



OSERS TRANSITION DATA FACT SHEET

MAY 2012

The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) administers programs that assist in educating children and youth with disabilities, provides funding for vocational rehabilitation (VR) services for youth and adults with disabilities and supports research to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities. OSERS established the Transition Steering Committee to focus specifically on the services, needs and outcomes of youth with disabilities who may benefit from the work conducted and services authorized by its program components. This committee, also known as “Transition Tigers,” includes staff members from each of OSERS program component offices—the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR)—as well as staff from the Office of the Assistant Secretary’s (OAS), Office of Policy and Planning (OPP).

OSERS provides funds to support transition services, transition programs, technical assistance projects and research projects related to youth with disabilities. However, the committee found that program-specific data about OSERS transition work are frequently not summarized and not readily available to OSERS staff across its component offices and the general public, especially members of the transition community. To address this need, the committee developed the Transition Data Fact Sheet as a quick reference to inform OSERS staff and the transition community about critical data areas related to the transition of youth with disabilities from school activities to post-school activities. For the purposes of this document, “transition” is defined as the passage from secondary education to participating in postsecondary education, training or both, engaging in meaningful employment, living within one’s community, exercising self-determination and contributing to society as productive citizens.

The data in this fact sheet are presented for OSERS staff and others to use in their work and to draw their own conclusions from the data provided. The Transition Data Fact Sheet is intended to be a reference tool and should not be treated as a comprehensive document. It is organized into three areas of emphasis: 1) transition services; 2) post-school outcomes; and 3) OSERS investment in transition-related research, special education and VR services. It is important to note that most of the data and information presented are primarily specific to youth with disabilities between the ages of 14 and 24.

TRANSITION SERVICES

THE *INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)*

Secondary Transition Services

- ▶ The 2010 Child Count data reported by states under *IDEA*, Sec. 618 shows that 2,198,474 children (ages 14–21) are served under *IDEA* Part B¹ in the U.S. and its outlying areas.

- ▶ The National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2)² data shows that for students enrolled in secondary school during the 2001–02 school year, transition planning activities were conducted for 75 percent of students age 14, 84 percent of students age 15, 91 percent of students age 16, 96 percent of students age 17, and 96 percent of students age 18, according to school staff completing the survey. Additional data from this survey and school year indicated:
 - The most frequently identified transition planning contacts were made on behalf of students with disabilities to VR agencies (38 percent) followed by colleges (24 percent), postsecondary vocational schools (24 percent), and job placement agencies (24 percent). The fewest contacts (11 percent) were made to mental health agencies.
 - Fifty-three percent of students received transition planning activities focused on securing competitive employment. Eight percent of students had a goal of supported employment and 5 percent had the goal of sheltered employment.
 - Other common post-high school goals were to: secure independent living (50 percent), attend a two- or four-year college (47 percent), attend a postsecondary vocational training program (40 percent), enhance social and interpersonal relationships (25 percent), and maximize functional independence (20 percent).

(Cameto, Levine and Wagner, 2004)

¹ The Data Accountability Center, funded by OSEP, provides public access to data about children and youth with disabilities served under *IDEA* Parts B and C; technical assistance materials to support the collection, analysis and reporting of *IDEA* data; and the forms and spreadsheets used for collection. Data retrieved June 28, 2011, from https://www.IDEAdata.org/arc_toc10.asp#partbCC.

² The National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), funded by the Department of Education's Institute of Educational Sciences, is a 10-year study that documents the characteristics, experiences and outcomes of a nationally representative sample of 11,000 students with disabilities who were between the ages of 13 and 16 and receiving special education services in the seventh grade or higher in 2001.

- ▶ Approximately three-quarters of child Supplemental Security Income (SSI)³ recipients reported current or past participation in an individualized education program (IEP)⁴ or special education. (Wittenburg and Loprest, 2007).
- ▶ *IDEA* mandates family participation in educational planning. However, in a recent study of family participation in educational planning for children receiving mental health services, 17 percent of families⁵ reported that their family's values and culture were not at all taken into account when planning their children's education, and 22 percent reported that their family's needs and circumstances were not at all taken into account (Jivanjee et al., 2008).

