

ADDRESSING EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS

The purpose of this overview is to help counties develop strategies to assist customers who have barriers that interfere with their ability to find and retain employment. This document is a compilation of information contained in various books and research papers. Please refer to the bibliography for more information on the source documents.

Identifying the Hard-to-Employ

Many social service agencies tend to identify the hard to employ as individuals with:

- < histories of domestic violence
- < drug and/or alcohol abuse
- < little or no work history
- < criminal records
- < very low self esteem
- < housing problems
- < mental illness
- < chronic health problems
- < a sick child or family member
- < long-term receipt of welfare
- < low basic skills/no high school diploma or GED
- < learning disabilities
- < limited English proficiency
- < lack of access to transportation

Many employed people face barriers and succeed in the labor market. Therefore, it is best to avoid operating on preconceived notions about who is and who is not employable based on individual characteristics.

Program Foundation

Addressing barriers requires a *strong employment program foundation*. A strong employment program includes the following elements:

G *An assessment* of job related aptitudes, skills, interest, experience, education, goals, barriers, and strengths. Help the customer to investigate:

- what skills they love to use
- what fields they would like to work in
- what personal goals motivate them

in order to identify or create a job that will meet their needs in all three areas. The goal is to help the customer find a job which they enjoy.

G *A pre-employment training program* that places a strong emphasis on work related habits and attitudes. The program imparts:

- basic skills that enable people to perform entry level jobs
- practice in “life” or “soft” skills that enable employees to keep jobs after they are hired.

G Job search and placement activities which help the customer to obtain an *entry level job* with the highest level of *pay* and the highest level of *interest* possible with opportunity for *advancement*.

G A relationship between the customer and a *mentor*. The mentor serves as a confidant, role model, advocate, and guide.

G A focus and strategy for *career mobility* (job ladder). A career ladder strategy includes:

- helping the customer to identify a “dream job” and developing a career path to reach that job
- continuing training for advancement
- a series of jobs and training that lead to a “dream” job

G *Labor market strategies* that identify or create employment opportunities in which individuals with barriers can succeed.

Barriers

An individual's success in employment depends upon their ability to be their own career developer. In a program where employment activities are available and utilized, individuals *can succeed* in addressing and surmounting their own barriers to employment.

- G Because individuals often face multiple barriers to employment, programs have to use *multiple strategies*, at *different intensities* and in *different combinations*, to adequately meet individuals needs.
 - T In order to avoid becoming overwhelmed, barriers cannot all be dealt with at once. Some barriers have to be addressed prior to the individual beginning job search, others may be addressed during job search, and still others may not emerge until after the individual starts to work.
 - T Programs do not have to address all of the individual's problems in order to clear the path to employment.

- G Assessing and dealing with some barriers are best left to those with specialized or clinical expertise.
 - T Form partnerships with local community-based service providers to ensure that supports and expertise are available and accessible.
 - T Even better, locate specialists on site and integrate them into program operations.

- G Ensure that treatment, follow-up, and other support services are coordinated.
 - T In particular, substance abuse and mental health services are often separated from the mainstream health care delivery system. Customers have to navigate separate systems in seeking those services, making it difficult to receive coordinated treatment, particularly for individuals with both substance abuse and mental health problems.
 - T When working with people who have multiple barriers, structure the program so that services are provided *comprehensively*, rather than viewing each service as discrete.

- G Focus on strengths while addressing the barriers. Focusing solely on barriers may lead to self-defeating behaviors (self-fulfilling prophesy).
- T Work with individuals to identify strengths.
- T Set high expectations for success and use people who have overcome their barriers as role models.
- T Consider working with advocacy organizations. They can often provide advice and support.

Organizational Structure and Staff Training

Helping individuals with barriers succeed in employment requires service strategies that address the barriers directly. It requires strategies that identify or create employment opportunities in which individuals with barriers can succeed.

In order for counties to effectively address customer barriers, programs must first look at the structure of their organization and the training provided to their own staff. Addressing barriers requires an investment in staff, staff training, and service delivery. When setting up a service delivery system:

- , Consider the extra time it takes to identify and work with people who have barriers, particularly when determining potential caseload size.
- , Reinforce expectations to staff that they are to assist all customers including those with multiple barriers.
- , Provide staff training and follow-up after training.
- , Develop formal policies and procedures that address employment barriers.
- , Give staff permission to tailor services and activities to meet individual and family needs.
- , Have a strong tracking system and monitor performance. Measure customer outcomes and find out which services and procedures are effective.

In order to be effective, staff need to know the various barriers that individuals face and need to be skilled at working with individuals. Recommended topics for staff training:

- T Basic understanding of barriers, their prevalence, characteristics, and associated behaviors, and the amount of time needed to address them.
- T The relationship between the barrier and employment.
- T Staff comfort in discussing barriers with individuals, including how to broach the topic in a nonthreatening and nonjudgmental way, how to deal with denials, and how to handle confrontations.

- T How to identify individuals who might have barriers.
- T How to use screening tools to identify the potential presence of a barrier.
- T Policies and procedures of service providers, including where to refer individuals for assessment and treatment and the specific roles of staff members from each agency.
- T How to monitor the work environment and facilitate modifications needed to improve the “fit” of a job placement.
- T How to provide ongoing, flexible, personally tailored supports, such as job coaching, and support groups.
- T How to motivate people to change.
- T How to recognize and work with a person’s strengths.
- T How to work with employers.

Screening and Assessment

There are a number of screening and assessment tools available to identify barriers. Some are formal paper instruments and others are informal interaction instruments. The ultimate test of a screening or assessment tool is whether it provides staff and individuals with information that they can use in making practical decisions.

When choosing tools identify:

- # What is the purpose of the tool? Is it an initial screening to identify potential barriers or an assessment to determine the nature and severity of a barrier?
- # How accurate is it? How well will it identify those with barriers, and how often will it misidentify those without?
- # How much does it cost? Costs include training of staff and time needed to administer and score the tool.
- # Who will administer the tool? What special training or staffing is needed to administer and score it?
- # What information can the tool identify? Will it provide sufficient, but not superfluous, information about employment-related issues?

Screening tools that rely on individuals to disclose information are problematic because people are often reluctant and inaccurate in revealing sensitive information. In particular, individuals may fear being thought of as a bad parent and losing custody of their children. People are more likely to reveal sensitive information to a specialist outside of the welfare system.

