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**Benchmarking Toolkit**

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# Introduction

Policy shifts over the past 20 years have created an agenda that calls for a sustained commitment to integrated employment for individuals with disabilities. But despite these clear intentions, unemployment of individuals with disabilities continues to be a major public policy issue.

For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), the disparity in labor market participation grows. Data suggest only 14.7% of individuals who receive supports from state IDD agencies work in either individual or group integrated employment, and 19% of individuals who receive day services from a state IDD agency participate in a service designed to support integrated employment (Butterworth, Hall, Smith, Migliore, Winsor, Domin, & Sulewski, 2013; Human Services Research Institute, 2012). At the same time, participation in sheltered or facility-based employment and non-work services has grown steadily, suggesting that employment services continue to be viewed as an add-on service rather than a systemic change (Butterworth et al., 2013; Mank, Cioffi, & Yovanoff, 2003).

Data on the state of employment for individuals with disabilities (as briefly synthesized above) is available through a myriad of data collection systems. A growing emphasis on government accountability at the state and federal levels has increased interest in the collection and use of data on employment outcomes. However, many disability data systems are only loosely coordinated across various agencies, and many state service systems have fragmented and incomplete data systems in place. Stapleton & Thornton (2009, p.4) note that “(a)lthough the challenges to improving the data are substantial, they pale in comparison to the likely consequences of failing to do so, both for people with disabilities and for taxpayers.”

This toolkit is designed to provide guidance on how to use currently available national and state-level aggregate data sets to weave together a picture of the employment outcomes of transition-age youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Data sets are grouped by the type of data they report: agency-level data, and general employment trend data.

## Agency-level data:

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- » National Survey of State Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Agencies
- » National Core Indicators
- » Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA-911)
- » National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2)
- » State Performance Indicators: 13 and 14

## General employment trend data:

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- » American Community Survey (ACS)
- » Current Population Survey (CPS)

## The data sets will be described under the following headings:

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- » Description of the dataset
- » How to access the data
- » How to use the data

The final section of the toolkit will offer suggestions on how to use the available data sets to create a picture of the employment landscape in your state for people with IDD, including transition-age youth.

# Agency-Level Data

## A. National Survey of State Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Agencies

### Description of the National Survey of State Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Agencies dataset

This survey is part of a longitudinal study commissioned by the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to analyze community-based day and employment service trends beginning in FY1988 for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and closely related conditions. Between 1988 and 2004, the survey was administered on a semi-annual basis; however, starting in 2007, information has been collected annually.

This survey collects summary data on day and employment service distribution and funding at the state level annually. Table 1 provides a description of service definitions. Individuals may be counted in more than one service category at a time, so percentages within the report may add up to more than 100%.

The survey collects data on participation by service, which means it does not directly assess participation in employment. In general, the data suggest that the number of people in employment services is slightly higher than the numbers that are actually employed. This reflects individuals who may be in different phases of the employment process, including career planning or job development.

**Table 1. IDD Survey Service Definitions**

Type of Service/ Setting	Work	Non-Work
<b>Community</b>	Integrated employment: A job in the community where most people do not have disabilities. Includes competitive employment, individual supported employment, and group-supported employment including enclaves and mobile work crews.	Community-based non-work: A program where individuals engage in recreational, skill training, or volunteer activities in settings where most people do not have disabilities. Typically includes community integration and community participation services.
<b>Facility</b>	Facility-based work: Employment in a facility where most people have disabilities, with continuous job-related supports and supervision. Includes sheltered employment.	Facility-based non-work: A program whose primary focus is skill training, activities of daily living, recreation, and/or professional therapies in a facility where most people have disabilities. Typically includes day activity and day habilitation services.

### How to access the data

- » Users can generate tables and charts of key variables using an interactive chart builder at [www.statedata.info](http://www.statedata.info). This website also allows users to download the annual report StateData: The National Report on Employment Services and Outcomes in PDF format, or to download raw data of selected variables. Select the “State IDD Agencies” database.

## How to use the data

The survey is designed to provide information on a state's investment in integrated employment and other services. Data include:

- » Trends in the number of people served in integrated employment, facility-based employment, and facility-based and community-based non-work programs.
- » Trends in the number of individuals waiting for services.
- » Funding sources that are being used to support day and employment services.
- » The allocation of funds across day and employment services.

This data can be used to understand changes in state investment in integrated employment and other services, as well as to compare states' service outcomes.

The survey is not designed to collect data on specific age groups or geographic locations within a given state. Additionally, the data cannot be used to track the outcomes of specific individuals.

## B. National Core Indicators

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### Description of the National Core Indicators dataset

The National Core Indicators project (NCI) (National Core Indicators, 2012) is a voluntary effort of participating state IDD agencies to monitor and track their performance. The [core indicators](#) are standard measures used across states to assess the outcomes of services provided to individuals and families. Indicators address key areas of concern, including employment, rights, service planning, community inclusion, choice, and health and safety.

