



PARTNERS for Youth

Minnesota's Disability Employment Initiative (MN DEI) is an innovative partnership among key youth-serving stakeholders focused on increasing the number of youth with disabilities, ages 14-24, served through Minnesota's youth workforce system.

Disability Resource Coordinators

identify and facilitate resources so youth with multiple barriers to employment can be better served by publically-funded workforce programs.

Integrated Resource Teams can be gathered so resources from various public and private organizations are leveraged on behalf of an individual youth.

Expanded Partnership and Collaboration

is established on the local and state level so youth can experience success as a result of improved communication and coordination between youth serving agencies.

The Guideposts for Success are utilized as a research-based framework that identifies what all youth, including youth with disabilities, need to make the move from school to employment, postsecondary education, and living independently in their communities.

For more information on MN DEI and how youth can become involved, please contact:



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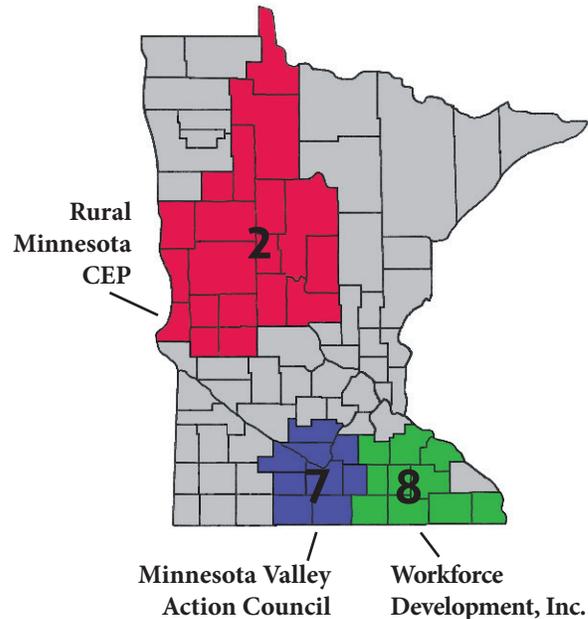


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Areas Served by MN DEI



Rural Minnesota CEP

- Becker
- Beltrami
- Cass
- Clay
- Clearwater
- Crow Wing
- Douglas
- Grant
- Hubbard
- Lake of the Woods
- Mahnomen
- Morrison
- Otter Tail
- Pope
- Stevens
- Todd
- Traverse
- Wadena
- Wilkin

Minnesota Valley Action Council

- Blue Earth
- Brown
- Faribault
- Le Sueur
- Martin
- Nicollet
- Sibley
- Waseca
- Watonwan

Workforce Development, Inc.

- Dodge
- Fillmore
- Freeborn
- Goodhue
- Houston
- Mower
- Olmsted
- Rice
- Steele
- Wabasha

This material is available in alternative formats, such as large print, Braille, or audio tape. TTY or MN Relay 711. Minnesota DEI is an equal opportunity employer and program. MN DEI is funded by the United States Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration and in cooperation with the DOL's Office of Disability Employment Policy.



Individualized Planning

MN DEI will help youth with disabilities make successful transitions to college and careers by using the *Guideposts for Success* as a framework to guide service delivery.

Collaboration

MN DEI will promote productive collaborations between education, workforce, and disability organizations which will lead to improved opportunities and outcomes for youth with disabilities. Project partners include Minnesota's Department of Employment and Economic Development, Minnesota Department of Education, PACER, and local workforce agencies in 3 areas of the state.

Increasing Staff Capacity

MN DEI will increase the capacity of Minnesota's youth workforce system to serve youth with disabilities, including those from culturally diverse communities, and those experiencing additional risk factors such as poverty, homelessness, teen parents, and involvement in juvenile justice.

Expanding the Use of Benefits Counseling

MN DEI will expand and promote benefits counseling so youth with disabilities and their families understand the impact of employment on Social Security benefits (such as SSI). The project also seeks to expand the number of Minnesota Workforce Centers becoming active Ticket to Work Employment Networks.

Informing Families

MN DEI will provide families of youth with disabilities with parent training on benefits planning, as well as general information, advocacy, and referral through its partnership with PACER.



Based on decades of research, **The Guideposts for Success** help identify what all youth, including youth with disabilities, need to make the move from school to adulthood successfully. They are rooted in high expectations and the understanding that a youth with a disability is a youth first, and a youth with a disability second. The five *Guideposts for Success* are as follows:

1. **School-Based Preparatory Experiences:** What are youth getting from educational settings and programs that help build skills for adulthood?
2. **Career Preparation and Work-Based Learning Experiences:** How are youth being given opportunities to learn about and try different career options so they can make an informed choice about their future?
3. **Youth Development and Leadership:** How are youth being given opportunities to be mentored, to learn about themselves, and given chances to lead so they can direct their own futures?
4. **Connecting Activities:** How are young people and their families being connected to programs, services, and activities that help them get the supports needed to live in the community?
5. **Family Involvement and Supports:** How are families being given information that empowers them to help their youth make the move to employment, postsecondary education, and community living?

For more information on a wide variety of topics related to *The Guideposts for Success*, please visit the *National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth* web site at www.ncwd-youth.info.