



Individualized Learning Plans: Findings from the Research

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Who We Are

- ▶ National Collaborative on Workforce & Disability for Youth
- ▶ A national technical assistance center
- ▶ Focus on needs of ALL youth, including youth with disabilities and other disconnected youth to
 - Improve state and local policy
 - Strengthen workforce development service delivery
 - Improve competencies of youth service professionals
 - Engage youth and families
- ▶ Supported by Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor

Questions Guiding Our ILP Research

- ▶ Should ILPs be considered a promising practice for developing college and career readiness?
- ▶ Are students with disabilities participating in ILPs?
- ▶ Should ILPs be considered a promising practice for college and career readiness among students with disabilities?

Research Strategies

- ▶ Correlational and mixed methods strategies to identify college and career readiness pathways
- ▶ Interviews with students to identify career readiness processes
- ▶ Established a study group of schools in four states: educators, families and students participated in surveys and focus groups
- ▶ 50-state web review of ILP purposes and implementation strategies
- ▶ In-depth conversations with select state and district/school officials

Results from Path Analytic Studies

- ▶ Access to a quality learning environment was related to students becoming college and career ready as indicated by recording higher grades, reporting better stress/health management, and more readiness to engage in career decision-making.
- ▶ Students who identified career plans that were clearly the result of active self exploration and career exploration activities were also found to report higher social emotional learning and college and career readiness skills.

Results From Follow Up Research: Becoming Career Ready is a Student Who is Able to:

- ▶ Identify one or more careers of interest
- ▶ Clearly describe plans to pursue the careers of interest
- ▶ Connect career plans to personal interests, skills and values
- ▶ Identify how current courses relate to career plan
- ▶ Articulate skill and entry requirements for their careers
- ▶ Engage in additional learning opportunities
- ▶ Describe their needed skills & future development plan

ILPs and College and Career Readiness

- ▶ Looking specifically at ILP engagement, results indicate that ILPs are associated with college and career readiness through its impact on self-regulation, motivation, and self-efficacy.
- ▶ These results were not replicated for students with disabilities.

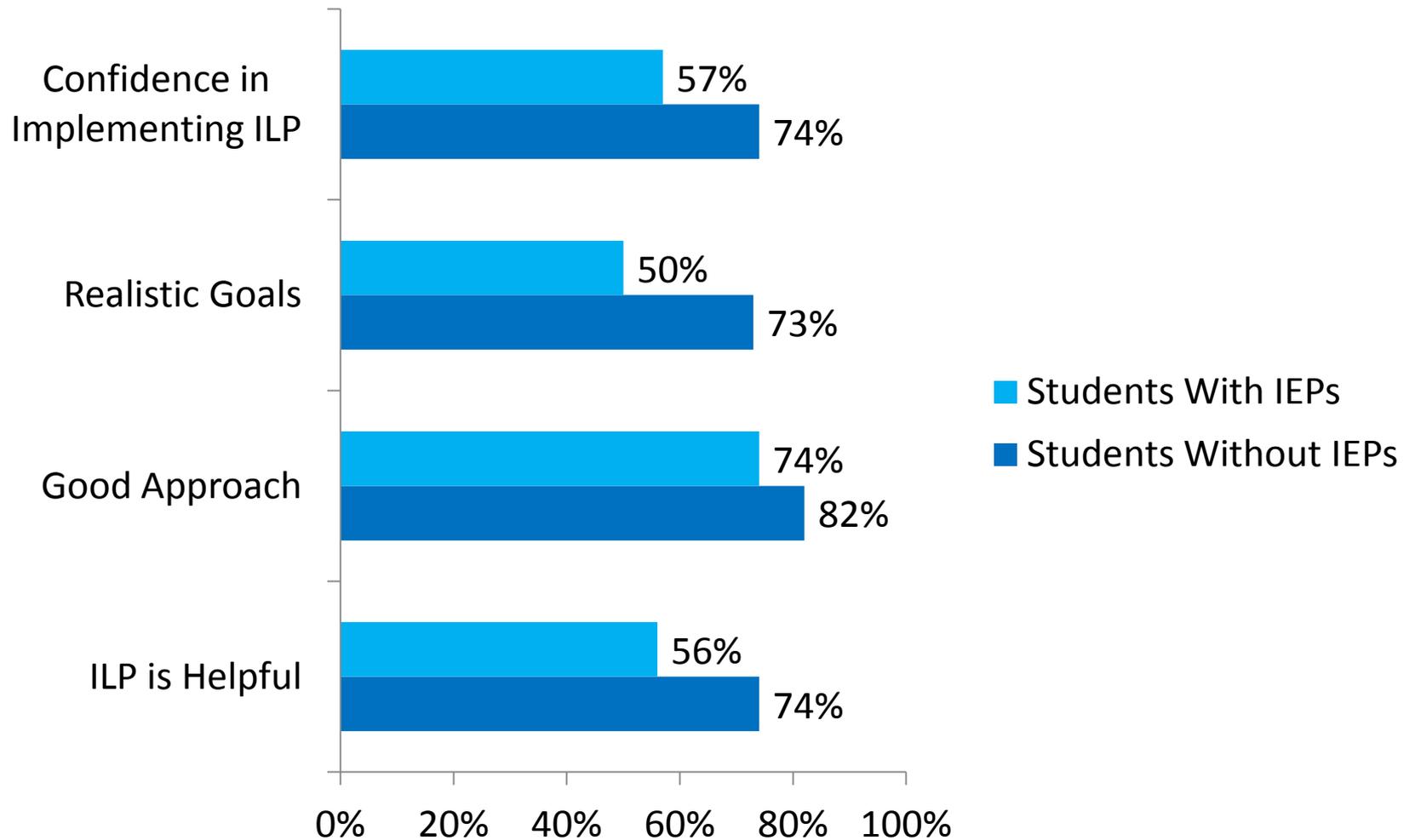
ILP Pathway to College and Career Readiness



