
SSRC Selections highlight research, evaluation reports, and other publications that inform the field about key issues in, and effective practices for, fostering economic self-sufficiency.

Dowler, D. L., & Walls, R. T. (2014). A review of supported employment services for people with disabilities: Competitive employment, earnings, and service costs. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 80(1), 11-21.

<https://www.opressrc.org/content/review-supported-employment-services-people-disabilities-competitive-employment-earnings-a-0>

In this literature review, the authors examined the impact of supported employment models for people with severe disabilities on three outcomes: competitive employment rate, weekly wages, and service costs. The authors prioritized experimental studies but also included causal-comparative, correlational, and descriptive methodology studies. Overall, they found that supported employment played an important role in increasing competitive employment rates, wages, and working hours for people with disabilities. The evidence on employment rates was particularly strong for the Individual Placement and Support model.



Rudstam, H., Hittleman, M., Pi, S., & Gower, W. S. (2013). Bridging the knowing-doing gap: Researching a new approach to disability and employment programming. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 39(1), 43-60. doi:10.3233/JVR-130641

<https://www.opressrc.org/content/bridging-knowing-doing-gap-researching-new-approach-disability-and-employment-programming>

In this article, researchers described immediate and longer-term results of a pilot training designed to increase employer action in accommodating persons with disabilities; the approach used organizational change and knowledge translation principles to reframe a disability inclusion training for employers. In the short term, the authors found a statistically significant effect on human resources professionals' knowledge and intent to change behavior. Participant interviews revealed that, in the longer term, human resources professionals undertook four main actions as a result of the training: acting individually, teaching others, building partnerships, and changing organizational policies or practices. Suggested future improvements included customizing the training to specific sectors and industries; enhancing follow-up training; and reaching managers, supervisors, and top leadership.

Cobb, R. B., Lipscomb, S., Wolgemuth, J., & Schulte, T. (with Veliquette, A., Alwell, M., Batchelder, K., Bernard, R., Hernandez, P., Holmquist-Johnson, H. ... Weinberg, A.). (2013). *Improving post-high school outcomes for transition-age students with disabilities: An evidence review*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance.

<https://www.opressrc.org/content/improving-post-high-school-outcomes-transition-age-students-disabilities-evidence-review>

Noting the continued gap in self-sufficiency outcomes for youth with disabilities compared to those without, this report reviewed available research on the programs, strategies, and interventions that support students with disabilities as they transition from school to employment. The authors used rigorous selection criteria for inclusion in the review and selected specific post-high school outcomes as measures of programs' effectiveness. These self-sufficiency measures include employment, post-secondary education/training, and independent living. The authors concluded that community-based work experience programs for youth had positive impacts on post-secondary education outcomes and mixed impacts on employment outcomes. Programs that focused on functional life skills had potentially positive effects on independent living outcomes. The authors made several recommendations related to program implementation and future research on programmatic impacts.



Livermore, G., Mamun, A., Schimmel, J., & Prenovitz, S. (2013). *Executive Summary of the Seventh Ticket to Work Evaluation Report*. Washington, DC: Social Security Administration.

<https://www.opressrc.org/content/executive-summary-seventh-ticket-work-evaluation-report-final-report>

This document summarized the seventh and final evaluation of the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work (TTW) Program. TTW was established in 1999 to increase the economic self-sufficiency of Social Security disability benefits recipients; recipients may access vocational rehabilitation, employment, and other support services through the program. The seventh evaluation report included seven studies that: (a) acknowledged and addressed changes made to the TTW program in 2008; (b) analyzed participant employment efforts; (c) documented the experiences of the TTW Employment Networks; (d) estimated the program's impacts on participants' access of services; and (e) discussed participants' characteristics and outcomes. Overall, the authors found that TTW and related programs were having a "limited but positive effect on the employment of Social Security disability beneficiaries and have motivated some beneficiaries to pursue employment."

Wittenburg, D., Mann D. R., & Thompkins, A. (2013). The disability system and programs to promote employment for people with disabilities. *IZA Journal of Labor Policy*, 2(4). doi:10.1186/2193-9004-2-4

<https://www.opressrc.org/content/disability-system-and-programs-promote-employment-people-disabilities>

This article examined large-scale intervention programs designed to reduce employment barriers for persons with disabilities and consequently reduce the growth in disability benefit caseloads. The authors found that no existing program could substantially reduce caseloads, although some programs targeting specific subgroups demonstrated encouraging employment impacts. The authors recommended more targeted programming and implementation of smaller pilot projects prior to large-scale rollout of broad employment initiatives. The paper includes an overview of the disability system in the United States, barriers to employment encountered by disability program beneficiaries, and discussion of several Federal programs.

Sevak, P., O'Neill, J., Martin, T., Vandergoot, D., & Grossman, H. (2013). *Individual characteristics and employment outcomes among people with disabilities: A critical review of the literature*. Durham, NH: University of New Hampshire, Institute on Disability/UCED, Research on Disability.

<https://www.opressrc.org/content/individual-characteristics-and-employment-outcomes-among-people-disabilities-critical-review>



This research paper reviewed recent literature on employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities using a social model of disability framework. The social model of disability suggests that outcomes depend on individual health, personal characteristics (e.g., demographics, social capital, human capital), and environmental characteristics. The authors found more than 300 studies examining individual characteristics and employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities, but few of those studies controlled for other influencing factors. They also found significant variations in the characteristics of the disability populations studied and methodologies used.

Lindner, S., & Nichols, A. (2012). *The impact of temporary assistance programs on disability rolls and re-employment*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

<https://www.opressrc.org/content/impact-temporary-assistance-programs-disability-rolls-and-re-employment>

This paper examined how participation in four different temporary assistance programs—Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Unemployment Insurance (UI), and Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI)—affected claims for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) as well as reentry into the workforce. As background, the authors noted two observations: (a) SSDI and SSI applications increase during periods of high unemployment and (b) temporary assistance programs cushion income losses before individuals who lose their job apply for SSDI or SSI. Significant effects were only found for UI and SNAP (the two largest of the assistance programs) and tended to depend on overlap in target population. For example, UI participation had a negative effect on SSDI. There were mixed results as to whether participation in a temporary assistance program yielded lower probability of workforce reentry. The authors provided possible explanations for the findings (e.g., effects on SSDI and SSI applications could be dependent on benefit levels or program or population characteristics).

Johnson, R. W., Favreault, M. M., & Mommaerts, C. (2010). *Work ability and the social insurance safety net in the years prior to retirement (The Retirement Policy Program Discussion Paper No. 10-01)*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

<https://www.opressrc.org/content/work-ability-and-social-insurance-safety-net-years-prior-retirement>

This discussion paper examined the economic consequences of disability for older adults in the years leading up to their retirement. Using individual self-reports and Social Security administrative data, the authors examined self-sufficiency outcomes for a sample of individuals aged 51-55 based on their disability status and disability severity. Among the researchers' key findings were that (a) the disability rate increased between the ages of 55 and 64; (b) the disability rate was higher for women, African Americans, Hispanics, and those with more limited education; and (c) poverty rates more than doubled after the onset of a disability. Nearly one-third of adults in the 51-64 age range who had disabilities were under the Federal poverty line. The paper also detailed the prevalence of disabilities among older adults, examined the receipt of disability benefits and the types of benefits most received, and analyzed the impacts of these benefits on economic security and self-sufficiency.