

Pathways TO PARTNERSHIPS

ILLINOIS

Illinois Pathways to Partnerships Project (IPPP) Evaluation Framework

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*Pathways to Partnerships:
Improving Transition Outcomes of Illinois Students with Disabilities (IPPP)*

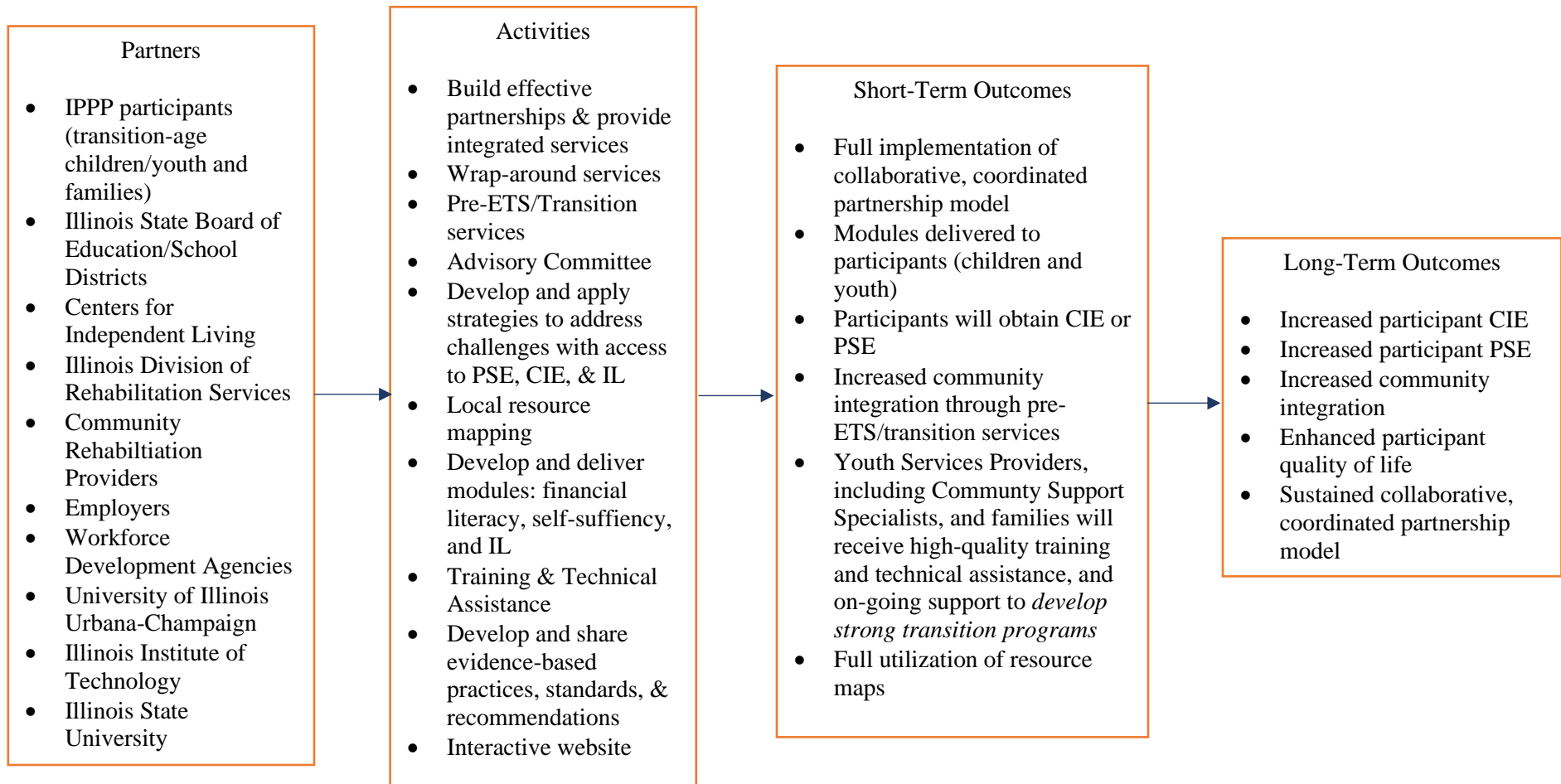
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IPPP Logic Model

Situation: Children and youth with disabilities in Illinois report disappointing post-school outcomes. Disappointing outcomes are particularly reported by those who live in underserved geographical areas and those who belong to underserved population groups.

Goal: To increase the opportunity for program participants, organizations, and support systems to improve transition outcomes.



