

JANUARY 2020 PRELIMINARY REPORT:

VIRTUAL INTERVIEW TRAINING FOR TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH

PROJECT SUMMARY

Virtual Interview Training for Transition Age Youth (VIT-TAY) is an internet-delivered job interview simulation that provides repetitive practice to enhance interviewing skills through performance-based feedback. The research team received funding from the Kessler Foundation to evaluate the delivery of VIT-TAY to youth enrolled in high school based transition services in Illinois and Michigan. A summary of the study's preliminary results follows.

TEACHERS & ADMINISTRATORS BELIEVE VIT-TAY IS APPROPRIATE FOR THEIR PROGRAMS

- 80% reported that they are motivated to continue delivering VIT-TAY.
- 93% reported that VIT-TAY seemed effective in helping students improve their interviewing skills.
- 69% reported that VIT-TAY had no disruption or a little disruption to their class routine.

VIT-TAY DELIVERY CHALLENGES

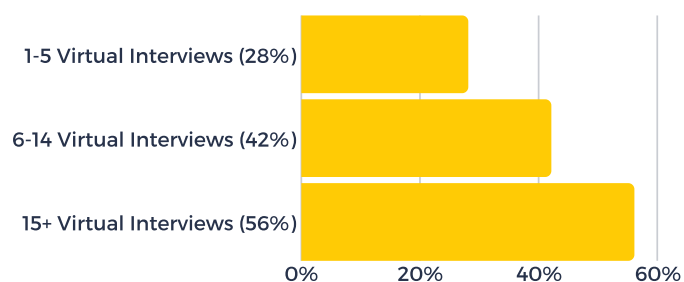
Administrators and teachers reported on some of the challenges they faced during delivery and to sustain VIT-TAY.

- 22% reported that their school was only a little bit or not at all equipped to support the continued delivery of VIT-TAY.
- 13% reported that they felt only a little bit prepared to delivery VIT-TAY after training.

VIT-TAY DELIVERY SUCCESS

- Higher rates of community employment for students using VIT-TAY.
- 41% of students obtained employment by 6 months compared to the national average estimate of 17%.
- Employment rates were higher among students who completed more virtual interviews.
- Students reported that VIT-TAY helped them and that it was easy to use.
- 65% of students reported that VIT-TAY helped them prepare to interview for a job and helped them get better at interviewing.

COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT BY 6 MONTHS



80% OF TEACHERS & ADMINISTRATORS REPORTED THAT THEY ARE MOTIVATED TO CONTINUE DELIVERING VIT-TAY.

“[Reports]...did help me sort of pinpoint who could continue on with more independence.”

“I think having the video...is a really nice way to give them exposure to what it's like to be out there.”

“The students enjoy working with the avatar, getting that feedback sort of directly with their responses.”

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93%

of teachers & administrators reported that VIT-TAY seemed effective in helping students improve their interviewing skills.

STUDENT QUOTES REGARDING THEIR FAVORITE THING ABOUT VIT-TAY:

“I liked how it taught me what and what not to say during an interview and it also helped me learn what I needed to improve on for an interview.”

“The experience of the whole program was amazing and it seriously boosted my confidence for a “real deal” interview and I absolutely LOVED it. I think it’s a great program for everyone.”

CHALLENGES OF VIT-TAY FROM FOCUS GROUPS

“I had a few students who have cognitive disabilities, and they were not able to...get hired on the third level.”

“Limitations [of] my programming are that because we are really so immersed in our community work experiences, there really isn’t an opportunity ...or ability to have access to sort of one-to-one computers at our work sites.”

METHODS

The study is an open trial to evaluate VIT-TAY delivery across nine urban, suburban, and rural schools. School staff reported student demographic and employment data at baseline, 3-months, and 6-months after VIT-TAY completion. Students’ VIT-TAY usability and acceptability were captured using surveys. Administrators and teachers (n=45) completed surveys and focus groups (n=4) to report on the implementation, acceptability, usability, and sustainability of VIT-TAY.

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Students (n=282) were 66% male, 16-26 years old (mean age = 19 years), and were from city (44%), suburban (41%), and town (15%) settings. Students were 46% Caucasian, 29% African American/Black, 13% Hispanic and/or Latino, 5% Asian American, 5% more than one race, and 2% other. Educational disabilities included learning disability (31%), autism (20%), intellectual disability (19%), emotional disability (11%), other health impairment (9%), and other (10%). In terms of reading level, 71% of students had a 4th grade reading level or higher.

CONCLUSIONS

Preliminary findings are highly promising and suggest that using VIT-TAY as a supplement to federally-mandated transition services may lead to higher rates of paid employment. VIT-TAY is viewed by students as a highly acceptable intervention that is easy-to-use. Teachers and administrators report that VIT-TAY is consistent with the values of transition services. Teachers and administrators also noted that despite barriers associated with start-up costs for some districts, highly motivated teachers and administrators are eager to support the sustained delivery of VIT-TAY in their curriculums.

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