

Promise Newsletter October 2017

Benefits Counseling Helped These Families: How About Yours?

Did you know you can work even if you receive disability benefits? It's true.

Benefits counseling can help you understand your disability benefits and work. Learn more on our [Benefits Resources](#) page.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Ideas for Educators and Youth Service Professionals

Activities conducted by educators and youth service professionals are a critical component of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). The ideas [here](#) are just a few ways they can take part.

Ellie's Updates

Promise Services Summary

The impact of Wisconsin Promise depends on making a difference in the lives of all Wisconsin Promise youth and families.

The more impact we can have with more youth and their family members, the more we will be able to demonstrate how Wisconsin Promise Services and Supports can help to increase participants' education, employment, and financial self-sufficiency.

Do you have a Promise Story? Are you a family member, teen, counselor, employer, legislator, or someone else connected to Wisconsin Promise? Tell us [how Promise has impacted you!](#)

Lessons Learned:

Wisconsin Promise's Response to SSA's Request:

Has Promise contributed to systems change at the state or local level?

- **Inter-agency Collaboration.** PROMISE helped to further improve Wisconsin's already existing strong inter-agency collaboration. This inter-agency collaboration was enhanced with the PROMISE requirement to add the state TANF partner to the inter-agency collaboration. Wisconsin's Department of Children and Families (DCF) includes both Wisconsin's TANF program, called Wisconsin Works (W2), and Child Welfare. DCF was added to the existing inter-agency collaboration that included the Department of Workforce Development (including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation), the Department of Health Services (Medicaid, including long term care and mental health services), and the Department of Public Instruction (schools, including special education and transition services). The data sharing process implemented in PROMISE has helped Wisconsin agencies communicate and collaborate in response to Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) requirements. Likewise, having a partner that better understands how to work with youth and families living in poverty has enhanced Wisconsin's employment disability inter-agency collaboration.

- **Vocational Rehabilitation Services.** Case management for Wisconsin Promise is implemented by Wisconsin DVR Counselors and Case Coordinators, so Wisconsin Promiseservices and supports have helped to inform the services and supports funded by Wisconsin's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), including increased experience with counseling strategies that are effective with this population (e.g., Motivational Interviewing,

Trauma Informed Care, and Rapid Engagement), and expanding services available for DVR consumers. Wisconsin DVR leadership is closely following the activities of the PROMISE project and the potential of these activities to be incorporated under Pre-Employment Transition Services required by WIOA (additional information below).

• **Work Incentive Benefits Consultation.** For many Wisconsin Promise youth and families, a full benefits analysis was too much information and overwhelmed families, so Wisconsin Promise developed a service called benefits consultation where the benefits specialist talks with the Promise youth and families about their current questions and concerns and provide information as needed. This service format of ongoing consultation was so helpful that it is now available as part of regular Wisconsin DVR services.

• **Financial Literacy.** Financial literacy has been a valuable service for Promise youth and family members who struggle to pay monthly bills and manage new income from new jobs. Partially based on this experience, Wisconsin DVR is incorporating financial literacy into the array of services available (e.g., as part of youth employment programs).

Promise Events

Community Forums

Wisconsin Promise is working to engage the broader community through Community Conversations throughout the state.

- October 19th in Eau Claire at Florian Gardens Conference Center [FLYER](#)
 - [Register Here](#)
- October 24th in Superior at Barkers Island Resort [FLYER](#)
 - [Register Here](#)
- October 25th in Rhinelander at Mulligans [FLYER](#)
 - [Register Here](#)

Each event is unique to reflect the local area, but will include presentations from local employers and youth. Small group discussions will focus on identifying how the community can come together to provide more opportunities for youth with disabilities and their families. Business owners and employers are encouraged to attend as the discussion will address local workforce needs.

Contact Us

[Contact Your DVR Counselor](#)

[Family Advocates](#)

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