Systems Change Through CIL/VR Collaboration

Carri George
Florida Independent Living Conference
September 13, 2011
Purpose

To improve cooperative working relationships between CILs, SILCs, and Vocational Rehabilitation agencies by focusing on the common goal of successfully transitioning young people with disabilities to adult roles in their communities.
GOALS

To develop tools, techniques and strategies for CILs to add value to transition services in the state of Texas.

To build communities of support for youth in transition by strengthening collaboration.

Disseminate and replicate across the country.
Successful Collaboration Does Not Happen by Accident

• Commitment
• Communication
• Strong Leadership from Key Decision Makers
• Understanding the Culture of Collaborating Agencies
Successful Collaboration Does Not Happen by Accident

• Providing Adequate Resources for Collaboration

• Minimizing Turf Issues

• Engaging in Serious Preplanning

Stakeholders’ view of factors that impact successful interagency collaboration. Exceptional Children; Reston; Winter 2003; Lawrence J Johnson; Debbie Horn; Brian Yai Yung Tam; Maggie LaDMontagne; Susan A Johnson
Creating Communities of Practice

Coalescing Around Issues: Focus on common goal of transition from school to adult roles

Ensuring Relevant Participation: Buy in from the top

Doing Work Together: Accomplish more together than we could separately

Leading by Convening: Sponsor and resources to bring people to the table
Taking Action
El Paso
Breaking Barriers
Summer Jobs Program for Youth with Disabilities
Taking Action
Dallas
Transition Connection
And
REACH Independent Living Academy
Taking Action
Austin
Transportation Advocacy
Reaching My Own Greatness
Job Club
Taking Action
Amarillo
Transition Fair
Tools

– Six Thinking Hats
– Goal setting and planning process
– Hidden Resource Finder
– Reaching My Own Greatness
– Reap What You Sow
Creating the Community

What We Learned

Find an issue that everyone cares about as the focus for the collaboration.
Have a facilitator or convener who can bring the parties to the table and keep them focused on the goal.
Creating the Community
What We Learned

Develop a common vision.
Creating the Community
What We Learned

Take some small steps forward and collaborate on short-term projects that produce tangible results.
Creating the Community

What We Learned

Provide a structure for maintaining communication and contact.
Creating the Community
What We Learned

Relationship-building is important work.

Relationships are key and relationship-building must be ongoing.
Emerging Issues

• Involving youth in planning, development and leadership

• Involving parents and families

• Including unserved youth—foster care, juvenile justice system
Sustaining the Community

Texas CILs become peer mentors in APRIL CIL to CIL Peer Mentoring Network

Web-based training and resources available http://uacurrentschirp.pbworks.com/

CHIRP group on Facebook
Carri George
University of Arkansas CURRENTS
cgeorge@uacurrents.org
501-623-7700