

# Promoting the Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income (PROMISE)

**Connecting Youth with Disabilities and Families Living in Poverty: Lessons Learned**

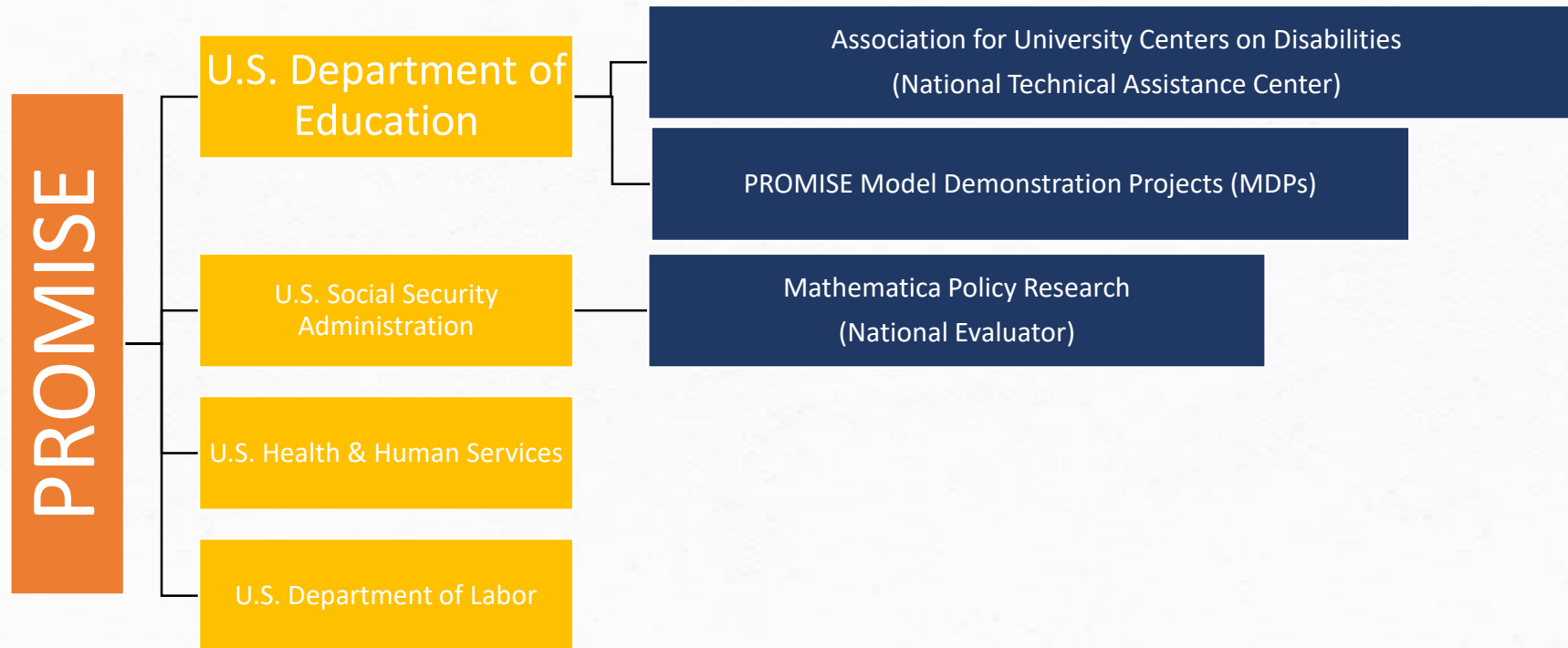


# The Problem

- A significant number of child SSI recipients do not become independent, self-sufficient tax paying members of the community as adults.
- Families of many SSI recipients are not self-sufficient.
- Child SSI recipients become adult SSI recipients due to
  - Low educational attainment and employment rates.
  - Low postsecondary, vocational rehabilitation or other enrollment rates.
- Rangarajan, Fraker, Honeycutt, Mamun, Martinez, O'Day, & Wittenburg. (2009). The Social Security Administration's Youth Transition Demonstration Projects: Evaluation Design Report.; Davies, Rupp, & Wittenburg. (2009). A life-cycle perspective on the transition to adulthood among children receiving supplemental security income payments.; Fraker, & Rangarajan. (2009). The social security administration's youth transition demonstration projects.; Loprest, & Wittenburg. (2005). Choices, Challenges, and Options: Child SSI Recipients Preparing for the Transition to Adult Life. The Urban Institute.

# FEDERAL PARTNERS

## INTERAGENCY



# RESEARCH DESIGN

## POPULATION

Target Population: Youth, 14-16 years of age, enrolled in the SSI program through the Social Security Administration and their families

