New Perspectives in Supported Education

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What is Supported Education?

- Provides assistance and support to:
  - individuals with a psychiatric disability who wish to pursue education or training
  - follows a psychiatric rehabilitation model.
Supported Education Mission

- Supported education is the process of helping people diagnosed with a mental illness to participate in an education program so
  - they may receive the education and training they need to achieve their learning and recovery goals and
  - become gainfully employed in the job or career of their choice.

- Karen V. Unger, MSW, Ed.D.
  President and Founder
  Rehabilitation Through Education
Supported Education Principles

- **Support** – services are available for as long as is needed in order for the student to successfully achieve their educational goal.

- **Integration** – services are inclusive and use non-stigmatizing methods and settings; services are generally consistent with routines of school life; participants have a new role as students.
Supported Education Principles

- **Flexibility** – services are evaluated on an ongoing basis and revised as needed to keep them responsive to student’s needs.

- **Dignity** – services are provided in a manner which protects privacy, enhances personal dignity and respects cultural diversity.
Supported Education Principles

- **Self Determination** – students set their own goals and participate fully in determining the criteria for success and in evaluating progress toward their goals.

- **Active involvement** – students have active involvement in all aspects of the program, from planning programs to implementation and evaluation.
Supported Education Principles

- **Hope** – promotes confidence in a better future.

- **Advocacy** – the program gives students supports and assistance to advocate on their own behalf, engages in proactive activities to promote accommodations and works to change social and physical environments to improve outcomes.

- **Recovery** – an on-going process facilitated by meaningful roles
Supported Education Models

- **Clubhouse** – typically offers:
  - Staff devoted to educational goals
  - Educational services in the clubhouse such as study time, skill building, computer use
  - Individual educational counseling
  - Some services outside of the clubhouse, such as mobile support or running a class/group on a college campus
  - Mentors & tutoring
  - Education focused support groups
  - Most likely to be funded by OMH
Supported Education Models

- **On-site model** – typically offers:
  - Location at a college setting – primarily serves individuals attending that college
  - Offers individual/group on-site educational counseling
  - Staff are usually employees of educational institutions or may be an employee of a mental health association
  - Most likely to be funded by the college where located or by VESID
Supported Education Models

- **Free-Standing/Mobile** – typically offers:
  - Designed to allow counselors to travel to students rather than students to counselor
  - May or may not be limited to college settings
  - Serves a larger spectrum of educational programs: pre-GED, GED, vocational training programs, on-line certificate programs, two and four year colleges or Master’s programs
  - Individual educational counseling
  - Most likely to be funded by OMH
Few significant differences were found between program models.

- Clubhouse: Full & Partial
- On-Site
- Mobile/Free-Standing
Supported Education Services

- Individual educational counseling/support:
  - Development of educational/career plans
  - Assistance with college application
  - Assistance with registration process
  - Assistance with accessing accommodations
  - Orientation to campus settings/services
  - Referrals to resources on and off campus
  - Financial assistance advisement and advocacy
Supported Education Services

(continued)

- Individual educational counseling/support:
  - Direct on campus advocacy and assistance related to arranging accommodations, medical withdrawals, crisis resolution
  - Assistance with skill development (e.g., note taking, study skills, stress management and time management)
  - Coordination of services with mental health providers
Peer Supported Education

- **Key Characteristics**
  - Recovery focused
  - Peer facilitated
  - Increased understanding of, and methods for coping with barriers
  - Familiarity from a personal perspective of the various systems such as Social Services, VESID, mental health services, self-help groups
  - Heightened empathy and ability to instill hope for a better future
  - Willingness to share one’s own story
Critical Interventions

- Supported Education Counselor provides:
  - Assistance with proper withdrawal from classes to preserve academic standing in the event of a relapse
  - Assistance with proper withdrawal from classes to preserve financial benefits in the event of a relapse
  - Assistance with resolving defaulted loans so that a student may re-enter an educational setting
Supported Education Referrals

