

Using Music and Person-Centered Planning to Improve Transition Outcomes for Marginalized Students



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Issue

Challenges in Emerging Adulthood

Making the transition from adolescence to adulthood can be challenging for any student, but some issues may make it even more difficult:

- Disability status
- Low self-esteem
- Low socio-economic status
- English language learner
- Few positive role models
- Social isolation
- High-risk behavior

If students have an identified disability, the school IEP process will include a transition plan. Often that planning process will utilize person-centered planning strategies. Without an IEP, students have much less chance of having a solid plan for their transition to adulthood.

The Goal

To identify beneficial transition interventions for students with a variety of challenges.

Theoretical Components

Outcomes for this proposal draw from three theoretical foundations:

- Bandura's (1977) Self-efficacy Theory,
- Deci & Ryan's (2000) Self-Determination Theory, and the
- Transition Outcomes Model proposed by Hood & Harwick

The transition outcomes in the right column of Figure 1 show four major considerations for successful emergent adulthood: Residence, Financial Independence, Relationships, and Constructive Engagement. Student self-efficacy and self-determination (including competence, autonomy, and relatedness) may contribute to positive transition outcomes.

Options

Three possible alternatives for identifying successful strategies for helping students faced by marginalizing challenges to succeed in their transitions to adulthood include:

- Completing a literature review or meta-analysis of the literature on emerging adulthood.
- Observing exemplary programs
- Comparing two or more programs that appear to contribute to successful outcomes.

A literature review presents some insurmountable challenges:

- Not enough current scientific reports to identify important trends
- What constitutes successful outcomes differs greatly from program to program

Qualitative observations of exemplary programs:

- Would be limited by the lack of agreement on what constitutes a quality program
- hampered by lack of a unified model of outcome measures

The Plan

The third option, a direct comparison of two or more programs, will provide the best information. It provides the opportunity to use the same outcome measures to identify the strengths of competing program strategies.

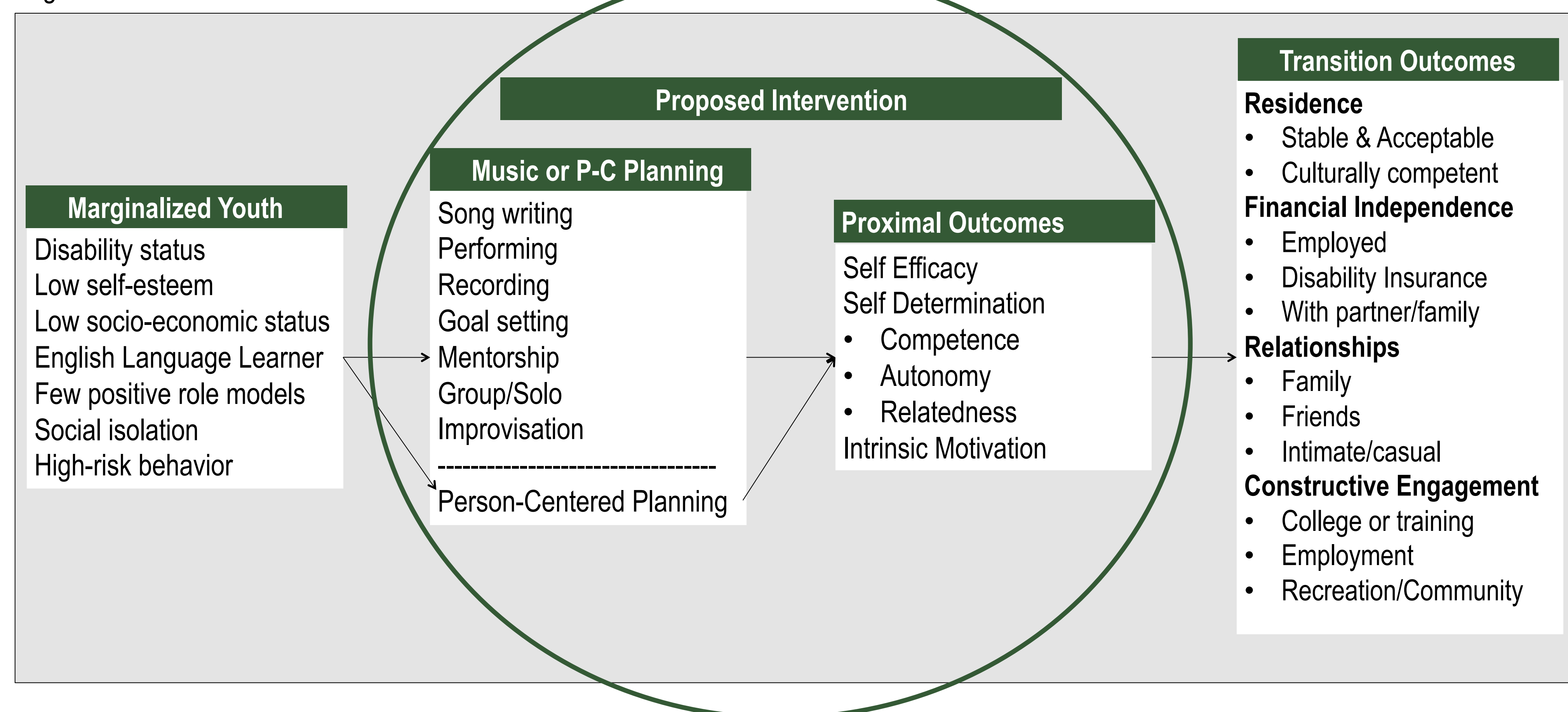
To find the most beneficial strategies for transition success, three groups will be assessed within two existing programs. The Portland School District provides for the transition needs of students with disabilities in a life skills program. Each student in the program receives services including a transition plan that incorporates person-centered planning.