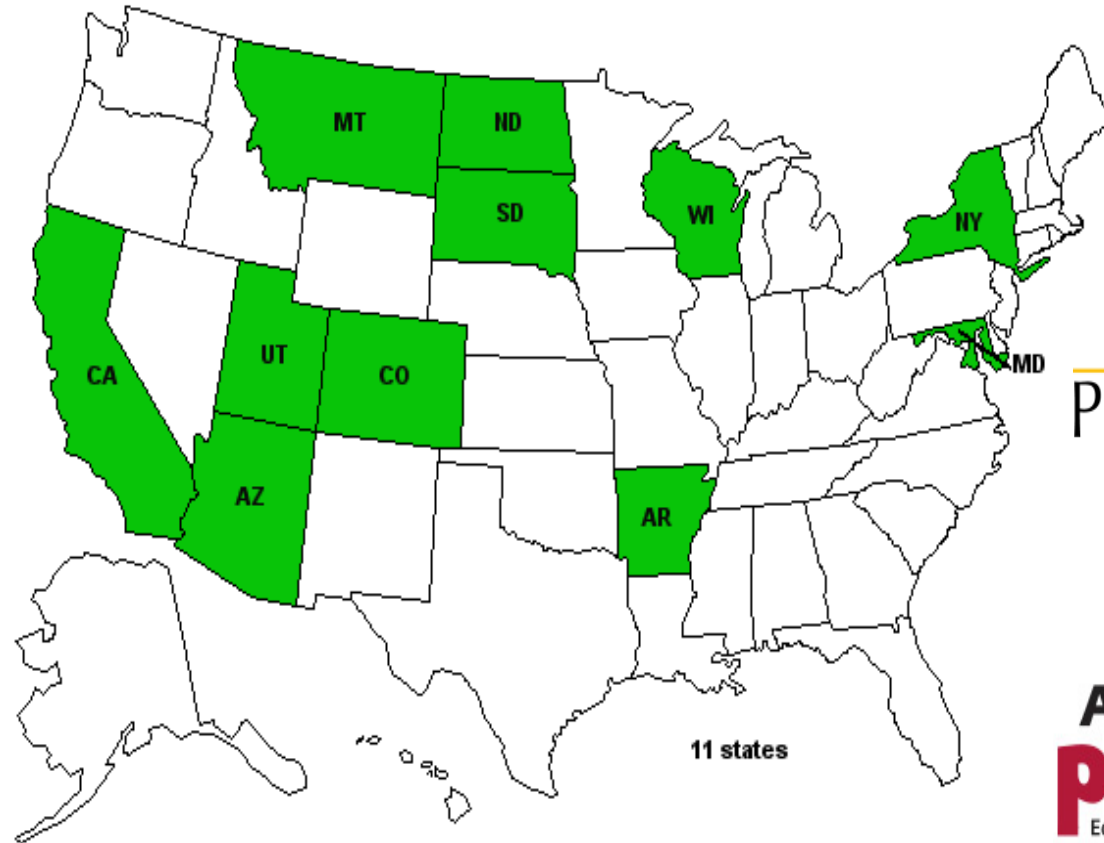
Six grant awardees were required to recruit 13,172 participants for the study (all MDPs were required to recruit 2,000 participants , except CA – 3,172 participants); recruitment ended on 4.30.16 and all MDPs met or exceeded their enrollment targets (total enrollment- 13,444/102%)

Experimental Research Design: RCT used to test interventions to predict positive outcomes for SSI eligible youth. The control group continues to receive typical services available to them in their state.





**ASPIRE**



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# PROMISE MDP CORE FEATURES

## REQUIREMENTS

- **Develop partnerships** with multiple state agencies and organizations
- **Provide services and supports** which included:
  - case management and linkages to services
  - benefits counseling and financial capability services
  - career and work-based learning experiences, to include paid employment in integrated settings
  - parent training and information

