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Vocational Rehabilitation Employment Outcomes for Transition-Age Youth with Intellectual Disabilities

By Agnieszka Zalewska and Jennifer Sulewski

As transition services evolve, increased attention is being given to the outcomes of transition-age youth. Since different age groups have different employment support needs and unique circumstances, it is crucial to monitor their outcomes separately and to address their services in a customized manner. This Data Note will focus on employment outcomes of transition-age youth with intellectual disabilities (ID) as compared with older age groups of people with ID. In this analysis, transition-age youth with ID are divided into two groups: ages 16–21 and ages 22–30. They are then compared to all other working-age adults.

Nationally, the percentage of closures into employment (out of all people with ID receiving VR services) was somewhat greater for older people (Figure 1). Thirty-six percent of individuals ages 31 through 65 achieved an employment closure, compared to 34% of those ages 22–30 and 28% of those ages 16–21. This is not surprising, considering that with age, people generally gain experience and become more employable.

When looking at the same outcomes across states (see Table 1), large variability can be observed. In general, the youngest group tends to have the lowest rate of employment closures compared to the two other groups, and many states mirror the national average with an incremental growth of the rate of employment closures. However, four states (DE, NH, VT, and WY) have the opposite trend, with higher percentages of employment closures for both younger groups (16–21 and 22–30), compared to the 31–65 group. Six other states demonstrate the highest rate of employment closures for the youngest group (16–21) compared to both older groups (AZ, CO, ID, NC, NE, and SC). It is worth exploring if these states are doing anything differently in terms of services and policies addressing transition-age youth that may be correlated to a higher percentage of closures to employment.

Figure 1. Percentage of closures into employment by age group nationally (all recipients of VR services with ID)

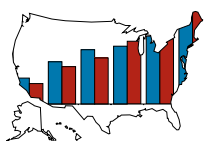
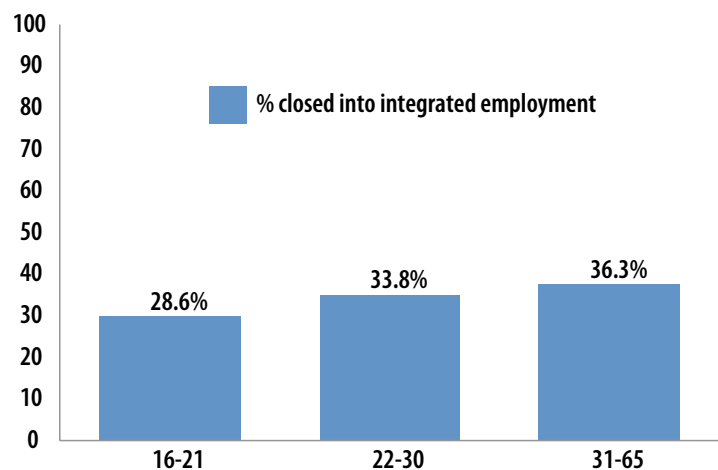


Table 1. Percentage of closures with ID into employment by state

State	16-21	22-30	31-65
AK*	55%	47%	38%
AL	17%	27%	26%
AR	20%	26%	33%
AZ	31%	23%	27%
CA	35%	47%	45%
CO	38%	32%	34%
CT	24%	25%	27%
DC*	33%	36%	57%
DE	53%	42%	34%
FL	20%	22%	21%
GA	36%	36%	43%
HI*	39%	25%	41%
IA	30%	25%	33%
ID	41%	36%	38%
IL	27%	37%	46%
IN	24%	32%	31%
KS	17%	24%	29%
KY	31%	31%	36%
LA	21%	21%	28%
MA	40%	53%	41%
MD	42%	40%	43%
ME	18%	20%	28%
MI	28%	40%	37%
MN	23%	26%	36%
MO	25%	27%	32%
MS	22%	16%	24%
MT*	26%	19%	36%
NC	40%	35%	40%
ND	45%	38%	47%
NE	44%	29%	39%
NH	53%	45%	40%
NJ	29%	38%	31%
NM	28%	35%	43%
NV	22%	29%	38%
NY	24%	34%	37%
OH	23%	27%	31%
OK	42%	34%	40%
OR	15%	33%	22%
PA	32%	41%	37%
RI*	25%	33%	33%
SC	29%	32%	37%
SD	37%	49%	54%
TN	19%	26%	23%
TX	30%	32%	39%
UT	38%	49%	54%
VA	32%	41%	45%
VT	59%	73%	62%
WA	32%	40%	40%
WI	32%	31%	33%
WV	37%	42%	39%
WY	50%	41%	40%
USA	29%	34%	36%

* Some cells for this state had counts smaller than 10

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