Welcome

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Housekeeping

- Closed captioning is available through Zoom. Access can be found under the settings tab on your Zoom toolbar.

- Please submit any questions (including technical issues) in the Q&A feature at the bottom of the Zoom window. Staff will respond as soon as possible.

The Center for Advancing Policy on Employment for Youth

The Center for Advancing Policy on Employment for Youth (CAPE-Youth) seeks to improve employment outcomes for youth and young adults with disabilities (Y&YADs) by helping states build capacity in their youth service delivery and workforce systems.

CAPE-Youth Partners

The center is fully funded by the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) in the amount of $7.5 million under Cooperative Agreement No. 23475OD000001-01-00.

Opening Remarks

Jennifer Kemp

Director of Youth Services

U.S. Department of Labor - Employment and Training Administration

Collaboration Study Overview

Matt Saleh, J.D, PhD
Senior Research Associate,
Cornell University's Yang Tan Institute on
Employment and Disability

Leslie Shaw, PhD
Research Associate,
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Objectives

Participants will:

1. learn how frequency of collaborative practices, knowledge about their partners, types of collaboration practices, and confidence in serving different vulnerable youth populations relate to employment outcomes;
2. examine practices implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic that can be applied in their own context; and
3. estimate levels of collaboration within their own networks and identify collaboration practices that can be applied in their own work.

Why study collaboration?

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 renewed focus on collaboration between vocational rehabilitation (VR), workforce development, and other agency partners serving youth and young adults with disabilities (Y&YAD).

- Goal of ensuring that "a full range of services is available, regardless of disability or cultural background" (U.S. Department of Education, 2017).
- But challenges remain for effective collaboration at state and local levels, and the pandemic gave rise to new issues (Oertle et al., 2020).

Service Coordination and Transition

Interagency collaboration can be vital because some transitioning youth are involved in multiple systems.

- Coordination of services and supports can require increased information sharing, cross-agency referrals, and more.

- For instance, youth might simultaneously be involved in one or more systems, such as: education, VR, Social Security, juvenile justice, foster care, developmental disability, or mental health.

Words Related to Collaboration

col·lab·o·ra·tion

...the action of working with someone to produce or create something.

- Behaviors

  - partner knowledge

  - type and frequency of communication

  - formalized partnerships

  - data sharing

  - decision-making

CAPE-Youth Collaboration Study Research Questions

What are existing levels of collaboration among agencies serving transitioning Y&YAD? What common features are present in states showing strong collaborations?

- **Phase 1**: Surveyed supervisors and "frontline" service providers across key agencies in all 50 states and compared with Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA)-911 data.

- **Phase 2**: Conducted focus group interviews with a subset of professionals in 10 states (one state per federal region).

338 Responses to the Survey

| Agency Type	n
Vocational Rehabilitation	98
Workforce Title I	48
K-12 + Career and Technical Education (CTE)	41
Other	41
Developmental Disabilities	32
Child Welfare	23
Mental Health	14
Juvenile Justice	13
Higher Education	12
Social Security	10
Workforce Title II	6

