

Person-Centered Employment Supports

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EMPLOYMENT FIRST: CONTROL YOUR OWN DESTINY OR SOMEONE ELSE WILL!

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About me



A word cloud featuring various terms related to social justice, community, and human rights. The words are arranged in a roughly horizontal shape, with 'community' and 'support' being the largest. Other prominent words include 'rights', 'respect', 'inclusion', 'access', 'choices', 'challenges', 'opportunities', 'value', 'valued', 'unique', 'equal', 'participate', 'dignity', 'diversity', 'fairly', 'valuable', 'voice', 'work', 'talents', 'liberty', 'healthy', 'life', 'safety', 'freedom', 'equally', 'reflect', 'accepted', 'fullest', 'ability', 'best', 'gifts', 'right', 'personal', 'equals', 'belonging', 'live', 'potential', 'help', 'work', 'travel', 'choice', 'work', 'talents', 'liberty', 'healthy', 'life', 'safety', 'freedom', 'equally', 'reflect', 'accepted', 'fullest', 'ability', 'best', 'gifts', 'right', 'personal', 'equals', 'belonging', 'live', 'potential', 'help'. The colors used for the words include shades of green, purple, red, blue, and brown.

community
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Quote of the Day



“True individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence.”

—Franklin Delano Roosevelt

State of Maryland - Fun Facts

- Maryland is one of two states, along with Delaware, that gave up some of its land to help form the nation's capital of Washington, DC in 1790.
- Maryland is the national leader in the production of blue crabs and soft clams.
- 19th most populous state in USA.
- It has a town called "BORING."
- 2nd state to pass Law Ending 14C-Sub-Minimum wage (NH, my former state, was 1st.)



MD State Self Advocacy



- Statewide self-advocacy organization led by Ken Capone. Been around for 30+ years.
- In 2016 POG, led by Ken Capone, succeeded in getting the MD Legislature to pass the Ken Capone Equal Employment Act to end 14(c) subminimum wage.
- As of Oct 2020, MD has NO 14(c) certificates in use.

Low Expectation Syndrome



4 'F's of Disability Employment

- **Food, Filth, Flowers, and Filing** have been the typical jobs people with disabilities work in.
- Part of this is due to attitudes and “Low Expectation Syndrome” our society has for the disability community.
- Until recently there were few if any college programs for adults with I/DD. We must expand and grow voc. tech and college programs for this population and end barriers like sky-high tuition and Accuplacer testing that prevent us from going to college.
- Given the era of automation of low-skilled jobs, it's time to think outside the box, look at how we can help people start their own businesses and get professional jobs in public, private and nonprofit agencies. One way is to increase \$ for IDA - Individual Development Accounts.





“ “ What Self-Advocates Say About Employment

“People should never be looked upon as empty spaces. Presuming that one is not intelligent, just because of outward appearances, is a tragedy. Judging one’s understanding by their form of communication or ability to socialize is deadly.” —KRIS MEDINA

“You need to know me and how my disability works.” —JASON BILLEHUS



What Self-Advocates Say About Employment

“Thanks for the assistance but remember it’s my job not your job.” —STIRLING PEEBLES

“You need to keep people in jobs, not just find them. You need to be there for folks who lose their jobs and help them find another job.”
—SABE MEMBER

“Unfortunately, many people with disabilities grow up in the shadows of ‘Low Expectation Syndrome.’ Our hopes and dreams can be stripped away by doctors, teachers, parents, and providers who have preconceived notions about what we are capable of doing.”
—NICOLE LEBLANC

The motto I live...



CONTROL
YOUR OWN
DESTINY.

THIS HAS BEEN A JEREMYVILLE
COMMUNITY SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT.

or someone else will.

ACT NOW



Inspiring person-centered supports

A few
moments
to talk
about:

What do we mean by person-centered? Aren't we all person-centered?

A (really short) history of person-centered planning, where we're going with system change.

Person-centered employment supports

Focusing in on person-centered thinking, planning, and practice

- The concept of person-centeredness first documented in 1979 with a formative period through 1992¹
- People with developmental disabilities were the original focus of this work both nationally and internationally, and definitions and approaches for person-centered thinking, planning, and practice have emerged over time.