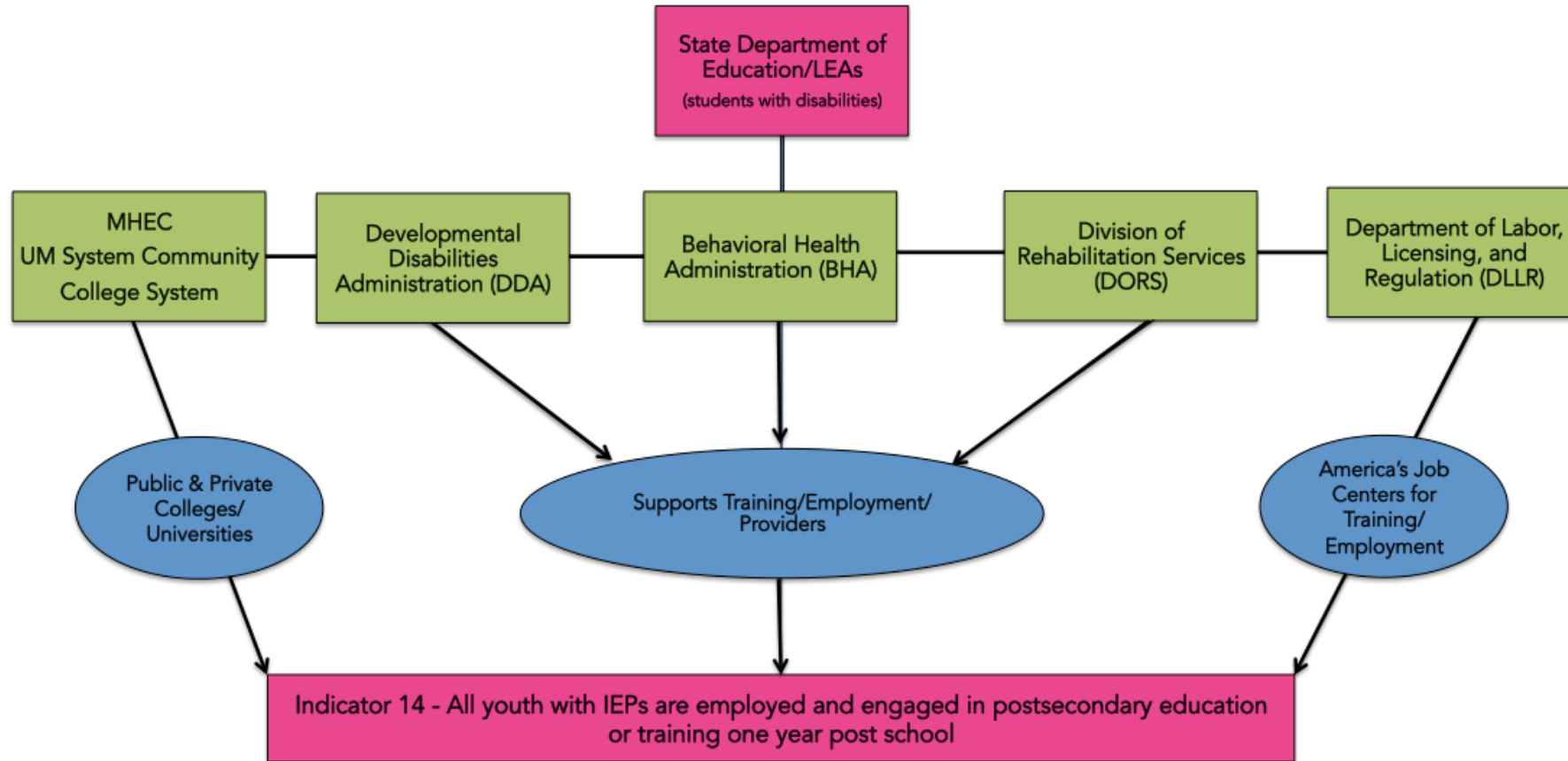


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*It pays to work!*

# Navigating Transition

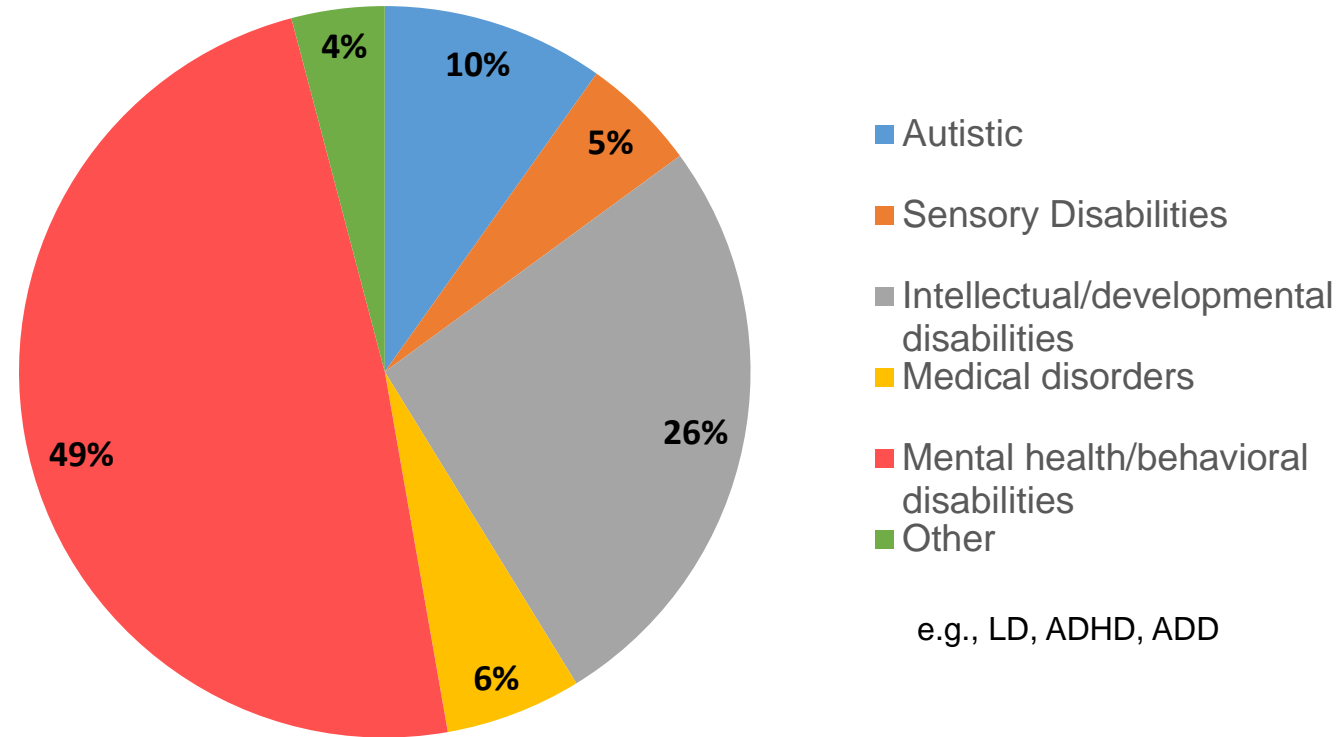




# MD PROMISE Demographics

N=997

Autistic	10%
Sensory Disabilities	5%
Intellectual/developmental disabilities	26%
Medical disorders	6%
Mental health/behavioral disabilities	49%
Other	4%



Luecking, R., Crane, K., Gingerich, J. (in press) *Intervention fidelity in a large-scale model demonstration project: Lessons from Maryland PROMISE*. Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, special issue PROMISE

