Transition of Youth and Young Adults with Emotional or Behavioral Difficulties
An Evidence-Supported Handbook
Edited by Hewitt B. “Rusty” Clark, Ph.D., & Deanne K. Unruh, Ph.D.

As youth with emotional or behavioral difficulties transition from school and home settings, they face the complex challenges and expectations of adult life: finding and maintaining work, establishing new relationships, building a career, and more. This comprehensive professional handbook will help transition specialists, general and special educators, mental health practitioners and therapists, child welfare and justice specialists, school psychologists, and administrators support youth and young adults in setting goals and achieving positive outcomes across employment, education, and community-life functioning.

Drawing on the expertise of a wide range of contributors—practitioners, educators, researchers, administrators, parents, and young people themselves—this book collects our best, most current knowledge on supporting transitions for young people with mental health issues. Through up-to-date research and in-depth analyses of seven successful transition programs, readers will discover how to

- apply evidence-supported practices to guide youth and young adults through the transition obstacle course
- bridge the gap between child and adult mental health services for consistent and coordinated services and supports for young people and their parents
- ensure effective adult services that are developmentally and culturally appropriate, and relevant to young adults
- address system fragmentation, so the mental health, education, justice, substance-abuse treatment, vocational rehabilitation, and child welfare systems can work together to serve young people’s best interests
- implement strategies for the transition from high school to meaningful employment, postsecondary education, or technical training
- use peer supports to reach, engage, and coach young people as they move into adulthood
- reduce common risk behaviors through skillful prevention planning
- fund and sustain services and supports through agency collaborations and a creative combination of federal, state, local, and private dollars
- implement a Continuous Quality Improvement process to recognize needs, build on strengths, and make required changes

Vignettes and first-person testimonials throughout the book strengthen readers’ awareness of the challenges young people experience and how effective transition services can make a difference. Detailed analyses and recommendations regarding program, system, policy, and research will help professionals shape the future of mental health supports—and ensure the best possible adult lives for the young people they serve.

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**Transition of Youth and Young Adults with Emotional or Behavioral Difficulties**

"An evidence-based framework and corresponding interventions that WILL better help young adults attain productive postsecondary outcomes." —Larry Kortering, Co-Principal Investigator, National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC); Professor, Special Education, Appalachian State University

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"A very well researched compendium of research, data, information and best practices for those who are policymakers, academicians and educators committed to ensuring successful adult outcomes for transition age youth.” —Lili Frank Garfinkel, Coordinator, Juvenile Justice Project, PACER Center

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"The voices of the students throughout the handbook speak to the realities and challenges of good transition planning practices. A great handbook for anyone interested in transition and improving the post school lives of young adults with disabilities.” —Ed O’Leary, Ed.D., Program Specialist, Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center, Logan, Utah

"This handbook has been long awaited by practitioners and researchers who collaborate with youth and young adults with mental health challenges . . . documents in useful detail the evidence that is currently available across several domains, including education, vocational rehabilitation, and mental health services.” —Nancy Koroloff, Ph.D., Portland State University

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"This timely and user-friendly handbook contains the latest information on evidence-based models and practices for young people and their families, educators and service providers, researchers, and administrators.” —Judith A. Cook, Ph.D., Professor of Psychiatry, University of Illinois at Chicago

"The important work that has been compiled in this text will positively impact the post-school outcomes for our most vulnerable youth, young people with emotional and behavioral difficulties.” —Cinda Johnson, Ed.D., Assistant Professor, Special Education Program Director, Seattle University, transition specialist, writer, mother of a daughter with bipolar disorder

"This text reduces the stigma of mental health conditions for young people, provides information and resources and does so by including authentic case stories.” —Linea Johnson, college student, mental health advocate, speaker, and writer

"An outstanding, empirically-based guide . . . The co-authors of each chapter include professionals as well as youth and family members who have wrestled with education and other service delivery systems, providing credibility and insight not found in most texts addressing [this topic].” —Peter E. Leone, Ph.D., Professor, University of Maryland
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