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NCWD/Youth Webinar – Family Engagement in Postsecondary Education
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>> ERIC: And I'm here to just give you a brief introduction to the webinar platform. So you know what all the things are and what they do and how they work, so our presenters are joining us here via telephone, and you'll be able to interact with them in two different ways, either via the chat window, which is the bottom right, or via the Q and A pod, which is above the bottom window. The question and answer pod will allow you to type in questions to specific presenters, questions if you have a technical issue or just questions for the group and we'll be able to field them either right away, if it's appropriate, or later on toward the end of the webinar if that's more appropriate and we'll be able to answer individual questions or also questions to the group.

So if you have a specific question, please go ahead and use the Q and A pod, otherwise use the chat to interact with each other. The bottom window, you'll see a pod that is a life captioning service, so this is an accessibility support and the transcript is going to be in the recording, it will be available to anyone after the webinar is over as well.

The webinar will be recorded, and the recording will be sent to anyone who registered for the webinar and will be posted on the NCWD website. Right now, you can see in front of the slides, there's a pod that says Style 5, and there is a docket in there, family engagement peck education webinar. That is the PowerPoint. If you want the PowerPoint for this session, I'm going to be moving it out of this very shortly but Mindy, who is our gracious moderator will be moving it back. Underneath is the slide section. Those will advance and I'm sure you all know what those lack like. With that, I'm going to pass it over to Mindy Larson.

>> MINDY LARSON: Great. Thank you, Eric. Once the recording starts I will get started with introductions. Great. Welcome, everyone. Thank you so much for joining us.

I am Mindy Larson with the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth. We're a national technical assistance center funded by the office of disability employment policy at the U.S. Department of Labor and we're home to the center for resource development. Our work involves improving policies, developing organizational capacities to strengthen service delivery and providing training and resources to build the competencies of the individuals who are working directly with youth throughout the workforce development system. Our definition of the workforce development system includes educational institutions at both the secondary and postsecondary level as they play an integral role in preparing you for employment and adulthood.

Our work also involves providing resources and training as well as other opportunities to youth and families to assist them in navigating the transition process and advocating for their needs. NCWD believes strongly in partnering with families and building their capacities to support the young people throughout their transition to adulthood, which is why today's webinar is an important one to us. We are focusing today on family and postsecondary education because parents and other family members are an important part of every student's team and when they're transitioning into postsecondary education, of course, young people must assume greater responsibility and develop more autonomy. At the same time, their families still provide critical support in advising as they're growing into adults so this webinar will highlight ways that the postsecondary institutions are partnering with parents or families to support all students as well as some specific ways (Lost audio)

At Rochester Institute of Technology and serves on the board of AHEPPP. Grace Francis is an assistant professor of special education at George Mason University. And she has developed a family program for students with disabilities in postsecondary settings. And Elizabeth Fuchs is a parent of a student with a disability who graduated from a postsecondary education program in the Midwest and she's also a professional who has developed parent workshops for -- so we're excited for their experience but before we turn it over to them, I just want to remind everyone to feel free to ask questions throughout the presentation using the Q and A box or the chat box. We're going to address the bulk of the questions at the end of the presentation, however, we have one point planned where we'll pause to take a few questions so you're welcome to ask your questions throughout.

At this time, I'm happy to introduce Grace Francis to get started.

>> GRACE FRANCIS: Hello, everyone. Thank you so much for joining us today. We're really excited to be here with you. And I start off with a double click. So by the end of this webinar, we're really hopeful you'll be able to decide why colleges partner with parents, as well as understanding how colleges can support families of students with disabilities and finally, you're going to hear some recommendations from Liz. So as an advanced organizer, Branka and Chelsea are going to talk about best practices, Liz and I are going to talk about colleges and Universities and how to partner with their families and then finally Liz is going to follow up with her top five tips for professionals. Okay. Chelsea, I'll leave it back to you.

>> CHELSEA PETREE: Thank you, Grace. As Grace just said, we're going to start off talking a little bit about why we work with parents. I think we all know that parents are much more involved today in their student's education than they ever were in the past. On this slide, you'll see a few primary reasons why we think parents are involved today. One is because parents have been told to be involved ever since preschool. They're asked to look at

their grades, assignments, and check in on them. Then when their student turns 18 and enters college, that access is taken away and there's really no transition period for either the parents or the student. So parents are used to being involved, and there's a little bit of shock when their students move on to college.

We also know that there's a large financial impact of college. College costs a lot today. There's no longer a time where students can work for a summer and earn tuition. What this means is families contribute and contribute a lot and sometimes they even have to take out their own loans and go into debt for their student's education. Because of this, they want to make sure that this is a good investment for both themselves and their students.

Third, we have technology available. Students don't have to walk back to their apartment or residence to call their parents on the landline or even wait for the one day a week where they wait in line to call home. Parents and students both have that technology right in their pockets and can contact each other any time and they do, and oftentimes this happens when issues arise and are fresh.

So, an example is, a student might be in a class and realize they got a bad grade and leave that class and immediately call or text their parents very upset. And by the time the student hangs up and makes it back to their apartment, they feel fine about it, but the parent is still at home really concerned about their student so that does encourage more involvement. Parents are concerned and they want it make sure everything is okay.

Finally, we know that students are initiating. We hear a lot about parent overinvolvement but students really are reaching out to parents as well. They're so used to their parents being involved, and they want their parents involved, so they do initiate. We know also that students will continue to be connected with home. Whatever happens at home is going to impact the students on campus, but also, what happens on campus is going to impact the students here at home. So, you really can't separate the student from their family.

All right, if we can move on to the next slide, please. I'm sure we've all heard of some of these negative images of parents. Particularly that top one, helicopter parents are in all the media families. It goes way beyond helicopter parents, who hover. We have the lawn mower parents who mow over everything in their way. The submarine that like to pop up. The stealth bombers that below everything out of the way. This isn't just in America. Curling parents are something you might find in Scandinavia. I believe I've also heard the agents of the which are like sporting agents, make deals for their parents. These images are very negative. They show overly intrusive. But the truth is that parents help us.