What is a Quality ILP?

- ▶ A document consisting of a student's: (a) course taking and post-secondary plans aligned to career goals and (b) documentation of the range of college and career readiness skills he/she has developed.
- ▶ A process that relies on a student's understanding of the relevance of school courses as well as out-of-school learning opportunities and provides the student access to career development opportunities that incorporate self-exploration, career exploration, and career planning and management activities.

ILP Reactions from Educators



Altarum (2011). Parent and educator perspectives on ILPs: Final recommendations From a four state report. Report available from Altarum.

Teacher's ILP Experience

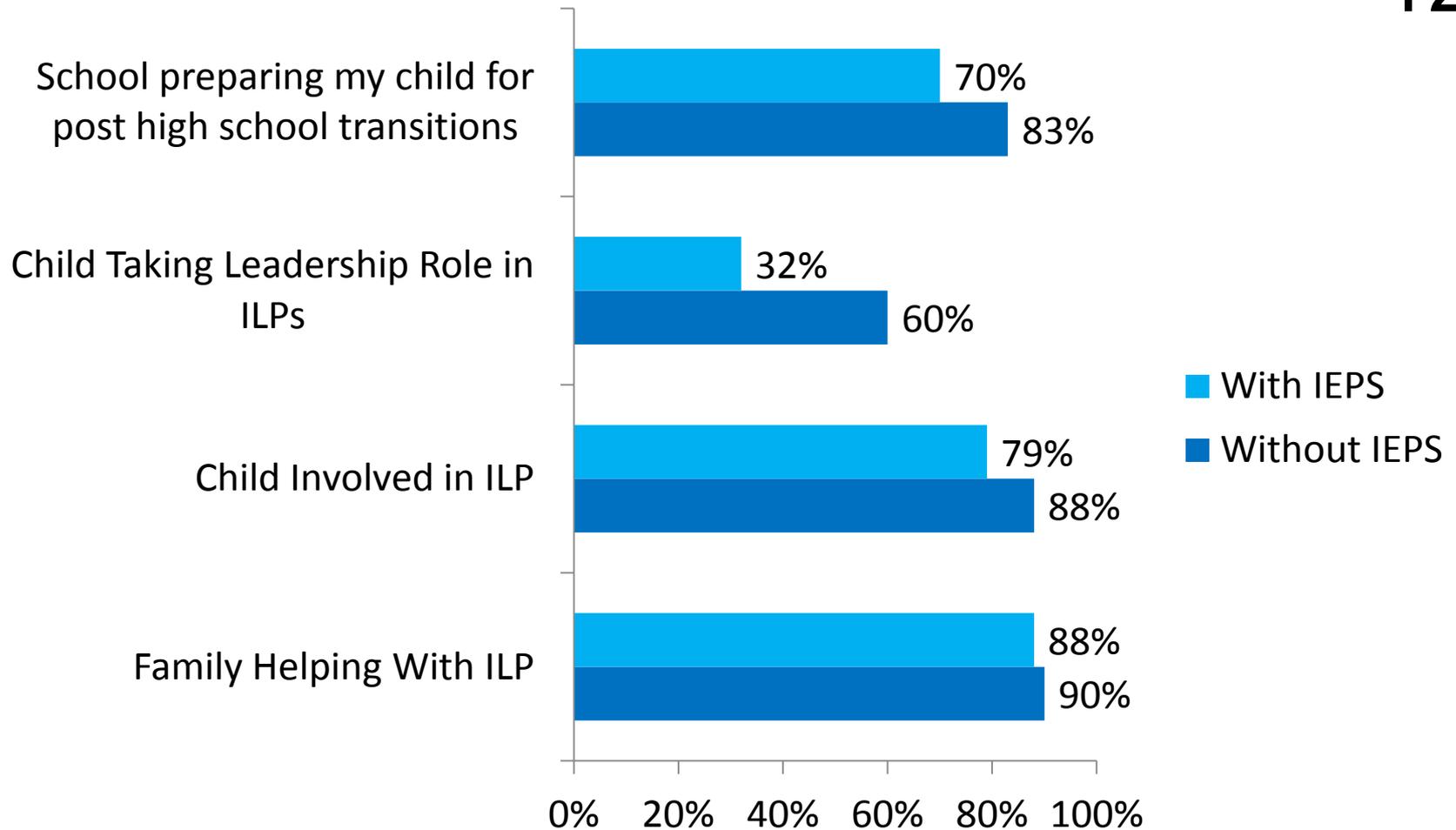
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“I love it. I absolutely love it. I think it's a success in that it's made everyone a stakeholder in where this child is going ... the ILP makes the courses and the curriculum the child chooses more relevant. They understand now why they have to take algebra I. They understand now why they have to take biology.”

