

**LET'S**

**GET TO**

Launching youth with disabilities  
into the workforce

**WORK**

# QUICK GUIDE

## ON TRANSITION TO EMPLOYMENT

A collection of resources and tools for teachers and school staff supporting the transition to integrated, community employment for students with disabilities. The Quick Guide will give you the tools and information you need, when you need it!

Developed by  
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Wisconsin Let's Get to  
Work Project



Find the QUICK GUIDE at  
[www.letsgettoworkwi.org](http://www.letsgettoworkwi.org)



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# The 5 C's

## of Evidence-Based Practices in Transition for Students with Disabilities

The most commonly identified best practices in transition can be condensed into the **Five C's** of Evidence-Based Transition Programming to Increase Employment Outcomes for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities:

1

**COORDINATION of TRANSITION SERVICES**—In order for best practices in transition services to be consistently implemented within any school or district, there must be a staff position dedicated to overseeing the educational services being offered to facilitate successful passage from school life to young adult life for students. This is particularly the case with regard to students with more significant disabilities.

2

**COURSEWORK, including EXTRA-CURRICULARS and COLLEGE ACCESS**—Students with disabilities need to take classes and have extra-curricular opportunities throughout their education that are inclusive and related to life skill and career development goals. This practice has been shown to increase student, family, and teacher expectations that helps students to develop peer relationships and appropriate social and employment soft skills earlier than students who do not have inclusive opportunities. In addition, students who have had more and broader inclusive opportunities have increased academic outcomes, which also put them in a better position for having expanded access to postsecondary education opportunities, career options, and ultimately higher paying jobs after completing a transition program.

3

**CAREER GOALS**—Students must be supported to consider and establish employment goals for their future that are self-determined, individualized and have been developed with direct involvement of students themselves, parents, family, and other team members. Coursework and planning for students should follow the goals that are established.

4

**COMMUNITY INTERNSHIPS & JOBS to GAIN WORK EXPERIENCE**—Students need opportunities to directly explore and practice the types of jobs they are interested in pursuing. Experiences should be varied, based on individual career goals, continue through the summer months, and provide students opportunities to develop a range of work and life skills. Students should have a minimum of two paid experiences prior to exiting school.

5

**COLLABORATION with STUDENTS, FAMILIES & a VARIETY of COMMUNITY MEMBERS**—Local Education Agencies (LEA's), and specifically transition coordinators and high school special educators, need to develop collaborative relationships that expand outside of school and district personnel to family members, key system and adult service partners, and community/business contacts.

# The **5 C's**

## of Evidence-Based Practices in Transition for Students with Disabilities



**COORDINATION** of transition services,  
including fostering Self-Determination



**CLASSES** and extra –curricular activities  
are inclusive with peers who do not  
have abilities, including postsecondary  
education opportunities



**CAREER GOALS** that are individualized  
and based on strengths and interests



**COMMUNITY WORK EXPERIENCE** including  
paid jobs



**COLLABORATION** with a variety of partners,  
including family members, employers, DVR,  
long-term care and WIBC

**The Quick Guide will help you implement the 5 C's.**



# Let's Get to Work Quick Guide

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For more samples, tools and resources check out the online version of the  
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<http://www.letsgettoworkwi.org/index.php/lgtw-resource-guide/>

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## Coordination

In order for best practices in transition services to be consistently implemented within any school or district, there must be a staff position dedicated to overseeing the educational services being offered to facilitate successful passage from school life to young adult life for students. This is particularly the case with regard to students with more significant disabilities



# What is Transition Coordination?

## Why do we need to consider Transition Coordination & what does that mean?

Coordinating Transition Services for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities is one way that schools and districts can help ensure that students have better employment and life outcomes in adult life. Transition coordination simply means that someone is following the progress of students toward their short and long-term goals while tracking the implementation of research-based practices for each student. LGTW developed a tool for tracking the comprehensive set of services and activities for individual students that have demonstrated positive impact on employment outcomes. This tool called the “Transition to Employment Services Rating Scale.”

## What’s the difference between Transition Coordination & Case Management?

A number of the tasks designated part of transition coordinator might also be typical tasks for assigned case managers, so your school and district probably already have someone doing these:

- ⊙ **Assessments:** Making sure that Age-appropriate Transition Assessments are conducted at least annually based on the identified needs of each student
- ⊙ **Longer Term Goals:** Supporting students to set Post-Secondary Goals and review those at least annually based on assessments and additional information from students & family members
- ⊙ **Classes:** Outlining a Course of Study outlined for students that are aligned with their post-secondary goals
- ⊙ **Annual Goals:** Ensuring that Annual Goals are developed and reviewed at least every six months to support progress toward post-secondary goals
- ⊙ **Short-term Goals:** Working with students to create Semester/quarter Goals that align with annual goals
- ⊙ **Extra-curricular Activities:** Providing information and opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities and school events
- ⊙ **Self-Advocacy:** Activities for students designed to promote the development of Self-Advocacy skills, including understanding of their disability and the supports that help them be successful
- ⊙ **Career Exploration:** Researching and talking with people about future jobs of interest based on assessment results



## What additional coordination activities have been used by Let's Get to Work pilot schools?

### ☉ Community Connections and Direct Experiences

- Developing relationships with employers to identify employment needs in the community so that students can be prepared for jobs that are available
- Introducing students to prospective employers through tours, informational interviews, and job shadows
- Hosting community conversations

### ☉ Connecting with DVR and Adult Services

- Providing information and referral forms to students and families
- Inviting the DVR counselor to attend IEP meetings or come to the school
- Provide information about adult services intake
- Host a Transition Night for families and invite DVR and Adult Service Agencies to present

### ☉ Work Trials and Employment

- In conjunction with DVR, support students to seek internships, temporary, and ongoing paid work

### ☉ Independent Living skills

- Provide development opportunities through in-school as well as community activities

### ☉ Looking at student outcomes at least twice annually

- Utilize the Transition Services Rating Scale or other means of reviewing implementation of EBP's

### ☉ Talking with students and families regularly and adjust goals as needed

- Align goals and services with IPE written by DVR as applicable



## Additional Resources

WI Department of Public Instruction Transition Services List

Wisconsin Transition Improvement Grant

National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT)

Transition Action Guide (TAG)







## **Transition Services Rating Scale**

for assessing the provision supports for students with disabilities to reach employment goals

This tool was designed by Nancy Molfenter and Ellie Hartman as part of the LGTW Wisconsin grant project to help high school special educators and transition teachers with: 1) Tracking the use of evidence-based practices for individual students, and 2) Identifying transition service needs in order to address existing gaps.

## Transition Services Rating Scale

**Background:** Items on this scale span **7** areas shown to increase successful transition from high school to integrated employment for students with disabilities. These areas include: *Self-Determination, Individualized Employment Goals, Collaboration with Transition Partners, General Education Classes & Extracurricular Activities, Community Work Experiences, Postsecondary Education, and Targeted Coordination of Transition Services.*

**Purpose:** This tool was designed to help high school special educators and transition teachers with: 1) Tracking the use of evidence-based practices for individual students, and 2) Identifying transition service needs in order to address existing gaps.

**Point System:** This scale uses a point system designed to measure the degree to which a student has engaged in evidence-based transition to employment activities since the last time the tool was completed. Each item describes a specific activity for students with disabilities linked to a higher likelihood of being employed after school.

1 point is given for each instance of the student engaging in the activity described. For some items, there is a secondary criterion that receives *1 or more extra points* as listed. \*Secondary criteria are awarded extra points because these items have demonstrated a stronger impact on employment outcomes.

For example, on item 1., if a student practiced sharing information about her/his disability to two different special education teachers and the student also shared disability information with one general education teacher, a 3 would be placed on the first line. An additional extra credit point is added for the instance of sharing with the general education teacher with a 1 on the next line. The total for the item would be 4.

### Section I - Self-Determination

1. Student can identify her/his strengths and impact of disability to:
  - a. Case manager and special education staff
  - b. General education teachers
  - c. Prospective employers/community members

1 point for every occurrence of student self-disclosing disability to someone from the list above 3

\*Add 1 *extra* point for each time the student self-disclosed his/her disability to a general education teacher or prospective employer/community 1

Item points (add numbers from both lines above here) 4

If the student self-disclosed disability information to one special educator, one general educator, and one prospective employer/community member, 3 points are given on the first line. In this case, 2 extra points would go on the second line – 1 extra point each for the general education teacher and the prospective employer. The Item Total would be 5.

1 point for every occurrence of student self-disclosing disability to someone from the list above 3

\*Add 1 *extra* point for each time the student self-disclosed his/her disability to a general education teacher or prospective employer/community 2

Item points (add numbers from both lines above here) 5

Points for each item and section accumulate over time to create an ongoing tracking system for transition to employment activities. Items and sections receiving more points are areas of current strength in terms of the student's transition services. Items that receive 0 points and sections with minimal points indicate areas of need in the scope of transition services for the student. Goals for next steps in transition activities can be developed based on results.

**Using Results:** By completing the scale over the course of transition years, educators can track the opportunities for individual students in each of the included areas linked to positive employment outcomes. Using the tracking form provided, teachers can identify, and then provide, opportunities that have been lacking or underrepresented in transition planning and services previously.

By reviewing scores across a group of students at a high school or in a district, educators and administrators can identify areas of strength as well as gaps in transition services for students with disabilities.

**Recommended Frequency of Use:** This scale will be most helpful to teachers and students if completed at the beginning, middle, and end of each academic year starting in the first school year that the student enters at age 14. Completing the scale for a student mid-year will allow educators time to adjust services and activities for the second half of a given school year to increase attention to transition activities, as well as assist in planning for summer opportunities.

**\*Note:** Although the majority of activities listed in the scale typically happen through high school services, Special Education Teachers/Transition Coordinators might need to gather information from family members and other partners in transition for a few items on this scale.

**Student Name:**

**Age and Grade:**

**Completed By:**

**Date of Completion:**

**Section I - Self-Determination**

1. Student can identify her/his strengths and impact of disability to:

- Case manager and special education staff
- General education teachers
- Prospective employers/community members

1 point for every occurrence of student self-disclosing disability to someone from the list above\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 *extra* point for each time the student self-disclosed his/her disability to a general education teacher or prospective employer/community\_\_\_\_\_

Item points (add numbers from both lines above here) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Student can identify what accommodations he/she needs in:

- a. Education settings
- b. Employment/community settings

1 point for every occurrence of student self-identifying accommodation needs to someone

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

3. Student can self-advocate for accommodations needed in

- a. Educational settings
- b. Employment/community settings

1 point for every *documented* occurrence of student asking for needed accommodation  
\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 *extra* point for each time the student asked a general education teacher or employer\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

**Section I Points** (add numbers from all "Item Points" lines here) \_\_\_\_\_

## Section II – Individualized Planning and Goals

4. Student provided direct input into the development of her/his annual transition and post-school employment and education goals.

Examples – *documented* discussions with student prior to and at planning meeting, review and revision of goals based on student data or transition assessment results.

1 point for each documented event of gathering student input toward goals\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 extra point for any meetings that were student-initiated or student-led\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

5. Student's family member(s) provided input for annual transition and post-school employment and education goals

Examples – *documented* discussion with family at planning meeting, transition survey completed by family, direct contact with family to gather input

1 point for each documented event of gathering family input for employment goals

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

6. Student has annual goals and objectives designed to directly support progress toward individualized post-school education and employment goals.  
Examples – learning to use public transportation to facilitate independence getting to college or work, using assistive technology to successfully complete a general education class, learning to follow a set list of instructions to develop skills for completing job tasks, or learning how to follow a time schedule without assistance

1 point for each annual goal that directly aligns with post-school goals  
points\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 extra point for each annual goal aligned with post-school goals that was self-identified by the student (student directed the team to include the goal through input)

\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

- 2 Student's annual and post-school employment and/or education goals have been revised as a result of community work experiences

1 point for each goal revised as a result of community experience

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

**Section II Points\_\_\_\_\_**

### Section III - Collaboration

7. Student and IEP team have worked with **general education** staff to identify classes and extra-curricular opportunities.

Examples – *documented* review of all available general education classes and clubs or extracurricular activities offered at the school (opportunity mapping), discussions with general educators about classes and activities the student plans to attend, meetings with general educators.

1 point for each documented consultation with general education staff

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

8. Student and his/her family have met with **guidance** counselor or equivalent person at school to discuss options for higher education and career plan.

1 point for each time student met with guidance staff

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

9. Student and her/his family have been provided information about **Vocational Rehabilitation** (VR) services.

1 point for every documented occurrence of information being provided \_\_\_\_\_

\*Add **1 extra point** if an **application** has been submitted to **VR** \_\_\_\_\_ +

\*Add **another 1 extra point** if student has Individual Plan for Employment (**IPE**) \_\_\_\_\_ +

\*Add **an additional 3 extra points** if **VR services** are being used to facilitate paid employment \_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

10. Student and her/his family have been provided information about the process of seeking resources from adult or long term care services.

Examples: Contacts for adult services intake (local aging and disability resource center, local state or county authority on disability services, social security, mental health, and health care benefits), and agencies that provide supportive services (home supports, recreation support, personal care assistance, mobility training, and transportation).

