

Partnerships to Promote Seamless Transition to Adulthood

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Life Course Outcomes
Research Program



Partners



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Autism Institute



Project | SEARCH

City of Philadelphia
DBHIDS
DEPARTMENT of BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
and INTELLECTUAL disability SERVICES



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & INDUSTRY
OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION



DREXEL UNIVERSITY
Business
Services

CREATIVE EMPLOYMENT SOLUTIONS
CIS
COMMUNITY
INTEGRATED
SERVICES

Session Objectives

Participants will acquire:

- Strategies to make complex partnerships work
- Elements necessary for successful partnerships
- Benefits of the partnership way



Falling Off the Transition “Services Cliff”



The Challenge of Working in Silos



Interagency Collaboration

Research says..

- All evidence supports the idea that schools partnering with adult agencies furthers progress for both entities

Noonan, Erickson, & Morningstar, (2012)

- Personal relationships developed among team members support an important aspect of interagency collaboration.

Noonan, Morningstar, & Erickson, (2008)



Indicators of Transition Interagency Collaboration

- Shared vision
- Understanding coworkers' jobs related to transition
- Knowledge of adult agency services
- Coordinating services in and outside of school
- Communication with families

Noonan, Erickson, & Morningstar, (2012)



Indicators of Transition Interagency Collaboration

- Joint action planning
- Shared leadership
- Professional development in and outside of school
- Widespread communication
- Functioning of team

Noonan, Erickson, & Morningstar, (2012)



The Challenge

What happens to transition-age youth with autism between high school and their early 20s?





National Autism Indicators Report Transition into Young Adulthood 2015



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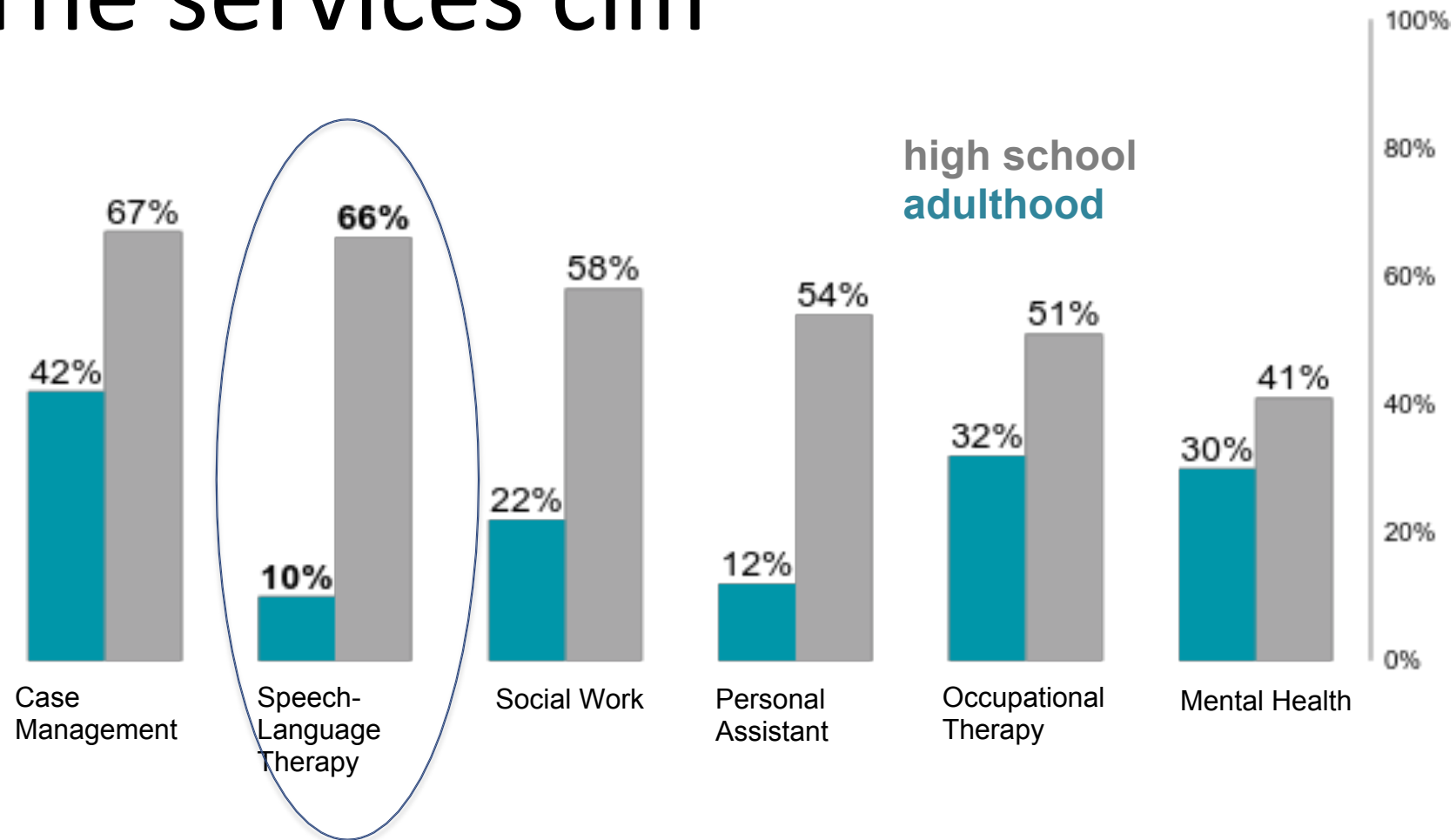
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Data Sources