# MD PROMISE Demographics

N=997

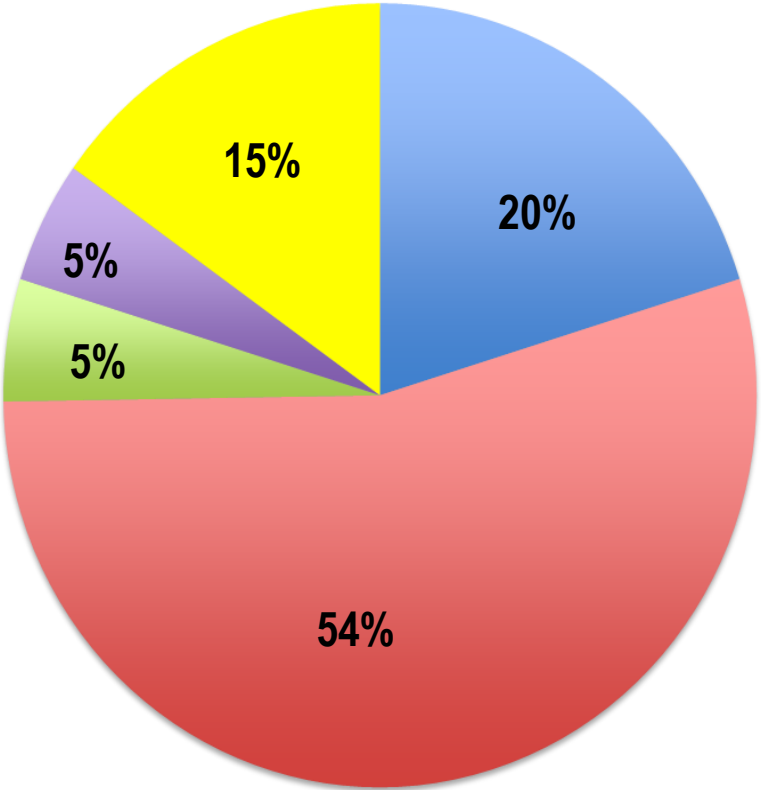
20% White

54 % Black

5% Other

5% Hispanic

15% Unreported



# Core Interventions: % of 997

# Perspectives

- The diverse needs of many youth with disabilities and their families, particularly those in poverty, can't be met by any one school, provider, community service agency or family. Focused and committed efforts across the broad range of partners at the state, local and school level are essential to achieving positive outcomes.
- Staff came from various backgrounds and worked across the state. They need to learn how to identify and compile and communicate information and resources in support of families and youth.
- Much information is presented to the public as “this is what we are/we do” versus providing information across agencies based on the needs of the audience.

# Lessons Learned

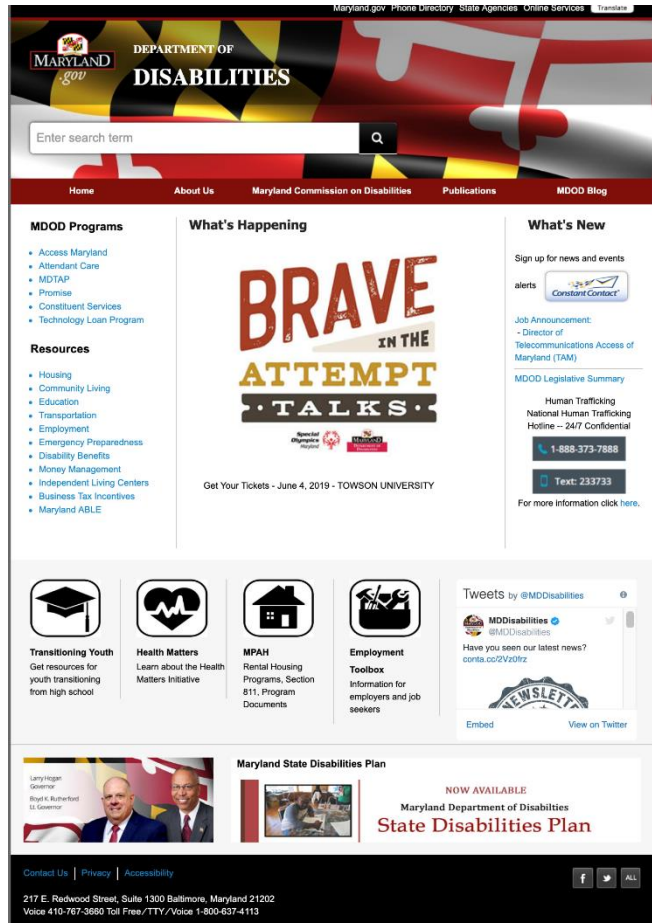
- Need to look beyond the disability arena for resources to those focused on low income, in their community. More out there than we realize that can fill gaps in disability services.
- Much of the information available was not developed with PROMISE youth and families in mind. Needed to develop information and resources to better meet their needs.
- Jargon free, low reading levels, graphics and white space, visually appealing.
- Developed in response to frequently asked questions/needs.
- Well developed information and resources are useful when onboarding new staff.

- Information needs to be updated regularly.
- Don't reinvent the wheel---collect existing information and resource guides and add to them.
- Consistency of information/messaging important. Cross agency training, talking to one another to ensure information is consistent across partners.
- Don't just provide information but what to expect, ie. VR—two letters, two calls, if no response and application is closed and you have to start over.

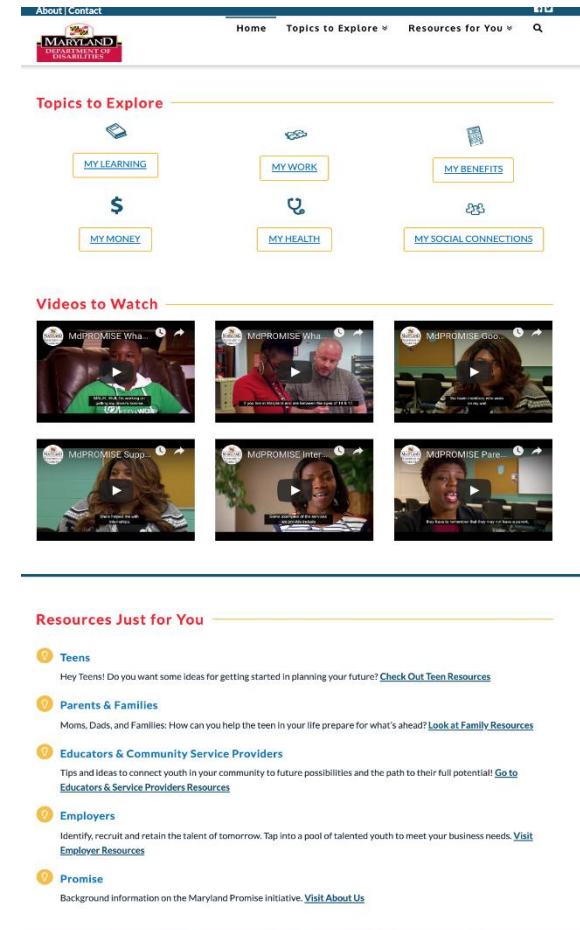
- Don't presume staff know it all. Ie. Allegany Co. lesson learned
- Provide the same information to providers, professionals and youth and families.
- Provide a folder with written materials, individual papers get lost!
- Remind information seekers to take notes, get names and numbers.