THE *REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973*, AS AMENDED (THE *REHABILITATION ACT*)

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services

All data reported in this section are from the FY 2011 RSA-911 report.⁶

Youth with Disabilities Referred and Served

- ▶ Of all the individuals whose service records (589,773) were closed by state VR agencies, 202,263 (34 percent) were youth with disabilities when they applied for VR services. Of the 202,263 youth with disabilities who applied for services, 101,851 (50.4 percent) youth with disabilities were referred to VR from elementary and secondary schools. In addition, 7,930 youth with disabilities (3.9 percent) were referred to VR agencies from postsecondary schools. Not everyone who applies for VR services initiates services or completes their plan for services.
- ▶ The total number of youth with disabilities whose service records were closed after receiving services from the 80 state VR agencies was 114,156, which represented 34.6 percent of the total number of individuals whose service records were closed that year after receiving services (330,367).

³ Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a federal income supplement program funded by general tax revenues (not Social Security taxes). It is designed to help aged and blind people and those with disabilities who have little or no income, and provides cash to meet basic needs for food, clothing and shelter.

⁴ In general, the term "individualized education program" (IEP) means a written statement for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised in a meeting in accordance with 34 CFR §§ 300.320 through 300.324. For a more detailed explanation of what is included in an IEP, please visit <http://IDEA.ed.gov> and conduct a search for "300.320."

⁵ Data are from a subsample (N=133) of a national, but not representative, sample of families of youths (up to age 20) who had received three months or more of mental health treatment while living at home, or 30 or more consecutive days of out-of-home treatment.

⁶ The Case Service Report (RSA-911) includes information collected on individuals whose service records have been closed in a given fiscal year. RSA requires all 80 state VR agencies to submit the RSA-911 by December 31 of each year. The data reported here are for transition-age youth who applied for VR services between the ages of 14 and 24 and whose service records were closed after they received VR services under an individualized plan for employment.

VR Transition Service Delivery

- ▶ Reported below are the percentages and numbers of youth with disabilities whose service records were closed after receiving services and the type of services received by the VR agencies in FY 2011:
 - *Assessment and Diagnostic Services:* Sixty-four percent of youth with disabilities (72,614) received assessment services, and 27.3 percent (31,125) received diagnosis and treatment services.
 - *Training:* Thirteen percent of youth with disabilities (14,582) received occupational or vocational training, 20.2 percent (23,080) received college or university training, and 20.4 percent (23,330) received job readiness training.
 - *Employment:* Twenty-six percent of youth with disabilities (29,596) received job search assistance, 37.3 percent (42,584) received job placement services, and 19.6 percent (22,349) received on-the-job supports.
 - *Other:* Other related transition services provided by VR agencies: 62.8 percent (71,707) of youth with disabilities received vocational guidance and counseling services and 27.4 percent (31,233) of youth with disabilities received transportation services.

- ▶ Reported below are other relevant service delivery data points regarding youth with disabilities served by the VR agency:
 - The number of youth with disabilities who received college or university training services decreased from 24,276 in FY 2007 to 23,080 in FY 2011.
 - Of all eligible individuals, including youth, whose service records were closed after receiving VR services and who received college or university training, 51.3 percent were youth with disabilities.
 - The total number of youth with disabilities who were served by the VR agencies and received Social Security Income (SSI) benefits at the time of closure was 22,163, which represents 19.4 percent of the total number of youth with disabilities whose service records were closed after receiving services.

POST-SCHOOL OUTCOMES

Secondary Education

Graduation and Dropout Percentages⁷

- ▶ Of the 409,058 students with disabilities, ages 14–21, who left school during the 2009–10 school year, 256,102 (63 percent) exited high school with a regular high school diploma, and 86,327 (21 percent), dropped out of school. The remaining 66,629 (16 percent) students with disabilities, ages 14–21, who left school during the 2009–10 school year, were reported as having received a certificate, reached maximum age, or died.