Inputs: Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) funding to address the problem. Capacity to improve Pre-ETS, transition, and CIE outcomes in Illinois. IPPP team's experience in implementing statewide educational and employment programs. IPPP team's knowledge of CIE evidence-based practices, education and employment interventions. IPPP team's experience delivering Pre-ETS services to transition age youth with disabilities.

Constructs of Focus & Evaluation Questions

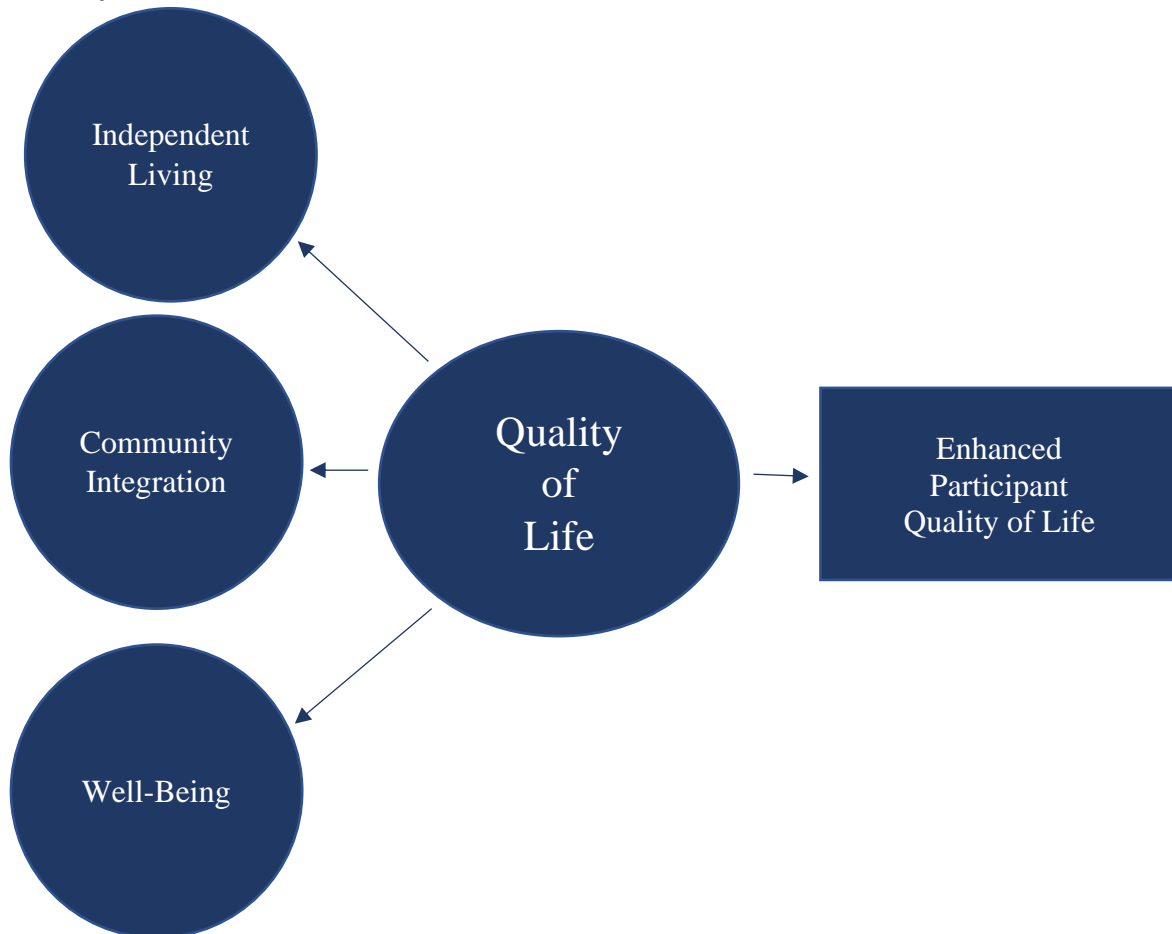
1. Quality of Life

Quality of life denotes a person’s desired conditions of home and community living, school or work, health and wellness, and social relations (Schalock, 1996). Quality of life is an overall well-being consisting of objective and subjective evaluations of physical, material, social, and emotional well-being.

Evaluation Questions

- What evidence exists regarding IPPP participant *independent living outcomes*?
- What is the level and quality of IPPP participant *community integration*?
- What is the level and quality of IPPP participant *well-being*?
- What evidence exists regarding IPPP participant *enhanced participant quality of life*?

Quality of Life Measurement Model.



Note 1. Independent Living, Community Integration, and Well-Being are sub-constructs to measure Quality of Life.