The choice of a tool depends on the purpose of using it. For quick and easy identification

of the potential existence of a barrier, a short questionnaire is beneficial. To determine the nature and severity of a barrier, a more detailed assessment tool conducted by a specially trained professional is needed.

Some purposes for screening and assessment:

- # *To identify an individual's strengths and interests* which results in the development of a career plan.
- # *To find what motivates an individual to work.*
- # *To identify barriers* that effect an individual's ability to get or retain jobs, including identifying disabilities of other family members that impact the customer's ability to work.
- # *To identify individuals who might be in need of support services* such as transportation, child care, and child support services.
- # *To protect individuals from inappropriate assignments* that would place them at risk of physical or psychological harm.
- # *To provide a basis for consultation with specialists and referral* for additional assessment or services.
- # *To indicate areas where job accommodations can be useful* in helping an individual to obtain or retain a job.
- # *To prevent discrimination in TANF work and training programs* by helping customers obtain needed services or accommodations without which the work requirement cannot be imposed.
- # *To identify individuals who could be referred to other programs* such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) programs.

When deciding whether to use a formal screening or assessment tool, the county agency must decide the purpose of the screening / assessment and how the results will be used to provide services to the customer.

How and When Should Screening for Barriers Take Place?

Guidance published by the Welfare Information Network (WIN) does not recommend the use of across the board one-time formal screening tools to look for hidden disabilities due to the risk of improper identification, the intrusive nature of some tools, and lack of demonstrated validity for the TANF population. Customers often have a mixture of marginal dysfunctions that do not lend themselves to easy identification and diagnosis. Also, individuals may have a disability that does not effect their ability to work.

However, there may be times when it is appropriate to use a formal screening tool. Screening tools have been developed and recommended for specific disabilities and some, specifically the Washington State Learning Needs Screening Tool for learning disabilities, have been validated on the TANF population.

Informal Screening

The Welfare Information Network recommends looking for clues on an ongoing basis. They suggest that it is best to address problems in the context of participation in training and employment.

- ' Clues can be revealed in interviews such as the statement, "My boyfriend does not want me to work."
- ' The presence of a disability is often indicated by a series of failed work experiences.
- ' Often people with barriers are able to get a job but are unable to maintain employment.
- ' Research shows that sanctioned families have more barriers than non-sanctioned families.

WIN recommends a three pronged approach.

1. Eligibility Determinations - Generic Questions

During eligibility determination, ask customers generic questions about their ability to work such as "Do you or any of your children have any physical or other condition that you feel might limit your ability to work?" Be alert to red flags which would provide the basis for further assessment.

2. Employability Assessments - Ask About Recent Work History

During a broader employability assessment, ask in concrete terms what the customer found difficult in their recent work experience. Ask things such as, "Do you have any physical or other limitations that you think contributed to your not being able to do that job satisfactorily?" The answers given may contain clues about hidden disabilities.

3. After Failure to Participate in a Work Activity or Termination from Job

Refer the person for further screening or to a specialist for further assessment, if they:

- ' fail to participate in a work activity
- ' do not have recent work history
- ' have unexplained failures on the job
- ' frequently quit their job
- ' respond inappropriately to questions
- ' exhibit unexplained fatigue
- ' are unsuccessful in job search
- ' cycle on and off welfare
- ' have been on welfare a long time
- ' have difficulty filling out paperwork
- ' exhibit clues that might indicate a problem

Formal Screening

If the customer exhibits clues that indicate the possible presence of a disability or if the county decides to screen everyone for a specific disability, the county agency must address the following:

- G *Written Guidelines* - the county must develop written criteria (guidelines) for who will be formally screened and screen everyone who meets the criteria for screening. These written guidelines must be followed so that the screening process is fair and equitable for everyone.

- G *Formal Diagnosis* - Screening indicates the **possibility** that someone has a specific disability. A formal diagnosis from a licensed professional is needed to confirm that the person has a disability. For example, if the county is doing an appraisal for the purposes of a self-sufficiency contract, and administers a formal learning disability screening tool which indicates the person may have a learning disability, the county must have a process in place to refer the individual for further screening and assessment.

- G *Appropriate Services* - When the screening tool indicates the possibility of a disability and a person is referred for a **diagnostic** assessment, the information obtained from the assessment *must provide information that the county can use to provide appropriate services*. For example, information that can be obtained from a learning disability diagnostic assessment would include information such as the job accommodations that are needed in order for the person to be employed or the educational accommodations that are needed in order for the person to participate in a training program.

- G *Customer Awareness* - It is important for dialogue to occur between the

customer and agency staff. The customer must be aware of what the screening is for, why it is being administered, and what will be done with the results.

- G** *Strengths* - Keep in mind that everyone has strengths. When a person is diagnosed with a disability, the action plan for accommodating the disability must rely and build on the individual's strengths.

Multiple Barriers

People who have one barrier often have other related barriers. If one barrier is diagnosed, it is recommended that the agency screen for related barriers. Sometimes one barrier will mask another one; when the first barrier is addressed, the related barrier may surface.

Vision and Hearing Screening

Often people with employment barriers have vision and hearing function conditions such as hearing loss or vision difficulties which have not been diagnosed. These conditions may have a significant impact on employment outcomes. It is recommended that agencies ask customers if they a history of vision or hearing problems or are currently experiencing problems with their vision or hearing and conduct screenings as necessary.

Building Trust

Staff must spend time building trust with the individual. If trust is established, the customer will be more honest, more willing to listen, and more willing to accept staff suggestions and recommendations. *Until the individual believes that staff have their best interest at heart*, the individual may not take action on the staff's suggestions.

Barriers may not be readily apparent. But even if they are apparent and obvious to staff, many individuals are not aware of some of their barriers, such as personal hygiene, destructive attitudes, inappropriate behavior, and unprofessional appearance.

In making suggestions, first ask permission to share concerns with the customer. If the individual does not want to hear observations or concerns, respect their decision. They may be willing at a later time.

Be prepared when the time does arise and discuss and offer practical solutions about how the individual can address the barriers.

Prioritizing Barriers

Keep barriers in perspective. Rather than focusing solely on barriers, help individuals set realistic employment goals, and work to develop strategies based on their strengths to achieve those goals.

The following is a way to prioritize barriers:

- G** Barriers that *must* be resolved before job search, such as mental illness and substance abuse (individual must be under treatment and stable) and physical rehabilitation.