Postsecondary Education

- ▶ National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2) data on postsecondary education collected in 2005 from parents or youths, ages 17–21, and out of high school indicated:
 - Fifty-five percent of postsecondary students who were identified by their secondary schools as having a disability did not consider themselves to have a disability by the time they transitioned to postsecondary school. Thirty-seven percent of postsecondary students with disabilities identified themselves as having a disability and informed their postsecondary schools of their disability.
 - Forty-five percent of youth with disabilities reported having continued on to postsecondary education within four years of leaving high school.
 - On average, students with disabilities who continued on to postsecondary school did so within five months of leaving high school. Students with disabilities enrolled in four-year colleges enrolled sooner after leaving high school than they did in postsecondary vocational, business, or technical schools (three months vs. seven months).

⁷ The Data Accountability Center, funded by OSEP, provides public access to data about children and youth with disabilities served under *IDEA* Part B and Part C, including data about students with disabilities ages 14–21 served under *IDEA* Part B who exited school, by disability category, exit reason and state. (Data retrieved June 28, 2011, from https://www.IDEAdata.org/arc_toc11.asp#partBEX). The calculation of graduation percentages used in this document is based on the ratio of the number of students with disabilities graduating with a regular high school diploma and the number of students with disabilities leaving school (students leaving school includes students who graduated with a diploma, received a certificate, dropped out, died, reached maximum age, moved or otherwise not continuing). These data are not necessarily comparable to state-reported graduation and dropout rates from the Annual Performance Report (APR) required under *IDEA* or the Consolidated State Performance Report (CSPR) required under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001 (P.L. 107-110). The Department's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education has issued guidance to provide states, local educational agencies and schools with information establishing a uniform and accurate measure of graduation rates that is comparable across states. It is available at <http://connected.ed.gov/newsletter/index.cfm?id=3&issid=54&secid=652>.

- Youth with disabilities were reported to be more likely to have enrolled in two-year or community colleges (32 percent) than in vocational, business or technical schools (23 percent) or four-year colleges or universities (14 percent).
- Postsecondary students who attended two-year colleges were more likely to have been enrolled in an academic than a vocational course of study (57 percent vs. 29 percent).
- The gap in postsecondary enrollment between youth with disabilities and those in the general population was most apparent for enrollment in four-year universities (8 percent and 29 percent, respectively). Rates of attendance at two-year colleges for these two groups were not significantly different (13 percent and 12 percent, respectively).

(Newman et al., 2009)

Comparisons of the NLTS and NLTS2 findings related to the postsecondary education outcomes for youth up to four years after leaving school indicated the following:

- ▶ Postsecondary school enrollment rates of youth with disabilities were higher in 2005 (NLTS2) than in 1990 (NLTS).
 - In 2005, 45.6 percent of youth with disabilities had enrolled in a postsecondary school within four years of leaving high school; in contrast, 26.3 percent of youth with disabilities had enrolled in a postsecondary school in 1990.
- ▶ Enrollment rate of youth with disabilities in two-year or community colleges was higher in 2005 (NLTS2) than in 1990 (NLTS).
 - In 2005, 32.4 percent of youth with disabilities who had been out of high school for up to four years had enrolled in a two-year or community college; in contrast, 13.6 percent of youth with disabilities had enrolled in a two-year or community college in 1990.
- ▶ Enrollment rate of youth with disabilities in vocational, business, or technical school was higher in 2005 (NLTS2) than in 1990 (NLTS).
 - In 2005, 23.0 percent of youth with disabilities who had been out of high school for up to four years had enrolled in postsecondary vocational, business, or technical schools; in contrast, 10.2 percent of youth with disabilities had enrolled in a vocational, business, or technical school in 1990.

- ▶ Enrollment rate of youth with disabilities in four-year colleges or universities was higher in 2005 (NLTS2) than in 1990 (NLTS).
 - In 2005, 14.3 percent of youth with disabilities who had been out of high school for up to four years had enrolled in four-year colleges or universities; in contrast, 5.2 percent of youth with disabilities had enrolled in a four-year college or university in 1990.

