

Wisconsin PROMISE Lessons Learned



Ellie Hartman, Ph.D., BCBA-D
Wisconsin PROMISE Grant Manager
University of Wisconsin-Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Kiva Graves, Director
Bureau of Adult Quality and Oversight
Division of Medicaid Services
Department of Health Services

Identify and Connect

- Poverty and Disability
 - Employment and Income
- Youth receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - Social Security Disability Determination
 - Family Income Deemed Low Enough
- Early Intervention – Youth
 - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
 - Pre-Employment Transition Services
 - College and Career Ready Individual Education Programs (IEPs)
 - Post-secondary Transition Plans (PTPs)
 - Children's Long Term Care Services
 - Think Possible!
 - <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/children/think-possible.htm>

What Is PROMISE?

- Randomized Control Design
- Six demonstration sites nationally (ASPIRE, Arkansas, California, Maryland, New York, Wisconsin)
- Research grant to improve the education and career outcomes of low income children with disabilities receiving SSI
 - *advances goal of fostering interagency collaboration at the Federal and State levels to improve services and drive innovation*
- \$32.5 million grant for 5 year demonstration (Wisconsin)
- PROMISE is a federal and state partnership Department of Education (DOE)
 - Department of Education
 - Social Security Administration
 - Department of Labor
 - Department of Health and Human Services

Wisconsin PROMISE

- Enrolled 2,024 youth ages 14, 15, and 16 receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and their families
 - Half received services as usual
 - Half received **Wisconsin Promise Services** through **DVR** with interagency Resource Teams for at least 2.5 years
 - Employment Services (at least one paid job)
 - Work Incentives Benefits Counseling
 - Financial Coaching
 - On the Job Social Skills Training
 - Family and self-advocacy training
 - Health Promotion
 - Interagency Resource Teams included youth, family, DVR, school, **long term care**, mental health, foster care, juvenile justice, etc.

Enrollment Demographics

(2024 Total Enrolled; 853 Milwaukee)

- Primary Disability Type
 - Mental Health/Behavioral: 34%
 - Intellectual/Developmental: 30%
 - Other: 25%
- Race/Ethnicity:
 - African American: 49% (78% in Milwaukee)
 - White: 36% (8% in Milwaukee)
 - Hispanic: 10% (11% in Milwaukee)
 - Primary English Speaking: 95% (92% in Milwaukee)
- Gender: Male: 67%

Enrollment Demographics

(2024 Total Enrolled; 853 Milwaukee)

- Family Households
 - Most single-parent households: 66% (77% in Milwaukee)
 - Most low income
 - 33% <\$10K a year (40% in Milwaukee)
 - 37% between \$10K and \$25K (35% in Milwaukee)
- Overall Health Status
 - Most reported good health: 85%
- IEP at Enrollment: 84%
- **Children's Long Term Services (CLTS): 10%**
- Families reported
 - Food Share: 67%
 - Other household members receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI): 60%
 - Other household members receiving SSI: 22%
 - 12 percent reported housing assistance: 12%
 - Wisconsin Works (W2): 4%

No Wrong Door?

- Youth and families eligible for lots of services and supports, but POVERTY can get in the way:
- Living day to day makes it difficult to jump through all the required hoops to access needed services
- Training/services are not always user friendly, and do not always account for hardships of poverty:
 - Trauma
 - Basic Needs
 - Ambivalence
 - Training structure (theory vs. hands on/practical instruction)
 - Truly meeting youth/family where they are at

Wisconsin PROMISE Service Rates

- **914** youth with any service
- **889** Individual Plans for Employment (IPE) Written
- **884** Family Resource Teams Identified
- **487** Family Services Plans Written for **652** Family Members
 - *109 Family members with regular DVR case*
- **713** Promise youth with employment services
- **594** Promise Families met with a Family Advocate
 - *414 completed Family Advocacy modules*
- **576** Promise Families met with a Financial Coach (Make Your Money Talk)
 - *377 had a savings accounts*
- **535** met with Work Incentives Benefits Specialist
- **532** completed Social Skills Training (Skills to Pay Bills)
- **476** completed the Self-Advocacy Modules
- **351** completed Health Promotion

Employment Outcomes

- Percent employed during the PROMISE service period: April 2014 to September 2018 (based on percent with employer reported wages in Wisconsin's Unemployment Insurance, UI)
 - Control with no DVR case - 51%
 - Control - 57%
 - Treatment - 67%
- **Of Note: 78 (8%) Promise Youth Earned Substantial Gainful Activity*
- Percent enrolled in Long Term Care (LTC) and Employed during service period:
 - Control: $79/183 = 43\%$
 - Treatment: $125/220 = 57\%$
 - Employment rates were higher for treatment youth who had a LTC Case Manager identified on their PROMISE Resource Team:
 $40/56 = 71\%$