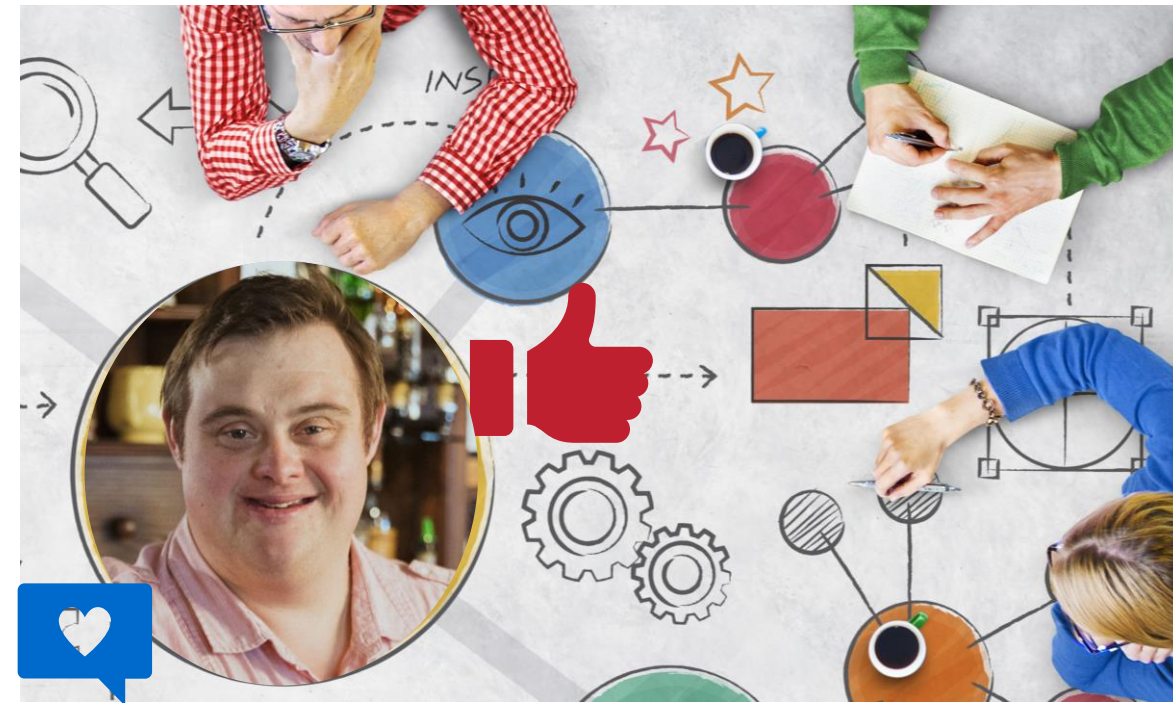


¹ O'Brien, C.L. & O'Brien, John. The Origins of Person-Centered Planning: A Community of Practice Perspective. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED456599.pdf>

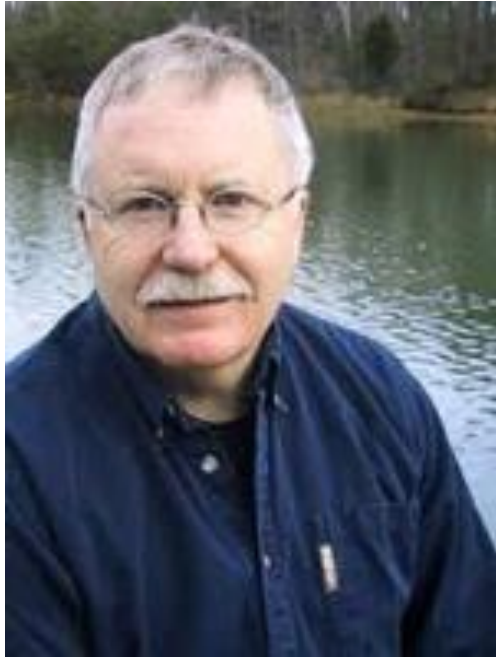
Focusing in on person-centered thinking, planning, and practice (continued)

The common factors across definitions and approaches:

- The “person is at the center”
- Ultimate control and decisions about all aspects of the person’s life is made *by the person* (and/or with decision-making support from those closest to the person)
- Decisions are based upon what is important to and for the person

