Introduction

Education is a vision of what it is that all young people need help to develop, if they are to cope well with the rigours and opportunities, we imagine they will face. It is, therefore, an explicit view of the future and of the resources which adequate engagement with that world will require (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). In planning and adjusting an educational vision, and its implementation in schooling, the testimony of students about their current experience of schooling needs to be taken seriously.

> "the core purpose of education should be to expand all young people's resources to cope with the actual and anticipated demands of their lives . . . That includes readiness to thrive at university or college, in the workplace and much more besides" (Claxton and Lucas, 2016, 5).

In Ireland, the concepts of access and transition are linked to the idea that educational opportunities should be provided appropriate to the ambitions, commitment and abilities of an individual throughout their lifetime. These opportunities are provided for through the National Framework for Qualifications (NFQ), a hierarchical system that specifies the entry requirements for accessing education and training programmes, transfer between programmes of education, and progression from one programme to another programme. The senior cycle curriculum (12 – 18 years) in mainstream education leads to NFQ Level 5 qualification facilitating entry to higher education and other post-secondary education and training opportunities. Typically, in special schools, students pursue a modified curriculum suited to their needs at NFQ Levels 2 and 3, delivered as a Junior Certificate School Programme resulting in a Profile of Achievement issued by the Department of Education and Science. Leaving school

and transitioning to further education requires access to a training provider offering a course at NFQ Level 3 / 4, however the range and availability of such courses is disparate and geographically contested. Importantly, the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (2018) observe that "The nature of the curriculum can either limit or increase opportunities for young people with disabilities to be employed" (p. 15), while students with disabilites from mainstream settings obtain better academic outcomes than their peers from special schools which ultimately impacts on employment opportunities (EASNE 2018; Myklebust & Batevik, 2005; Batevik & Mylebust, 2006). In this context, therefore, young people with disabilities from speical schools are at a disadvantage and face many more barriers to accessing the same opportunities in further / higher education, training, or employment, than their disabled (EASNE, 2011) and non-disabled peers (Doyle, Mc Guckin, & Shevlin, 2017; Gillan & Coughlan, 2010; Mc Guckin et al., 2013). For example, the absence of specific modules and targeted guidance in the last two years of school can be seen to reduce access for young people with Intellectual Disabilities to developing employment readiness skills and reduced access to transition resources (Shandag & Hogan, 2008). Consequently, the educational profiles and participation rates in third level of young people with disabilites between the ages of 15-50 differs significantly from their peers who do not have a disability with 13.7% of individuals with one or more disabilities discontinuing their education after primary school in comparison to 4.2% of their non – disabled peers and where only 37% achieve making a transition to third level education in comparison to 53.4% of the general population (Scanlon, Kamp, & Cochrane. 2019).

Building on educational qualifications, personal aspirations and societal expectations, being in employment is seen as the principal marker of transition to adulthood, and the primary driver of economic success in the developed world. However, the benefits of having paid employment go beyond financial independence; employment enhances psychological well-being where work is seen as a central source of identity, roles and social status. Lacking in paid work can lead to social exclusion, poor health and lower job satisfaction in later life (Waddell & Burton, 2006), particularly for young people who lack any form or do not have access to work experience (EASNE, 2018). This is reflected in the participation rates in the Irish context for people with a disability aged between 20 and 64 years that is 49.7% in comparison to 82.3% for people without a disability with people with an Intellectual Disability experiencing the lowest level of employment (17.3%) (The National Disability Authority, 2019). Taken together it would seem prudent that greater efforts are required to support young people with an Intellectual Disability to access the same opportunities as their peers in their transition from education to further / higher education and the labour market.

Transition

For vulnerable young people and their parents, the end of formal education brings new uncertainties and worries, so access to timely and accurate information about future options, is essential. Successful transition from compulsory education to lifelong learning opportunities requires strategies that support parents to support the aspirations of their children, and ensure that students with disabilities have access to as broad a range of choices in education, training and employment as possible. Research has consistently noted the need for specific planning tools (Aston et al., 2005; EADSNE, 2006; Levinson & Palmer, 2005; Mittler, 2007; Newman, 2013; OECD, 2011), and that

"high-quality transition programmes provided in secondary school may increase the likelihood of people with disabilities being employed" (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2018, p. 15). Therefore, the dearth of transition planning space in special schools in Ireland, may constitute a barrier to positive post-school outcomes.

