



Person-Centered Planning in the Foster Care System

The Institute for Innovative Transition at Strong Center for Developmental Disabilities at the University of Rochester and Westchester Institute for Human Development are pleased to begin work on a project proposed and funded by the New York Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.

The desired outcome of this project is to develop a long-term, sustainable plan for the use of person centered planning in the foster care system; increasing quality of life outcomes for youth with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD) served in the foster care system. This is an ambitious goal to be accomplished over a three-year span. Five counties, Westchester, Orange, Erie, Cattaraugus, Columbia, and the New York City Administration for Children's Services have been designated to participate in the initial project development.

A significant percentage of children in the New York foster care system are diagnosed with IDD. The estimated number nationally ranges from 28% to more than 50%. Unfortunately, these children with IDD often have the longest stays in the foster care system due to the complexity of their needs.

Person-Centered Planning (PCP) is a well-established methodology for helping and guiding youth with IDD towards goals for successful transition to adulthood while increasing their independence, self-determination, and quality of life. This makes PCP an excellent fit for the needs of the young people with IDD in foster care in New York State.

In the initial stages of the project, we will convene an advisory board to provide feedback on project goals and progress. Next we will identify stakeholders who could be impacted by this project (e.g., adolescents, department of social services, OCFS regional experts, OPWDD regional experts from the designated counties/services). This group will provide feedback and generate ideas specific to transition planning and person-centered planning for youth with IDD through participating in focus groups. This will include questions specific to both their region and state systems by conducting regional focus groups in the counties specifically pre-identified to participate in the project.

Lending their expertise to the project are co-investigators, John Maltby, MSW and Danielle Weisberg, LCSW from the Westchester Institute for Human Development and Martha Mock, Ph.D. from the Institute for Innovative Transition. We are very excited to collaborate with many other partners around the state as we begin this important and much needed project to support youth with IDD in foster care! We will be reaching out soon to organizations to discuss participation on our advisory board and/or in focus group participation.

If you have any questions, please contact:

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