1 point for every different/new resource shared with student and her/his family

Item points\_\_\_\_\_



11. Student and her/his family have been provided with information about integrated employment service providers available in the community where they live.  
Examples: Transition night at school where integrated employment support providers are present, brochures given to student and family, student and family meet with former students who are using the provider to learn about the services offered.  
\*Note – DO NOT count information provided about sheltered/segreated workshop settings in points for this scale.

1 point for each different *integrated employment* support provider introduced\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 extra point for every prospective *integrated employment* support provider the student and her/his family have met or been in contact with\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

12. Student and family have been provided information about obtaining work incentives benefits counseling to learn about how to keep needed benefits when working.  
\*Note: this is *not* the same as applying for public benefits through a *Benefits Specialist*

1 point for each *documented* time information was provided\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add **1 extra point** if student has had an analysis completed by a *Work Incentives Benefits Counselor* (WIBC) \_\_\_\_\_+

\*Add an **additional extra 1 point** if that WIBC was part of the Work Incentives Benefits Specialist Association (WIBSA)\_\_\_\_\_  
(*this item for Wisconsin only – can be found on website using the name of WIBC*)

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

**Section III Points**\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Section IV - High School Classes and Extra-Curricular Activities**

13. Student has had support to review the list of classes offered to all same-grade peers and participate in making choices about the classes he/she is taking now and will take in the future (opportunity mapping).

1 point per *documented* opportunity for student to choose from classes offered\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 extra point for each class chosen by the student that was placed on his/her schedule\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

14. Student is currently enrolled in general education classes with peers who do not have disabilities.

1 point for each *inclusive* gen ed class the student is taking at this time\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 extra point for every current gen ed class with content directly related to a post-school education or employment goal\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

15. Student has had opportunities to choose from the list of school-sponsored extracurricular activities offered to all other same-grade peers based on her/his talents and interests. (opportunity mapping)

1 point for every *documented* opportunity provided for the student to choose inclusive extra-curricular activities offered through school

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

16. Student is actively involved in extracurricular activities with peers who do not have disabilities.

\**Note:* DO NOT count activities designed especially for students with disabilities such as Best Buddies or Special Olympics for points on this scale.

1 point for each extracurricular activity the student chose and actively participates in at this time\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 extra point for each activity directly related to post school education or employment goal\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Section IV Points \_\_\_\_\_**

#### **Section V – Community Work Experiences**

17. Student has had one or more volunteer experiences in the community.

1 point for every new different volunteer experience since last completion of scale\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 extra point for each of the different or new experiences directly related to employment goal\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

18. Student has gone on job shadows and/or tours of community businesses for the purpose of career exploration.

*\*Note:* DO NOT include tours of sheltered workshops in the points for this scale.

1 point for each new and different job shadow/business tour since last completing this scale\_\_\_\_\_

*\*Add 1 extra point for new job shadows/business tours in fields directly related to post school employment goal*\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

19. Student has participated in work study, service learning, or another program to obtain school credit for time working or volunteering at a community business/organization.

1 point for each new opportunity to earn credit for community work experience since last completion of scale

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

20. In conjunction with community work experiences, the student has been provided opportunities to practice and develop social and soft skills needed for optimal employment success.

Examples: Job skills class, assigned mentoring, use of video modeling, implementation of social and/or soft skills curriculum, job coaching

1 point for each new and different formal learning opportunity provided since last completion of scale \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Add 1 extra point if social and/or soft skills training took place in community setting*\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

21. Student has had one or more paid integrated jobs in the community.

Note: DO NOT count paid work experience at sheltered workshops in the points for this scale.

1 point for each current paid integrated community job\_\_\_\_\_

*\*Add 1 extra point for each paid job directly related to post-school employment goal*\_\_\_\_\_

*\*Add 3 **additional** extra points for each current job that is paid directly by the employer (student is on company payroll)*\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

**Section V Points**\_\_\_\_\_

## Section VI - Postsecondary Education Goals

22. The student has had opportunities and support to explore options for postsecondary education that matches intended career choice.

1 point for college or postsecondary vocational-technical education goal\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 point if the postsecondary goal is directly related to the employment goal\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

23. Student has a program of study planned through her/his Individual Education/Transition plan (IEP/ITP) and/or Individual Learning Plan (ILP) or Academic Career Plan (ACP) that is aligned with postsecondary education goal.

1 point for course of study plan and postsecondary education goal alignment

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

24. Student and her/his family have been provided information about specific college or postsecondary vocational-technical education programs that might be a good fit.

\*Note: DO NOT include points for providing information about segregated vocational training programs such as sheltered workshops on this scale.

1 point for each college or vocational-technical institution introduced\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add **1 extra point** for every new postsecondary education institution toured since last completion of scale\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add **2 extra points** for each college class the student has taken through dual enrollment since the last completion of the scale \_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

## Section VI Points\_\_\_\_\_

## Section VII - Coordination of Transition Services

Coordination of transition planning services involves assistance to students with disabilities to engage in all of the activities covered in this rating scale. There are sometimes Additional required goals and activities as determined by the team and IEP.

25. Student has a designated school staff member assigned to coordinate and oversee the delivery of transition services, including course of study, annual goals, postsecondary education and employment goals, and all related transition activities.

1 point if formal transition coordination is an assigned job\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 extra point if the transition coordinator's time is dedicated full-time to that role\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

26. Student's transition plan and services are reviewed regularly to ensure

1 point for this completion of the transition services rating scale \_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

**Section VII Points\_\_\_\_\_**

**Summary of Section Points**

I. \_\_\_\_\_

II. \_\_\_\_\_

III. \_\_\_\_\_

IV. \_\_\_\_\_

V. \_\_\_\_\_

VI. \_\_\_\_\_

VII. \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Points \_\_\_\_\_**

**Transition Service Goals based on Section Scores:**

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.





[illegible]

- I - Self-Determination - Item 1.
- I - Self-Determination Item 2.
- I - Self-Determination Item 3.

- II - Goals Item 4.
- II - Goals Item 5.
- II - Goals Item 6.
- II - Goals Item 7.

Goals Section Total
III - Collaboration Item 8.
III - Collaboration Item 9.
III - Collaboration Item 10.
III - Collaboration Item 11.
III - Collaboration Item 12.
III - Collaboration Item 13.

III - Collaboration Section Total

IV - Classes/Extra-Curriculars Item 14.

IV - Classes/Extra-Curriculars Item 15.

IV - Classes/Extra-Curriculars Item 16.

IV - Classes/Extra-Curriculars Item 17.

Classes/Extra-Curriculars Section Total	
V - Community Work Exp Item 18.	
V - Community Work Exp Item 19.	
V - Community Work Exp Item 20.	
V - Community Work Exp Item 21.	

V - Community Work Exp Section Total	
VI - Postsecondary Ed Item 22.	
VI - Postsecondary Ed Item 23.	
VI - Postsecondary Ed Item 24.	

VI - Postsecondary Ed Section Total

VII - Coordination Item 25.

VII - Coordination Item 26.

VII - Coordination Section Total

Total Points



# 3 BIG IDEAS for Supporting Self-Determination in Transition to Employment

Promoting self-determination for students with disabilities by affording decision-making and leadership opportunities has been recommended for many years. And, applying self-determination principles to transition and employment planning is also a well-established best practice. The Let's Get to Work (LGTW) Quick Guide includes a list of free resources available to help teams implement activities designed to promote self-determination. Below are three BIG IDEAS for supporting students to be self-determined in planning for employment.

## 1. Make Time for Student-Led Preparation to Foster MEANINGFUL INVOLVEMENT

- a) **Get Students THINKING about their Career Goals** – In preparation for goal-setting and IEP meetings, students can be engaged in opportunities to consider their own interests, abilities, and learning needs. Some options for making this happen can include: *hold individual and group discussions about a variety of jobs; talk about what jobs students have already tried at home and school; watch videos about various careers and jobs; visit local businesses; have guest presenters; and use information-gathering tools* such as the LGTW Employment Planning Tool or the Self-Directed Employment Planning Modules and Workbook (links to both are available in the Career Goals section of the LGTW Quick Guide). Once a student has had time to consider what they like to do, what they are good at doing, and the types of jobs and places that interest them most, they are better prepared to set goals for themselves.

- b) **Support Students to EXPRESS their Career Goals** – Educators are accustomed to writing student goals, but *students can benefit when they are engaged to write down, type, or verbally express their own goals.*

Taking part in developing goals can promote a deeper understanding of the fact that transition and employment goals are all about them. When getting personal goals from thought to written or verbal form, both short and longer-term goals should be outlined, since one leads to the other. Starting with the end in mind and then working backward (backward planning design) is usually most effective. Laying out the small steps or “achievable chunks” needed to accomplish the employment goal makes the process less overwhelming for students and the whole team. Another important step is letting students know that goals can change – setting them is a starting point, not an ending point!

### Support students to:

- ✓ **THINK** about their career goals
- ✓ **EXPRESS** their career goals
- ✓ **PREPARE** visuals about their career goals
- ✓ **PRACTICE** sharing their goals

- c) **Help Students PREPARE Visual Representations** – Students can *create written and/or electronic documents about their interests, abilities, and support needs.* The format can include pictures, videos, audio files, words, or a combination. The product can be a poster, a visual resume, a presentation like PowerPoint, or something else the student wants to use. The best format really depends on the individual student (another opportunity to provide choice).

- d) **Provide Time for Students to PRACTICE Sharing their Goals** – Once a student sets short and long-term employment goals, gets them down on paper, and prepares a format for sharing them, **teachers can facilitate discussions and presentation by students**. This practice can happen one-on-one, in small groups, in classes, and with trusted friends and educators. After some practice, students will be ready to take the lead on presenting their goals and plans to their family members, other team members, and in more formal meetings.

## 2. Commit to Student-Led Planning Meetings that Promote LEADERSHIP

Once students have created visual plan representations and practiced, they can **take the lead in sharing that plan, including short and long-term goals, at IEP meetings**. When students are well-prepared and clearly express what they want to accomplish, teams usually find working together toward those goals happens more easily and enlisting support and help of other team members with potential employer connections and tasks also unfolds more naturally because goals are clear and person-centered. Team members generally want to be supportive, and students can lead the way to explain how everyone on the team can be helpful in supporting their career objective.



## 3. Ensure that Evolving Goals Based on Experience is the EXPECTATION

This idea really involves knowing when to go back to the first one. When students begin to gain experience with different jobs in a variety of settings, there is a higher likelihood that both short and long-term goals will change. Sometimes goals need slight tweaks, and sometimes they need complete overhauls. **Truly supporting self-determination means allowing students to draw from their experiences and go back to square one when they figure out that they don't really want the kind of job they originally thought they did.** Maybe a student had a goal to become a pre-school teacher based on experience babysitting cousins, but figured out changing diapers was not something he wanted to do each day at a job. Or perhaps a student's employment goal was to become a chef, until she realized that cooking at home is much more pleasant than trying to get through the busy dinner rush at a restaurant. Everyone becomes self-determined by learning from successes and failures, and the education system best promotes actual self-determination by allowing dignity of risk, trial and error – and going back to the drawing board with students as many times as needed.

## Additional Resources

The [Let's Get to Work Quick Guide](#) has many additional resources to help you support students' self-determination and goal setting. Resources you may find helpful include:

- [Self-Directed Transition Planning Tool](#)
- [Self-Directed Employment Planning Modules](#)
- [Transition Services Rating Scale](#)
- [Discovery Notes Form](#)

# Information & Resources for Promoting Self-Determination

Being self-determined is important for success in employment and life in general. Numerous resources are available to assist teachers and students with disabilities as they work to build self-determination skills. There is no “best” way or resource, but certain practices, including: 1) supporting students to become involved in leading their own planning meetings, 2) offering choices among available options for classes and extra-curricular activities, and 3) providing opportunities to practice self-determination in natural settings, are recommended.

The Let's Get to Work Library of Self-Determination Resources will help you explain to teams why self-determination is so important in transition and expanding the scope of ways you teach it. Some of the resources are stand-alone, while others can be used with additional items as indicated within the documents. The library of resources can be found at <http://www.letsgettoworkwi.org/index.php/lgtw-project-resources/self-determination-resource-library/>.

