

# Service Provider Promising Practice

YEAR OF PUBLICATION: 2020

**COVID-19  
Resource**

TOPIC: Services and Service Innovation

## SEEC's Stay-At-Home Curriculum (Maryland)

### Background

SEEC (Seeking Equality, Empowerment and Community) is a Maryland-based provider that supports people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) with community living, community employment, and community development throughout Maryland and in Washington, DC. SEEC was founded in 1987 as a provider of center-based day and employment services. However, the organization underwent a transformative process and has exclusively provided community-based supports since 2009.

A key focus of SEEC's service model is the use of community engagement activities to discover individuals' strengths, broaden their social networks, develop new talents and interests, and investigate employment possibilities. In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic required the provider to alter its method of delivering these services to observe physical distancing guidelines. Because SEEC's typical community-based model was not possible, provider staff developed ways to serve customers from a distance.

### Implementation

SEEC has implemented a broad online curriculum called *Stay At Home*. The comprehensive curriculum was developed by Kyra Harvey, Instructional Resource Consultant, and Abby Taylor, Customized Employment and Training Mentor. The Instructional Resource Consultant is responsible for facilitating SEEC's Job Club and Life Skills classes to assist clients to engage in their community and workplace; while SEEC's Customized Employment and Training Mentor is responsible for creating processes and methods for Customized Employment outcomes, training staff on Customized Employment and other support strategies, and developing meaningful curriculum and programming. Some of the resources were already used or under development by staff, while others were developed quickly to meet clients' emerging support needs as a result of the pandemic.

Available to the public on its website [www.seeonline.org/curriculum-stay-at-home/](http://www.seeonline.org/curriculum-stay-at-home/), the curriculum addresses a wide range of topics including health and safety, social skills and self-advocacy, career interests, networking, stress management, the arts, money management, and communication. Each topical area provides a set of "how to" instructions for staff. The career interests and networking topics offer individuals the opportunity to engage in career exploration and planning while staying at home.

The lessons make use of a multi-modal learning approach that incorporates visual (YouTube videos), auditory (music and podcasts), reading and writing (worksheets and journal reflections), and kinesthetic activities (scavenger hunts). Each lesson ends with a feedback card that clients and staff are asked to complete. Clients are asked to describe what they learned and how they will use the skill and staff are asked what could be done to make the lesson more effective.

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To successfully implement the curriculum, SEEC needed to first assess their staffers' and clients' access to technology such as cell phones, laptops, tablets, device chargers, online passwords, internet availability and speed, etc. Second, provider staff needed to assess their knowledge and skill levels regarding the use of technology such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, FaceTime, Office 365, and Microsoft Outlook. Staff were categorized into three levels of technology competency—basic, amateur, and proficient—and supported to develop their skills.

Staff were trained to use the curriculum over the phone, through written instruction, and via video tutorials. They were also encouraged to incorporate additional resources into the curriculum and to provide feedback on ways to improve the training.

## Impact

Although SEEC's supports and services are implemented from a distance, their message to individuals, families, and support staff continues to be empowering: that by staying at home and using these curriculums they can reduce the spread of COVID-19.

About two months after the curriculum was first launched, SEEC had collected 43 feedback cards. SEEC leadership noted that the curriculum has been implemented in every department: employment services, community engagement, supported living, discovery/personal supports, and Project SEARCH. Responses have been very positive, and feedback such as adding more visual examples and reducing the amount of reading will be used to improve the next iteration. SEEC staff have also offered trainings to other providers who want to develop their own stay-at-home curricula.

## Suggestions for Replication

- » Start by assessing technology. Work with partners such as the state IDD, vocational rehabilitation, and assistive technology agencies and natural supports to help clients gain access.
- » Support staff to gain access to technology and learn to implement supports from a distance.
- » Develop remote lessons that make use of a multi-modal learning approach.
- » Request feedback from clients and staff at the end of each lesson to ensure continuous quality improvement.

**For more information: [www.seeonline.org](http://www.seeonline.org)**



**This promising practice was developed in collaboration  
with the State Employment Leadership Network**

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