PD Study Description and Questionnaire Questions

[The Center for Advancing Policy on Employment for Youth (CAPE-Youth)](#) is a U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) funded national technical assistance center supporting the development, implementation, and integration of effective evidence-based practices and policies for improving transition outcomes for youth and youth adults with disabilities.

This year, as part of the ongoing effort to strengthen and align professional development across the many systems serving youth and young adults with disabilities, we are inviting your voluntary participation in CAPE-Youth's research study on **Professional Development.** The purpose of this study is to explore best practices, challenges, and strategies for improving professional development efforts and the subsequent capacity of youth serving professionals including supervisors, and frontline staff within the workforce system, education system and other systems supporting transitioning youth and young adults with disabilities as in attaining their employment goals. Findings from a phase one group concept mapping process will inform a second phase involving interviews to further identify gaps/barriers and strategies for overcoming such barriers. Please take time to read the attached flyer and letter from ODEP regarding this project.

Participants will engage in a 1 hour and 40 minute [group concept mapping (GCM)](#) process as well as potentially engage a 1 hour and 30 minute interview.

GROUP CONCEPT MAPPING QUESTIONS

Step 1: Brainstorming: "Please respond to the following prompt with as many individual words or phrases as you would like to contribute. Please make sure each idea is entered separately. You can revisit this activity as many times as you would like during this first step as new thoughts or ideas come to mind." Participants enter as many responses as they can think of in this step.

Prompt (to get the process started)

1) To successfully support youth and young adults with disabilities in transition to employment, a professional **would know or know how to**…

Step 2: Sorting: "Using the ideas contributed from all participants during Brainstorming, please SORT each idea, connecting ideas you think are similar in meaning, or share some meaning. This "sensemaking" activity produces the map results. You can create any number of categories to group similar ideas. You can designate/name categories and group items into similar categories. As you progress, you may even decide to go back and change the names of the categories. FIRST, review all the ideas so you have a sense of the overall content. Then begin by naming a category for each idea. You will find ideas might fall into more than one category once you start, but make the best choice from your perspective. Remember this is not prioritizing or describing what you like or do not, but it is organizing the ideas into conceptual groups."

Sorting Question (once all participants complete brainstorming)

2) Look at all the items and **SORT them into groups of ideas that you think are similar in meaning**, or that share some meaning. This "sensemaking" activity produces the map results. You can sort them into any number of groups, and the name the groups.

Step 3: Rating: Importance: Participants will have the entire brainstorm list of ideas from all contributions and rate them according to how important they are using the prompt below. They will do this for every item by typing in or choosing from a four-point scale.

Rating Question (importance) (once all participants complete sorting)

3) **How important do you believe each idea is** for professionals to know or know how to do to support youth with disabilities? Using a four-point scale, please rate each idea where:

> 1=Relatively unimportant
>
> 2=Somewhat important
>
> 3=Important
>
> 4=Extremely important

Step 4: Rating: Presence: Participants will have the entire brainstorm list of ideas from all contributions and rate them according to how present they are using the prompt below. They will do this for every item by typing in or choosing from a four-point scale.

Rating Question (presence) (once participants rate importance)

4) How much is this knowledge or ability present in your work setting? Using a four-point scale, please rate each idea where:

> 1=Not present (I never see evidence of this in my work setting.)
>
> 2=Somewhat present (I see evidence of this occasionally in my work setting.)
>
> 3=Very present (I often see evidence of this in my work setting.)
>
> 4=Always present (I see evidence of this all the time in my work setting.)

Step 5: Rating: Ease of Access: Participants will have the entire brainstorm list of ideas from all contributions and rate them according to how easy it is to access professional development on these topics using the prompt below. They will do this for every item by typing in or choosing from a four-point scale.

Rating Question (ease of access) (once participants rate presence)

5) How easy or hard is it for you to access training/professional development in each area? Using a four-point scale, please rate each idea where:

> 1=Really hard
>
> 2=Somewhat hard
>
> 3=Easy

4=Very easy

Once the GCM is complete, the findings will be shared with participants to inform phase 2—interviews. These groups will be formed by selecting a subgroup of participants who engaged in GCM. Interviews will be 1 hour and 30 minutes in length including questions and discussions about identified gaps from the GCM in terms of importance, presence, and ease of access, factors affecting access to meaningful professional development, barriers to professional development, and identified strategies to help fill the gap. These will be facilitated discussions, recorded (for internal research purposes only to verify information), and transcribed.

Interview QUESTIONS

Interviewers will share with participants preliminary findings from GCM, including a list of topics rated as important but not present as well as present but not important. This may be presented in text form as well as by using charts and infographics. As a group, they will review the information, identify gaps, and respond about accuracy based on their lived experience.

