Youth Transition:
The Growing Role of Centers for Independent Living

*How to Engage Parents and Foster Healthy Parent Involvement*

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Parents in Youth Transition

Recognizing the role parents play in CILs and Youth Transition
But First, the Children...

• This presentation is meant to provide you with an added resource for youth with disabilities in IL.
• Doesn’t mean reducing the power of youth.
• Parents are a resource, not a consumer.
• “Independent Living means that we demand the same choices and control in our every-day lives…”
Getting in the Door...

Parents provide

• Potential transportation for their child.
• Permission slips for CILs who are working with consumers in schools.
• Details about their child’s strengths/weaknesses.

Parents do NOT provide

• A necessarily warm/supportive/accepting environment.
• Definitions of their children’s disability or goals.
• A step-by-step instruction on how to make their child independent.
What parents might need to know . . .

- What is an IEP? What does it involve?
- What is IL? How can they support their child in the IL philosophy?
- What are other resources such as Vocational Rehab?
- How can I support my child as they transition out of school?
- What is disability pride? How can I encourage that?
- Internship programs/employment opportunities
- Adaptive driving programs/other transportation options
- Dignity of Risk/Loss
How To Reach Parents

Get in touch by…

• Talking to your schools about
  • Getting onto their website, uploading a permission slip/waivers, etc.
  • Getting in the newsletter, reaching parents of school aged youth
  • Speaking with the PTA

• Outside of Schools:
  • Contacting community centers with parent groups, YMCA, etc.
  • Reaching out to disability organizations CILs/SILCs have ties with
How to Support Parents…who in turn support their youth

• Talk to them about the IL philosophy; many parents have concern for their child’s success.
  • Remind them the growing & changing terminology.
• Create a parent, peer-to-peer support group, so that other parents with children with disabilities can be a resource to each other.
• The same way you reach out to consumers, tailor your style of communication to parents.
• Create a space where they feel their child is comfortable and getting help/resources.
• Refer them to school resources, such as guidance counselors, special ed. coordinators, local college programs & camps.
Resources for Parents…

- Offer peer support group for parents to learn from other parents.
  - Try to include the IL philosophy in these events vs. “special needs parents.”
- Parent Engagement Centers/Family Engagement Centers
- Family Engagement News & Contributions Form (FACETS)
- Potential mentor with a similar disability in your CIL/SILC
Equation for Success

- Engaging Students
- Engaging Parents
- Engaging Schools
- IL Services

Youth Transition
Questions?

Thank you!
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