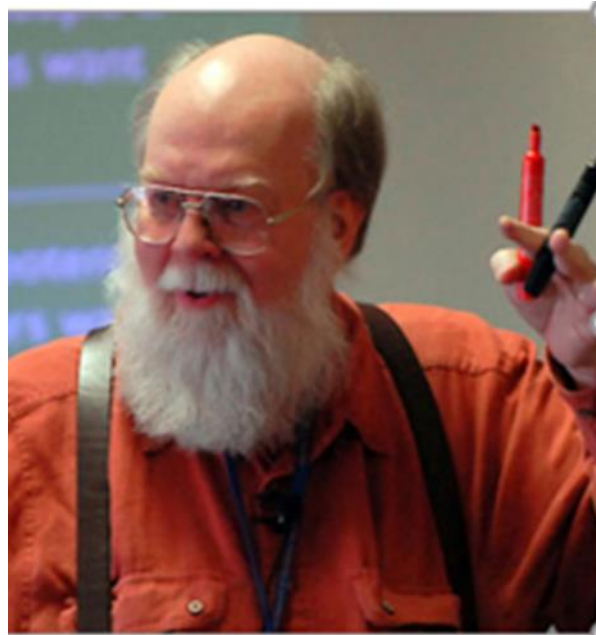


Three Pioneers of Person-Centered Planning



Michael Smull

Essential Life Planning emphasizes more than “a service life” and stresses that plan include services that are *important to* the individual as well as *important for* the individual



John O'Brien

Planning Alternative Futures with Hope – focuses on individual’s vision and includes graphic representations (Forest, Pierpont & O’Brien)

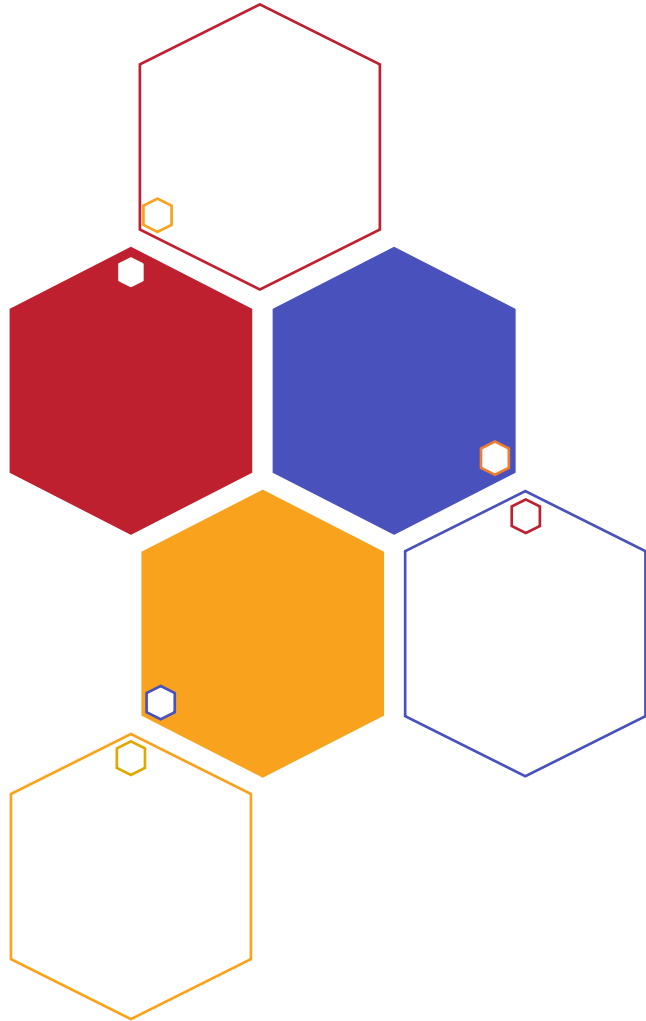


Beth Mount

Advanced Person-Centered Principles: see people first, rather than labels; use ordinary language and images; actively search for a person's gifts and capacities in the context of community life



