Strengths outweigh needs for emerging adults with Down syndrome preparing for work.

**BACKGROUND:**
- Down syndrome (DS) is the leading genetic explanation for intellectual disability and is often associated with developmental delays.
- A successful transition to adulthood involves growth in independent living, employment preparedness, and community involvement.
- The study implemented a qualitative phenomenological approach to interviewing parents of emerging adults with Down syndrome about their experiences with work readiness.

**METHODS:**
- 11 parents (8 mothers and 3 fathers) were interviewed.
- Parents were interviewed via Zoom where they were asked open-ended questions to facilitate in-depth responses.
- Using MaxQDA software, data were coded and analyzed using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis.

**Questioning Route**
1. Tell me about your child.
2. What does a typical day look like for your child?
3. What does it mean for your child to be an "adult"?
4. How do you feel about your child becoming an adult?
5. What does it mean for your child to be independent?
6. What is your child's living situation at the moment?
7. What comes to mind when you think about work and your child?
8. How does your child access transportation (e.g., if they wanted to get to work, to the grocery store, etc.)?
9. What is your child doing now in your community?

**DISCUSSION:**
- Parents see work as an essential part of becoming an adult which is consistent with prior studies (De La Garza et al., 2023).
- Previous research has emphasized the importance of job fit for people with Down syndrome (Channell et al., 2023).
- The findings in this study can help professionals understand the role of meaningful work in the transition to adulthood for emerging adults with Down syndrome.

**RESULTS:**
- Wanting a particular job or vocation such as going to college or working in a preschool.
- Being hardworking, dedicated, and disciplined at work.
- Working with people (e.g., relationships with coworkers, greeting customers, etc.)
- Managing work supplies by following instructions for a task, setting tables, etc.
- Experiencing fatigue after work or having difficulty completing an 8-hour work day.
- Needing some level of oversight for work tasks or work transportation.

**TABLE:**

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<thead>
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<th>Work Skills Needs</th>
<th>Work Skills Strengths</th>
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Florida International University
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