

BEST PRACTICES TO SERVING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AT ONE-STOP CENTERS

“Discovering Employment Resources”

A program sponsored by the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities to assist individuals with developmental disabilities achieve their employment goals through meaningful resources at the Illinois Employment & Training Center.



PREPARED BY:
Parents Alliance Employment Project
June 2003
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Roger Cave, Workforce Investment Liaison

FLOWCHART FOR REFERRAL PROCESS

*"Discovering Employment Resources"
at the Illinois Employment & Training Center*

Customer Identified & Referred to IETC

Client from either a supportive employment agency or a client that an IETC partner has identified was referred to the project.



Meet with Workforce Investment Liaison

Client that is requesting supplemental assistance will meet with the WIL and their support staff to receive an orientation, complete intake information, check over milestones, and create their plan of action.



Tap into Illinois Employment & Training Center Resources

Client will attend workshops, watch videos, use the computers, and utilize the Career Resource library located in the IETC.



Outreach to Employers and local businesses

WIL will network with employers and local businesses to increase employment opportunities for job seekers with disabilities for employers to tap into and be aware of.



Successful Employment

Client gained meaningful employment through accessing the resources at the Illinois Employment & Training Center.



Review & Follow Up for progress

Increasing Employment Opportunities for People With Disabilities

Just the Facts.....

- ◆ Most workers with disabilities require **no** special accommodations and the cost for those who do is *minimal* or much *lower* than many employers believe.
- ◆ 91% of workers with disabilities displayed **average to higher than average** performance on the job.
- ◆ Individuals with disabilities have a diversity of skills and abilities, and can meet many employer needs.
- ◆ Individuals with disabilities *want* to work and contribute to society.

Benefits of Hiring People with Disabilities...

- ◆ Provides eligibility for WOTC tax credit
- ◆ Reduced turnover and absenteeism.
- ◆ Increases diversity of staff and develops contributing members to our community.
- ◆ Commitment: People with disabilities are committed to fulfilling Employer expectations.

Assisting Employers Tap Into Underutilized Pool of People with Disabilities....

Professional services can be provided at no cost including:

- ◆ Assessment of your business to determine specific needs.
- ◆ Matching your business with a pre-qualified employee that can meet your needs.
- ◆ Work area assessment to offer solutions on necessary accommodations at little or no cost.
- ◆ Supplemental job training support and supervision of the employee.
- ◆ Providing answers to frequently asked questions about hiring people with disabilities.

For more information and resources:

- www.ietc-dupageco.com
- www.jan.wvu.edu
- www.abilitylinks.com

Parents Alliance Employment Project

...A partner in the
ILLINOIS EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING CENTER
 837 Westmore Rd. Lombard, IL 60148

◆ Matching qualified persons with disabilities to employment opportunities in a wide variety of businesses ◆

Appendix D.

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

This manual is structured to provide information on Best Practices of serving individuals with disabilities within the One-Stop centers. It serves as a reference to assist in enhancing the ability of One-Stop systems meet the needs of job seekers with disabilities.

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"The contents of this product were developed under a grant from the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities. However, these contents do not necessarily represent the policy of that agency."

INTRODUCTION

Overview

The Illinois Employment & Training Center (IETC) of DuPage County is a comprehensive, workforce development center, providing essential employment and training services for DuPage area residents and businesses. The IETC is a public partnership between the following organizations:

- College of DuPage
- DuPage County Workforce Development
- Illinois Department of Employment Security
- Parents Alliance Employment Project
- Northeast Area Agency on Aging
- Adult Basic Education
- Illinois Department of Human Services
- Office of Rehabilitation Services

According to the US Census Bureau of 2000, there are 102 counties in Illinois and DuPage County is the second most populous and the 4th fastest growing in net population growth. The median household income for DuPage County residents is \$67, 887. With a population approaching one million people and over 600,000 jobs, the major employment sectors are: manufacturing; retail trade; administration, support, waste management & remediation services; wholesale trade; professional, scientific, & technical services; health care & social assistance; accommodations & food services; finance & insurance; construction; and transportation & warehousing.

One of the core principles of the One-Stop center is to provide universal access to all job seekers. Part of operating a universally accessible system requires meeting the diverse job seeker needs that exist within the local service delivery area, which includes the needs of people with disabilities.

Operating under a "One-Stop," the Illinois Employment & Training Center makes it easy for employers and job seekers to access a wide variety of employment, training, education, economic development and related services at one convenient location. As a partner housed in the DuPage County Illinois Employment & Training Center, Parents Alliance Employment Project has played a major role in advocating accessible services for people with disabilities within the center.