Guidance in secondary education is a statutory requirement designed to: "ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices" (Education Act 1998 [Section 9], p. 13). It is underpinned by the ethos of lifelong learning and is connected to curriculum programmes at NFQ Levels 3 to 5 for students aged 12 – 18 years. However, special schools do not have access to a dedicated Guidance Counsellor and teaching staff are not sufficiently resourced to provide this support. Coupled with a dearth of information from State departments and service providers, there is an urgent need for greater clarity around options and financial implications, and more timely communication of same, to alleviate the stress and anxiety described by pupils and parents. A dedicated, person-centred, post-school transition planning strategy is an obvious solution.

The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) in Ireland provides comprehensive guidelines for primary to post-primary transition in the context of Individual Education Plans (NCSE, 2006), however, post-secondary transition within this document is limited to signposting the need for some form of transition planning. Policy advice concerning the future role of special schools and classes (NCSE, 2011) dedicates just two pages to educational supports for pupils in special schools; provision of Guidance Counselling for post-school transitions is not mentioned. More recently, parent guides to post-school programmes in education and training indicate that guidance may be provided by the School Guidance Service (NCSE, 2014), and that

transition planning should begin 2 – 3 years before leaving school (NCSE, 2016), but lack detail on accessing these services. In effect, personalised guidance in special schools continues to be dependent upon the human and physical resources at the disposal of individual schools.

Pyer, Horton, Tucker, Ryan, and Kraftl (2010) argue that: "Greater attention should be paid to the geographies of children and young people who are effectively marginalised as a consequence of their 'disability'" (p. 1). Therefore, obtaining first-hand accounts from students is essential to understanding the complexities of planning for life after school, as they are "the most expert, the most capable of telling what it is like to be them, living in their bodies, requiring assistance or accommodation, often on the margins of childhood or young adulthood" (Speraw, 2009, cited by McLaughlin & Rafferty, 2014, p. 65). In particular, young people with Intellectual Disability need to be provided with opportunities to voice their dreams and aspirations, which in effect are no different to those of their contemporaries: employment, continuing education, and independent living (Dee, 2006; Dyson, Meagher & Robson, 2002; Scanlon and Kamp, 2015).

The Current Study

The Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities (CES) is mandated to ensure that people with disabilities who are able and willing to undertake employment, are enabled and facilitated to do so (Government of Ireland, 2015). The CES was developed to address historical barriers to employment arising from inadequate education and skills levels, low expectations, and the loss of disability payments. Importantly, the notion of transition and the critical components that underpin and enable a seamless process including, supports, co-ordination of services, and support for employers is featured in the strategy. However, recent findings indicate

that little or no formal transition planning takes place to support people with disabilities moving from education /training to employment in Ireland (Scanlon and Kamp, 2019), and this process is fragmented where young people are moving from compulsory education to further/ higher Education or employment (McGuckin et al., 2013). This is despite their aspirations being similar to that of their peers (Scanlon, Shevlin, & McGuckin, 2013) at the point of transition from school to further and higher education (FE/HE) or directly into the labour market.

Traditionally in Ireland, young people with Intellectual Disabilities have left school and transitioned into health funded "Day Services" – segregated from their non-disabled peers and society in general resulting in social exclusion particularly for those individuals who have attend special educational settings (Gill, 2005). This has resulted in low expectations and dependency among this cohort of young people and a poor acquisition of skills to enable them to become more employable in their communities and become autonomous citizens (Gill, 2005). Consequently, services (i.e. further / higher education, employers, social protection, etc) have lost the competencies and skills to support this group of young people to access, engage, progress and develop career aspirations and opportunities.

A number of inherent barriers to participation in FETE for young people with Intellectual Disabilities in Ireland exist and are seen to be related to poor attitudes and stigma connected to low expectations of the capabilities of young people with Intellectual Disabilities, and their capacity to secure and maintain employment (WALK, 2015). The dichotomy of these perceptions has resulted in risk avoidant behaviour from employers who may feel ill-equipped to offer supported employment and also from families, who may be reluctant to pursue less economically certain alternatives to adult day services. Whilst students with disabilities are more likely to experience unemployment or under-

employment (Levinson and Palmer, 2005), those already engaged in some form of part-time employment at the time of leaving school, and those with work experience – particularly paid vocational experience - are 35% more likely to secure employment (Fabian, 2007). Furthermore, there are additional barriers surrounding the infrastructure of further education and training opportunities which are impacted by the curriculum content in special schools.