## Self-Determination Resource Webpage

### Background Information on Self-Determination:

- **NTLS2 Fact Sheet** – research findings on self-determination for youth with disabilities
- **NCET Research to Practice Brief** – about self-determination and tips for promoting it
- **Whose Life Is It Anyway?** – different perspectives on self-determination for a transitioning youth
- **Opening Doors to Self-Determination** – a guide for teachers, students, and families

### Practice Information and Tips:

- **DCDT Fact Sheet** – goal-setting for youth with disabilities along with a list of additional resources
- **Foundations** – a toolkit about fostering self-determination for educators
- **Lesson Plan Examples** – on various topics that can be used or adapted when working on self-determination
- **Fostering Self-Determination** – a set of activities and lesson plans to build self-determination skills
- **Self-Determination Ideas from Paraprofessionals** – a set of specific ways to promote self-determination compiled from a survey of paraprofessionals in WI along with lists of resources for each

### Resources Geared Toward Students:

- **The Speak-Up Guide** – a resource book students can use on its own or with accompanying materials
- **The 3 R's of Self-Determination** – a student practice guide about rights, responsibilities, and resources for increasing self-determination
- **Leadership Tips for Youth** – a list of ideas for youth interested in gaining self-determination skills through leadership roles

### Resources Geared Toward Parents:

- **Fostering Self-Determination** – A parent-to-parent guide for providing opportunities for children and youth to build self-determination skills along with a list of additional resources for parents and teams



Youth presenting information to the Mayor to promote integrated employment

Youth presenting at a Town Hall meeting with Senator Leibham on why they want to work in the community



## Additional Resources

There is a lot of information available about self-determination on-line. Below are a handful of websites with great information.

- **[www.imdetermined.org](http://www.imdetermined.org)** – a website with resources for youth, educators and parents focused on helping youth with disabilities take control of their lives.
- **[www.wiyouthfirst.org](http://www.wiyouthfirst.org)** – a website for youth, about youth; includes information and resources about a variety of transition topics. Look for the companion page on Facebook!
- **[www.ncwd-youth.info](http://www.ncwd-youth.info)** – innovative strategies, Guideposts for Success, helpful tips all in one location.
- Check out the annual **Self-Determination Conference** held each November at the Kalahari Resort in the Wisconsin Dells. The conference empowers people with disabilities to have more control over their lives. For more information, visit **[www.wi-bpdd.org](http://www.wi-bpdd.org)**.



# Classes

## *Including Extra-Curriculars and College Access*

Students with disabilities need to take classes and have extra-curricular opportunities throughout their education that are inclusive and related to life skill and career development goals. This practice has been shown to increase student, family, and teacher expectations and helps students to develop peer relationships and appropriate social and employment soft skills earlier than students who do not have inclusive opportunities. In addition, students who have had more and broader inclusive opportunities have increased academic outcomes, which also put them in a better position for having expanded access to postsecondary education opportunities, career options, and ultimately higher paying jobs after completing a transition program.



# Why High School Inclusion Matters: Factors to Consider

Inclusion of students with significant disabilities at the high school level has been long debated and undoubtedly presents challenges for districts and schools. However, there are evidence-based reasons for implementing inclusive practices. And, students with and without disabilities alike will benefit.

## Gains in Academic Performance

Studies have shown that when students with disabilities take more general education classes with peers who do not have disabilities, academic gains are made, even with the use of largely modified and adapted curriculum and materials.<sup>1, 2</sup> Think of it this way, any exposure to the general education content is better than none. And, schools that implement inclusion report being pleasantly surprised at the level of participation seen that educators previously thought were not possible. General education classes in high school are also correlated to college attendance and any college attendance is linked to better employment and life outcomes.<sup>3</sup>

## Benefits for Students without Disabilities

Studies have found that the majority of secondary students without disabilities report never or rarely seeing students with significant disabilities at their schools, and having almost no opportunity to interact with peers who have disabilities.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, the majority also report that they would like to get to know students with significant disabilities. Varied research over a number of years has demonstrated that academic achievement is not negatively affected for students without disabilities when their peers with disabilities are included in general education classes. In fact, there is some evidence that serving in a peer tutor role can provide academic benefits for students without disabilities.<sup>5</sup>

## Increases in Social Interaction

Logic dictates that students with disabilities will have more social interactions with peers who do not have disabilities when they are in general education classes and extra-curricular activities side by side. Research confirms that is indeed the case.<sup>4, 5</sup> It just makes sense that it is easier to get to know people if you spend time with them. Two important aspects of providing opportunities for social interactions through inclusion is affording students with disabilities **chances to be in the same places at the same times** as their peers without disabilities and **thoughtful coordination without adult hovering**. In other words, special and general educators should work together to orchestrate seating, expectations, peer supports, materials, content delivery, and participation without the constant presence of adults in close proximity to students with disabilities.

## Optimal Practices Require Individualized Planning

The [10 Practical Ways to Foster Inclusion](#), along with this and other resources in the [LGTW Quick Guide](#) provide inclusive strategies drawn from research as well as the direct experiences of several [Let's Get to Work](#) pilot schools. However, there is no one right or best way to implement inclusion. Just as both special and general educational practices are most effective when the needs of individual students are placed at the forefront of thinking and planning, the same is true of inclusive practices. For one student, science classes and related school clubs might be optimal. For another, music and art could be the perfect way to relate to peers through shared passion. Some might be in general education classes most of the day, while others still may need to build up their comfort level or balance small group direct instructional time with time in general education.



1 Browder, D. M., & Cooper-Duffy, K. (2003).  
4 Salend, S. J., & Duhaney, L. M. G. (1999).

2 Cole, C. M., Waldron, N., & Majd, M. (2004).  
5 Carter, E. W., & Hughes, C. (2005).

3 Landmark, L., Ju, S., & Zhang, D. (2010).  
6 Siperstein, G. N., Parker, R. C., Bardon, J. N., & Widaman, K. F. (2007).

## Examples from LGTW Pilot Schools

**A**ndy, a young man who uses a wheelchair and communicates in a variety of ways but says very little, has always attended a wide variety of classes at his high school. He particularly likes culinary classes. Often, Andy gets assistance in classes from his peers without disabilities, and is provided valued roles such as delivering notes from the office or reading in the library when he becomes restless and needs to leave class before the end of the period. When visiting his school, it is obvious that many of his peers without disabilities know him and appreciate his presence there. People wave and say hello in the hallways and when he goes for lunch, he sits at a table with some students who do not have disabilities. Andy's favorite hobby is making spirit key chains with friends to sell before school and at school sporting events. The friends he makes key chains with are peers without disabilities.



**C**hris has always been involved in some general education classes and especially enjoys science and history, but used to have an adult attend most classes with him. Over the past two years, classes have been added to his schedule and adult support simultaneously faded where possible. With daily check-ins and collaboration between his case manager and general education teachers, Chris has been very successful and takes great pride in his ability to complete his work and get good grades. His social interactions have also increased since he has an adult with him less frequently.

**T**om had very limited time with peers who did not have disabilities until last year. Then, his high school implemented two specific strategies to increase inclusion: having students with and without disabilities go to homeroom together and the development of classes co-taught by a general and special educator. By the end of the first semester after those changes, Tom had made several friends without disabilities, began eating lunch with them, and started seeing them socially outside of school. Soon after that, Tom invited other students with disabilities to join the group for lunch, thus expanding not only his own social network, but also doing the same for his peers with disabilities.



**S**arah had a busy schedule in high school, working in the coffee shop, attending classes, and socializing with friends. It was not always easy, as she sometimes became frustrated and has tough days, even acting aggressively toward peers without disabilities at times. Not being included was never an option at her high school and she got the support she needed from not only special educators, but also general educators and peers without disabilities when she was having a difficult time. The distinction of “those kids” or “your kids” is not apparent in an inclusive environment and she was not permanently removed from classes or activities because of behavioral issues. Sarah had friends who stuck by her in high school and have stayed in touch after graduation – just like anyone would want.

## Inclusion is Long-Term Thinking

*Incorporating Inclusive practices has short-term pay offs, but also represents long-term thinking that can be closely tied to more positive transition and employment outcomes. Exposure to academic content, increased chances of attending college, learning and practicing social skills, and getting to know more people before leaving high school are among the benefits for students with disabilities. As a result, those who have had more inclusive opportunities are better prepared for work and the adult world overall.<sup>7, 8</sup> Their counterparts without disabilities leave high school better prepared to accept, live, and work side-by-side with individuals who have disabilities, thus helping create more inclusive communities not just during high school, but well beyond.*



# 10 Practical Ways to Foster Inclusion

High school inclusion for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) can happen in natural ways that primarily involve having students with I/DD in the same places, for the same activities, at the same times as their peers without disabilities. Innovative educators and paraprofessionals can take on different roles that allow students with I/DD to take part more fully in the range of activities offered by schools. For some, this means re-thinking disability as well as the ways special education staff spend their time. Helping students with disabilities blending into the fabric of the school community, and be viewed in terms of strengths and positive contributions, is the ultimate goal of inclusion.

The following are 10 field-tested ideas to help expand or strengthen inclusion in your school:

## 1. Develop class schedules in typical ways.

- Use the same class scheduling system everyone else uses to create a plan for all 4 years of high school.
- Help students and families look at classes offered to students in the same grade level.
- Make sure classes connect with the student's interests and goals.
- Just like everyone else, help all students with disabilities map out a course of study that will prepare them to accomplish their postsecondary education and employment goals.

## 2. Add or expand co-teaching.

- Special educators can be lead teachers for a portion of instructional time working with *all* students in conjunction with general educators.
- Special educators bring expertise in universal design for teaching, scaffolding of information, and ways to accommodate for multiple learning styles.
- Special educators can modify and adapt content and materials for anyone in a class who has a need.
- Co-teaching can be integrated into one or two courses at a time per grade level based on demand for classes and educator knowledge/strengths.

## 3. Make homerooms/advisory time inclusive.

- Include students with I/DD in general education homerooms so they can access activities such as: meeting with advisors to discuss school and grade-level issues; checking in on status of academic performance; getting extra help with assignments; and making plans for participating in school events, field trips, and service projects.

## 4. Support students with disabilities to use & serve as peer tutors.

- Include peer tutoring in a variety of subjects and allow students with disabilities to be tutors for peers in areas in which they excel.
- Encourage students with disabilities to share their personal experiences to help their fellow students better understand the nature of their disabilities and how those impact their lives.

### Benefits of Inclusion

Inclusion is linked to better post-school outcomes for youth with disabilities, including college attendance and employment.

School inclusion goes hand-in-hand with preparing all students to be college and career ready.

Students and educators gain a deeper understanding of similarities between students with and without disabilities.

Peer-to-peer relationships evolve as students spend time together.

All students benefit from getting to know others who are different from them.

## 5. Facilitate and encourage inclusion at school events.

- Foster student interactions at field trips, dances, assemblies, and student body meetings by having students go with their inclusive homeroom or advisory class and provide limited adult supervision. (No hovering)

## 6. Foster fully inclusive lunchtimes.

- Ensure students with I/DD are included during lunchtime - whether that is based on their classes, grade, homeroom or random assignment – whatever method is used for all other students.
- Encourage peers to help students with disabilities who may need assistance with purchasing or carrying their lunch rather than assigning an adult.



## 7. Expand participation in sports, clubs, and extra-curricular activities.

- Provide students with I/DD information about all clubs, sports, and activities that are available at their grade level.
- Students with and without disabilities who do not possess keen athletic abilities can serve as sports' team managers and helpers.
- Encourage peers without disabilities to invite students with I/DD to clubs or activities of interest.
- Consider holding meetings during lunch or study hall times if afterschool transportation is an issue.

## 8. Extend in-school work experiences to everyone.

- Offer all student jobs found within the school to both students with and without disabilities to help them gain valuable work experiences together (e.g. running the school store or coffee shop, assisting with office tasks, helping in the cafeteria, and working on grounds-keeping).
- Avoid setting up separate jobs only for students with disabilities.

## 9. Promote service learning for all students.

- Ensure that students with and without disabilities are completing their service or volunteer requirements for graduation in the same places and at the same times, based on interests and schedules.

## 10. Provide shared career exploration activities.

- Build connections between special education staff and vocational/technical teachers to support students with I/DD to engage in career exploration and planning, such as classes, on-line research, business tours, career fairs, guidance counseling, and career presentations with peers who do not have disabilities.

# Additional Resources

Seeds of Inclusion Conference – every March at UW-Oshkosh

Inclusive Schools Network – a variety of ideas and resources





# High School Opportunity Map

This opportunity mapping tool is intended to provide an example of how information about classes and extracurricular activities can be compiled. Compiling comprehensive information into one document or web-based location can assist teachers and students with disabilities when considering classes and extracurricular activities available.

Opportunity Mapping can be an effective way to assess classes and activities that have not been offered to students with disabilities, but that could open opportunities to learn and be engaged in the school community along-side peers without disabilities.

Please take a few minutes to read through the entire survey prior to filling it out.

**School Name:**

**Number of students attending:**

**Name(s) of school personnel completing the opportunity map survey:**

## Opportunities for Student Involvement

This portion of the survey is intended to capture the array of coursework and student activities offered to all students at the school.