Parents Alliance Employment Project is a non-profit community based organization that matches qualified persons with disabilities to employment opportunities in a wide variety of businesses. The mission of Parents Alliance Employment Project is to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities through individualized employment services. In order to accomplish this mission, Parents Alliance Employment Project works closely with employers to identify and solve workplace needs as well as with employees to help them understand and learn all parts of the job. Parents Alliance Employment Project recognized a need for employment resources to be accessed by job seekers with disabilities. Utilizing the resources that are available within the One-stop center can assist in gaining satisfying employment outcomes.

In June 2001, Parents Alliance Employment Project received a grant titled, "Discovering Employment Resources" from the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities to serve individuals with developmental disabilities who desired to access the IETC and the local workforce development system in DuPage County. This grant served to create a linkage between customers with disabilities, their families, the organization that serve them and those representing the Workforce Board members and the IETC partner staff. It assisted the One-Stop center in the development of strategies to open the doors to people with disabilities.

Appendix C.

Parents Alliance Employment Project Is...

A nonprofit agency that matches qualified persons with disabilities to employment opportunities in a wide variety of businesses.

Mission Statement...

Parents Alliance Employment Project is an organization devoted to improving the lives of people with disabilities through individualized employment services.

Parents Alliance Employment

Project is offering free workshops for individuals with disabilities. Come find out about the great resources that are available for you. We are located in the Illinois Employment Training Center.

Helping Hands (formerly known as Job Club): **Join us every third Friday of the month.**

2:30 – 3:30

Topic: Coping at Work



How to make the best of a difficult situation.

Assessing Your Abilities

10:30 – 12:00

This is a great session to learn how to focus on your abilities and your strengths. Learn the differences between skills, knowledge, attitude, work habits, personal characteristics, interests and values. Learn great tips on how to give your job search direction and focus by goal setting. In addition, this session will also cover skills that businesses look for in their employees.

"The difference between successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather in lack of will."
- Vincent T. Lombardi

First Impression...Getting your foot in the door

10:30-12:00

Make a positive and lasting impression to employers. Featured will be: tips on dressing and grooming appropriately, increasing effective communication skills on the phone and during introductions,

and proving a professional image through your resume and cover letter.

Interviewing Skills

10:30 – 12:00

Learn great tips on handling stressful situations. Find out how mock-interviews can increase your chances at live interviews. Get ideas on how important body language is in giving first impressions.

Social Skills

10:30 – 12:00

Are you afraid to ask questions at work? Do you feel left out? This workshop provides necessary steps to maintain employment. Find out how you can learn appropriate on-the-job behavior such as skills to communicate with the employers and co-workers more effectively and efficiently; making new friends; handling frustration and anger at work.



IETC

*Individual on-site Social Security Benefits Counselor will be available to meet every 3rd Wednesday of the month to provide information on SSI, SSDI, and work incentive counseling (ticket to work).

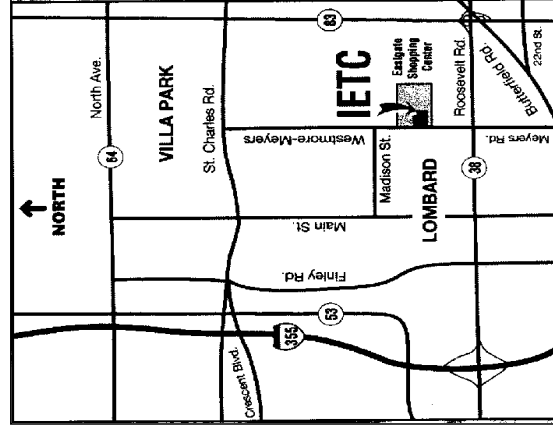
*Please schedule appointment with IETC Liaison at 630-495-4345 x 213

"Look at a day when you are supremely satisfied at the end. It's not a day when you lounge around doing nothing; it's when you've had everything to do, and you've done it."
- Margaret Thatcher

To better serve individuals with disabilities, the resource center at the Illinois Employment and Training Center has new assistive technology: JAWS, Intellitalk, Aurora Word Prediction and Track balls.

The IETC of DuPage is an Equal Opportunity Employer / Program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

Information (630) 495-4345
TDD (630) 495-0655
Website www.ietc-dupageco.com
ISM www.illinoisisskillsmatch.com



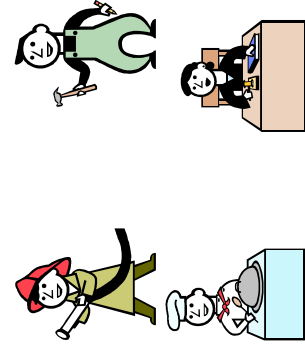
837 South Westmore/Meyers Road
Lombard, Illinois 60148

Hours: Monday through Friday
8:00 – 5:00
Resource Room is Open Until
7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays

Workshops Sponsored by:
Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities, DuPage County Human Services, and Community Memorial Foundation.