Quality of Life: Construct (& Sub-Construct) Definitions

<p>Quality of Life</p>	<p>Quality of life denotes a person’s desired conditions of home and community living, school or work, health and wellness, and social relations (Schalock, 1996). Quality of life is an overall well-being consisting of objective and subjective evaluations of physical, material, social, and emotional well-being.</p>
	<p><i>Independent Living</i> Independent living deals with a person’s independence that includes their personal development and self-determination, college and career-related activities, and other independent living skills such as how to prepare a budget, build a resume, hire and manage a personal assistant when needed, and develop awareness and self-advocacy skills. Transition Support from high school to college and/or work, and from institutionalization to independence on their terms (Claes et al., 2010; Statewide Independent Living Council of Illinois, 2024; https://silcofillinois.org/centers-for-independent-living/; Walters & Plotner, 2023).</p>
	<p><i>Community Integration</i> Community integration concerns where and how people live. It fundamentally reflects the relationship of people who happen to have a disability with the other members of their community. To be socially included in a community is to be a family member, neighbor, classmate, friend, casual acquaintance, shopper, coworker, and significant other (Claes et al., 2010). It means being a member of organizations and a consumer of services (Kosciulek, 1999). Community integration is conceptualized as including three related but separate aspects of integration. First, there is integration into homelike settings and family situations. The second area of community integration is social integration, which refers to participation in a variety of activities outside the home, including shopping, leisure activities, and visiting friends. The third area of community integration is regular performance of productive activities. This area encompasses employment, educational, and avocational activities.</p>
	<p><i>Well-Being</i> Well-being stems from the degree of fit between an individual’s perception of his or her objective situation and his or her needs, aspirations, or values (Kosciulek, 1999). Well-being is comprised of emotional (safety, positive experiences, lack of stress), physical (health, nutrition, leisure), and material (financial, employment, housing) life areas (Claes et al., 2010).</p>
	<p><i>Enhanced Participant Quality of Life</i> Illinois Pathways to Partnerships Project (IPPP) participant quality of life that can be attributed to their participation in IPPP.</p>