Parents have been shown to be related to student success in a number of ways. I like to think of parents that way. Like helicopters, helicopters can be very useful, they help us. I like to think of parents that way as well.

How parents help us. Recruitment, retention, graduation, legislative support, fundraising, volunteering, and also with our messaging. We know, for example, that parents are in contact with their students. Some national studies have shown that one-third of students are in contact with their parents at least once a day. At Rochester Institute of Technology, I know that over 90 percent of my parents are in contact with their students at least once a week, so we know that parents and students are in communication and we can really use this to our advantage. Our parents are able to help us send just in time messages. When students reach out to their parents with their problems, as long as parents understand

the resources, they can help direct their students to those resources, so we want parents to know what's on campus so when students reach out for help, parents can direct them.

They also know their students better than we do. They can use personal messages from their student's life at home in order to help our messages sink in. So one example would be, you might see posters all over campus with problems with drinking. A parent might be able to tell their student, your uncle was an alcoholic, you really should be careful, so they can support those messages.

They also know when something is wrong, that we might not know. However, although parents can help, there are reasons why the school is hesitant to reach out. One is FERPA, which hopefully most know that the student's information is their own. Which means we can't talk to the parents about the student's information. FERPA can be very confusion because there are sections and it can be interpreted different ways and institutions don't want to violate FERPA and don't necessarily know thousand talk to parents without violating FERPA. There's also issues that we want the students to get that autonomy. We do. We want them to grow and do things for themselves and when parents step in too much, it can be really difficult navigating wanting the student to develop on their own and helping the parents help the student.

And finally, while we do want parents to be involved, we can recognize such a thick thing as overinvolvement. If we go back to that image of helicopter parent, what does a helicopter do when it's done with its job? It goes away. That's what we want for parents. That they come and help us but also have their space when the need it. All right. Moving on to next slide.

We know that institutions are offering more and more services for parents. Some are lucky to have positions like Branka's and mine, which are positions dedicated to working with parents. But even those institutions that don't have a specific person or office dedicated to working with parents really seem to understand the importance of involving the family. For example, I was recently researching schools that have a specific parent contact and I found that even those who don't have a specific person or e-mail address for parents have a parent website or advertise for a family weekend so they're still making sure that there are ways to involve parents on campus. So the data you see on your screen is from the 2015 national survey of parent and family programs, which was conducted by a colleague and myself, and out of all the institutions that answered the survey, 100 percent said they had a website dedicated for parents, almost 95 percent had an email newsletter, and 88 percent had a Facebook page for parents of these are the primary ways that institutions are communicating with parents, but there's other ways as well.

Some have a print newsletter, some have a family calendar or handbook. Some institutions are even translating materials for non-English speakers so there are a lot of different communications going on with parents.

There are also a lot of events. The two primary you see are family orientation and family weekend, and again, you can see that 90 percent of the schools that we surveyed offered these events for families. Again, there are other events, sibling weekend, movement event. A lot of different events. There are also some special programs that other programs will put on, institutions will put on. Family. Care packages for families, could be doing fundraising, there are a lot of different way that's they're working with parents. In and these services do

have a purpose. The communication really helps us give information to parents when they need it so they can pass those resources on. Parents will use these resources and understand, so these are really beneficial. The three services that have stars are the three services that parent/family programs consider the most useful service for their families, so that's probably why so many institutions are offering those. And I'm now going to pass the phone on to my colleague, Branka.

>> BRANKA KRISTIC: Hello, Chelsea --

>> MINDY LARSON: I apologize, this is where we were going to quickly pause to check in on questions and we haven't received any content-specific questions so far, so what I'm going to do is just invite our listeners to respond, to react to this list of different ways that colleges work with parents. If you're a college -- and I know we have many participants today who are different colleges in the Universities, we'd love to hear from you in the chat box about, what do you find to be the most effective way to name parents in your work if you are doing things to engage families and parents? So that way we get a little bit of a sense of your work in this area as we move ahead. Now I'm going to go ahead and pass it over to Branka to continue the presentation.

>> BRANKA KRISTIC: Hello, everyone. My name is Branka Kristic. I'm director of parent and family programs at Hofstra University, Long Island, New York. And I'm also president of the. Is he association of Higher Education Parent and Family Professionals and I'm so delighted to be with you and I'm so grateful for your interest. In this section, I will focus on the parents and families of students with disabilities and how postsecondary institutions are serving them. We found out that parents of kids with disabilities often need extra support.

Certainly with transitions into college, issues with that transition, how to integrate into the campus culture and how to seek support, meaning, how their students can do all of those things, and why the parents and family members of students with disabilities need that support is as Chelsea mentioned, they were very highly involved in K through 12 education all through high school, and advocating for the student. And they were doing so in the environment where individualized education program, or IEPs were the norm. Their child's success was guaranteed. On the college level, on the other hand, Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA is enforced, in the United States.

So institutions for higher education guarantee access, and not success. That means that all students must meet academic requirements for each class as specified on the course syllabi. I know that Grace and Liz will talk more about those differences a little later, but I would like to just mention one issue that's close to my heart and it's the name of the office that provides services for students with disabilities. I've found that most of those offices are called Disability Resource Office, Services for Students with Disabilities. In other words, they have the word "disability" in them. I cannot tell you -- I was so happy when our office was renamed as Student Access Services and I highly encourage all my higher education colleagues to consider doing the same because that is a positive focus on the seriousness -- services that staff provides students can disabilities and not on the obstacles or challenges those students are facing and I feel that that really helps with self-disclosure and being comfortable on the campus for students with disabilities.

Certainly the parent and family program professionals, my colleagues, are full-time administrator serving the families of undergraduate students but there are anonymous rouse

professionals on Universities and colleges, community colleges, both private and public, who deal with families on a daily basis, such as financial aid offices, relations, residence life staff, and we at AHEPPP serve all those professionals.