As a result, the WALK PEER (**P**roviding **E**qual **E**mployment **R**outes) model, of support for young people with Intellectual Disabilities was developed to increase choice, self-determination, and connectivity to mainstream society while they are in school, to support them to develop their career aspirations, explore mainstream opportunities and implement ambitious transition plans. The WALK PEER model facilitates collaboration between the individual participant, their families and teachers and the wider society in further / higher education, employment, social services, and disability service providers to maximise progression in mainstream society, thus avoiding lives in institutional day services and increasing the likelihood of young people becoming embedded in their community and become autonomous citizens.

Therefore, the emerging hypotheses from this literature review are that: (a) students with Intellectual Disabilities and their parents or carers encounter restricted pathways to inclusion in the community when leaving special education settings, and (b) a structured transition model, delivered within the school setting, integrated with the NFQ, and offering supported employment opportunities, can positively impact post-school progression. If the CES is to truly pay attention to the geographies of young people with disabilities as they approach the threshold of adulthood, then it is essential to capture the lived experience of real transition journeys.

The purpose of the study was to identify a transition model that empowers young people with Intellectual Disabilities by cultivating self-awareness, self-determination, and self-advocacy, and which promotes access to opportunities for lifelong learning. Exploring efficacy of the model across three different cohorts (pre-transition, transitioning, and post-transition) permits the generation of hypotheses that can be further investigated with a larger population sample. Each of these cohorts were attending or had attended two special schools in Ireland, and were engaging with the WALK PEER programme, a supported transition initiative provided in both schools since 2011.

Method

Data collection and interpretation was based upon a phenomenological perspective, and both content and thematic analysis were selected as methods of measurement. Thematic analysis is a useful method for: a) capturing real experiences, meanings and understandings expressed by participants, and b) examining how these discourses are observed, interpreted and manipulated within near and far social contexts.

Sample: Data was collected from a purposive sample of 31 students with Intellectual Disabilities who were attending or had attended two special schools: Group 1 (Pre-transition) students in the penultimate year of formal education, Group 2 (Transitioning) students in the final year of formal education, and Group 3 (Post-transition) had left school two years previously.

Setting: Individual interviews and focus group discussions took place in a quiet room in each of the two special schools involved in this study.

Materials: Semi-structured interview questions were drawn from five a priori transition themes: Dreams and Aspirations, Post-school Pathways and Options, Access to Information About Choices, Options, and Pathways, Essential Factors in Successful Transitions, and Expectations.

Procedure: Students from both schools attended an information morning with their parents and teachers, and subsequently self-selected for participation after discussion with their parents and WALK Employment Facilitators. The researchers conducted focus group and individual interviews at two time points in 2017.

Data collection: Individual interviews and focus group discussions were audio taped and these recordings were transcribed verbatim into typed script. Material was anonymized by replacing personal identifiers with participant codes, and by deleting geographical / location identifiers.

Feedback: Students were offered individual feedback sessions to discuss results and outcomes, however, there was no uptake on this offer.

Ethical Considerations: Within the ethical principles of conducting research with vulnerable populations, an 'ethics as process' approach was employed throughout the study (Ramcharan & Cutcliffe, 2001) and was central to the methodology employed for the research. This approach allowed participants the ongoing opportunity to negotiate their consent to participate, to take breaks when and where was required, and also the opportunity to withdraw from the interview process at any stage they wished. Ethical approval for this project was issued by the Research Ethics committee at Dublin City University application no.

Data analysis: Transcripts were thematically analysed; data was reviewed for patterns and themes relating to research questions, and re-coded in a third analysis using merged and condensed a priori and new themes. This inductive and deductive approach to analysis results in a more detailed and nuanced data set facilitating a more precise understanding of leitmotifs, causes, or explanations (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Results

Dreams and Aspirations

For many young people, current strengths provide a foundation for building future hopes and ambitions:

> "The whole dress design, I love it. As I got older, you know I just got more into fashion and drawing and my art. I want to do clothes design. Like I know how to do a bit of embroidery and knitting and so on and the whole lot, like I practice these things at home in different colours and in the seasons and that. . . I'd like to have my own clothes range someday."

