



'This Ability' Disabled Learners and their Parents Making and Exploring Hidden Connections



'Connect 5': The Inter-relationships between Young People, Families, Education, Careers and their World: Aimhigher Lancashire 3rd National Conference, 2007

This information sheet focuses on activities developed in the Aspire project for disabled students who remain a key target audience for Aimhigher activities. In addition to ideas shared by Christine Haugh, resources produced by Aimhigher Lancashire and others to support work with disabled students is included.

Workshop Facilitator:

Christine Haugh, Disability Development Officer, Aimhigher London North



c.haugh@mdx.ac.uk

Workshop Context:

This workshop gave participants the opportunity to hear about the hidden connections between disability and HE, ask questions on points raised throughout the presentation and discuss problems they have encountered personally and professionally. The work is based in Middlesex University and is an award running programme established in 2005 that provides a variety of activities for disabled students and their parents in 10 London boroughs.

PERSON-CENTRED REVIEWS

- *Ambassadors trained to facilitate Person-Centred Reviews for students with a statement*
- *Increases student participation in review of their own provision and communication between Ambassadors and students' parents/carers*

The use of trained student ambassadors not only provides role models for working with new and prospective students but gives disabled undergraduates a valuable work experience that enhances their own employability.

There are a range of different parent events that support parents / guardians in actively participating in the pre transition activities. Participation in voluntary sector events is an effective strategy for meeting parents in situations where they may feel more comfortable.

MEETINGS WITH GROUPS OF PARENTS

- *Participation in School/College Parents' Evenings / Target Setting Days*
- *Participation in Voluntary and Statutory Sector Conferences for Parents*
- *Provide Parents/Carers with Information and Advice on range of issues relating to disability / inclusion /transition*

INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS WITH FAMILIES

- Campus tours for individual families
- Meetings with individual families to discuss application/financial/academic support
- Parents can also discuss matters via phone/email

The service provides a valuable link during transition. This has been identified as particularly difficult for disabled students, and as the LAD: Lancashire Aimhigher Disability project identified staff working in schools, FE and HE do not necessarily know or have the time to provide the additional support needed and provided by this project.






Providing targeted activities for individual families allows information to be adapted to need.

This can be particularly important for students with complex support needs or for those who wish to control the extent to which they disclose their disability.

MEETINGS WITH RELEVANT PROFESSIONALS

- Can attend and even help in scheduling meetings with parents / carers and relevant professionals, to help assist successful transition

FURTHER READING:

-  Embedding Disability – presentations from the Action on Access conference http://www.actiononaccess.org/?p=2_3_11
-  Information Sheet 3: Working with parents to improve access into HE for disabled students <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/projects/reap/families/Conference06.htm>
-  Lancashire Aimhigher Disability (LAD) project has produced a series of information leaflets for different audiences including parents, practitioners and teachers. <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/projects/reap/projects/LAHDResources.htm>
-  The Road to Higher Education – produced by Aimhigher West programme www.aimhigher.ac.uk/sites/practitioner/resources/Roadmap%20Poster%20with%20panel.pdf
-  Wray, M., and Houghton, A. (2007) 'Disability: A rough guide for Widening Participation Practitioners' Action on Access www.actiononaccess.org/?p=2_5_4_3_1


Prepared on behalf of Aimhigher Lancashire



For other Information Sheets

This is one of 5 Information Sheets prepared following the 'Connect 5' Aimhigher Lancashire National Families Conference. For further details see:

<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/projects/reap/families/Conference07.htm>

For further information about working with families, or copies of other resources, contact:

 Lancaster University, Department Educational Research, REAP: Researching Equity, Access and Participation, County South, Lancaster, LA1 4YD

 Deena Jayousi: d.jayousi@lancaster.ac.uk or  01524 592907

 Ann-Marie Houghton: a.houghton@lancaster.ac.uk

 <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/projects/reap/families/index.htm>



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