

Empower Your Future: MN WAY/ETM Grant Fact Sheet

The MN WAY (Minnesota Workforce Access for Youth) initiative is a 5-year project under the Employment Transition Model (ETM) Demonstration Grants, funded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP).

This project is focused on supporting rural youth with disabilities aged 14–24 as they transition into the workforce, education, or career training—delivering long-term, person-centered services through coordinated, community-driven supports aligned with national best practices in youth transition services.

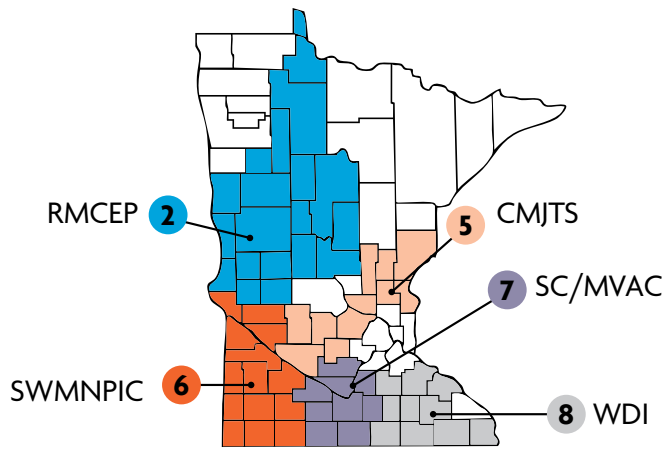


Youth Path to Success:

- **Hands-on work:** Paid and unpaid work experiences tailored to your interests and skills
- **Explore and plan:** Career exploration and planning, including virtual reality and AI technology
- **Education and jobs:** Support for postsecondary education enrollment or employment placement
- **Team support:** Coordinated planning through Integrated Resource Teams (IRTs)
- **Family empowerment:** Family-centered services and trainings supported by PACER Center
- **Financial guidance:** Disability benefits counseling by certified work incentive practitioners
- **Comprehensive assistance:** Wraparound support aligned with the Guideposts for Success 2.0 framework

Our Commitments:

- ✓ Expand career and educational opportunities for youth with disabilities
- ✓ Build a “No Wrong Door” service system across partner agencies
- ✓ Enhance family and youth engagement in planning and services
- ✓ Promote collaboration among schools, workforce, and community providers



Project Reach & Partners

This statewide collaboration covers **63 of Minnesota's 87 counties** and operates across **five Workforce Development Areas (WDAs)** in rural Minnesota:

Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program (RMCEP)

Becker, Beltrami, Cass, Clay, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Douglas, Grant, Hubbard, Lake of the Woods, Mahnomon, Morrison, Otter Tail, Pope, Stevens, Todd, Traverse, Wadena, and Wilkin Counties

Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services (CMJTS)

Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, Mille Lacs, Pine, Renville, Sherburne, and Wright Counties

Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council (SWMNPIC)

Big Stone, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Jackson, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Rock, Swift, and Yellow Medicine Counties

South Central Workforce Council/Minnesota Valley Action Council (SC/MVAC)

Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca, and Watonwan Counties

Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI)

Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, and Wabasha Counties

Supporting Partners

PACER Center (parent/family training, advocacy, assistive technology, and social inclusion programs)

Manhattan Strategy Group (MSG, contracted technical assistance provider)

Abt Global (independent evaluation partner)

Contact Us

Cory Schmid, *Project Lead*
cory.schmid@state.mn.us

PACER Center:
transition@pacer.org
 (952) 838-9000

MN WAY Core Frameworks

✓ *Guideposts for Success 2.0*

Foundation of key educational and career development interventions for youth across five areas:

- School-based preparatory experiences
- Career prep and work-based learning experience
- Youth leadership
- Community connections to programs, services and activities
- Family engagement

✓ *Integrated Resource Teams (IRTs)*

Wraparound planning teams that coordinate services across education, workforce, and community sectors.

Project Outcomes

By 2029, MN WAY aims to achieve:

- 822 youth served
 - 493 placed in employment
 - 329 employed 1 year post-program
 - 247 enrolled in postsecondary education
 - 310 families engaged through PACER trainings
- Increased Certified Work Incentive Practitioners (CWIP) and benefits coaches
- Fully integrated Guideposts & IRT practices statewide

Why It Matters

“Youth-first. Disability-second.”

The MN WAY/ETM grant creates lasting, meaningful opportunities for youth with disabilities. By prioritizing each youth's goals, removing barriers, and ensuring whole-family support, this initiative is building stronger futures—for individuals and communities alike.



Minnesota Workforce Access for Youth (ETM Grant) is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor in the amount of \$7,150,000 under Cooperative Agreement No. [24475OD000004-01-0] with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development that will be incrementally provided. 100% of grant funding is from U.S. Federal funds. This resource does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Labor, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.