

**REPORT OF
SURVEY FINDINGS**

**Transitioning Youth
Consumer
Satisfaction**

**OCTOBER 2022 THROUGH
SEPTEMBER 2023**

**WEST VIRGINIA
STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL**

PREPARED BY
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**TRANSITIONING YOUTH:
CONSUMER SATISFACTION
October 2022 – September 2023**

The WV State Rehabilitation Council in conjunction with the WV Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) conducted a survey of consumer satisfaction with DRS services in West Virginia. The Council developed an instrument that asked consumers to rate their level of agreement with statements about the services they may have received through WV DRS. Consumers were also asked about specific information related to jobs and to their rights as a consumer. A final section included open-ended items designed to determine the consumers' opinion about program changes or improvements that could be made.

As a subset of DRS consumers, the surveys were distributed to "transitioning youth" during the year so that the Council could examine the pattern of responses for that population. A total of 1,883 surveys were distributed to Transitioning Youth from October 2022 through September 2023. Sixty-two surveys coded as "transitioning youth" were returned. This report summarizes the responses of those youth and describes the findings from those 62 responses.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

District.

The district and closure status were recorded on each survey in preparation for mailing. If there were equal numbers of responses from each district, you would expect to see about 17% of the responses to come from each of the six districts. In this sample, District 4 and District 5 each represented about 21% of the sample. District 6 represented 11% of the responses. There were 62 individuals who reported county information. There was at least one response from 24 of the 55 counties in West Virginia.

It should be noted that the District information was coded on each survey. The responders indicated the County information. Therefore, not all the returned surveys contained County information.

The number and percent of responses by WVDRS District.

District	Number of responses	Percent of total responses received
District 1	12	19.35%
District 2	9	14.52%
District 3	8	12.90%
District 4	13	20.97%
District 5	13	20.97%
District 6	7	11.29%

District 1: Boone (0 responses), Calhoun (0), Clay (1), Jackson (2), Kanawha (2), Mason (2), Putnam (2), Roane (1), Unknown (2).

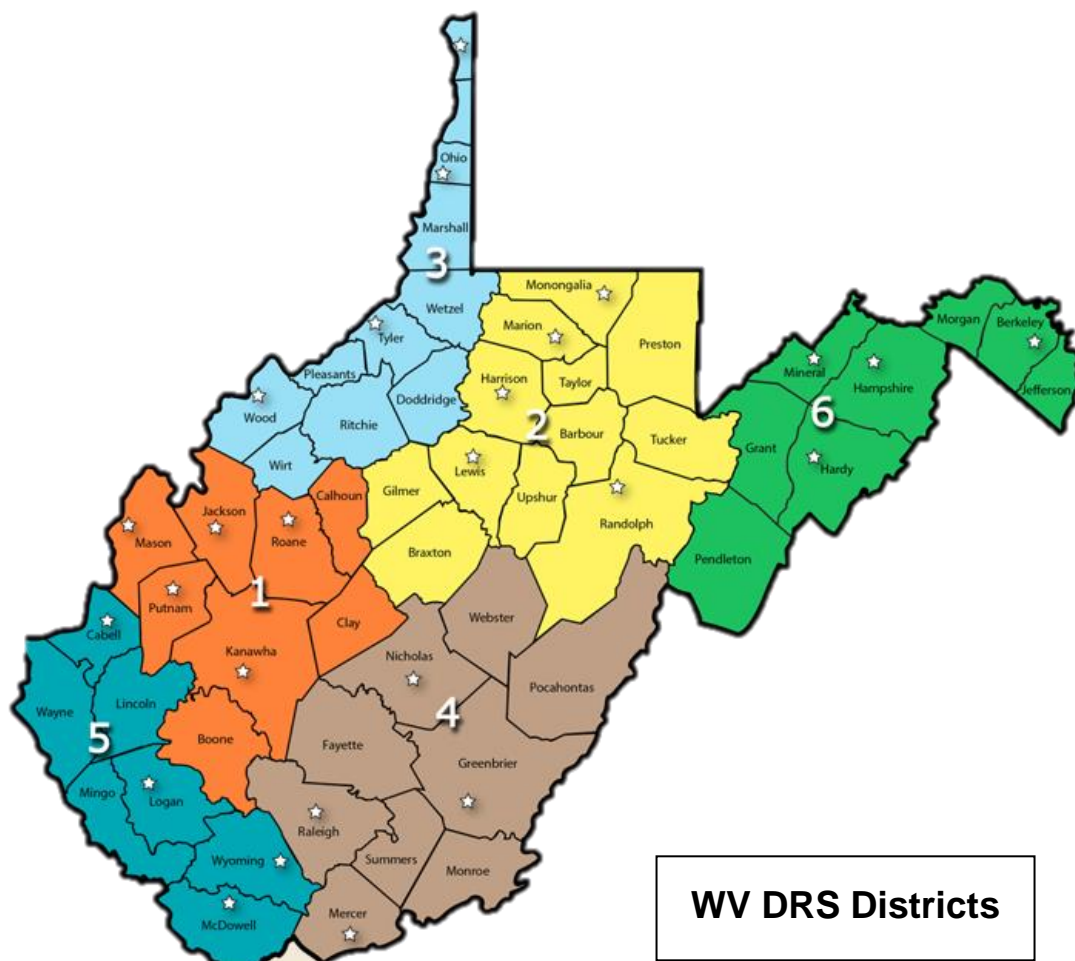
District 2: Barbour (0 responses), Gilmer (0), Harrison (1), Lewis (0), Marion (2), Monongalia (5), Preston (0), Randolph (0), Taylor (0), Tucker (0), Upshur (0), Unknown (1).