# Website Examples

- [www.mdod.state.md.us](http://www.mdod.state.md.us)



- [www.mdtransitions.org](http://www.mdtransitions.org)





# Benefits

## Think You Can't Work? Think Again...

Having a job is an important part of life and these worries about losing your benefits shouldn't keep you from going to work. There are a lot of possibilities to think about and questions you would probably like to have answered, such as:

- ▶ Would you like to work but are afraid you will lose your Social Security check?
- ▶ Have you stopped working because your check was reduced?
- ▶ Do you think that you might lose your Medicaid benefits if you go to work?
- ▶ Are you afraid that if you try to work, but it doesn't pan out, you might not be able to receive benefits again?



## Contact a Benefits Counselor

There are programs and people who can help you figure out your benefits.

Contact Maryland Work Incentive Network (MD WIN)

[MD WIN Website](#)

**Phone:** Voice [\(301\) 277-2839](tel:3012772839) or [\(888\) 838-1776](tel:8888381776) **TDD:** Use Maryland Relay 711

# Featured Resources



## Changes in Benefits when You Turn 18

At age 18, teens who get SSI must go through two kinds of medical reviews to keep their benefits. This is called Age 18 Redetermination. [Learn more about Age 18 Redetermination and Benefit Options](#)



## SSI & Section 1619(b)

This new Medicaid law allows former SSI cash recipient to keep Medicaid benefits if SSI cash benefits are lost due to earned income. [Learn more about SSI & Section 1619 \(b\) here.](#)



## Expedited Reinstatement & SSDI

Expedited Reinstatement (EXR) is a post-termination work incentive and is the third phase of SSDI work incentives. [Learn more about Expedited & SSDI Reinstatement here.](#)



## Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE)

Students under age 22, who are regularly attending school, can take advantage of the student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE). [Learn more about Student Earned Income Exclusion here.](#)



## SSI INCOME RULES (1)

Income basically comes in two kinds: Earned and Unearned [Learn more about SSI Income here.](#)



## Work Incentives (1)

Rules that allow you to work and keep public benefits. [More about work incentives...](#)



## Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE)

IMPAIRMENT RELATED WORK EXPENSES (IRWE) can be used by workers who receive



## Extended Period of Eligibility

The Extended Period of Eligibility (EPE) is the second phase of SSDI work incentives that immediately follows the Trial Work Period (TWP). [Learn more about the Extended Period of Eligibility here.](#)



## SSI Income Rules for Adults above 18 (1)

The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program requires that recipients have a limited amount of resources. [Learn more about SSI Income for Adults above 18 here.](#)



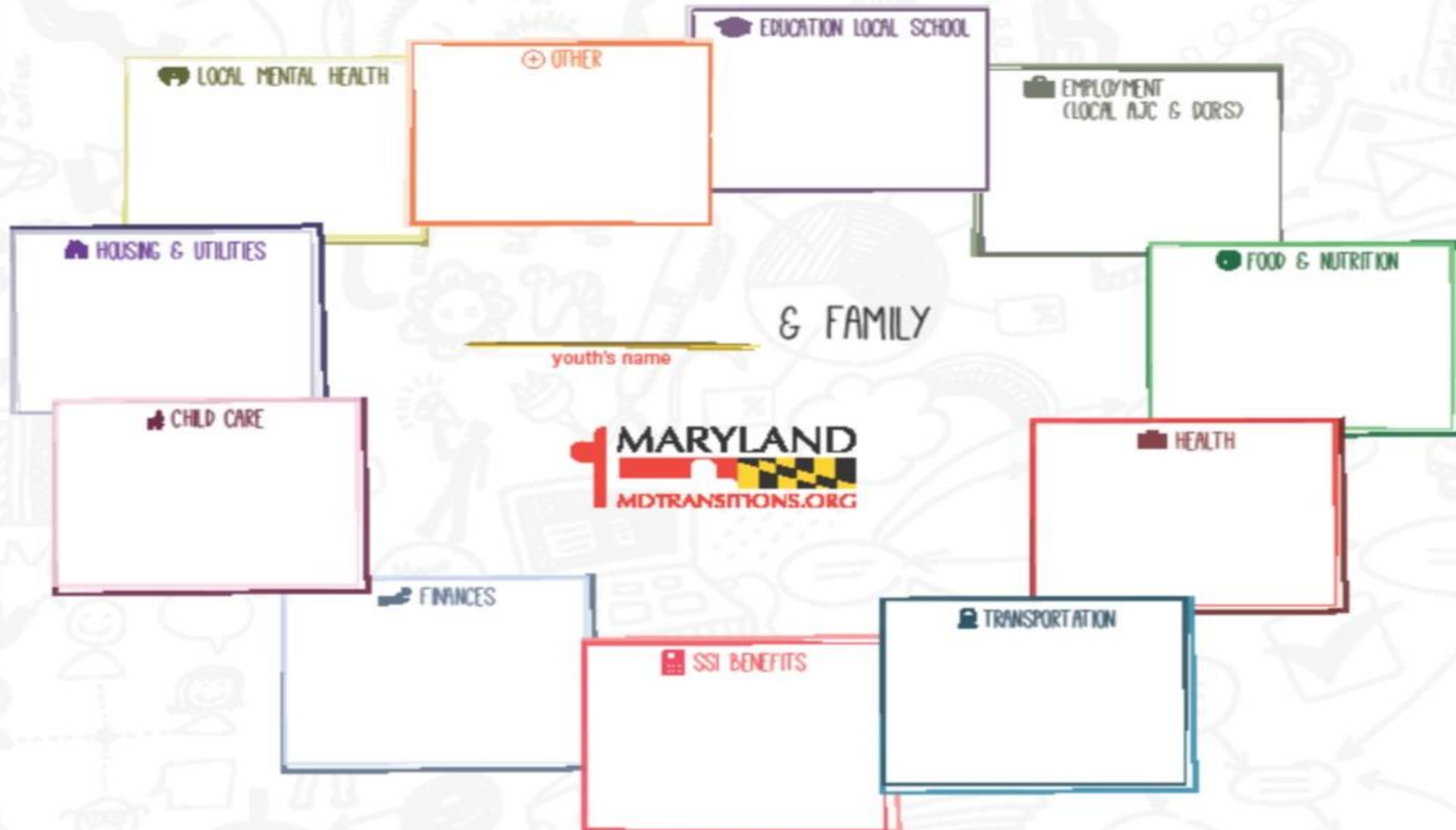
## Plans to Achieve Self-Support (PASS) (1)

