

Factors associated with sustained community employment among adults with autism and co-occurring intellectual disability

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It is challenging for adults with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and intellectual disability (ID) to maintain working for pay in the community. Our study collected information over time to examine how contextual influences (e.g. the inclusiveness of the school that the person attended, the size of the population the person was living in), family factors (e.g. household income, the mothers' social support networks), and individual characteristics (e.g. daily living skills, levels of social difficulties) were related to sustaining employment in the community. Our data showed that very few adults with ASD and ID sustained employment approximately over a period of 18 months (just 14.3%). We also found that adults with ASD and ID who (1) had more independent daily living skills, (2) had a higher family income, (3) had a larger maternal social network, (4) lived in an inclusive school environment in early childhood, and (5) who were currently living in an area with a larger population size, were more likely than others to continue to work for pay in the community. Follow-up analyses suggested that managing personal care is a particularly important aspect for employment.