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A qualitative exploration of social support needs for youth with physical disabilities: implications for a peer e-mentoring study

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Outline

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- Review of the literature

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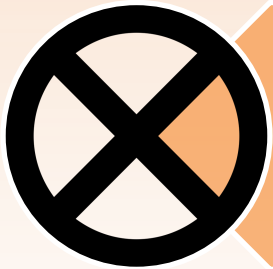
- Implications & Recommendations

Introduction

Youth with physical disabilities:



Double the unemployment rate than their peers without disabilities



Barriers: discrimination, lack of transportation, accessibility, lack of programs tailored for YWPD, lack of parental and social support



Benefits: social, mental, and financial independence

Introduction

- Peer-mentoring:
 - ✓ Transition to employment
 - ✓ Transition to higher education
 - ✓ Academic pursuits
 - ✓ Self-management of chronic illness

Outcomes: improved self efficacy, skill development, goal attainment, coping, social participation, social support

Introduction

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graph TD; A((Peer support)) --- B((Social comparison)); A --- C((Social learning)); A --- D((Social exchange));
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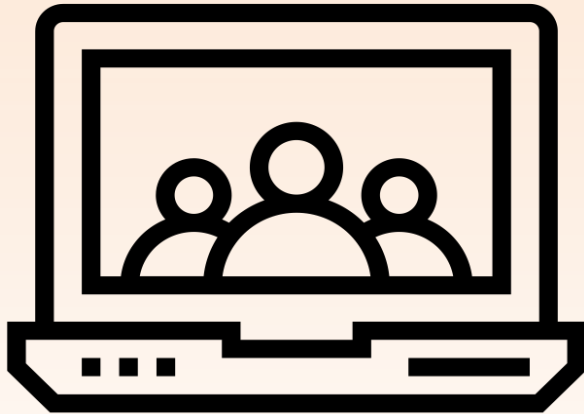
Social
comparison

Peer
support

Social
learning

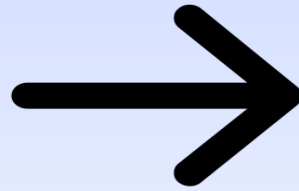
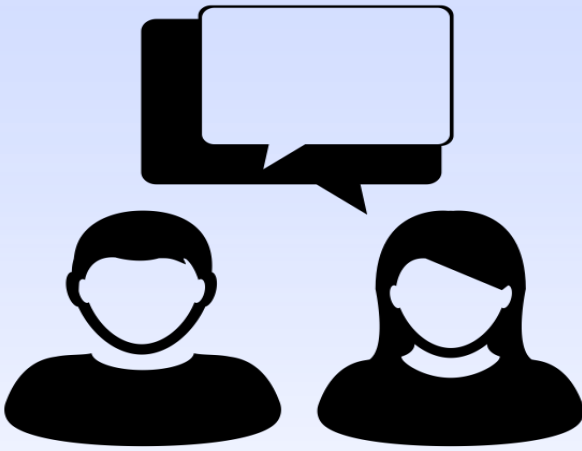
Social
exchange

Introduction



- E-Mentoring:
 - Removes barriers of geographical location, time
 - Accessible
 - Greater availability of mentors

Purpose



Research Question

What types of social support do youth recommend to include within a proposed e-mentoring intervention?

Study Details



- Proposed format:
 - Online group format
 - 12 weeks, new topic per week
 - Resources embedded throughout
 - Asynchronous communication for the whole group through discussion forums
 - Private chats option
 - Organized live chats with group and guest speakers

Study Details

- Proposed format:
- Mentored group:
 - Information on skill development through:
 - Interactive power-point presentation
 - Links to external resources
 - Mentors discussion post, facilitation
- Non-mentored group
 - Interactive power-point presentation
 - Links to external resources
 - No mentor post, no facilitation

Study Details

- Goal setting
- Aspirations and expectations for work
- Job searching techniques
- Marketing yourself
- Managing disability at work
- Getting ready to work
- Family role in supporting employment
- Learning from professionals with disabilities
- Social networking and community resources

Methods



8 youth

Aged 17-24



6 females, 2 males



All had successful volunteer and or work experience to comment on



All had a physical disability

Methods

- Focus group:

Purpose:

- Understand the types of social support YWPD address during discussion of their employment experiences and the intervention's preliminary topics

Procedure:

- Paper copies of the weekly topics given to all participants (i.e., preliminary topics)
- Recorded, transcribed
- Thematic analysis

Results



Resource sharing



Feeling of belonging



Practical assistance

Results

Resource sharing:

- “I’d say when you go to look at university or college programs connect with disability services”..“Yeah and know all the disability services in advance!”
- “I think maybe having a service that young people with disabilities can go to, and you can get career services of of that tend to your specific needs”

Results

Feeling of belonging:

- “Also like talking to other people with disabilities about like what program they’re in for college or university because what I found is like a lot of people in my program are really accepting just because of the field they’re in”
- “Someone who has been there done that”.. “Someone who knows what you’re going through so it’s not weird”.. “And I think it would be helpful, especially if you have to like if they’re not accepting at first, and you have to advocate a lot, mentors that know how to discuss their disability in a way that will be [helpful]”

Results

Practical assistance

- Advice surrounding employment preparation i.e., how to disclose your disability, how to build up experience
 - “Yeah you don’t want to go there and them look at you and then they make assumptions about what you can or can’t do
 - “Yeah I feel it’s also important to note the way you disclose”.. “Be as positive as possible”.. “Like don’t talk about so much about what you can’t do, but you can talk about what you can do and how you can overcome your challenges”

Conclusions

- Important to see the perspectives of participants when developing online interventions
- Social support is central to the mentoring process
 - Means by which participants can develop positive outcomes: employment readiness skills, social skill development, mental health, coping
- Limitations:
 - Formal usability sessions, focus group with other key informants