The second program, My Voice Music, provides after-school, in-school, and summer programs in music designed to foster skills that help students move successfully into adulthood. Some students in the program will have an IEP and are likely to receive person-centered planning in addition. Ethical and practical constraints prohibit random assignment to groups.

It is anticipated that students who receive person-centered planning will improve, those who receive music will improve more, and those who receive both will improve the most.

Theoretical Model

Figure 1. Youth transition outcome model.



The proposed comparison will test the effect of person-centered planning, a music program, or both on proximal outcomes of self efficacy, self determination, and intrinsic motivation.

The model proposes that the proximal outcomes should lead to successful transition outcomes based on prior research on self efficacy and self determination.

Figure 2. Proposed Timeline for Intervention and Assessment.

| | DEC | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV |
|---------------------|-----|---------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------|-------|
| Finalize Constructs | IRB | | Compare groups, matching? | Collect first post data | Continue programs | Continue | Continue | Continue | Collect final post data | Prepare data, analyze | Write | Write |
| Determine Measures | | Recruit | Begin music program | | | | | | | | | |

This study will evaluate and compare existing programs. The life skills program is funded by the Portland Public Schools. The second program, My Voice Music is funded through grants, private donations, and member contributions. Evaluation will be

completed by graduate students, so no additional personnel are required beyond several trips to Portland. Costs will be limited to graduate students collecting and analyzing data.