> "I would really like to do something computer, IT, because I'm pretty good at using the computer, I must admit. I've created PowerPoints. I mainly use a tablet or a computer doing all of my work so basically it's one of my primary skills that I use all the time."

This self-awareness married with a growing sense of self-determination, meant that early ambitions were part of a complex plan that had been long in the planning:

> "Well, believe it or not, my dream job is to become a game designer. I was about eleven when I thought of it, because I always wanted to see how it's done, what you need to do . . . I want to literally put my head down and study for this game design, because this is my actually dream job."

> "I have to go to college. Get all my business A levels really, so then I can, in my old school for my Junior Cert I did business studies and I got an A. I love business. I love business, I love doing all the Accounting and everything."

In one particular case, early interests were developed and progressed over a two-year period, with support from the school-based Employment Facilitator, evolving into a successful transition outcome:

> "See I always had a thing for food. As in, not in just eating it, it's more like making it. I'm very fond of cooking, yes. when I was younger I'd tell mam that I cooked this, different kind of meal, you know what I mean just to try it out and when I got older I'd try it myself and all that stuff. I read recipes and I'm a big fan of, Jamie Oliver." (March, 2017)
>
> "Well, I got into college. Newry SRC. It is City and Guilds Diploma 2 in Cookery. I'll be the only one in the house going to college." (June, 2017)

However, this student also acknowledged the need to be realistic about aspirations and pathways: "It's up there but as I say to everyone, my dream job was a paramedic, but you always have to have a plan B."

Students were aware of the possibilities that further education and training could bring: "I'm planning to do the EBT course in National Learning Network," "I hope to go to DIFE in Drogheda to do a level 5 course in Childcare, "Or I'll go on and do a GCSE in Business in Newry," and that this was a necessary part of moving forward "Like that's not what I plan to take my life career, that's just a stepping stone." Sometimes,

plans required adaptation in the face of a growing awareness of practical and financial restrictions. This was evident in the testimony of one student who revised his ambition to play for a professional football team, but identified a career pathway that enabled him to work within his area of interest:

> "I was hoping I would be able to coach, like a football coach. I was going to do my first coaching in June, to get my kick badge, that's what it's called starting off. There's one up in Dundalk in Oriel Park, that's the Dundalk stadium, I'll be coming up there to do that. Like, they're professional football coaches and they teach you like a level at a time, one course at a time. There's only two and then you go into your UEFA Pro licence, it means that's going into like managing."

The value of timely, first-hand work experience cannot be underestimated: "I wanted to be a chef. I just love cooking. And all of a sudden then it changed . . . when I was doing my Junior Cert we went to visit a crèche and since then I loved kids." Many of the young people interviewed were acutely aware of the need to plan for life after school: "Because I just want to get a job or do something when I leave school I don't want to be sitting at home doing nothing. I want to be out and about and that," "No, I won't I'll never give up, I don't want to be sitting at home doing nothing under my mother and fathers feet, they wouldn't have it anyway." They also acknowledged the necessity of a part-time income in order to support their dreams: "Well, I'd love to have a part time job as well as doing my college course, so just a bit of both," "Hopefully I would like to work in [retail outlet] while I'm getting my coaching . . . I'll still be able to make a bit of money while I'm doing the coaching."

Later interviews with students who were on the cusp of leaving school, and those who had left school two years previously, asked young people to reflect upon the role of supported transition planning in school, and its impact on realising aspirations: "No, I think I would be leaving school and that would be it, I wouldn't be going off to college or anything like that. I think I would be just sitting at home living a miserable life," "I'd say I would have dropped out of school sooner. I don't think I would have even finished the first bit of QQI."

Post-school Pathways and Options

Students demonstrated more certainty about future prospects and plans - both positively and negatively – than their parents:

> "I'm going to college in October. I've applied for that as well over the last few weeks. Employment based training in the National Learning in the Ramparts. QQI Level 4. Because my Mum told me she doesn't want me staying at home anymore."

> "I actually have a EBT employment-based training as well so if I don't get into Newry this time, I'll go and do that one-year course and I'll try Newry again the year after."

> [gaming as a job or a career] "Well it would be but I don't think so no. We'd have a long way to go. Ultimately, I don't think it could happen. It'll be a good dream but I don't think it'll ever happen. It's very competitive."

[without employment prospects] “You'd end up being stuck at home. For the rest of your life. Doing nothing unless like you have a parent that works on something that could help you get that job.”

