

## **Occupations of Young Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: From Their Perspective**

Kimberley Persons

*University at Buffalo, State University of New York, Buffalo, New York, USA*

The transitional period following post-secondary education is a difficult time for any young adult. This is especially difficult for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Previous research has primarily focused on the family perspective of transition to adulthood, but there is limited research on the perspectives of young adults with IDD.

The purpose of this study was to determine the occupations young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) want to engage in following secondary education. A descriptive research study using survey method was conducted. Data was collected using a 23-question, non-standardized investigator developed pencil-paper questionnaire. Participants were young adults ages 18 to 26, diagnosed with IDD, and able to complete a questionnaire with or without assistance. The questionnaire was administered at community-based centers that serve people with IDD.

There were 103 participants in this study. The majority of the participants want to volunteer, work, complete home managements tasks, and participate in job and social skills training. Most participants reported that they are currently volunteering at centers set up through their transitional programs however, less than half of the participants are currently working.

This research has helped show that individuals with IDD possess the ability to determine their accessed and desired occupations. Occupational therapists can advocate for inclusion of the individual perspective during this transitional period. This research will help to improve transition programming for young adults with IDD in order to increase their ability to become active members of society and participate in meaningful occupations.