So, I will talk about how those professionals can help serve the families of students with disabilities. We've helped with student information, meaning we educate our families, especially during the orientation in the summer before the first year students matriculate, we explain the services that our offices provide to students with disabilities, and also explain the difference in laws between high school and college, but also, I feel that this is -- and this is certainly necessary, but also, I feel we need to go further and by going further -- and I'll explain what I mean -- is listening to our parents and families and students with disabilities. And by that, I mean we need to understand our families on our campus, including families of students with disabilities.

We actively promote integration and normalization on our campus. For example, the director of student access services to present to all families, to all parents during the orientation session. Not only to the families of students with disabilities, just to educate the general population of parents what it means to serve parents of student with disabilities on a college level. But I'm also adding, I found that parents, like any person, like our students, too, learn different ways. So, I suggest that you try varying how you deliver that information. I include information about those services in the parent and family handbook that is mailed to all incoming first year families prior to orientation.

I also will include a breakout session for the families of students with disabilities this summer because I've seen and heard later in the semester, in the fall semester, many questions that were answered in the general orientation sessions, but parents forgot. There's so much information shared during orientation, and we need to communicate with our families of students with disabilities in a more smaller setting. And Chelsea will speak more on the importance of that in a bit.

In my job, I found the practice of organizing a parents support network was extremely successful. I had a first year family, a mother who was very anxious as her first year son was progressing for the first semester. And she didn't know how to get information, how to help him navigate the college life, and she outreached to me in the office of parent and family programs and I asked her to please join our parent council. She started the SAS, parent support network, and now, she helping new families navigate campus and get those resources for their students, empowering herself. She is empowered now, and she is really helping other families to do the same.

Preparing for this webinar, I conducted a poll of the member institutions of association of higher education and family parent professionals. Very informal. We contacted their website, also via email. We contacted 33 institutions, postsecondary institutions, and we've gotten 14 responses. And what they told us is that there is not much out there for the students of families with disabilities. Eight of them said no specific services for families. That what they do is really distribute the information that the offices of disability resources provide them and they direct them to the office of disability resource. Five of them told us similar, that they distribute the information for the students with disabilities in a general or breakout session.

Two institutions told us that they have a policy of family members being invited to the

interviews or meetings with student's permission, and we also do family workshop once a semester, specifically for the families of students disabilities. Now, in April, we are going to have our director of student counseling lead an interactive workshop of how to transition from being a caretaker to an adviser. Lastly, I would like to mention a tool that's very helpful to me as a professional, and this is for my colleagues in other postsecondary institutions. It is really helpful that I can see the adviser contact notes of the students.

And this helps me when a parent or family member calls me with an issue with the student. I know right away which professional already has the contact with the student, including the student access services staff and I can outreach and collaborate with that staff member to try to solve a problem and now Chelsea will talk about campus integration.

>> CHELSEA PETREE: Thanks, Branka. So the first note on this slide is, remember that students with disabilities are students first. And this is actually advice that I received from our staff that works in the disability student service office. They say that you need to really remember that they are students first, and we need to remember that they have the same responsibilities, opportunities as all students and everybody on campus needs to treat them like students and understand that they do need special help in certain areas. But I think we can really be creative other ways with the way we talk to students and parents. Another example that I have about living situations. I hear from both our disability services staff and our residence life staff that there's a lot of discomfort in the residence hall sometimes if a student lives with another student with a disability, and they make that complaint.

The way our residence life staff talks with it is asking the students, making the complaint, are you uncomfortable with your roommate or do you feel like you're in danger. Students tend to jump to fear when they're really just uncomfortable so our staff really tries to work with students by helping them think about how to work together to solve problems and not running away from their "weird" roommate. I try to remember this when I talk to parents as well and use that same language and really try to help parents encourage their students to think outside the box and be accepting of all students and work with one another. Hispanic so at RIT, we are home for the National Technical Institute for the Deaf which means we have one of the largest deaf populations. It's a pretty unique situation. A lot of campuses see deaf with disabilities but here it's a part of our culture.

I know it's an extreme situation but I also think the way we've handled this can be almost a model of how we've worked with institutions. It might be uncomfortable for some new students when they come here because they have to interact with our deaf students and staff, but it is ingrained with them. Students will see interpreters and closed captioning at all of their classes and at all major campus events. You see students and staff signing all over campus and we actually offer free SASL classes for staff, faculty, and students like I said, it's not seen as a disability here, but I'm sure it took a lot of time and it is a special community but I think it's a goal that we can work towards the idea that differences are good and really embracing it instead of shutting it down. And Branka, I believe you wanted to add more how to integrate on campus.

>> BRANKA KRISTIC: Yes. This is an issue that I really love. We all talk in -- my office is housed in division of student affairs and we are very adamant and focal about universal design. I would like to mention this. I know Grace and Liz will talk more about this later. But Universal design refers to ideas, programs, buildings, and environments that are inherently

accessible to all people. So what I mean about the universal design on college campuses is, when all of our campuses have facilities for the janitors, faculty, staff, think about renovating buildings, designing classroom activities, they should take into account all students, all community members. So, not only students with disability but people without disabilities, older, younger, different challenges, and I can give you an example that we had on our campus last semester.

We had a diabetic student who was overweight and couldn't sit in our classroom chairs. This happens to our staff members, too. We brought this to the attention of our facilities department. And when you are ordering new furniture, think about those and don't just put one or two large chairs in a classroom. Design the entire classroom with all students in mind because then you eliminate this embarrassment factor that some students with disabilities might face.

A second example I can tell you is our facilities worker shoveled the snow in front of a building and shovels the stairs going up and a student in a wheelchair approaches him and says, would you please shovel the ramp to the building? And the worker says, oh, I'm trying to shovel the area that most students use. And the student tells him, but if you shovel the ramp, all students would be able to use it. So, this frame of mind, think universal design when you design programs and buildings and classroom experience

And Grace and Liz will now talk about the differences between high school and college.

>> GRACE FRANCIS: Hello, everyone. Grace Francis again. So as was mentioned earlier, I am a professional of special education here at George Mason but I'm also a sibling of an individual with disability, so largely, as a result, I'm extraordinarily invested in family partnerships. In family support, so, high school versus college. Huge transition, right? So, perhaps the biggest difference is the move from those services in high school to the eligibility services in college. It's different, the nature of the colleges is also super challenging. Services provided to students in high school. Services provided in higher education are often far more, kind of, basic or maybe more service-level than students are accustomed to. So, no modifications or no paraprofessional support or something like that.