DVR Employment Services Increased Employment Rates

- Percent Employed after Employment Service (713):
 - Employment Assessment (372): 77%
 - Skills to Pay the Bills (532): 81%
 - Job Exploration Counseling (137): 81%
 - Job Search Assistance (308): 91%
 - Temporary Work Experience (308): 96%
 - Short-term Job Supports (285): 95%
 - Work Based Learning Experience (304): 93%
 - On the Job Training (22): 95%
 - Supported Employment (22): 100%

PROMISE Services Increased Employment Rates

- Percent Employed after PROMISE Service (813):
 - School Person on Interagency Team (884): 70%
 - Work Incentive Benefits Counseling (535): 78%
 - Financial Coaching(576): 79%
 - Savings Account (377): 83%
 - Met with Family Advocate (594): 71%
 - Completed Family Advocacy Modules (414): 77%
 - Self-Advocacy (476): 79%

Sustain

- Community Conversation Partnerships
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDf_IPxXkog&t=2s
- Community Leadership Projects
 - 97 PROMISE youth and family members; 87 goals identified
 - Community Integration – 44; Employer Outreach – 32; Career Exploration – 30; School/Training – 26; Transportation – 13; Apprenticeships/Internships – 12; Supported or Customized Employment – 11; Entrepreneurship – 10; Benefits (Social Security and Medical) – 5; Housing – 5; Assistive Technology – 3; Asset Development (Financial Planning) – 2
 - Promise youth connecting to other students with disabilities in her high school and helping them apply for local internships/apprenticeships
 - Promise youth working with the city council to improve the road safety of biking to and from work
 - Promise mom working with local cab company to negotiate cost and assistance with drop-off and pick-up for youth with disabilities working in the community

Lessons Learned

- Ensuring to continue to connect to SSI youth and families to education, employment, and financial services and supports
 - Outreach to SSI youth and families about existing services/supports (**postcards**, other outreach)
 - Targeted Case Management or Family Navigators to connect youth and families to supports?
 - Employment Focused
 - Strength-Based/Empowerment (Person Centered, Rapid Engagement, Motivational Interviewing, Trauma Informed Care)
 - SSA Navigation
 - Inter-agency Data Sharing
- Community Conversations: Empowering Local Communities

Interagency Lessons Learned

- Providing services where youth are at (including in schools)
- Collaboration across plans IEP to IPE to (if needed)
Long Term Care
- **Customized Employment and Supported Employment (including Systematic Instruction)**
Capacity Building
- Improve Service Delivery and Accessibility for SSI youth and family members

Wisconsin Moving Forward

- PROMISE Lessons Learned Influence Policy and Practice
 - Pre-Employment Transition Services
 - Skills to Pay the Bills Soft Skills Training
 - <https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/>
 - Work Incentives Benefits Counseling
 - Financial Capability Trainings
 - Self-Advocacy Training
 - Youth Engagement in Service Delivery
 - Use of Technology (Communication/Connecting to Services/Delivery of Services)
 - Relationships with Schools, DVR, **Long Term Care**, and Mental Health
 - Rapid Engagement, Motivational Interviewing and Trauma Informed Care

Wisconsin Moving Forward Cont.

- Recommendations for Future Action
 - Focus on matching interests, skills, abilities with workforce needs of local businesses
 - Implement Best Practice learned through PROMISE service delivery
 - **Family Support** – Work across agencies to ensure the family members of youth with SSI have the support needed to navigate services and systems and information on post-school possibilities

COMPETITIVE INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT

WISCONSIN ACT 178 BACKGROUND

- Signed into law March 28, 2018
 - Assembly Bill 625 Employment First Initiative
 - Requires interagency collaboration to increase Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)
- In response to 2017 Wisconsin Act 178, DVR, DHS, and DPI have reaffirmed their commitment to work together to improve the lives of youth and adults with disabilities in Wisconsin by increasing CIE outcomes through the implementation of the CIE Plan

WISCONSIN ACT 178 REQUIREMENTS

- Prioritize the competitive integrated employment (CIE) of people with disabilities
- Promote CIE with self-determination and informed choice
- With input from stakeholders, develop, implement, and update a shared plan biennially which includes specific targets
- Provide a report to the legislature annually detailing progress toward targets
- <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/cie/>

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE #1

Increase awareness that work is possible for people with disabilities by promoting CIE opportunities

