



**CUSTOMIZED
EMPLOYMENT:
OPENING DOORS FOR
PEOPLE ON THE AUTISM
SPECTRUM**

Presented by:

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Introduction of Presenters



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Purpose/ Objectives

- Increase knowledge and understanding of the customized employment process
- Share current efforts to develop an evidence-base for use of CE strategies to facilitate competitive, integrated employment for individuals with autism
- Demonstrate translation of research to practice and impact through personal perspectives and success stories

Customized Employment

“***competitive integrated employment***, for an individual with a significant disability, that is based on an ***individualized determination*** of the strengths, needs, and interests of the individual with a significant disability, designed to meet the ***specific abilities of the individual*** with a significant disability and the ***business needs of the employer***, and carried out through flexible strategies.”

(Civic Impulse, 2015, p. 573)

Why Customized Employment?

- Promotes the identification of interests, talents, and conditions for employment
- Facilitates attainment of competitive, integrated employment when traditional strategies are not successful
- Assists in the implementation of job accommodations that promote employment retention

Customized Employment Process

- Considers *unique aspects of each person* (age, type of disability, functional capacities, disposition, interaction style)
- Recognizes *contextual factors* (resources, living arrangements, geographical location, supports)

Facilitates an employment outcome that aligns with the individual's *interests and talents* while considering *conditions* that may impact successful, long-term employment



Customized Employment Process



CE Process Elements

PROCESS ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION
Discovery Process	Comprehensive, naturalistic assessment of interests, skills, and conditions for employment.
Vocational Profile	Robust, strengths-based narrative snapshot of the job seeker and translation of “discovered” interests and skills to potential employment opportunities.
CE Planning	Team development of a blueprint to employment.
Career Portfolio	Marketing materials including a video/photo resume illustrating job seeker’s ability to complete essential elements of a job.
Job Development & Negotiation	Working with employers to identify unmet needs and to customize job opportunities to benefit from job seeker skills and talents.
Accommodations & Post Emp. Supports	Environmental restructuring, training, and customization to enhance job seeker success and employment retention.

Universal Hiring Rule

Demonstrate that the value of hiring the individual is greater than the cost the business will expend and makes good business sense.