### 1. Please check all types of courses offered at the school:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family and Consumer Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Music
<input type="checkbox"/>	Art	<input type="checkbox"/>	Foreign Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical Education
<input type="checkbox"/>	Business	<input type="checkbox"/>	Geography	<input type="checkbox"/>	Political Science
<input type="checkbox"/>	Computer Science	<input type="checkbox"/>	Graphic Design	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reading
<input type="checkbox"/>	Driver's Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Health Sciences	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science
<input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/>	History	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social Studies
<input type="checkbox"/>	English	<input type="checkbox"/>	Math	<input type="checkbox"/>	World Affairs

Please list additional courses not mentioned above:

### 2. Please indicate the types of school sponsored activities that are offered:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Assemblies/Pep Rallies	<input type="checkbox"/>	Concerts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plays
<input type="checkbox"/>	Band	<input type="checkbox"/>	Forensics	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student Council
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chorus	<input type="checkbox"/>	Newspaper	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yearbook

Other (please specify)

**3. Please check all academic clubs currently offered at the school:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poetry
<input type="checkbox"/>	Astronomy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Geography	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rocket Building
<input type="checkbox"/>	Aviation	<input type="checkbox"/>	History	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reading
<input type="checkbox"/>	Biology	<input type="checkbox"/>	Math	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science
<input type="checkbox"/>	Debate	<input type="checkbox"/>	National Honor Society	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social Studies
<input type="checkbox"/>	DECA (marketing and management)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Odyssey of the Mind	<input type="checkbox"/>	Writing

Other (please specify)


**4. Please check all fine and creative art clubs currently offered at the school:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Anime (Japanese animation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drumming	<input type="checkbox"/>	Painting
<input type="checkbox"/>	Choir	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jazz	<input type="checkbox"/>	Photography
<input type="checkbox"/>	Drama/Theatre	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knitting	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pottery
<input type="checkbox"/>	Drawing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Orchestra		

Other (please specify)


**5. Please check all foreign language/culturally-based types of clubs currently offered at the school:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	African American	<input type="checkbox"/>	German	<input type="checkbox"/>	Latin
<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hispanic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Russian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hmong	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sign Language
<input type="checkbox"/>	French	<input type="checkbox"/>	Italian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spanish
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gay-Straight Alliance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Japanese		

Other (please specify)


**6. Please check all game and recreation clubs currently offered at the school:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Chess	<input type="checkbox"/>	Meditation and Yoga	<input type="checkbox"/>	Video gaming
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Movies	<input type="checkbox"/>	Word games (scrabble/pictionary)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fitness and exercise	<input type="checkbox"/>	Music		

Other (please specify)


**7. Please indicate political clubs that currently exist at the school:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Young Democrats	<input type="checkbox"/>	Young Independents	<input type="checkbox"/>	Young Republicans
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Other (please specify)




**8. Please check all service-oriented clubs currently offered at the school:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Amnesty International	<input type="checkbox"/>	FCCLA (Family Career and Community Leaders of America)	<input type="checkbox"/>	SADD (Students Against Drunk Driving)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Combating Poverty and Homelessness	<input type="checkbox"/>	KEY Club (Informs students of volunteer opportunities)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Students for Informed Response (addressing international issues)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Diversity Alliance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local service clubs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Environmental Issues
<input type="checkbox"/>	R.O.T.C.				

Other (please specify)


**9. Please check all sports offered at the school:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Basketball	<input type="checkbox"/>	Field Hockey	<input type="checkbox"/>	Soccer
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bowling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Football	<input type="checkbox"/>	Softball
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cheerleading	<input type="checkbox"/>	Frisbee	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tennis
<input type="checkbox"/>	Climbing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Golf	<input type="checkbox"/>	Track
<input type="checkbox"/>	Crew/Rowing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hockey	<input type="checkbox"/>	Volleyball
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cross Country	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lacrosse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Water Polo
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rugby	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weight lifting
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dance Team	<input type="checkbox"/>	Running	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrestling

Other (please specify)


**10. Please check all volunteer and job opportunities that exist for students at the school (either for credit or not for credit):**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Attendance Aide	<input type="checkbox"/>	Peer Tutor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student Services
<input type="checkbox"/>	Concession stand	<input type="checkbox"/>	School Store	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teaching Assistant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Library Aide	<input type="checkbox"/>	Score Board	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ticket Sales
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lighting Assistant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Set Design	<input type="checkbox"/>	Usher
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lunchroom Assistant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sound Assistant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yearbook layout and graphic design
<input type="checkbox"/>	Office Aide	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sports Statistician	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yearbook Writer

Additional roles not listed above:


**11. Please indicate all career development information and activities currently offered through the school:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Apprenticeships	<input type="checkbox"/>	Internships	<input type="checkbox"/>	PEP (Personal Education Planning)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Career Days	<input type="checkbox"/>	Interview Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Resume Writing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Career Exploration Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Job Hunting Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	College Information
<input type="checkbox"/>	Job Shadowing (going to visit people working in particular jobs)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scholarships	<input type="checkbox"/>	Informational interviews with employers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Military				

Other (please specify)


## Involvement of ALL Students

This portion of the survey is intended to encourage reflection on the general level of participation by students with significant disabilities in the variety of school-wide opportunities offered.

### 12. How is information about courses and extracurricular opportunities shared with the student body?

	Activity Advisors		Mailings		School Website
	Daily Announcements		Newsletters		Student to Student
	Department Announcements		School Bulletin Board		Teachers
	Filers		School Catalogs		

Other (please specify)


### 13. Please estimate how many students with significant disabilities are generally participating in the various types of opportunities at the school:

(Participation being defined as being in the same activity and at the same time as students without significant disabilities.)

	Most		Some		Few		None
Academic Classes (general)							
Academic Clubs							
Arts							
Career Development							
Cultural							
Foreign Language							
Games and Recreation							
Political							
School Community							
School Jobs							
Service-Oriented Activities							
Sports							

Please provide any additional information you think would be helpful:

--

### 14. What is or could be done to increase participation by students with significant disabilities in the various opportunities offered at the school?

Yes, this happens at the school		Seems like a good idea to try
---------------------------------	--	-------------------------------

General educators make suggestions for a particular student based on interest area(s)					
General educators present information to students and ask what they might want to try					
Intentional discussions at IEP-PTP meetings about the variety of opportunities available					

Parents are provided with information about courses and activities and make suggestions (send home catalogs/lists)				
Special educators make recommendations for particular student based on interest area (s)				
Special educators present information to students on a regular basis and ask what they might want to try				
Students with significant disabilities are provided experiential opportunities to attend a variety of activities				
Students without disabilities invite students				
with significant disabilities to attend classes and activities				

Please provide any additional thoughts or ideas for increasing participation by students with significant disabilities:

## Questions for Reflection

These questions were developed based on feedback from school personnel after completing the survey. They are intended to assist support teams and educators to move forward in their efforts to more fully include students with significant disabilities in general education classes and extracurricular activities.

**15. Which activities at our school are truly shared?**

**16. Which factors support such activities?**

**17. What barriers exist to the participation of students with disabilities in some activities?**

**18. What changes could we make to increase the number of inclusive activities?**

**19. Who could we engage as partners to help increase the range and quality of activities?**

**20. How will we measure the success of our efforts?**

## OPPORTUNITY MAPPING NEXT STEPS

1. Does a full list of options available at our school already exist or does that need to be created?
2. What classes and activities currently include students with significant disabilities?
3. What action steps will increase participation of one or more students with significant disabilities?
4. Who will help set targets, develop and implement action steps, and track progress?

ACTION STEP PLANNED	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	BARRIER ENCOUNTERED & SOLUTION	TARGET DATE	RESULTS



## **Least Restrictive Environment for IEP Work Placements for Youth in Transition**

A [June 22, 2012 letter](#) from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services outlines how Least Restrictive Environment Requirements (LRE) under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) applies to transition work placements for youth. School districts often have questions on this topic as they are required to report the extent to which all students with disabilities are educated with their nondisabled peers. Understanding how to report an integrated work placement for youth receiving transition services requires different analysis than what districts may use in calculating time spent in a classroom. This guidance is intended to clarify reporting requirements, answer questions for IEP teams and ensure that youth with disabilities are receiving transition services, including work experiences, in the most integrated setting.

### **Is an individualized education program (IEP) Team required to include work placement in a transition-age student's IEP?**

In Wisconsin, transition requirements begin no later than in the first individualized education program (IEP) that will be in effect when the child is 14. Nationwide, the age is 16. At this point, the IEP must include a statement of appropriate, measurable postsecondary goals for the child based on age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment and, where appropriate, independent living skills. It also must include a description of the transition services needed to assist the child in reaching the goals. Work placement can be an appropriate transition service for a youth with a disability, but is not a required component of an IEP. An IEP team would determine whether a work placement is an appropriate transition service for the student and if so, would then be required as part of the student's IEP.

### **Must a school provide a written notice of placement for a work setting if it is included in a student's IEP?**

Yes, if a work placement is included in a student's IEP, it is considered part of the student's educational program. Therefore, parents must receive prior written notice before initiating or changing a work placement.

### **Is a work placement for a youth required to meet Least Restrictive Requirements (LRE)?**

LRE means that a student with a disability, to the maximum extent appropriate, is educated with children without disabilities. When a work placement is part of a student's IEP it must comply with LRE and thus IEP teams must consider the supplementary aids and services that could be provided to allow a youth to participate in a work placement with his or her peers without disabilities. A work placement in a segregated environment would only be determined

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as appropriate by law if the IEP team agrees that even the use of supplementary aids and services would not support a youth to participate in a work experience in a more integrated setting.

**What types of supplementary aids and services should an IEP team consider when determining a least restrictive work placement?**

Supplementary aids and services available to students with disabilities are defined generally in the law as “aids, services and other supports”. These aids and services should be based on peer reviewed research and are intended to help a student meet goals, make progress and participate with peers without disabilities. The National Secondary and Transition Technical Assistance Center has analyzed evidence-based practices to teach job skills. Their list of reviewed practices includes such things as job coaching to teach employment skills, video modeling, picture cues, and other assistive technology. These supports could be provided through a variety of funding mechanisms, including Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). The employment supports provided by VR can include Youth Transition On-the-Job Training (OJT); temporary work/internship, supported employment work trials, etc. Again, only after use of supplementary aids is discussed and considered by an IEP team would discussion of a more restrictive work placement be allowed by law.

**When the IEP team fills out the IEP questions that ask if the child will be educated in the same environment s/he would be educated if the child did not have a disability, must the IEP team consider transition work placements?**

Yes, the IEP team must consider whether the transition work placement is in a competitive job environment that includes people without disabilities that non-disabled students might also avail themselves of (e.g., internships and apprenticeship programs), or in a non-competitive sheltered environment. If the latter, the IEP team must answer this question “no” and then proceed to answer the following question on the IEP document which asks why the child cannot be educated in the general education environment with appropriate supplementary services and supports.

**How does a district accurately report on work placements for youth with disabilities?**

Educational time spent in an age-appropriate community-based work placement that includes individuals with and without disabilities should be counted as time inside the regular classroom when calculating the percentage of time spent inside the regular classroom. This is true regardless of whether special education support is provided to the student in this setting. Wisconsin’s Department of Public Instruction provides specific guidance on accurate reporting for IDEA [Indicator #5 and WI State Performance Plan \(SPP\), Indicator #20](#).



The following example outlines how districts would count an integrated setting in a work situation:

*Educational time spent in age-appropriate community-based settings that include individuals with and without disabilities, such as college campuses or vocational sites, should be counted as time spent inside the regular classroom. For example, a job placement at McDonalds would not be considered a removal because McDonalds employs people with and without disabilities. A placement at a sheltered workshop would be a removal as this environment is exclusively for people with disabilities. A student segregated at the library or the office without contact with non-disabled peers would be considered removed from his/her non-disabled peers.*

Similar to how classroom composition is reviewed for this purpose, IEP teams must also consider the composition of the work place (whether a majority of the employees are people without disabilities) and the extent to which the other non-work periods of time at the placement are spent with people without disabilities when determining the work placement time which will be counted as “regular class room with nondisabled peers”.

### **How do State Educational Agencies monitor least restrictive environment in work placements?**

SEAs have the responsibility to monitor LRE in all settings. If there is evidence that a school district is making placements that are inconsistent with LRE, the State Education Agency will conduct a review and if there is no justification for certain segregated placements, it may assist in planning or implementing any necessary corrective action.

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**PARTNERS** Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities, Department of Health Services, Department of Public Instruction, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Disability Rights Wisconsin, Waisman Center—University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities





# Preparing Students for College Checklist

**Middle and high school special education teachers play an important role in helping students with disabilities to understand the array of college options available, plan for those options, and leave high school prepared for postsecondary education aligned with their goals.**

STEPS	DATE COMPLETED	NOTES/NEXT STEPS
1. Consult with school/career counselor about college options for student and set up a student meeting with the counselor		
2. Compile information about several college/postsecondary education options to share with student and family		
3. Talk with student and family about possible college options and plans for postsecondary education, including financial planning		
4. Support student to explore career interests and research education needs that coincide with those interests		
5. Complete age-appropriate transition assessments to help determine appropriate postsecondary, annual, and short-term goals for student		
6. Work with student and their family to develop postsecondary employment and education goals based on interests and strengths		
7. Assist student to map out a course of study that will help them prepare for their postsecondary education and employment goals		
8. Explain the differences between services allowable in an IEP versus a 504 plan since IEP's cannot carry over to college		



STEPS	DATE COMPLETED	NOTES/NEXT STEPS
9. Work with the student, family, and IEP team to reduce support and increase independence of the student to complete work for classes, implementing the types of supports that will be available in college and gradually reducing services that will not be (e.g. – paraprofessional support, modified assignments)		
10. Introduce additional technology and supports for student to try in various classes as part of the strategy to increase independence and prepare for college (Kurzweil, Dragon, smart pens audio recording, electronic pens, note-taking assistance, study groups, tutoring)		
11. Work with the student and family to increase independence in health care and understand the need to schedule their own appointments, understand medication side effects and be responsible for health insurance information.		
12. Provide information about DVR to student and family so they can apply to seek assistance in overcoming employment barriers, including barriers to career-related education needs if they choose to do so (if student is already connected with DVR, ask if post-secondary education is part of the current plan with DVR)		
13. Encourage student and family to schedule visits at colleges of interest, including meeting with someone from the disability services center at each, and check in with students and families to find out their thoughts after visits (list specific colleges in notes section)		

## Additional Resources

[Think College Wisconsin](#)



## Career Goals

Students must be supported to consider and establish employment goals for their future that are self-determined, individualized and have been developed with direct involvement of students themselves, parents, family, and other team members. Coursework and planning for students should follow the goals that are established.