Survey Content

Collaboration

- Levels of Collaboration (LCS)
- Frequency of different practices
- Partner knowledge
- Practices
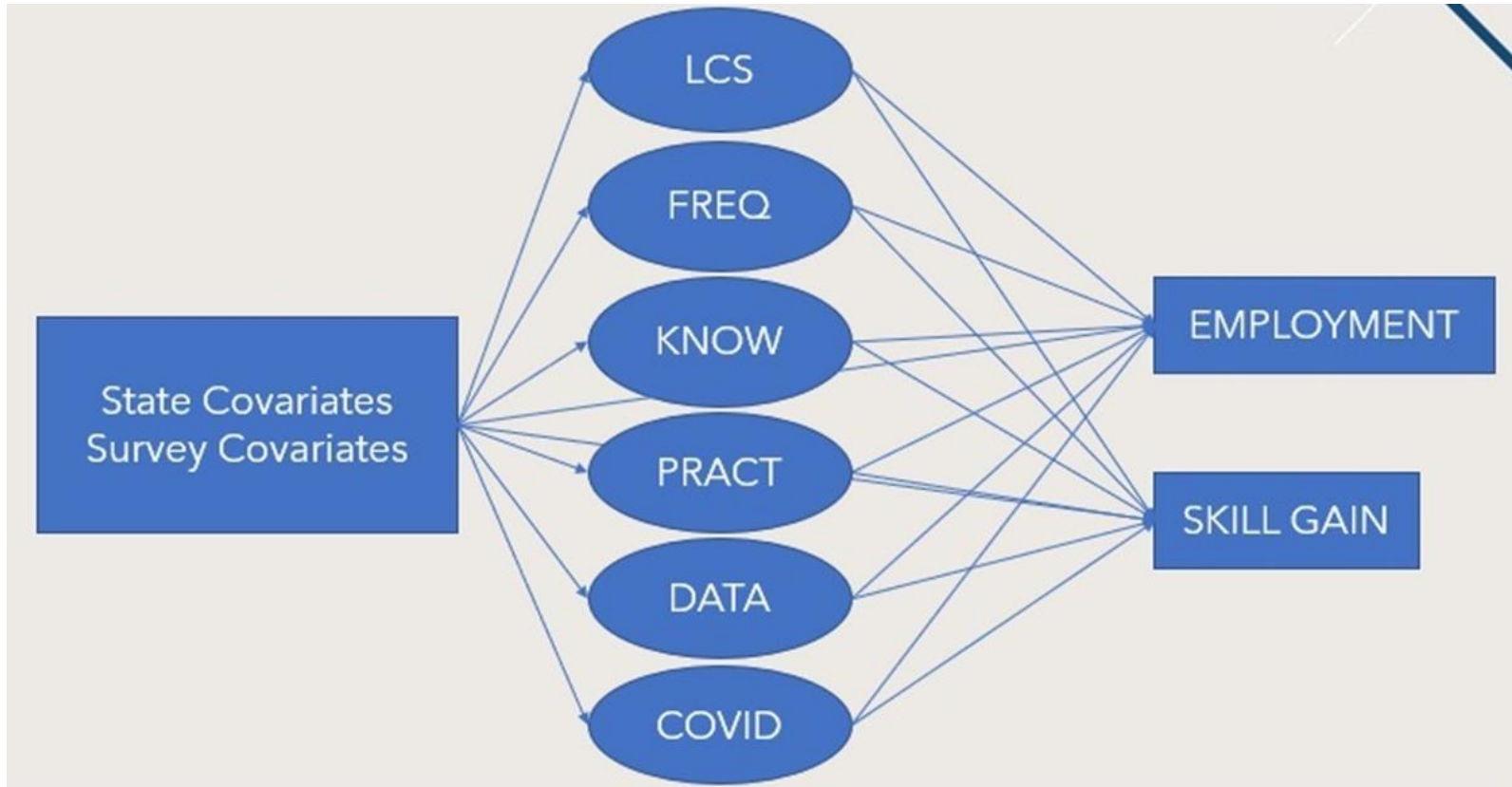- Data sharing
- COVID impacts

Demographics

- Years of experiences in the field (M=16.12); agency (M=10.10)
- Job role (39.64% supervisors)
- Gender (76.04% male)
- Race (79.88% white) and ethnicity (90.53% non-Hispanic)
- Disability (76.04% non-disabled)

