**ACLS Advising Task Force - 2013**

**Tools, Resources, Methods and Practices for Implementing**

**Education and Career Planning in ABE**

OVERVIEW: This document was developed by the 2013 ACLS Task Force on Advising, using numerous resources and promising practices identified by many ABE Advisors, Directors and Instructors across the state. This document builds on recommendations from the 2011 Counseling Task Force and the 2012 Education and Career Planning Task Force. The combined goals of these three groups are listed below. (Note that the term “counselor” was used prior to the 2011 Task Force’s recommendation to shift to “advisor” which was adopted in 2012):

* To review the goals of counseling in ABE/ESOL programs.
* To discuss the needs of students for counseling services in an environment where college and career readiness and increasing academic rigor have become critically important to our system, and most importantly, to our students' future success.
* To make policy recommendations on how counseling should be offered in our programs in the future (i.e., change from “counseling” to “advising”).
* To develop a tool for documenting individual student Education and Career Plans within ABE programs, and the capacity for student ownership of the document, including his/her ability to update the document with assistance from his/her advisor.
* To identify key elements, strategies, practices, tools and resources that will help build a culture of education and career planning in ABE programs and for all adult learners.

The Task Force reviewed the work of the previous two Task Forces as well as new research, information, practices and strategies used to implement education and career planning in ABE. The group agreed on the following key principles of effective education and career planning in ABE:

* Support of the ABE Director to implement education and career planning is critical to setting the tone in the program and therefore critical to embedding a culture of education and career planning in their program (the goal of the Task Force).
* Building a positive and trusting relationship between the student and staff from the moment of initial contact with program is key to effective advising, education and career planning.
* Cultural sensitivity comes from the thought that the student we are working with is guiding us and driving the process, allowing us to recognize the diversity and variance within a cultural group. Culture is ever-changing and adapting. This is especially relevant with ESOL students who have to go through the process of creating a post-migration cultural identity by integrating their own cultural identity with that of the new culture. So the best way to learn is by listening and using our students as guide while having sensibility towards the diverse cultural identities of our students. Validating an individual's culture and bridging it to the culture of education and career planning creates a truly individually-driven process. Therefore, the recommendations submitted in this report are part of a culturally sensitive approach to advising and education and career planning.
* The education and career planning process should be flexible enough to explore several possible pathways for students, and to allow for adjustments as students become more self-aware and learn more about career options.
* The over-riding philosophy of effective education and career planning is that there is something for everyone. Everyone has strengths.
* Planting the seed with students early on about an education and career plan will help students to develop the plan with their teachers and advisors.
* Education and career planning does not happen in one or two meetings and is developed over time involving the student, teacher and advisor. Take the time.
* Assisting students to identify strengths, interests, issues, supports and barriersis important to developing individual education and career plans. In addition to “formal” assessments (i.e. TABE, BEST Plus, Accuplacer, etc.) it is important to assess other areas such as learning styles, multiple intelligences, soft skills, interests, computer literacy skills, etc. to develop meaningful individually-focused and culturally competent education and career plans.
* Communication between teachers and advisors is critical to successfully developing individual education and career plans. Integrating the advising and teaching processes is important to successfully developing individual education and career plans.
* Maintaining electronic files that can be shared with staff through a networked system could facilitate stronger communications. Sharing tools, best practices and processes between ABE programs and other networks would be an effective way for programs and staff to implement promising practices.
* ABE staff should expand their understanding of technology changes and how they can be integrated into teaching, advising, administration and all other aspects of the ABE program.
* The Family Education Plan can be used to focus on academic goals for ESOL students not planning to enter the workforce or pursue further education, older students who have retired from the workforce, but want to continue their education for their family and community, and others whose goals do not include careers.
* Developing community relationships is important to the advising role, as the shift from “counseling” to “advising” requires staff to be highly knowledgeable about the services in their community in order to make appropriate referrals. It will also be important for the program to develop ABE Community Planning Partnerships with community representatives who reflect the services that students need to achieve their next steps goals.