- G** Barriers that must be resolved while in pre-employment training or job search such as securing a mailing address, obtaining child care, or rehearsing how to discuss criminal background information.

- G** Barriers that may be resolved after the employment begins such as additional training and education.

Ten Step Process in Identifying and Overcoming Employment Barriers:

(References from “No One is Unemployable”; Debra L. Angel & Elisabeth E. Harney, 1997)

1) ***Identify the barrier***

Correctly identifying a barrier is a key step in becoming employable:

- # This is an on-going process, and as staff continue to work with an individual they will become aware of new issues.
- # An individual must identify an area in their life they would like to see changed and see where the barrier is preventing them from reaching their goal, in order to be *motivated* to change.
- # The assessment of whether something is a barrier or not must be done from the *employer's* perspective, since the employer is the one who determines if an issue is a barrier.

2) ***Identify the individual's perception of the barrier***

Once the barrier is identified, determine how the individual views the situation before trying to help. The following are four common views and suggested strategies to address those views:

- # Individual is not aware of the barrier.
 - Ask for permission to speak honestly
 - Teach individual the employer's perspective

- # Individual is aware of the barrier but feels the barrier cannot be solved.
 - Present several options to address barrier
 - Bring in others with same barrier who succeeded

- # Individual thinks it is the employer's problem and not their own, i.e., individual is unwilling to acknowledge that barrier is preventing them from working in a certain position or company:
 - Help change viewpoint by showing what's in it for them if they change.
 - Present new options which they did not realize existed.
 - Encourage them to seek work which is a better match for them.

- # Individual thinks it is employer's problem and not their own, i.e., individual is dealing with an issue (e.g. gender) that has traditionally prohibited people from working in that type of position:
 - Help them market themselves as an exception to the rule.
 - It requires strength to be a pioneer. Encourage them to find a mentor, build a strong network and help others to become exceptions to the rule.

- # Individual is aware of the barrier but needs help to resolve it.
 - Offer support and assistance that is needed for individual to move ahead.

3) ***Identify the employer's perception of the barrier***

Identifying the employer's perception of a barrier occurs during the job search. A barrier to one employer may not be a barrier to another. To identify the employer's needs and concerns, program staff must put themselves in the employer position and think like an employer. If unsure, it is best to call the employer and ask.

4) ***Determine which approach to use in addressing the barrier***

Some barriers are easy to identify and resolve, while others require creativity and resourcefulness.

Approaches include:

- # *Provide a resource* - assess resources offered by community agencies. As staff become aware of barriers, determine who in the community provides for those needs.
- # *Change where the individual looks for work.* Help candidates find jobs or fields which match their interests, skills and personality.
- # *Adjust the individual's outlook.* Help the candidate see how their specific attitude is perceived by the employer. Explain the results of holding that attitude and then teach an alternative attitude and reaction. Help the individual to understand the rules of American business culture and how management generally thinks.
- # *Teach a new skill.* Often, what the candidate needs in order to succeed is a specific skill which can be learned. Often the skill that the individual needs to learn pertains to finding and maintaining employment, rather than specific vocational skills needed to perform the job. If appropriate, teaching a new skill would include teaching individuals how to accommodate their disability.
- # *Develop a good answer* to sensitive questions in the interview.

5) ***Eliminate the employer's concerns***

Address the employer's concerns or needs. Both the employer and individual have to be satisfied. The employer must be convinced that the customer is the best candidate for the job. It is not as difficult to convince an employer that the individual is the "exception to the rule", as it is to get the employer to make a change in their belief system. Therefore, to become the exception to the rule, it is important to know the rule.

6) ***Identify the individual's selling points which meet the employer's needs***

The individual must be marketed as the best candidate for the job. Remove barriers and build on the individuals' strengths. Identify positive selling points:

- T List the employer's needs for the position
- T Determine how the individual meets those needs
- T Show proof that the individual meets those needs
- T Give specific examples.

When interviewing, the candidate presents only the information which relates to the position.

7) ***Turn the individual's barriers into selling points***

If the individual is matched with the right employer, determine what the employer gains by employing the individual who has faced and overcame their barrier. If the benefit is significant enough, use the barrier and the fact that it has been overcome as a selling point. If a barrier is resolved and cannot be used as a selling point, the individual should not mention it to the employer.

8) ***Put it all together in the individual's words***

Develop good answers to difficult questions. Answers cannot sound scripted.

9) ***Practice the answer until it is a natural response***

When discussing the barrier, the individual must sound honest and natural. If the answer is not convincing to the staff, then the answer will not be convincing to the employer.

10) ***Carefully match the individual to appropriate employers***

An accurate assessment is essential to a successful match with an employer. It is more important that individuals obtain a job that they like, than it is to just get a job. If people enjoy what they are doing and feel like they belong, they tend to work harder and learn more, and will remain with the employer.

Keys to a Good Job Match:

- i Job Skills - Individual has the ability to do the work.
- i Personality and Attitude - Individual's personality fits the company culture.
- i Stability - The employer believes that the individual is trustworthy, dependable, and going to stay with the company for a reasonable length of time.
- i Presentation - Individual matches the company image in dress, hygiene, speaking voice, language, etc.
- i Goals - Individual shares similar goals or motivation with the company.
- i Dream Job - Job is on the path to the individual's dream job.

Job Retention

It is important to support individuals after employment. Many of the hardest challenges arise once they start to work.

- G *Accessible and flexible* - Programs need to be accessible and have the flexibility to respond when needs arise.
- G *Natural Supports on the Job* - Job coaches and mentors can help individuals identify and use coworkers as natural supports on the job. People with disabilities may need assistance in developing relationships with their coworkers. They may lack the social skills necessary to approach coworkers for advice or they may feel stigmatized by their disability.
- G *Natural Supports in Community* - Job coaches and mentors can help individuals identify natural supports in their community such as family or friends. Neighbors, family, and friends can help people sustain employment by easing pressures off the job.
- G *Adapting Off the Job* - Job coaches/mentors can help individuals identify ways to adapt one's none-work life to one that supports having a job. Barriers affect all aspects of a person's life, not just on the job. The coach/mentor can explore with the customer how to implement strengths and strategies off the job that will support job success.
- G *Job Accommodations* - Job coaches can work with employers to analyze job requirements and suggest needed accommodations. Job coaches can also help new employees learn the job.

