

## **Optimal Programs and Opportunities Transitional Aged Youth with Disabilities**

1. Group events for young adults – Started Meetup.com group in lieu of a formal program to provide:
  - a) Socialization
  - b) Advocacy
  - c) Education
  - d) For adults age 18 to 30 and their caregivers
  - e) Mostly free –
  - f) There are several others in our community
  - g) We receive no funding to do this, but parents are starting these because of a lack of opportunity in the community.
2. Current Social Programs
  - a) What is offered in the City of Riverside:
    - Friendly Stars – A social recreation program for developmentally disabled adults 18 and over. Optimally it would be best to separate by age and interests.
    - Parks, Recreation and Community Services – Special Transportation
  - b) Optimal Availability of Social Programs
    - Summer day camp for young adults and other adults with disabilities through Parks, Recreation and Community Services
    - Employment: City of Riverside offering internships for people with intellectual delays in various departments that might lead to future employment
    - Post-Secondary Education: Working with local universities to develop educational programs for this population similar to what is offered at the University of Iowa
    - Parks, Recreation and Community Services: Summer Day Camp
    - Mentorship for starting micro-businesses
    - Housing: Development of housing program for people with disabilities similar to the model of assisted living programs for the elderly.
3. Post-Secondary Educational Programs
  - a) No College to Career program in the City of Riverside
  - b) No post-secondary university programs as are at Georgia Tech; University of Iowa; Bellevue College; George Mason University; Leslie University; George State; Lone Star Community College; Vanderbilt University and so on.
  - c) thinkcollege.org
  - d) Our universities are missing out on federal funding for innovative education programs for young adults with disabilities.

4. Training / Mentoring Programs and Eligibility:
  - a) Department of Rehabilitation
  - b) Inland Regional Center.
  - c) Internship
  - d) Mentorship
  
5. Jobs:
  - a) What are the advantages of hiring someone with a disability?
    - Tax incentives
    - Long-term devotion to a company
  
  - b) Increased employment increases the tax base for the City
  
6. Microbusiness
  - a) Parents are starting microbusinesses for their children in other communities.
  - b) Increases tax base and decreased reliance of social services
  
7. Housing
  - a) Need for people with a disabilities to live independently
  - b) Shortage of affordable housing nationwide for this population
  
8. What Can You Do?
  - a) Develop a brief one-page hand out that parents could give to a business telling them about the specific tax benefits they could receive for hiring someone with a disability.
  - b) Develop a brief, one page handout on how to start a micro business and encourage the local Chambers of Commerce to mentor young adults and their families on how to run a business.
  - c) Work with City Council, state and federal legislators, community colleges and universities to keep pace with the rest of the nation and start development of post-secondary educational programs for this populations. The only way parents will be able to afford these programs is if they are able to access federal financial aid (FASFA).