District 3: Brooke (1 response), Doddridge (0), Hancock (0), Marshall (0), Ohio (0), Pleasants (0), Ritchie (0), Tyler (0), Wetzel (2), Wirt (0), Wood (4), Unknown (1).

District 4: Braxton (0 responses), Fayette (1), Greenbrier (2), Mercer (5), Monroe (0), Nicholas (0), Pocahontas (0), Raleigh (2), Summers (0), Webster (0), Unknown (3).

District 5: Cabell (5 responses), Lincoln (0), Logan (0), McDowell (1), Mingo (0), Wayne (1), Wyoming (4), Unknown (2).

District 6: Berkeley (1 response), Grant (2), Hampshire (0), Hardy (0), Jefferson (1), Mineral (1), Morgan (0), Pendleton (0), Unknown (2).



Type of Disability.

The consumers were asked to indicate their disability. There were 56 youth who listed a disabling condition (e.g., Type I Diabetes) or a description of their disability (e.g., Learning, reading, writing and spelling). There were 29 youth who reported having a **Cognitive** impairment. There were 6 youth who reported a **Sensory** disability and 6 who indicated **Mobility**-related disabilities. Three youth reported **Mental Health** disability. Six youth reported having Sensory impairments. Twelve people reported **Various/Other** disabilities (e.g., Juvenile scleroderma; depression; Psoriatic arthritis; Solar urticaria; endocrine system doesn't function).

Type of Disability	Respondents	Percent
Cognitive	29	52%
Sensory	6	11%
Mobility	6	11%
Mental Health	3	5%
Other/Various	12	21%

Type of Closure.

The surveys were sent to consumers from each closure status. Closure **Status 08** means that the case was closed after the application process because the individual was determined to be ineligible for services. Closure **Status 30** means that the consumer was determined to be eligible for services, but none were provided. Closure **Status 28** means that the case was closed after at least one service was provided, but the employment goal was not achieved. Closure **Status 38** means that the individual's case was closed from the waitlist. Closure **Status 26** means that the case was closed after the consumer met the objective(s) in their service plan.

The Closure Status was obtained for all individuals who responded. Closure Type 26 can be thought of as a "successful" closure and Statuses 08, 28, 30, and 38 usually represent an "unsuccessful" closure. In this sample, about 44% of the responses were received

from consumers who successfully completed their rehabilitation program (Status 26) and about 56% were closed as unsuccessful. There were no Status 38 closures in this sample.

Status	Responders	Percent of total
26 (Successful)	27	44%
08 (Unsuccessful)	2	3%
28 (Unsuccessful)	22	35%
30 (Unsuccessful)	11	18%
38 (Unsuccessful)	0	0%

Work Status of Respondents.