## Self-Directed Employment Planning Modules

This on-line series was developed by Shannon Webb and Nancy Molfenter through inControl Wisconsin with funding made available from the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities. The set of modules was designed to help people with disabilities and their family members think about their integrated employment options, understand employment supports, and create a plan to achieve their integrated employment goals.

### Purpose

The intended purpose is to provide job seekers with disabilities and those who support them with information about ways to become employed, factors to consider, and resources available. The information can also be helpful to teachers and support providers.

The series is called the **Self-Directed Employment Planning Modules** because it is very important for individuals with disabilities and their families to be involved in planning and decisions about the future. Work is a part of life for most adults and having a disability does not mean someone cannot work. In fact, the authors and sponsors of this training believe that **everyone** can work, regardless of disability. We hope that these modules and materials will be helpful in paving a path to employment for people who use them.

### Content and Structure of the Modules

There are 12 modules total. The series starts with an Introduction, next there are 10 content modules, and then a Conclusion module. The titles of the 12 modules are:

- Introduction to Self-Directed Employment Planning
- One: Everyone Can Work
- Two: A Working Life
- Three: Thinking About Your Future
- Four: Overcoming Barriers to Employment
- Five: Dealing with Public Benefits Issues When You Work
- Six: People Involved in Planning and Providing Employment Supports
- Seven: Understanding Employment Supports
- Eight: Understanding Resources for Employment and Advocating for What You Need
- Nine: Getting the Help You Need to Implement Your Employment Plan: Working with an Employment Support Agency
- Ten: Getting the Help You Need to Implement Your Employment Plan: Hiring Individual Employment Supports
- Conclusion Module: to review and complete an Employment Plan

Each section of this series will take most people 30 to 60 minutes to complete, including answering the Workbook questions at the end. The modules can be viewed one at a time or back to back. Parts or all of any module can be viewed more than one time.

### **inControl Wisconsin Website**

A list of the modules and descriptions can be found on the Self-Directed Employment Planning web page on the inControl Wisconsin website [www.incontrolwisconsin.org](http://www.incontrolwisconsin.org). To view any module, simply click on its title.

The modules were created to be viewed one after the other in the order listed as the information from one module is the foundation for the next. Viewing the modules in order can help people learn the information and build an employment plan. However, users can skip modules or view the modules in the order of greatest interest.

### **Materials**

There is a **Workbook** that goes with this training as well as a **Resource Guide**. Those can be downloaded by selecting 'Resources' in the top right corner of this training. Each of the 10 content modules has a corresponding section in the workbook. At the end of each module, there are Workbook questions to answer and the answers to these questions can help to formulate an Employment Plan at the end.

### **Accessing the Materials**

Before starting the modules, we recommend downloading and printing the Workbook. You can find the workbook by clicking on the 'Conclusion' tab on the left hand side menu of the Self-Directed Employment Planning Module webpage or if you are watching a module, you can select the 'Resources' in the top right corner of the module.

The Resource Guide can also be found the same way.

There is also a full written narrative that goes with each module that can be printed. These can be found under the description of each module on the website or by clicking on the 'Resources' tab when you are watching a module.





WISCONSIN BOARD FOR PEOPLE  
WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION» PLANNING TOOL

**LET'S**

**GET TO**

**WORK**

Launching youth with disabilities  
into the workforce

Developed by: Shannon Webb & Nancy Molfenter for the  
Wisconsin Let's Get to Work Partner Schools and Students

# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION» PLANNING TOOL

## A NOTE ABOUT THIS TOOL BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

This planning tool was created to help students and their support teams come together to talk and think about employment goals. The following 7 pages can serve as a guide to teams and will work best when the information compiled is a true reflection of the student's experiences, thoughts, and opinions. Teamwork throughout this process by a group of people who know the student well is important. This tool is not intended to be a form for one time completion, rather it is designed to be an ongoing guide for teams to use as students move through transition, build life skills, and engage in educational and work experiences in preparation for adulthood.

A notes section on the back of this form has been provided for additional information and planning purposes.



# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION» PLANNING TOOL

**My circle of support:** (family, teachers, friends, and other people in my life who support me the most right now and how they help me)

Name and relationship	How they help me

**My weekly schedule:** (include community activities, classes, recreation, household chores, etc)

Saturday
Sunday
Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday

# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION» PLANNING TOOL

**My interests/favorite things to do are:**

**Things I do not like to do are:**

**Five positive statements about me:** (ask friends, family, school staff, employers, etc to describe my unique personality characteristics and talents)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION» PLANNING TOOL

## Academic Involvement:

Classes I have taken	Classes I would like to take (use opportunity map to brainstorm options)

## School Related & Extra Curricular Activities:

Previous and current involvement	Things I would like to be involved in (use opportunity map to brainstorm options)

You can find the Opportunity Map and other tools to support youth to obtain employment in the community in the LGTW Quick Guide at [www.letsgettoworkwi.org](http://www.letsgettoworkwi.org).

# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION» PLANNING TOOL

**Civic and Community Involvement:** (List activities and volunteering done with groups and organizations)

[illegible]

**Volunteer & Work Experiences:** (List school-based and community-based work experiences)

[illegible]

# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION» PLANNING TOOL

**Transferable Skills:** (list what I am good at doing that could be applied in a work setting)

My specific skills	I can do this Independently	I can do this with initial training	I can do this with ongoing support

**Things important to my optimal learning and success in school activities, community involvement, and work experiences:** (List supports, accommodations, environments, best times of day, etc.)

--

**Based on the information above, my Transition Career Goal is:**


# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION PLANNING TOOL

## Career Exploration Strategies:

Interest area	On-line Research	Informational Interview	Job Shadow	Mentor-ship	In School Work Experience	Unpaid Internship	Paid Internship	DVR Paid Work Experience	Other

## Connecting for Employment Exploration:

People we know	Workplace & job title	Their community involvement	How we will connect

# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION» PLANNING TOOL

Summarize the Team Action Plan:

Who (name)	What (task)	By when (time frame or deadline)

When we will get back together and who should attend?

What should be communicated between now and then and how will it be communicated?

The next time we meet we will:



Review what we have done,



Consider what we have learned, and



Use this new information to create another team action plan that keeps us moving forward!

# SELF-DIRECTED **TRANSITION**» PLANNING TOOL

PLANNING NOTES:



# Developing Individualized Career Goals

Helping students with disabilities choose and work toward postsecondary employment goals is an essential component of transition services. In addition to using age-appropriate assessments, Career Pathways, and the Postsecondary Transition Plan (PTP), students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) benefit from specific strategies in order to develop truly individualized career goals. As students gain experience and knowledge about themselves and the world around them, their career goals will evolve.

## Strategies to Use:

To Gather Ideas	To See & Try Jobs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Afford opportunities for students to take different classes and be involved in extra-curricular activities</li><li>• Involve family members in the process to learn about home life, preferences &amp; transferrable skills*</li><li>• Use one or more assessments &amp; planning tools</li><li>• Meet as a team to discuss ideas and make a list of employer connections</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Spend time in various community settings doing different activities</li><li>• Schedule business tours</li><li>• Set up informational interviews</li><li>• Arrange for job shadows &amp; trial work experiences</li><li>• Support short-term volunteer activities</li><li>• Activities, experiences &amp; jobs that do not go well are part of the goal development process</li></ul>

\*Transferrable skills are tasks and activities a student already knows how to do, such as mowing grass, putting away clothes, washing the car, and setting the table, that can translate into work skills.



## More Ideas to Consider:

- Use age appropriate assessments designed for students with significant disabilities (see resources section on the back page)
- Review examples of planning activities and tools (see the resources section on the back page)
- Use the free Self-Direct Employment Planning Modules (see resources section on the back page)
- Meet as a team regularly or find other ways to share information during the employment planning process
- Ensure that students have ample time to experience a variety of community and work settings
- Document all experiences and outcomes so the information can be used for goal development
- Check out more tools you can use in the Community Work Experience [link] section of the on-line LGTW Quick Guide on Transition to Employment [link]

## Meet Devon

Devon is a high school senior who has had goals in place to work and attend college for the past couple of years. About a year and a half ago, he had the chance to complete a paid work experience at a bank. At the end of the work experience, the bank did not offer him a job, and that was very disappointing. But, Devon and his team did not give up. He worked with his teacher, DVR, and a service provider to try another temporary work experience at a grocery store near his school. He enjoyed the work at the grocery store a lot, but that employer also did not offer him a job. With the help of his team, Devon kept looking for a job. A different grocery



store in a neighboring town offered Devon a chance and he started working there several hours per week. It was not too long before

his team, including Devon, his supervisor at work, and his vocational support agency felt he no longer needed a job coach with him for all of his work time. Devon is narrowing down his goals through actual experience.

He enjoys his job at the grocery store and is looking forward to starting classes at a local community college.

## Meet Eddie

Eddie is a high school junior who wants to be an auto mechanic. With the help of his teachers, DVR, a vocational service provider, and his family, he has set short and long term employment goals. Right now, he is taking classes at his high school that will help him apply to an auto repair certificate program at the technical college near where he lives after graduation. He also set a goal to work as a car detailer for a local car dealer, but through exploration discovered he can't do that until he turns 18. In the meantime, he got assistance to obtain a part-time paid job at a banquet hall to get work experience and earn some cash. Eddie has individualized short and long term employment goals, and a plan to match those.



## Additional Resources

Self-Directed Transition Planning Tool – **Let's Get to Work Quick Guide**

Assessing Students with Significant Disabilities for Supported Adulthood: Exploring Appropriate Transition Assessments by Dr. Mary E. Morningstar

Thought Sauce by Griffin-Hammis Associates

Individualized Employment Planning Model from the Rural Institute

Information available through the PACER Center

Self-Directed Employment Planning Modules from **In Control Wisconsin**

# Creating a Meaningful Week with Youth with Disabilities: Using Employment and Other Community Supports

For most young adults, a typical week revolves around a work and/or school schedule and is surrounded by time with friends, hobbies, home chores, volunteering, shopping, exercise, faith groups and other personal interests. The same should be true for people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) who need supports. Planning a meaningful week with a student with disabilities as he/she prepares to leave high school begins by considering typical activities for young adults and how these fit with the student's goals and preferences first. Necessary services and supports can then be put in place based on the choices the student has made.

As you plan employment, post-secondary education, career development, and other life goals with students with I/DD who need ongoing support, don't limit your thinking to the options that have been available in the past. Increased expectations for community-based services and flexibility are being built into the adult long-term care service system, which will better accommodate the lifestyle choices of individuals with disabilities. This means transition planning can be more flexible too!

## Chris's Story

Chris is what some teachers call a 'super-super senior who has an Intellectual Disability. He completed twelfth grade two years ago and has been participating in his local school district's transition program since then. Last year, he took 2 classes per semester at the technical college and worked with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to complete 2 temporary work experiences. This year, Chris decided to continue taking classes in a variety of subjects through the technical college and began working part-time at a grocery store with assistance from a local vocational support agency. Recently, he had his hours at the grocery store increased and reduced the number of hours per week he has job coaching. He would also like to add a second job. Outside of school and work, he enjoys fishing, spending time with his friends and girlfriend, and volunteering at his church. Of course, he has to dedicate some of his time to school work, shopping, cooking, and cleaning. All of these, along with his support needs, will be part of his plan when he exits school services next year. Having work, school, and a number of ongoing activities already in place before school exit makes the transition less stressful and more seamless. On the next page you will examine Chris's weekly schedule and learn about the types of services and supports he receives to engage in activities that are important to him.



## Adult Long-Term Care Services

Adult long-term care services provide people with supports to engage in personally meaningful activities. Youth with disabilities can apply for adult long-term care services through the county's **Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)** starting at age 17 years, 6 months. If found eligible for these

services, youth and their families in most regions of the state can choose to receive adult long-term care services through one of two programs: **Family Care** or **IRIS**.

The Family Care and IRIS programs will then work with the youth and his/her planning team (which includes DVR and school staff) to determine how he/she wants to spend his/her day, what is most important to him/her, the community resources available, the natural support options, and the formal, paid supports that the individual needs to achieve goals, increase independence, maintain optimal health, and expand employment and community involvement. The following list are some Adult Long Term Care services that can be used to support meaningful activities and community involvement.