Over the past five years, NCI has strengthened its collection of employment information. Data are collected at the individual level on a randomly selected sample of individuals who receive supports from participating states. NCI includes approximately 150 consumer, family, system, and health and safety outcomes. The information is gathered through four main data sources: an adult consumer survey (e.g., rights and choice issues), family surveys (e.g., satisfaction with supports), a provider survey (e.g., staff turnover), and system data from state administrative records (e.g., mortality).

As of July 1, 2012, 34 states were participating in NCI. Fifteen states administered the consumer survey in 2010–2011, and together collected background information on a total of 8,796 individuals (National Core Indicators Consumer Outcomes Report, 2012).

NCI examines five groups of quality indicators with subdomains:

- » Individual: relationships, satisfaction, self-determination, choice and decision-making, community inclusion, and work
- » Health, welfare, and rights: safety, respect/rights, health, medications, wellness, and restraints
- » System performance: access and service coordination
- » Staff stability and competence: staff stability and staff competence
- » Family: choice and control, family outcomes, satisfaction, family involvement, community connections, access and support delivery, information and planning

NCI has been tested for validity and reliability. Sample questions from the NCI adult consumer survey are outlined in Table 2 (Human Service Research Institute, 2013). For some questions, individuals were able to choose more than one response.

**Table 2. Sample Questions and Responses from the National Core Indicators Project**

Sample questions	Response choices
What does the person do during the day?	Paid community job, unpaid community activity, paid facility-based job, unpaid facility-based activity
Where does the person live?	Institution, group home/agency, independent home/apartment, parents'/relatives' home
Does the person have a community job? If, no do they want one? If the person would like a job in the community, is this goal in their individual service plan (ISP)?	Yes, no
If the person has a community-based job, what type of placement is it?	Competitive, individually supported, group supported employment
What industry does the person work in?	Industry choices: building and grounds cleaning or maintenance, retail such as sales clerk or stock person, food preparation and service, general office and administrative support, assembly and manufacturing jobs, materials handling and mail distribution
During a two-week period, how many hours did the person work?	Open
During a two-week period, how much money did the person make?	Open
Does the person like where they work?	Yes, no
Would the person like to work somewhere else?	Yes, no
Does the person receive benefits from their employer?	Yes, no
How long has the person been working in their job?	Open

### How to access the data

Users can generate tables and charts of key variables using an interactive chart builder at <http://www.nationalcoreindicators.org/>. This website also allows users to download reports on states that participate in NCI and on specific indicators.

### How to use the data

The purpose of the program, which began in 1997, is to support National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services member agencies to gather a standard set of performance and outcome measures. States can use these measures to track their own performance over time, to compare results across states, and to establish national benchmarks.

What types of information are states able to learn based upon these questions?

- » The number of people working in the community
- » The number of people in each type of community job
- » Whether an individual's work placement varies based upon where they live
- » The number of people that want a job but do not have one
- » The number of people who want to work and have this goal in their ISP

- » The industries that individuals are concentrated in, including across community job type
- » How many hours on average people are working, including across community job type
- » How much money on average people earn, including across community job type
- » Whether people are satisfied with their job
- » Whether people would like a different job
- » Whether people receive benefits from their employer

NCI specifically cautions that while it is a “tool for understanding programmatic, policy and practice issues at the systems level, it is not meant to understand the circumstances of a particular person or family” (p. 14). NCI also states that the data should not be used to evaluate the performance of providers or regions of the state, or as a single point of data for Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services evidence packages.

## C. Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA-911)

### Description of RSA-911 dataset

The RSA-911 is an administrative case-reporting database that describes the characteristics, services received, and employment or postsecondary education outcomes of people with any type of disabilities who exit the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program. About 600,000 people with disabilities exit the program every year, about a third of whom exit with paid jobs. The types of disabilities reported in the RSA-911 dataset are those identified by rehabilitation counselors as the causes of either a primary or secondary impairment to employment.

The recommended criteria for whether an individual is considered to have an intellectual disability (ID) is if code 25 (mental retardation in the RSA-911 dataset) was reported as the cause of either a primary or secondary impairment to employment. An employment outcome is reported after a person held one of the following closures for at least 90 days: integrated employment with or without ongoing support, self-employment, state-agency-managed business enterprise, homemaker, and unpaid family worker.

Key data points that can be examined through the RSA-911 are:

- » Number and percentage of people receiving services
- » Types of services received
- » Number and percentage employed at exit from VR services
- » Time from referral to employment
- » Weekly earnings at exit from VR services
- » Weekly hours worked at exit from VR services
- » Participation in postsecondary education
- » Demographics

### How to access the data

- » Users can generate tables and charts of key variables for each state and the nation using an interactive chart builder at [www.statedata.info](http://www.statedata.info). This website also allows users to download an annual report StateData: The National Report on Employment Services and Outcomes in PDF format, or to download raw data of selected variables.
- » The full dataset is available on a CD upon request to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). Data are made available approximately one year after the close of each federal fiscal year, and include individual records, with identifying information removed for each person who exited the VR program.
- » On a state level, data are maintained and managed by the state VR agency.

