



Title Registration Form
Campbell Collaboration Education Coordinating Group

Titles must be registered BEFORE work commences on reviews.

- 1) Name and affiliation of primary reviewer: John D. Westbrook, PhD. Program Manager
Disability Research to Practice Program, SEDL
- 2) Name(s) and affiliation(s) of co-reviewer(s): Chad Nye, PhD, University of Central Florida
Frank Martin, MS, SEDL
- 3) Provisional title [preferred format of title: (intervention) for (education condition) in (population)]:
Effectiveness of adult employment assistance services for persons with autism spectrum disorders
- 4) Objective: To determine the effectiveness of adult assistance services on individuals with autism spectrum disorders in producing competitively integrated employment outcomes that are maintained 90 days or longer
- 5) Rationale for review / background (briefly present a summary topic to be reviewed, the importance of the topic, the controversy if appropriate:

Employment rates are declining for persons with disabilities (Stapleton & Burkhauser, 2003). Only 3 out of every 10 individuals with disabilities are working full- or part-time, and two thirds of individuals who are not working would like to be working, according to the National Organization on Disability and Louis Harris & Associates (2000). The more severe the disability, the less likely a person is to be employed. People without severe disabilities are 8 times more likely to be employed than people with very severe disabilities (N.O.D., 2000). Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are among those least likely to be employed within the disability community (Dew & Alan, 2007); according to Cameto, et al., (2003), only 15 percent of persons with autism are employed.

Successful competitive employment outcomes for people with ASD were once perceived to be highly unlikely (Mawhood & Howlin, 1999; Nesbitt, 2000). Today, however, given new technologies and other supports to assist people with ASD in competitive employment settings, more are being successful in achieving employment outcomes. While some research has been conducted and reported, we know little about programs that are effective in accomplishing competitive employment outcomes (Howlin, Alcock, & Burkin, 2005). Competitive employment is a preferred outcome because of its integration into mainstream work environments and its inclusion of full or part-time work options at minimum wage or above (Wehman, 2006b). There is a need to examine the effects of these employment-oriented interventions for individuals with ASD.

- 6) Review:
 - a. Intervention: Third-party employment services (including private or government-based employment assistance services) provided to out-of-school adults with autism spectrum disorders will be included; Interventions implemented in any country will be eligible for inclusion. There is no reason to exclude studies meeting the study criteria due to their cultural representation or country of origin. Interventions of any duration or level of intensity will be included provided the intended outcome of the intervention is competitive employment. Acceptance of interventions of varying durations will maximize the potential variation of strategies that may be included.

- b. Outcomes: Continuous employment for 90 days or longer that occurs within a competitive work setting; employment of part time (10 hours per week or greater but less than 40 hours per week) to full-time (40 hours per week or more) will be included; less than 10 hours per week of employment will not be included.
 - c. Population: Individuals with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (includes Classic Autism, Asperger Syndrome, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder, Rett Syndrome, Pervasive Developmental Disorders – Not Otherwise Specified) that are 18 years of age or older and voluntarily seeking assistance in obtaining employment
 - d. Method: Experimental and Quasi-Experimental designs; Qualitative studies (case studies) to enrich description will also be reviewed. Case studies will be reviewed in order to understand the context of quantitative studies. Case studies are to be reviewed separately as they are inappropriate to answer the review question posed. Studies will be coded for methodological factors such as method of selection or assignment, attrition, blinding, method of statistical analysis (e.g., ITT), among others. A form will be developed for coding items such as participant, intervention, treatment, design, and effect size characteristics. All studies will be coded by two reviewers. Any differences in coding will be reported in terms of inter-rater agreement and subsequently reviewed, discussed and resolved or continuing differences will be resolved by a third party.
- 7) Roles and responsibilities (please give brief description of content and methodological expertise within the review team):
- a. Content: John Westbrook has directed several federally funded projects (for example, Regional Rehabilitation Exchange, National Model for Supported Employment and Independent Living) that are closely linked to the content area of the review; Chad Nye is Executive Director of the Center on Autism and Related Disabilities at the University of Central Florida, Frank Martin has conducted studies in the field of vocational rehabilitation.
 - b. Systematic review method: Chad Nye has authored multiple C2 systematic reviews and will serve as our mentor.
 - c. Information retrieval: SEDL (formerly Southwest Educational Development Laboratory) has a highly skilled reference librarian (Nancy Reynolds) on staff that will help facilitate information retrieval efforts.
 - d. Statistical analysis (meta analysis): Chad Nye has experience in the needed statistical analyses that will be appropriate for this review; SEDL has available Comprehensive Meta-analysis software to facilitate some of the statistical calculations; SPSS is also available for other related analyses.

Contact details of primary reviewer:

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- 8) Approximate date for submission of DRAFT PROTOCOL (please note this should be no longer than 6 months after title approval): Tentatively June 2009
- 9) Approximate date for submission of DRAFT REVIEW (please note this should be no longer than one year after title approval): January 2010

References: (used in answer #5)

Cameto, R., Marder, C., Wagner, M., & Cardoso, D. (2003). Youth employment. *NLTS2 Data Brief*, 2(2), 1-6.

Dew, D. W., & Alan, G. M. (Eds.). (2007). *Rehabilitation of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders* (Institute on Rehabilitation Issues Monograph no. 32). Washington, DC: The George Washington University, Center for Rehabilitation Counseling Research and Education.

Howlin, P., Alcock, J., & Burkin, C. (2005). An 8 year follow-up of a specialist supported employment service for high-ability adults with autism or Asperger syndrome. *Autism* 9 (533).

Mawhood, L. & Howlin, P. (1999). The outcome of a supported employment scheme for high functioning adults with autism or Asperger's syndrome. *Autism*, 3 (3), 229-254.

National Organization on Disability. (2000). *Employment rates of people with disabilities*. Excerpted from the N.O.D./Harris 2000 survey of Americans with disabilities. Washington, DC: Louis Harris & Associates.

Nesbitt, S. (2000). Why and why not? Factors influencing employment for individuals with Asperger syndrome. *Autism*, 4 (4), 357-369.

Stapleton, D. C., & Burkhauser, R. V. (Eds.). (2003). *The decline in employment of people with disabilities: A policy puzzle*. Kalamazoo, MI: W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

Wehman, P. (2006b). Integrated employment: If not now, when? If not us, who? *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 31(2), 122-126.

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