Some students had a clear understanding of the product offered through HSE Adult Services and were specific in their rejection of that model “Oh service centres. I am definitely not going there. As far as I know it is people with really bad disabilities, they do kind of childish things but I don't want to be doing that,” for other students, information was vague and insufficient to support them in making a decision about post-school futures:

“Yes, I went to [the] Service. It's a place where most people, kind of disability people go. Drama, art, and all that, most what primary infants school do. . .You're doing the same things like all the time, like what primary school do, like junior kids doing it, it's like a routine all the time . . .”

“You go to a service and there's not . . . I've heard, I can't probably say it's true or not like, all you do is be there, you just don't do work there, you're in there all day every day, I know they do a bit of work experience but not a lot, that's all I know.”

Access to Information About Choices, Options, and Pathways

When questioned about potential further education routes, students were aware of a range of options - National Learning Network (NLN) and QQI courses through Education Training Boards (EBT) - but unclear about their personal pathway: [interviewer] “Then as soon as you finish those, does that mean you can then apply for a

job in a crèche? When you finish the EBT and then when you finish the course in Newry?" "I'd say so, I'm not quite sure." Young people also alluded to the information provided by the HSE which implied that essentially, there is no choice:

> "I thought there was no support or anything like that you know . . . like when I told your one from the HSE, as I said before, she just came in and just start telling me I have to go to this place, or else nowhere so I just kind of took it in my head but sure, I can't really go anywhere except there you know what I mean?"

Students were keenly aware that WALK Employment Facilitators had communicated information about alternative pathways that they might not otherwise have received:

"I'll probably end up on a course your one wanted me to go to. It's the same as EBT but it's completely different like. It's like, it's people with like really bad disabilities . . . it would probably put me down or something like that you know what I mean like, it's not that I don't... them or anything, it's just that I don't think it would be my type of thing."

Essential Factors for Successful Transitions

Self-awareness, self-determination, and self-advocacy are key skills for young people leaving school. Statements in this category refer to the acquisition of competencies that will help the student to achieve their aspirations, and traits or characteristics that will be useful in pursuit of goals, including development of independence. Work experience opportunities play a significant role here. Comments also acknowledge the importance

of supports and resources provided by schools and WALK Employment Facilitators, that directly facilitate successful transitions.

Without exception, students talked about growth in personal skills over the course of the programme, principally in relation to confidence, a calming reassurance, and solutions that alleviated anxiety about life after school: “At the start I didn't know what I was, where I was going or anything but since WALK came I know now I'm much calmer and everything, they're a great support.” This personalised development was attributed directly to engagement with Employment Facilitators:

> “That's the way I looked at it because then you can be like, 'No I don't want to do this but I want to do this' like, she understood really. Yes and she always listened. I think if I'm right it was the questions she asked us like, 'What did we like doing? What would we want to do?' Do you know like just stuff about us, what we liked, our hobbies and it's was about like her to get to know us.”

> “If I wasn't in school she'd meet me after the school hours and we'd go and get a coffee and sit down and have a chat and catch up, and then I'd tell her what I'm looking to do. She's just a phone call away. She met up with me when I was on my work experience and she would pop in and out.”

Not only is this level of personal engagement with young people reassuring, it provides a valuable role model of social skills at an adult level, focusing attention on personal presentation and workplace communication:

> “Normally when I go into a shop or if I was getting up to talk to someone like you know just passing or small talk or going out looking for a job, I wouldn't normally do that. And since [she] came I've handed my CV out, I applied for a job in the Hotel. I've done loads.”

Strong indicators of person-centred planning are seen in the data, tailoring experiences to individual strengths and interests:

> “I don't know, it was like [she] believed that we could do whatever we wanted. And it's hearing it from someone else you actually think to yourself, 'I can do this' and she, it wasn't that she was pushing us, she was making sure we were reaching the goals that we were able to reach.”

> “[She] said, 'You can do this and you can do this and you can do this' but I like I had my mind set on one thing but she like had other options there as well if I wanted to try them.”

Expectations

Younger students just beginning the supported transition programme talked about access to equal opportunities and rights: “It didn't really help that like I just noticed people were getting a lot more opportunities than the special needs schools would.”