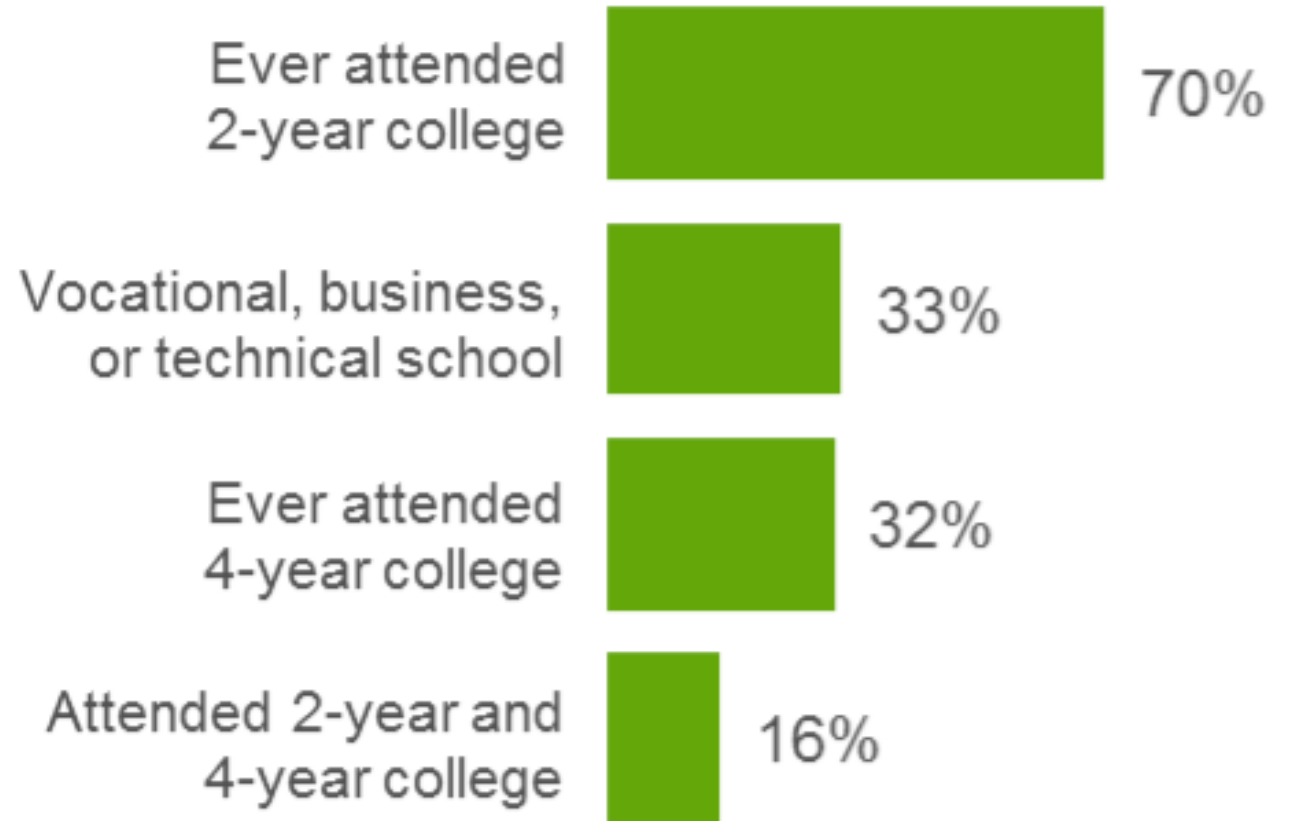
- National Longitudinal Transition Survey 2 (NLTS-2)
- Survey of Pathways to Diagnosis and Services



The services cliff



One-third ever attended postsecondary education.



