



# **New Community Opportunities Center at ILRU Presents...**

## ***Creating and Operating Services to Support Youth in Transitioning to a Post-Secondary Education: Teaching the importance of Exploring All Options toward Further Education***

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***Presenters:***

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Living Independence for Everyone (LIFE)**



**Living Independence For Everyone of Mississippi**

*Dedicated to the Empowerment  
of Individuals with Disabilities*

# What Does Post-Secondary Education Mean in Transition?



- A chance for education after high school
- Young adults can grow more about themselves
- Socialization can be fostered
- Independence can be gained
- More opportunities in the future



## How Does HOT Do It?

- Each IL Specialist serving youth develops relationships with youth and their families.
  - This is vital in planning for future transitions including Post-Secondary.
    - Each process is discussed with youth and family and accomplished as the Core TEAM.
  - The Core Team will pull others for each part of the Transition.

# What Does It Take?

- The Core Team will collaborate and create the Post-Secondary Team.
- Who should be part of the Post-Secondary Team?
  - Young adult
  - Parent/Guardian
  - CIL Specialist
  - VR Counselor
  - Transition Counselor (school)
  - Disability Support of desired Post-Secondary



# What Does It Take: The PCP Meeting

- Now that you have a team, have a PCP (Person-Centered Plan) meeting.
  - Facilitate it yourself or collaborate with another agency to allow you to participate in the meeting more actively.
  - Meet with youth & family to discuss how the PCP will go.
  - Make sure you plan early enough in advance to allow for everyone to participate.
    - This can be vital!
- PCP meetings help the youth's unique needs and wants get pinpointed and **REALISTICALLY** fulfilled!!

# What Does It Take: Plan Ahead

- Begin in school IEP
- Look at options
  - Talk to Disability Support Staff
  - Talk to other students with disabilities
- Continue talking to youth about plans/wants can... will probably change



# What Does It Take: Know Your Options

- 4-Year College/University
- Community College
- Vo-Tech School
- MS State ACCESS Program (New Pilot Program)
- Learning Centers (Provides 1-on-1)



# Accommodation Changes?

- The Youth no longer has an IEP, but they do have accommodations.
  - Before the Youth finishes high school provide Youth and family with understanding of received accommodations.
    - Discuss their need/usage
    - Discuss possible unofficially fulfilled needs
  - Disability Support Coordinators (may be named differently) will be the contact for meeting accommodations.

# Accommodation Changes, cont'd.



- The Youth will have to be active in requesting accommodations.
  - Some Community Colleges accept the Youth bringing the IEP, but most colleges require doctor documentation.
  - Do it early on!
  - Youth must bring request to each Professor the accommodations that are needed.
  - Don't underestimate need!
    - Youth may want to disregard need to not make show, but peer support is encouraged to have them request ANY possible need.
      - They can easily be removed, not so easily added!

# Possible Funding Sources: Federal Application For Student Aid (FASFA)

- FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) – Pell grant
  - This must be done to access other services. Preferably 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of Senior year of high school.
    - Once completed, depending on need/award, student will be able to access other services.
  - Based on parent/guardian income until age 24
    - Then, it is based on student's income.
  - Application completed online
    - Depending on youth and family computer abilities, assistance may be needed.

# Possible Funding Sources: Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

- VR (Vocational Rehabilitation)
  - A GREAT relationship between CIL Specialist and VR Transition Counselors can make the transition so much more SUCCESSFUL!!
  - Each state has different policies and procedures. The great relationship will allow you to know when the Counselor can begin serving the Youth.
    - Start as early as possible!
  - Once the FAFSA is completed, VR **may** pay tuition, books, room (dorms) and other disability expenses that allow the Youth to attend Post-Secondary School.

# Possible Funding Sources: Work-Study

- Work-Study
  - Schools have their unique, different programs.
  - They may have accessible opportunities.
  - A relationship between the CIL Specialist and the different school Disability Support Coordinators in your state/area is very handy.
    - The DSC can bridge this resource.

# Possible Funding Sources: Scholarships

- Scholarships
  - Be aware of scholarships based on disability, culture, major and other unique qualities.
  - Educate your youth about them early on.
    - Timing can have unique deadlines.
  - Youth may need assistance in completing 1<sup>st</sup> few. Volunteers can be a great resource for this.
  - Youth may need reference letter from CIL Specialist.

# Learning isn't ONLY about the Books!

## Balance the Experience



- Resources for getting any needed tutor/study assistance
  - This can be through the school or through volunteers. CIL Specialists will need to know what's available, but the Disability Support Coordinator may have knowledge/resources.
- Encourage your youth to be active in clubs.
  - This should start in high school.
  - Clubs and organizations foster socialization, relationships and memories.

# Learning isn't **ONLY** about the Books: A Balanced Experience

- Try to match the Youth with an able-bodied peer.
  - The Disability Support Coordinator can assist with this.
  - Peers can be vital to ensure the Youth has everything needed.
  - Peer may be a student in Nursing program or a student that is known for their willingness to serve.