Federal (NIH/NIMH) Grant



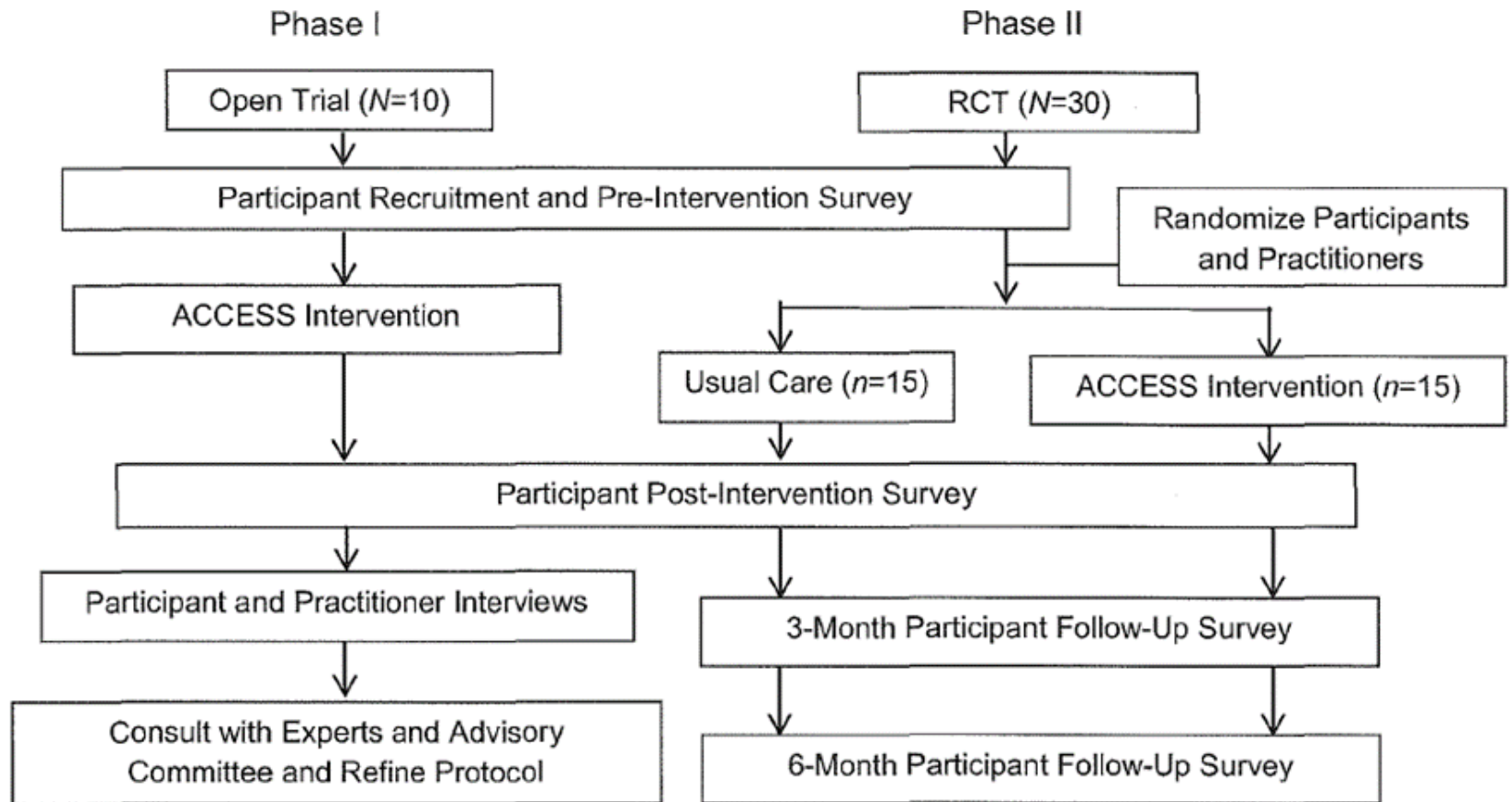
The purpose of this project is to test the CE process for its utility in improving competitive, integrated employment outcomes for adults (age 22+) with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Improving Current Practice

- The ACCESS model has potential to improve functional outcomes by improving both **employment matching** and **employment customization** for job seekers with ASD.
- Shift current clinical practice by:
 - Providing an evidence-base for a VR reimbursed model
 - Adaptation of the model to meet the specific services needs of adults with ASD

Methodology

Figure 3. Research Design



Expected Outcomes

- To gain convincing evidence of the feasibility, acceptability and preliminary efficacy of the ACCESS intervention
 - Competitive, integrated employment outcomes
 - Increased self-determination
 - Increased quality of life



Goals for Future Work

- **RO1** - To conduct a larger randomized controlled trial of the ACCESS intervention
- Power the RCT to evaluate whether ACCESS achieves the recommended effect size over the control intervention
- Test postulated mediators of intervention outcomes
- Recruit representative samples from under-represented groups (females, minorities, low socioeconomic status, Spanish-speaking, etc.)



“Pygmalion Effect”

– *When someone is expected to succeed, they probably will (the inverse is also true).*

*-Robert Rosenthal,
Harvard professor*

Personal Perspectives & Success Stories



Glazer Children's Museum

Working together with Kenny
by his supervisor Yvonne
Newson



“What We Both Needed”

- Kenny was a referral from Christine at Learning Academy Services which places potential candidates with autism spectrum disorders in permanent employment positions
- Christine served as Kenny’s Job Coach and spent time with Kenny and Museum staff to ensure our mutually successful working environment

“What We Both Needed”