## How to use the data

The data from the RSA-911 dataset is key for understanding the role of the VR program in supporting people with disabilities in getting employment or postsecondary education. Specifically, these data tell us how many people with disabilities accessed the VR program, what types of services they received, and what outcomes they achieved. This information is available at the state level, allowing comparisons across states. Moreover, data are available for types of disabilities, allowing comparisons across disabilities. Finally, the data can be compared across demographic characteristics of job seekers, including gender, age, race, and education.

Since the data are collected by VR counselors for administrative—not research—purposes, they are not tested scientifically for validity and reliability. For example, the types of disability reported for a person may be influenced by subjective perceptions of the counselor during eligibility determination, types of services reported may vary across VR offices, and earnings might reflect job seekers' resistance to disclosing their full income. Also, the RSA-911 data does not include information about job retention after case closure.

Participation in VR services by people with IDD also reflects the overall emphasis on employment outcomes in the state. The number of individuals exiting VR services will depend on the VR agency's effectiveness in reaching out to and serving this population, but also on the extent to which schools and the state IDD agency make referrals and emphasize employment as a priority. Understanding the reasons for levels of participation or outcomes will require a broader interagency discussion.

## D. National Longitudinal Transition Survey (NLTS-2)

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### Description of NLTS-2 dataset

The National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS-2) was a ten-year longitudinal survey of a nationally representative sample of about 12,000 students with disabilities who were between the ages of 13 and 16 and in special education in December 2000. In addition to surveying students, the study collected information from the students' parents or caregivers, teachers, and other personnel in schools.

Data were collected in five waves over a period of ten years. The purpose of the survey was to expand our knowledge about the characteristics of the students and their households, school experiences, extracurricular activities, post-high-school experiences, and transition outcomes in the domains of education, employment, leisure, and living situation. The study was funded by the National Center for Special Education Research at the Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, and carried out by SRI International.

A new NLTS, NLTS 2012, has recently been conducted. Wave 1 of data collection began in spring 2012 and continued through summer 2013.

### How to access the data

- » Data from the NLTS-2 are available online, where users can select variables and view the corresponding findings: [http://www.nlts2.org/data\\_tables/index.html](http://www.nlts2.org/data_tables/index.html)
- » Researchers who would like to run data analysis can request CDs with the raw data, dictionaries, and study documentation. However, researchers interested in the raw data must apply for a restricted-user license and meet the confidentiality standards listed in the license. The application process is described here: [http://www.nlts2.org/data\\_dictionary/index.html](http://www.nlts2.org/data_dictionary/index.html)

## How to use the data



### ***What the data can tell you***

The NLTS-2 data is a great source of detailed information about students' transition experiences during their years in high school, and their transition outcomes after high school. This dataset provides information by types of disabilities on a wide spectrum of variables, including demographic characteristics, personal characteristics (e.g., self-determination and social skills), support needs, experiences in school, expectations after school, participation in school activities, educational results, and transition outcomes. Moreover, a wealth of information is provided from the perspective of the students' parents and their teachers.

### ***What the data cannot tell you***

Due to the relatively small sample size, the NLTS-2 data cannot provide state-level information. Moreover, these data do not allow for comparison with students without disabilities, because the target population is limited to students in special education. Also, different from other datasets providing yearly updates, the NLTS-2 data address a specific historical period (2000–2009). Any changes in schools occurring after that timeframe are not captured in the data.

## **E. State Performance Indicators: 13 and 14**

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### **Description of the State Performance Indicators: 13 and 14 datasets**

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), all states are mandated to report on twenty indicators of educational services and outcomes for special education students. Each state submits an annual performance report on these indicators to the Office of Special Education Programs.

Indicator 13 represents the percentage of students with an appropriate transition plan. Indicator 14 represents the percent enrolled in higher education, and/or employed, one year after exiting school. Factors that make up each indicator are described below.

#### **Indicator 13**

- » “Percent of youth with individualized education plans (IEP) aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age-appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition services needs.
- » Evidence that the student was invited to the IEP team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority.” (20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

States used a variety of checklists to measure Indicator 13, including the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC) I-13 Checklist or their own checklist.

#### **Indicator 14**

- » “Percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they 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)).

There is considerable state-to-state variation in how these data are collected, including differing definitions of higher education and competitive employment, the use of a census or a representative sample of students, and the data collection method (in-person interview, mailed questionnaire, Internet survey, state longitudinal data system, or combination of methods).

### How to access the data

- » Summary data on national performance outcomes for Indicator 13 and 14 can be found at: <http://therightidea.tadnet.org/assets/2147>
- » State Annual Performance Reports are available from the U.S. Department of Education: <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/data/report/idea/partbspap/allyears.html#a>
- » Additional data, including data by district, may be available from a state's department or division of special education.