Staying Focused

It is easy to become overwhelmed and preoccupied with the barriers that people face. To help maintain focus:

- G *Maintain a focus on the goal of employment.* All activities should promote employment
- G *Define success in the context of employment.* Develop definitions of success that measure steps on the path to employment.
- G *Identify both short-and long-term goals.* Be realistic about what individuals can accomplish and how quickly. Set high expectations for long-term success while at the same time focus on the incremental steps that individuals who face serious barriers will need.
- G *Help individuals explore their interests and options.* Having barriers does

not mean that individuals do not have options in the type of employment that they seek. If individuals like what they do and see it as a means of reaching a goal that they want, they are more likely to be involved and participate.

- G *Monitor attendance and progress.* Individuals must remain involved and progress toward employment. In order to ensure that individuals are involved and progressing, staff must monitor attendance and progress.
- G *Provide positive reinforcement and encouragement.* It is difficult for individuals to accept and address barriers. Provide support and encouragement to help individuals stay motivated.

Lessons from the Disability Field

(“Employing Welfare Recipients with Significant Barriers to Work: Lessons from the Disability Field”, The Lewin Group, October 2000)

- T Expectations are important. Viewing work as a viable option is a necessary first step for success.
- T In the disability field, program models based on a “place-train” approach are more effective than models based on a “train-place” approach. The most effective way to learn skills is within the context of a job.
- T Some customers need ongoing support to remain employed. Placement into employment is the beginning, not the end, of the process. Ongoing training and support is essential to long-term success.
- T Some customers need to mix benefits and work indefinitely. Work is an important aspect of adulthood that connects people to their communities, however, work does not always result in self-sufficiency. Some individuals may need to mix work and financial supports indefinitely.
- T Employer involvement is crucial. Many of the programs such as workplace accommodations, supported work, and specialized job placement are not possible without the active participation of employers. Building bridges with employers is a priority in the disability field.

High Performance Organization

The American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) outlines an organizational high performance model that they use when they consult with organizations. They believe that the conditions for success in working with the hard to employ are not found in the details, but rather in the *fundamental ways of thinking and behaving in organizations*. Their

definition of a high performance organization can be found in the article, “TANF Hard-to-Serve”, Lessons from Related Disciplines, APHSA, www.APHSA.org.

TIPS ON HELPING THE HARD TO EMPLOY

- # Develop a trusting relationship.
- # Expectations are important - view work as a viable option.
- # Address problems when they interfere with participation and employment.
- # Offer ongoing support, even after job placement. Use job coaches or mentors to support new workers. Help individuals to identify and use natural supports. Have the flexibility to respond over time if additional needs arise.
- # Provide training for all staff and utilize specially trained case managers.
- # Help customers identify and work with their skills and strengths.
- # Combine part-time or volunteer work and education and training with counseling, treatment or other activities.
- # Have activities replicate a work environment.
- # Enforce program rules and use them to identify problems.
- # Quickly follow up with those who fail.
- # Keep in touch with individuals who are in treatment and continue the employment plan.
- # Help customers work and support each other.
- # Offer choices when possible.
- # Do not try to solve everything.

HARD TO SERVE PROGRAM MODELS

The following five models have been successful in assisting individuals with barriers to employment. Research information for the first three models 1) Modified Work First 2) Supported Work, and 3) Incremental Ladder, can be obtained from the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC). Research information for the fourth and fifth models can be obtained from the Welfare Information Network.

Modified Work First

- ' Staff training to identify barriers.
- ' On-site staff or partnerships with other agencies to provide further screening and assessment of identified individuals.
- ' Expanded definitions of allowable activities so that employment plans can address barriers as well as employment.
- ' Partnerships with local mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence, education, and other providers to offer an expanded range of services to participants.
- ' Close monitoring of both participation and progress in all activities and services, including those provided by partner agencies.
- ' Development of a variety of employment opportunities specifically intended to help individuals with barriers transition into the workplace.
- ' Post-employment services that pay particular attention to the problems faced by individuals with barriers.

Supported Work

- ' Highly structured work environment in a business whose principle purpose is to train and/or employ those who would probably not succeed in the competitive labor market.
- ' Can be used as an assessment tool to observe customers in a real job setting and identify issues that interfere with employment success or it can be an activity which gives customers the chance to learn and practice job skills in an environment in which they can make mistakes without losing their job.
- ' Participation in the program is time-limited.
- ' Supervision is intensive and specialized.
- ' There is a gradual increase in expectations and demands placed on the customer.
- ' Customer does real work producing goods and services.

- ' Job development and job search services are provided so that individual can move to permanent employment.
- ' Sustained case management and supportive services are provided.
- ' Heavy emphasis on peer support.

Incremental Ladder

- ' Paths are highly individualized, and case managers have great flexibility in designing the starting point, sequence, and intensity of activities.
- ' Case managers work closely with participants to keep them engaged and moving forward.
- ' Ladders contain short-term goals which are regularly revisited and revised, based on an individual's progress.
- ' Lower rung activities include self-improvement activities, volunteer work, and child focused activities.
- ' Work and work-oriented activities - including volunteering and part-time employment - are central to the model. They provide opportunities to learn about the world of work and practice job-related skills. The requirements of a conventional work setting are imposed gradually and activities are arranged so that they are progressively more demanding.
- ' Small successes are celebrated, and failures are treated as opportunities to learn.
- ' A rich array of supportive services are provided over a relatively long time frame to deal with personal difficulties that may arise.

Counseling

- ' Deals with the whole person to remove barriers.
- ' Individuals who are sanctioned for noncompliance or struggling to comply with their self-sufficiency contract are enrolled in counseling.
- ' Allows customers to identify and address barriers. Customers are often reluctant to disclose their problems to TANF case managers. Everything said to the counselor is confidential.
- ' Clinical counselors are typically located in county offices and coordinate their services with TANF case managers. The counselor and the TANF case manager often confer about cases and meet jointly with the customer.
- ' The counselor assesses the customer for barriers.
- ' The counselor identifies strengths and uses this information to help the customer develop a plan, problem solve and improve self-esteem. The counseling is solution focused.

- ' Counselors act as service brokers. They help with immediate crises, and refer customers to community agencies for intensive services.

