Listen Up!

Listening Session for the RRTC on Advancing Employment
“Employment is a way for people with disabilities to give to the community and see what they have to offer.

We’re givers, not just takers.”

(SABE member, 2017)
1970s
Try another way

1980s
Supported Employment

1990 + ...
Customized employment

Self employment
• Nationwide, only about 15% of people with IDD work in the community.

• And, only about 14% of the total funding for people with IDD goes towards helping people work.
47% (or more) of the individuals who don’t work want a job
What’s happening nationally?

- Employment First
- CMS language
- Olmstead, the ADA and the Department of Justice
- WIOA
Why is research important?

You'll need to take something for high cholesterol.

Which drug commercial do you like best?
What is this project about?

1. How to get information out to everybody about working in the community
What is this project about?

2. What employment consultants really do to help people find jobs.
What is this project about?

3. How providers can support more people to work in their communities
What is this project about?

4. How policies affect access to jobs
What we learned from individuals and families
Getting information to families

1. What families think about work is important.

2. When employment consultants work with families, it can lead to more people finding jobs.

3. Characteristics of families (for example, if they live in poverty, if they are immigrants from another country) may affect whether or not people have jobs.
1. Do you agree? Do these themes make sense in your opinion?
2. Do you disagree? What is different in your experience?
3. What should we do about it?
Families and individuals’ opinions about the system

1. The service system can give confusing advice; different agencies have different rules and goals.
2. Sometimes professionals have low expectations.
3. Services don’t match what people want.
4. Sometimes self-advocates and families do better on their own.
Feeling frustrated with the system

“I brought my daughter to an agency 4 times and nobody ever followed through. It was disappointing [and she never did get a job].”
1. Do you agree or disagree? Do these themes make sense in your opinion?
2. What is different in your experience?
3. What should we do about it?
We also found that people who had legal guardians were less likely to work.
What we learned about states and state policy
Some states do better than others to help people with IDD find jobs.
Three systems

Education

IDD

Voc Rehab

ThinkWork
Top Ten Tuesday
State policies affect how many people work – we ranked states across VR, IDD, ED

1. Maryland
2. New Hampshire
3. Vermont
4. Oregon
5. Washington
6. Iowa
7. Oklahoma
8. South Dakota
9. Colorado
10. Delaware
“just calling your state an ‘Employment First’ state is not enough; it’s when everyone who wants a job, actually has a job.” (SABE, 2017).
1. How is Employment First working in your state?
2. What do you want state administrators to know?
What we found out about organizational capacity (provider agencies that help people find jobs)
What do the best employment consultants do?

1. Partner with job seekers.
2. Get to know job seekers.
3. Network.
4. Support job seekers before they are hired.
5. Support job seekers after hire.
1. What else is important in thinking about how employment consultants help you find and keep a job?
Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Advancing Employment for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

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