<b>Individual Supported Employment</b>	<p>These are the supports to help someone find and maintain <i>integrated employment</i>, which includes competitive, customized, or self-employment. Integrated employment means being employed in a typical workplace with co-workers who do not have disabilities, paid directly by the business for which they work (not the employment service provider), and earning at least minimum wage.</p> <p>These services should be <i>individualized</i> and include any combination of the following: vocational/job-related discovery or assessment, person-centered employment planning, job placement, job development, meeting with prospective employers, job analysis, training and systematic instruction, job coaching, job supports, work incentive benefits counseling, training and work planning, transportation and career advancement services. Typically, DVR provides the 'up-front' services necessary to obtain employment (including assessment, work incentives benefits counseling, work experience funding, job development and initial job coaching). Once DVR services are complete, ongoing supports are transitioned to the Family Care or IRIS plan.</p>
<b>Small Group Supported Employment</b>	<p>This service provides another option for employment in the community. People are supported to work in small groups, are typically employed by the service provider, and may or may not be paid at least minimum wage. If this service option is used, it should be a stepping stone for getting an integrated job. A person can use Small Group Supported Employment services <u>and</u> Individual Supported Employment services during the week (i.e. working in an integrated job for part of the week and in a group employment arrangement for the other part of the week). This service can also support people in career exploration and other activities that can move them toward integrated employment.</p>
<b>Community-Based Pre-Vocational Services</b>	<p>This is a short-term, time limited service to prepare individuals for integrated employment. Services are provided individually or in small groups and activities take place in the community (not at the employment service provider building). Activities include job shadows, tours, informational interviews, support to attend classes at the Job Center, short-term volunteering, unpaid work experiences, and other kinds of career exploration and soft skill development in community settings. People who get part-time jobs in integrated employment can also use this service to continue volunteering and do other activities outside of their job that help sustain employment (e.g. soft skill classes, job clubs).</p>
<b>Other Types of Services that can Support Community Involvement</b>	<p>These include Daily Living Skills Training, Supportive Home Care, and community-based Day Services. These services have broad definitions that describe how they are intended to be used to support people to build skills in the community and access and connect with community resources. This could include: taking an art, cooking, or dance class at a community college, joining a ski or tennis club, volunteering at the local food pantry, and other ways of engaging in social and recreational opportunities with members of the community who share similar interests. These services can be provided individually or in small groups.</p>

## Chris's Weekly Schedule & Supports

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>AM</b>	Church  Volunteer at Church	Design Class Study	Speech Class  Fitness on campus	Design Class Study	Speech Class  Fitness on campus	Volunteer at Church	Relax at home Laundry
<b>PM</b>	Hang out with girlfriend  Housework	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Volunteer at animal shelter  Shopping
<b>Evening</b>	Study & get things ready for work	Housework  Fishing	Dinner at mom & dad's  Watch TV	Hang out with girlfriend	Housework  Watch TV	Dinner/movie with friends	Hang out with girlfriend

**Community Involvement** – Chris gets a ride to church from a fellow parishioner. After the service, a Supportive Home Care staff who he has hired using Self-Directed Support (SDS) through the adult long-term care program meets him at church to support him in his volunteer activities. This same staff supports him to volunteer at the Animal Shelter on Saturday's as well.

**Technical College Classes** – Chris's father drives him to class each morning on his way into work. After class, Chris meets with a tutor available through the technical college to study.

**Work** - Individual Supported Employment staff meets Chris at the technical college campus to take him to work. The job coach helps Chris get started at work and checks in regularly with his employer. The job coach is available more often when Chris needs to learn new work tasks. Chris gets a ride home from a co-worker or, when one is not available, takes a reduced fair taxi cab, which he pays for out of pocket and claims as an Impairment Related Work Expense (IRWE) with his Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

**Errands, Chores and Home Life** – Chris uses a combination of Supportive Home Care services and natural supports from his family to engage in housework, laundry, and shopping. He has on-call/video supports for emergencies funded by his long-term care plan.

**Fitness and Recreation** – Chris receives supports from a Community-Based Day Service agency six hours a week for fitness and recreational activities. He also belongs to an informal local fishing group that meets in the early evening and he has an active social life. Chris's family helps him arrange transportation for these activities and Chris provides funding for mileage reimbursement to these drivers through his long-term care plan.







## Community Work Experiences

Students need opportunities to directly explore and practice the types of jobs they are interested in pursuing. Experiences should be varied, based on individual career goals, continue through the summer months, and provide students opportunities to develop a range of work and life skills. Students should have a minimum of two paid experiences prior to exiting school.





# 7 Ways for Students to Gain Work Experience

High schools students with and without disabilities alike can benefit from spending time at a variety of community businesses to find out about different types of work and jobs. The first step in the career exploration process is typically to complete one or more interest inventories. Without direct exposure and experience, however, students might not understand the choices they are making. Therefore, the goals and objectives students set are not always on target to help them find meaningful work that is a good fit for their individual skills and interests. Direct exposure to community businesses can be achieved in a variety of ways.

Try using a combination of the following options to better support career development for youth:

1. **Business Tours** – Based on student interests, teachers can set up tours at local businesses for one or more students. Students prepare questions ahead of time and then gather information directly from the person(s) who conduct the tour. After the tour, teachers meet with students to talk about what they saw, what they liked, and what job tasks they noticed being done. Business tours provide an excellent opportunity for students to see a range of work environments to help them consider what factors in a workplace will be important to them.



Business Tour at Vita Plus in Madison, WI

2. **Informational Interviews** – When a student has an expressed interest in working at a particular business or specific type of job, a teacher supports the student to schedule an interview with people who work in the place or field of interest. The student should prepare a set of questions to ask based on what she/he wants to know about that workplace and job duties.
3. **Job Shadows** – Once a student has more specific ideas about a job(s) she/he would like to try, that can be a good time for teachers to work with the student to identify possible places to go and watch jobs being done. A student should make a list of things they want to find out during a job shadow to make the most of the experience. Job shadows may take place where students toured and/or conducted informational interviews.
4. **Volunteer Work** – Volunteering can be a great way to gain direct work experience and build a resume. Some high schools offer service learning credit for the hours students spend volunteering. It is important that teachers follow labor laws when setting up and supporting volunteer opportunities. ***Students should not be volunteering their time on an ongoing basis to complete work that others in the same business or organization are paid to do.***

5. **Internships** – Businesses offer internships to help students learn about the work they do and get direct experience. Internships are time-limited and can range from a few weeks to a few months. High school students can seek internship opportunities with assistance from teachers and career counselors. In many areas, there are school-business partnerships called Partners in Education (PIE) through which internships are made available to students. School credit is sometimes available.
6. **Paid Temporary Work Experiences** – Students with disabilities may have the chance to work at a job for pay before the business officially hires them. This can be through an arrangement with the school district to pay the wages for a certain period of time or when a student applies and is found eligible for services through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). Students with disabilities and their families typically apply for DVR services when they decide it is time to start looking for a paid job; however, DVR recommends that students apply **at least two years prior to graduation**. Once a student begins working with a DVR counselor, they will usually choose an employment or vocational support agency. Someone from that agency will assist the student, in conjunction with teacher and school staff, to look for a job. DVR can pay wages for a temporary work.
7. **Jobs** – Many high school students work part-time in the evenings, on weekends, and over the summer to make money, get work experience, and learn the soft skills needed for successful employment. Students and their families can apply for services through DVR to help with looking for a paid job and getting assistance with job training. DVR might consider using an option called Youth on the Job Training (YOJT) when an employer wants to hire a student with a disability, but an extended period of training might be needed. With YOJT, DVR reimburses an employer for the wages paid to a student while they are completing their job training and then the employer becomes fully responsible for the wages and benefits.

Paid employment for youth with disabilities while still in high school is the number one predictor of successful employment outcomes as an adult.



# Making the Most of Summer: 3 Ways Let's Get to Work Pilot Schools Expanded Summer Employment Opportunities

For many high school students, summer is not only about being off from school but time to work and earn money for spending, toward a car, or maybe saving for college. High school is also a time for first “real” jobs, not only for the purpose of making money, but to learn soft skills that employers are seeking such as responsibility, work ethic, following directions, showing up on time, attending to personal appearance, and being a team player. So, it stands to reason that youth with disabilities need to be afforded the same opportunities to gain these skills – and earn money – as their peers without disabilities through summer work experiences.

1) **Continued School Support** – Extended School Year (ESY) funding can be used for students at paid jobs over the summer months to maintain job coaching and personal assistance deemed necessary for employment and other skill levels to remain constant. Summer School classes can be geared toward the attainment of employment skills and designed to match the structure of summer programming available. Here are some examples from the Let's Get to Work Pilot Schools.

- One school held a three-week summer program called “World of Work” through which students toured local businesses and spent time engaged in activities related to their employment goals. Students and teachers alike expanded employer connections during that time. Most recently, this school offered participating students work experiences with several local employers and paid the students stipends through district funds.
- Another school created a two-week summer school session focused on employment, which included instruction on using public transportation, going on business tours, and talking with local employers about job qualifications. Students practiced asking employers if they were hiring and picking up applications and learned how to answer common interview questions.
- Another school created a three-day “Employment Academy” for students to engage in job shadows and an immersion into employment planning, giving everyone a jump start for the fall.
- Schools also developed summer options by collaborating with nearby districts to pool resources for summer offerings. At one pilot site, three districts collaborated to provide a summer school class that focused on continuing life skill development (e.g. shopping, cooking, laundry, etc.).

## *Begin planning for summer early.*

At age 14, talk with students and families about preparing for future summer work. Once a student is interested in working, begin planning several months before summer as it might take that long to find a job.

2) **Collaboration with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)** – When students with disabilities have established services from DVR, including an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), a variety of services can be used over the summer months. Below are some examples from Let's Get to Work Pilot Schools.

- The transition coordinators or teachers arranged work experiences or part-time summer jobs (even if the work is just seasonal). Once the employment situation was lined-up, DVR provided funding to a vocational services agency to provide job coaching and check-in support for the students at work.

- For students still exploring employment through work experiences, the DVR counselor worked with an employment support agency or individual job developer to set up one or more short-term, paid experiences for the student during the summer months.
- A student who had a paid job during the school year and required assistance on the job was supported by DVR funded services (job coaching and transportation) over the summer months because school supports were not available. Services were planned well ahead of time with the DVR counselor.

#### ***Collaborate with Transition***

***Partners well in advance.*** DVR and service providers can provide the resources for students to have work experiences and paid jobs over the summer. However, determining eligibility and setting up services typically takes time just like finding a job. So plan ahead!

- Schools connected students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to youth employment programs funded through the Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act (WIOA), such as the Job, Education, and Training (JET) Program. More information about such programs can be obtained from the student's DVR Counselor or your local job center.

### **3) Family Support** – Families can be critical partners in finding and supporting summer jobs and volunteer experiences. Many youth with and without disabilities find their first jobs through personal connections. Here are some examples of how Let's Get to Work Pilot Schools partnered with families for employment experiences.

- One pilot student was supported by his family to volunteer at community baseball games and work at festivals over the summer months. These experiences enabled him to develop job skills and have a valued social role in his community.
- Several students worked for family members over the summer by babysitting for younger siblings or cousins, mowing lawns, working at an uncle's masonry business, and helping a family member's delivery business.
- Families provided transportation for work and volunteer experiences over the summer. A young man walked to work at his permanent paid position with a bank during the school year (the bank was a few blocks from the school). His family provided transportation over the summer months.

***Involve Families.*** Remember that most young people find their first jobs or volunteer experiences through their family connections. Engage families in discussions about who they know and how they can support summer experiences – and why these are just as important for youth with disabilities.



# Getting to Work: Transportation Options for Students with Disabilities

As you plan for ongoing paid employment with students, it is essential that you do so with the “end in mind” and consider how students will get to and from work.

Before seeking employment, the student and his/her employment planning team should discuss the full range of options and map out the areas and times transportation is available. This is part of finding a good job match in a location that will work and important information to have when negotiating terms of employment, including where the student will conduct his/her job search and hours available for work. With each student consider the following questions:

- ⊙ **What** are the transportation options?
- ⊙ **Where** is transportation available?
- ⊙ **When** is transportation available?
- ⊙ **How much** does it cost?
- ⊙ Is it **flexible**? Is it **reliable**?
- ⊙ **Does** the student need travel training?
- ⊙ Is it **sustainable** over the long term?