Housing Based

- ' The program is located in and serves a particular community in an area of concentrated poverty.
- ' Employment and housing are interdependent.
- ' Holistic approach to services. Program recognizes the customer as part of a family unit, and is able to respond to the family's needs as they are impacted by family and community influences.
- ' Provides a broad range of services.
- ' Commitment to long-term relationship and sustained services.
- ' High visibility and easy accessibility.
- ' Aggressive outreach.
- ' Presents work as a norm. Role models who are working play a dominant role.
- ' Participants engage in work-related activities. Activities are highly individualized and geared to the participant's level of functioning - patterned after Supported Work or Incremental Ladder models.
- ' Wage paying jobs are available. There is a standing offer of work opportunities that are available for individuals at whatever level they are capable of working from supported work to full time jobs.
- ' Utilizes informal relationships to access local services - requires support from local community.
- ' Often linked to neighborhood revitalization or economic development projects.

Commonly Related Barriers to Employment

(references from MDRC, ReWorking Welfare; Beyond Work First; Amy Brown, April 2001)

Potential Barrier

Related Potential Barriers

Substance abuse

Criminal record (often for drug-related arrests), domestic violence, physical health problem , mental health problem, child welfare involvement, suspended driver's license

Domestic violence

Health problem, mental health problem (in particular, depression, anxiety, or low self-esteem), child welfare involvement, substance abuse, legal problem, social isolation

Physical disability or chronic health problem

Multiple health problems

Depression or other mental health problem

Substance abuse, domestic violence

Criminal record

Ongoing legal problems, substance abuse, low basic skills, lack of access to certain professions

Very low basic skills and/or learning disability (often related)

Mental health problem (in particular, low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, or anger), substance abuse

Language barrier

Low native-language skills, cultural differences (leading to miscommunication and misunderstanding)

SUGGESTIONS ON HELPING THE HARD TO EMPLOY CRIMINAL RECORDS

Individuals with convictions for certain types of crimes may be barred from working in some fields, such as child care or banking. Even those occupations that are not formally closed to ex-offenders may screen out potential applicants with criminal backgrounds.

Issues:

- , Individuals with criminal records often have incomplete work histories, low levels of education, and little exposure to the norms and interpersonal environment of a typical workplace setting, including the supervisor-employee relationship.
- , Often the individual fears that no one will give them a second chance. They sometimes feel that their only option is to lie to the program staff and employer about their past, or to return to the illegal activities.
- , Employers may be afraid that individuals with criminal records will give their business a bad image or feel they are untrustworthy, dangerous, or a threat to their staff.

Key Strategies:

- , Discuss the benefits of honestly getting a job in which they can prove themselves and get promoted.
- , Do not refer them to jobs if they cannot convince you they have changed.
- , Help the individual deal with ongoing legal issues related to parole and creditors. Federal bonding may be an option. Find out if the record can be expunged.
- , Carefully match the individual with the right job.
- , Teach them not to lie on an application. On applications, put “will discuss” when answering questions about felony convictions without checking yes or no.
- , The more evidence they can show that they have changed, the greater the chance they will be hired. Encourage them to get involved in community activities, counseling, support groups, higher education, or church activities. Anything that shows an improved attitude and lifestyle.
- , Help them develop good answers to interview questions. They have to convince the employer that they are the exception to the rule. They have to focus on how they have changed, what they have learned, and why their

previous actions will not be a problem on the job. They need to thoroughly understand the employer's concerns and address them. After addressing the employer's concerns, they need to redirect the conversation to their skills, experience, and qualifications for the job.

- , Encourage them to not give up.
- , Find employers who are willing to hire ex-offenders.
- , Help them to apply for jobs in ways where they can sell themselves first before mentioning the criminal record. If possible, they should avoid applying for jobs through filling out an application.
- , Put prison work record under work experience on application.
- , If unable to get interview, have them leave the question about felony convictions blank and prepare them to discuss the conviction in the interview. In doing this, they should leave prison work record off the application.
- , Assign a job coach or mentor. Some individuals with recent prison experience may need help dealing with frustration, anger, coworkers, and authority.
- , Be alert to indications of substance abuse.
- , Use ex-offenders who have successfully moved to employment as role models.

SUGGESTIONS ON HELPING THE HARD TO EMPLOY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence involves abusive or aggressive behavior, whether physical, sexual, or emotional, by a person in an intimate relationship with the victim.

Issues:

Domestic violence can effect participation and employment in various ways.

- , Violence against women is often accompanied by emotionally abusive and controlling behavior.
- , Threats of violence may make women afraid to take steps toward employment.
- , Partners may sabotage work efforts in subtle ways, such as refusing to provide transportation, promising to provide child care and then renegeing, or destroying or hiding clothing or other items needed for work activities.
- , Once victims begin working, their partner may show up at the job site uninvited or telephone repeatedly.
- , Lack of support at home can make it hard for individuals to cope with other difficulties, such as a sick child or car trouble. In addition, physical injuries, especially visible ones, can cause women to miss work.
- , Employers may be concerned that victims will be unable to focus on their job due to their personal problems.
- , Individuals may feel doubt about their ability to integrate into the business culture, believe they have no skills, and worry about the shame and embarrassment of others discovering the abuse. Even when they have left the abuser, they may lack confidence, doubt their abilities, and be fearful that the abuser will find them on the job and cause problems.
- , Domestic violence has a marked effect on security, tardiness, absenteeism, and workplace productivity.

Key Strategies:

- , An individual is more likely to disclose information about her abusive situation in a supportive, nonjudgmental environment.
- , Promote disclosure by providing information to all customers about the support services and options available to victims of domestic violence. Provide multiple opportunities for disclosure. When talking with the customer about her situation, use terms other than domestic violence because many customers

do not identify with the term “domestic violence”.

, Facilitate access to services for children. Provide referrals to health care, counseling, and other services for children. Women may be more likely to seek help for their children than for themselves.

, Focus on her safety first. Refer her to domestic violence resources and work with partner agencies to ensure that she is out of immediate danger.

, Enroll her in employment and training activities. Employment related activities can provide a route to independence. Financial self-sufficiency, increased self-esteem, goal-setting, and expanded social networks can motivate individuals to leave the abusive relationship.

, Help her find safe and affordable child care while she is participating in employment activities. Women may fear for the safety of their children if left in the care of their partner.

, Help her expand her social and professional networks. Women in abusive situations are often isolated. Counter this isolation and help her connect with the outside world. Use peer support.