PARENTS ALLIANCE EMPLOYMENT PROJECT

Offers Free Workshops For Individuals With Disabilities



"Assess Your Skills, Interests and Abilities"

2003 Schedule

For more information and to register for workshops contact: PAEP staff
630-495-4345 ext. 211

CRITICAL FACTORS FOR ENHANCING SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

A number of components including the collaboration of numerous organizations, the development of a Workforce Investment Liaison (WIL), the operation of a Taskforce to the Workforce Board, and training to one-stop staff and partners emerged through the project. Through the use of these components, critical best practices were established that can be utilized by other One-Stop operators as a framework for the development of serving people with disabilities.

► Collaboration Among Organizations

To ensure the overall success of the systems change among the One-Stop system, it is important to identify key partners and agencies that can assist in providing disability related information and assistance when needed.

For the specific project implemented in the DuPage County One-Stop, the following agencies were identified as key partners:

- The four major providers of employment services to individuals with developmental disabilities in DuPage County.
 - Ray Graham Association
 - Supported Employment Associates
 - Spectrum-Division of Little Friends Inc.
 - Parents Alliance Employment Project
- All the partners and the Workforce Board located at the Illinois Employment & Training Center in DuPage County.
- Local community based organizations:
 - DuPage Center for Independent Living
 - Special Recreation Centers and Associations
- Schools
- Local employers and businesses

The potential impact of the services provided in a One-Stop center is strengthened and enhanced when organizations can connect with other local programs. It allows for a comprehensive network of services and a seamless service delivery model.

► Implementation of a Workforce Investment Liaison

Like others needing assistance in finding employment, people with disabilities are often presented to a system that is fragmented and difficult to navigate. A major role of One-Stop centers is to bring programs together to be easily accessed by all job seekers. The implementation of a Workforce Investment Liaison (WIL) allowed the linkage among services and resources.

The Workforce Investment Liaison acted as an advocate between customers with developmental disabilities, their families, the organizations that serve them, and those representing the workforce investment system. The WIL navigated customers with disabilities through the system to assist in accessing the resources and services that were available through the center. Having a liaison available to meet directly with customers with disabilities allowed for increased participation in employment activities.

The WIL worked with job seekers with disabilities and their support staff to:

- **Provide an orientation to programs and resources at the IETC to become familiar and as comfortable as possible. (See appendix A)**
- **Identify work skills and abilities of the job seeker to promote their knowledge and capabilities.**
- **Create a plan of action for employment to identify and assess goals. (See appendix B)**
- **Enroll in employment workshops to increase employability skills. (See appendix C)**
- **Explore employment opportunities.**
- **Provide referrals to IETC partners for additional services and support.**
- **Network with employers to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities among the community. (See appendix D)**
- **Continuously monitor progress.**

Plan of Action Discovering Employment Resources Project

Illinois Employment and Training Center

Client Name: _____

Disability: _____

Intake Date: _____

Referral: _____

Summary of Meeting:

Consumer Employment Interests:

Plan of Action:
(Resources to utilize)

Signature of Client Date

Signature of Support Staff Date

Signature of WIL Date

Employment Resources Available for Individuals with Disabilities at the Illinois Employment and Training Center

837 S. Westmore-Meyers Rd., Lombard, IL 60148
(630) 495-4345 • www.ietc-dupageco.com

TRAINING

Free workshop classes specifically designed for individuals with disabilities including:

- Helping Hands (formerly known as Job Club)
- Assessing Your Abilities
- First Impression...Getting your foot in the door
- Interviewing Skills
- Social Skills

EDUCATION MATERIALS

Books including:

- The Americans with Disabilities Act- What you need to know
- Job Search Handbook for People with Disabilities
- Computer and Web Resources for People with Disabilities
- No One is Unemployable
- Different Abilities
- Career Success for People with Physical Disabilities
- Six Steps To Employment for People with Disabilities
- Able to Work Job Outlook
- Learning a Living
- Introduction to Job Applications
- A Primer of Brain Tumors - A Patient's Reference Manual - Living with a Brain Tumor
- Job Strategies for People with Disabilities
- Resource Guide for Persons with Disabilities

Magazine/Newspaper Subscriptions:

- CAREERS & the disabled
- College of DuPage Job Opportunity Bulletin
- Wall Street Journal
- Daily Herald

Occupational Books:

- Dictionary of Occupational Titles
- Guide for Occupational Exploration
- Career Clusters
- Job Descriptions

VIDEOTAPES

Different types of demonstrated videos including:

- Creating Self esteem & Self Confidence
- Job Interviewing for People with Disabilities
- Resumes & Applications for People with Disabilities
- Job Search Tactics for People with Disabilities
- Looking Sharp: Grooming and Dressing for Success
- When Can You Start
- Eight Easy Ways to Lose Your Job
- First Impressions
- Interviewing Skills for Job Candidates with Learning or other Hidden Disabilities
- We Made the Right Choice
- Different types of occupations - videotapes include a brief 5-7 minute example of: "what it is like to be..."

COMPUTERS

Available to use for:

- Create a resume/cover letter
- Conduct a job search: www.abilitylinks.com
- Illinois Skills Match
- Assistive Technology: JAWS, Intellitalk, and Track Balls
- Interest Inventory: www.iocc.state.il.us/etc.htm

ON-SITE INDIVIDUALIZED BENEFITS COUNSELING

REFERRAL TO COMMUNITY RESOURCES

► Taskforce for Serving People with Disabilities

Establishing a specific Taskforce to address disability issues was a key component to enforcing programmatic and physical accessibility issues of the IETC to the Workforce Board and partners. It was also used as a method to better educate Taskforce members about the workforce investment system and the current initiatives in this area. The Taskforce was charged with sponsoring the following events. These events can be easily duplicated among One-Stop centers to increase participation of people with disabilities in the workforce system.

- Holding an event for school personnel, high school students with disabilities and their parents at the IETC sponsored by all the supported employment agencies and the IETC partners.
- Providing awareness and etiquette training to IETC staff on working with people with disabilities.
- Holding a "Community Resource Day" at the IETC in which over 25 community-based organizations were showcased and integrated with other customer populations.
- Establishing a referral process for job seekers with disabilities as they access the IETC to be shared among staff. (See Appendix E)

The Taskforce is also a logical group that can be used to spearhead the development of creating an accessible One-Stop center. Overall, the Taskforce provided a strong voice and provided representation in discussing the role of the One-Stop system in meeting the needs of people with disabilities.

Some tips for establishing a taskforce are:

- Identifying 5-8 key representatives that serve people with disabilities.
 - Supportive Employment Agencies
 - Vocational Rehabilitation Services
 - Workforce Board
 - Community Based Organizations
- Designating a regular meeting place and time.
- Developing objectives to be addressed by the Taskforce.
- Sharing information and findings among the other One-Stop staff members to maximize inclusion.

▶ Training to Staff

Training among staff provided an overview on disability awareness. Training can easily heighten the sensitivity of people who have no previous experience serving or working with people with disabilities. Training that was offered included:

- The core values of customer service towards people with disabilities.
- Assisting and supporting customers with disabilities.
- Information and referral to Vocational Rehabilitation services.
- Locating community resources.
- Use of assistive technology in job searches and assistance.

A "Disability Awareness" Video* was produced in order to aid in the training of IETC One-Stop Staff. The video provides a basic understanding of disability issues and etiquette that should be followed in interacting with an individual with a disability. The video was used to help One-Stop staff develop a basic understanding of various disabilities and how to identify and obtain accommodations for employment success. It also helped staff recognize that people with disabilities do not need to be automatically steered to "disability-specific" services.

**A copy of the video that was produced can be obtained by contacting Parents Alliance Employment Project.*

APPENDIX

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The contents of this manual were put together in collaboration with the major supported employment service providers in DuPage County including Ray Graham Association, Supported Employment Associates, Spectrum-Division of Little Friends, and Parents Alliance Employment Project as well as the partners within the DuPage IETC. The groups worked closely through the Taskforce to implement a seamless service delivery model that would increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities through the DuPage One-Stop center.