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Identifying Gaps in Collaboration
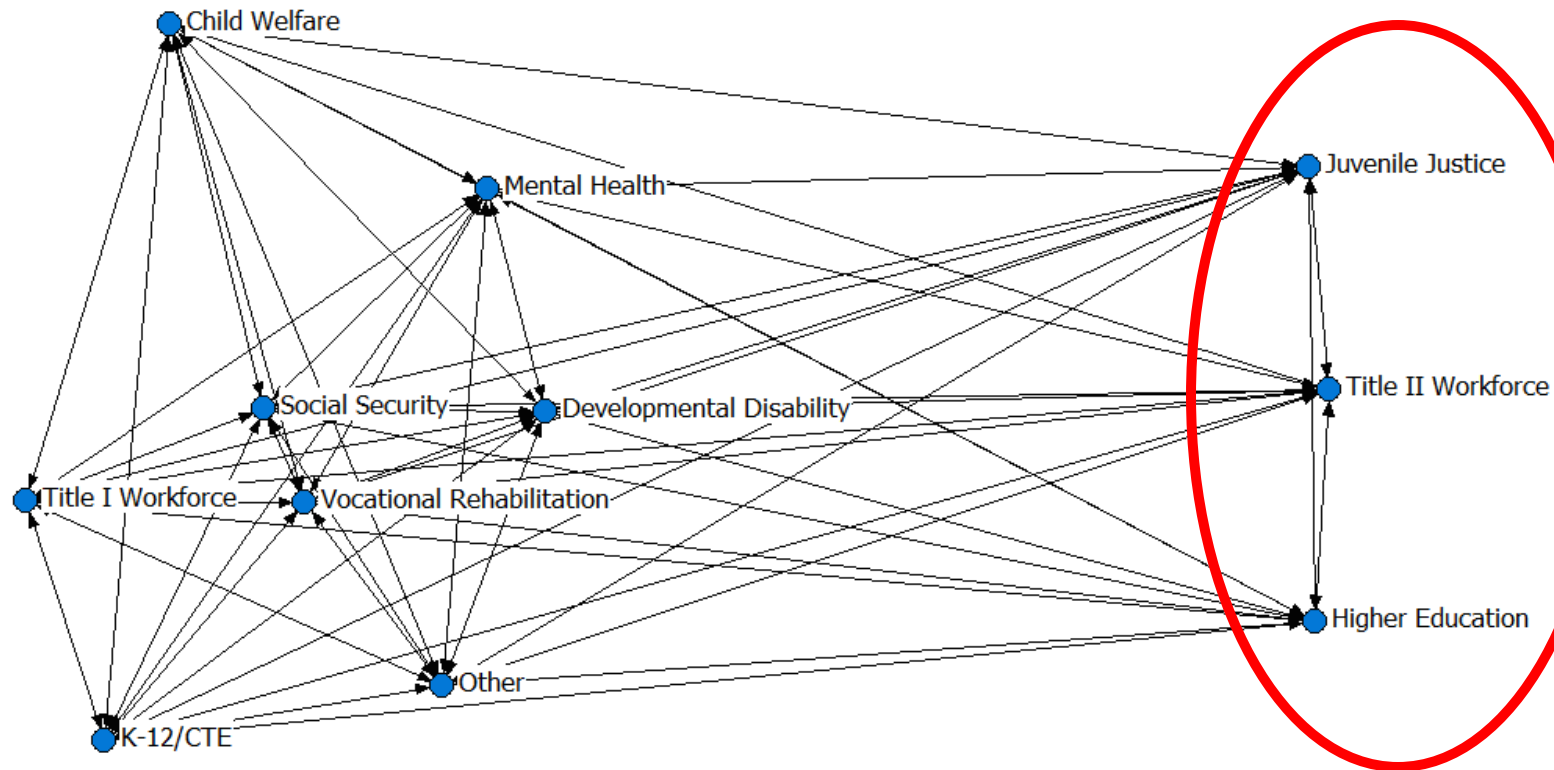
Collaboration and Employment

Impact of Job Role

For the five collaboration subscales, responses differed in comparison to supervisors.

- Frontline staff responded lower than supervisors on levels of collaboration, partner knowledge, and COVID impact.
- Staff who fill both supervisory and frontline roles responded higher than supervisors on partner knowledge, practices, and data use.

	Frontline		Both	
LCS	-0.30	*	0.03	
Frequency	-0.20		0.01	
Knowledge	-0.97	**	0.82	*
Practices	-0.01		0.18	*
Data	0.05		0.48	**
COVID	-0.38	**	0.11	

Agency Differences

	LCS	Frequency	Knowledge	Practices	Data	COVID
Juvenile Justice	-	-	-	-	-	-
Child Welfare						
Workforce Title I	-	-	-	-	-	-
Workforce Title II						
K-12 + CTE	-0.88	-	-	-	-	-
Social Security						
Developmental	-0.47	-	-	-	-	-
Mental Health						
Higher Education	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Agency	-0.39	-0.34				

Collaboration in Utah

Crystal Emery, PhD
SSIP and Secondary Transition Specialist,
Utah State Board of Education

Aimee Langone
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor,
Utah State Office of Rehabilitation

What is the STC?

- The Utah Statewide Collaborative on Improving Postsecondary Transition Outcomes for Individuals with Disabilities (STC) is a working partnership of all the state agencies and many other organizations that serve transition-age (14-22) youth across the state of Utah.

- The STC includes agencies and organizations that are disability-specific and agencies who serve the general population of transition-age youth (including youth with disabilities) to ensure the state infrastructure analysis thoroughly articulates the needs and resources of transition-age youth with disabilities.

Agency Partners

History of the STC

- The STC met monthly for one year to explore the current infrastructure and outcome data of postsecondary transition in the state.

