

# **IPS-Y 101**

**Wisconsin Individual Placement and  
Support (IPS) Annual Meeting  
July 16, 2024**

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# Learning Objectives

1. Explore differences and similarities between the standard IPS scale and the IPS fidelity scale for young adults (IPS-Y).
2. Review implementation and information from the youth manual.
3. Identify limitations and questions of current research.

# The IPS Fidelity Scale

[IPS Supported Employment  
Fidelity Scale from the IPS  
Employment Center Document  
Library](#)



# The IPS-Y Fidelity Scale

IPS-Y: IPS Fidelity Scale for  
Young Adults from the IPS  
Employment Center Document  
Library



# Similarities

# IPS-Y Practice Principles

- Zero exclusion for eligibility
- Focus on mainstream education and job training programs
- Supported education services use a team approach
- Supported education and employment services are integrated in the IPS vocational unit
- IPS specialists help people access information about the financial impact of their career plans
- Rapid engagement and expeditious enrollment in educational programs
- IPS specialists build partnerships with school and training program staff
- Education supports are continuous
- IPS supported education is individualized

# Fidelity Scoring: Staffing

1. Caseload size
2. Exclusive focus on employment
3. IPS generalist (for employment)

# Fidelity Scoring: Organization

4. Integration of rehabilitation with mental health through team assignment
5. Integration of rehabilitation with mental health through frequent team member contact
6. Collaboration between employment specialists and Vocational Rehabilitation counselors
7. IPS unit
8. Role of IPS supervisor
9. Zero exclusion criteria
10. Agency focus on employment
11. Executive team support for supported employment



# Fidelity Scoring: Services

12. Benefits counseling/work incentives planning
13. Disclosure (employment)
14. Experience-based vocational assessment
15. Rapid job search/exposure to the world of work
16. Individualized job search
17. Job development - frequent contact with employers (hiring managers)
18. Job development - quality of employer contact

# Fidelity Scoring: Services

19. Diversity of job types
20. Diversity of employers
21. Competitive jobs
22. Individualized follow-along supports (employment)
23. Intensity and timing of follow-along supports
24. Community-based services
25. Assertive engagement and outreach

# Differences

# Fidelity Scoring: Education

- 3B. IPS generalists (for education)
- 10B. Agency focus on education
- 13B. Disclosure (education)
- 14B. Experience-based educational assessment
- 16B. Community-based career exploration
- 16C. Individualized education searches
- 21B. Mainstream educational or training programs
- 22B. Help with financial aid (for post-secondary education and training )
- 22C. Individualized educational supports after enrollment
- 26. IPS team has contact with family

## **3B. IPS Generalists (for Education)**

Each IPS specialist carries out all components of educational services for all young adults on their caseload with education goals, including (1) intake, (2) engagement, (3) assessment (career profile and career exploration), (4) school selection and application, (5) enrollment support, (6) liaison with academic staff, and (7) ongoing educational support.

These interventions are explicitly documented in the progress notes for each young person receiving these services, or in a form designed to document these activities.

# 10B. Agency Focus on Education

The primary referring agency for the IPS team promotes mainstream education (that is, education that anyone can enroll in, and not restricted to people with disabilities), throughout the entire organization using multiple strategies.

If the IPS team is affiliated with a mental health or psychiatric rehabilitation agency, then that agency is usually the primary referring agency. If the IPS team is collaborating with a coordinated specialty care program for first episode of psychosis, then that team assumed to be primary referring agency.

# Disclosure (Education)

IPS specialists help young adults make informed decisions regarding what they reveal about their mental health condition, disability, or any other personal information to faculty, students, and academic staff at educational programs, including staff at college disability services.

Decisions about disclosure in educational settings are complex, given varied staff roles and types of support in education settings. Disclosure decisions may vary from course to course. Also, guidance counselors may require disclosure before making impairment-related educational accommodations available.

# 14B. Experience-Based Education Assessment

For young adults with education goals, IPS specialists assess (1) educational interests, (2) talents, skills, environmental supports, resources (3) preferences, (4) academic history, (5) future academic aspirations, (6) barriers to education, and (7) accommodations/support needs.

The domains are documented in the career profile, which is updated periodically, incorporating new educational experiences. These assessments and updates should be conducted in person.



# 16B: Community-Based Career Exploration

IPS specialists help young adults on an individualized basis learn about different careers related to their interests. (Group events, such as inviting a speaker to the agency, do not count here.) Strategies include meeting at a workplace with a manager and/or employee to learn about career options (informational interviews), making contact with family member or someone else who has worked in a specific profession or career to learn about requirements and experiences, going to job fairs, meeting with academic advisors or counselors to learn about training/education programs, visiting college events and open houses. Informal short-term job shadowing (one day or less) is considered career exploration. IPS specialists document activities in progress notes.

