




# **IPS Supported Education**

Missouri Institute of Mental Health

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June 2, 2016

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- IPS = Individual Placement and Support. A type of supported employment that is evidenced based for people with mental illnesses
  - People who have access to IPS services are 2-3 times more likely to work than those who use other types of employment programs.

**IPS includes supported  
education**

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- For many, education and building a career is interrupted by the onset of psychotic symptoms.
  - Many young people are not interested in mental health treatment, but want to resume education/career planning.  
Engagement tool.


**Why focus on education?**

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- In the U.S., fewer than 3% of people who are awarded Social Security disability benefits ever exit the system.
- Helping young people sign up for disability benefits consigns them to a life of poverty, disengagement from their communities, poorer physical and mental health, and higher rates of substance abuse.


## **The “disability trap”**

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- Multiple research studies demonstrate that IPS helps people work.
  - The field lacks research about how to best help people with education.

**Supported education  
research is needed**


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Eight supported education principles  
that correspond with IPS practice  
principles for employment

**Supported education  
principles**

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- Any person who is interested in pursuing school or vocational training related to a career goal is eligible for IPS services.
  - People are not screened out based on perceived readiness, missed mental health appointments, age, substance use, decisions about medication, or other factors.

# **1. Zero exclusion criteria**

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- High school completion
- GED
- English as a second language classes (ESL)
- Certificate bearing vocational programs (joint vocational schools, community colleges, cosmetic schools, dog grooming, pharmacy tech...)
- College degrees

## **2. Regular education and job training programs are the goal**

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- IPS specialists meet weekly with mental health and housing practitioners.
- They discuss ideas for education/training programs a person may enjoy.
- They problem solve issues encountered by the student.
- Both practitioners encourage students to continue in school and build on their achievements.

### **3. Supported education uses a team approach**

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- Help accessing financial aide
  - FAFSA
  - Local grants and scholarships
  - Help purchasing computers, tools, textbooks, etc.
- Benefits planning
  - Student earned income exclusion (SSA)
  - Plan for Self Sufficiency (SSA)
  - Effect of future earnings on benefits


## **4. IPS specialists help investigate financial impact of school**

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- Youth do not complete evaluations other than those required by education and training programs for eligibility.
- Within 30 days of starting IPS, meet with:
  - Academic advisor
  - Workforce development director
  - Teacher
  - Person working in desired field
  - Other


## **5. Investigate education options rapidly**

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- High school: special education teachers, guidance counselors.
  - Secondary education: office for students with disabilities.

**6. IPS specialists build relationships with teachers and school personnel**

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- IPS supports for as long as a person wants/needs help.
  - Mental health team takes over when person exits IPS. Example: IPS helps person enroll and register for a two-year degree. After the first two semesters the student is doing well so mental health practitioners provide education supports.

## **7. Education supports are continuous**

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Preferences may be related to:

- Type of education program
- How education supports are provided (disclosure or no disclosure)
- Inclusion of family members in plan
- Accommodations for going to school
- Pace of education
- Other

## **8. Student preferences are important**

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- One specialist provides both education and employment supports. This allows people to move between education and employment goals without changing practitioners.
- The specialist has a caseload of about 20 people so that he can provide intensive services, as needed. Also so that he can provide community-based services.
- Mental health practitioners support the plan.

## **Who provides education supports?**

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- IPS supervisor takes a lead in learning about different degrees/careers.
- Visits to community colleges, joint vocational schools, other. Tours, open housings, meetings with academic advisors.
- Consultation with state Vocational Rehabilitation.

## **IPS specialists prepare to learn about education programs**

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Supported education is a community-based service. IPS specialists meet young people at:

- School (academic advisors, office for students with disabilities, cafeteria, student unions...)
- Libraries
- State Vocational Rehabilitation offices
- Family home or young person's home
- Where the young person likes to spend time

**Where is supported  
education provided?**

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“I’m working with a man who is 20 years old and he changes his mind a lot about what he wants to do. For a while he wanted to be an auto mechanic so I helped him get a job at a car dealership but he didn’t like it and he decided that type of work wasn’t for him. Next he wanted to be a veterinarian’s assistant so we started looking for jobs working with animals. Then he decided he wanted to go to school so we looked for jobs that wouldn’t interfere with his school schedule. We met with an academic advisor who suggested that he start with general classes to learn about what subjects he enjoys. Right now he is taking some classes and working part time.

I encourage young people to try as many things as possible, especially when they don’t know what they want to do. Listen to them. Don’t say, ‘Well you don’t have experience in that.’ Just help them have experiences related to what they want because that is how they are going to learn.”

