



Accessing Services for Youth with Emotional Disturbances During and After High School: Family Efforts and Perspectives

Findings from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2)

Mary Wagner, Ph.D.

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Today's Agenda

- Provide a national picture of youth who received special education services in the category of emotional disturbance (ED) regarding:
 - Services and supports they received from or through their high school and after high school.
 - Parents' reports during and after high school of the:
 - Sources of information they accessed in seeking services for youth,
 - Effort it took to acquire services,
 - Problems they encountered in doing so, and
 - Level of satisfaction with the services acquired.
 - Trends in service receipt rates over youth's early post-high school years.

NLTS2 overview



Stratified random sample	Nationally representative sample of 500 LEAs and 40 special schools, stratified by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Geographic region• Enrollment size• District wealth 11,280 students receiving special education services 1,000 students in ED category
Focused on	Youth, ages 13 to 16 at start of study
Study years	2001-2011
Generalizes to	Each disability category, each age cohort
Longitudinal	5 waves of data collected over 9 years from parents, youth, direct student assessments, school staff and transcripts

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Services received during and after high school

Services received	During high school	At all since high school
Mean number of services received	2.6 (0.16)	1.8*** (0.11)
Received no services (%)	17.0 (2.50)	33.8 (2.75)
Services received (%)		
Mental health services	43.2 (3.92)	38.0 (2.86)
Vocational services	40.5 (3.38)	35.1 (2.84)
Case coordination/management	35.2 (3.91)	22.7** (2.40)
In-class aide/assistant	30.5 (3.35)	5.0*** (1.18)
Special transportation for disability	22.0 (2.14)	11.1*** (2.03)
Social work services	21.0 (2.95)	14.4 (1.88)

NOTE: Services received during high school were those provided from or through the school youth attended.. Only services received by at least 10% of youth are reported. Standard errors are provided for all statistics. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Services received during and after high school (concluded)



Services received %	During high school	At all since high school
Medical services for disability	19.4 (3.43)	24.8 (2.39)
Occupational therapy/life skills training	18.6 (3.38)	13.2 (1.94)
Speech/language pathology services	16.6 (2.60)	4.5*** (1.28)
Case coordination/management	16.4 (2.89)	14.9 (2.18)

NOTE: Services received during high school were those provided from or through the school youth attended.. Only services received by at least 10% of youth are reported.

Standard errors are provided for all statistics. *** $p < .001$. Sample sizes for during high school = 500-510; after high school = 330.

Parents' experiences in accessing service, by time period

Experiences	During high school	At all since high school
Effort required to access services (%)		
Almost no effort	33.8 (4.16)	20.6** (3.46)
A little effort	19.7 (3.04)	14.6 (2.81)
Some effort	1.8 (1.81)	17.6*** (3.22)
A great deal of effort	44.7 (4.20)	47.2 (4.26)

Standard errors are provided for all statistics. ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Sample sizes = 400-470

Problems in accessing services during and after high school

Problems reported (%)	During high school	At all since high school
Services not available	47.9 (3.22)	45.1 (3.21)
Getting information about services	47.8 (3.18)	57.0* (3.13)
Poor service quality	43.8 (3.23)	36.9 (3.18)
Location where services provided	39.5 (3.13)	40.8 (3.18)
Youth not eligible	40.0 (3.22)	48.3*(3.29)
Scheduling conflicts	37.5 (3.04)	34.8 (3.14)
Cost of services	36.9 (3.07)	40.5 (3.14)
Lack of transportation	30.9 (3.05)	38.1* (3.13)
Lack of time to participate in services	28.6 (2.84)	25.0 (2.76)

NOTE:: Problems reported are those cited by parents of at least 10% of youth with ED. Standard errors are provided for all statistics. * $p < .05$. Sample sizes = 400-470

Sources parents accessed for information about services

Sources accessed for information (%)	During high school	At all since high school
School district or school	81.3 (2.46)	43.6*** (3.26)
Consultant or caseworker	23.9 (2.55)	17.4 (2.39)
Medical/mental health professional	22.7 (2.75)	26.7 (2.87)
Parents/parent support group for youth with disabilities	20.7 (2.65)	10.3**(1.96)
Newsletters/brochures/magazines/other print media	18.1 (2.67)	21.8 (2.79)

