

VIRTUAL INTERVIEW TRAINING FOR TRANSITION AGE YOUTH

PRELIMINARY REPORT

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 and partnered with Project SEARCH sites in both Michigan and Florida to evaluate the delivery of VIT-TAY in transition services. A summary of the study's preliminary results follows.

QUOTES FROM STUDENTS: "What was your favorite thing about the Virtual Interview Training?"

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"The experience of the whole program was amazing and it seriously boosted my confidence for a "real deal" interview."

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"I like the Virtual Interview Training, because I got practice."

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"The constructive criticism that Kendra [the virtual job coach] gave [to me] about improving in an interview."

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STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Project SEARCH students (N=61) were 60% male, ages ranging from 18 to 26 years old (mean age = 20) and primarily from city (56%), suburban (28%), rural (10%) and town (7%) locales. Students were Caucasian (71%), African American/Black (25%), Native American (2%), and more than one race (2%). 7% identified as being Hispanic and/or Latino. Their primary diagnosis included autism (32%), learning disability (29%), intellectual disability (20%), other health impairment (10%), and other disability (9%). 81% of the students read at a 4th grade reading level or higher. 84% of students reported that they had never had a job before.

VIT-TAY DELIVERY CHALLENGES

- 11% of Project SEARCH instructors reported that their sites were not well equipped to support the delivery of VIT-TAY
- 22% of Project SEARCH instructors reported they needed additional preparation to deliver the training in the future

83% OF PROJECT SEARCH STUDENTS GAINED EMPLOYMENT WITHIN 6 MONTHS OF COMPLETING THE VIRTUAL INTERVIEW STUDY

- 89% of students said that virtual interviewing helped them prepare to interview for a job and that it helped them get better at interviewing
- 77% of students said that virtual interviewing improved their confidence to interview for a job
- 91% of students said they felt they were good at using the virtual interview tool
- Only 13% of students said that they had a hard time using the virtual interview tool

NINE PARTICIPATING PROJECT SEARCH INSTRUCTORS BELIEVE VIT-TAY IS APPROPRIATE FOR THEIR PROGRAMS

- "Your study is so incredibly valuable, along with the feedback from the Virtual Interview for the interns. I attribute this program for 100% of the interns being offered competitive employment last year."
- "Our interns really like the VIT-TAY program...it wasn't a struggle to get them to log on and do it."

CONCLUSION

Preliminary findings are highly promising and suggest that using VIT-TAY as a supplement to federally-mandated transition services, such as Project SEARCH, may lead to higher rates of paid employment. VIT-TAY is viewed by students as a highly acceptable intervention that is easy-to-use.

CONTACT

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100% of Project SEARCH instructors reported that their students were "very engaged" during their virtual interviews.

78% report that VIT-TAY was not disruptive to their class routine.

100% were satisfied with VIT-TAY as a service overall and motivated to continue to deliver VIT-TAY to students.