Becky Brown, IPS Specialist


## **Young people change their goals**

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- IPS specialists attend Individual Education Program (IEP) meetings.
  - Offer extra supports to stay in school, help with good study habits, make suggestions for transition plans, point out student achievements and strengths.
  - After-school/summer jobs to try out different types of work.
- Mental health practitioners can help with social situations, symptom management at school, family meetings to talk about career plans.

## **High school supports**

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- General Educational Development (GED).
  - Alternative high schools

**Other ways to get high  
school diploma/  
equivalency**

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## Active study

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- Flashcards
- Self quizzes
- Look away: “Why did he do that?” “What difference does that make?”
- Set goal: At the end of this hour, I will know about \_\_\_\_\_”
- Summarize in your own words.


## Passive study

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- Reading and highlighting text
- Listening to recorded lecture


# Good study habits

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- Quiet: Turn off phone. No music. No television.
  - Alternate study locations.
  - Set study schedule.
  - Set goals for each study session.
  - Study more than one subject in a study session.


# **Good study habits**

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- “I either want to be a parole officer or a chef.”
  - Young people do not always know much about positions or what they may enjoy. Still learning about themselves.
  - Help people explore their interests before they invest time and money in education.

# Career exploration


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- Informational interviewing
  - Meetings with academic advisors
  - State Vocational Rehabilitation counselors
  - Family meetings
  - Occupational outlook for careers

# **Career exploration**

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1. Is the internship is *required* for future employment?
  2. Do most nondisabled people working in the desired occupation complete internships prior obtaining their positions?
  3. Is the internship part of a certificate or degree-bearing education program?

If all answers are “no,” skip the internship.

# “Internships”

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- Applying to schools
  - FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
  - Studying for placement tests
  - Enrollment
  - Walking about campus
  - Putting syllabus into planners. Adding study time.

# **Supports for starting school**

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## Office for students with disabilities

- Why to register
- Request a specific accommodation related to disability
- Counselor is assigned → letter for professor → student takes letter to professor
- What is private

# Supports for starting school

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“I stay in touch with the counselor at disability services office. I talk to Tim when I am concerned about how someone is doing. One person dropped a class late. He did that before we could talk about it, but then he was anxious about the repercussions to his financial aid. I called Tim because I knew that he had dealt with similar issues in the past and he helped this student straighten things out with his financial aid. I also sit in on initial appointment between students and the counselor. I want the counselor to know up front that I am helping with education.”

Jurcel Eroba, IPS specialist

## **Office for students with disabilities**

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Examples of accommodations:

- A human reader for tests
- Use of a calculator during a test
- A quiet room for test taking
- Permission to take long exams over more than one day (to take the test in sections)
- Extra breaks during tests or classes
- Permission to record lectures
- Copies of projected material
- Note takers for classes
- Tutoring
- Preferential seating, such as sitting at the front of the room to minimize distractions

Accommodations may depend on resources available at the school.

# Supports for starting school

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“One student had problems with concentration. Reading a chapter of a textbook was daunting to her. We came up with a plan for her to read for 15 minutes while taking notes on what she read. Next, she would take a 30-minute break and then review her notes before she resumed reading.”

Marian Cooper, IPS specialist


## **Individual study plans**

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- Reminders to stay on track for assignments/tests
- Teaching good study skills
- Meeting with family to talk about setting aside quiet study space
- Deciding when to drop classes
- Talking with professors regarding accommodations
- Working with the counselor in Office for Students with Disabilities
- Attending IEP meetings

## **Ongoing school supports (IPS specialist)**


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- Most supports are outside of class.  
Occasionally in-class support.
  - Tutoring provided by the educational institution, not the IPS specialist.

## **Ongoing supports (IPS specialist)**

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- Medication adjustments for better concentration or to control symptoms while at school
  - Social skills/planning (for making friends at school or managing school assignments)
  - Appointments outside of business hours for people in work and school
  - Family meetings to talk about education/employment progress

## **Ongoing supports (mental health)**


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## Researching and disseminating information about the evidence- based approach



Many people living with mental illness  
want to work.

**Individual Placement and Support (IPS)** is an employment service that helps more people with mental illness obtain employment than any other type of vocational program. The Dartmouth IPS Supported Employment Center conducts research studies, disseminates findings, and delivers training and consultation services. This website provides information about IPS supported employment for consumers,

IPS Leadership Training   
*Lebanon, NH*

Online Training Courses 

#### WHAT'S NEW

State of Utah joins the

# [www.dartmouthips.org](http://www.dartmouthips.org)

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