## Consider These Possible Transportation Options:

- ⊙ **Find a job within walking or biking distance** - support can be provided to help students learn how to safely navigate within their community.
- ⊙ **Ride public transit** - mobility trainers can help students learn how to ride the bus safely.
- ⊙ **Set up a Ride Share** - family members, friends, other students, or co-workers might be willing to provide rides to or from work if they are traveling in the same direction. Travel stipends could be provided through private pay or possibly through long term care funding (Children’s Long Term Support, Family Care, or IRIS). The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has a ride-share service that matches people who need a ride to people who will give rides. <http://www.dot.state.wi.us/travel/commuter/index.htm>.
- ⊙ **Take a reduced-fare taxi** - some communities offer reduced fare rides for people with disabilities.
- ⊙ **Get a driver’s license** - with additional support and accommodations for driver’s education and testing, learning to drive might be a viable option.
- ⊙ **Specialized transportation** - this could be funded by long term care if the student is enrolled in Children’s Long Term Support, Family Care or IRIS. Be sure to talk with the long-term care representative about transportation options.

- ⦿ **Getting a ride from the job coach** - if the student is supported by a supported employment agency at work, the job coach might be able to provide transportation.
- ⦿ **Learn about the other Transportation Assistance Programs in your area** - Independent Living Centers, Community Action Programs, and Aging and Disability Resource Centers are good places to contact to ask about local transportation assistance programs.

## Transportation Funding Options:

- ⦿ If the job is during the school day, districts can often include transportation to and from jobs in transition services through school vehicles, staff vehicles, or contracted providers.
- ⦿ If the job is after school, on the weekend or during the summer: the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) could be an option to provide limited-term funding for transportation when the student initially begins work. The transportation cost would need to be transitioned to another source after a certain number of weeks or months as determined by the DVR counselor and employment planning team.
- ⦿ Once DVR is done covering the costs of transportation to and from work, the costs could be paid for out of pocket (after all, the student will be earning money and might be able to afford the transportation), or long-term care (Children's Long-Term Support, Family Care or IRIS) could be used to cover the transportation costs.
- ⦿ Using a Work Incentive called Impairment Related Work Expense (IRWE) may be an option (pronounced "er-wee" for short). If the student is unable to drive due to an impairment and incurs out-of-pocket costs to get to and from work for specialized transportation, operating a modified vehicle, or for paying a driver these costs might be considered an IRWE by the Social Security Administration. To learn more, contact a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist by talking to the DVR counselor or calling the local Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) program: [www.eri-wi.org/programs/wipa](http://www.eri-wi.org/programs/wipa).
- ⦿ Saving money in a Plan to Achieve Self Support (PASS) to purchase a vehicle to get to and from work could also be an option. PASS is a Work Incentive through the Social Security Administration. To learn more about PASS, talk to a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist or visit: [www.passplan.org](http://www.passplan.org).



# 6 Steps for Providing Employment Supports

The process of providing assistance to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in seeking employment and succeeding at a job can be outlined in 6 steps: Assessment, Planning, Job Search, Job Training, Fading Support, and Ongoing Support.

- 1) **ASSESSMENT of Skills, Interests, and Preferences in Natural Settings through an Individualized, Strength-based Process such as Discovery** – The best way to help someone figure out what types of jobs they might like and be good at is to spend time with them in a variety of settings, and particularly places where they already spend blocks of time, such as their home. Talking with family members and others who know the person well to gather detailed information about activities they enjoy and places they like to be is important too. Through this type of assessment process, a list of skills, preferences, and employment themes can be created.
- 2) **PLANNING for an Employment Goal with Supports Needed based on Assessment Outcome** - From the list of skills, preferences and employment themes, a goal can be set and a plan put into place to accomplish it. Through a team process, people who know an individual well can assist them to determine what tasks and activities they enjoy, what tasks and activities they are good at, the places where they like to spend time, and the types of jobs that might bring the three sets of information together. Through this type of planning process, vocational themes can be identified and an employment goal created.
- 3) **JOB SEARCH through Connections at Community Businesses that have Job Opportunities Aligned with Assessment** – Once an employment goal has been established, the person seeking employment and their team can consider the variety of community connections they have that can be used to reach out to prospective employers. Typically, when a team thinks about the number of people they know collectively, multiple links to employers within the preferred vocational theme(s) exist. Those links can then be used to begin talking with prospective employers about employment possibilities.
- 4) **JOB TRAINING in Conjunction with the Employer and Business Processes** – After a job offer has been made, the new employee often needs assistance to learn to complete assigned job duties. Two critical elements of the job training process are having accurate information about the job description of the person being trained and working directly with the employer to provide the same information given to other new employees as well as to understand precisely how the employer expects the job duties to be completed. Teaching strategies that include breaking tasks down into smaller parts and creative ways to adapt materials and maximize learning should be used.





- 5) **FADING and Planning for Greater Independence** – Over time, the goal is always to foster the greatest possible independence at work. Using an individualized planning and job search process, a job seeker is able to identify good matches in employment. With effective teaching strategies, a new employee can learn to complete many parts of the job with little or no direct support. The last step toward fostering optimum independence is through the development of natural supports in the workplace. By working hard to learn the job and making an effort to be a good team member on the job, individuals with disabilities build relationships with their employer and co-worker that contribute to maximum independence and success. Employment support providers can support the development of such relationships by taking intentional steps to help the employee do their job well, fit into and become a part of the work culture, get to know co-workers, and, above all, not become overly reliant on paid services at work.



David with his supervisor and co-worker who now provide natural supports.

6) **ONGOING SUPPORT** –

The last phase of employment supports can be long-term, or for as long as the person stays at the same job. For most people, this step comes six months to a year after employment was obtained, but this timeline varies based on individual learning styles and support needs. Ongoing support can be several hours of direct service per week, daily or weekly face-to-face check-ins at work, monthly contact in person or by phone, and different levels of support in between. Teams, including the employee and the employer, are usually involved in deciding what is needed for ongoing support. At this point, employment supports are in place to insure ongoing success, and the expectation is that help will be provided if issues arise. These can be challenges that need to be addressed, such as a refresher training on one or more parts of the job, or it can be because the employer is adding hours, job duties, and/or responsibilities and the employee needs additional assistance to grow in their employment situation.





# Tips & Steps for Job Coaching Students with Disabilities

Job coaching is often needed when a youth with a disability begins a new job. The degree and amount depends on the individual student and the job. There are several steps that can be taken to optimize the effectiveness of job coaching and foster increased independence. Successful job coaching actually begins before a student's first day on the job.

Remember, the ultimate goal of job coaching is independence. A new job situation should be set up for success. Job coaches should not be promised on a full-time or permanent basis to employers. Think of job coaches as teachers and employment consultants; they are there to facilitate learning and foster on-the-job problem-solving.

## Step 1: Exchange information with the employer before the first day of work.

### Information to get from the employer:

- Written job description and work schedule
- New employee handbook/policies and procedures
- Training protocol description
- Decision about job coach attendance at training (is it ok with the employer?)
- Date(s) and times to report for training and who to see upon arrival
- Name(s) and contact information for supervisor
- A list of items the student/employee should bring on the first day (documentation, identification, name tag, uniform)

*\*Once obtained from the employer, this set of information should be provided to the student, her/his family, and those who will be involved in job coaching.*

### Information to provide to the employer:

- Relevant information about learning and communication styles of the student
- Information about job coaching, including the intention to teach, coach, and fade
- Name(s) and contact information for people anticipated to be coaching at the business
- A written description of the job coaches' roles and responsibilities
- Request for one or more job coaches to observe and conduct a job site analysis
- A formal request for one or more job coaches to participate in training with employee
- Time and opportunity to ask questions, share concerns, and set boundaries for coaches

## Step 2: With the employer's permission, conduct analyses to lay the groundwork for success before the first day of work (analyses might include gathering/exchanging some of the information listed above or verifying it)

### The three types of analysis that should be completed before the student begins the job:

<b>Worksite Analysis</b>	Used to write-up a "lay of the land" description of the workplace and identify potential barriers to success on the job (e.g. a corner that might be tight for a wheelchair, a soda machine in a break room that could prove a distraction, an area of the workplace that is very noisy).
<b>Job Analysis</b>	Used to create the list of required tasks, materials needed, the order the employer wants tasks completed, and then start development of steps for each of the discrete tasks (preliminary task analysis) to be used for systematic instruction. *Job and Work Site Analyses can be combined.
<b>Task Analysis</b>	Used to list <u>all</u> steps required for each job duty. This can be accomplished by using specific task analysis forms, checklists, a job duty notebook, or electronic software such as used with an iPad or iPod Touch.

### Important tips for conducting these analyses:

- During **Worksite and Job Analyses**, coaches can start to consider potential points within the work routine where simple adaptations might be useful (e.g. pictures of work materials or stages of work completion, a basket or shelf to hold a particular set of materials, color coded signs or bins for different types of work materials). Any ideas for making work tasks easier should be discussed with both the employee and the employer for approval before implementation.
- The key to effective **Task Analysis** is to start off with enough detail so the employee learns each small part of the job task correctly and in the right order. Steps are then combined, or collapsed as the employee learns them. For example, the initial task analysis for folding a towel might include 15 steps, but go down to 5 as independence is achieved.

Examples of forms that can be used or adapted to conduct work site, job, and task analysis, as well as examples of adaptations, can be found at [Link to: LGTW Implementation Guide/Effective Community Work Experiences].

### Step 3: Implement systematic instruction to teach multiple job tasks.

Through the new employee training, and then with job coach assistance, the steps of each job task are modeled for the new employee. Using the task analysis information created for each part of the job, the coach determines the lowest level of prompting/support needed by the employee for each step. Documenting the level of support provided to complete each step allows the job coach to avoid over-supporting and effectively reduce support in increments toward the goal of independence.

### Step 4: Support natural workplace communication.

Job coaches can encourage the employee to ask questions and interact directly with his/her supervisor and co-workers rather than going through them. Job coaches can also model effective ways for co-workers to speak and communicate directly to the employee. The stronger the employee's relationships are at work, the better the chances of the job situation working out in the long run.

### Step 5: Step back from direct teaching and coaching.

As the student/employee learns the job tasks and develops working relationships on the job, coaches spend less time directly in the environment, while remaining available for consultation and problem-solving.

## Additional Resources

**The Roles of a Job Coach** – Virginia Commonwealth University  
Region III CRP-RCEP Fact Sheet

**Job Coaching in the Workplace** – [www.askjan.com](http://www.askjan.com)

**Job Coaching Strategies** – Attainment Company



# Discovery Notes

Designed for capturing information during a community activity, job shadow, or work experience

Student:

Observer:

Date:

Describe the activity that was observed:

How long did the student participate in the activity?

Describe the environment:

Describe anything that seemed to be of particular interest to the student:

<u>Specific</u> tasks performed:	He/she does this:		
	Independently	With Verbal or Gestural Prompt	With direct assistance
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Overall, what seemed to work well and not so well for the student during this activity?

Works	Doesn't Work

If the student has been observed doing this same activity/job before, describe any notable changes during this observation:



# Career Exploration Activities Tracking Form

Designed for logging the types and number of community career exploration activities

Student Name:

School Year:

Date & Purpose of Visit (tour, informational interview, job shadow)	Business or Organization Name, Address, Contact	Type of Business or Organization	Characteristics of the Environment	Student Reactions to the visit	Person Completing this form





# Student Work Experience Record

Designed for compiling information about the outcomes of a work experience

Student name:

Person Completing this Form:

Work experience location:

Work experience dates:

Name and contact information of employer/supervisor:

Type (Volunteer, Internship, Unpaid Work Experience, Paid Work Experience, and Employment):

If paid, list hourly rate of pay:

Was the student paid by DVR or directly by the employer?

Transportation arrangements - How did the student get to and from the work experience?

## Work experience weekly schedule:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursdays	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

Total hours per week:

Was the experience paid or unpaid?

Did the supervisor complete a work evaluation feedback form for the student? Attach or describe the feedback here.

Who supported the student on the job and for how long?

Were the supports paid, unpaid or natural supports?

Describe the work environment in detail:

Describe the workplace culture in detail:

List the Work Tasks below.

In the column to the right, indicate the student's level of performance by the end of the work experience. If task analysis and systematic instruction were used, attach more detailed information.

[illegible]



Describe the strengths the student demonstrated during the work experience:

Describe aspects of the job that were challenging for the student:

Describe the kinds of training, workplace supports and job coaching techniques that worked best:

Describe any adaptations, modifications, and/or assistive technology implemented to help the student become more independent on the job:

Describe any tasks or work environment aspects to avoid in the future:

### Questions for the student and family:

What did the student like about the work experience?

What parts of the job does the student feel she/he did well?

Were there aspects of the job she/he did not enjoy?

What does the student feel he/she learned from the work experience?

What does the student want to improve as a result of the work experience?

Does the student want to pursue another job like this? Why or why not?

**After reviewing the outcomes of this work experience, next steps toward employment will be:**





# Frequently Asked Questions about Student Work Experiences

High School Students can begin to seek employment at age 14 in Wisconsin. When it comes to employment for high school students with disabilities, many businesses, families, and school staff have questions about providing these opportunities, including work experiences and internships. These questions might be about safety, liability, and legal considerations. There are protections to ensure that everyone involved is covered.

## The Frequently Asked Questions Addressed in this Document:

- What are “community employment experiences” for students with disabilities?
- Who pays the student’s wages during a paid community employment experience?
- How much students should be paid?
- Do parents and/or guardians need to give permission for their child to be involved in community employment experiences?
- What about liability? Who is responsible if something happens?
- If the student is doing work tasks at the jobsite, how do we know if the community employment experience should be paid or unpaid?
- Should we have a written agreement in place?
- How many hours can a student engage in a community employment experience?