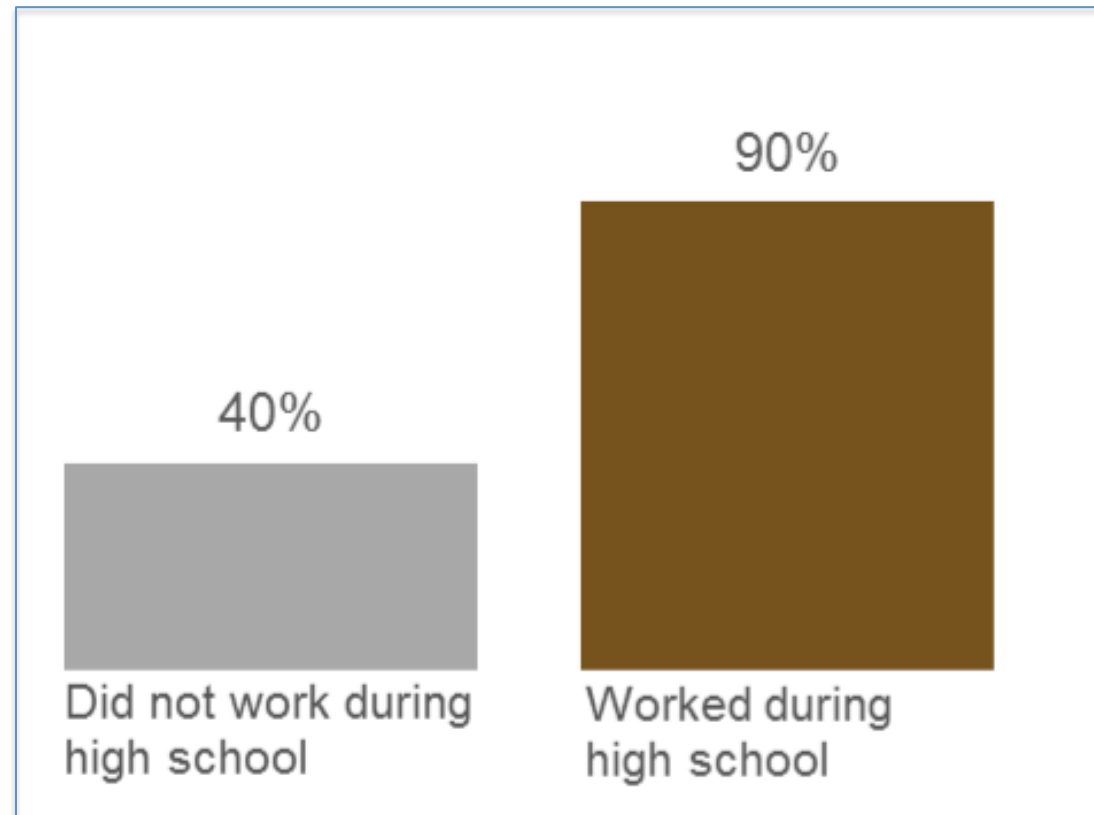
One-quarter were socially isolated across all three indicators.



Percent with no participation in past year



Half ever held a job.



Research shows that having a competitive paid job during secondary school is the strongest predictor of job success after graduation.