, Be aware that employment can often lead to an escalation of violence, so closely monitor her behavior and progress.

, Some advocates recommend that staff do not help her find a job until she has left the abuser. They recommend that staff be familiar with the situation and be sure the abuser is completely out of her life.

, Refer her to counseling and support groups.

, If possible, do not tell the employer about domestic violence. Explain gaps in work history other ways.

, Help her find work in a safe and comfortable environment where she can feel secure and comfortable. Take into account the extent and nature of contact with customers and coworkers, the physical space of the workplace, and the degree of supervisory support.

, Help her build self-esteem by:

G Helping her feel safe again.

G Helping her to envision a new and better future for herself.

G Assisting her with setting goals and making a plan to achieve those goals.

G Assuring her that you will assist her and that you will be there for her.

G Taking small steps and celebrating small successes.

SUGGESTIONS ON HELPING THE HARD TO EMPLOY HEALTH PROBLEMS AND MEDICAL LIMITATIONS

Serious health problems do not necessarily prevent individuals from working or participating in work related activities.

Issues:

Employers may be concerned about an individual's dependability, productivity, and the cost of job accommodation and medical benefits.

Individuals may worry that employers will not believe their illness is in remission or that the illness or disability is not an issue. Individuals may worry about co-workers finding out about their illness, especially if the illness has a social stigma, e.g., AIDS. They may worry about medical costs since, at some point, they may no longer qualify for Medicaid and many employers do not cover ongoing medical costs associated with a disability.

Key Strategies:

- , Determine the nature of the illness/disability and the ways in which it might impact employment. Differentiate between health problems that limit the ability to work or the type of job an individual can do and those that make an individual unable to work.
- , **Get the medical information needed to make informed decisions. It is best to get information from a specialist who is trained in doing work assessments.** However, the information may be obtained from regular physicians. Be sure that physicians understand when writing medical reports that they will be used to develop employability plans and job accommodations. In order to assess an individual's barriers and what they are able to do, it is suggested that agency staff:
 - G** Encourage physicians to answer questions designed to give detailed information about the characteristics of the disability, what activities the individual is able to perform, the limitations caused by the disability, and how the disability will affect the individual's ability to work.
 - G** If the physician cannot or is unwilling to give the information needed to make an assessment, refer the individual to a professional who specializes in work assessments.

- , If the person is unable to continue with their past profession, identify transferable skills and help them select a new career.
- , Spend time with each individual to make sure that they are adequately matched with employers. Get detailed information about the task and demands of each job opening. Match individuals with jobs they can perform.
- , Help them find a job in a supportive work environment with an employer who provides health coverage.
- , Work with employers to design job accommodations.
- , Address transportation issues.
- , If the disability is not visible and does not hinder them from doing the job, it is best that the individual not mention it to the employer.

G Employers can become aware of a disability through gaps in work history, a reference check, or inadvertent comments made during the interview.

G Prepare them for a good answer in the interview, if the question comes up. They should explain that the disability will not affect their job performance and mention steps they have taken to minimize inconvenience to the employer. They should avoid giving details of the disability. Then they should redirect the conversation to their skills, experience, and qualifications for the job.

G If the disability is visible, it must be addressed in the interview. The individual must address employer concerns and then redirect the conversation to their skills, experience, and qualifications.

G If the disability will decrease their job performance, they must discuss how they will minimize the negative and what *additional* benefits the employer will receive by hiring them. They must explain *why* they are the *best* candidate.

- , Red flag to employer - on application - reason for leaving job - medical or health reason.

- , Suggest that they do not tell coworkers of illness.

- , Request that previous employers keep health information confidential on references.

- , Inform individuals of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which provides protection in hiring and employment for individuals with disabilities. To receive this protection, including the right to accommodations, individuals must tell employers about their disabilities.

- , Help those who may qualify to apply for Social Security Income.

SUGGESTIONS ON HELPING THE HARD TO EMPLOY LOW BASIC SKILLS AND LEARNING DISABILITIES

Very low basic skills may be the most common barrier faced by individuals receiving public assistance.

Issues:

- , Employment opportunities are limited for individuals with very low skills. Most entry-level jobs require a certain level of reading and math proficiency.
- , Low basic skills results from a variety of factors but are often linked to learning disabilities.
- , Individuals with learning disabilities may present a number of characteristics that interfere with employment that may be interpreted as a lack of motivation or poor work habits. These characteristics may include:
 - G being disorganized and inconsistent
 - G having difficulty in planning and prioritizing
 - G using imprecise language or misusing terminology
 - G poor handwriting
 - G having difficulty filling out forms.
- , Individuals with learning disabilities may exhibit low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, anger, and substance abuse.
- , Welfare to work programs that emphasize basic education have only been modestly successful.

Learning Disabilities:

Learning disabilities are neurological disorders that interfere with a person's ability to store, process, or produce information, and create a gap between a person's ability and performance. They are perceptual processing problems. They can effect a person's ability to read, write, speak, or compute math, and can impede social skills. They can affect one or more areas of development. Individuals with learning disabilities can exhibit marked difficulties on certain types of tasks while excelling at others. Learning disabilities are not easily recognized and often run in families.

Learning disabilities are not the same as mental retardation or behavioral disorders. Individuals with learning disabilities are usually of average or above average intelligence.

Attention deficit and hyperactivity disorders (ADD/ADHD) sometimes co-occur with learning disabilities. Characteristics associated with ADD/ADHD include marked over-activity, distractibility, or impulsivity which can interfere with an individual's availability to benefit from instruction.

Some types of learning disabilities:

- G *Dyslexia* - difficulty with language processing and its impact on reading, writing and spelling.
- G *Dysgraphia* - difficulty with writing. May be seen in the motor patterns used in writing. Includes difficulties with spelling and the formulation of written composition.
- G *Dyscalculia* - difficulty with math skills and math computation. May include difficulty with math facts, concepts of time, money, and musical concepts.
- G *Dyspraxia (Apraxia)* - difficulty with motor planning, impacts a person's ability to coordinate body movements.

Auditory discrimination is a key component of language use and is a necessary skill for reading. It involves being able to perceive the differences between speech sounds, and to sequence these sound into meaningful words.

Visual perception is critical to the reading and writing processes. It addresses the ability to notice important details and to assign meaning to what is seen.