### How to use the data

Data on Indicator 13 can tell you the percent of assessed students with an appropriate transition plan. The National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC) is the national coordinating center for Indicator 13. NSTTAC provides technical assistance and disseminates information related to evidence-based transition practices for students with disabilities, college and career readiness for youth with disabilities, and compliance with Indicator 13. For more information about NSTTAC, visit their website: <http://nsttac.org/>

Data on Indicator 14 can tell you the percent of assessed students within one year after exiting school who are:

- a. Enrolled in higher education.
- b. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed.
- c. Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment.

The National Post-School Outcomes Center, the national coordinating center for Indicator 14, provides guidance to support states that are interested in expanding Indicator 14 data collection to include supplemental employment information, such as wages and hours worked. For more information, refer to their website: <http://www.psocenter.org/>

All states are mandated to report educational outcomes of special education students: graduation and dropout rate (IDEA Part B Indicators 1 and 2), percent served in integrated classrooms (Indicator 5), percent with an appropriate transition plan (Indicator 13), and percent enrolled in higher education and/or employed one year after exiting high school (Indicator 14). However, while these indicator data are available state-by-state for the full population of students with disabilities, they are not consistently reported or available broken out by disability categories.

Employment status is embedded in parts b and c of Indicator 14. As a result, Indicator 14 does not provide a specific statistic for the number of individuals who are competitively employed.

# General Employment Trend Data

## A. American Community Survey (ACS)

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### Description of ACS dataset

The American Community Survey (ACS) is a national annual survey that—mirroring the U.S. decennial census—investigates topics such as gender, age, race, disability, employment, income, poverty, veteran status, and other demographic and personal data. Unlike the U.S. census, the ACS collects data from a random sample—instead of the entire population—and focuses on a shorter list of key variables. Because of random selection and by using weighted data, however, the ACS can be generalized to the entire national population, and data are available at the state and county level annually. The U.S. Census Bureau administers the survey.

The ACS reports on several broad disability categories based on individual responses to the survey. The primary variables used to identify presence of a disability include:

- » Hearing difficulty, i.e., deaf or having serious difficulty hearing
- » Vision difficulty, i.e., blind or having serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses
- » Cognitive difficulty, i.e., because of a physical, mental, or emotional problem, having difficulty remembering, concentrating, or making decisions
- » Ambulatory difficulty, i.e., having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs
- » Self-care difficulty, i.e., having difficulty bathing or dressing
- » Independent living difficulty, i.e., because of a physical, mental, or emotional problem, having difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping

### How to access the data

- » For select variables, users can explore the interactive chart builder available at [www.statedata.info](http://www.statedata.info) or download the annual report StateData: The National Report on Employment Services and Outcomes available on that website. The chart builder allows comparisons between people with no disability and individuals with a cognitive, hearing, visual, or physical disability.
- » The American Fact Finder website is appropriate for guided searches of broader variables: <http://factfinder2.census.gov/>
- » Finally, the US Census Bureau website is a good place to go for obtaining broader information, including documentation on methodology and instructions for obtaining the raw data for analysis: <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>

### How to use the data

One advantage of the ACS data set is that it allows comparing characteristics and employment outcomes of people with disabilities with the corresponding information for the general population of people without disabilities. Data are available at the state as well as the county level annually. Therefore, these data provide information that closely mirrors the information available from the decennial US Census without having to wait 10 years for updated results.

The ACS also allows users to explore employment status as it relates to other variables, including poverty, living situation, and occupation and industry. These data are critical for informing local policies.

Because of the broad definition of disability used in the ACS, comparison of findings from this survey with findings from other disability-specific data sources should be made with caution. For example, the ACS identifies a person as having cognitive disabilities when a “yes” response is provided to the following question: “Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, does this person have serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions?” This very broad question will include individuals with a wide range of disability experiences, and is not directly comparable with individuals with IDD.

Before 2008, the definition of this group category was slightly different, and participants were identified as having a “mental disability”—instead of cognitive disability—if they reported difficulties in learning, remembering, or concentrating because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition lasting six months or more. Due to this change in disability definition, any comparison of disability data from before 2008 with later years is challenging.

## **B. Current Population Survey (CPS)**

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### **Description of CPS dataset**

The Current Population Survey (CPS) is a monthly survey of about 60,000 households with a focus on labor force, employment, unemployment, people not in the labor force, hours of work, earnings, and other demographic and labor force characteristics. Since 2009, the survey has collected employment data about people with disabilities. With the exception of the disability population, data are available both at the national and the state level. The survey is conducted by the Bureau of the Census for the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and is the source of the Employment Situation, the monthly Bureau of Labor Statistics report on national employment statistics.