# Note

Formal work trials – either paid or unpaid – do not count as career exploration, nor do work experience placements that are part of secondary school requirements or that are needed for completion of an education or training course.

# **16C: Individualized Education Searches**

For young adults with education goals, IPS specialists help them select school/training programs related to their interests and academic aptitudes.

# 21B: Mainstream Educational or Training Programs

IPS specialists help young adults enroll and complete educational programs that are open to the entire community and are not limited to people with disabilities. Internships and apprenticeships that carry academic credit or that are requirements for completion of an academic program qualify as mainstream (without regard to whether they are unpaid or pay less than minimum wage). Recognizing that a high school graduation is paramount for increasing career potential, IPS specialists also support attendance at alternative schools and other options that school authorities and families initiate and that aim at this goal. Mainstream education or training can include online courses and programs when they are fully accredited.

## **22B: Help with Financial Aid (for Post-Secondary Education and Training Programs)**

In collaboration with financial offices in academic institutions, IPS specialists offer to help young adults with finances during and after enrollment, providing help as needed.

- Note 1: This item must be modified when assessing IPS programs outside the U.S.
- Note 2: Full credit on a component (for example: managing loans) if no help is needed and IPS specialists explain their role in helping with finances.

## **22C. Individualized Educational Supports after Enrollment**

IPS specialists help link young adults to mainstream educational programs, or (when needed) offer direct assistance in the following areas, documenting in progress notes, checklist, or other record.

Education supports may include: (1) tour of educational institution, (2) introduction to campus resources and personnel, including making contact with instructors early in the program, (3) locating tutoring services if needed, (4) academic accommodations and making contact with campus office of disabilities, (5) time management, (6) meeting with instructors, (7) dropping class or withdrawing from program, (8) locating any relevant self-help groups, (9) (for U.S. high school students) participation in Individualized Education Programs, 504 plans, and transition plans (including meetings with school personnel)

## 26. IPS Team has Contact with Family

The IPS team has contact with each young adult's most trusted "non-professional support person." Most young adults can identify at least one trusted "non-professional support person" (someone outside of the social service system to whom they turn for help and with whom they share good news). This may be a family member, friend, or authority figure (teacher or member of clergy); this excludes anyone who is paid to provide support. The IPS team first asks each young adult to identify a support person. Then, with client's permission, the team involves support person in the young adult's IPS services. Contact may involve specific issues, such as initial enrollment, benefits counseling, career and school planning, or financial planning. No minimum number of contacts required.

# Clarifications



# Does the IPS supervisor role change?

Added to “role of IPS supervisor” item 8:

- If the IPS team consists of a mixed caseload of both young adults and adults who are over 26 years of age, the maximum number of specialists that a full-time supervisor supervises should not exceed eight.
- IPS supervisor has met and interacted in person with 80% or more of young adults on IPS caseload (for example: by joining IPS specialists in intake interviews or other appointments with young people).

# What if they aren't ready?

From zero exclusion criteria, item 9:

Although IPS team does not exclude any referrals because of lack of readiness, an external gatekeeper (such as treatment team or local vocational rehabilitation office) screens out young adults for that reason and the IPS team accepts the decision to exclude.

# Can youth self-refer?

Added to zero exclusion criteria, item 9:

Possible evidence for a self-referral policy includes postings in public areas of the building, or other materials that young adults receive, and include instructions about how to request IPS services without a professional referral.

# How can we engage youth?

Added to agency focus on employment, item 10A:

In addition to poster and fliers, publicizing IPS through websites and social media (such as Facebook) are options.

# What do executives need to do?

Added to executive team support for IPS services, item 11:

- IPS supervisor shares information about barriers and facilitators with the executive team (including the CEO) at least twice each year. The executive team helps the supervisor identify and implement solutions to barriers.
- IPS supervisor tracks employment outcomes for both the total IPS caseload and young adults enrolled in IPS and produces a summary report at least annually. The supervisor and executive team share the report with stakeholders (e.g., mental health clinicians, agency leadership, young adults, steering committee). Minimally, the report should include the quarterly competitive employment rates (frequency and percentage) of young adults employed and in school over the last 12 months.

# **Can IPS employment specialists help apply for disability benefits?**

Requirement of benefits counseling/work incentive planning, item 12:

The IPS specialists do not directly help young adults apply for disability benefits (may redirect to case manager or other staff).

# When are job shadows supported?

When creating experienced-based vocational assessments, item 14A:

“Entries in profile are guided by actual work experiences and/or visits to workplaces to learn about different jobs, not vocational tests. Volunteer positions and short-term job tryouts are rarely used.”

