Making It On Their Own
Strategies for Success in the Home and Workplace
Where We Have Been

- Learned about SSI and other financial assistance available for “making a budget work”.
- Learned about housing options.
- Learn steps to ensure success financially and in living and working arrangements.
Where to Start to Ensure Success

- Starts with us... keep working "the plan".
  - Off to a good start – enrolled at WCU
  - Be supportive of their activities and provide the nudges necessary when their enthusiasm flags.
  - Review transition plans already in place or spend time mapping the plan
  - Constantly ask self – where are we, where do we want to go, and what is the priority (i.e. what order do we need to follow to achieve goal)
Tools at Our Disposal

- Parent Transition Checklist –
  - explores major life areas
    - Educational needs and skills inventory – how do they rank in importance to your son or daughter and to you?
    - Career plans – where do they want to be in one year, five years, ten years and how do we accomplish this?
      - What type of support will be necessary?
      - Are the goals realistic?
Parent Transition Checklist –

- explores major life areas
  - Where will they live? Alone? Roommate?
    - What options are viable via life skills and available resources
    - How does your son or daughter feel about the options?
  - Finances
    - Sources of support – financial and physical
    - Who will need to support them in this area and how much (i.e. guardianship???)
Tools at Our Disposal

- Parent Transition Checklist –
  - explores major life areas
    - Transportation to and from work
      - How and who?
    - Recreation and Leisure
      - What, how and with whom?
      - Education throughout life?
      - Relationships – building sustainable friendships and romantic alliances (?) – how to guide and support
Building Skills that Pay the Bills

- My epiphany...
  - David wants to live on his own – log cabin, blue tick hound, pick up truck with hunting dog box.
  - Busy working on the housing –
  - Realized with no job – no feasible budget – no independent living so we

REFOCUSED!
Reality is:

- Persons with disabilities comprise only 20.5% of the workforce compared to 69.1% of the nondisabled public
  - Lack of opportunities due to fear of employers
  - Hard job market
  - Unemployment rate averages 11.7% for disabled and 7.5% for nondisabled
    - This is worse for rural areas such as WNC
Focus on Building “Soft Skills”
- Communication – verbal and nonverbal
- Attitude and Enthusiasm
- Teamwork
- Networking
- Problem Solving and Critical Thinking
- Professionalism
Communication

- Encourage and build better skills through role playing scenarios where good communication is necessary.

- Skill building:
  - Verbal (sounds, language and tone of voice)
  - Listening skills – following directions
  - Nonverbal – facial, body language and posture
Building Skills that Pay the Bills

Enthusiasm and Attitude

- Build skills in “selling yourself” by teaching upbeat, positive body language, showing interest in job they are doing, willingness to listen, cooperativeness.
- Bouncing back from failure – learning to punt when things don’t go right at first and learning from mistakes. “The road to success is paved with failure!”
- Enthusiasm can get a job when skills don’t always succeed!
Be a Team Player – No I in TEAM!

- Ability to work in a team is one of the MOST important job skills
- Promote
  - Working cooperatively
  - Contributing ideas to the effort
  - Having a sense of responsibility
  - Respecting other opinions
  - Being a participator
Building Skills that Pay the Bills

Problem Solving and Critical Thinking

• Don’t forget to give and ask for feedback
  • Have adult conversations about tasks performed –
    • Ask them how they think they are doing – this builds self confidence
    • Give them HONEST and CONSTRUCTIVE feedback

• Teach a good work ethic – honesty, integrity, and “being ON THE JOB when you are at the job.”
  • Ask questions about what they observe and provide guidance when what they see is NOT POSITIVE
  • Remember – they will be held to a higher standard of behavior on the job – what their peers “get by with” will not equal what your son or daughter will “get by with”
Networking

“It’s not about what you know, it’s who you know.”