Also, no guarantee of a degree or a job. So, unsurprisingly, students really experience some challenges. So as Branka had mentioned, there's a stigma, often, around disabilities. So, lots of students elect not to disclose that they have a disability and as a result, they don't receive the support that they might need. Students are often unaccustomed to really managing themselves, managing their own time, materials. They don't even know what to do with down time. We all know that down time without a plan is bad time.

Often as a lack of really, opportunities, students may come in with poor social skills which can make group work and living with roommates really, really challenging.

Problem solving skills. Maybe they didn't have many opportunities to really take risks, to have to problem-solve, and as a result, sometimes in college, they don't know what to do. They don't know who to reach out to. There's no one there coaching him and as a result we do nothing, and doing nothing results in -- every semester, I get a list of names and a list of accommodations. I don't get any training. I don't get any instruction. I don't get any more information than that. So, fortunately, I teach special education so I know how to do accommodations or redirect students who are compromising conversations.

Just like Branka said, too, with universal design, faculty would really benefit from

universal design from learning to help all students. So fortunately, parents can help with these challenges. As Mindy mentioned earlier, parents provide lifelong critical involvement with their students. Parental expectation, there's a ton of research that they directly correlate with the expectations of their student. If you don't expect you're going to get a job, you're not going to get a job, right? So there's also recent research that indicates that parent's involvement can actually support self-determination. Previously, we thought parent involvement really decreased self-determination. Finally, parents can help increase knowledge of resources. So not only are those maybe campus resources or disability service resources, but also just social capital, which is so important. So, as much as parents help, they also need help and support sometimes, right?

So, students and parents often enter college with a kind of a dependent and caregiver mental. So, when students are in that dependent mode, they're accustomed to following instructions other people give them. They anticipate help because it's always there. A lot of support. They may avoid risk because they don't have the problem-solving skills or they're unfamiliar with the consequences. So really, you can imagine it as just being a wind-up doll. You're there and someone is kind of directing.

Similarly, parents who are in kind of caregiver mode, they've been advocating their butts off for 20 years. They're accustomed to doing for their kid. They're accustomed to preventing crises from even happening so students don't get in dangerous situations. So you can really think of that as, parents are at the helm. They're kind of directing the course for their students. But we know to be successful, it's essential that parents and their children transition from dependents and caregivers to advocates and advisers. So a student who has been an advocate knows how to problem solve. They think about consequences, what might happen based on a decision. They ask for help.

They know how to maintain their personal schedule. They know how to fill their time. So kind of here, you have the self-driving car. You can think about that as an advocate. So this student may need supports and services for the rest of their life, but they're directing their own path. So parents who are advisers really name their children in supportive decision-making. They maybe intentionally create risk and then lower that safety net so their student can experience consequences in real time and then the parent can be there to help support them to make decisions and how to handle things. So you can kind of think of Yoda in terms of an adviser. Like a Sage, providing this great advice. There's kind of Yoda speak. There's also adviser speak. For example, instead of providing an answer, an adviser might say something like, you know what some here's what I might do. And help the student in that way. So in the postsecondary education program I directed which is specifically for students with intellectual disabilities and physical disabilities, we approached this transition in several ways, as early as the application process.

So, what you have here is an example of a parent contract that we used to really align expectations so we're all on the same page. So, first one you can see is about contracting choices or preferences. So I understand that my student will make decisions at times that I might disagree or feel uncomfortable. So just recognizing that, right? The second one is really about student responsibility. So, I understand that my student is responsible for the physical and mental wellbeing, and that's really setting the parent and student up. No one is going to be there in the morning to tell you to take your medication, right?

So, finally, just a family expectations may not always align with school and student expectations. So I will effectively communicate family expectations to my child. So oftentimes, we would get families calling us, so-and-so is up until 4:00 in the morning, and we would talk to so-and-so about it, and they don't care. They don't have class until noon, and that's what they like to do, and that's not a University rule. So that's really something that parents need to talk to their students about. We also created different breakout sessions during orientation, so having one specifically with the University police department was really helpful to alleviate parental fears. They got numbers. They got contacts. Another one was dining services. So, in University settings you have that magic card that never seems to run out and you can buy 600 bags of doritos in one day and then you don't have any more food. So we helped the parents teach their student how to use that magic card.

Another thing that we did, we purposely used the word student instead of child with parents just to help with that vision of their child while in college. We also avoid the word let go. In anybody whose parents or otherwise -- if someone tells you to let go of your kid, you hold tighter than ever. So, we talk more about lowering that safety net.

Using student-first language can really help. Similar to person-first language, student-first communication prevents that bypass between students and faculty. So, for example, say class attendance is a problem. Nothing is working. So I might talk to the student, say, you know what? We might need to rope your parent 92 this and get their suggestion. So what I would do is write an email to the student with their knowledge and permission, CC the parents -- carbon copy the parents -- and then talk about how the attendance is kind of being an issue and then suggested, hey, you may want to talk to your family about getting a new clock that is louder.

On the flip side, if a parent is -- their kid's room is filthy and they cannot handle that. Instead of them emailing us immediately and asking us to go in and do something, we ask them to email the student and then copy us, so that we're able to support the student in that way. And if they do bypass, we forward that email to the student and copy the parents so room cleaning, clean room come ups more than you would think. So we try to anticipate and address these common concerns or common issues.

We do this not only by anticipating, but we ask. At the onset, we say, what are your concerns here? Then we create things like that. Really giving the parents examples and non-examples that they can refer back to and kind of gauge where they're at.

So, now Liz is going to talk more about a workshop period that we develop to help parents and students make that transition.

>> ELIZABETH FUCHS: Hello, everyone. I'm Elizabeth Fuchs and I am I a parent of a college graduate with a disability. I am also co-founder with Dr. Grace Francis of the Joyzen power house parent workshop for the postsecondary education and I have a background in collaborating over the last 25 years with a developmental and behavioral pediatrician, Dr. Tim Jordan, teaching emotional skills to families.