There were 57 responses to the item about work status. Of these, 56% indicated they were working at the time of the survey, 23% were in school, 5% were looking for work, and 12% reported that they were unable to work. Two of the Youth reported that they don't want to work. Thus, 61% of the Transitioning Youth in this sample were either working or looking for work at the time they completed the survey.

Consumers by reported work status		
Work Status	Participants	Percent
In School/Training	13	23%
Working	32	56%
Looking for Work	3	5%
Unable to Work	7	12%
Don't want to Work	2	4%

SATISFACTION ITEMS

The youth responses to the Satisfaction Items are listed in the following table. Historically, the level of satisfaction by youth was low, but the increased over the past 2 years. This sample shows a decrease in satisfaction for the Transitioning Youth this year. The “mean of means” was 74% this year as compared to 84% for 2021-22. Five of the Items were rated at less than 70% agreement and only 3 satisfaction and/or rating items were rated at 80% or more this year.

The following table lists each Satisfaction Item, the percent of respondents who agreed with that statement during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 surveys. The last 2 columns display the number of individuals who responded to each statement (N) and the percent of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement (%). By comparing the previous percentages with the percentages from this year’s survey, it may be noted that the level of agreement has fluctuated across the years with this year’s responses being generally lower than the past responses.

Reported Satisfaction by Transitioning Youth	% Agree or Strongly Agree			
Satisfaction Item	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-23	
			N*	%**
1. The eligibility requirements and process for receiving services were clearly explained by DRS staff.	88%	89%	52	81%
2. My questions were answered clearly by DRS staff.	82%	90%	49	76%
3. My DRS counselor helped me identify appropriate employment opportunities.	63%	83%	47	64%
4. My DRS counselor and I developed a plan for employment.	71%	85%	51	69%
5. I was made aware of the steps and my responsibilities to achieve my employment goal.	70%	88%	54	69%
6. My DRS counselor stayed in contact with me so I knew what was happening with my services.	79%	73%	53	72%
7. I received the services needed to reach my employment goal.	70%	81%	50	70%
8. I am satisfied with the services provided by DRS.	75%	80%	57	74%
9. My counselor treated me with respect.	91%	89%	52	85%
10. My counselor told me about job opportunities.	54%	78%	49	67%
Rating Item				
1. How would you rate the accessibility at your local DRS office?	81%	86%	49	67%
2. How would you rate your counselor?	85%	86%	46	83%
3. How would you rate your overall experience with DRS?	79%	80%	49	78%

* Number of Transition Youth of responded

** Percentage of Transition Youth of Agreed or Strongly Agreed or gave a positive rating to the item

RIGHTS INFORMATION

The consumers were asked to indicate which rights information had been explained to them. There were 50 individuals who responded that at least one right had been explained (80% of the sample). Most individuals indicated that they had received several rights explanations. The total number of rights explained was 273. If each of these individuals had been given information about each of the rights listed, the total would have been 400 (50 people X 8 issues). The total responses indicate that consumers recalled having been told 68% of the possible rights information. They most often recalled being told about their right to “Participate in developing my plan” and least often report being told they could “Request another DRS counselor” and to “Contact CAP for help in resolving differences.”

One individual wrote in a comment, “Does not apply” near the rights information section of the survey form.

Rights explained to consumers.		
Type of rights information	Consumers	%
Participate in developing my plan	48	96%
Know about all the services that were available	42	84%
Choose how my services were provided	40	80%
Appeal any decision about my services	32	64%
Choose who provided my services	31	62%
Appeal any decision about my case	31	62%
Contact CAP for help in resolving differences	25	50%
Request another DRS counselor	24	48%

OPEN-ENDED ITEMS

Which service(s) offered by DRS did you find the most helpful?

The survey participants were asked to list the service they found most helpful. There were 45 responses to this question. Of these, 6 people reported that “All” the services were helpful (e.g., All of them, They were all helpful). There were 8 people who said that they did not find any of the services helpful, or that they never received any services (e.g., Never received any services; The lady I talked to was great, but that is all that was ever done was talk; They did not do anything to help me).

The others said the most helpful services were Education/Training, Employment/Job Services, and Other/Various Services. These comments follow.