Key Strategies:

- , When individuals test very low on basic skills, screen them for learning disabilities.
- , If the screening indicates the possible presence of a learning disability, refer the individual for a diagnostic assessment.
- , Redesign basic education programs.

- G Vary instruction methods to meet students needs. Use group learning, computer-assisted learning, and project-based learning.
- G Focus on the practical use of the skills being taught.
- G Adopt curricula more relevant to students' everyday lives.
- G To encourage individuals to attend, provide child care while parents attend class.
- G To encourage individuals to attend, provide transportation to the door.

- , Tailor educational and employment strategies to the specific strengths and deficits of each individual.

- G** Integrate basic skills with hands-on job skills training and job search. Connect all instruction to the workplace. Use examples from real job tasks.
- G** Emphasize group activities and peer learning instead of the traditional lecture format.
- G** Set realistic goals. Focus on teaching the skills needed to move into an entry level job in the short term.
- G** Use computerized educational software to allow individuals to proceed at their own pace.

, Break down entry level requirement barriers. Employers and training providers may use a GED or high school diploma as a screening device to screen out potential employees. Often a high school diploma or GED is not needed to perform the job. Whenever possible, identify the skills actually needed for the job or program, and ask employers and providers to consider dropping the high school diploma/GED requirement.

, Focus on good job matching. Targeted job development helps individuals with low skills find better jobs than they can find on their own.

- G** Help customers find jobs that take advantage of their strengths.
- G** Look for jobs that provide training and advancement opportunities. The jobs that customers find are likely to be the lowest paying. Try to find jobs where training is available or jobs with built-in career ladders.

, Work with employers to provide job accommodations for those with learning disabilities.

- G** Focus on individuals' strengths and the accommodations necessary for them to be successful.
- G** For individuals who have difficulty reading and writing, use graphics to explain tasks, and allow extra time for tasks.
- G** For individuals who have trouble managing time and following directions, break down large tasks into smaller ones, and provide step-by-step directions.
- G** For individuals who have difficulty understanding language, maintain eye contact during conversations, and have them restate instructions.
- G** For individuals who have trouble understanding and organizing visual information, use color-coded files, and keep the work area organized.

, Promote workplace literacy services. Partner with employers and adult basic education programs to provide literacy services at the worksite.

, Adults with learning disabilities may have difficulty in social situations, and a history of academic and employment failure. Use counseling, mentoring and

peer support to address deficits in social skills and self-esteem.

- , Provide opportunities for skill building after employment. Tailor continuing education to skills needed for advancement. Parents are more likely to participate if child care and activities for older children are provided.
- , Teach customers how to advocate for themselves. Employees need to understand the nature of their strengths and limitations and be able to explain them to employers. Help them to be prepared with strategies to overcome their limitations and feel comfortable asking for accommodations.
- , Teach customers strategies and accommodations to deal with their learning disability that they can use in their non-work life that will support success on the job.

SUGGESTIONS ON HELPING THE HARD TO EMPLOY MENTAL ILLNESS

Mental illnesses such as anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, paranoia, and others vary in their symptoms, severity, and duration. Symptoms are often minimized by medication or therapy, but can last a lifetime. Individuals with mental health problems often have related barriers, especially substance abuse.

Issues:

- , Mental health problems are difficult to recognize. They often are misinterpreted as motivation, attitude, or behavior problems.
- , Stigma and discrimination lead to reluctance by employers to hire individuals with mental illness.
- , Because the illness can be episodic, long-term job retention is a key challenge.
- , Mental illness is often irregular in nature and can make it difficult for the individual to maintain consistent work schedules and to handle day-to-day stresses and social interactions.
- , Medications may have side effects such as drowsiness, nervousness, headaches, and confusion.
- , Individuals suffering from mental illness often drop out of programs and accept sanctions for noncompliance.
- , Their needs are often not met by employment and training providers.
- , Many people with mental illness have a co-occurring disorder such as two mental disorders at once or one or more mental disorders and substance abuse.
- , Mental health and substance abuse services are often separated from the mainstream health care delivery system. Customers have to navigate separate systems in seeking those services resulting in fragmented and uncoordinated care.
- , Customers may worry that the costs of their medical services may not be covered when they go to work. At some point, they may no longer qualify for Medicaid and many employers do not cover ongoing medical costs associated with mental illness.

Key Strategies:

- , Train workers to identify individuals who have mental health problems.
- , Individuals with mental health problems are less likely to show up for program intake. Follow up and screen those who fail to show for initial appraisal or assessment.

- , Treat mental problems the same as any other barrier to employment.
- , Collocate trained specialists in the office.
- , After obtaining a signed release of information form, confirm that the individual is receiving professional help and that their doctor or counselor confirms that they are ready to work. If the individual is not ready for work, do not refer them to jobs.
- , If the person is not receiving professional help, refer them. Help individuals enter and follow through with treatment by improving access, monitoring participation and providing wraparound support services. Address the stigma associated with treatment.
- , Enroll them in employment and training activities. Employment activities can be empowering and motivating for those with mental illness.
- , Ensure that treatment, follow-up, and other support services are coordinated. Work with treatment providers to develop service plans and regularly assess progress toward treatment and employment goals.
- , Promote peer support.
- , Assign a mentor who understands the illness and its effects.
- , If the disability does not hinder their ability to do the job, they should not mention it to the employer. Help them to find a job that they can perform well and eliminate the need to mention the illness.
- , If certain pressures or environments aggravate the illness, help the individual find a job where those pressures are not present.
- , Help them find a job in a flexible, supportive work environment with an employer who provides health insurance that covers mental illness.
- , Often individuals who are in counseling or 12 step programs are focused on what they are learning and want to share it with others. Explain that discussing it with their employer or coworkers may negatively effect their job search.
- , To help people find jobs, ask local advocacy groups where their clients work.
- , Call employers and find out if they currently employ people with disabilities.
- , Have them practice best answers to possible interview questions. If the question comes up, they should explain that the disability will not effect their job performance and steps they have taken to minimize inconvenience to the employer. Then they need to redirect the conversation to their skills, experience and qualifications for the job. They should avoid giving details of the disability.
- , Persons with emotional disability often cycle. They will be good for awhile and they will be ill for awhile. If individual destabilizes, work with employer to make any necessary accommodations. It is helpful to have a mental health advocate or counselor work with the individual and the employer.
- , Individuals with mental illness are protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act that requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations that may be necessary for employees to perform job functions. To receive this protection, including the right to accommodations, individuals must tell

employers about their disability.