The following table shows how a variety of resources may be used to support the 8 Key Components of Education and Career Planning.

| **Objective(s)** | **Tools, Resources/Research**  **(Also See Appendix C)** | **Methods, Practices** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| To set the tone for education and career planning in the ABE program. | One Step Forward Initiative, *Guide to Adult Education for Work, Transforming Adult Education to Grow a Skilled Workforce*, 2009, National Center on Education and the Economy  <http://www.jff.org/sites/default/files/adult_ed_work_guide.pdf>  Persistence: program self-assessment  <http://www.nelrc.org/persist/program_assess.html>  Resources for integrating advising, education and career planning, next steps, etc.:  THE LIFE SKILLS, COLLEGE, AND CAREER READINESS GUIDE FOR ESOL LEARNERS <http://www.sabes.org/curriculum/esol/caela-guide-2011.pdf>  Integrating Career Awareness (ICA) Curriculum Guide  <http://www.sabes.org/workforce/integrating-career-awareness.pdf>  MA Community College and Workforce Development Transformation Agenda – Contextualized Curriculum  <http://mccwdta.etlo.org/> | Through pre-program planning meetings and ongoing staff meetings, the ABE Director sets the tone of embracing education and career planning in the program, as the first step in changing program culture.  The ABE Director works closely with advisor and specific ways , such as encouraging teachers and advisors to work together and dedicating specific time for that; encouraging teachers to attend sessions with guest speakers, or go on college site visits; integrate information about careers, jobs, post-secondary education into the curriculum.  Conduct Persistence self-assessment (Drivers of Persistence)  Ensure that ABE Community Planning Partnerships have community representatives who reflect the services that students need to achieve their next steps goals. |
| To build relationships with students that are:   * Friendly * Engaging * Informative * Strengths- based | Appreciative Advising, Jennifer L.  Bloom, Ed.D.  <http://www.appreciativeadvising.net/>  *Persistence: Helping Adult Education Students Reach Their Goals,* John P. Comings, February 2007  <http://www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/ann_rev/comings-02.pdf>  The Six Drivers of Persistence  <http://www.nelrc.org/persist/drivers.html> | Introduce concept of education and career planning, expectations, and goal setting right from registration and orientation.  Introduce the advising function at registration.  Conduct academic placement and other testing to assess current skills including reading, math and writing) (Also see Self-exploration component) |
| To plant the seed about education and career planning and “next steps” with students.  To introduce the concepts of education and career planning, goal setting with students.  To communicate expectations of staff, faculty, student. | Sample Orientation Outline:   * Ice Breaker * Program overview * Review student handbook * Review attendance policies * Introduction to goal setting * Introduction to education and career planning * Overview if career Decision-Making:   Self-Assessment  Career Exploration  Educational Planning  Job Seeking Skills  Student handbook  ACLS Education and Career Plan (ECP)Template Part A, B, C of ECP  Short essay, short questionnaire. | The frequency and type (one-on-one or group) of orientation conducted by programs depends on whether or not a program has a “managed” or “open” enrollment model.  Some programs (smaller programs or those with open enrollment policies) conduct 1:1 student orientation.  Some programs conduct “hybrid” orientation sessions that are partially done in a group then 1:1 interviews and/or evaluations are conducted.  One-day student orientation held before the first day of class specifically to establish one or more goals.  Staff introductions during orientation.  Teachers present section of orientation on classroom rules/expectations.  Emphasis on “what brought you to our door in the first place.” We are here to help!!  Identification of other resources on site.  Description of ECP process and why planning is so important.  Begin Education and Career Planning activities to engage learners right away, i.e., do sections A,B,C,D of ECP as a group, then individual advising on other sections.  Give students career folder to each student and asks them to write short answers to the 3 questions on ECP. |