- Stakeholders took turns presenting the services and supports they offer and outcome data of those activities for transition-age youth.

- The first goal of the STC was to identify service gaps and overlaps to determine what service areas need scale-up to better meet the needs of transition-age youth with disabilities.

- The STC created a <u>Theory of Action</u> and <u>Logic Model</u> to drive the work.

Overall Goal of the STC

To improve postsecondary outcomes for students with disabilities in Utah through interagency collaboration

Employment

Postsecondary Education

Independent Living

STC Activity

Exploring
- Exploring the landscape and infrastructure of postsecondary transition in Utah

Identifying
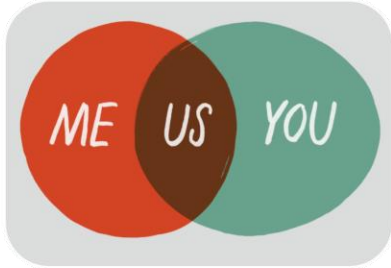- Identifying gaps and overlaps in postsecondary transition services

Guiding
- Charting a course to improve student post-school outcomes as a unified system

Feedback
- Offering stakeholder input for the plan

STC Participant Themes

Active Collaboration

Data Driven

Creating a Shared Vision

Student & Family Focused

Utah State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)

01 step

THEORY OF ACTION

IF Utah implements the broad improvement strategies of:

Comprehensive support for youth and families

Equitable access to supports and resources for transition-age youth and their families

Coordination of services

Systemic intentional coordination, streamlined referral processes, and active collaboration between agencies

Smooth flow of services

Identification of the ideal transition experience including: K–12 education, critical core services, early onset of services, education opportunities, and data sharing to support students across services

02 step

03 step

THEN UTAH'S STATE-IDENTIFIED MEASURABLE RESULT (SiMR)

Utah will reduce the percentage of students ages 19–22 exiting a post-high program who report being unengaged or under-engaged on the Indicator 14 Survey by 20 percentage points over a five-year period.

UTAH SSIP LOGIC MODEL

1) If USBE and the STC expend these RESOURCES & EFFORTS (INPUTS)...

2) ... to implement these broad improvement STRATEGIES...

3) ...by implementing these ACTIVITIES...

4) ...we can realize these SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES (OUTPUTS):

Human Capacity (staff time) **Resources** **Expertise** **Funding**	Comprehensive supports for youth and families Smooth Flow of Services Coordination of Services	Specific activities chosen to improve outcomes	Measurable targets that direct the work of the STC

...*then* Utah will reduce the percentage of students ages 19-22 exiting a post-high program who report being unengaged or under-engaged on the Indicator 14 survey by 20 percentage points over a five-year period.
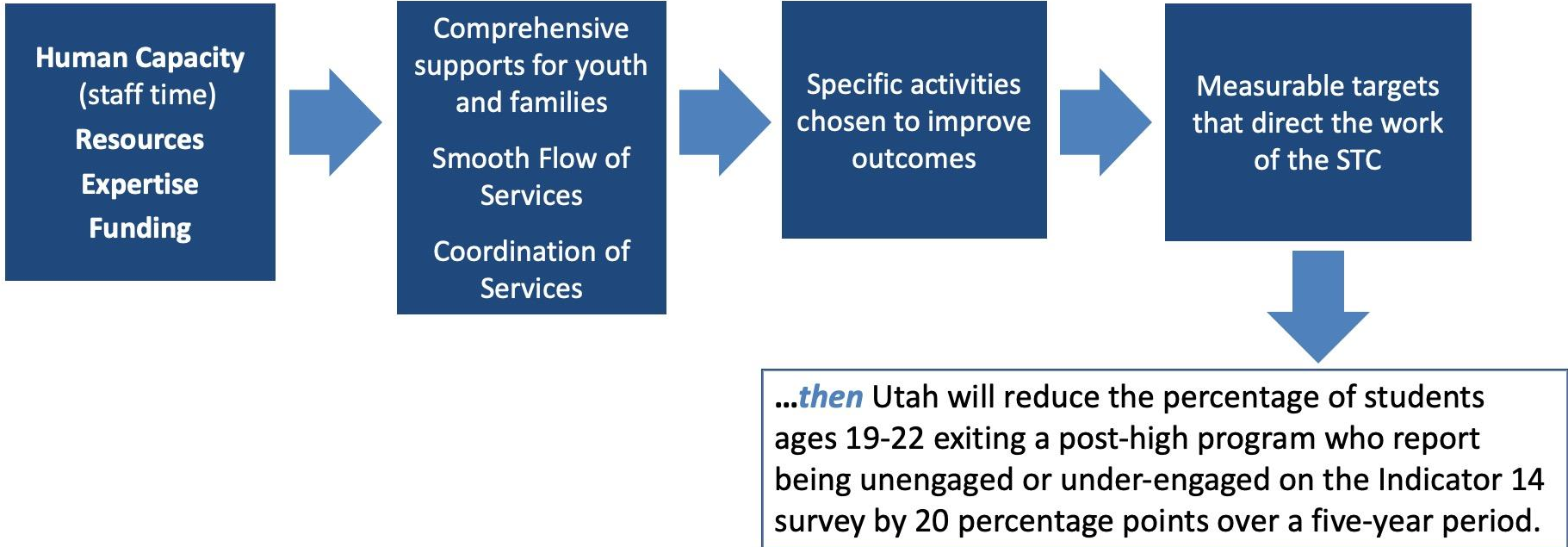
Measurable Outputs