Standard errors are provided for all statistics. ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Sample sizes= 400-470)

Sources parents accessed for information about services (concluded)

Sources accessed for information (%)	During high school	At all since high school
Family members/friends/personal acquaintances	13.6 (2.00)	32.1*** (3.08)
Web/internet/online source	11.3 (2.33)	20.3** (2.65)
Trainings /workshops	9.0 (1.99)	3.1** (1.21)
Public/private agencies	9.8 (2.14)	29.8*** (3.04)
Other sources	6.2 (1.59)	1.5**(0.57)

Services received at time of interview, by years out of high school



Services received (%)	< 2 years post high school	2-4 years post high school	≥ 4 years post high school
Mean number of services received	0.76 (0.09)	0.62 (0.09)	0.62 (0.10)
Received no services (%)	64.8 (3.45)	74.3* (3.24)	83.2*** (2.64)
Services received (%)			
Case coordination/management	22.0 (3.10)	13.8** (2.58)	8.7** (1.85)
Mental health services	17.7 (2.75)	14.3 (2.54)	16.0 (2.70)
Medical/health services for disability	13.4 (2.35)	9.3 (1.98)	10.5 (2.29)

Services received at time of interview, by years out of high school (concluded)



Services received(%)	< 2 years post high school	2-4 years post high school	≥ 4 years post high school
Vocational services	9.2 (2.14)	4.7 (1.42)	5.6 (1.86)
Social work services	7.1 (1.94)	5.5 (1.63)	6.1(1.87)
Occupational therapy/ life skills training	3.6 (1.20)	3.8 (1.15)	3.1 (1.33)
Special transportation	2.9 (1.21)	5.6 (1.98)	4.6 (1.78)
Parents reported enough services received	56.5 (4.78)	49.7 (4.98)	56.8 (5.01)



Summary—services overall

- The percentage of students receiving **no** services doubled from high school to the post-high school years (17% vs. 34%).
- Receipt of services post-high school was sporadic.
 - Fewer received services at a given interview time point (35%, 26%, 17%) than received them at all since high school (66%).

Summary—mental health services/ supports



- Receipt of mental health services at each post-high school time point was only 33%-42% of the receipt rate during high school.
- Only 12% of youth with ED had mental health services cited as a post-high school need on their transition plans.
- Contacts with mental health providers were made as part of transition planning for 17% of students with ED.
- Youth with ED also were less likely to be taking prescription medications for controlling behavior, mood, or attention after high school (22%) than during high school (42%).

Issue: Translating needs/preferences into action



- **Obstacles to service acquisition**
 - Getting information on services was the mostly frequently reported barrier to obtaining post-high school services.
 - Student's high school continued to be most frequently accessed source for information even after high school.
- **Self-identification of need**
 - 54% of youth with ED in postsecondary school didn't believe they had a disability, so didn't report a need for services/supports to their school.

Issue: Translating needs/preferences into action



- Reflecting preferences in transition planning
 - Fewer than two-thirds of youth with ED had instruction in how to participate in transition planning so their “needs, strengths, preferences, and interests” could be expressed.
 - 58% stated their primary post-high school goal was paid employment. Contacts with potential employers or job placement agencies were made for 24% and 29% of youth, respectively.
 - 44% had a post-high school goal of attending a career/technical education (CTE) school. Contacts were made with such schools for 24% of youth as part of transition planning.
 - Parents of more than one-third of youth reported wanting more involvement in setting transition goals and planning. Parents of fourth reported the transition planning process was “not very” or “not at all helpful” in meeting youth’s transition needs and goals.



Questions

- What are the implications of these findings for policy and practice?
- For intervention development?
- For research?
- Other levers for change?



For more details

- Wagner, M., Wei, X., & Thornton, S.P., & Valdes, K. (2015). Accessing services for youth with emotional disturbances in and after high school. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals* (on line ahead of print) DOI: 10.1177/2165143414565837



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