- , Assign a job coach. Sometimes individuals with mental illness have cognitive impairments that make job memory a challenge. Supervisors may find they need to use an extraordinary amount of repetition of simple instruction. A job coach can help the customer learn how to do the job.
- , Some people with mental illness do not cope well in social situations, may be irritable, and do not cope well with stress and fear. Employers may need to introduce stress gradually, avoid isolation of the individual, and build in a formal mechanism for peer support. A job coach, mentor, or mental health advocate could work with the employer to make necessary job accommodations.
- , Develop a plan to continue treatment after employment.
- , For those who are not ready for competitive employment, consider placement in a supported work environment.

SUGGESTIONS ON HELPING THE HARD TO EMPLOY SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Substance abuse is defined as “regular, sporadic, or intensive use of higher doses of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco that leads to social, legal, or interpersonal problems.” Substance abuse can effect employment efforts in a variety of ways.

Issues:

The *employer's* concern is that the individual is still abusing the substance, or will begin again, resulting in sick days, absences, safety hazards, accidents, a Worker's Compensation claim, poor quality work, damaged or stolen merchandise or company property, and disruptive attitudes. The employer may also be concerned that the individual will attract the “wrong type of people” to the business, damaging the company image.

The *individual's* concerns may include fear of having to explain: gaps in their work history; having been fired; a decrease in responsibility from one job to the next; and short job retention. They may experience anxiety about approaching the business world and may experience feelings of self-doubt, especially because they are “clean” now and must relearn to function in different situations. They may fear that having a regular paycheck will create a desire to use again.

Mental health and substance abuse services are often separated from the mainstream health care delivery system. Customers have to navigate separate systems in seeking those services resulting in fragmented and uncoordinated care.

Key Strategies:

- , Foster an open and nonjudgmental environment. People are more likely to disclose to people with whom they feel comfortable.
- , Train staff to talk about substance abuse. Focus on the consequences of addiction for employment. Focus on drug and alcohol use only when it is a barrier to work
- , Develop clear confidentiality policies following federal confidentiality guidelines.
- , Program staff do not need to know how to diagnose addiction, but they need to know basic information to identify a potential problem, and know where to refer individuals for further assessment and treatment.
- , Train staff on co-occurring disorders. Many people with substance abuse

problems also have a co-occurring mental illness.

- , After initial screening, use trained specialists to conduct assessments and develop treatment plans. Collocate trained specialists in the office.
- , Match individuals with treatment options that fit their needs and preferences. Look for treatment that is compatible with an employment focus. When possible, expand slots in residential treatment programs that allow children to remain with parents.
- , Help individuals enter and follow through with treatment by improving access and providing wraparound support services.
- , Ensure that treatment, follow-up, and other support services are coordinated.
- , Consider the different needs of men and women.
- , Follow up with participants during and after treatment. Ask how recovery is going. Find out tools they are using for recovery - usually 12-step or religious programs.
- , Focus on customer's goals and the role substance abuse plays.
- , Be sure the person is actively recovering before referring to employment. Make sure they are actively participating with their individualized recovery program.
- , Primary causes of relapse:

- G Unhealthy relationship
- G Taking on too much at one time
- G Lack of support network
- G Boredom

Guard against relapse:

- G Build in structure into participant's schedule.
- G Stress the importance of replacing old habits with new habits and old friends with new friends.
- G Create support systems to avoid isolation. Use peer support. Refer individual to groups, clubs, community volunteer organizations, or churches where they can make friends with people who do not use.
- G Offer incentives and rewards.

, During job search program staff can:

- G Find out if employers test for drugs.
- G Offer to provide bonding for individuals.
- G Assist individuals in looking for jobs in low-stress environments.
- G Assist in looking for jobs that avoid relapse triggers.

, Individual should not mention addiction and recovery to employer unless it is

a selling point for job or unless directly asked.

G Often people in counseling or 12-step programs are focused on what they are learning and want to share it with others. Explain that discussing it with their employer or coworkers may negatively effect their job search.

G Have them practice best answers to possible interview questions. If directly asked, they have to focus on how they have changed, what they have learned, and why their previous actions will not be a problem on the job. They need to thoroughly understand the employer's concerns and address them. Then they need to redirect the conversation to their skills, experience and qualifications for the job.

, Because of the cyclical nature of substance abuse, job retention strategies are more important than job placement. Employment success can motivate individuals to stay clean and sober.

G Provide positive reinforcement and support to workers

G Help them develop new work and career advancement goals as they succeed.

, Consider direct deposit of paycheck and issues of money management. Consider having only enough money in checking account to pay bills and for incidental expenses. Rest of money could go in savings account which requires co-signer for withdrawal.

, Develop transitional supported work opportunities so participants can focus on recovery with fewer job demands.

, Follow up and screen those who are sanctioned or "cyclers" who get jobs but cannot keep them. These are often indications of substance abuse or mental illness.

! STRATEGIES TO GET PEOPLE IN YOUR PROGRAM AND KEEP THEM ENGAGED

- i Be upbeat and sell the program
- i Take responsibility for outreach
- i Develop materials that are understandable to people with low literacy levels.
- i Keep materials simple, direct, and visually engaging
- i Repeat the message over and over again
- i Be creative
- i Make orientation engaging and inspiring
- i Track attendance at orientation and follow-up immediately with people who do not initially attend
- i Be crystal clear about expectations and the consequences of not following through
- i Use sanctions to enforce program regulations but do not rely solely on sanctions to increase show-up rates
- i Schedule people for their initial appointment as quickly as possible
- i Follow-up quickly
- i Make sure needed supports can be quickly put in place

- i Help participants identify their skills and strengths
- i Help participants identify realistic goals and maintain a focus on those goals
- i Offer choices. The more options available, the more likely individuals will find one that works for them
- i Make activities fun and energizing
- i Measure progress in achievable steps, and celebrate success
- i Share success stories
- i Build relationships between participants and staff and among participants
- i Forge close linkages between service providers and promote communication between various staff who work with participants
- i Minimize logistical problems
- i Help participant identify reliable arrangements and backup plans
- i Provide ongoing support as needs change
- i Monitor participation in program activities. Make participation monitoring a program priority and ensure that staff have time to monitor participation.
- i Maintain frequent contact

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