- Where are the students referred from?
  - Self referrals
  - Mental health treatment programs, Outpatient clinics, partial hospitals, private psychiatrists, psychologists, clinicians, Inpatient discharge planners
  - Educational institutions (colleges, high schools, BOCES, training programs)
  - VESID
Supported Education Referrals
continued

- Other psychiatric rehabilitation programs such as vocational programs and IPRT
- Department of Social Services
- Residential programs
- Social clubs
- PROS
Some Colleges & Educational Programs Attended by Supported Education Students

- **COLLEGES:**
  - The College of Saint Rose
  - University at Albany
  - Hudson Valley Community College
  - Schenectady County Community College
  - Empire State College
  - Siena College
  - Russell Sage College
  - DeVry University – On-Line
  - The New School
  - Rensselaer (RPI)
  - Skidmore
  - Albany School of Pharmacy
  - Russell Sage School of Nursing

- **GED Programs:**
  - Washington Irving
  - SCCC Adult Continuing Education
  - Educational Opportunity Center
  - Literacy Volunteers
  - Adult Learning Center

- **Vocational Schools:**
  - Cornell Cooperative Extension
  - Branford Hall Career Institute
  - Professional Skills Center

- **Other:**
  - Circles of Mercy
Organizations that provide Scholarships include:
The Veteran’s Administration, Native American and other ethnic organizations, Second Chance Scholarships, etc.
Summary of Supported Education Outcomes

- Increased self esteem, optimism, hope
- Increased likelihood to return to college following an educational gap
- High degree of consumer satisfaction
- Higher course completion rate
- Higher average GPA (above 3.0)
- Significant increase in competitive employment relative to the general population of person’s with a mental illness
- Drop out rates similar to that of part time students in general instead of the higher rate found for students with a mental illness
- Type of psychiatric diagnosis was not a predictor of school completion but having one’s own car and number of psychiatric hospitalizations prior to program participation were predictors
New York Intrastate Supported Education Consortium

Purpose

to provide regional Supported Education Coordinators/stakeholders with:

• Support;
• Collaboration of ideas;
• Dissemination of information;
• A forum for advocacy.
Supported Education Programs in NY State

Fountain House Supported Education Program
425 West 47th Street
New York, New York 10036
212 582-0340

Hudson House Supported Education
245 Broadway
Newburgh, NY 12250
845 565-8575
hudsonhouse@frontier.net

Mental Health Association of Columbia & Greene Counties
713 Union Street
Hudson, NY 12534
518 828-4619

Northeast Career Planning Supported Education
28 Colvin Avenue
Albany, New York 12206
tel: 518 438-3445
fax:518 453-9096

Northeast Career Planning Supported Education
2469 Albany Street
Schenectady, NY 12304
518 372-2895

Northeast Career Planning Supported Education
1700 6th Ave
Troy, NY 12180
518 273-0818

Stony Brook University Disability Support Services
128 ECC
Stony Brook, MY 11749
631 632-6748

Ulster County Community College—Academic Coaching for Success
Cottekill Road
Vanderlyn Hall
Stone Ridge, NY 12484
800 724-0833 ext. 5073

Supported Education Groups throughout the United States as offered by the School of Social Welfare, The University of Kansas

http://www.socwel.ku.edu/projects/SEG/segprog.html
New Perspectives

Where are we now?
Current funding for Supported Education Services has been preserved outside of PROS

Within a PROS, students can explore and set educational goals and receive assistance with enrollment.

On campus assistance is difficult to fund in a PROS due to limited face to face contact with the counselor. Students typically can not travel to the PROS site for blocks of time due to class schedules.

In the future, Supported Education may be funded similarly to how vocational services are provided in a PROS
Promoting a Better Academic Environment

1. Empower students to advocate for themselves and others in educational settings and to become more fully integrated in their community.

2. To educate and advocate with administrators and faculty of educational institutions so that students with disabilities are treated with dignity and respect for privacy.

3. To advocate for the change of policies or for the enforcement of existing policies to ensure that the rights of students are protected.
References


