

Research Highlights

Topic: Self-Determination

Wehmeyer, M.L., Lattimore, J., Jorgenson, J.D., Palmer, S.B., Thompson, E., & Schumaker, K.M. (2003). The self-determined career development model: A pilot study. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 19, 79-87.

BOTTOM LINE

Five adults receiving vocational rehabilitation services in Kansas participated in a pilot study of a new model for self-determined career development. Based on the Self-Determined Model of Instruction, this pilot project enabled participants to set career and job goals and design, implement, and evaluate progress toward those goals. Four of the five participants made progress toward their goals and indicated satisfaction with the process.

TIPS

- Consider ways to adapt this study to real-life work situations or other settings.
- Think about how to involve vocational rehabilitation consumers in career and job decision-making to promote their own career and job-goal success.

KEY FINDINGS

- Participants set job and employment goals related to their interests and preferences, participated in designing interventions to achieve those goals, implemented and self-monitored the goals and, in so doing, made progress toward the goals.
- The Self-Determined Career Development Model increased the capacity of individuals in vocational rehabilitation to self-direct problem solving and goal-setting activities in order to get a job.
- The Self-Determined Career Development Model promoted greater consumer involvement in career and job decision-making and goal attainment.

METHOD

- Five adults with disabilities who were receiving vocational rehabilitation services in local vocational rehabilitation offices in Kansas participated in the study.
- All participants were identified as making minimal or no progress in obtaining successful, independent employment.
- Participants worked through the support model to set a job or career goal and to design an action plan to reach that goal.
- Data were based on structured observations by project staff of simulation and role-playing activities by the participants.
- The pilot evaluation was conducted over a six-week period.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

- Agran, M., Blanchard, C., & Wehmeyer, M.L (2000). Promoting transition goals and self determination through student-directed learning: The Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities* 35, 351-364.
- Mithaug, D., Wehmeyer, M.L., Agran, M., Martin, J., & Palmer, S. (1998). The self-determined learning model of instruction: Engaging students to solve their learning problems. In M.L. Wehmeyer & D.J. Sands (Eds.), *Making it happen: Student involvement in educational planning, decision-making, and instruction* (pp. 299-328). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.
- Wehmeyer, M.L. (1996). A self-report measure of self-determination for adolescents with cognitive disabilities. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities*, 31, 282-293.
- Wehmeyer, M.L., Palmer, S., Agran, M., Mithaug, D.E., & Martin, J. (2000). Promoting causal agency: The Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction. *Exceptional Children*, 66, 439-453.

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