



# Supported Employment Adapted for Young Adults with Peer Mentors: A Feasibility Study

**Brief #4 Research in the Works**

**TRANSITIONS RTC**

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*The mission of the Transitions RTC is to conduct cutting edge research and knowledge translation projects that support the transition of youth and young adults with serious mental health conditions (age 14-30) into rewarding lives as students and workers. One of these projects is the Thresholds-Dartmouth Research Center adaptation of Individual Placement and Support (IPS) for youth and young adults. The program and study is described below.*

## **The Thresholds Young Adult Program**

The Thresholds Young Adult Program (YAP) is a Transition to Independence (TIP) informed residential and transitional living program in Chicago for young people between the ages of 16 and 21. YAP provides residential, education, employment, case management and therapeutic services to young adults with serious mental health conditions, the majority of whom are wards of the state. In the past, YAP has used the evidence-based Individual Placement and Support (IPS) employment model to assist young adults with their vocational goals. IPS was developed for adult consumers with serious mental illness and emphasizes providing individualized, ongoing supports to consumers to obtain and maintain competitive employment.

## **Adaptation of IPS for Young Adults**

The goal of this study is to specify and standardize modifications to IPS services to target the needs of this age group. Consistent with the version of IPS that was developed for mostly young adults experiencing their first episode of psychosis (IPS-FEP)<sup>1</sup>, direct service staff provide support for consumers who are interested in either educational activities, employment, or both. This IPS-FEP model is augmented by use of Peer Mentors. Peer Mentors provide social support, encouragement, role-modeling and guidance to facilitate young adults' engagement in vocational activities that achieve their goals.

## **The Feasibility Study**

This feasibility study includes manual development and a small trial to test: clinical issues, the clinical approach, research design, and appropriateness of the research measures. There are 35 participants.

For more information about IPS, IPS-FEP models and the current Peer Mentoring model at Thresholds, please contact Rochelle Frounfelker MPH, MSSW at [rfrounfelker@tdart.org](mailto:rfrounfelker@tdart.org) or visit:

<http://www.thresholds.org/explore-research/ongoing-studies>

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~ips/>

For more information on the Transitions RTC please visit: <http://labs.umassmed.edu/transitionsRTC/index.htm>

<sup>1</sup>Nuechterlein, K.H., et al., Individual placement and support for individuals with recent-onset schizophrenia: Integrated supported education and supported employment. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 2008. 31: p. 340-349.



# Thresholds·Dartmouth

Research Center

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