
Abstract: Article reports the findings of 2 national surveys that assessed the types and frequency of educational supports, accommodations, and services offered to students with disabilities attending 2- and 4-year postsecondary education institutions. The first survey was administered in 1999 with a follow-up in 2001. Comparison of the 2 surveys showed an increase in the provision of postsecondary services, supports, and accommodations over the 2-year period. The most frequent services offered were testing accommodation services, followed by the availability of note takers, personal counseling, and advocacy assistance.


Abstract: Study used data from national surveys conducted in 1999 and 2001 to identify and investigate the relationships among constructs that contribute to effective educational supports provided to students with disabilities in postsecondary education. Exploratory factor analysis was used to determine: (1) if the survey items grouped into meaningful constructs that represent services provided to students with disabilities, (2) if the constructs showed a significant difference between 2-year and 4-year institutions, and (3) if the constructs changed over time. The results revealed that the 34 survey items grouped well into 4 factors: strategies, assistive technology, accommodations, and vocational/work support. Assistive technology supports were offered more often in 2-year institutions, whereas accommodations and vocational-work supports were offered more often in 4-year institutions. Only assistive technology supports increased between 1999 and 2001; strategies, accommodations, and vocational-work supports did not change significantly over time.


Abstract: Focus groups were conducted to identify barriers to access and utilization of educational supports and subsequent implementation of each project, and reports on project outcomes. Barriers common to these projects and cross-project findings include: (1) the need for cultural sensitivity in transition planning; (2) challenges of providing transition planning for students with disabilities from foster systems or juvenile justice systems. For the school-based studies of students with learning disabilities and mental retardation, participating schools included: (3) if the constructs changed over time. The results revealed that the 34 survey items grouped well into 4 factors: strategies, assistive technology, accommodations, and vocational/work support. Assistive technology supports were offered more often in 2-year institutions, whereas accommodations and vocational-work supports were offered more often in 4-year institutions. Only assistive technology supports increased between 1999 and 2001; strategies, accommodations, and vocational-work supports did not change significantly over time.


Abstract: Quarterly publication of the Institute on Community Integration and the Research and Training Center (RTC) on Residential Services and Community Living, University of Minnesota. This issue focuses on achieving secondary education and transition services for students with disabilities. Topics include: (1) culturally sensitive assumptions in transition planning; (2) challenges of secondary education and transition services for youth with disabilities; (3) universal design in education; (4) strategies for improving graduation results; (5) improving postsecondary education access and results; (6) students with disabilities attending alternative schools; and (7) success stories and resources.


Abstract: The Southeast Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC) promotes widespread use of accessible and usable electronic and information technology (IT) for students with disabilities in a variety of educational environments through the Education Leadership Initiative (ELI). The Southeast DBTAC funded 13 ELI projects over a 2-year period; 6 of these projects dealt with IT accessibility for kindergarten through twelfth-grade students. This report identifies these projects, highlights the development and implementation of each project, and reports on project outcomes. Barriers common to these projects and cross-project findings are also presented.

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For September, RehabWire goes back to school with students with disabilities.
Text-to-Speech Software as a Means to Improve the Unaided Reading Comprehension and Overall Reading Skills of High School Students Identified for Special Education or 504 Services, (H133S050046) led by Kelly Drew Roberts, PhD, A. Cate Miller, PhD, Project Officer.

Abstract: This fellowship seeks to determine if text-to-speech software is an effective tool for improving unaided reading comprehension, reading rate, and reading skills. Text-to-speech software provides access to written material that is otherwise inaccessible to individuals with poor reading skills. While text-to-speech software provides this access it is hypothesized that its use may also increase the unaided reading skills of “poor” readers. For this project, targeted research subjects are 11th grade students who are identified for special education or 504 services and reading between the 1.0 and 5.0 grade levels. Outcomes data is collected and analyzed for each subject for the 1.5 years following the initial study. This data is used to determine if the use of text-to-speech software leads to overall improved educational performance in secondary school and improved transition to valued post-school outcomes such as access to postsecondary education and employment.

Resilience in Students with TBI: A Longitudinal Investigation, Western Oregon University (H133G030179) led by Ann E. Glang, PhD, Theresa San Agustin, MD, Project Officer.

Abstract: The project extends the work of Project PSC, a project investigating post-secondary outcomes for young adults with TBI, tracking this sample into their early 20s, a time when the subjects are making significant life adjustments in the areas of post-secondary education, employment, independent living, and interpersonal relationships. The Project’s quantitative and qualitative data reveal that some of the 92 subjects appear to be resilient, achieving successful post-injury adjustments, while others are experiencing difficulty, becoming dependent on family members for instrumental and social support. The data suggest that access to specific types of educational interventions and support services account for these differences in adjustment. In addition, this project investigates factors that facilitate and impede delivery of services and support to young adults with TBI from key agencies, including VR, Social Security Administration, and state social service agencies serving individuals with disabilities.

Multimedia Literacy Software for Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing, and Visual Learners, Voom3D, Inc. (H133S050137), led by Edward Sims. David W. Keer, Project Officer.

Abstract: Persons who are Deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) have difficulty learning to read and write proficiently. Over the last decade, several software screen readers and literacy tools have been developed for persons with blindness and learning disabilities. However, to date, none of these tools has incorporated features and functions that specifically target the needs of the (DHH) population. This project is developing a fully functional Multimedia Literacy Software (MLSW) program that addresses the needs of DHH, as well as other students, and identifies the best uses of the MLSW in the instruction of reading skills. The creation of a multimedia module presents a highly detailed representation of an animated human that can: Speak selected words and text segments, while demonstrating correct mouth movement to form speech sounds; automatically translate English text into Signed English, which may be viewed with or without accompanying speech; and provide ASL or Signed English definitions of selected English words. The prototype MLSW and the supporting instructional materials serve as the basis for a commercial software product that may be stand-alone or licensed and bundled with currently available and evolving assistive reading and writing software. Find out more at: www.voom3d.com

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