During my son's two college experiences, one at the University of Missouri, and the other at the University of Missouri St. Louis, I witnessed an experience that a tremendous amount of chaos was in the institutions because parent's expectations were not aligned with the program goals and tasks. This chaos, because many of the parents were struggling with letting go or letting down the net and letting their students fail at paths within the program

because they didn't have the parenting skills and emotional awarenesses they needed to help their young adult master independence without interfering.

So I approached Grace, who was the director of the program at the time with the idea of putting together an experimental workshop program. So the Joyzen power house program was born. Joyzen workshop is an intense six hour workshop that parents attend prior to their student entering into postsecondary program. We do many experimental exercises. One of them deals with the parents and the pictures in their head. We all have pictures in their head. How we should think, how our life should look, what car we should drive, what kind of dog or cat we should own.

So we start with the picture in their parent's head of what they want their student to look like when they graduate from the postsecondary program, starting with the end in mind. We have the parents right in the journal a descriptive list all the qualities they want their student to possess when they leave their postsecondary program. Some of the examples of what parents have said to us is that they want their young adults to have a job, be well-connected in the community, have a close circle of friends, living with others. From these descriptive words and sentences, we draw a single collective picture of what they want their student to achieve in the postsecondary program. This is the picture of what success looks like for the students in their head.

Next we talk about if they match the picture in their head, we're happy and feel successful. When things don't match the picture in our head, that's when trouble happens. So we need to discuss the issues which get in the way of the pictures we create in our head that's we want the students to be successful in transitioning into independent identifying. So another exercise we would screen for is feels, thoughts, and memories the parents have about their child with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This is done with an exercise called, ghosts in the nursery. We do a visualization with the parents that takes the parents back to the day their child was born.

We walk them through the milestones, then we ask them what they were feeling and what they were thinking at that time. Questions like, what were you feeling and thinking when your student entered middle school? What were you feeling and thinking when your student graduated from high school? Then after the exercise is over, we have them write in the journal about their memories and feels. We then come together and talk about it. Many of the parents get to see they have the same thoughts and feelings and that they are not alone in their journey.

Parents also learn through this exercise that because their child was either born prematurely, like my son Tyler, or had a condition that brought the child to the edge of death or the child was diagnosed with a disability, that the parent's perception is altered forever in a way that makes them see the child as vulnerable, weak, and needing protection for the rest of the their life. Even long after they grow out of it and/or have grown to a point where they no longer need a kind of support required as they did in their younger years. We show parents that because we are still carrying around these memories, feelings, and worries, that when a problem arises, it can cause them to react to the current situation with a lot more fear and worry than the situation necessarily calls for.

This exercise also creates community for quickly. Branka it mentioned the fact about parent to parent counseling. This specific exercise creates an immediate bond between the

parents and helps them to they can talk to one another as their students could go through the postsecondary experience.

Another exercise we do deals with fears and worries. We have the parents create and compile a list of all the things they're worried about. Start by asking such questions as, what are your greatest worries or concerns for your student as they enter college. What is your greatest fear or worry that won't happen? Are you concerned about their safety? Are you worried about them getting along with others? Are you worried about their hygiene? You get the picture. We then write all the descriptive words down so that everyone has the chance to explain. As a group, we get to acknowledge where these worries, concerns, and fears can interfere with them letting go of their students and achieving independence. We teach failure is okay.

We call it the fabulous failure because growth is happening with young adults when they fail and we also emphasize that even though your child may have failed at a task, that doesn't mean you're failing as a parent. I know that may seem very logical, but remember, logic and emotions don't always complement one another. Most parents go into pain or they are failing at a task which causes the parent to step in and try to fix the situation, whether they intended to or not. Unfortunately, this negates the growth that could happen if they allow their students to struggle. Here's the fact. Did you know that pain not an emotion? Pain can cause emotions, in fact, many kind emotions, but nonetheless, it's not an emotion. Which brings us to the next piece. Coping skills.

Up to this point the vast majority of parents who have young adults with intellectual and emotional disabilities enter nothing a college experience have remained in what the Joyzen program described as a caregiver role. Quite frankly, helicopter parent on steroids is more like it, and I can attest to that. This is because so much of our time is trying to keep the child on track academically and compensating for areas of weakness to perform academically. There's no focus on training on how to get the parents to fully let the net out because the student can learn for themselves how to handle taking care of themselves.

This should have begun in the middle school years but for most parents it end happened at all. As a parent who has had to be on high alert at all times, continuously compensating for areas of weaknesses for their young duty, they now find themselves being asked to back off and let the safety net go, but how do you do that when your brain is shooting out cortisol because your student just got on the wrong bus heading in the wrong direction for their internship program. Or how about this, your 22 year-old son just decided to breakup with his girlfriend, takes a train to Mexico, gets on a train, calls to let you know he's never coming back, and as he is crossing the Colorado border. And you are doing everything on the phone trying to stay calm as your blood pressure going through the roof. And your brain is tell you, he's going to die. Yeah, that really did hand. He remembered to bring his phone charger.

So, through Joyzen, we teach parents how to self-calm through many different exercises like breathing and medicating skill. We teach them how to raise their stress, like on a -- rate their stress, like on a scale of one to ten, where are you right now? One being cool collected on the beach, and ten being going out of your mind with anger. If you are between zero and three, you are handling the situation. If you are a seven or ten, which means flipping out, you must first take care of yourself and calm down so you can handle the situation at hand with your young adult and with the other skills we teach.

So we go through practicing scenarios because not every method works for everyone and we want them picking at least one way to self-calm, and use it while they are going through the program with their young adult. We also talk about the brain and how it functions, reacts to fear and worry. Understanding what is taking place inside of you can be very liberating and creates a complete picture of why you are reacting the way you are even when you don't want to. Like, did you know that the right side of your brain takes the information from the environment it only processes what you see without description. The left side of your brain is the narrative to what the right side could be. Using past experiences of thoughts and emotions to apply to what it is seeing in the present. That's ghosts in the nursery.