Education/Training Related Services:

- Financial assistance in college.
- Financial help and advice for college.
- Help with school supplies.
- Life skills
- Participation during HS years. They kept tabs on me, made sure I did my homework, put me in easier classes.
- Reimbursement for college textbooks.
- The only service I could take advantage of was funding for college, but only for attending full time.
- Tuition and book payment/reimbursement. Help buying scrubs. Purchasing a laptop for me.
- When they was able to help pay for books and equipment.

Employment-Related Services:

- Employment
- Job placement
- Job placement and transitioning from high school to a job.
- Job preparedness.
- Job training.
- Resume

- The employment plan.

Other/Various Services or Assistance:

- Ability to discuss and change my plan as my condition worsened.
- Assistance finding and paying for hearing aids.
- Camps, technology assistance, orientation and mobility training in Charleston/Nitro.
- Counselor
- Financial.
- Helping pay for supplies.
- I am still in the process of exploring the options that are available for me and appropriate for me.
- I did not get any messages from DRS.
- Job location; help with obtaining hearing aids.
- Monthly checks; funding for education; school supplies; resume assistance
- Only had some contact in high school.
- School services, career/employment services.
- The speed of how my services were and how easy it was to understand.
- Training, education, job

What needs do you have that were not met or addressed by DRS?

The survey participants were asked whether they had additional needs that were not met or addressed. There were 30 responses to this item. Fourteen youth indicated that all their needs were met or that they had no additional needs (e.g., I think all was covered; All needs were addressed.). Four Transitioning Youth said none of their needs were met. Their comments were:

- All
- I was not informed of anything.
- I wasn't taken serious.
- None of my needs were addressed. They forced me to go have an evaluation with a psychologist which my parents had to pay for then never addressed any of his recommendations.

The other comments were related to Education/Training or Employment.

- Career and follow-up with college. I was asked to leave college and not come back for my SR yr.
- I was not able to attend college FT after a while due to my disabilities. I could not success attending FT 15 credit hours and having to keep a certain GPA. I was not paired with a job or housing.
- I would like to have information on how to live independently.
- Still need skills training and securing.
- Tuition for my college.
- Being aware of what is under the appropriate work accommodations in the workplace.
- Help with resume feedback. I was told it was fine, but I wanted more specific feedback.
- Helping find a job.
- I was not offered job placement.
- Job hunting skills.
- Limited job options presented.
- Where to begin looking for a job with my degree.

How could the Division of Rehabilitation improve services?

The survey participants were asked how services could be improved. There were 26 responses to this item including 3 people who said no improvements are needed (e.g., I think they did a great job so I can't think of anything they can improve; I think they're good as they are right now; No need to they did an outstanding job). There were 23 people who offered praise and/or suggestions for improvements. These comments follow.

- More advertising in high schools so people are aware of services. Not count years w/o assistance as part of your qualifying years for services.
- Allow for broader discussion and to use the info you provide to make a physical list to study and discuss.
- Being more helpful, explain services and options, respond quicker.
- Better follow up with services that I was told qualified for but never got more info on.
- By telling what they actually provide.
- Clear communication between client/counselors and clear deadline for approvals.
- Counselor need express what is expected.
- Do more to interact instead of just showing up at school every 2-3 months.
- Keep me more informed.
- Kept better tabs on me. I floundered in the system. I'm very, very, shy and easy to overlook. I have a lot of trouble asking for help as well.
- More timely communication. Better prepared for meetings. Have options listed so could read/review.
- Actual job placement.
- Work with the clients in helping them find jobs and applying for them.
- Working more time and more jobs to get to apply for.
- Counselors are spread too thin and I believe are not able to serve each individual fully to grow and succeed. I needed help from DRS with my college disability office.
- Do the training I never received.
- Increased funding; provide equipment.
- Things were restricted by Covid. So not actual services.
- Consistent counselors, but I understand there is a high turnover.
- Fire [counselor name].

- Have counselors that care about clients. I never felt welcomed or included. Every email I sent I felt like a bother.
- Hire workers who are engaged and want to help people succeed that help them acquire all the assistance available.
- Retaining case workers.

Do you have any other comments?

The final item on the survey asked the participants if they had any other comments. A total of 24 people made a comment. There were 8 positive comments, 8 negative comments, and 4 comments that were explanations or suggestions. These comments are listed subsequently.

