Serving Youth with Disabilities: Ethical Practice

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Defining Transition

• Results-oriented process, focused on improving academic and functional achievement of student to facilitate movement from school to postschool activities, including:
  • Postsecondary education
  • Vocational education
  • Integrated employment (supported employment)
  • Continuing and adult education
  • Adult services
  • Independent living
  • Community participation

Defining Transition (Cont.)

- Based on student’s needs, taking into account strengths, preferences, and interests
- Includes instruction, related services, community experiences, development of employment and other postschool adult living objectives, acquisition of daily living skills, and functional vocational evaluation

Need for Guardian

• A person with a disability may be able to make sound decisions if presented with training, education and informed choices.

• The young person with a disability may need an advocate to avoid exploitation or abuse.

Horizon Unlimited: http://www.new-horizons.org/gdguar.html
Defining Guardianship

• “Also, referred to as conservatorship, is a legal process, utilized when a person can no longer make or communicate safe or sound decisions about his/her person and/or property or has become susceptible to fraud or undue influence “ (National Guardianship Association Inc).

National Guardianship Inc: http://www.guardianship.org/
Removal of Rights

May include:

- Determine residence.
- Consent to medical treatment.
- Make end-of-life decisions.
- Possess a driver’s license.
- Manage, buy, or sell property.

- Own or possess a firearm or weapon.
- Contract or file lawsuits.
- Marry.
- Vote.

Ethical Guidelines for Human Service Professionals

- Responsibility to Clients
- Responsibility to the Community and Society
- Responsibility to Colleagues
- Responsibility to the Profession
- Responsibility to Employers
- Responsibility to Self

APSE Human Principles

• Individuality—lack of grouping
• Choice—exercise control
• Respect—active participation
• Competence—gifts and capacities
• Social inclusion—access to diversity
• Community settings with Minimal Intrusion—minimize restrictions
• Employment—development of options and decisions

Adapted from Association for Professionals in Supported Employment (APSE) Ethical Guidelines (1998)
APSE Principles for Practice

• Career Planning—choices for employment
• Job Development—professional interactions
• Job Acquisition—matching of preferences and skills
• Work Support—holistic support network
• Career Advancement—future goals
• Staff Training—needs of recipients and trainers

Adapted from Association for Professionals in Supported Employment (APSE) Ethical Guidelines (1998)
CRCC Ethical Principles

• Autonomy—right to self-rule
• Beneficence—do good to others
• Nonmaleficence—do no harm
• Fidelity—be faithful
• Justice—be fair
• Veracity—be honest

Adapted from Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) Code of Ethics (2010)
Special Education Professional Ethical Principles and Practice Standards (Council for Exceptional Children)

• A. Maintaining challenging expectations for individuals with exceptionalities to develop the highest possible learning outcomes and quality of life potential in ways that respect their dignity, culture, language, and background.

• B. Maintaining a high level of professional competence and integrity and exercising professional judgment to benefit individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

• C. Promoting meaningful and inclusive participation of individuals with exceptionalities in their schools and communities.

• D. Practicing collegially with others who are providing services to individuals with exceptionalities.

• E. Developing relationships with families based on mutual respect and actively involving families and individuals with exceptionalities in educational decision making.

• F. Using evidence, instructional data, research, and professional knowledge to inform practice.

Council for Exceptional Children Ethical Principles: https://www.cec.sped.org/Standards/Ethical-Principles-and-Practice-Standards
Principles and Standards (Cont.)

• G. Protecting and supporting the physical and psychological safety of individuals with exceptionalities.
• H. Neither engaging in nor tolerating any practice that harms individuals with exceptionalities.
• I. Practicing within the professional ethics, standards, and policies of CEC; upholding laws, regulations, and policies that influence professional practice; and advocating improvements in laws, regulations, and policies.
• J. Advocating for professional conditions and resources that will improve learning outcomes of individuals with exceptionalities.
• K. Engaging in the improvement of the profession through active participation in professional organizations.
• L. Participating in the growth and dissemination of professional knowledge and skills.

Council for Exceptional Children Ethical Principles: https://www.cec.sped.org/Standards/Ethical-Principles-and-Practice-Standards
Evidenced-Based Practices and Successful Transition

• Most important by far: paid or unpaid work experiences
• Areas that play role: employment preparation, inclusion, parental involvement, social skills training, and self-determination training
• Strong evidence: life skills training
Additional Best Practices

• Student-focused planning
• Student development
• Interagency collaboration
• Family involvement
• Program structures

Developing interventions and service in each area is essential for post-school success

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Questions?
References

• Council for Exceptional Children Ethical Principles: https://www.cec.sped.org/Standards/Ethical-Principles-and-Practice-Standards

• National Guardianship Inc: http://www.guardianship.org/

• New Horizon Unlimited: http://www.new-horizons.org/gdguar.html