### **How to access the data**

- » The monthly Employment Situation Summary includes data on individuals with and without disabilities: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t06.htm>
- » Additional data are available here: <http://www.bls.gov/cps/>
- » To carry out your own data analyses, download the raw data here: [http://thedataweb.rm.census.gov/ftp/cps\\_ftp.html](http://thedataweb.rm.census.gov/ftp/cps_ftp.html)

### **How to use the data**

Because the questions about disability status are the same for the CPS and the ACS, the findings of these two surveys are comparable. The CPS data, however, have the advantage of providing the data on a monthly basis. Therefore, the CPS is a better tool for monitoring short-term employment trends.

Due to the smaller sample size of the CPS and the higher frequency of data collection, data from the CPS are less suitable than data from the ACS or the decennial US census for investigating long-term trends. Moreover, because of the smaller sample size, the disability data are not available at the state level, and the Employment Situation Summary only provides a general statistic for employment across all disabilities. Finally, like the ACS, the definition of disability in the CPS is broad, making it challenging to compare findings from the CPS with findings from other disability-specific data sources.

# Suggestions for Using Data to Describe the Employment Landscape

The final section of this toolkit offers suggestions on how to use the available data sets to describe the employment landscape in your state for people with IDD, including transition-age youth. Suggestions include discussion questions for using each data set as a catalyst for change, and examples of figures and tables that can be used to inform the discussion.

## Sample discussion questions

It can be useful to frame the presentation of employment data by posing a series of questions to encourage discussion about each of the variables in the data set. Sample discussion questions include:

- » How do my state's employment outcomes compare to the national average?
- » What state has the highest/lowest outcomes?
- » How do the outcomes of individuals with IDD compare to those without disabilities?
- » Are the longitudinal trends showing a decline, increase, or no change in the data?
- » How can we use these data in our communication with key stakeholders?
- » Are we satisfied with our states employment outcomes?
- » If not, what goals could we set for improvement? What needs to happen from a system perspective to meet the goal?

## Sample tables, graphs, and narrative to describe data

Graphs and tables are useful methods to present data to help frame the discussion. The website [StateData.info](#) allows users to create on-demand displays of data from many of the data sets discussed in this toolkit. This section of the toolkit also offers sample tables, graphs, and narrative to describe the data. Examples are provided for the RSA-911 data set, the American Community Survey, the National Survey of State Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Agencies Day and Employment Services, Social Security Administration data, and the National Core Indicators.

### Example 1: RSA-911

#### Table example

Here is an example of how data from the RSA-911 dataset can be used to compare the employment outcomes of people with ID with the corresponding figures from people with other disabilities in the US, over time. Specifically, Figure 1 shows the total number of closures, the number of closures in employment, the number of closures that involved an individual plan of employment without an employment outcome, the rehabilitation rate, and the percentage of closures with an employment outcome of working-age people with intellectual disabilities and people with other types of disabilities, during the period 2004–2011, nationally.

Figure 1. Example RSA-911 Table

**Table 8: Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Case Closures and Employment Outcomes**

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total number of closures	654,040	616,879	617,149	600,188	609,625	580,295	602,814	581,258
Total number of closures with ID	57,113	56,332	56,487	53,620	53,974	49,382	49,697	47,812
Closures into an employment setting	213,431	206,695	205,791	205,447	202,297	177,986	169,258	175,441
Closures with ID into an employment setting	22,964	22,569	22,580	21,799	21,141	17,554	15,810	16,097
Closures with an IPE but no employment outcome	171,642	149,534	146,347	139,061	147,948	141,433	158,337	150,980
Closures with ID and an IPE but no employment outcome	18,278	17,677	17,264	15,681	16,198	14,852	16,689	15,227
Closures with supported employment as a goal	39,518	39,038	40,368	38,448	39,478	36,068	35,913	34,396
Closures with ID and supported employment as a goal	17,439	17,362	17,418	16,752	17,049	14,740	14,176	13,771
Rehabilitation rate for all closures with an IPE	55.4%	58.0%	58.4%	59.6%	57.8%	55.7%	51.7%	53.7%
Rehabilitation rate for all closures with ID*	55.7%	56.1%	56.7%	58.2%	56.6%	54.2%	48.7%	51.4%
Percentage of all closures into employment	32.6%	33.5%	33.3%	34.2%	33.2%	30.7%	28.1%	30.2%
Percentage of closures with ID into employment	40.2%	40.1%	40.0%	40.7%	39.2%	35.6%	31.8%	33.7%

Source: Rehabilitation Services Administration 911 (RSA-911)

\*Rehabilitation Rate = (# closures into employment) / (# closures into employment + # closures with an IPE but no employment outcome)

Butterworth et al., 2013, p. 61

### Narrative example

Here is an example of how you can use narrative to describe the trends presented in Figure 1: “Overall, the total number of closures and closures into an employment setting for both all individuals and for individuals with IDD has declined steadily since 2004. There was also a decline of 3,668 individuals with IDD closed into employment with supported employment as a goal.”