SSI will normally count a certain portion of earned or unearned income and limits resources to \$2000. [Learn more about PASS here.](#)



# MD PROMISE personal map

Maryland 211: Access to health and human service information - [www.211md.org](http://www.211md.org) | call 2-1-1 or text 898 211



# MD PROMISE other resources

**Maryland 211:** Access to health and human service information - [www.211md.org](http://www.211md.org) | call 2-1-1 or text 898 211

## CHILD CARE

Childcare Subsidy Program

<http://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-subsidy-program>

## EDUCATION

The Parent's Place of Maryland

<https://www.ppmmd.org/>

Maryland State Department of Education

<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org>

## EMPLOYMENT

Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services

[www.dors.maryland.gov](http://www.dors.maryland.gov)

## AMERICA'S JOB CENTERS

Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation

<http://www.dllr.state.md.us>

## FINANCIAL EDUCATION

Maryland Cash Campaign

<http://cashmd.org/>

## FOOD / NUTRITION

Maryland Foodbank

<https://mdfoodbank.org/>

<https://mdfoodbank.org/need-food/>

## HEALTH

Maryland Health Connections

<https://www.marylandhealthconnection.gov/>

## HOUSING & UTILITIES

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development

<http://dhcd.maryland.gov/>

[Residents/Pages/default.aspx](http://dhcd.maryland.gov/Residents/Pages/default.aspx)

## LEGAL

Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service

<https://mvlslaw.org/>

Maryland Disability Rights

<https://disabilityrightsmd.org/>

Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland

<https://probonomd.org/>

## MENTAL HEALTH

Maryland Association of Behavioral Health Authorities

[https://bha.health.maryland.gov/](https://bha.health.maryland.gov/Documents/MABHA%20Directory.pdf)

[Documents/MABHA%20Directory.pdf](https://bha.health.maryland.gov/Documents/MABHA%20Directory.pdf)

## BENEFITS / SOCIAL SECURITY

### ADMINISTRATION

Maryland Workforce Incentive Network

<http://www.innow.org/md-win/>

[md-win.html](http://www.innow.org/md-win/)

Social Security's Help Line

[1-866-968-7842](http://www.ssa.gov/1-866-968-7842)

## TRANSPORTATION

Maryland Transit Administration

<https://mta.maryland.gov/>

BaltimoreLink Schedules

[https://mta.maryland.gov/content/](https://mta.maryland.gov/content/baltimorelink-schedules)

[baltimorelink-schedules](https://mta.maryland.gov/content/baltimorelink-schedules)

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

<https://wmata.com/>



Information/Referral is like playing the game of telephone, chasing unicorns, and slaying myths of dragons while saving princesses.

# Contact Information:

Jade Gingerich

MD PROMISE Project Director

410-767-3660

[Jade.gingerich@maryland.gov](mailto:Jade.gingerich@maryland.gov)

[www.mdtransitions.org](http://www.mdtransitions.org)

# For More Information:

<https://mdtransitions.org/>

The contents of this brief were developed under a grant from the Department of Education (cooperative agreement #H418P130005). However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal government.



# Wisconsin PROMISE Lessons Learned



**Ellie Hartman, Ph.D., BCBA-D**  
Wisconsin PROMISE Grant Manager  
University of Wisconsin-Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute  
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation



# Wisconsin PROMISE

- Enrolled 2,024 youth ages 14, 15, and 16 receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and their families
  - Half received services as usual
  - Half received **Wisconsin Promise Services** through **DVR** with interagency Resource Teams for at least 2.5 years
    - Employment Services (at least one paid job)
    - Work Incentives Benefits Counseling
    - Financial Coaching
    - On the Job Social Skills Training
    - Family and self-advocacy training
    - Health Promotion
  - Interagency Resource Teams included youth, family, DVR, school, long term care, mental health, foster care, juvenile justice, etc.