> “Basically you'd think like back 10 or 11 years ago, anyone with a disability or a form of special needs would end up in a rundown job like working as a janitor or something, like cleaning like, in a restaurant or some place, nothing big, like very simple like job that he just wouldn't feel great about

> yourself but then like WALK came along and basically WALK are here to tell you that just because you might be impaired in a way or even like, to have some form of weakness, doesn't mean you can't do what you want when you're older."

For those approaching the end of their school career, stress and anxiety creeps in, despite all of the groundwork of the WALK programme, and the fragility of tentative and uncertain plans for the future cast a shadow over expectations: "But he's delighted and he's not delighted. It's a fear, like a fear for him. It's a fear, they haven't a clue what they're really doing." This is compounded by pressure to transition to adult services on the basis of little information, and little person-centred planning:

> "Yeah, sure the HSE was forcing, they weren't forcing but they were telling my mam that this is the only option and all this kind of stuff. And then, they rang my mam last week and saying we will pay you to go here and they were on about [Employment Facilitator] and saying [she] might not be here. And all this kind of stuff, talking crap."

Discussion

Awareness of personal strengths and challenges, and how these might need to be developed or addressed, are a critical part of transitions. The acquisition of self-awareness, self-determination, and self-advocacy are key skills for young people leaving school. The acquisition of competencies that will help the student to achieve their aspirations, and traits or characteristics that will be useful in pursuit of goals, including development of independence and work experience opportunities is crucial. This is evident in the testimonies of students who also acknowledge the importance of

supports and resources provided by schools and WALK Employment Facilitators, that directly facilitate successful transitions. Undoubtedly, engaging in the supported transition programme provided parents and young people with access to information, options, confidence, and some of the hard and soft skills required for successful transition into education and employment contexts, even though those pathways are long and circuitous.

The relationship between participation in education and social inclusion is not a new phenomenon, but one which has progressed as the result of a growing acceptance of the rights of all people to participate in their society. For example, Dewey (cited in Garrison, Neubert and Reich, 2016) stated that: "any education given by a group tends to socialise its members" – but the quality and value of the socialization depends upon the habits and aims of the group" (p. 97). Garrison and colleagues propose how this group is perceived and evaluated (ableism -v- disablism) is connected to their ability to enlarge and improve the quality of experience not only for themselves but for society at large. This in turn is connected to the notion of the: "separation of experiences and exclusion of, or discrimination against members of the group who are being prevented from full- participation and sharing" (p. 102). It is worth noting that the Irish inclusive education policy has pursued segregated settings (McConkey et al., 2016) which have been found to decrease the employment options for young people with Intellectual Disabilites and where the gap between participation rates for students with an Intellectual Disability differ significantly between primary and secondary school, where students with SEN are seen to be less likely to patriciate particularly those with an Intellectual Disability (Buchner et al. 2020).

Two central concepts proposed in the ecological model of social inclusion (Simplcian et al. 2015) are interpersonal relationships and community participation

which is embedded within employment and education. Participation in education enables students to "actively engage" in decisions that are important for them (EADNSE,2018, p. 26). In this proposed model of supported transition, the role of the Career and Employment Facilitator (CEF) is critical in order to ensure a seamless transition and adopts the concept of mentoring the young person by developing a close relationship based on trust. In keeping with the core principles of transition planning, the model places the young person at the centre of the process by assisting them to explore their aspirations and brings them to a point in their lives where they are able to make an *"informed choice"* about their future. These aspirations are then translated into real work experience opportunities which are assessed by the CEF, and young people are then assisted to be fully included in the workplace. The CEF then monitors the placement and evaluates the overall performance in order to ensure that the young person progresses to their final destination, for example, moving to further education in order to achieve appropriate qualifications. This is particularly important for students with Intellectual Disabilities whom, when afforded the opportunity to participate can contribute to society (Cobigo et al., 2012), gain work experience, and thus challenge the stereotypical view of "ableism" that is, who has the ability to become an autonomous citizen (Scanlon, 2013). This is critical for communities and society as a whole to grow which results in the participation and contributions from diverse individuals (Garrison, Neubert & Reich, 2016).

In conclusion, the authors propose that this model of supported transition reflects the ambitions of proposed national policies (in this case in the Republic of Ireland, the CES) by essentially ensuring participation which accords these young people their right to autonomy and choice around the policies that affect their lives in

tandem with preparation for living independently which is fundamental to the principles and spirit of the convention.

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