(Newman, Wagner, Cameto, Knokey and Shaver, 2010)

Employment

- ▶ NLTS2 data on employment collected in 2005 from parents or youth, ages 17–21 and out of high school indicated:
 - Fifty-seven percent of youth with disabilities who had left high school were employed for pay outside of the home at the time of the NLTS2 interview. In contrast, 66 percent of similarly aged youth in the general population were employed outside the home. A larger majority of youth with disabilities (72 percent) had been employed *at some point* since leaving high school than were working at the time of the interview, which indicates fluctuation in their employment status.
 - About 19 percent of working youth reportedly had employers who were aware of their disability, and 3 percent reported receiving some kind of accommodation on the job. Job accommodations included a range of individual adaptations involving materials or technology used on the job (e.g., Braille, TTY) (14 percent), scheduling accommodations (30 percent), human aides (41 percent), and adaptations to assignments or supervision (56 percent).
 - On average, the jobs held by youth with disabilities were of shorter duration (10 months) than those of youth in the general population (15 months).

(Newman et al., 2009)

- ▶ The comparisons of the NLTS and NLTS2 findings related to the employment outcomes for youth in cohort 1 (1990) and cohort 2 (2005) up to four years after leaving school indicated the following:⁸

⁸ Information reported here primarily is drawn from the second wave of parent/youth interviews conducted for NLTS in 1990 (referred to as cohort 1) and the third wave of parent/youth interviews conducted for NLTS2 youth in 2005 (referred to as cohort 2). Analyses include the age group of out-of-high-school youth that was common to the studies at those time points: youth ages 18 through 21.

- For youth with disabilities, at the time of the interviews, no changes that were statistically significant between 1990 and 2005 were in reported employment status, job duration, hours employed per week, type of job, average wages, or receipt of health insurance. Youth with disabilities received paid leave, both sick and vacation, at a significantly lower rate in 2005 than in 1990. Specifically, the comparison data indicated that:
 - The reported employment rates at the time of the interview of out-of-high school youth with disabilities was 62 percent in 1990 and 56 percent in 2005.
 - On average, employed youth with disabilities who had been out of high school between one and four years had been at their current job 15 months in 1990 and for 13 months in 2005.
 - The percentage of youth with disabilities employed full time (35 hours or more per week) was 71 percent in 1990 and 55 percent in 2005.
 - Youth with disabilities held a range of jobs in both 1990 and 2005, with approximately one-third of those at both time periods working in food service (e. g, waiter, busboy, cook, kitchen prep, food counter worker) or as construction trade skilled labor (e.g., plumber, carpenter, electrician). The types of jobs in which youth with disabilities were employed did not differ significantly between 1990 and 2005.
 - After adjusting the 1990 wages for inflation, the percentage of youth with disabilities reported to be earning less than minimum wage was 6 percent in 1990 and 5 percent in 2005. Average earnings in 1990 and 2005 were \$9.10 and \$9.00 per hour, respectively.
 - The rate of youth with disabilities reported having received health insurance as part of their employment benefits decreased from 52 percent in 1990 to 33 percent in 2005.
- Youth with disabilities in 1990 were more likely to receive vacation or sick leave as part of their employment benefits than were those in 2005, 60 percent vs. 38 percent, respectively.
- All significant findings and most apparent trends show worse employment outcomes for youth with disabilities in 2005 than in 1990 as indicated below:
 - Youth with disabilities in the high household income category were more likely to report receipt of health insurance as an employment benefit in 1990 than in 2005, 53 percent versus 20 percent, respectively.

- White youth with disabilities also were more likely to report receipt of health insurance in 1990 than in 2005, 52 percent versus 28 percent, respectively.
- Males were more likely to report receipt of employer–provided health insurance (57 percent vs. 33 percent) and vacation or sick leave (63 percent vs. 39 percent) in 1990 than 2005.

(Newman et al., 2010)

- ▶ VR assisted 59,133 youth with disabilities ages 14–24 (51.8 percent of the total 114,156 youth whose service records were closed after receiving services) to achieve employment outcomes in FY 2011. Of the total transition-age population served who achieved employment outcomes, 97.4 percent (57,595) of youth achieved competitive employment and 15.9 percent (9,415) of these youth achieved supported employment.
 - The overall average wage for these transition-age youth increased from \$9.04 per hour in FY 2007 to \$9.58 per hour in FY 2011.
 - The overall average hours worked for these transition-age youth decreased from 32.0 in FY 2007 to 29.9 in FY 2011.
 - The rehabilitation rate⁹ for these transition-age youth decreased from 57.9 percent in FY 2007 to 51.8 percent in FY 2011.