### Graph example

On the following page is an example of how graphs can be used to compare VR employment outcomes across states and the nation (Figure 2). The bar chart compares the rehabilitation rates reported by Massachusetts, California, and the nation during the years 2002–2011.

Figure 2. Example RSA-911 Bar Chart



<http://statedata.info>

## Example 2: American Community Survey

### Table example

Here is an example of how data from the American Community Survey can be used to compare the employment rates of people with cognitive disabilities with the overall population in the US, over time. Figure 3 shows the estimated working-age population, the corresponding figure of people with any disability, and the corresponding figure of people with cognitive disabilities. Moreover, the table shows the numbers and the percentages of people in these three groups who reported employment. Data refer to the period 2005–2011, nationally.

Figure 3. Example ACS Table

Table 2: Employment Participation for Working-Age People (Ages 16–64)\*

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Estimated working-age population (in thousands)	188,091	190,295	191,815	196,235	197,630	199,709	201,195
Number of people with any disability (in thousands)	22,772	23,134	23,060	19,490	19,537	19,511	20,061
Number of people with a cognitive disability (in thousands)	8,420	8,725	8,768	8,041	8,205	8,281	8,532
Number of people employed (in thousands)	131,559	135,176	136,112	140,419	134,826	133,122	134,279
Number of people with any disability employed (in thousands)	8,521	8,655	8,438	7,502	6,810	6,422	6,503
Number of people with a cognitive disability employed (in thousands)	2,406	2,495	2,436	2,194	1,963	1,888	1,895
Percentage of all people who are employed	69.9%	71.0%	71.0%	71.6%	68.2%	66.7%	66.7%
Percentage of people with any disability who are employed	37.4%	37.4%	36.6%	38.5%	34.9%	32.9%	32.4%
Percentage of people with a cognitive disability who are employed	28.6%	28.6%	27.8%	27.3%	23.9%	22.8%	22.2%

Source: American Community Survey (ACS)

\*Due to changes implemented in the American Community Survey in 2008, data for people with disabilities for 2007 and earlier years should not be compared with data beginning in 2008. See the Methodology section for clarification.

Butterworth et al., 2013, p. 57

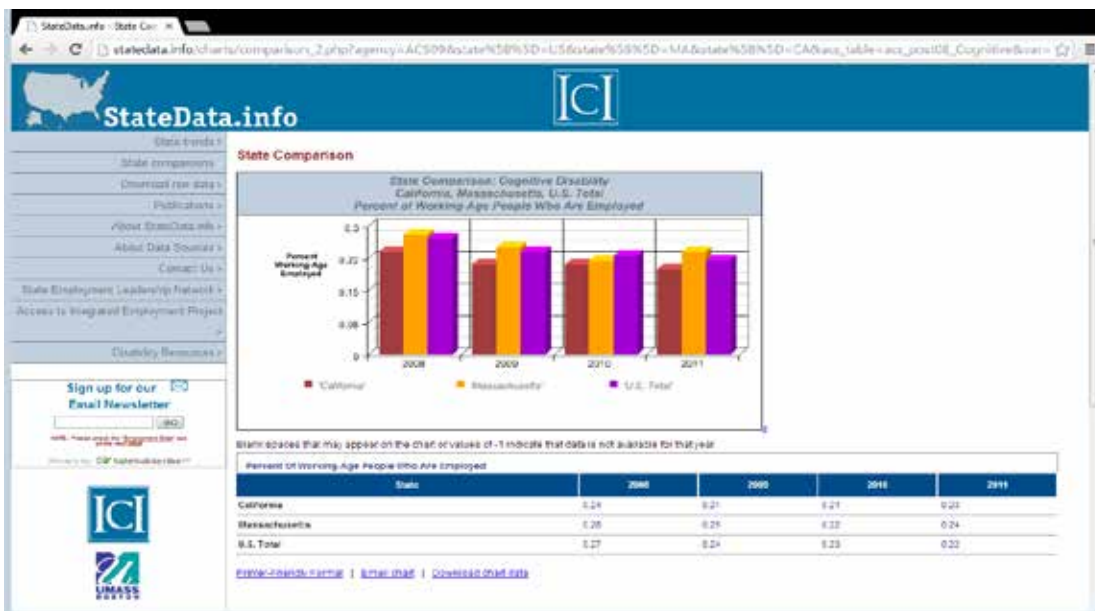
### Narrative example

Here is an example of how you can use narrative to describe the trends presented in Figure 3: “Overall, the estimated working-age population has increased steadily since 2005, and the number of individuals with cognitive disabilities has varied slightly during this same time period. Additionally, the percentage of people with a cognitive disability has decreased from 28.6% in 2005 to 22.2% in 2011.”

**Graph example**

Here is an example of how a graph can be used to visualize and compare employment outcomes across states, based on data from the American Community Survey. The bar chart below compares the employment rates of people with cognitive disabilities ages 16 to 64 across two states (Massachusetts and California) and the nation, for the period 2008 through 2011.

