Employment and young adults with Serious mental health conditions: Increasing employment and career opportunities

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Introduction

• For young adults (ages 16-30) with SMHC high rates of un- and under-employment

• Reasons (some)
  • Delay/behind [experience/education/training]
  • Symptoms, Treatment
  • Social Security incentives
  • Lack of social/family support
  • Lack of confidence/resilience
  • Difficult work environment
Summary

1. What is different about young adults with serious mental health conditions?
2. Effectiveness and acceptability of employment interventions for young adults
3. Preferences and components specific to young adults
4. The necessary and growing role of the employer
5. Takeaways re increasing employment rates of young adults with SMHC
1. What is different about young adults with serious mental health conditions?

- Developmental
- Personal challenges
- Young adult life/culture
- Systemic Issues
- Special considerations for First episode
- Capital Framework
Developmental

• Brain
• Psychological
  • Risk taking
• Self-defining
• Early in career [Figure]
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Interventions for:</th>
<th>Vocational thinking for young adults [14-30]</th>
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<td>Career development (thinking, efficacy)</td>
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<td>Employment (competitive)</td>
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<td>Post-secondary Education</td>
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<td>Internships</td>
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Young adult life

Generational

- Technology
- Values- tolerance and sensitivity
- Substance abuse and use
- Economic uncertainty and labor markets
- Family formation
Personal challenges for young adults with SMHC

- Incomplete education
- Lack of work experience
- Low self-efficacy
  - Confidence
  - Assertiveness
Systemic Issues

- Experience of (services) and education as adolescents
- “Aging out” process
- Adult system not meeting developmental needs nor prepared to do so
Special considerations for first episode psychosis (FEP)

- Impact of stigma.....
  - “Dropped right into it”
- More work experience
- Cognition
- Different types of employment goals?
- DUP does not necessarily predict employment outcomes
Capital Framework
Delman & Klodnick in press

- Human Capital
- Cultural Capital
- Positive Psychological capital
- Personal Social Capital
- Organizational Social capital
2. Effectiveness and acceptability of employment interventions for young adults

- Supported employment and related models
- Vocational rehabilitation models
- Emerging approaches
Supported employment and related models I

- Supported employment- major components
  - Competitive employment is the goal
  - Rapid job search
  - Zero Exclusion: Eligibility is based on client choice
  - Attention to client preferences.
  - Benefits counseling is important.
  - Systematic job development
  - Time-unlimited support

- With Supported education
- With Cognitive Enhancement supports
Supported employment and related models II

- Integrated Placement and Support
  - Supported employment is integrated with treatment

- Integrated Placement and Support +++
  - Concurrent course in workplace skills
  - Family information sessions
  - Vocational peer mentor
Difficulties with recent models

• **ACCESS**
  - Direct costs of service provision
  - Lack of [insurance] coverage,
  - High demand

• **QUALITY**
  - Fidelity

• **OUTCOMES**
  Jobs obtained are usually low-paying, part time and without a career pathway

• **RESEARCH**
  Very early in research on young adult interventions
State government vocational rehabilitation agencies

Provide direct services to people with disabilities, including:

- Guiding the development of an Individual Plan for Employment, organized around a specific client-chosen employment outcome;
- Assessment, counseling, resume development, coaching, and transportation;
- Services to high school students with disabilities, including provision of career planning, counseling and preparation services;
- For people in college or training programs, job placement, job search assistance and on-the-job training.
- Specialized services for people with psychiatric disabilities, including IPS, Clubhouses, contracting out.
WIOA: New focus for State Rehab Agencies

- Employers
- Apprenticeships
- Youth, Young adults
Innovations, more career oriented

• Self-determination theory
  • Career Visions, http://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/proj-1-careervisions
  • RENEW (Rehabilitation, Empowerment, Natural Supports, Education, and Work).
  • Jump On Board for Success (JOBS)

• Becoming a peer specialist
  • Career pathway

• Social Enterprise for Homeless Young Adults
3. Preferences and components specific to young adults

PREFERENCES

- Employment [search] preparation
  - Resume development
  - Interview practice
- Family support- engagement of family
  - Young adults with children
  - Encouragement/discouragement
- Strong education and training component
- Readily Available Workplace Supports
- Culturally driven
Other notable components

- Workplace (soft) skills training
- Career guidance
  - Self-determination
  - Meta skill development
- SE components are good, but consider
  - Rapid job search necessity and under what circumstances
    - How rapid?
    - Rapid education/training search
  - How to create time unlimited supports….
    - Role of employer
  - “Career aims” ?????
4. The necessary and growing role of the employer

- Organizational culture
- Best practices
- Organizational infrastructure
- Employer carrots and sticks
Organizational culture
(Universal design)

- Workplace wellness
- Staff understand requirements of the ADA and the Reasonable Accommodations Framework
  - *Education*
  - *Clear process for complaints or requests*
- Supporting young employees
  - *Mentors*
- Actively addressing stigma and discrimination
  - *E.g., NAMI’s ‘CEOs against stigma’ campaign*
Employer best practices 1

- **Hiring**
  - Criminal record considerations

- **Supervision**
  - Individualized
  - Regular
  - Instructional re handling assignments
  - Patience

- **Other staff supportive**
  - Staff orientation, training and accountability
Best practices 2

- Building young adult resilience and developing soft skills
  - Mentorship
  - Training

- Reasonable accommodation (RA) framework.
  - FIRST, assess which job functions are not being performed well, do not start by with illness, symptoms et al.
  - Young adult reluctance to disclose
    - Confidentiality
    - Extent of disclosure
    - Limited number of employees can know
Organizational Infrastructure

- Committed leadership
- Internal and external messaging
- Staff orientation and training
- Quality control
  - staff
Employer Incentives: Carrot and Stick

• ADA enhancements
  • “Obvious”
  • “Disability”

• DOL regulation requiring federal contractors to set a seven percent workforce utilization goal for employing individuals with disabilities

• WIOA placing greater funding emphasis on both employer responsibilities and supporting young adults

• Tax credits/incentives- Apprenticeships

• Growth of young adult peer provider role
5. Takeaways re increasing employment rates of young adults with SMHC I

• Understand young adulthood as a unique developmental stage and culture
• Intervention research is early, complicated by questions about how we measure vocational outcomes, model fidelity issues, and what we research
  • *Current models (e.g., SE)*  
    • Enhancements  
    • Adaptations  
    • *Newer models and approaches*
• Link employment and educational supports/specialists, *along with career supports*
Takeaways re increasing employment rates of young adults with SMHC II

- Anxiety related to feeling unprepared, lack of job experience, and mental health symptoms
  - Resume development, job interview practice
  - Role of family
  - Criminal records
- Encourage and develop positive psychological capital
  - Persistence
  - Resilience
  - Confidence
Takeaways re increasing employment rates of young adults with SMHC III

• Universal design workplace approach
  • Health/wellness/family company benefits
  • Americans with Disabilities Act and Reasonable accommodations
    • Understanding
    • Access
  • Mentors for young people
  • Promoting diversity and addressing stigma in the workplace

• Educate employees, young adults in particular, about organizational policies and benefits

• Follow WIOA and Voke Rehab Agency new foci, including more direct systemic work with employers
References


• Delman, J., & Klodnick, V. (in press) Young Adults with Mental Health Conditions as Peer Support Workers: Perspectives of Workers and Supervisors, *Community Mental Health Journal.*


Behavioral Health is Essential To Health

Prevention Works

Treatment is Effective

People Recover