(RSA-911 report)

Independent Living

- ▶ NLTS2 data on independent living collected in 2005 from parents or youth, ages 17-21 and out of high school, indicated:
 - Of the 25 percent of youth with disabilities who had lived independently at some time since high school, 63 percent had lived alone and 38 percent had lived with a spouse, partner, or roommate. Of those who had lived semi-independently, 65 percent had lived in a college dormitory and 35 percent in military housing.
 - When youth with disabilities were asked during the interview about their satisfaction with their current living arrangement, 58 percent reported being

⁹ Rehabilitation rate is the total number of transition-age youth whose service records were closed with employment outcomes divided by the sum of a) the total number of transition-age youth whose service records were closed with employment outcomes and b) the total number of transition-age youth whose service records were closed without employment outcomes after receiving VR services.

satisfied with their residential arrangement, 17 percent reported they would prefer to live elsewhere, and 25 percent were ambivalent.

- Percentages of youth with disabilities with savings accounts, checking accounts or credit cards varied by disability category. Across categories, 41 percent to 66 percent of youth were reported to have a savings account, 26 percent to 71 percent had a checking account, and 9 percent to 51 percent had a personal credit card.

(Newman et al., 2009)

- ▶ According to the Centers for Independent Living Annual Reports (RSA-704)¹⁰, the number of youth with disabilities, ages 20–24 served by centers for independent living, decreased from 14,465 in FY 2006 to 14,198 in FY 2010.

¹⁰ The Annual Performance Report for Centers for Independent Living (RSA-704) reports resources, allocation of funds, consumer information and services. This report is submitted by December 31 each year.

OSERS INVESTMENT IN TRANSITION–RELATED RESEARCH, SPECIAL EDUCATION AND VR SERVICES

- ▶ The Grants to States program, which is authorized under *IDEA*, allocates formula grants that help states pay the additional costs of providing special education and related services to children with disabilities ages 3 through 21 years. The program spending level for FY 2011 was \$11.5 billion, making the federal contribution toward meeting the excess cost of special education about 17 percent of the national average per pupil expenditure. The FY 2011 Continuing Resolution program spending level provided a per-child average of \$1,735 for an estimated 6,614,000 children with disabilities.¹¹
- ▶ Under the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)*, \$11.7 billion were made available for use by local educational agencies.¹²
- ▶ Under *ARRA*, in FY 2010 the VR State Grants program received \$540 million with no state match required. In addition, \$18.2 million were made available for Independent Living (IL) formula grants to state agencies to expand IL services, with a 10 percent state match required, and \$87.5 million with no match requirement were allocated for discretionary grants for centers for independent living.
- ▶ In FY 2011, the total cost of purchased services for youth with disabilities, ages 14-24, whose VR service records were closed was \$525,783,431; the average cost of purchased services per youth in FY 2011 was \$4,605.83.
- ▶ The total cost of employment outcomes of purchased services for youth with disabilities, ages 14–24, who were assisted in obtaining employment by VR agencies in FY 2011 was \$355,168,285; the average cost per employment outcome for transition-age youth in FY 2010 was \$6,006.26. (RSA-911).
- ▶ In FY 2011, the total cost for NIDRR-funded grants in the area of transition for youth with disabilities to adulthood was \$ 3,224,990.

¹¹ For a summary of the Grants to States program, see “Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Summary, February 14, 2011: Section II B. Special Education and Rehabilitative Services” (retrieved April 18, 2012 , from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget12/summary/edlite-section2b.html#spedgrants>)

¹² For a summary of *ARRA* funding for state formula grant programs authorized by *IDEA*, see “FFY 2009 Part B 611 and 619 allocation tables retrieved April 5, 2012, from <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/osep/partb611table09.xls> and <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/osep/partb619table09.xls>).

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