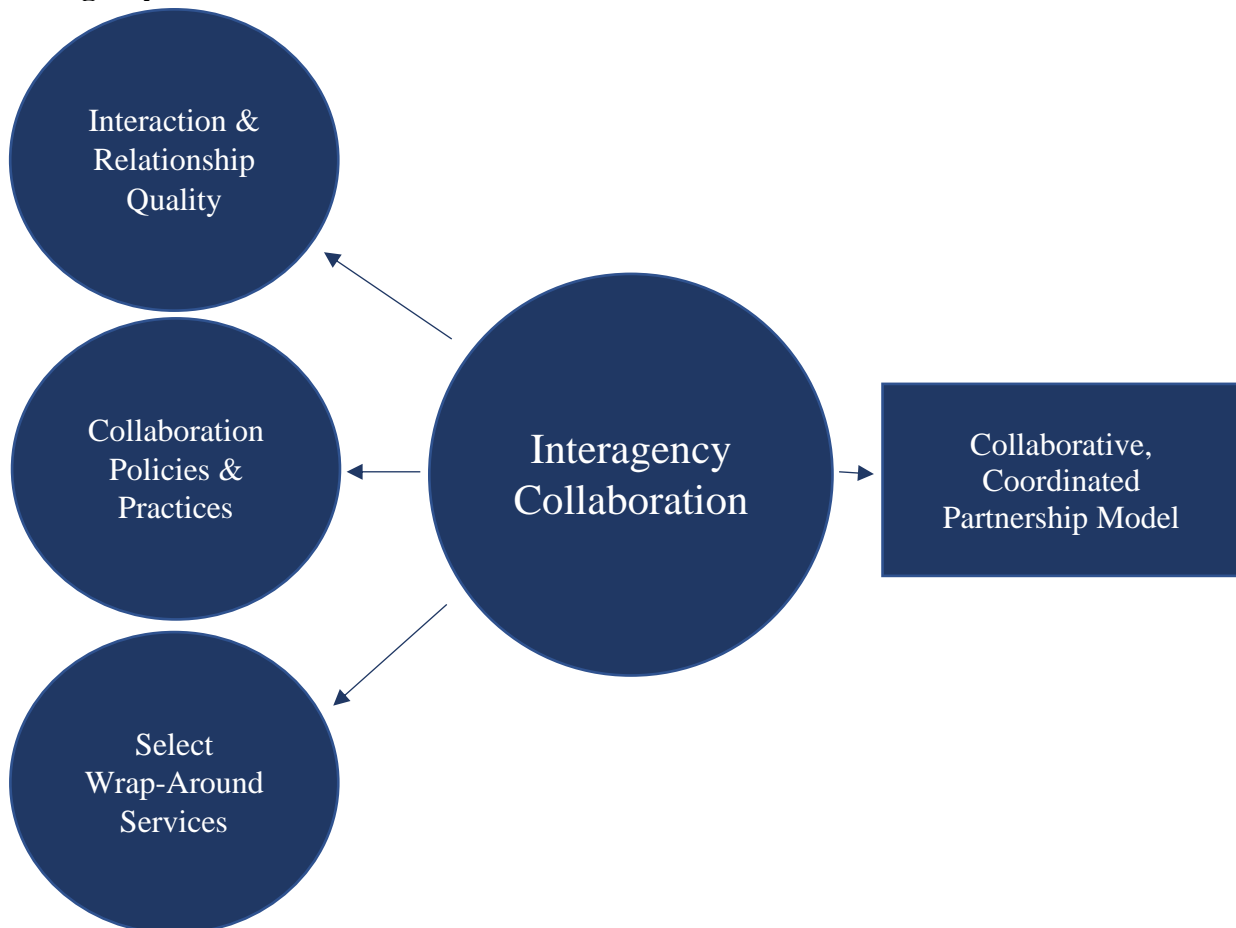
2. Interagency Collaboration

Interagency collaboration is a process where agency representatives work collectively for mutual benefit toward a common goal of supporting a student from high school to transition to adulthood (Test et al., 2020, p. 297).

Evaluation Questions

- Who are the IPPP partners, what are their roles on the project, and what specific activities do they complete?
- What are the *linkages* across and *relationships* among IPPP partners?
- What are the *collaboration policies* and *practices* among IPPP partners?
- What *select wrap-around services* have been provided?
- What evidence exists regarding local resource mapping?
- What innovative, *collaborative*, and *coordinated IPPP partnership model* with clear connections between partners, activities, and outcomes has emerged?

Interagency Collaboration Measurement Model.



Note 1. Collaborative, Coordinated Partnership Model=Innovative and Collaborative, Coordinated IPPP Partnership Model.

Note 2. Interaction & Relationship Quality, Collaboration Policies & Practices, and Select Wrap-Around Services are sub-constructs to measure Interagency Collaboration.

Interagency Collaboration: Construct (& Sub-Construct) Definitions

Interagency Collaboration	Interagency collaboration is a process where agency representatives work collectively for mutual benefit toward a common goal of supporting a student from high school to transition to adulthood (Test et al., 2020, p. 297).
	<i>Interaction & Relationship Quality</i> Cooperation that involves teamwork, communication, and consideration as well as quality of interagency relationship such as trust among a variety of parties that come together to reach a shared goal (Frey et al., 2006, p. 386).
	<i>Collaboration Policies & Practices</i> Policies and practices utilized in different state contexts, such as frequency of collaborative activities, knowledge about partners, quality of collaborative practices, and data use (Shaw et al., 2023, p. 60).
	<i>Select Wrap-Around Services</i> Activities related to increasing awareness of pre-ETS and other services, connecting IPPP participants with interdisciplinary support systems, direct referrals to Illinois DRS, and increasing parental expectations regarding competitive integrated employment (in part through the resources provided on the <i>IPPP</i> website). These services include integrated employment services such as supported and customized employment, on-the-job training and job exploration, work-based learning experiences (i.e., internships and job shadowing), benefits counseling, self-determination, post-secondary education, credentialing, peer counseling and information and referral services, as well as independent living skills training, and local resource mapping.
	<i>Collaborative, Coordinated Partnership Model</i> Innovative, collaborative, and coordinated IPPP Partnership Model. An alliance among people and organizations from multiple sectors, such as schools and businesses, working together to achieve a common purpose (Roussos & Fawcett, 2000, p. 369).