Review the following Purpose/Goal:

"In an effort to strengthen service integrity and to align PD efforts and resources across the myriad of systems serving youth, we have been gathering information regarding current PD opportunities of youth serving professionals with the purpose of identifying themes and gaps used to inform the design of: a cross-systems rubric of evidence-based practices, a national guide to current credentialing entities and the creation of staff development recommendations/strategies necessary to elevate the transition and employment outcomes of youth and young adults with disabilities."

Review the meeting process:

"Our GCM process helped us to identify themes and gaps in supporting youth and young adults with disabilities as they transition to employment across education partners, WIOA partners and other workforce system partners."

"We are conducting facilitated interviews with open dialogues with one of our team members capturing the conversation in notes. Groups will be recorded to ensure all elements of the conversation are captured and reported accurately.

During the interviews, we will:

- Present findings from Phase 1 GCM summary report.
- Facilitate an open format discussion and using the pre-approved questions below.
- Participants will have the opportunity to participate using an open microphone or the chat-box feature of the meeting platform.
- Accommodations for alternative communication methods will be provided upon request
- Facilitators will be available to provide prompting and clarification when needed.

1) The GCM results showed us what PD knowledge and skills youth service professionals believe are important and present. Looking at those results, what gaps do you notice in what was important but not present currently?

a) In your experience, is this accurate?

b) Why/why not?

Interviewers will share with participants preliminary findings from GCM, including areas in which they indicated were easy or difficulty for them to access professional development. This may be presented in text form as well as by using charts and infographics. As a group, participants will review the information, respond about accuracy based on their lived experience, reflect on what affects access, and suggest strategies for accessing professional development.

2) The GCM results showed us how easy or hard it is to access professional development in each area. In your experience, is this accurate?

a) Why/why not?

3) What are some factors that affect access to PD?

4) How would you go about accessing the PD you need?

5) As we identify potential gaps in knowledge and access to quality/content-specific training, what do you think are barriers in filling those gaps?

6) Reflecting on PD methods (e.g., coaching, training, and mentoring), what methods are most frequently used in your field/organization?

a) How effective do you believe these PD methods are in preparing professionals to support youth with disabilities in transitioning to employment?

b) What other methods would you recommend utilizing to improve the quality of PD and transfer of skills into daily work of professionals?

7) What are the PD delivery modalities (e.g., classroom/in person training, webinar, asynchronous, synchronous, hybrid, self-study, micro-learning) most frequently used?

a) What modalities are most effective in extending learning and applying skills in every day work?

b) What would you do to access other methods/modalities?

c) What do you think are some barriers to quality learning through any of these modalities that you have identified?

d) What supports do you believe will help YSPs address barriers to quality relevant PD?

e) What supports or resources should YSPs have to help them meet identified training needs?

8) Is there PD provided which you feel is not valuable?

a) If yes, what factors made it not valuable?

b) Is there a mechanism in place to provide meaningful feedback regarding professorial development to your agency/organization?

i) If yes, please describe to us how you provide that feedback.

9) What is currently done or in place to assess and evaluate the quality, availability, and effectiveness of PD?

    a) What is your role in these processes?

10) What role, if any, do youth and families play in designing, selecting, or providing PD?

11) Do you believe training is valued in your field?

    a) Why or why not?

12) Do you believe credentials are valued in your field?

    a) Why or why not?

13) What is one thing you believe is required that not only demonstrates high quality professional development in your field but also is specific to improving youth with disabilities transitioning to employment?

14) Are there things you wish you had learned or had access to during your pre-service/preparation program?

    a) What about at growth points in your career?

15) Are there other things about Professional Development that you want to make sure we hear?

Facilitators will:

- provide a summary of preliminary observations;
- inform of plans for using the information in the future;
- provide contact information for any participants desiring a continued opportunity to provide input; and
- thank all participants and close the meeting.

Closing Language

"Thank you for your participation in today's interview. Our preliminary observations indicate…"

"Once we complete all discussions, we will create an overall summary report of the responses to inform workforce systems and their partners of the essential components of PD necessary for youth serving professionals as well as suggestions for how policymakers and administrators can support robust training and skill development for their staff. In addition, we will create a rubric by which policymakers can evaluate, select, and improve PD for staff."

"We may reach out to you throughout this process to get clarification or feedback on our reports and rubric."

"In recognition of the time and work you contributed in both GCM and interviews, we will be sending you a $25 gift card."

"If you have any questions during this time, please contact Kimberly Osmani at kosmani@cornell.edu or Wendy Quarles at wq45@cornell.edu. Have a wonderful day."

Privacy Act Statement
Collection and Use of Personal Information

The following statement is made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5. U. S. C. 552a). Information collected will be handled and stored in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (5 U.S.C. 552a). Furnishing the data requested is voluntary.

We will use the data you provide for the CAPE-Youth Research Project, funded by The United States Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy. In accordance with the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (Title 5 of Public Law 107-347) and other applicable Federal laws, your responses will not be disclosed in identifiable form without your informed consent. Per the Federal Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015, Federal information systems are protected from malicious activities through cybersecurity screening of transmitted data.