# Enrollment Demographics

(2024 Total Enrolled; 853 Milwaukee)

- Primary Disability Type
  - Mental Health/Behavioral: 34%
  - Intellectual/Developmental: 30%
  - Other: 25%
- Race/Ethnicity:
  - African American: 49% (78% in Milwaukee)
  - White: 36% (8% in Milwaukee)
  - Hispanic: 10% (11% in Milwaukee)
  - Primary English Speaking: 95% (92% in Milwaukee)
- Gender: Male: 67%

# Enrollment Demographics

(2024 Total Enrolled; 853 Milwaukee)

- Family Households
  - Most single-parent households: 66% (77% in Milwaukee)
  - Most low income
    - 33% <\$10K a year (40% in Milwaukee)
    - 37% between \$10K and \$25K (35% in Milwaukee)
- Overall Health Status
  - Most reported good health: 85%
- IEP at Enrollment: 84%
- Children's Long Term Services (CLTS): 10%
- Families reported
  - Food Share: 67%
  - Other household members receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI): 60%
  - Other household members receiving SSI: 22%
  - 12 percent reported housing assistance: 12%
  - Wisconsin Works (W2): 4%

# No Wrong Door?

- Youth and families eligible for lots of services and supports, but POVERTY can get in the way:
- Living day to day makes it difficult to jump through all the required hoops to access needed services
- Training/services are not always user friendly, and do not always account for hardships of poverty:
  - Trauma
  - Basic Needs
  - Ambivalence
  - Training structure (theory vs. hands on/practical instruction)
  - Truly meeting youth/family where they are at

# Wisconsin PROMISE Service Rates

- **914** youth with any service
- **889** Individual Plans for Employment (IPE) Written
- **884** Family Resource Teams Identified
- **487** Family Services Plans Written for **652** Family Members
  - **109** *Family members with regular DVR case*
- **713** Promise youth with employment services
- **594** Promise Families met with a Family Advocate
  - **414** *completed Family Advocacy modules*
- **576** Promise Families met with a Financial Coach (Make Your Money Talk)
  - **377** *had a savings accounts*
- **535** met with Work Incentives Benefits Specialist
- **532** completed Social Skills Training (Skills to Pay Bills)
- **476** completed the Self-Advocacy Modules
- **351** completed Health Promotion

# Employment Outcomes

- Percent employed during the PROMISE service period: April 2014 to September 2018 (based on percent with employer reported wages in Wisconsin's Unemployment Insurance, UI)
  - Treatment - 67%
  - Control - 57%
  - Control with no DVR case - 51%

*\*Of Note: 78 (8%) Promise Youth Earned Substantial Gainful Activity*

- Percent enrolled in Long Term Care (LTC) 2 Years after PROMISE Enrollment
  - Employment Rates 2 Years after Enrollment for those ever in LTC
    - Treatment:  $74/141 = 52\%$  (CLTS: 9%; Family Care/IRIS: 5%)
    - Control:  $38/114 = 33\%$  (CLTS: 8%; Family Care/IRIS: 3%)

# Lessons Learned

- Ensuring to continue to connect to SSI youth and families to education, employment, and financial services and supports
  - Outreach to SSI youth and families about existing services/supports (**postcards**, other outreach)
  - Targeted Case Management or Family Navigators to connect youth and families to supports?
    - Employment Focused
    - Strength-Based/Empowerment (Person Centered, Rapid Engagement, Motivational Interviewing, Trauma Informed Care)
    - SSA Navigation
  - Inter-agency Data Sharing
- Rapid Engagement, Motivational Interviewing and Trauma Informed Care

# Motivational Interviewing

- Surprise!: MI Actually Takes Less Time
  - Less Advice Giving
  - More listening, praising/reflecting, and encouraging
- From a research study observing MI practices of Informational Specialists at Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) in Wisconsin



- Average Client Talk Time
  - Pre: 233 sec
  - Post: 233 sec
  - $p = 0.991$
- Average Informational Specialist Talk Time
  - Pre: 225 sec
  - Post: 162 sec
  - $p = 0.053$
- Average Total Talk Time
  - Pre: 458 sec
  - Post: 395 sec
  - $p = 0.285$