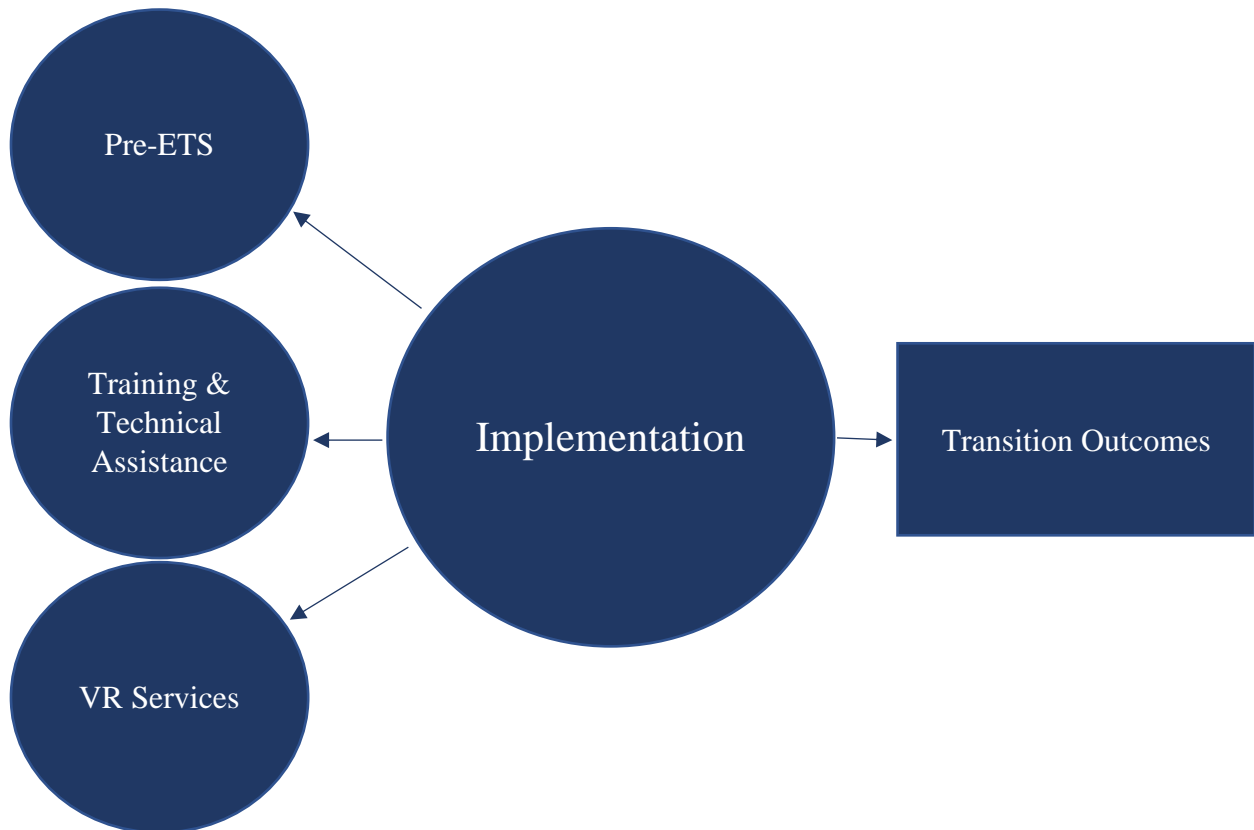
3. Implementation

What actually happens in the program, what are its key characteristics, who is participating, what do staff do, what do participants experience, and what’s working and not working (Patton, 2008, p. 309). Implementation science includes both research and practice. Implementation research seeks to understand and evaluate approaches used to translate evidence to the real world. Implementation practice seeks to apply and adapt these approaches in different contexts and settings to achieve positive outcomes (Metz et al., 2021, p. 1).

Evaluation Questions

- What level and quality of project *Pre-Employment Transition Services* have been provided?
- What level and quality of project *training and technical assistance* has been provided?
- What *vocational rehabilitation services* facilitate IPPP participant to obtain *transition outcomes*?
- What are the best practices of Pre-ETS, training and technical assistance, and VR services related to IPPP participants achieving transition outcomes?

Implementation Measurement Model.



Note 1. Pre-ETS=Pre-Employment Transition Services.

Note 2. VR=Vocational Rehabilitation.

Note 3. Pre-ETS, Training & Technical Assistance, and VR Services are sub-constructs to measure Implementation.