Positive Comments:

- Good service
- I truly appreciate all the help achieving my goal to become a pharmacist. I can't express how much my counselor helped me through the process.
- My counselor helped me with all my issues.
- Thank you!
- They were great! Everyone. Thanks. Been employed 1 year full time and benefits.
- Very professional and kind staff.
- We were completely satisfied with your services.
- Wonderful program.

Negative Comments:

- After my first counselor left, I only heard from my new counselor once and never heard from anyone after.
- I have a lot to say about the services-- which was NOT helpful and a lot to say about [counselor name].
- I'm not satisfied with the services. My daughter got Covid and didn't work for a period. The counselor said she would contact me to set something up for her. I never heard back.
- My worker was completely disengaged, took weeks to respond if she responded. This was a horrible experience as I watched other people get assistance over and over but I got nothing.
- Never found out how they could help.
- Overall poor service.
- The only advantage I was able to participate in with DRS had caveats. The real help I needed was finding a career so I could have a life and not struggle.
- Very disappointed in program, my son had to research and find his own jobs and then try to keep them. DRS never helped with the actual getting a job and working with a workplace to help with assistance with job.

Other Comments:

- Child approved, but parent/child refused services because we felt someone more deserving may need services. We cannot evaluate your program at this time.
- I'm in the hospital. I would like you to help me after I find a place to live.
- I'm now working at Walmart as a cashier. I hate the job. Hell on Earth!! But what am I to do? I'm not smart enough for college and my mom said I had to get a job. I was transferred from one dept to cashier because I wasn't fast enough. I'm not that great of a Walmart worker either.
- It would be nice to have clear instructions on services offered and what all you can participate in.
- It would be nice to have a 3 to 5 year transition period like SSA has for careers.
- Program needs to be started earlier in child's life.
- Receiving other guidance via the workplace via asking for accommodations would be helpful.
- You need better people for job training. I waited almost 2 years and gave up on the training and got my own job.

SUMMARY

Demographic Information. There were 62 surveys returned from respondents who were identified as “Transitioning Youth.” The respondents represent each of the six districts of West Virginia and 24 of the 55 counties in the state.

Respondents were asked about their disabling condition. It is typical that the Transitioning Youth most often report having Cognitive impairments and, in this sample, 52% of the youth reported Cognitive disabilities. This percentage is somewhat higher than in previous samples.

The surveys were sent to consumers whose cases were closed during the program year. Only 44% of the respondents were in the Status 26 (successful rehabilitation) group and the remaining 56% were closed in Status 08, 28, or 30 (unsuccessful rehabilitation). This sample contains fewer “successful” closures than previous sample.

Of the 57 people who provided work status information, 23% were in school at the time they completed the survey, 56% of responders were working, and 5% were looking for work. About 16% of respondents were unable or unwilling to work at the time of the survey.

Rights Information. There were 50 individuals who responded that at least one right had been explained (80% of the sample). The total responses indicate that consumers recalled having been told 68% of the possible rights information (50 people X 8 issues). They most often recalled being told about their right to “Participate in developing my plan” and least often report being told they could “Request another DRS counselor” and to “Contact CAP for help in resolving differences.” One individual wrote “Does not apply” on their survey in response to the question about rights information.

Satisfaction Items. The youth were asked to respond to a series of statements about their interactions with DRS. Historically, the level of satisfaction by youth had dropped across the years, but over the last three program years, the level of satisfaction by Transitioning Youth has fluctuated. This year, satisfaction levels have dropped again. The “mean of means” of the 13 items was 80% in 2018-19, 83% for 2019-2020, 76% in 2020-21, and 84% for 2021-22. This year, the “mean of means” was 74% across all items.

Open-Ended Questions.

The consumers provided specific responses to the services they found most helpful, existing service needs, and ways to improve services offered and delivered through the WV Division of Rehabilitation Services. Examination of these comments may contribute to understanding how consumers view DRS and the services received. For example, the comments often indicate the need for clearer communication of policies and processes as consumers move through the system. The comments (along with the rating scores) also indicate the strengths of the agency that contribute to positive outcomes for West Virginia youth with disabilities.