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE #1 STRATEGY HIGHLIGHTS

- Track ongoing outreach to transition-aged students and their guardians, including youth receiving SSI, and document in the annual CIE report
- Develop a joint messaging campaign by December 2019 for children and their families to promote and raise expectations for CIE
- Develop collaborative materials that explain the value of CIE and clarify misconceptions about working and loss of benefits
- **Think Possible! Employment Webinar Series**
 - <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/children/think-possible.htm>

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE #1 STRATEGY HIGHLIGHTS (CONTINUED)

- Collaborate to implement the Pay for Performance Initiative for members and participants enrolled in adult long-term care programs to increase rates of CIE
- Create efficiencies within the DVR referral system to streamline referrals of potential consumers to DVR in collaboration with DHS and train staff from both DHS and DVR on the updated DVR referral system
- Add mechanism for youth, adult, and family voice and input into CIE planning to ensure outreach materials are consumer friendly and service systems are consumer driven

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE #2

Align service delivery systems and strengthen coordination to increase CIE opportunities for people with disabilities

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE #2 STRATEGY HIGHLIGHTS

- Develop a system to collect and analyze common participant data to be completed by the end of 2019
- Set statewide benchmarks and evaluate progress
- Identify and use promising evidence-based employment practices for systems change and collaboration in partner service delivery systems

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE #2 STRATEGY HIGHLIGHTS (CONTINUED)

Keep memorandums of understanding (MOUs) and interagency agreements updated and implement activities included within those agreements

- Interagency Agreement:

https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/pdf_files/dpi_interagency_agreement.pdf

- Transition Action Guide (TAG):

https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/pdf_files/tag.pdf

- Develop and document a clear delineation of state and local agency roles and responsibilities in planning services and coordination targeted toward helping individuals and their families better understand state systems
- Continue to assign staff from each Department to the CIE Workgroup and CIE Leadership meetings

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE #3

Prepare students for CIE through their educational experience, connecting them to vital services during and after high school

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE #3 STRATEGY HIGHLIGHTS

- Develop and carry out a strong plan for professional, cross-agency development that includes both in-person training and technical assistance, including online resources
 - Joint trainings to address provider capacity and best practices
 - DVR-led Service Provider Capacity Workgroup
- Showcase schools and programs that are effective in connecting students to early work experiences through local school districts and DVR

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE #3 STRATEGY HIGHLIGHTS (CONTINUED)

- Develop and share resources that inform stakeholders such as ADRCs, long-term support professionals, DVR counselors, and educators about community services and supports available to the students they serve during and after high school
 - Post the plan and report on the shared CIE website:
<https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/cie/>

CIE RESOURCES

- Wisconsin CIE Website: <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/cie/>
- Wisconsin PROMISE: <https://promisewi.com/>
- Transition Improvement Grant: <https://www.witig.org/>
- Wisconsin Post School Outcomes: <http://www.posthighsurvey.org>;
<https://www.indicator14wi.org/>
- DHS Employment Initiatives: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/employment-skills/index.htm>
- Children's Long-Term Support: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/clts/index.htm>
- Mental Health Resources (including IPS): <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/mh/ips.htm>
- Youth Apprenticeship: <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/youthapprenticeship/>

Youth with Promise

- You could call him the strong, silent type. Matthew is a teen from Wisconsin's Northwoods who is pumped about getting even stronger. He's set his sights on working, and with the support of Wisconsin Promise and others, he succeeded in his first job of maintaining his high school's weight room. Next he got a job keeping CrossFit Chippewa Falls in tip-top shape.
- Matthew connected his interest in getting healthy and fit with his job goals, and there's no stopping him. Matthew is a youth with Promise, building muscle while working, learning, and pursuing his dreams



<https://promisewi.com/videos/>

Videos on Wisconsin Promise Website

- **Youth with Promise**

- Meet Xavi. She's like most teenagers... she hangs with her cats, dances with her friends, and loves Criminal Minds. She's also going to have a lung removed. Xavi shares her dreams, challenges, and the steps she's taking with Wisconsin Promise to plan for her future.



<https://promisewi.com/videos/>

Discussion

Q & A

<https://promisewi.com/success/>

Thank you!

Contact Info

Ellie Hartman, Ph.D., BCBA-D
Wisconsin PROMISE Project Manager
University of Wisconsin-Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
(608) 261-0215
Ellie2.Hartman@wi.gov

Kiva Graves, Director
Bureau of Adult Quality and Oversight
Division of Medicaid Services
Department of Health Services
(608) 261-8358
kiva.graves@wi.gov