- *Colley & Jamison, (1998); Luecking & Fabian, (2000)*



Philadelphia School District

- Eighth largest school district in the nation
- Racially and ethnically diverse community



Elementary	150
Middle	15
High	55
Total	220

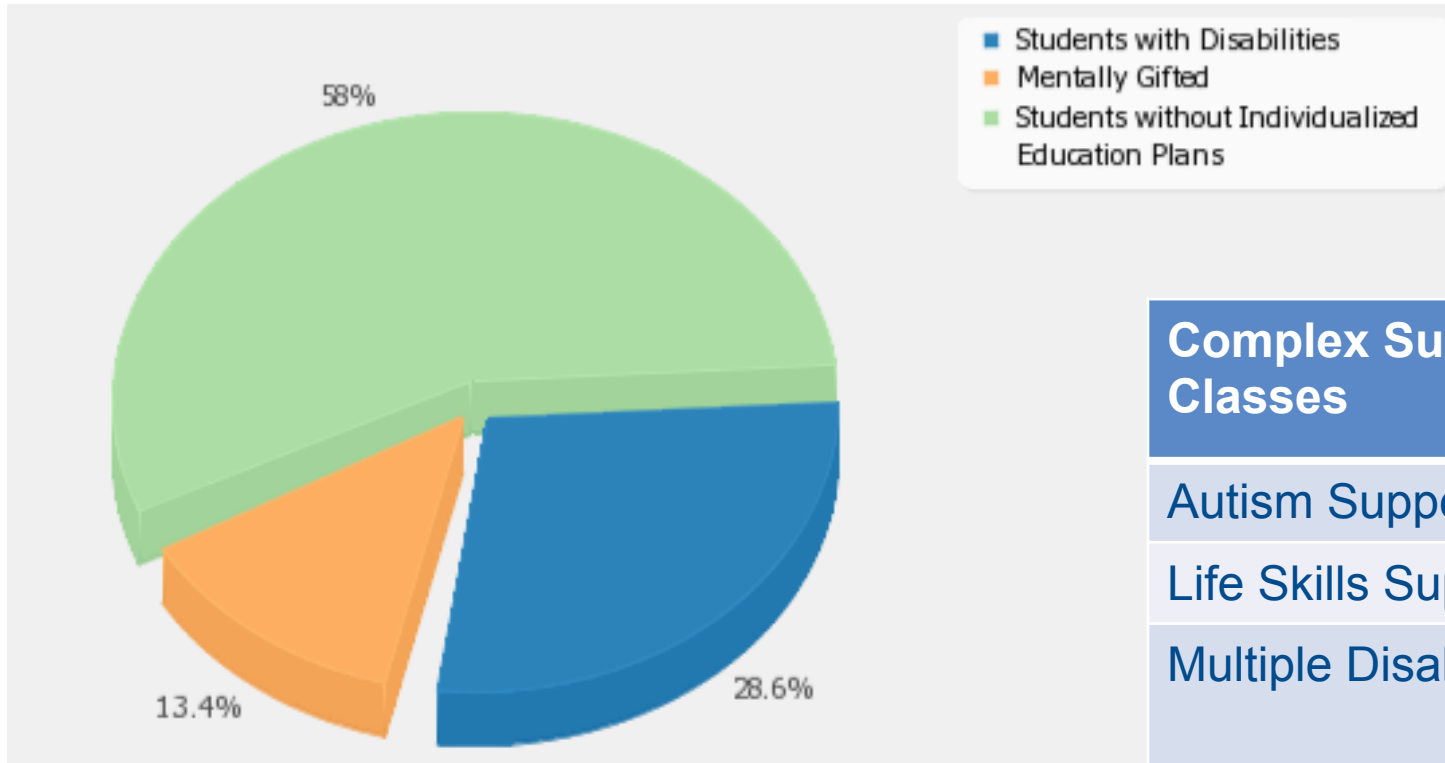
Total	134,041
Students with Disabilities	18,162
Students 18-21 with Autism	155



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Hill-Freedman World Academy



Complex Support Needs Classes	Number of Classes
Autism Support	7
Life Skills Support	3
Multiple Disabilities Support	1
Total	11



High School Transition the Project SEARCH Way

Project SEARCH is a school-to-work program for young people with autism and/or intellectual disabilities

- Goal of competitive employment
- Total workplace immersion
- Internship rotations for career exploration and job skills acquisition
- Customized job-search assistance



