



Community Experiences Correlated with Improved Employment Outcomes

What is the level of evidence?

This predictor of post-school success has been labeled by NTACT at a Promising level of evidence, based on one *a priori* correlational study. *More information on NTACT's process for identifying effective practices is available here: [NTACT's Effective Practices](#).*

What is the predictor?

Community experiences are activities occurring outside of the school setting, supported with in-class instruction, where students apply academic, social, and/or general work behaviors and skills.

What are the essential characteristics?

1. Allocate sufficient resources to support meaningful community-based experiences.
2. Conduct ecological assessments to determine skills needed for various community environments.
3. Provide instruction on skills needed to safely access community environments as identified via ecological assessments.
4. Conduct transition assessments with students and families to determine appropriate community environments for current and future activities.
5. Use community-based instruction to teach, assess, and monitor the attainment of desired academic and/or functional skills.
6. Observe and document students' attainment of desired behaviors and skills across diverse environments.
7. Instruct students in use of public transportation.
8. Provide supervision during community experiences to guide and direct students in the development of appropriate behaviors and skills needed for specific environments.
9. Involve parent and adult service providers to support student involvement in community experiences.
10. Cooperate with community partners (e.g., employers, recreation facilities) to develop community experience sites.
11. Provide supports for parents to arrange community experiences after school hours.

12. Train teachers and paraprofessionals in necessary safety, health policies, and liability coverage necessary for students to participate in community experiences.

Where is the best place to find out how to do this practice?

The Division on Career Development and Transition of the Council for Exceptional Children developed a Fast Fact on Community Based Vocational Experiences available here:

https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/SPED/34aee1c1-7ded-4d59-af82-da4af08d5fc4/UploadedImages/Fast%20Fact%20FSLA_Final.pdf.

Additionally, the following Practice Descriptions and Lesson Plan Starters for community based instruction to teach specific employment or life skills are on NTACTION's website, www.TransitionTA.org in Transition Planning resources or Effective Practices.

- Community Based Instruction to Teach Purchasing Skills
- Community Based Instruction to Teach Employment Skills
- Community Based Instruction to Teach Safety Skills

References used to establish this evidence base:

White, J., & Weiner, J. S. (2004). Influence of least restrictive environment and community based training on integrated employment outcomes for transitioning students with severe disabilities. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 21*, 149–156.

Test, D. W., Mazzotti, V. L., Mustian, A. L., Fowler, C. H., Kortering, L., & Kohler, P. (2009). Evidence-based secondary transition predictors for improving postschool outcomes for students with disabilities. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 32*, 160-181.

Reference used to define and identify characteristics of this predictor:

Rowe, D. A., Alverson, C. Y., Unruh, D. K., Fowler, C. H., Kellems, R., & Test, D. W. (2014). A Delphi study to operationalize evidence-based predictors in secondary transition. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals, 38*, 113-126.

This Description was developed by The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT), Charlotte, NC, funded by Cooperative Agreement Number H326E140004 with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS). This document has been reviewed and approved by the OSERS. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education. OSEP Project Officer: Dr. Selete Avoke. RSA Project Officer: Kristen Rhinehart-Fernandez. This product is public domain. Authorization to reproduce it in whole or in part is granted. While permission to reprint this publication is not necessary, the citation should be: National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (2015). *Community Experiences Predictor Description*.