



A Special Note to Youth and Families!

WHY IS THE POST HIGH SCHOOL OUTCOMES INFORMATION IMPORTANT?

“Families, educators, policy makers and advocates all want to see more youth with disabilities go on to postsecondary education, to find meaningful employment, and achieve success in the adult world. There is shared concern over high drop-out rates and low employment rates among young adults with disabilities.” --*Author Unknown*

In April 2007, Utah began to survey former students who had an Individualized Education Program (IEP) during their last year of high school and who are no longer in school. Youth who graduated with a regular or modified diploma (e.g. HSED or certificate of attendance), reached the state maximum age of eligibility for services (21 years old), or dropped-out are included in the survey.

This information is required by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in response to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004). To gather and report this outcomes data, Utah has developed a survey tool. Utah reports the outcomes results in their Annual Performance Report (APR) to OSEP and to the public.

The success of the project now depends on the timely participation of former district youth in this Utah and national project

The **goal of this survey** is to improve secondary transition planning programs so they lead to better employment and postsecondary outcomes for youth with disabilities.

IMPACT

“Post-school outcomes data will give us a better picture of how we REALLY DID in supporting our students when they were in our K-12 programs. We can use this data for program improvement.”

Susan DuRant, Director of the South Carolina Office of Exceptional Children

WHAT TO EXPECT

Utah has developed its own post high school outcomes telephone survey that takes approximately 5-8 minutes. It is a combination of “yes” or “no”, multiple choice, and open-ended questions. It can be completed with the help of special operators or in the respondent’s native language. Most questions focus on current employment and postsecondary education activities. Utah also asks additional questions to learn about living situations and community participation of former students, and asks youth what problems or difficulties, if any, they have had working or going on to school as they had planned. All surveys are kept confidential.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RESPONDING

Participation in state post school outcomes surveys is voluntary. However, youth and their families should know that their participation is important and valued. By giving a small amount of your time, you can make a big difference in the development of more effective special education and secondary transition programs for future students.

HOW DOES IT BENEFIT YOUTH NOW?

The survey results are used by higher education and employment agencies to better serve youth with disabilities as they begin their employment and/or postsecondary experiences.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

This is a sample of questions that Utah asks in their survey:

1. Are you now or have you been employed since leaving high school?
2. How many hours do you typically work each week?
3. Is your typical wage below or above minimum wage?
4. Describe your current or most recent job.
5. Are you now or have you been enrolled in any type of school, training or education program since leaving high school?
6. If attending, are you enrolled full-time or part-time?
7. Describe any difficulties being employed or participating in postsecondary education since leaving high school?

TRANSITION RESOURCES

IDEA Partnership www.ideapartnership.org

National Secondary Transition and Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC) www.nsttac.org

National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities (NDPC-SD) www.ndpc-sd.org

National Post School Outcomes Center (PSO) www.psocenter.org

National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) www.nasdse.org

PACER Center www.pacer.org

Shared Work.org www.sharedwork.org

WI Family Assistance Center for Education, Training and Support (Wisconsin FACETS) www.wifacets.org/

Utah State Office of Education www.usoe.k12.ut.us/
APR www.schools.utah.gov/sars/lawsregs/stateplan.htm

Utah State Special Education Services
www.schools.utah.gov/sars/

“It is very important for youth and families to participate when contacted.

In doing so, they will be helping to shape the future of special education and the development of high quality results-oriented secondary transition programs.”

Deborah Leuchovius
Project Director
Technical Assistance about
Transition and the
Rehabilitation Act Project
(TATRA) at PACER Center

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Check out the National Post School Outcomes Center Resources and State Profile Database at www.psocenter.org

Profiles include descriptions of how each state collects and uses post-school outcomes

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