Project | SEARCH®

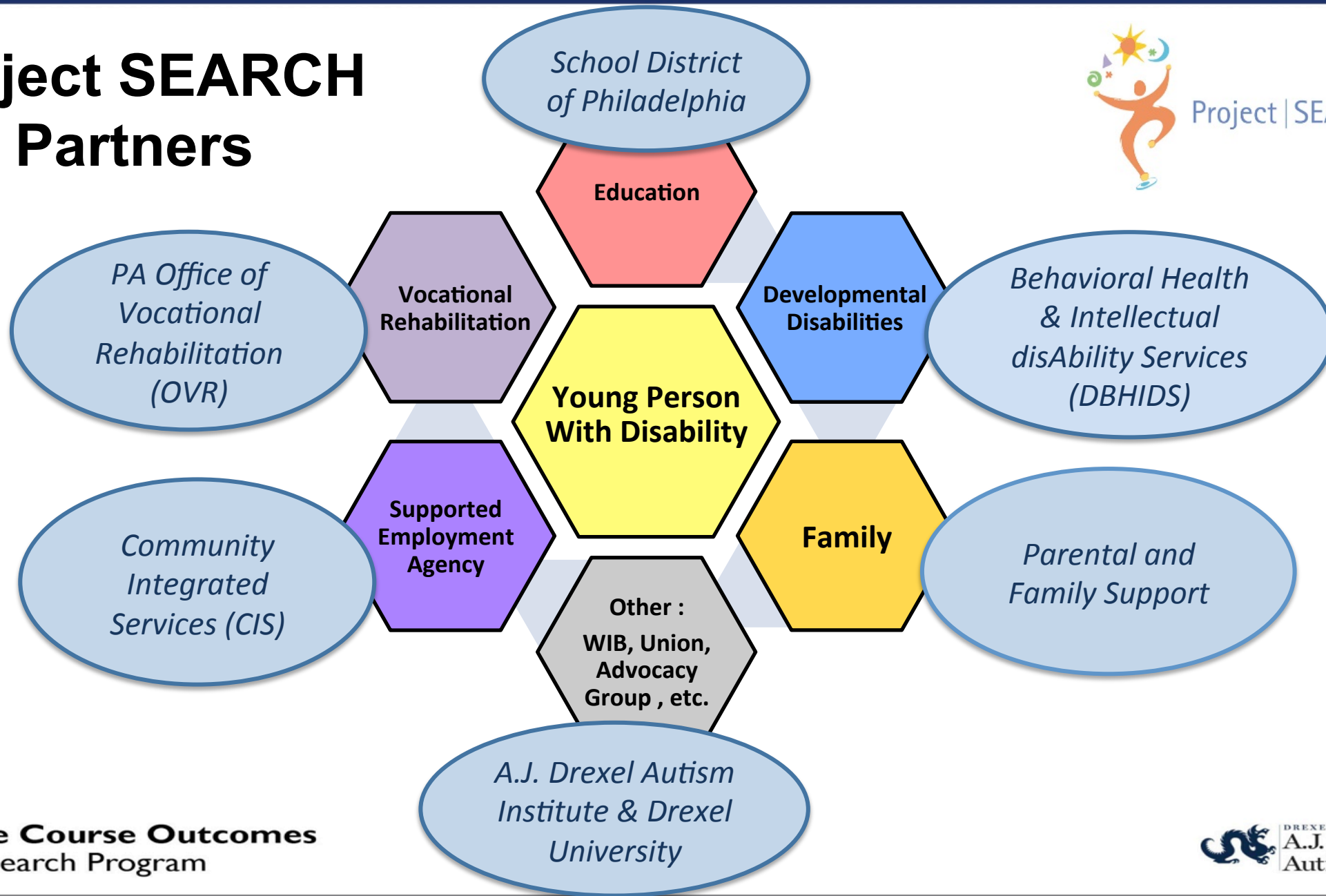


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Understanding Each Other's World



Macro Challenges

- Communication
- Funding
- Planning Document
- Staffing
- Organizational Commitment

