



Fostering Self-Determination

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Introduce Yourself

- What is your name?
- What role brings you to this conference?



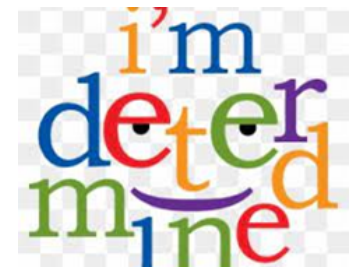
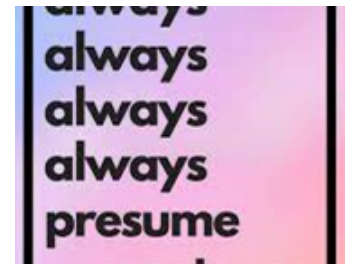
Session Goals

1. Explore the implications of **presuming competence** and moving towards a position of **valuing** all individuals, including those with disabilities.
2. Discuss the complexity of the concept of **self-determination** and implications for individuals with disabilities.
3. Imagine possibilities to **increase opportunities** across settings for individuals with disabilities to grow in self-determination and enhance adult outcomes.
4. **Explore pathways** for students with ID to attend and succeed in college.



3 Keys of My Work

- Presume Competence
- Move Toward Valuing
- Foster Self-Determination



Why Presume Competence?

incompetence
could cause
irreparable
harm to our
students if we

(New) Assumptions Matter

(Jorgensen, 2018)

- Intelligence is not a single measurable characteristic;
- All people have different talents and skills;
- People learn and perform best when they feel valued, when others have high expectations, and when they are taught and supported well (this can be accomplished in inclusive settings);
- When someone cannot currently communicate that they are smart, assume that they are.

That Means (in part) ...

- Commit to helping each person develop a reliable communication system.
- Bring supports to the “general environment” where all individuals belong.
- Individuals do not need to develop skills to bring to the “general environment” before they can benefit from learning there.
- Carefully monitor and withdraw supports as individuals become more independent.



Responses to Disability

(Van Der Klift & Kunc, 2019)

MARGINALIZATION

- Segregation
- Aggression
- Death

REFORM/REHABILITATION

- Minimize the disability
- Assimilation
- “You can be with us when you are like us.”



Responses to Disability continued

(Van Der Klift & Kunc, 2019)

TOLERANCE/BENEVOLENCE

- Resignation
- False belonging
- “We will do it because it is the right thing to do for those unfortunate people.”

VALUING

- Diversity is typical
- Reciprocal relationships
- Equal worth
- Mutual benefit
- Belonging



Self-Determination

- SD is linked to quality of life
- SD is a personal characteristic that empowers individuals to act with intention - causal agency
- Environment impacts the development and exercise of SD
- SD learning occurs when a person encounters an obstacle to his/her goal

Connecting this to college

- What do you think is the best part of going to college?
- Who should go to college?
- How about students with intellectual
- disabilities?

College as a model for fostering self-determination

College doesn't give anything special to students with intellectual disabilities, instead... it gives them something that everyone else who goes to college gets; the opportunity to learn about yourself, get a better job, and... grow up a little bit.



*Think College! Postsecondary Education
Options for Students with Intellectual
Disabilities Meg Grigal & Debra Hart (2010)*

Bethel University Integrated Learning and Development (BUILD) Program



Academics

- **Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) Program**
- ***Career Pathways:***
 - Arts & Communication
 - Business
 - Human Services

Expected Outcomes

1. Increase in independent living skills
2. Secure and maintain integrated employment
3. Develop personal growth



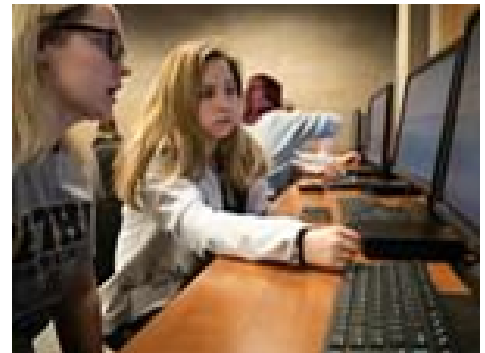
Core Curriculum

- Independent Living
- Jobs and Employment Skills
- Bible
- Independent Study



Elective Courses

- More than 30 elective course options available
- Faculty trained in Universal Design for Learning.
- Student mentors



Certificate in Applied Studies

Students can earn a Certificate in Applied Studies upon completion of the program.



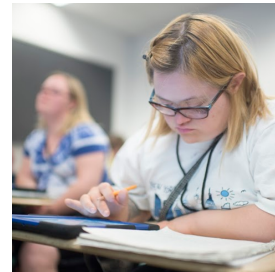
Internships

Meaningful, supported work experiences in an area of interest and skill to prepare students for independent employment.



Career Development

1. Jobs and Employment courses
2. Independent Study
3. Life at Bethel and Internships



BUILD Mentors

1. Housing mentor
2. Student mentor
3. Job mentor
4. Social mentor



Residential Experience

Integrated living experiences in traditional residence halls



Residential Experience continued

1st Year Freshman Hall

- Traditional Dorm Room with two students
- Roommate in BUILD
Intentional integration
- Care for self and part of room
- Prepare one meal per week
- Housing mentors

2nd Year North Village

- On-campus apartments with two to four students
- Roommate(s) in BUILD
- Intentional integration
- Increased responsibilities to care for self and living space including kitchen, bathroom, etc.
- Housing mentors

Students in BUILD are Bethel University Students



Research Studies



Longitudinal Study

- Quality of life (QOL) survey
- 6-year longitudinal study
- 3 time-points



BUILD Student Outcome Conclusion

- It is difficult to compare incoming PSE students with “others.”
- Based on this small sample size, students entering the BUILD program are similar to other young adults with disabilities on many key QOL measures.
- Employment was the biggest area of difference; past employment impacts current and future employment of adults with disabilities (although this was NTLS-2 comparison data).
- These results support the practice of researchers comparing the outcomes of individuals with ID who complete a PSE program to “others” with ID.

Student Experience Study

- Phenomenological study
- Semi-structured interviews
- 6 students completing BUILD program
- Self-determination lens



Phenomenological Study Conclusions

Participants exercised self-determination in choosing to go to college (Wehmeyer, 2003)

- Setting and attaining goals
- Making decisions
- Developing “causal agency” - a person’s ability to impact, direct, or cause events

The college experience provided an innovative environment or intervention with a context that positively impacted the participant’s self-determination (Walker et al., 2011)

- Key components of the college environment/intervention
- Opportunity-rich environment,
- Network of supports, and
- Community of belonging.

Campus Impact Study

- Case study design
- Semi-structured interviews
- 15 administrators, faculty, staff, traditional students



Campus Impact Conclusions

The BUILD program has impacted the university comprehensively, encompassing traditional students, faculty and staff, classroom experiences, policies and structure, and organizational culture.

- community member experience and identity development (students, faculty, staff),
- organizational policy and systems,
- culture and subcultures of the university.

Minute and mundane changes accumulated to richly change the “fabric of the community”

Questions and Answers

www.bethel.edu/build

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Thank you!