The National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems



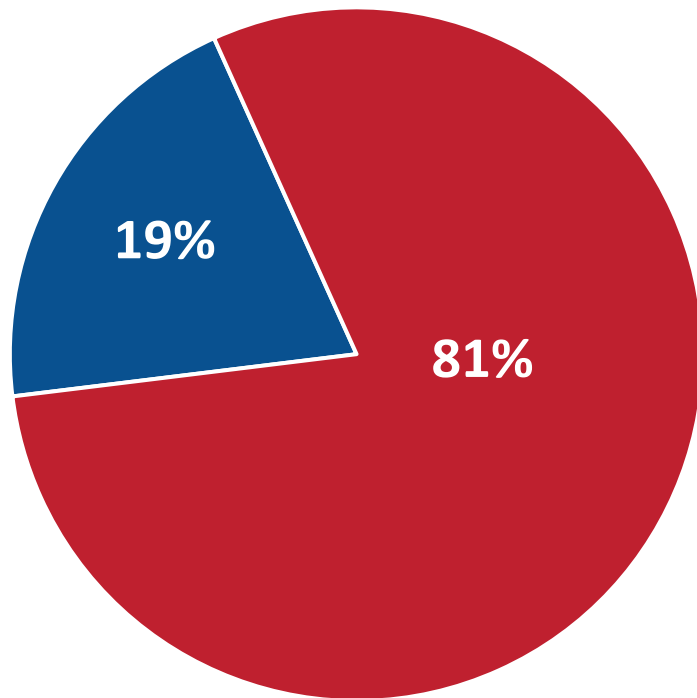
Person-centered thinking is a foundational principle—requiring consistency in language, values and actions—that reveals respect, views the person and their loved ones as experts in their own lives, and equally emphasizes quality of life, well-being, and informed choice.

Person-centered planning is a methodology that identifies and addresses the preferences and interests that make up a desired life and the supports (paid and unpaid) needed to achieve it. It is directed by the person, and it is supported by others selected by the person.

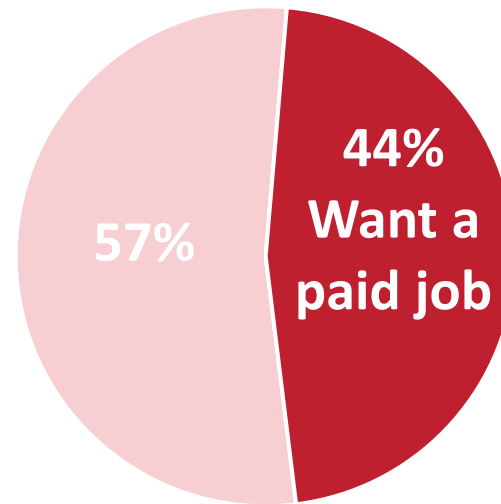
Person-centered practices are the alignment of services and systems to ensure the person has access to the full benefits of community living and to deliver services in a way that facilitates the achievement of the person’s desired outcomes.

What do we know about **work** from National Core Indicators?

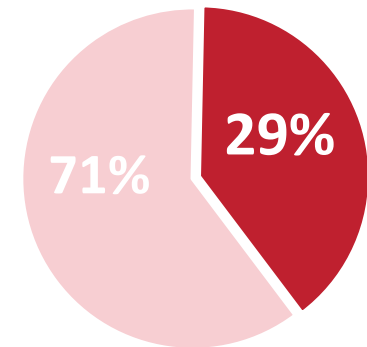
In 2019, only 19% of people in NCI had a paid job in the community.



Of those **without** a paid community job...44% said they want a job.

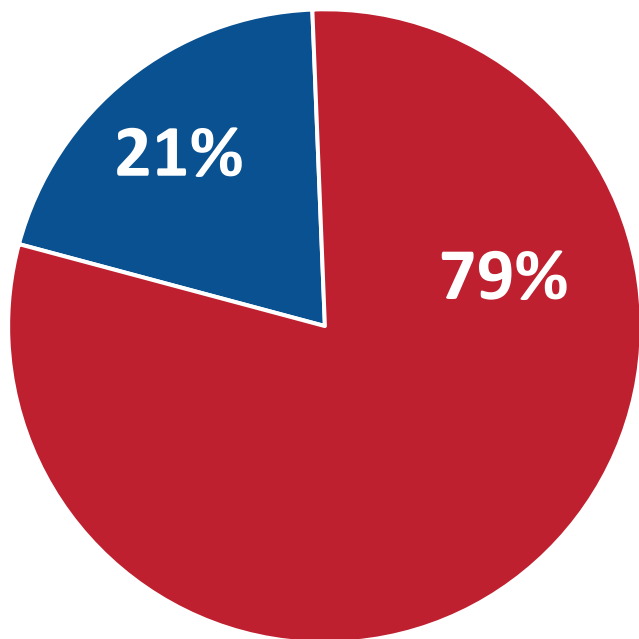


...and of those, **only 29%** had community employment as a goal in their service plan.