- 80% of all jobs are NEVER advertised!
- Talk with family, friends, co-workers – let them know you know someone FANTASTIC for the job. Do not be shy!
- Take your kid to work and let them volunteer for those tasks that NO ONE wants to do – David got his start SHREDDING as a volunteer – now he is paid to clean. Our kids will SELL THEMSELVES!
Professionalism

- Professionalism helps us “stand out in the crowd.”
- Combination of qualities
  - Being punctual
  - Good time manager
  - Neat and clean appearance no matter what – appropriate dress for job.
  - Good manners and positive attitude
Building Skills that Pay the Bills

Other key ideas – How to act at work

- Leave the smart phone in pocket or purse – no personal calls or texting on the job unless dire emergency
- No social networking on the job unless a job requirement
- Keep socializing to a minimum
So now we have a viable job...

- And we have found the place to live
- How do we make it work so they are thriving...

Some hard questions:
- Can my son and daughter be fully independent – needing only occasional assistance from naturally occurring supports?
- If not, how much and what type of assistance will they need? What areas?
- Will they need “round the clock” assistance?
- Do they feel comfortable being alone?
- Time frames for transitions – do we do it all at once?
Personal Assistance Services

- How much assistance and who?
  - Another checklist! – The more yes answers the better.
  - Look at areas such as:
    - Overall independence – financial, transportation independence
    - Social or natural supports from friends, family, coworkers, church family
    - Emotional health – ability to communicate needs and wants, seeking help, interests and hobbies
    - Physical Health – medications, exercise, risky behaviors
    - School and Work – ability to get there, maintain workload, and career goal attainment
    - Health care accessibility
Options for Success

- No answers do not mean NO INDEPENDENCE
- Areas of help
  - Electronic monitoring systems
  - Service Animals
  - Hire a personal assistant
Personal Assistance Services

• Consider
  • What areas – need help
  • How many hours per day
  • How will manage assistants – live in or come as needed
  • How many assistants?
  • Use a Daily Living Worksheet to document needs
Personal Assistance Services

How to pay for it?

• Private funds
• Health Insurance – not likely
• Medicaid – NC Innovations – great concept but long wait lists
• Work out a “roommate” situation and share expenses
Personal Assistance Services

Recruiting
- Advertise and provide a point specific job description
- Initial screen – telephone interview
- Face to face interview in a neutral setting
- Second face to face at home if you are comfortable with them and evaluate their skills through hands on performing tasks
- Background checks and reference checks and MVR requests.
- Prepare a contract for services
Personal Assistance Services

Managing
- Set guidelines and policies – what is expected
- Keep good records – follow tax law appropriately
- Do formal job evaluations
- Be on lookout for abusive situations
- Be prepared to terminate – do not allow a personal relationship to develop to the point where you are being taken advantage of – document, document, document in case of a termination
Personal Assistance Services

• Having the appropriate support system will help to ensure success
• No two scenarios will be alike
• Talk to son or daughter about their wants and try to balance wants against reality…
Title I of ADA requires employers of 15 or more to “consider providing reasonable accommodations to employees ADA definition of disability."
Personal Assistance Services in the Workplace

• Reasonable Accommodation – modification or adjustment to a job that enables a qualifying individual to enjoy equal employment benefits and privileges as an employee without a disability.
Personal Assistance Services in the Workplace

- Reasonable Accommodations can include a personal assistant to assist with certain job related functions.
- Can come in form of a job coach or supported employment.
- A few employers have seen the value and supply them, but most come through programs such as VR.
Personal Assistance Services in the Workplace

- Employers are not required to pay for the assistants.
- Personal Care Assistants – assist with daily living such as hygiene – are different than vocational personal assistants.
- Employers do not have to pay for or arrange for personal care assistants but are obligated to consider providing private space to meet needs of employee.
Personal Assistance Services in the Workplace

- Types of WPAS
  - Sensory assistants
  - Qualified Readers/Scribes
  - Job Assistants
  - Job Coach
  - Driver
  - Personal Care/Travel Attendant
  - Supported Employment Person
Next Steps – Questions?

- Next webinar – Saturday, February 23 2:30 pm
- Source to explore: [www.dol.gov/odep](http://www.dol.gov/odep)
- Source: WhatCanYouDo.org for employment resources, encouragement and ideas.
- Topic – Community Transportation Options