MACRO



MICRO



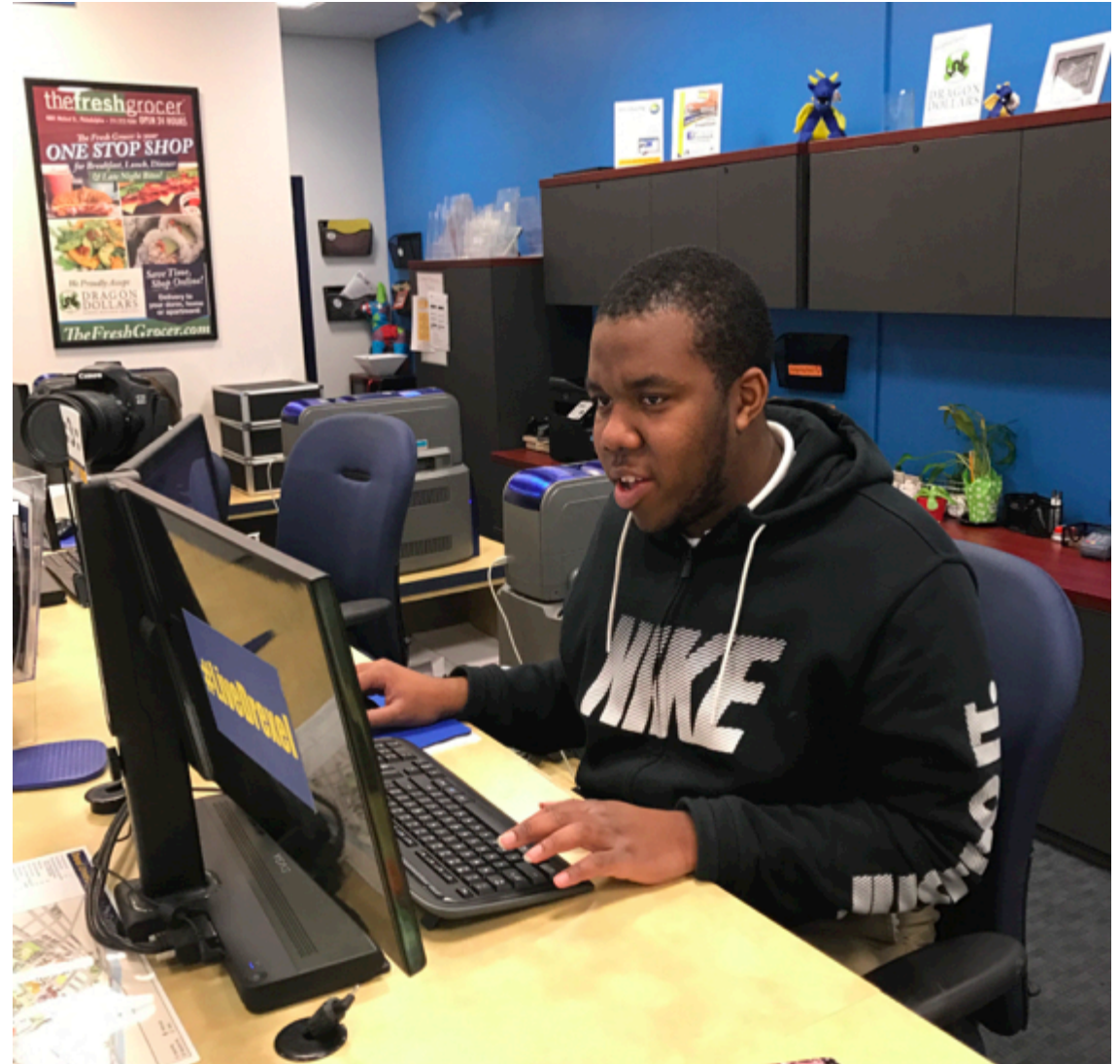
Micro Challenges

- Communication
- Transportation
- School lunches
- Recruiting youth
- Personal commitment



Outcomes

- Strong commitment to employment outcome for youth
- Connecting youth to adult services to avoid the service cliff



Key Components

- Braided funding
- Flexible and creative
- Working collaboratively
- Allocating resources
- Organizational and administrative support
- Identifying passionate champions for the partnership
- Families as partners
- Balancing time commitments



Monthly Steering Committee Meetings

- Began months prior to program start date
- 3 hour monthly meeting
- Representatives from each agency
- Structured agenda
- Strong backbone organization
- Sub-committees formed based on needs



Lessons Learned

- Define a project that is doable to get started
- Start with a successful established program with proven outcomes
- The absolutes of the model (Project SEARCH) helped launch the partnership
- Working at the micro level helped develop the collaboration



Lessons Learned

- Creative problem solving
- Cross agency collaboration to problem solve around individual youth and family needs
- Individual youth and family needs drive the collaborative process



Benefits of Shifting Business as Usual

- Develop new solutions that no organization could implement alone
- Larger impact on the community
- Partnership has opened up new possibilities
- Expansion of partnership is feasible after starting with a model for collaborating



Benefits of Shifting Business as Usual

- The collaboration has become a model of what is possible for the organizations involved
- Partners are energized by what has been accomplished by working in the partnership way



For More Information

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