Implementing an Educational Model for Secondary Students with Autism: The Complexities of High School

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Purpose: To develop & evaluate a comprehensive, school-based intervention program for secondary students with ASD.

Because after high school “…nearly 80% (of students w/ASD) still live at home, almost half have no jobs or postsecondary training, 40% never have contact with friends, 17% never feel hopeful about the future…” - Paul Shattuck (2010)

Stakeholders talked, We listened

A. Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups

WHO: Parents, Educators, Service Providers, and Individuals on the Spectrum

28 Focus Groups ■ 153 Participants ■ 5 Sites Across the US

MAJOR FINDINGS:
Needs of students with ASD not being met in High School! WHY?
- School-wide lack of understanding of ASD
- Interventions are often ineffective and inconsistently implemented

Concerns about feasibility of the implementation of CSESA & prioritization of Professional Development
- Who will do it?
- Where are the resources?
- When is the time?

"Time is going to be a big factor. Planning time to be able to plan and implement these steps." Teacher

Example Questions:
- What helped to make the high school experience successful?
- Who helped facilitate those successes?
- What were some of the challenges faced?
- Anything help to reduce those challenges?
- What were your fears/concerns throughout high school?
- How were those addressed?
- What outcomes were most important during and after high school?

B. Advisory Board: Ten Leaders in the Field of Autism

Provided feedback on the model components, process, materials, research design and dissemination plan.

C. Autism Society of America Preconference Workshop

37 Participants - individuals with autism, families, professionals

Engaged in dialogue on the experience of High School for students on the spectrum related to:
- Relationships and Social Interactions
- Responsibility & Independence
- Technology

D. Incorporating Feedback

In response to stakeholder feedback materials, formats and technology platforms were redesigned.

Building teams to ensure success

CSESA Implementation Team

Provide each other with on-going feedback through:
- Systematic Coaching Process
- Team Meetings
- Direct Training

School Implementation Team

"It's hard to get that consistency, making sure everybody's following. That's a lot of people to get on the same page. Everybody's willing to try stuff, but we're not all using the same language, and that's confusing for somebody to work with that many people." Administrator

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http://csesa.fpg.unc.edu/