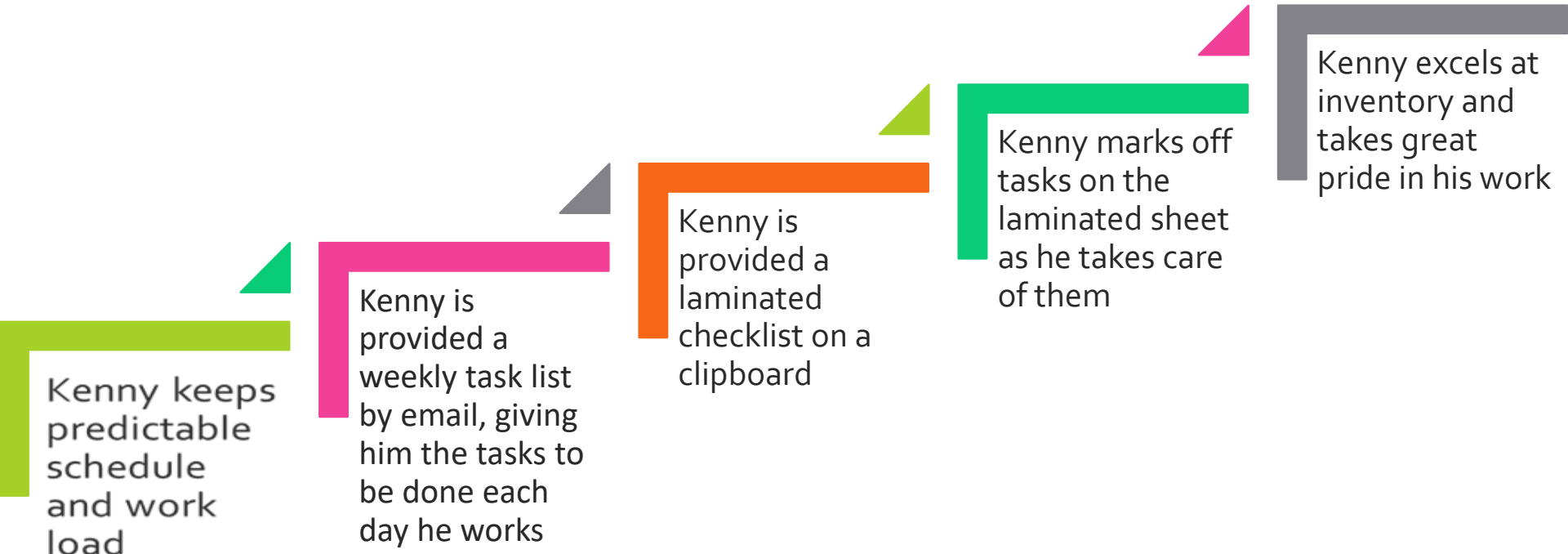
- Yvonne (employer) was provided with tools and tips to best train Kenny and help him to learn and be successful in this position at the Museum
- Christine continued to be available to us for reinforcement and continued training for both Kenny and Museum staff.

What We Learned

- Kenny became well versed in the needs and operations of the business.
- We learned tools and strategies to keep Kenny organized and to help him prioritize his work load.
- We received staff-wide training from the Center for Autism & Related Disabilities at USF.
- Getting to know Kenny and being able to utilize training helped everyone reach their goals and meet expectations.



Kenny's Expectations: How He Works Best



Kenny keeps predictable schedule and work load

Kenny is provided a weekly task list by email, giving him the tasks to be done each day he works

Kenny is provided a laminated checklist on a clipboard

Kenny marks off tasks on the laminated sheet as he takes care of them

Kenny excels at inventory and takes great pride in his work

Final Thoughts

- Yvonne needed to educate herself and really get to know Kenny to learn how to best communicate and train him.
- New tasks are sometimes intimidating for Kenny and knowing him on a personal level helps Yvonne approach subjects and new training opportunities.

Final Thoughts

- Kenny thrives when he is given recognition and told how much we appreciate him for the role he plays within our staff.
- Kenny is also learning how to be more proactive and aware of other co-workers who may need assistance.



Kenny
and
Yvonne

Glazer
Children's
Museum



Impact on A Micro-enterprise Journey



Questions?



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