This is the beginning of understanding how you might see a situation as dangerous when, in reality, it is not. We give parents simple skills to address this problem. Your brain, when calm, has 40 megahertz of electricity per second flowing through your brain but when you become fearful or worried or angry, that slows down to 14 per second. You literally are working with less brain when upset, causing you not to be able to think. Also why you feel drained after an emotional event because you are literally drained of electric Cal connections of also, your electrical brain wave activity affects everybody else's around you, which mean emphasize your brain wave activity is at a will her rate, you will cause your young adult's brain wave activity to lower as well. Interesting stuff.

Next, we do role playing and I think, by far, that is the corner stone of our workshop. Everything we do within the workshop is experiential. We role play with every parent many of the common problems that happen with students while going through their postsecondary experiment we first start out how a caretaker responds and then we change it over to how an adviser would respond. This switching from caretaker to adviser helps parents to see how to language their response through the situation so that the student is handling the situation, not the parent. We show parents as an adviser, how think can make adjustments. Have you thought about trying this? Who could you talk to about that? But they cannot do the tasks for the student.

We also say things like, I can understand how that may frustrate you. How would you like to handle this? All questions are designed to make problem solving come from the students and allow the parents to let the net out. As the saying goes, give a man a fish, he will eat for a day. That would be the caretaker. Teach a man to fish, he eats for a lifetime. That would be the adviser.

Lastly and most importantly, Joyzen teaches parents to raise the bar. One of the greatest determinants of a student being successfully is how the parent believes the student will be. If a parent says, my young adult will not be independent, I promise they'll be right. And if a parent says unequivocally that a young adult will be living independent on their own, they will be right. If you tell to me, 55 percent, or 95 percent, you're right. It won't happen. Because whatever is causing you to say that, and I promise you, it's fear, you as a parent will behave and feel in a way that sends the message to the young adult that they aren't capable gaining the skills they need to be independent. And guess what some you're wrong.

That's where Joyzen comes in. We raise the bar of expectations by stripping away the old feelings, thoughts, and fears and replace it with the skills that allow the parents to not only see their students living independently but participate fully and letting the net out of actions, words, and emotions that facilitates their student reaching their hundred percent. Joyzen sets

the groundwork so that the postsecondary programs can do what they're designed to document create a team community that is committed to helping the student reach their hundred percent and independent living. The empowers the students to let go and empowers the students to take responsibilities for their lives. And now I'm going to turn it over to Grace.

>> GRACE FRANCIS: All right. Woo! We did it. We worked really hard. We built these relationships. All right. We all learn from each other. Great. And now it's time to graduate. Which means there's another cliff. Just like there was in high school. There's a drop off. We like the net, right? So this is super challenging for all families as their young adults graduate college, so we approach this in a couple ways. The first thing we do is give the parents information inventory. So what do they need? What are their questions? And then we invite people in to talk about it. So our families are really questioning about SSI and SSDI and how does that work and benefits, we invite a benefit specialist in to talk to the family.

We also engage families in person-centered planning which is a great way to really have wrap around support. We also visit communities so if the student wants to live in a certain community, get the bus route, get out there, go check it out before you graduate so we can problem-solve. Exposure is use. So we mentioned disclosure in college. Also disclosure in the workplace. ADA, right? So you have to disclose that you have a disability in order to get a reasonable accommodation. So looping parents and students into rights and responsibilities according to ADA, how to disclose, if you disclose, when to disclose, is very important. So, vocational experiences -- and just like any internship. Right? So getting this out into the workplace, getting them into communities and even if it's just unpaid volunteers is really, really helpful. So, making partner ships with community employers that, you know, so we get positions for students, but also kind of giving back, right, that reciprocity and partnership.

So I might do a training on ADA or I might talk about accommodations, so the same is true for career services in the college setting. So collaborating of the more than once I've had career services call me ached say, oh, I have your student here and here are the problems we're running up against. And it was not my student. Yes, you can help us by coaching our students and helping our students and I'm going to help you by helping you problem-solve how to support all students.

So, Liz, are you ready to give your top five recommendations?

>> ELIZABETH FUCHS: Absolutely. Teach parenting skills in elementary school. I think all parents should have the opportunity to be exposed to parenting workshops that help them handle behaviors and emotions with their child. No one teaches us how to be a parent except our parents. That can be a good thing or a not so good thing and there are great parenting workshops out there that are research-based that can help parents handle everyday situations that eliminates bad behaviors from children that are unintentionally reinforced by the parent because think knew no other way of handling the situation.

I personally love -- because he identifies four areas of mistakes, and motives. Like attention, -- based on how you feel, how you respond. Simple and easy and I like easy and the Joyzen workshop encourages this model.

Teach parents to lower the "safety net" in middle school. This is hard. So much coming out tells us that the world is unsafe and that we need to be vigilant. So how do we balance being vigilant and letting a young adult be independent unless we let go and let them do things that scares us like staying the night at a friend's house when they are eight years old

or riding the metro train when they are 19 to get to their job. How else are they going to be independent unless you let them do it? The parents need skills of handling their emotions to let out safety nets.

Help parents develop high expectations for student's 100 percent. I keep hearing my husband say, adapt, overcome, persevere. We, as parents need to hold a higher picture of what we expect for our young adults even when it's looking like it's not going to happen. Tyler, my son, was a premature baby. I was told he would not walk, read, write, or expect to live. He not only lives, but he's 24 years old, reads, writes, has jobs, lives independently. Still doesn't have the girlfriend thing figured out, but how many 24-year-olds do? I never let myself succumb to negative thoughts of others. That's a skill.

Teach parents that fabulous failures are learning. I think this one speaks for itself. To fail is to learn and remember, you're not failing by letting your young adult fail so that they may obtain the skills they need to be independent. You're actually being a hero because you're saying, I believe new. You will get this. Try again. Enjoy the ride. Enjoy your child. Parents of children who are intellectual and developmentally delayed spend so much time on what is not happening with their child that they may miss the good thing of what is happening. Be present with them. Enjoy the ride. Thank you for caring and listening to this presentation. Handing it back to you, Grace.