# How is rapid job search calculated?

From rapid job search/exposure to the world of work, item 15:

- First face-to-face employer contact (which can include an informational interview) ... occurs within 30 days after program entry OR declaration of employment goal if no employment goal at program entry.
- If young adult has little or no work experience and unsure of job preferences, initial contacts may be tours of potential job sites.



# What do we do when a youth changes goals?

From individualized job search, item 16A:

- Accept young adults' decisions to change direction (revise goals) and work with them on revised plans, even if this means switching from employment to education as next step.
- When clients rapidly find and leave jobs independently, IPS specialists continue to job search (even when clients are employed) for positions related to preferences and lessons learned from job experiences.

# What about “gig jobs?”

From competitive jobs, item 21A:

“... work as independent contractors (“gig” jobs), and internships that anyone can apply for (that is, not set aside for people with disabilities) and pay at least minimum wage are all also classified as competitive jobs if worker reports income to government.”

# What about temporary work experiences or volunteer work?

- IPS programs do not require people to complete short-term jobs (job tryouts), volunteer jobs, or work assessments to prepare for employment. Everyone has abilities that employers will appreciate. IPS specialists simply help people discover which jobs are good matches now, and help develop a plan for long-term career goals. Participants learn what they are good at doing the same way everyone else learns about their employment related strengths—by going to work. (IPS Youth Manual Chapter 9)
- Youth are not required to complete vocational evaluations or short-term jobs to learn about their strengths and needs. And they do not participate in groups to help the person prepare for the workforce. (IPS Youth Manual Chapter 10)

# What is item 26?

- Can be rated as a stand-alone item for IPS programs that do not provide supported education.
- The IPS team asks each young adult to identify a support system that is NOT paid to provide support and, with permission, involves them in IPS services.
- To get a 5, at least 50% of young adults have a non-professional support person who has had contact with IPS team.

# Questions and Limitations of Current Research

# IPS Programs for Young Adults: Where are they and whom do they serve?

- Nine IPS programs in five U.S. states
- 111 participants ages 16-24
  - 53% female
  - 47% under 21
  - 60% with depressive disorder
  - 92% with employment goal
  - 40% with education goal
- IPS specialists reported that managing mental health symptoms was the most common barrier to achieving employment and education goals.

Al-Abdulmunem, M., Bond, G. R., Ressler, D. R., Becker, D. R., Swanson, S. J., & Marbacher, J. (2023).

Individual placement and support programmes for young adults: Where are they and whom do they serve?

Early Intervention in Psychiatry, 17, 824-836.

# IPS for Young Adults: One-Year Outcomes

- 111 participants
  - Mean age of 19.2
  - 72 (64.9%) had never worked
  - 76 (68.5%) had a diagnosis of depressive and/or anxiety disorder.
- Average length of employment: 8 months.
  - 51 (45.9%) participants obtained a competitive job or paid internship
  - 14 (12.6%) achieved a new education outcome

Bond GR, Swanson SJ, Becker DR, Al-Abdulmunem M, Ressler DR, Marbacher J. Individual placement and support for young adults: One-year outcomes. *Psychiatr Rehabil J*. 2024 Mar;47(1):46-55. doi: 10.1037/prj0000580. Epub 2023 Aug 17. PMID: 37589696.

# Wisconsin IPS-Y Pilot: Three Years of Data

- Total job seekers served 2021 - 2023: 187
- 2023 fidelity score: 164/175 points
- Education starts: 11
- Training program starts: 11
- Average employment rate: 43



# Questions

# Works Cited

- Al-Abdulmunem, M., Bond, G. R., Ressler, D. R., Becker, D. R., Swanson, S. J., & Marbacher, J. (2023). Individual placement and support programmes for young adults: Where are they and whom do they serve? *Early Intervention in Psychiatry*, 17, 824-836.
- Becker, Deborah, and Sarah Swanson. "Supported Employment Fidelity Scale" IPS Document Library, IPS Employment Center, [ipsworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/IPS-Fidelity-Scale-Eng1.pdf](https://ipsworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/IPS-Fidelity-Scale-Eng1.pdf).
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- Swanson, Sarah, et al. "IPS Fidelity Scale for Young Adults ." IPS Document Library, IPS Employment Center, [ipsworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/IPS-fidelity-scale-for-young-adults-3-27-19.pdf](https://ipsworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/IPS-fidelity-scale-for-young-adults-3-27-19.pdf)
- Swanson, Sarah, et al. The IPS Supported Employment Approach to Help Young People with Work and School. The IPS Employment Center at the Rockville Institute, 2017.