**Figure 4. Example ACS Bar Chart**



<http://statedata.info>

**Example 3: National Survey of State Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Agencies Day and Employment Services**

**Table example**

This example shows how data from state intellectual and developmental disabilities agencies can be used to explore the types of day services that adults with IDD receive, and how these data change over time, nationally. Specifically, Figure 5 shows the total number of people with IDD served each year from 1999 to 2011, the number and percentages of people who received services leading to integrated employment, and the percentages of people who received other services, including facility-based work, facility-based non-work, and community-based non-work. Finally, the table shows the number of people who were on waiting lists.



## Figure 5. Example IDD Agency Table

**Table 5: Intellectual and Developmental Disability (IDD) Agency Outcomes by Employment Settings (Number of states included in figure appears in parenthesis)**

	1999	2001	2004	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total number of people served	457,892 (51)	477,279 (51)	499,495 (51)	531,794 (51)	535,932 (51)	557,963 (51)	569,955 (51)	570,406 (51)
Number of people served in integrated employment	108,618 (51)	117,330 (51)	104,734 (51)	108,826 (51)	110,429 (51)	111,740 (51)	108,644 (51)	110,295 (51)
Percentage of people served in integrated employment	24% (51)	25% (51)	21 % (51)	21% (51)	21% (51)	20% (51)	19% (51)	19% (51)
Number of people served in integrated employment per 100K national population	38.9 (51)	41.2 (51)	35.7 (51)	36.1 (51)	36.3 (51)	36.4 (51)	35.2 (51)	35.4 (51)
Percentage of people served in facility-based work	35.8% (33)	30.5% (31)	28.9% (30)	27.8% (29)	26.6% (29)	26.1% (29)	27.2% (29)	25.8% (29)
Percentage of people served in facility-based non-work	37.5% (26)	38.1% (28)	34.4% (30)	33.8% (26)	33.8% (29)	36.2% (28)	39.2% (30)	41.7% (31)
Percentage of people served in community-based non-work*	21.2% (22)	33.1% (24)	33.7% (24)	38.9% (32)	43.6% (29)	41.7% (29)	43.3% (31)	45.6% (27)
Number on waiting list for day and employment services	22,096 (28)	19,844 (18)	35,739 (20)	32,407 (17)	28,345 (18)	15,423 (17)	62,625 (19)	75,182 (22)

Source: *The National Survey of State Intellectual and Developmental Disability Agencies' Day and Employment Services*

\*Not formally collected until FY 1996.

\*\*May be used by agency if they do not have categorical breakdown for facility-based work and non-work and community-based non-work. Duplicated counts for individuals served in non-work settings may result in figures that are not equal to the sum of all non-work categories.

Butterworth et al., 2013, p. 59

### Narrative example

Here is an example of how you can use narrative to describe the trends presented in Figure 5: “Overall, the estimated number of individuals served by state IDD agencies has increased by more than 110,000 people, but the number of individuals served in integrated employment peaked at 117,330 and has declined to 110,295. These trends are mirrored in the percentage of individuals served in integrated employment services, which peaked at 25% in 2005 and has consistently declined to 19% in 2011.”

### Graph example

On the following page is an example of a bar chart that helps to visualize employment outcomes across states, based on data from state intellectual and developmental agencies. Figure 6 shows the percentage of people with IDD who received integrated employment services in Massachusetts, compared to California, and the nation, for the period 1988 through 2011.

Figure 6. Example IDD Agency Bar Chart



<http://statedata.info>

### Example 4: Social Security Administration Data

#### Table example

This example shows how data from the Social Security Administration can be used to learn more about people with disabilities who receive Social Security benefits. Figure 7 shows how many people with disabilities received Social Security benefits, and how many of them worked during the years 1997–2011, nationally. Moreover, the table shows the number of people who received work incentive benefits, such as the Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS), Impairment-Related Work Expenses (IRWE), and Blind Work Expenses (BWE).

Figure 7. Example SSA Table

**Table 4: Employment and Work Incentive Program Participation for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Beneficiaries**

	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011
Total number of SSI recipients with disabilities	5,188,485	5,317,385	5,499,955	5,740,109	5,977,161	6,251,863	6,581,473	6,995,558
Number of SSI recipients with disabilities who are working	319,842	340,603	346,033	323,666	336,559	357,331	340,163	312,764
Percentage of SSI recipients with disabilities who are working	6.2	6.4	6.3	5.6	5.6	5.7	5.2	4.5
SSI recipients with disabilities who received Plans for Achieving Self-Support (PASS) benefits	1,998	1,045	1,600	1,700	1,578	1,495	1,455	1,271
SSI recipients with disabilities who received Impairment-Related Work Expenses (IRWE) benefits	9,637	9,520	8,798	7,602	6,309	5,155	3,862	3,323
SSI recipients with disabilities who received Blind Work Expenses (BWE) benefits	4,116	3,972	3,642	3,070	2,547	2,133	1,638	1,555