| To assist student to identify challenges and suggest solutions and resources. | Support Systems, ICA, Section IV, Lesson 6  Problem Solving, ICA, Section IV, Lesson 7  <http://www.sabes.org/workforce/integrating-career-awareness.pdf>  Appreciative Advising  <http://www.appreciativeadvising.net/>  *Persistence: Helping Adult Education Students Reach Their Goals,* John P. Comings, February 2007  <http://www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/ann_rev/comings-02.pdf>  The Six Drivers of Persistence  <http://www.nelrc.org/persist/drivers.html>  Mass211  <http://www.mass211.org/>  MASSCAP  [www.masscap.org](http://www.masscap.org) | Advisor refers to the Education and Career Plan Part G and H, re “What resources do I have that will help me complete this step?”  Advisor meets with student to identify barriers to persistence and resources to help student overcome barrier.  Advisor makes referrals to appropriate resources.  From State Policy Task Force on the  Transition to Postsecondary Education for Adult Learners (“Open Doors Demonstration Project” ):  Individual sessions: Students work one-on-one with advisor to address issues that can impede their academic progress.  Advising may include information about and referral to community and support services.  Group advising: Focused on solving problems in a group setting that allows students with similar concerns to support each other.  Peer counseling: Students are matched one-on-one or in groups with trained peers for sharing of information and experiences that help them address barriers, problems, etc. |
| To assist students in setting education and career goals. | Introduction to Goal Setting, ICA, Section I, Lesson 3  Career Planning Skills, ICA, Section IV Lesson 5,  Support Systems , ICA, Section IV, Lesson 6  Problem Solving, ICA, Section IV, Lesson 7  <http://www.sabes.org/workforce/integrating-career-awareness.pdf>  Education and Career Plan (the education and career planning process is goal setting in and of itself) | Goal setting and education and career planning are processes that occur over time. Sometimes goals just “pop out” during orientation or during an interview but the more challenging situation is when goals are not evident.  Goal setting requires relationship building and teachers have the most time with students so they build relationships sooner.  Help student to expand narrow goals (i.e. to learn English, to get a GED), by using methods and activities such as those described in J. Bloom’s Appreciative Advising and the ICA guide will assist students to understand what goal setting is and to expand their goals to include next steps identified through an education and career plan.  Advisor conducts class/workshop on certain part of the ECP, and then does 1:1 advising on goal setting.  8-week Next Steps class (can make it a requirement of all GED students)  Advisor meets 1:1 w/students to start ECP  Advisor meets with each student 2 times per year and more frequently on a case by case basis.  After initial advisor/student meeting, advisor develops a condensed goal sheet and reviews this sheet with the classroom teacher.  Share information on goals with student-teacher-advisor.  Integrate classroom lessons based on student ECPs  Reinforce concepts of education and career planning at many “touch points” with students.  Students are responsible for reporting goals every week on a chart on the wall.  Continue ECP/short and long term goals and steps to take, timeline. |
| To assist students to identify their:  • Interests  • Skills   * Transferrable skills | Self-assessments including personality/type indicators, interest inventories, skills surveys, and other tools and resources:  http://www.rileyguide.com/assess.html#tools  Learning Styles:  What is Your Learning Style? [www.usd.edu/trio/tut/ts/stylest.html](http://www.usd.edu/trio/tut/ts/stylest.html)  Identifying Skills and Values:  Integrating Career Awareness (ICA) Curriculum Guide  <http://www.sabes.org/workforce/integrating-career-awareness.pdf>  Section IV, Lesson 8  Things I Have, ICA, Section II, Lesson 5, Part 2  Identifying Skills , ICA part II, Lesson 7  Identifying Job Values , ICA Part II, Lesson 10, 11  Multiple Intelligences  http://www.ldpride.net/learning style.html  Interests Assessment:  Things I Like, ICA Part II, Lesson 6  The Harrington O’Shea Career Decision Maker Career Scope  Reading-Free Vocational Interest Inventory – Revised <http://www.pearsonassessments.com/HAIWEB/Cultures/en-us/Productdetail.htm?Pid=015-8683-846>  Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory  <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/j.1556-6676.1987.tb00785.x/abstract> | This component can also be part of the Orientation Component.  