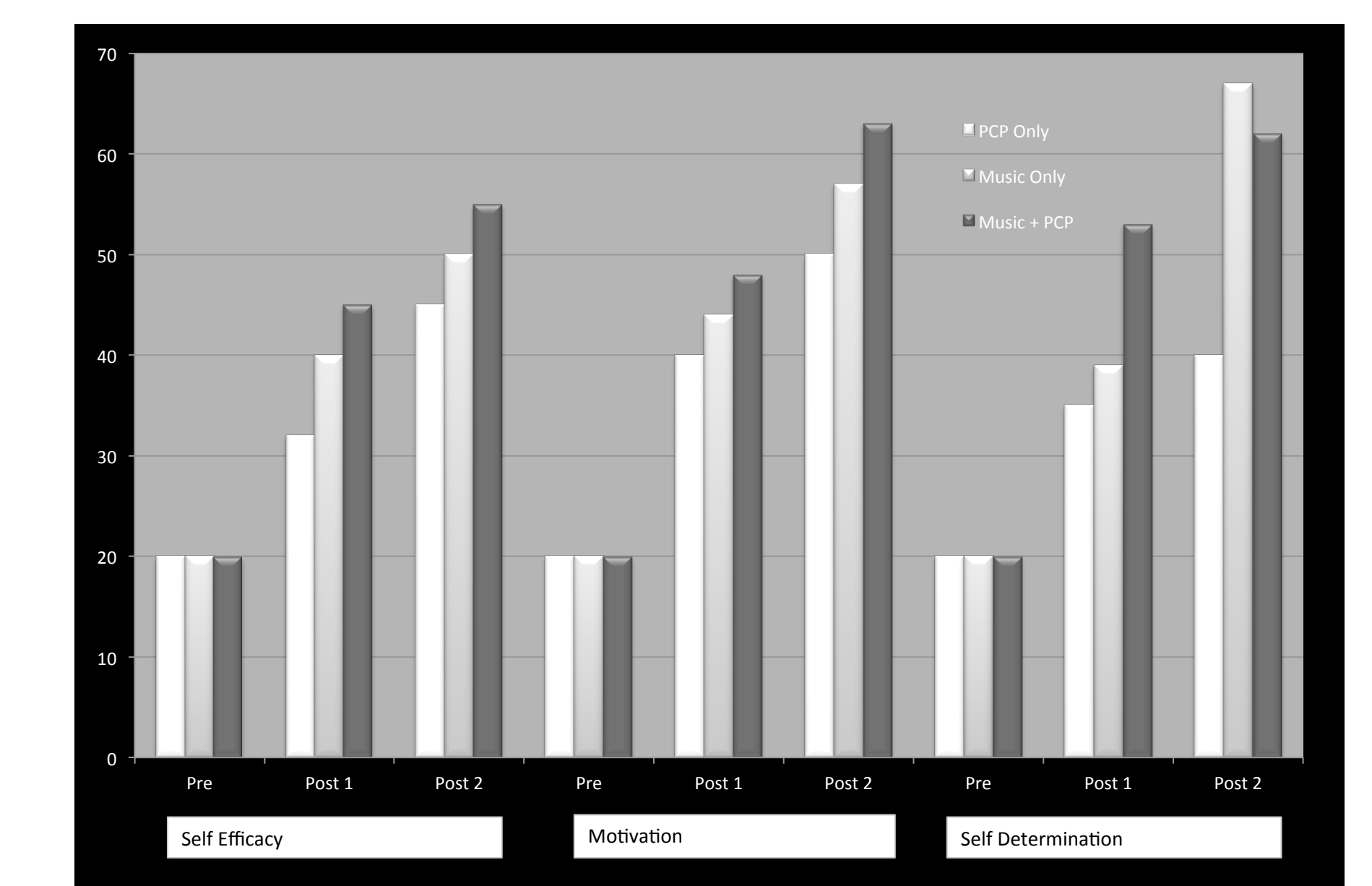
Some Results and Conclusions

Previous research indicates it is likely that success in transition will benefit from improvements in motivation, self efficacy, and self determination. Person-centered planning has the potential to affect each of those. What is less clear is the effect of music on those attributes. Music has the potential of supporting the proximal outcomes directly (e.g., self efficacy) as well as through a variety of indirect means (e.g., cognitive development, spatial temporal reasoning, quality of writing, mathematics proficiency, reading, and SAT verbal scores (Deasy & Arts Education Partnership, 2002)

Figure 3 shows hypothetical results on the proximal outcomes (self efficacy, self determination, and intrinsic motivation). The model predicts that both person-centered planning and the music program will improve student scores on the outcome measures. Person-centered planning will help, music will help more, and person-centered planning with music will help the most.

Finally, if the model is accurate, the proximal outcomes will positively affect the transition outcomes related to residence, financial independence, relationships, and constructive engagement.

Figure 3. Hypothetical results comparing the effects of person-centered planning, music program, and both on three outcome measures: self efficacy, self determination, and intrinsic motivation.



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