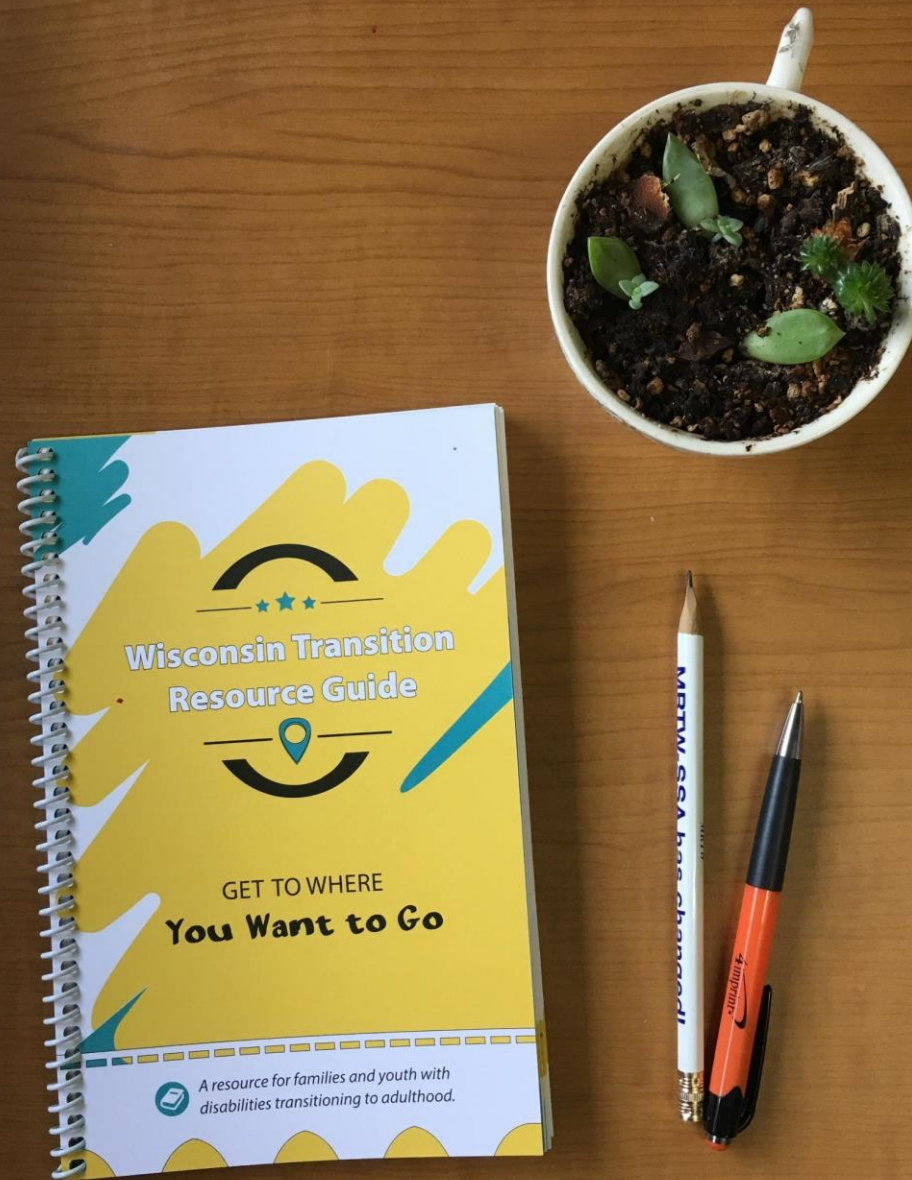
# Identify and Connect

- Poverty and Disability
  - Employment and Income
- Youth receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
  - Social Security Disability Determination
  - Family Income Deemed Low Enough
- Early Intervention – Youth
  - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
    - Pre-Employment Transition Services
  - College and Career Ready Individual Education Programs (IEPs)
    - Post-secondary Transition Plans (PTPs)
  - Children’s Long Term Care Services
    - Think Possible!
    - <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/children/think-possible.htm>

# Think Possible! Employment Webinar Series

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/children/think-possible.htm>

- Think Possible! was developed to help service coordinators support the children, youth, and parents they work with every day to develop and achieve the goal of working in the community.
- Families may also find the training helpful for understanding competitive integrated employment and how service professionals can help them with this important goal.
- Part One: The Case for Competitive Integrated Employment
- Part Two: Supporting Competitive Integrated Employment
- Part Three: Coordinating Employment Services and Supports
- Part Four: Final Exam and Certificate of Completion
- The first three parts have learning activities, including a webinar and quiz. Plan to spend an average of 30 minutes for each part.
- Final Test – Passing Score: Certificate of Completion



## Transition Guide: Get Where You Want to Go

<https://promisewi.com/transition-guide/>

- **Get to where you want to go...**
- Navigating the path to finish high school and become an adult is exciting. There are many possibilities, and changes too. The **Wisconsin Transition Resource Guide** provides tips and resources to help plan for adulthood and life after high school. Get ready to consider choices, explore options, and take action to prepare for your future.

# Wisconsin PROMISE Benefits Navigation

- Work Incentive Benefits Counseling
  - <https://www.eri-wi.org/programs/wipa/>

- Provide information as needed/wanted;

## ***Meet families where they are***

- Youth starting to think about and/or trying work - Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE) and Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWEs)
- Deeming/reporting work activity (child care payments; parents starting or increasing work)
- Medical reviews and 18-year redeterminations: Section 301
- Local Benefits – Medicaid; FoodShare; Housing
- Asset Limits; Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) and Achieving a Better Live Experience (ABLE) Accounts
  - <http://www.ablenrc.org/about/what-are-able-accounts>

# Wisconsin Promise Benefits Resources

<https://promisewi.com/benefits-resources/>

## Benefits Resources

Did you know you can work even if you receive disability benefits? It's true. If you have disability benefits and want to work, program rules called work incentives make work possible.

You can learn about these incentives by contacting a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist. These benefit specialists can show you how to establish and use work incentives like:

- [Impairment Related Work Incentives](#)
- [Student Earned Income Exclusion](#)
- [Continued Medicaid coverage for Individuals who Work 1619\(b\)](#)
- [Deeming – Process for determining which assets and income count for Supplemental Security Income \(SSI\)](#)
- **New!** Social Security [Section 301](#). This work incentive continues social security payments to individuals participating in a vocational rehabilitation or similar program like PROMISE.
- Plan to Achieve Self-Support (Ask your Benefits Counselor about this!)

## Other Benefits Resources:

- Do you understand your work reporting responsibilities? Do our [Work Reporting Activity](#).
- [BadgerCare Plus](#) is a Wisconsin Medicaid Program that provides health insurance to low-income adults and families.

# Youth and Families with Promise

- **Sometimes all a family needs is a lot of heart and a little extra lift.**
- After spending most of their lives being told they couldn't, the Clemens-Clarks are putting their hearts into proving they can with the support of Wisconsin Promise.
- Tony, a youth with communication barriers, was the first to enroll in Wisconsin Promise. His whole family joined in when they saw him succeed at his job in their community. His siblings began working too, and Promise helped send his dad back to school to become an auto mechanic.
- With the help of Promise services, the family now has their own AAA-certified towing business. The Clemens-Clarks are a family with Promise, building a legacy of employment and independence for the whole family.



**“My favorite is helping people. I learn new things every single time.”**

- TONY, PROMISE PARTICIPANT

<https://promisewi.com/videos/>

Discussion

**Q & A**

<https://promisewi.com/success/>

**Thank you!**

# Contact Info

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