Advisors work with instructors to develop lesson plans using the various tools available.  Advisors work with instructors to develop monthly “themes” that include fun and engaging assessments of skills, interests, strengths.  Lessons done in classroom are reinforced through Advisor 1:1 with students.  Advisor conducts workshops with class on various assessments.  Advisor conducts workshop on different lessons in the ICA.  Advisor demonstrates different websites for assessments, either in class, in a workshop or 1:1.  Advisor conducts in-class workshops /lessons with students on relevant lessons in the ICA.  Advisor works with students 1:1 or in small groups on relevant lessons in the ICA.  Advisors works with instructors to integrate lessons from the ICA. Reinforces lessons with students.  Students use internet for exploration (Dream Center, blogs, wikis). (Also see Assessment component) |
| To assist students to match their skills, interests and goals to jobs and careers. | Career Exploration on the Internet, ICA Section III, Lesson 1  <http://www.sabes.org/workforce/integrating-career-awareness.pdf>  [www.bls.gov/oco](http://www.bls.gov/oco) - Occupational Outlook Handbook, Resources for job seekers on employment, salaries, 10 year outlook projections and opportunities for advancement  [www.nextsteps.org](http://www.nextsteps.org) – Check out the Career Planning Section,  *Resume/Cover Letter samples with explanations, Videos of jobs*  [www.acinet.org](http://www.acinet.org) – America’s Career InfoNet, *From the One Stop Career Centers can be used to access local job listings*  [www.masscis.intocareers.org](http://www.masscis.intocareers.org) – Massachusetts Career Information System, *From the MA Department of Career Services has a very helpful career planning section to answer “Who am I? Where am I headed? How do I get there?”*  [www.onetcenter,org](http://www.onetcenter,org) - *U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training occupation exploration site that utilizes current national data with info including career ladders*  Career Cruising  <http://public.careercruising.com/us/en>  ABE Career Connections:  A Manual for Integrating Adult Basic Education  into Career Pathways  <http://lincs.ed.gov/professional-development/resource-collections/profile-300>  Adult Career Pathways Training and Support Center  <http://www.acp-sc.org/>  Education Opportunity Centers  <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/trioeoc/index.html> | Instructors do job search, career exploration w/student s in the classroom  Advisor conducts in-class demonstrations of websites  Every student does a resume  Students do sample job applications to collect work history for ECP  Advisor facilitates “forced choice activities” (for job values) with students in the classroom  Employers do classroom presentations as part of career exploration  Institute a monthly program-wide highlight of careers and do exploration around that career  Conduct three weeks of intensive Ed and Career Exploration w/speakers and employers. Done every 3 months, with lessons plugged into regular curriculum in between  30-minute Education and Career Exploration class every week in GED class  Encourage students to think “outside the box” when working on career / college exploration  Advisor (in corrections) does career exploration and brings each student 3 careers to explore |
| To help students fully commit to an education and career plan. | Appreciative Advising  <http://www.appreciativeadvising.net/>  *Persistence: Helping Adult Education Students Reach Their Goals,* John P. Comings, February 2007  <http://www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/ann_rev/comings-02.pdf>  The Six Drivers of Persistence  <http://www.nelrc.org/persist/drivers.html>  Time Management:  <https://sites.google.com/site/scalenextsteps/home/personal-readiness/time-management>  Interactive Time Management Tool  <http://www.studenttools.info/study-tips-time-management-guide.html> | Place pictures of students graduating, posters of workers in careers, engaging materials in corridors, waiting rooms, or classrooms  Post pictures or other information about former students who got into college, got a job, entered job training program  Review ECP steps and revise as needed  Ensure there is a communications/feedback loop between the teacher--student-coordinator-director  Identify student leaders as mentors to newer, less experienced students  Provide on-going information to student on goal setting techniques, strategies  The Education and Career Plan is a living document…it can be adjusted as the student becomes more self-aware and gains self-efficacy |