

Research Highlights

Topic: Person-Center Planning and Friendships

Blue-Banning, M., Turnbull, A.P., & Pereira, L. (2002). Hispanic youth/young adults with disabilities: Parents' visions for the future. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 27(3), 204-219.

BOTTOM LINE

In focus group interviews, Hispanic parents of youth/young adults with disabilities discussed their hopes and expectations for their child's future. The findings suggest that Hispanic parents have a diversity of hopes and expectations concerning future living, employment, and free-time options for their children with disabilities. Parents' responses indicate the influence of not only the Hispanic culture on their hopes and expectations, but also the multicultural contexts in which these parents live.

TIPS

- Increasing the acceptance of a child with a disability by extended family, friends and community members may reduce the stress experienced by family members of the child.
- Ensure that all families, regardless of cultural/ethnic background, have information and knowledge about the adult service system in general and more specifically about available residential, employment, and leisure options in their community.
- Strive to understand your own cultural values as well as the cultural values that influence a family's preferences for their son's or daughter's quality of life.
- As a result of cultural heritage or personal preference, the quality of life envisioned by an individual and family may not conform to the quality of life as defined by dominant U.S. cultural values.

- The inclusion of functional skills (e.g., activities of daily living such as self-care) in the curricula of students with disabilities may facilitate their inclusion in community opportunities in the future.

KEY FINDINGS

- While parents expressed diverse hopes and expectations, many envisioned a future that would be consistent with the preferences of their sons or daughters and characterized by their participation in the community.
- A universal component of parents' vision was the acceptance of their child as a person. Lack of their child's acceptance by others was expressed in all focus groups as a source of distress.
- Parents had visions of the future encompassing three areas of their child's life: future living, employment, and leisure activities.
 - ◆ *Future living:* The heart of parents' discussion about future living was the future physical and emotional well-being of their child. Comments about future living options fell into two subcategories: residential and improved skill proficiency.
 - Residential: Three residential options were identified: (a) living in the family home, (b) living in a supervised, residential care facility, or (c) living independently in the child's own apartment or home.
 - Improved skill proficiency: Regardless of their choice of future residence for their child, parents expressed the desire for their child to improve proficiency in activities of daily living skills.
 - ◆ *Employment:* The majority of parents who envisioned their children having employment also expressed the desire for them to live in their own apartment or home.
 - All comments regarding employment options indicated parents wanted their children to have meaningful jobs.
 - The majority of parents who envisioned their child living at home or in a supervised residential setting did not mention employment as a part of their vision.
 - ◆ *Leisure activities:* Across all groups, there were parents who talked about the importance of leisure activities during their child's free time. Often these parents emphasized the importance of their children having leisure time activities of their own choosing.

METHOD

- 38 Hispanic parents of youth and young adults with developmental disabilities participated in focus groups in four states.
- Participants were identified using purposive sampling.
- A Hispanic community leader within each community served as a research site coordinator. The site coordinators had many responsibilities including assisting in the identification of participants and finding a location for and scheduling the interviews.
- A participatory action research committee provided advice and guidance to ensure that the research outcomes would be relevant for children with and without disabilities, family members, teachers, and researchers.
- The three phases of data analyses were: (a) recording and managing the raw data, (b) data reduction, and (c) interpretation.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

- Blue-Banning, M., Turnbull, A.P., & Pereira, L. (2000). Group Action Planning as a support strategy for Hispanic families: Parent and professional perspectives. *Mental Retardation*, 38(2), 262-275.
- Turnbull, A.P., Pereira, L., & Blue-Banning, M. (1999). Parents' facilitation of friendships between their children with a disability and friends without a disability. *Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps*, 24(2), 85-99.
- Turnbull, A. P., & Ruef, M. B. (1997). Family perspectives on inclusive lifestyle issues for individuals with problem behavior. *Exceptional Children*, 63, 211-227.

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