

Education for Life

Linking State and Community Agencies to
Maximize Access to Care and Improve
Quality of Life for HIV Positive Individuals

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Education for Life (EFL)

Partnership of the Minnesota Department of Human Services with two local non-profit agencies:

- Project for Pride in Living (PPL), and
- MN Work Incentives Connection (WIC)

Education for Life

- Recognized the need for a program which specifically addresses the unique issues of HIV positive clients:
 - Increased life expectancy
 - Desire to return to workforce or be active in community
 - Need to address chemical and mental health issues
 - Deal with stressors such as disclosure & discrimination
 - Other psychosocial issues related to returning to work
 - Sustained health care

Education for Life

- A work initiative that assists HIV positive people, considering reentry into the workforce the opportunity to:
 - Explore their career options
 - Understand legal rights, HIV disclosure issues
 - Be informed of health insurance options
 - Job skill development
 - Training in a safe, supportive environment
 - Be informed of benefit changes related to employment

Education for Life – Results (in the past 18 months)

- 90% of EFL students graduate successfully
- 21% EFL graduates have become employed
- 22% are volunteering
- 26% are attending school

2009 HRSA site visit; project officers deemed EFL

“One of the most successful programs of its kind in the nation”

Education for Life

■ Next Steps

- Provide expanded employment services
 - Include job placement activities
- Conduct classes in rural areas
 - Outside TGA reaching 14% of Minnesota's HIV population
- Conduct a class for those who are underemployed
 - Evening and/or weekend session

Education for Life

- Key components of this successful collaboration:
 - Buy-in from the participating agencies
 - Shared goal
 - Good communication
 - Clear understanding of expectations
 - Frequency of meetings
 - Regular contact & feedback
 - Willingness to be flexible and adapt to recommended modifications
 - Shared responsibility with marketing/recruitment
 - Ongoing evaluation and improvement

Helping people



help themselves

Project for Pride in Living works with lower-income individuals and families living throughout the Twin City metro area to achieve greater self-sufficiency through housing, employment training, support services and education.

PPL was founded in 1972 by a group of volunteers concerned with the diminishing quality of housing stock in the inner-city neighborhoods of Minneapolis.

Today, PPL helps people help themselves. We provide families, youth, and adults with housing, support systems and processes for skill-building that can lead to:

- **Housing Stability**
- **Economic Advancement**
- **Family Stability**
- **Youth Achievement**

Helping people



help themselves

- PPL is the host agency for Education for Life (EFL), offering the training program out of the Emma B. Howe Learning Center in Minneapolis. A variety of in-house resources are available for the students:
 - Other classroom-based training programs in healthcare and banking industries
 - Computer Access Lab & Professional Development Workshops (resume, mock interviewing, computer basics)
 - Career Assessment and Exploration
 - Financial Coaching

PPL's Role in the EFL Process:

- Worked with DHS staff to design goals and outcomes
- Designed curriculum
- On-going marketing and recruitment efforts to promote the class
- Administer 2-hour clinical intakes for interested candidates
- Conduct the 5-week course on-site, several times a year
 - Collaborating with outside presenters
 - African American Family Services – offers chemical health assessments and additional support

PPL's Role in the EFL Process:

- Staff an EFL Trainer, Resource and Referral Specialist, and Placement specialist
- Offer placement services and additional support to graduates
 - Ongoing follow-up with clients
 - Connection to other supportive services



Answers, Choices, Possibilities

- Provide clear, accurate information about impact of work on government benefits
- Services include:
 - Phone hotline for info and referral
 - Problem solving and advocacy for complex benefit issues
 - Outreach
 - Benefits Analysis

Work Incentives Connection's Role in the EFL Process:

Provide individual benefits counseling to students. Services address the following benefit programs:

■ Federal

- Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Medicare

■ State and County

- HIV programs
- Medicaid and Medicare Buy-in programs
- Food Support
- Cash programs
- Group home programs

■ Housing Assistance

Benefits Analysis

1. Verification of benefits

2. Problem solving as needed

3. Written report includes:

- Impact of earnings on each cash, healthcare, and housing benefit
- Examples showing financial impact of work at different levels of earnings
- Benefits Management Plan:
 - Reporting instructions
 - Tracking tools
 - Resources for finding employment and training

4. Follow up for at least 1 year following in-person delivery of Benefits Analysis

Sue: SSI Benefits Analysis Example

(\$8 an hour at 20 hours a week)

SSI Calculation

Gross Monthly Wages:	\$640.00
- Earned Income Exclusion:	<u>- \$85.00</u>
	\$555.00
	÷ <u>2</u>
Countable Earned Income:	\$277.50
2010 Federal Benefit Rate:	\$674.00
- Countable Earned Income:	<u>- \$277.50</u>
SSI:	\$396.50

Total Monthly Income:

Paid Wages:	\$640.00
*Taxes:	-\$64.00
SSI:	\$396.50
Food Support:	\$16.00
- Rent:	-\$301.00
MA:	Yes

Available Income \$687.50

Total available income when not working was **\$522.**



Bill: SSDI Benefits Analysis Example (Earning \$900 per month)

Not Working

Earning \$900 per month:

Paid Wages:	\$0	Paid Wages:	\$900
*Estimated Taxes:	\$0	*Estimated Taxes:	- \$135
SSDI:	\$814	SSDI:	\$814
Food Support:	\$16	Food Support:	\$0
Medicare Part B:	\$0	Medicare Part B:	\$0
MA/MA-EPD:	\$0	MA/MA-EPD:	- \$87
Rent:	<u>-\$234</u>	Rent:	<u>-\$501</u>
Available Income:	\$596	Available Income:	\$991

A 66% increase of available income when working!



Work Incentives Connection

Answers, Choices, Possibilities

- Information sessions provided for EFL students to increase general knowledge of:
 - Social Security Disability eligibility
 - Housing Assistance programs
 - SSA – Ticket to work program and State Workforce Center (one-stop) services



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

Department of Human Service's role in EFL

- Provide funding
- Manage contract
- Provide ongoing support
- Assist with marketing and outreach
- Program development



Health Care Access Specialist's role in EFL:

- Provides benefits intakes
- Triage cases with MN-WIC and PPL staff
- Reviews health care options
- Completes health care assessments
- Gives health care presentation



Education for Life Documentary

View some elements of the
Education for Life experience



Education for Life

Questions



Education for Life

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