Altarum (2011). Parent and educator perspectives on ILPs: Final recommendations From a four state report. Report available from Altarum.

ILP Reactions from Families

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Altarum (2011). Parent and educator perspectives on ILPs: Final recommendations
From a four state report. Report available from Altarum.

Family ILP Experiences

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“[This school] really seems focused on launching adults as opposed to getting through a curriculum...”

Altarum (2011). Parent and educator perspectives on ILPs: Final recommendations From a four state report. Report available from Altarum.

Emerging Promising Practices

- ▶ Begin in middle school and continue through high school graduation
- ▶ Provide access to online career information systems that use an ePortfolio for the ILP
- ▶ Emphasize three career development processes: Self-exploration, Career exploration, and Career planning and management skills
- ▶ Establish whole school buy in by incorporating ILP activities into advisory periods
- ▶ Adopt student-led parent-teacher conferences

Issues Related to Students with Disabilities

- ▶ Students with disabilities who were highly motivated to attend school were less ready for post-school transitions.
- ▶ Educators were less certain on how to support students with disabilities around career concerns.
- ▶ It is not clear what career development information and experiences students with disabilities are receiving, especially those with significant disabilities.

Are Students with IEPs participating in ILP Activities?

- ▶ Based on our 50-state review we can say “Yes, in most states that mandate ILPs” – but not all.
- ▶ Some states are allowing students with significant disabilities to be excused from engaging in ILP activities because assessment tools and ILP activities are deemed inaccessible.

Promising Practice for Students with Disabilities

- ▶ General and special education officials and educators work together to ensure accessibility of ILP resources and activities.
- ▶ ILP implementation begins in middle school and engages families in the process so that students and families can be stronger advocates.

Promising Practice for Students with Disabilities Continued

- ▶ States provides guidance and examples of how to integrate ILPs into the IEP plans including a focus on post school outcomes.
- ▶ States develop professional development materials and training venues to staff responsible for ILPs and IEPs are equipped with the knowledge and skills to assist students in developing goals and identifying skills, interests, and accommodation-related needs in both plans.

State Level ILP Challenges

- ▶ Lack of communication materials to explain purpose and value of ILPs to different stakeholders.
- ▶ Lack of accountability systems for measuring ILP impact and ROI.
- ▶ Lack of evidence-based grade-specific ILP curriculum that includes measurable benchmarks.

District/School Capacity Development Challenges

- ▶ Lack of leadership support for establishing whole-school buy-in
- ▶ Dearth of staff knowledgeable about career development
- ▶ General and special education educators need clarification as to their respective roles and responsibilities for engaging in ILPs.
- ▶ Many transition staff do not understand how ILPs complement and support IEPs.

Web-based ILP Challenges

- ▶ Lack of connectivity between web-based career information and student information systems in order to evaluate quality ILPs against academic outcomes
- ▶ Many states are not providing an online career information system with ILP ePortfolio for all residents.
- ▶ Inaccessibility of assessment tools and career information for students with significant disabilities.

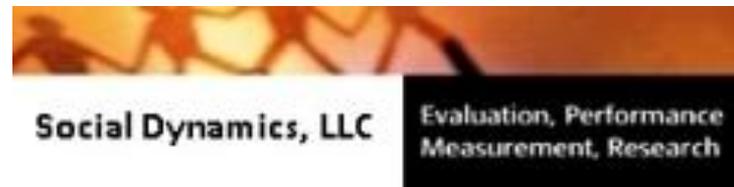
Challenges to Engaging Families in ILPs

- ▶ Families need access to the online resources and ILP activities.
- ▶ More family related ILP activities need to be available.

Other ILP/IEP Challenges

- ▶ ILP implementation has not effectively considered the assessment and curriculum access needs for students with significant disabilities.
- ▶ There is lack of evidence for adopting/ adapting ILP curriculum/strategies for use for youth with significant disabilities.

Research Partners





Questions about the research should be directed to:
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