Source: Social Security Administration, "SSI Disabled Recipients Who Work"

Butterworth et al., 2013, p. 58

### Narrative example

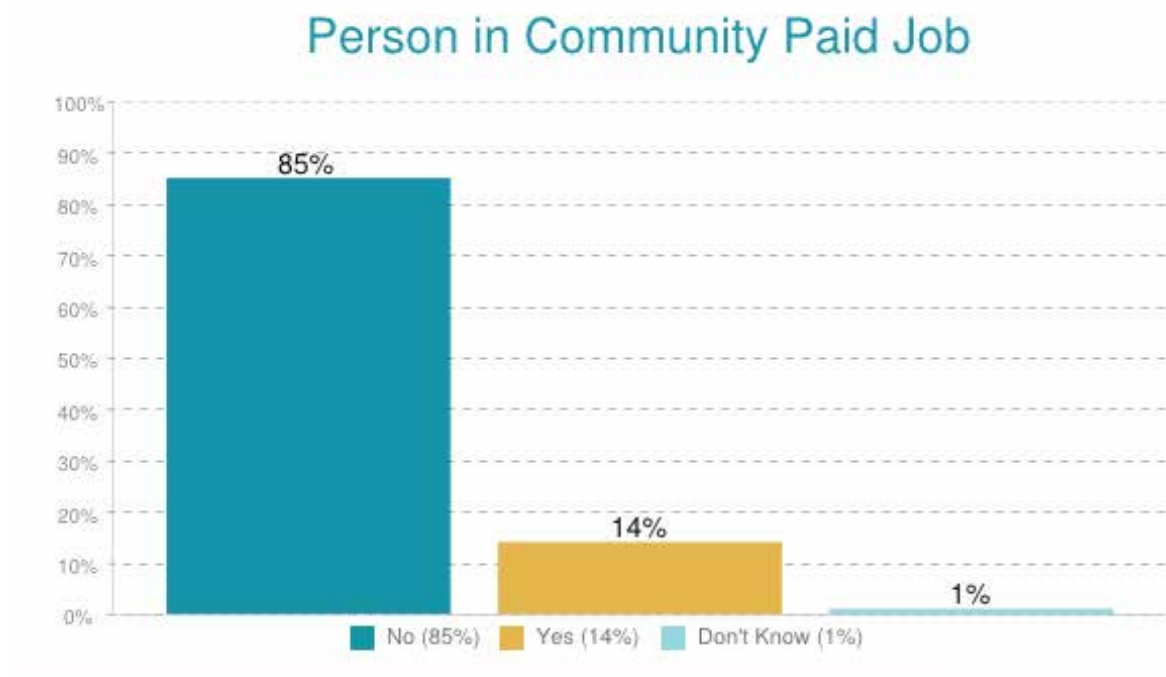
Here is an example of how you can use narrative to describe the trends presented in Figure 7: “Overall, the total number of Supplemental Security Income beneficiaries with disabilities has grown steadily since 1997. However, the number who are working has varied between 1997 and 2011. Additional data points of interest relate to the exceptionally low number of individuals who received Plans for Achieving Self-Support benefits and Impairment-Related Work Expenses (IRWE) benefits. Further, there has been a marked decline in the number of individuals who received IRWE benefits since 1997.”

### Example 5: National Core Indicators

#### Graph example

This example shows how data from the National Core Indicators can be used to explore a variety of key variables including employment, rights, service planning, community inclusion, choice, and health and safety of adults who receive services from state IDD agencies. Specifically, Figure 8 shows the percentage of people with IDD who in 2011–2012 worked in community paid jobs, in the sample states that participated in the survey.

Figure 8. Example NCI Bar Chart



**Indicator:** The proportion of people who have a job in the community.

**Year(s):** 2011-12

**State(s):** AL, AR, AZ, CT, GA, HI, IL, KY, LA, MA, ME, MEORC, MI, MO, NC, NJ, NY, OH, PA, SC

### Narrative example

Here is an example of how you can use narrative to describe the trends presented in Figure 8: “Data from the NCI Project demonstrate that during the data reporting period 2011–2012, only 14% of adults with IDD that were surveyed had jobs in the community.”

# Conclusion

Outcome data on supports for people with disabilities can be used for many purposes, including analyzing the impact of policies, monitoring supports and services, providing a basis for quality improvement, helping establish the parameters of best practices, and as indicators of systems change (Shogren et al., 2009). Employment data can be important from both a strategic and program planning point of view, as it informs and promotes conversation about employment among stakeholders.

Data can be used to establish priorities and goals, and to support decision-making at multiple levels. It is the intent of this toolkit to provide guidance on how to use currently available national and state-level aggregate data sets to weave together a picture of the employment outcomes of transition-age youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

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