids with Disabilities

IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO START

Life is a continuous transition

In a recent interview with research Professor and author Rich Luecking we asked when is the ideal time to start planning for work, his response "the earlier the better, more often the better and the more varied the better...ideally younger students are exposed to informal work experience,". Our research and practice leads us to echo this sentiment.

Too often we hear from young people and their families that the focus is on what they can't do or would my son or daughter be eligible or do they need an assessment.

The practice of Discovery turns this deficit focus on it's head and brings the focus to the individuals strengths, skills and interests. This exploration begins in the home and then extends into the community, where these interests are explored in locations where people with similar themes work or socialise.

Exploration of work for people with disabilities is encouraged from childhood, as it is for children without disabilities. During school aged years a greater focus should be placed on work experience and work tasters.



DID YOU KNOW THAT

Kids with a family that believes in employment are 30% more likely to succeed in transition to work.



THE SDLMI - A NEW APPROACH TO SUPPORTING SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION

Result: The students love it!

The Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction (SDLMI) was developed as a tool to support the development of self-determination skills in children as part of their individual education plans. It works to support and enable students to become more effective at initiating and self-regulating their actions as they work toward self-selected goals.

Working with the SDLMI developers, we've found that it has application in our work with kids in high school and we've incorporated it into our Employment Counselling program at Work First. Employment Counselling isn't a replacement for existing therapeutic supports that kids may be receiving but an adjunct service focused on developing goal orientation skills, self-advocacy and workplace skills.

Our aim is to explore the idea of employment and normalise the idea that work is part of the transition to adulthood that every child undertakes.

When implementing the SDLMI with students with significant support needs, we build upon cognitive and communication supports the student is familiar with, such as visual representation of concepts (e.g., goal, plan) or assistive technology. At Work First, we collaborate with students to prepare for their transition from high school to adult life. Transition should start as soon as possible, preferably by the age of 14.

The NDIS provides an opportunity for all kids with disabilities to have a real transition to adult life. It's a game changer!