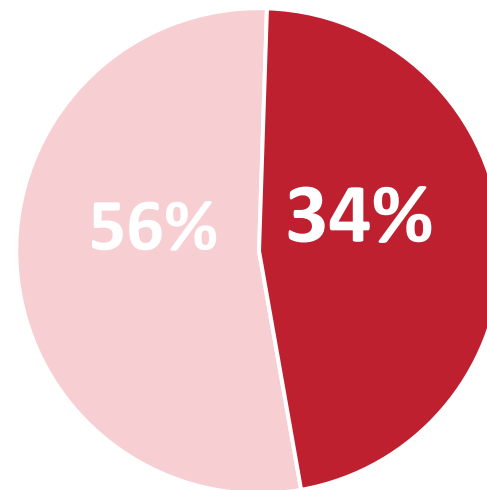


What do we know about **work in WI** from National Core Indicators?

In Wisconsin's NCI data, 21% of people in NCI survey had a paid job in the community.



Of those **without** a paid community job...34% said they want a job.*



More NCI results for Wisconsin (2018-2019 In-Person Survey)

- Among those who said they do not want a job, the main reasons were: “Health Limitations” and “Retired”
- 15% said they take classes, training, or do something to get a job (or do better in their current job)
- 29% of people said they volunteer

Being Person-Centered in Employment

What do we mean? My two cents:

- To be person-centered in the world of employment means to carve and develop jobs based on a person's unique strengths, interests, talents, and abilities. This is at the heart of great career planning.
- Just placing someone with a disability in any old job slot is an example of what is NOT person-centered.
- Person-centeredness in employment is allowing people with developmental disabilities to control their own destinies.
- A person-centered employment program focuses on **careers NOT just jobs**. Also, not just the 4 Fs of disability employment - FOOD, FILTH, FLOWERS, FILING.

Things need to be done to achieve the value of Employment First



- We need to reform public benefits (SSI, SSDI, Medicaid...) to support employment by allowing us to earn more and raise earnings limits.
- Eliminate benefits cliff situations, where you make enough to lose benefits but not enough to be self-supporting.
- Break down silos in service systems so that employment is a key focus and expectation during the transition years for all systems.
- Public benefits must be reformed to consider that being disabled is EXPENSIVE!
- Engage families early and have high expectations early, often. We must presume employability regardless of severity of disability.
- Educate employers on the benefits of hiring people w/ disabilities and on ABLE accounts.

Employment, Community Risk Assessment in era of COVID-19

Many states like VT have created Risk Assessments for resuming community & employment activities. Here is a sample of what VT covers:

- Concerns from people about resuming employment and other activities in the community.
- Using Individual risk assessment that looks at a person's health status and risk of COVID
- Risk of losing a job and their dependency on income from employment.
- Impact of work on people's benefits
- People's ability to follow COVID safety precautions
- Plans for quarantine, or if someone is ill.

Risk Assessment Continued...

- Direct Support Provider Risk Assessment if person needs job coaching.
(Health Status - High risk or Normal Risk)
- Does DSP work within other locations?
- Backup plan when DSP not available to support
- DSP and (job coach) training and support - PPE, infection control, etc.
- Transit risk
- Home safety routines to ensure everyone's safety.



Getting back to Person Centeredness & Employment

- Job seeker w/ disability is the **customer** along with the employer: Dual Customer Approach.
- Having access to values-neutral info needed to make informed choices.
- Matching & carving jobs based on our unique individual strengths and talents.
- Embrace Dignity of Risk, getting outside of our comfort zone. For example, doing an internship in DC or another state, taking bus alone etc.
- Have High Expectations & Presume Competence.

Employment Rights

- Right to Not Be Discriminated.
- Right to Support & Reasonable Accommodations on job and during interview process.
- Right to be paid minimum wage or higher.
- Right to work in a job that fits strengths, abilities and interest.
- Right to work in integrated settings alongside those w/o disabilities.
- Benefits counseling on how work impacts benefits.
- Right to safe working conditions especially during pandemics like COVID.
- Tools and equipment to do job safely.
- Equal opportunity and decent benefits that nondisabled workers get.
- To be treated with dignity and respect, not be teased or harassed due to disability.