Implementation: Construct (& Sub-Construct) Definitions

<p>Implementation</p>	<p>What actually happens in the program, what are its key characteristics, who is participating, what do staff do, what do participants experience, and what’s working and not working (Patton, 2008, p. 309). Implementation science includes both research and practice. Implementation research seeks to understand and evaluate approaches used to translate evidence to the real world. Implementation practice seeks to apply and adapt these approaches in different contexts and settings to achieve positive outcomes (Metz et al., 2021, p. 1).</p>
	<p><i>Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)</i> <i>Job Exploration Counseling; Work-Based Learning experiences</i>, which may include in-school or after school opportunities, or experiences outside of the traditional school setting including internships, that is provided in an integrated environment in the community to the maximum extent possible; <i>Counseling on Opportunities for Enrollment in Comprehensive Transition or Postsecondary Education Programs</i> at institutions of higher education; <i>Workplace Readiness Training</i> to develop social skills and independent living; and <i>Instruction in Self-Advocacy</i>, (including instruction in person-centered planning), which may include peer mentoring (including peer mentoring from individuals with disabilities working in competitive integrated employment) (The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition, 2019, p. 14). Examples include delivery of the curriculum (modules) to IPPP participants, and application of virtual career exploration tool, career assessments and/or career exploration services.</p>
	<p><i>Training & Technical Assistance</i> Training (and development) are planned learning experiences that teach workers how to perform their current or future jobs effectively (Kleiman, 2000, as cited in Somasundaram & Egan, 2004, p. 854). Technical Assistance is the process of providing targeted support to an organization with a development need or program (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, n.d.; https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/professional_development/videos/pd101/05-technical_assistance.pdf). Examples include training and technical assistance to youth services professionals (e.g., Centers for Independent Living staff, community support specialists, school personnel, DRS vocational rehabilitation counselors), parents/families, and other project partners.</p>
	<p><i>Vocational Rehabilitation Services</i> Services that help people with disabilities find and keep jobs. These services help people find jobs or get ready for work. They also make sure that people have supports they need to stay on the job (Illinois Department of Human Services; https://www.illinois.gov/services/service.vocational-rehab-services.html).</p>
	<p><i>Transition Outcomes (Post-Secondary Education & Competitive Integrated Employment)</i> Full-time or part-time academic training above the secondary school (vocational/trade or technical school/college, community college, junior college, or four-year college or university) leading to an baccalaureate degree, Associate’s Degree, a certificate, or other recognized educational credential and/or to prepare students or youth for gainful employment in recognized occupation, not leading to an academic degree (Rehabilitation Services Administration Policy Directive, 2019). Work that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis (including self-employment), carries benchmarks related to compensation which ensure that individual pay discrepancies are not solely tied to one’s disability status. Wages in Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) must be at or above the (higher of) State or Federal Minimum Wage and not less than what is paid to comparably trained/skilled employees who are not disabled. CIE must also include an individual with a disability maintaining the same eligibility for benefits and advancement as other similarly situated employees. CIE can only occur in a location where the employee interacts with other persons (not including job coaches or other support personnel) who are not individuals with disabilities (Illinois Department of Human Service, 2024; https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=128239).</p>