# Recreation isn't only for the football players!

- Provide Youth with options of Accessible Recreation, i.e. Tennis, Basketball, Softball, Rugby, etc.
  - Our CIL co-hosts clinics, tournaments and exhibitions.
    - It educates Youth and consumers of options.
    - It also provides opportunities for natural peer support to occur.
  - Host a variety of events and/or let Youth know about various activities in their area.
  - Encourage Youth to be active in School Activities.

## Title VII, Part C funding

- Establishes LIFE as a center for independent living
- Requires that we provide the four core services of independent living as well as other IL services the Board of Trustees chooses (in Mississippi, that's most of them)
- Eligibility is simply anyone with a significant disability, of any age and any type of disability
- In an effort to serve individuals "of any age and any type of disability" we seek other sources of funding

# Funding



- Specific needs within the disability community have emerged
  - The need to provide IL services to children and youth
  - The need to provide IL services to parents or caregivers
- Funding was sought to address the needs
- Funds led to the establishment of programs that provide independent living services to children and youth and parents
- Additional staff were hired
- The Assistant Director serves as Project Manager to provide oversight and guidance to the staff

# How to Develop Partnerships



- Find the entities in your state providing Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grants Programs (often state health departments)  
<http://mchb.hrsa.gov/programs/titlevgrants/index.html>
- Find the entities in your state operating the Family to Family Center <http://www.fv-ncfpp.org/>
- These entities are required to provide the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) with state data on their outreach and service efforts to children with special health care needs. How are they reaching families in rural areas? How are they providing IL services to children and youth? Do they need you & your network of centers? Find out!

# State Department of Health Partnership (Title V program in MS)

LIFE partners with the Children's Medical Program (CMP) under the Bureau of Maternal and Child Health through the Mississippi State Department of Health. Our roles and responsibilities under this contract are:

- To provide Independent Living Services to youth with disabilities between the ages of 5 and 21 who are referred to us from CMP clinic staff as well as other referral sources (such as schools, IL staff, etc.)
- Assign an IL Transition Specialist to participate in weekly CMP clinics offered to children and their families

# State Department of Health Partnership (Title V program in MS), cont'd.

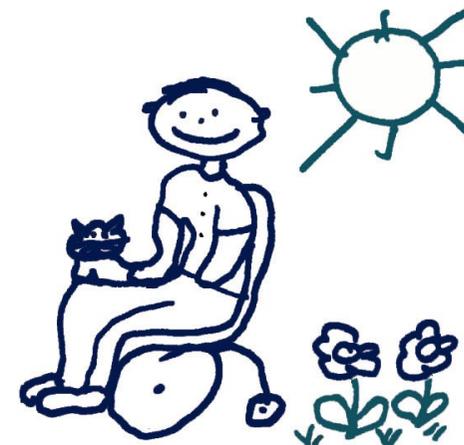
- Assist CMP staff to ensure that families are receiving information regarding the resources available to them through the schools, the Division of Medicaid, and others.
- Advocate on behalf of the consumers and their families to ensure that appropriate services are provided in a timely manner.

**This Partnership is Known as:**

**HEALTHY OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRANSITION  
in Mississippi or**

**HOT!**

Established in 2004 because the Title V entity knew our reputation for service, knew LIFE had a network of offices that reached rural areas and knew we provided services to children and youth w/disabilities. They needed us to reach their goals!



## Education Resources

- **Going to College**

Information about living college life with a disability. For high school students with video clips, activities and additional resources

<http://www.going-to-college.org/>

- **Rise Up**

Mississippi Postsecondary Website; a Guide to what to do to prepare for College

<http://www.riseupms.com/>

## Education Resources, cont'd.

- **Think College.net**

Information and links for youth with disabilities interested in learning more about attending college.

<http://www.thinkcollege.net/>

- **ACCESS at MSU**

Mississippi's FIRST postsecondary program for students with intellectual disabilities

<http://www.ss.msstate.edu/access>

Remember...

**Remember in this Process and ALL Processes the **YOUTH** Must Be in the Driver's Seat!!!**





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# New Community Opportunities Center at ILRU



This program is part of a series of trainings and other activities provided to the IL field by the New Community Opportunities Center at ILRU. The project's purpose is to assist CILs in developing self-sustaining programs that support community alternatives to institutionalization for individuals of any age, and youth transition from school to post-secondary education, employment, and community living.

# New Community Opportunities Attribution

This training is presented by the New Community Opportunities Center, a national training and technical assistance project of ILRU, Independent Living Research Utilization. Support for development of this presentation was provided by the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration under grant number H400B100003. No official endorsement of the Department of Education should be inferred. Permission is granted for duplication of any portion of this slide presentation, providing that the following credit is given to the project: Developed as part of the New Community Opportunities Center at ILRU.