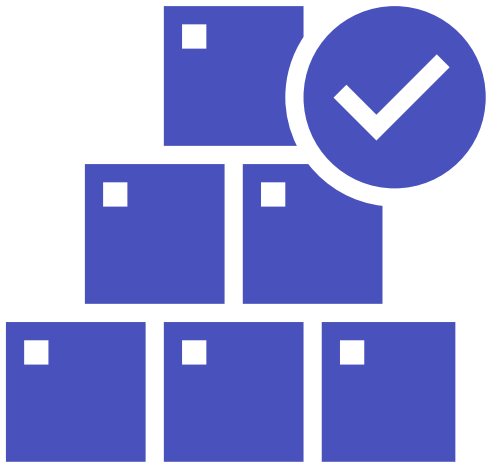




Tips for Employment Support Professionals

- What environments does the individual enjoy?
- In what environments have they succeeded?
- What social skills do they bring to the work environment?
- What types of work environments should be avoided?
- See us as Real People w/o judgement.
- Focus on Whole Person-Wrap Around Supports.
- Be good at assessing my skills.
- Listen to me.
- Always be respectful with actions and words.

More Tips for Employment Support Professionals



- Have high expectations and DREAM BIG.
- We are people first, see us as real people, without judgement or bias!
- Support us in a way that makes us feel strong!
- Get to know us and how our disability works.
- Help us balance our emotions & manage STRESS in a healthy way.
- Ensure environment is sensory-friendly and keep it positive.
- Be organized and act with a professional attitude - no cell phone.
- Be aware that problem-solving with a peer can give me new ideas that fit our way of doing things.
- Pay attention to how fast the job needs to be done and match it to what I can do.

Movement = Civil Rights





“

One of our most important rights as human beings and sovereign citizens is the right to pursue our goals, our dreams, our loves and the things that make us happy. This is something that all people want and need. It fulfills us and makes our lives more rich and valuable. Person-centered planning is a thoughtful, research-based and beautiful process which helps provide the foundation for people with disabilities to also experience the joys of a living a self-determined life.”

Kimberly R. Mills, Ph.D., BCBA-D

Senior Executive Director – Virgin Islands University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (VIUCEDD)

NCAPPS Person-centered Advisory and Leadership Group (PAL Group) Member

Takeaway Message

Expectations Matter.

Expect Ability.

Resources on Employment, COVID and work

- <https://www.selfadvocacyinfo.org/resource/covid-19-plain-language-guidance-for-employees-with-developmental-disabilities/>
- https://covid19.communityinclusion.org/pdf/TO33_COVID_F.pdf
- https://covid19.communityinclusion.org/pdf/TO35_COVID_F.pdf
- https://covid19.communityinclusion.org/pdf/TO38_COVID_F.pdf
- https://covid19.communityinclusion.org/pdf/TO42_COVID_F.pdf
- <https://www.thinkwork.org/sites/default/files/files/UTAH.pdf>
- <https://www.thinkwork.org/christina-mastering-job-remote-supports-during-covid-19>

Resources List To Learn More

- <https://icimedia.wistia.com/medias/ndaz4rpb1q>
- <https://selfadvocacyinfo.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Disability-Employment-Policy-101-Guide-By-Nicole-LeBlanc.pdf>
- <https://firstpersonservices.com/getting-to-work-with-nicole-leblanc/>
- <https://www.thinkwork.org/44-series-informed-choice-and-employment-first-what-does-it-really-mean>
- <https://thearc.webex.com/thearc/k2/e.php?RCID=99acdf8877de5143d9609214cf465268>
- https://seed.csg.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/2020_SEED_Telework_RGB_Web.pdf
- <https://employmentfirstma.org/raisingexpectations/>
- [https://employmentfirstma.org/files/Tip for advocating when returning to school and work.pdf](https://employmentfirstma.org/files/Tip%20for%20advocating%20when%20returning%20to%20school%20and%20work.pdf)
- <https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/rehab/essential-elements-of-customized-employment-for-universal-application.pdf>
- <https://www.radford.edu/content/dam/departments/administrative/career-services/PDF/Starting%20with%20Me-Person%20Centered%20Guide%20for%20Job%20Seekers.pdf>
- <http://www.letsgettoworkwi.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Supervising-Employees-with-Intellectual-Disabilities.pdf>

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