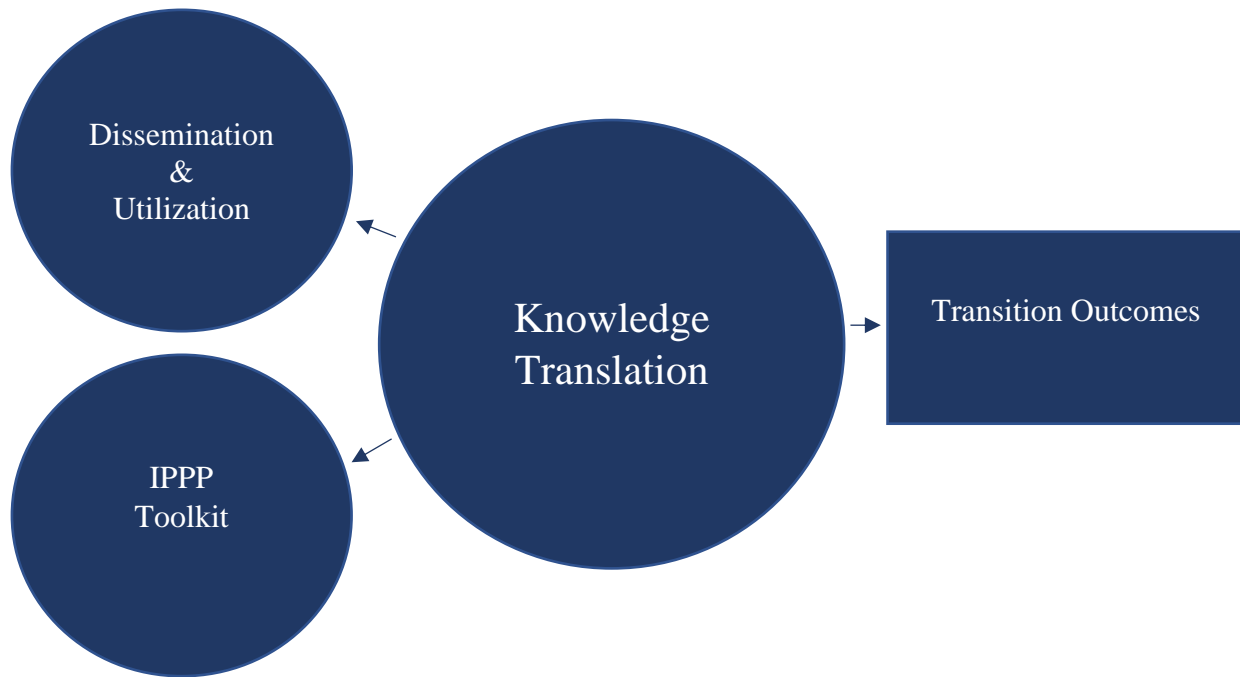
4. Knowledge Translation

A process through which research [and evaluation] evidence is synthesized for, and communicated to, researchers, clinicians, consumers, and policy makers so these constituent groups can make informed decisions about research agendas, providing and receiving interventions, and social and health policy (Johnson et al., 2010, p. 239).

Evaluation Questions

- What *transition evidence-based practices* have been established?
- What evidence exists regarding *dissemination* and *utilization* of IPPP information and established transition evidence-based practices?
- Has an *IPPP Toolkit* been created and disseminated?

Knowledge Translation Measurement Model.



Note 1. IPPP=Illinois Pathways to Partnerships Project.

Note 2. *Dissemination & Utilization* and *IPPP Toolkit* are sub-constructs to measure Knowledge Translation.

Note 3. *Transition Outcomes*=Transition Outcomes (Post-Secondary Education & Competitive Integrated Employment).

Knowledge Translation: Construct (& Sub-Construct) Definitions

<p>Knowledge Translation</p>	<p>A process through which research [and evaluation] evidence is synthesized for, and communicated to, researchers, clinicians, consumers, and policy makers so these constituent groups can make informed decisions about research agendas, providing and receiving interventions, and social and health policy (Johnson et al., 2010, p. 239).</p>
	<p><i>Dissemination & Utilization</i> The processes and variables that determine and/or influence the adoption of knowledge, interventions or practice by various stakeholders (Dobbins et al., 2002, p. 150). The process of transferring research-based [and evaluation-based] knowledge into clinical practice and represents a process whereby research [and evaluation] information is translated into a useable form and then implemented into practice (Dobbins et al., 2002, p. 150). Examples include IPPP Practice Briefs, peer reviewed journal articles, webcasts, Employment Specialist Handbook, social media strategies, and in-person or virtual conference for partners.</p>
	<p><i>Illinois Pathways to Partnerships Project Toolkit</i> Use of a theoretical framework such as knowledge-to-action (Graham et al., 2006) to translate the highest quality of evaluation and research knowledge to practice through the development of a toolkit to help inform practitioner and vocational rehabilitation (VR) customer decision-making about assessment, planning, and other VR services needed to increase post-secondary and competitive integrated employment opportunities for IPPP participants (Chan et al., 2012, p. 399).</p>
	<p><i>Transition Outcomes (Post-Secondary Education & Competitive Integrated Employment)</i> Full-time or part-time academic training above the secondary school (vocational/trade or technical school/college, community college, junior college, or four-year college or university) leading to an baccalaureate degree, Associate’s Degree, a certificate, or other recognized educational credential and/or to prepare students or youth for gainful employment in recognized occupation, not leading to an academic degree (Rehabilitation Services Administration Policy Directive, 2019). Work that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis (including self-employment), carries benchmarks related to compensation which ensure that individual pay discrepancies are not solely tied to one's disability status. Wages in Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) must be at or above the (higher of) State or Federal Minimum Wage and not less than what is paid to comparably trained/skilled employees who are not disabled. CIE must also include an individual with a disability maintaining the same eligibility for benefits and advancement as other similarly situated employees. CIE can only occur in a location where the employee interacts with other persons (not including job coaches or other support personnel) who are not individuals with disabilities (Illinois Department of Human Service, 2024; https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=128239).</p>