Utilization rates of current resources in Utah

MOU and data sharing agreements between workforce, health and human services, and education

Creation of new resources to support youth, families, and educators

15 Focus Group Interviews

State	*n*	Groups
Arizona	8	1
Massachusetts	4	1
Michigan	4	1
Missouri	9	2
New Jersey	5	1
North Carolina	7	2
Oklahoma	5	2
Utah	5	1
Virginia	16	4

Primary Themes

- Youth Empowerment

- Formality

- Information and Resource Sharing

- Communication

- Impact of COVID-19

Youth Voice

It is important to situate the youth service recipient within those collaboration – ensuring that the goal of collaboration is to empower the youth in their transition to adulthood, among systems, out of systems, and so on.

"I think I'd like to see more youth voice being used in...service delivery...we've really tried to increase our hiring of young people with lived experience in our system. You know, give satisfaction surveys and being part of program development. And I think it really helps make sure that your service delivery is improving in a way that meets your clients' needs."

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Theme: Youth Empowerment

	Sub-Theme	Description
A	Client self-determination	Supporting youth self-determined decision-making
B	Communicating complex systems	Describing complex systems/services to youth/families
C	Preventing service gaps	Preventing gaps as youth move among systems

Theme: Formality

	Sub-Theme	Description
A	Written interagency agreements	Use of interagency agreements (e.g., MOU, MOA)
B	Interagency collaboratives	Existence and function of interagency working groups
C	Agency bridges/liaisons	Agencies facilitating new connections
D	Policy and practice disconnect	Effect of high-level collaborations on service delivery

Theme: Information and Resource Sharing

	Sub-Theme	Description
A	Data sharing and referrals	Barriers to and facilitators of sharing data across agencies
B	Cross-training opportunities	Role of training in information and resource sharing
C	Legal and process barriers	Practical barriers to agencies sharing information
D	Familiarity and trust	Familiarity/trust with other agencies' services and function

Theme: Communication

	Sub-Theme	Description
A	Barriers to/facilitators of communication	Barriers to and facilitators of effective communication
B	Role of clarity and mutual decision-making	Existence of clear roles and mutual decision-making
C	Staffing, capacity, and resource issues	Impact of capacity and resources on communications

Theme: Effect of COVID-19

	Sub-Theme	Description
A	Service disruptions	Service disruptions during the pandemic
B	Technological and geographic barriers	Technology/geographic barriers during the pandemic
C	Remote work effect on collaborations	Effect of remote work on interagency collaboration

Policy and Practice Opportunities

- **Initiate new collaborations with the weakest partners:** Title II Workforce, Higher Education, Juvenile Justice, and Child Welfare.
- **Add cross-training:** Cross-train with agencies your agency doesn't typically collaborate with to learn about services, referrals, and outcomes to increase partner knowledge.
- **Consider digital divides for youth in rural areas or youth living at/below poverty level:** Consider innovative hybrid models, partner with community organizations (e.g., libraries, Non-Governmental Organizations [NGO], and local foundations.)

Closing Remarks

Taryn Williams
Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor
Office of Disability Employment Policy

Questions? Comments?

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Do you have
feedback for us?

Do you need
technical assistance?

Contact Us

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General CAPE-Youth Inquires

If you are interested in learning more about our work or participating in our research initiatives, please contact info@capeyouth.org or visit capeyouth.org.