



Creating a Path to Employment

*Presented by Cheryl Laaker, Manager of Community Engagement,
Sunflower Health Plan*



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Goals of This Training

- * Provide brief overview of disability and employment.
- * Provide discussion points.
- * Provide brief overview of employment resources/programs.

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Kansas is an Employment First State

- ✱ In 2011, House Bill No. 2336 was enacted making Kansas an Employment First state
- ✱ This act states that competitive and integrated employment shall be considered its first option when serving persons with disabilities who are working age to obtain employment.
- ✱ It also established the Employment First oversight commission.

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WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act)

- * If workers are age 24 or younger hired after July 22, 2016, they must first explore employment and work with Voc Rehab before working at subminimum wage.
- * Regardless of age, if working at subminimum wage, they must receive annual career counseling and be provided with training on self-advocacy, self-determination and participate in peer mentoring opportunities

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Employment is a Positive Health Outcome for Members

- * Increased social participation
- * Higher quality of life and life satisfaction
- * Increased self-esteem and decreased depression
- * Reduced poverty and enhanced economic wellbeing
- * Sense of identity and purpose
- * Rhythm of the day
- * Connections with others, contribution to society



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Create the Path

- * Encourage independence and increase expectations
 - * Teach responsibility through chores
 - * Teach self advocacy at a young age
 - * Teach how to follow instructions and that there are rules in life
 - * Teach how to accept criticism
 - * Teach how to respect others
 - * Allow them to make mistakes



The Path ...

- * Talk about work
 - * Work history, interests, preferences, goals
 - * Communicate positive experiences/success stories
 - * Incorporate into person-centered planning
 - * What services and supports are needed to develop a personal pathway to employment?
 - * Assure there are vocational goals on the IEP (Individualized Education Program/Plan)



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The Path ...

* Presume employability

- * Working with people “where they are”
- * Not waiting until someone is “graduated” from a sheltered workshop, “ready, stable” or “has no behaviors”

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The Path ...

- * Identify strengths
 - * What skills are they independent on?
 - * What are their physical strengths? Fine motor vs gross motor
 - * Where do they have the longest attention span?
- * Find jobs that will enhance these strengths
- * Attend Family Employment Awareness Training through Families Together





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Create Opportunities for Learning

- * Find opportunities to volunteer
- * Create/find places to explore new interests
- * Support the person to challenge themselves
- * Educate on how employment affects their benefits

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Assistive Technology

- * Think outside the box – 3D printers
- * Make it specific to the individual and the job
- * May have to try several different types before finding one that works
- * Does not have to be complex (laminated grid with pictures)



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Assistive Technology for Kansans Project

ATK connects people with disabilities and health conditions of all ages with the assistive technology they need to learn, work, play and participate in community life safely and independently.

- * Technical consultation/recommendations
- * Hands-on demonstrations
- * Equipment loan
- * Equipment reuse/reutilization
- * Funding/loans
- * Home modification evaluations
- * <http://atk.ku.edu/> or (1-800-KANDOIT)



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Employment Options

- * Community-based opportunities
- * Integrated within a business
- * Preferably business-paid not provider-paid wages at minimum wage or higher
- * Internships (paid and unpaid experience)
- * Americorps or other community programs

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Employment Options

- * Local programs that focus on employment skills
- * Small Business Ownership
- * Post-secondary education/vocational training
- * Transition programs like Project SEARCH

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Resources

- * Learn/network with employment resources
 - * Vocational Rehabilitation
 - * Workforce Centers (<http://us.jobs/state-workforce-agencies.asp>)
 - * Benefits/Work Incentives Counseling (State Medicaid buy-in programs)
 - * Assistive technology





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Vocational Rehabilitation

- * The disability employment agency for the state of Kansas.
 - * Vocational Rehabilitation can help you get and/or keep a job.
 - * Call for an appointment or submit application online.
 - * www.dcf.ks.gov/services/RS/Pages/Employment-Services.aspx
 - * Presumptive eligibility for Kansans who already receive SSI or SSDI.
 - * Services do not begin until Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) is written and approved. (90 days)
 - * Also a resource for post-secondary education and training.





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Workforce Development

- * Connector between Kansas employers and job seekers.
 - * No eligibility requirements. Services can start immediately.
 - * Assistance with applications, resumes, interview skills, work skills training.
 - * Apply in person or open [kansasworks.com](https://www.kansasworks.com) account online.
 - * Find the center closest to you
<https://www.kansasworks.com/ada/r/contact>
 - * Great Job Search Workbook online
<http://www.kansascommerce.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/607>
 - * Access both Vocational Rehabilitation and KansasWorks together!
- * Open to all Kansas job seekers



Working Healthy

What is it?

- * A state & federally funded Medicaid buy-in program that provides KanCare benefits for working people with permanent disabilities.
- * Pay Medicaid premium instead of client obligation or spenddown.

Who qualifies?

- * Kansans age 16-64 with physical or mental disabilities who are competitively employed with verifiable income.
- * Must meet the Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) standard, even if not currently receiving SSDI.
- * Assets of less than \$15,000 and net family income below the Working Healthy program limits.



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Resources Continued

- * Working Healthy Benefits Specialists
- * Employment1st.org
- * <https://kcdcinfo.ks.gov/employment-first>
- * <http://employmentfirst.leadcenter.org/>
- * APSE (Association of People Supporting Employment First)
<http://apse.org/>
- * www.gkcbln.org/shift.html
- * Other community programs
 - * Dress for Success
 - * Church groups/classes





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“Strive not to be a success, but
rather to be of value.”

– **Albert Einstein**





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Questions

Cheryl Laaker

Cheryl.L.Laaker@sunflowerhealthplan.com

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