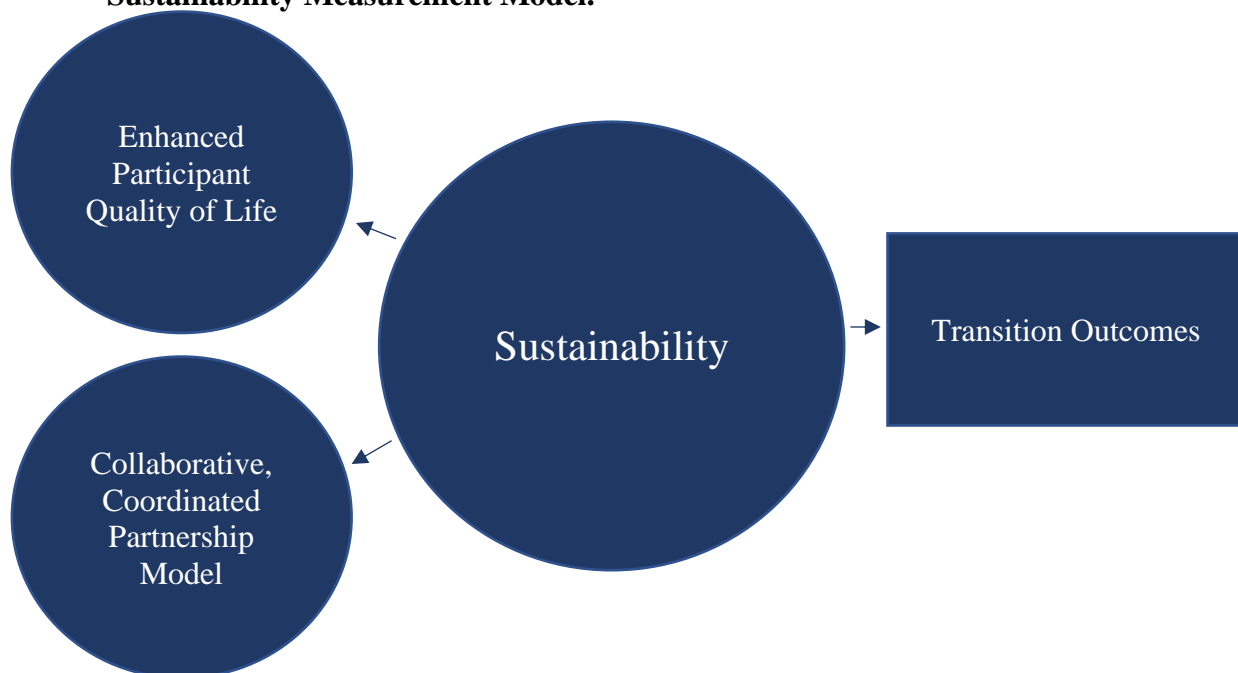
5. Sustainability

Sustainability is a community’s ongoing capacity and resolve to work together to establish, advance, and maintain effective strategies that continuously improve quality of life for individuals with disabilities. Sustainability is about creating and building momentum to maintain community-wide change by organizing and maximizing community assets and resources. It means institutionalizing policies and practices within communities and organizations. Sustainability requires an approach that emphasizes the development of a network of community practitioners. These factors are crucial to ensuring lasting change and making a difference in people’s lives (Batan, Butterfoss, Jaffe, & LaPier, n.d.).

Evaluation Questions

- What evidence exists that demonstrates IPPP participant participation contributes to IPPP participant enhanced quality of life to support IPPP *sustainability*?
- What evidence exists that the IPPP innovative, collaborative, and coordinated partnership model should be *sustained*?
- What evidence exists regarding the sustainability of enhanced participant quality of life and that the innovative, collaborative, and coordinated IPPP partnership model will likely lead to future positive *transition outcomes*?

Sustainability Measurement Model.



Note 1. Collaborative, Coordinated Partnership Model=Innovative, Collaborative, and Coordinated IPPP Partnership Model.

Note 2. *Enhanced Participant Quality of Life* and *Collaborative, Coordinated Partnership Model* are sub-constructs to measure sustainability.

Note 3. *Transition Outcomes*=Transition Outcomes (Post-Secondary Education & Competitive Integrated Employment).

Sustainability: Construct (& Sub-Construct) Definitions

<p>Sustainability</p>	<p>Sustainability is a community’s ongoing capacity and resolve to work together to establish, advance, and maintain effective strategies that continuously improve quality of life for individuals with disabilities. Sustainability is about creating and building momentum to maintain community-wide change by organizing and maximizing community assets and resources. It means institutionalizing policies and practices within communities and organizations. Sustainability requires an approach that emphasizes the development of a network of community practitioners. These factors are crucial to ensuring lasting change and making a difference in people’s lives (Batan, Butterfoss, Jaffe, & LaPier, n.d.).</p>
	<p><i>Enhanced Participant Quality of Life</i> Illinois Pathways to Partnerships Project (IPPP) participant quality of life that can be attributed to their participation in IPPP.</p>
	<p><i>Collaborative, Coordinated Partnership Model</i> Innovative, collaborative, and coordinated IPPP partnership model. An alliance among people and organizations from multiple sectors, such as schools and businesses, working together to achieve a common purpose (Roussos & Fawcett, 2000, p. 369).</p>
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