Parents Alliance Employment Project

A partner in the...
Illinois Employment &
Training Center
837 Westmore-Meyers Rd.
Lombard, IL 60148
(630) 495-4288
Contact: Kristen Tribe

Spectrum-A division of Little Friends

2320 Wisconsin Ave.
Downer Grove, IL 60515
(630) 852-7520
Contact: John Lee

Supported Employment Associates

P. O. Box 4714
Wheaton, IL 60189
(630) 653-5662
Contact: Cheryl Adlaf

Ray Graham Association

442 W. Fullerton Ave.
Elmhurst, IL 60126
(630) 993-0155
Contact: Melanie Brooks

DuPage Workforce Board

837 Westmore-Meyers Rd.
Lombard, IL 60148
(630) 495-4345
Contact: Mary Beth Marshall

Office of Rehabilitation Services

2901 Finley Rd.
Downers Grove, IL 60515
(630) 495-0500
Contact: Marilyn Liwanag

Department of Human Services

146 Roosevelt Rd.
Villa Park, IL 60181
(630) 782-4706
Contact: Jan Archambault

Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities

100 W. Randolph, 10-600
Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 814-2080

CREATING OPEN DOORS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AT THE IETC

People with disabilities need the type of expertise and assistance that a One-Stop center can provide to help them find and succeed in employment. Many employment resources can be added to the center to assist individuals with disabilities who want to improve their job-seeking skills including:

- **Employment workshops including a monthly Job Club as well as workshops that address interviewing and resume writing skills, identifying barriers to employment, and improving social skills. These workshops give individuals with disabilities the opportunity to acquire and increase employability skills among peers.**
- **Equipping the Career Resource Center with Assistive Technology that allows individuals to independently create resumes and cover letters, as well as to perform interest inventories and job searches.**
- **Videotapes on interviewing, grooming, goal setting, and social skills.**
- **Books with information about rehabilitation and transition services, transportation, social security, and support groups.**
- **Having an expert available to provide consultation to One-Stop staff regarding disability related issues.**

Tapping into employment resources through the Career Resource Center integrates people with disabilities into the community and can help them become more self sufficient in their job search activities. Through implementing and expanding the services and resources that are offered to people with disabilities, One-Stop centers can create a more user-friendly system that can be navigated by all populations.

CREATING AN IMPACT AND IMPLEMENTING THE PROJECT

The "Discovering Employment Resources" project has resulted in many successes among a variety of organizations including the One-Stop center, supported employment agencies, local schools, businesses and partners within the Workforce Board. It has increased the participation of people with disabilities who wish to access services and resources to assist them in obtaining meaningful employment outcomes with "specialized" services being utilized on an as-needed basis.

By implementing the critical factors of collaboration of the numerous organizations, the development of a Workforce Investment Liaison (WIL), the operation of a Taskforce to the Workforce Board, and training to one-stop staff and partners, One-Stop centers can become accustomed to serving people with disabilities and have a major impact on many different groups within the community:

JOB SEEKERS

- Acquire additional pre-employment skills.
- Improve work behaviors on their job site.
- Become independent and self-sufficient in their job search.
- Obtain meaningful employment.

SUPPORT STAFF

- Receive additional support, access, and linkage to resources and services available at the one-stop to their customers.

IETC STAFF & PARTNERS

- Prepared to serve customers with disabilities as any other customer who enters the system.
- Can identify appropriate resources to maximize their time and efforts.
- Increased universal outlook on access for all levels of job seekers.

BUSINESS & COMMUNITIES

- Increased awareness of people with disabilities as people who can contribute to society and be a stable force in the workplace.

SHARING SUCCESS AND OUTCOMES

Through the course of a year and a half, the specific project, "Discovering Employment Resources" resulted in many successes for people with disabilities and has made great impact on the DuPage One-Stop center. Here are some of the stats:

- **Over 85 individuals with disabilities entered and were served through the WIL at the One-Stop.**
- **Approximately 70 individuals with disabilities utilized the resources within the center including the employment workshops, computers, and resource library.**
- **35 individuals gained employment.**
- **15 individuals have retained their job for more than 5 months.**
- **8 individuals have retained their job for more than a year.**

More successfully, the staff of the DuPage One-Stop center have been equipped with the knowledge of how to serve an individual with a disability. Programs, resources, and services have become more user friendly among all that wish to access them.

▶ Testimonials

"Our clients feel more comfortable accessing the services at the IETC. Before, they were overwhelmed with all that is available. Now, they can come in and I know that they will acquire the necessary skills that are needed to find employment."

*-Cheryl Adlaf, Director
Supported Employment Associates*

"Connecting job seekers with disabilities to employment resources has become a top priority among one-stop staff. I personally have gained a heightened awareness and sensitivity to include people with disabilities within the various services here at the Illinois Employment & Training Center."

*-Noreen Tunney, Career Resource Facilitator
DuPage Workforce Development Division*

"I came into the IETC on a weekly basis to look for a job. It was nice knowing that the computers were equipped with assistive technology so that I could do internet searches. Thanks to the resources and the guidance I received from staff, I landed a full-time job and will be there for 1 full year!"

*-Joseph Weakland
Customer of DuPage One-Stop*