>> MINDY LARSON: All right. This is Mindy. Grace, did you want to say anything else to wrap us up?

>> GRACE FRANCIS: No, just thank you ; and if you have any questions, he know we all would be very, very happy to hear from you.

>> MINDY LARSON: So we definitely have some questions but first I do want to pause and say, thank you all. This is such an amazing combination of presenters with a range of experience in postsecondary institutions, with families, different types of programs and training, working with the diverse of students so I just want to thank you all for the write presentation and for sharing so much about the work that you do. We've got some questions so I want to go ahead and go through the questions we have. I'm going to start with Liz since we just heard from you and some questions have come in. Liz, someone asked if you could repeat the name of the research you pensioned for parent education?

>> ELIZABETH FUCHS: Oh, yes. I like Ralph Dreicheer. There's a book called Children, the Challenge. People can get it on Amazon. It's just a very simple model parents can use in redirecting misguided behaviors. And that's for all children.

>> MINDY LARSON: Great. And someone had asked whether Joyzen has an online presence, and Grace, you responded in the chat box that they don't have a website at this time but that you would be happy to send additional information, so perhaps if anyone wants more information about the Joyzen parent training that Liz describes, you can use the e-mail address here on the slide to reach out to Liz and Grace for more information.

>> ELIZABETH FUCHS: Yes, please call us. (laughter). We do have a website in the working, but not yet. We're in the process of designing it.

>> MINDY LARSON: Great. And I'm going to go back to a couple other questions that came in early. Actually, Branka and Chelsea, these came in during your presentation. The first one was in reference to, Chelsea, when you were talking about different ways of engaging families. You mentioned parent associations. Someone asked the question of whether or

not you see colleges charging a fee for parents to join parent organizations because they have observed this in their local area.

>> BRANKA KRISTIC: This is Branka. I certainly know that different institutions have different models. Our parent council does not charge a fee. This is an advisory board giving suggestions to administration, also volunteering and leading parent volunteers, doing the events on campus. Certainly, the pros and cons will have some resources on the topic, doing the annual conference as we have through many presentations, advisory boards, parent counsels and associations. So I invite you to our next annual conference in November in Dallas, Texas, and all the informations that AHEPPP have.

>> CHELSEA PETREE: And Branka, I can step in and say, in that 2015 survey I was mentioning, we did ask if institutions who had a parent advisory board had a fee so it wasn't exactly about associations, so it really depended how the response was interpreted. And in that survey, we found that about half replied that there was a required or expected fee. And the cost varied, so it really does vary by institution and what works for that institution.

>> BRANKA KRISTIC: This is Branka. I would just also like to mention that in the poll that we've done of AHEPPP institutions regarding the services for families with disabilities. The respondents were all four year institutions. We invite our community colleges to join AHEPPP. We need your voice. I know that our services, networks, ListServes will be of great interest to you, so I invite your ideas. I invite your joining AHEPPP. I also invite all of you who are on this call to let us know Chelsea and me, Branka, know, if you have any services, publications, IT resources for families with disabilities, we are writing the topics on best practices and this is one of them. How to serve families with disabilities. I invite you to submit you were practice.

>> CHELSEA PETREE: Thanks, Branka. I had actually started asking you that question and I was on mute, so you read my mind. (Mindy speaking). So, definitely would like to hear more from community colleges in the AHEPPP network so that you could get more information from community colleges on how they're engaging parents and families. There was a question about, Branka, you talked about changing the student services office name and how that name is actually something that Amy mentioned she really likes and is used in California as well, and she asked, did changing the title have an impact on funding or was it simply just (inaudible).

>> BRANKA KRISTIC: Just a linguistic change. The director of student access services previously services for students with disabilities. Just wrote a proposal to the Vice President, the head of our division, the student affairs, and it was accept. It was really easy process. You can certainly, if you want to change it, just talk with your colleagues on campus and write a proposal, and with the buy-in of different offices. I really don't see why not change because it's really a much more welcoming for parents of students with disabilities and their families.

>> MINDY LARSON: Great. And then there was a question about how you can identify which colleges -- excuse me. Hold on. Opening up the question. How can you identify or evaluate which colleges are most supportive and encouraging independence while also supporting students with disabilities. And Grace, I flagged this one for you, but if anyone else has any thoughts on how you can sort of identify supportive colleges?

>> BRANKA KRISTIC: Sure. This is great. I guess there's a couple ways. There is a top ten list about colleges that support people with disabilities. I don't know the name of it,

but I think if you even just Google top ten disability supportive colleges, you can find that. Also, I think college is a resource and training center that is specific for programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities and it's a very well done website and so much information and a lot of details specific to these programs around the country. So those are the two resources that come to my mind. Does anyone else have any resources?

>> MINDY LARSON: Yes. If our presenters but also any of the participants want to share information about great resources for identifying colleges in the chat box, love to hear from you.

Let's see. Amy responded to indicate, she works at the high school level but she's a part of an adults with disabilities PAC -- I think it's PAC, Parent Advisory Counsel, and working with the University. Grace put in the link, colleges and Universities, what was the name of the college just mentioned?

Nancy, you might be thinking of, the Think College website. If you Google that, it's an organization that works with a network of postsecondary education for institutions that have programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. A very diverse range of programs from noncredit to credit. There was a question that came in earlier. Want to be sure we get to it. Do you ever deal with families and students without disabilities or college staff who question the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities. If so, do you have any tips to share? So, Grace, and Liz, I'll direct this to you since you both have been working specifically with programs for students with intellectual disabilities. Any tips?

>> GRACE FRANCIS: Yes. I've absolutely experienced what you described. And I think anyone who works with people with disabilities or just citizens in general experience that in pretty much every environment always. So some strategy that's were pretty effective at our University, were reciprocity. Hey, I really need counseling services for my student and I'm willing to train your staff on how to deal with students who maybe don't have disabilities that you are going to see. I also kind of pushed my way into campus meetings and they were pretty receptive, kind of. But so while they're talking about diversity, I would always pipe in about disabilities as part of diversity.

While they were talking about maybe gender neutral bathrooms, I would maybe pipe in about how to also make them accessible. Kind of pushing in a little bit that way. Also, finding reliable allies. We had kind of a rough semester and one of the departments had pretty much washed their hands of us, and I don't blame them. We pushed in and did not provide training, support, and of course it was a disaster. I got connected with one faculty member, I think she was even a PhD student who just got it and she was really into social justice and so we collaborated and kind of built back that trust that we lost.

I was trying to think. I think any time you can find -- so, I'm from Missouri. So I hear -- I feel and hear a lot of, "show me," right? So we can talk about research and talk about this and say we're going to do this and that but I think "show me" comes down to it. So using reliable allies, partnering with reliable allies to then talk to new people, right? So maybe an employer for a teacher or parent or student, of course, going together to say, hey, this is how it works for me. Here's some issues that came up and this is how we addressed them has definitely been helpful, too.

>> MINDY LARSON: Liz, did you want to add anything?

>> ELIZABETH FUCHS: I'm searching my mind because with my son, Tyler, I think he was

always included, whether it was in the classroom or outside social settings and stuff. I think he kind of affected the way because he had such an outgoing personality that I didn't find myself in those kind of conversations, but even in the campus, I've done in the past with Dr. Jordan, we've had all types of children and young adults with disabilities and it was always inclusion.

So, I think it's just a process that you make it normal. You just assume it, and then as you're working with other people, it becomes a part of what you're doing because it's such a natural process. And if people struggle with that, then you help them with that with the objections they may have and help calm their fears because any time anybody is in resistance, it's always about a fear. So you need to address the fear. What's going on? Why is it thinking this way? What is it that they need so that they're comfortable with this? So if you have both understanding, if you look at both sides of it, then once you're able to address the fear, then as I said, it's just a natural process of inclusion perhaps.

So, I would say, half the people, if you find resistance in specific areas, find out what the fear is. Once you understand the fear, then you can say, okay well here's some things we could do. What do you think about this? What do you think about that? And then put it forward and put it into action. To me, it's about action. Not just about talking about it, but getting into action.

>> MINDY LARSON: Thank you, Liz. There's a question from robin asking, is there a link for information on the conference we talked about for parents? Does anyone recall mentioning a conference for parents?

>> ELIZABETH FUCHS: Are you talking about the workshop or a conference? We talked about a workshop? Grace? Like CEC?

>> GRACE FRANCIS: I'm wondering if it's the one that Branka mentioned earlier.

>> MINDY LARSON: Branka, AHEPPP has its own conference for the parent family program, correct?

>> BRANKA KRISTIC: Yes. M-hmm. And at AHEPPP.org, 3Ps, AHEPPP.org, you will find all the information about the annual conference. We touch upon all aspects of dealing and naming and serving families of undergraduate students both community college, for year institutions, public, private. We invite submissions of programs on the topics of interest. And please contact me. I'm very happy to talk to you if you have any questions, AHEPPP has a very lively Facebook page that we ask each other questions, share our experiences, documents, protocols, it's really very helpful to connect to your colleagues on a daily basis.

>> MINDY LARSON: Great. Thank you, and regarding conferences for parents and students with disabilities specifically, one conference that I, we actually participated in last year on postsecondary education and students with disabilities called the postsecondary training institute, hosted by the University of Connecticut, and that conference is broadly about postsecondary education and experiences of students with disabilities. So, while it's not a conference specifically for parents, I believe it's open to anyone interested in the topic. That's a national conference. And I will look for a link in a few minutes.

Okay. I want to go ahead and share a couple more resources before we conclude. Do any of the presenters have any final responses that you'd like to share to any of the questions we were talking through?

>> BRANKA KRISTIC: This is Branka. I just want to thank you for participating. I'm just

impressed that a wide range of participants, your good questions. All of those educate me, too. So, thank you very much and I hope that we can connect again in a further webinar.

>> MINDY LARSON: So we have a couple of links for everyone. We wanted to make sure that you're aware that the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth has offered past webinars for postsecondary institutions and others interested in postsecondary Ed and students with disabilities, and those include two links here to webinars on universal design for learning and the postsecondary Ed setting. Plus additional topics including work based learning, career development, engaging employers during the postsecondary years to help students in college get work experience and prepare for employment.

The third link is to all of the topics in the postsecondary Ed series. And then the last link on this slide is where you can sign up to receive our monthly e-news if you don't already and are interested in staying up-to-date on upcoming webinars like this one or other publications and resources that we offer. We have developed several publications on college success and transitions with information relevant to all students and guidance specifically for students with disabilities as well and for colleges. The supporting families of students with disabilities and postsecondary education brief actually captures input from families of students with disabilities who participated in an online dialogue that we hosted about three years ago. Personal competencies for college and career success looks at the nonacademic skills that all students need to be successful in the college years as well as moving on to employment and how colleges can help students develop those competencies during college.

Making my way through college is a guide written specifically for students, including students with disabilities, with a variety of tips, strategies, and resources they can use to get oriented to college and to make the most of the experience the whole way through to graduation and preparing for life after college.

And then finally, supporting students' success through connecting activities is a series of brief questions wrote for community colleges that delved into support services such as helicopter, transportation, housing, and other ways that students, colleges can support students to help them persist and succeed in college.

Those briefs highlight different practical examples from other colleges and resources on things that college asks do to help students get connected to the variety of services that they need. And finally, our contact information, both our website and the website for the Department of Labor offices of disability employment policy where you can find lots of free public educations and please feel free to contact us at any time if you have any questions. We are so happy to have you join us today and we electronic forward to having you participate in future webinars and events with us. Thanks again to our presenters and feel free to leave us any other comments or questions in the chat box. I'm going to expand the file window here so that you can see, you can download the presentation file if you haven't already.

You just have to click on the title of the file and then the download file button will highlight so that you can download it. And then we also have a participant survey. It's just a couple of questions. We'd appreciate your feedback on this webinar, so please go ahead and complete the survey. Thanks, everyone. We will talk to you in the future on upcoming webinar, we hope.

(Session was concluded at 2:26 p.m. CST)

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