## What are “community employment experiences” for students with disabilities?

Community employment experiences, including internships, are opportunities involving local businesses that help youth with and without disabilities learn about jobs and explore career options so they can begin to determine their goals after high school. Community employment experiences can be paid or unpaid. Paid experiences are preferable and should be considered first, however, unpaid experiences can also provide valuable community job training and can be a way for students to gain exposure in an area of strong interest to them.

Unpaid Community Employment Experiences	Paid Community Employment Experiences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ informational interviews</li><li>✓ job shadows</li><li>✓ company tours</li><li>✓ volunteer service</li><li>✓ student work-skill activities (including assisting with a school-based entrepreneurial venture or completing tasks within the school district)</li><li>✓ unpaid work experiences</li><li>✓ service learning programs</li><li>✓ unpaid internships</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ part-time employment (while in school or over the summer – this can be time-limited or ongoing)</li><li>✓ employment connected with DVR Youth Transition On-the-Job Training</li><li>✓ earning income through a self-employment venture</li><li>✓ Employability Skills Certificate Program</li><li>✓ WI Cooperative Education Skill Standards Certificate Program</li><li>✓ WI Youth Apprentice Program</li><li>✓ paid internships</li></ul>

## Who pays the student's wages during a paid community employment experience?

For part-time or summer employment, the business typically hires and pays the student directly. There are resources available to assist in providing jobs to students with disabilities. In some cases, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) may reimburse the business for training wages paid to the student for an agreed upon time period, this is known as DVR Youth On-the-Job Training. In a DVR Youth On-the-Job training arrangement, the student is hired by the business, the business pays the student's wages, and DVR provides reimbursement to the business for at least 50% of the student's wages for up to 500 hours. The details of a DVR Youth On-the-Job Training opportunity would need to be agreed upon with DVR before the student begins working. After the training agreement has ended the student is considered a permanent employee. If the student requires assistance to maintain an acceptable level of performance, supports may stay in place for that student beyond the agreement period.

For Employability Skills Certificate Program, WI Cooperative Education Skill Standards Certificate Program, and WI Youth Apprenticeship Program, students are directly hired and compensated by the business.

## How much should students be paid?

Students should be paid the prevailing and commensurate wage but at least the minimum wage. Student may also be considered "Opportunity Employees." Opportunity Employees are not yet 20 years old and have been in employment status with a particular business for *90 or fewer consecutive calendar days* from the date of initial employment. A link to more information about Wisconsin's Minimum Wage Rates, including the Opportunity Employee Wage, can be found in the resources section of this document.

Use of the DVR Youth On-the-Job Training requires payment of the prevailing wage, which may be more than the minimum wage. Once the training agreement period has ended the prevailing wages will continue to be paid by the business.

## Do parents and/or guardians need to give permission for their child to be involved in community employment experiences?

It is best practice for school staff to involve parents and/or guardian(s) in planning community employment experiences. Just like other school or program field trips and activities, schools may ask parent(s) and/or guardian(s) to sign permission slips or consent forms to engage in community employment experiences if the student is under 18 or if the student has a legal guardian. If a student is seeking a paying job, a parent or guardian will need to assist in the completion of a Wisconsin work permit. If the student is over 18 and does not have a legal guardian, the student can provide consent. However, if the student wishes, schools should involve parents or other allies in planning community employment experiences with the student.

## What about liability? Who is responsible if something happens?

Every student needs to be covered by liability insurance while doing community employment experiences.

For paid community employment experiences, the business provides the liability coverage just as they would for any employee they hire, *even when DVR is providing reimbursement (even if temporarily) to the business for some or all of the student's wages*. The student's school may also have additional community employment experience (or 'Work-Based Learning') liability coverage that covers all their students (regardless of disability). Schools can provide businesses with a copy of this coverage. In case of injury at the workplace, students in paid community employment experiences would be covered by the business's workers' compensation insurance.

For unpaid community employment experiences, the school (or youth program if one is involved) provides the liability coverage, similar to other school activities such as field trips. Most schools have liability coverage that includes a community employment experience (or 'Work-Based Learning') endorsement. School staff should also verify with parents/guardians that the students involved in community employment experiences have health insurance coverage through a private plan or Medicaid program.

## If the student is doing work tasks at the jobsite, how do we know if the community employment experience should be paid or unpaid?

Generally speaking, if the community employment experience is time-limited (e.g. one week, one month, or a specified number of hours) as determined by the IEP team and/or the business in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act *and* is primarily for the benefit of training the student on *new skills* (not for the direct benefit of the business), the business is not required to pay the student wages. If the opportunity is to be unpaid, then the expressed purpose of the experience is for the student to gain job skills. Therefore, the benefits to the student should be *clearly defined* in an unpaid work experience.

If the student can perform the job tasks independently and the business begins to derive "productive work" from the student (meaning that the business is benefiting from the tasks or assignments being done by the student), schools have an obligation to revisit the working relationship with the business and student. To continue any community employment experiences with this same business, the student must be provided with different responsibilities and tasks to learn.

According to the Fair Labor Standards Act, ALL FOUR of these criteria must be in place for a student to work in an unpaid arrangement with a business:

1. The student is directly trained and continually under the supervision of school staff;
2. No employees at the business have been displaced by the student - i.e. the business cannot lay off or reduce the hours of other employees or chose not to hire if they otherwise would due to the presence of the student;
3. The student is not entitled to a job at the completion of the experience. However, businesses can

- offer employment to students who complete the training; and
4. The business, student, and parent or guardian all enter the arrangement with the understanding that the student is not entitled to wages or other compensation for the time spent in the experience.

If all of these four criteria are not met, the business *must* provide wages to the student as an employee.

### Should we have a written agreement in place?

Yes, it is best to have a written agreement in place before starting the community employment experience. Additionally, paid work experiences require Work Permits or Youth Apprenticeship agreements. School staff takes the lead on developing this agreement with input from the business. The agreement should provide specifics on commitments and responsibilities of the business, the student, the school, and the parent/guardian, and is signed by those involved. The DVR Youth Transition On-the-Job Training opportunity has an established agreement form which will be provided by the DVR Counselor. Community Employment Experience Agreements examples can be found in the Resources section of this document.

### How many hours can a student engage in a community employment experience?

Job Shadows, Company Tours, Informational Interviewing, Service Learning and Volunteerism	There is no limit to the number of hours that a student can be engaged in these opportunities. Involvement should be determined based on preferences of the student/family and the number and types of opportunities that can be developed.
Unpaid Internships, Student Work-Like Activities and Unpaid Work Experiences	Per the Fair Labor Standards Act: Vocational explorations - 5 hours per job experienced Vocational assessment - 90 hours per job experienced Vocational training - 120 hours per job experienced  <i>Best practices suggest unpaid employment experiences should be less than 40 hours total and internships should be limited to 10 hours or fewer per week.</i>
Paid Employment	State child labor laws prohibit work during times that minors are required to be in school, except for students participating in work experience and career exploration programs approved for credit.  State and federal laws do not limit the hours that minors, age 16 or over, may work.  14 & 15 year olds can work up to 8 hrs/day on non-school days and 3 hrs/day on school days.  For more info: <b>WI Department Workforce Development on Child Labor Laws</b>

## Additional Resources

**School-to-Work Experiences & Wage and Hour Fact Sheets** – US Department of Labor

**Wisconsin Work-Based Learning Guide** – WI Department of Public Instruction

**Child Labor Laws & Minimum Wage Rates** – Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development information on

**Community Employment Experience Agreements Examples** – NCWD Youth

## Glossary

**DVR Youth On-The-Job Training** – A direct hire of a student by a business with DVR providing the business reimbursement for at least 50% of the salary and fringe benefits paid by DVR for up to 500 hours. The business provides the student with on-the-job orientation and training. DVR is currently piloting a youth project in response to the Let's Get to Work grant project.

**Entrepreneurial Venture** – a school or community -based enterprise involving students with and without disabilities to sell products or services to the school community and/or broader community. Examples include a school store, coffee cart, hand-made greeting cards, and graphic/printing services.

**Informational Interview** – A student meets with a business to ask structured questions about the business and/or career field.

**Internship** - a time-limited, structured experience with an business during which a student completes a set of planned activities, a project, or set of learning objectives designed to give the student an understanding of a particular business or career field. Internships can be paid or unpaid opportunities.

**Job Coaching** – additional assistance, above and beyond the training and supervision typically provided by an business to an employee, for people with disabilities to learn how to perform job tasks to the business's specifications and learn the soft skills necessary to fully integrate into the workplace.

**Job Shadow** - A student follows an employee at a workplace for one or more days to learn about a particular job or career field.

**Student Work-like Activities** – Supervised, unpaid work activities in school for one hour or less per day primarily for an educational purpose that benefits the student. Examples include helping in the cafeteria, collecting recycling, cleaning a classroom, or helping in the school office or library.

**Service Learning** - “a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.” ([National Service Learning Clearinghouse](#))

**Self-Employment** - is working for one's self instead of a business. Self-employed people draw income from a trade or business they operate.

**Unpaid Work Experience** – a time limited opportunity for a student to learn new work related responsibilities and skills at a workplace. If used for vocational training purposes any one unpaid work experience with a business cannot exceed 120 hours/year. During an unpaid work experience, the student must be learning new skills and the business must not be receiving substantial benefit from the tasks the student is performing.

**Volunteerism** – Volunteerism is a community services that is performed for non-profit organizations in duties *clearly and often* performed by other volunteers. Volunteerism is not the same as unpaid work experiences or internships. Students may not volunteer for a for-profit business. Volunteering can be used to build skills and get connected to community.





# Checklist for Arranging Community Work Experiences

This checklist can serve as a guide for educators when setting up four distinct types of community work experiences: 1) volunteer, 2) temporary unpaid work, 3) temporary paid work, and 4) permanent paid work. This tool was designed to accompany two other Let's Get to Work informational documents: the FAQ about Student Work Experiences and the companion FAQ for Employers. Both are available in the Let's Get to Work Quick Guide at [www.letsgettoworkwi.org](http://www.letsgettoworkwi.org).

## Step 1: Meet as a Team & Obtain Necessary Permissions

- ☐ Meet with the student and her/his family to identify preferred types of experiences and locations where they already have established connections.
- ☐ Let the student and family know that documents including: a social security card, birth certificate, vaccination records, and school or state ID will likely be needed.
- ☐ Assist with referral to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) if needed and invite the DVR counselor to participate in a discussion about planning work experiences and potential use of DVR-funded services during the process.
- ☐ If the student has already been deemed eligible for DVR services, meet as a team to talk about the choice of vocational support providers and division of labor between school staff and the DVR-funded services (e.g. contacts to prospective employers, transportation, support at the experience(s), troubleshooting if issues arise).
- ☐ If the student has already chosen a vocational service provider, a representative from that agency will also be involved in meetings/discussions.
- ☐ Get permission forms signed (if needed by your high school/district) for the student to engage in community employment experiences if she/he is under legal guardianship.
- ☐ Make arrangements to get a work permit if the student is under age of 18.

## Step 2: Check Compliance with Labor Laws

### **For volunteer experiences:**

- ☐ The experience must be for an organization with non-profit status (educational, charitable, religious, community service).
- ☐ School staff must supervise the student(s) at all times while volunteering.
- ☐ Student(s) volunteering cannot displace one or more paid employees.
- ☐ If student(s) is under 18 and/or has guardianship in place, consent must be obtained.
- ☐ If student(s) is under 18, she/he cannot volunteer in an area or use equipment prohibited by child labor laws.

**For temporary unpaid work, all 4 of the following criteria must be met:**

- ☐ Student is directly trained and continually under supervision of school staff.
- ☐ No employee(s) at the business are displaced by the student.
- ☐ Student is not entitled to the job at the completion of the experience (but the business can offer employment to student).
- ☐ All parties involved understand the student is not entitled to wages or other compensation for the time spent in the experience.

**For temporary paid work, determine how the student will be paid:**

- ☐ The employer hires the student directly for seasonal work or a discrete set of tasks and pays wages to the student.
- Or-**
- ☐ The employer offers the work opportunity but does not hire the student directly. DVR pays the student's Temporary Work Experience wages through a third party.

**For permanent paid employment, determine if On-the-Job Training (OJT) will be used:**

- ☐ With the DVR Youth On-the-Job Training (YOJT) program\*, the employer hires the student directly, pays wages to the student and DVR uses YOJT funds to reimburse the employer for up to 500 hours of the student's wages during the initial job training period.
- Or-**
- ☐ With the "regular" DVR On-the-Job Training (OJT) program\*, the employer hires the student directly, pays wages to the student and DVR uses the regular OJT funds to reimburse employer 50% of the student's wages for 12 weeks during the initial job training period.

\*Working directly with DVR, the employer chooses which OJT to use unless the student will exit school services during the use of OJT, then the regular OJT must be utilized.

**For ALL paid experiences:**

- ☐ Ensure the wage paid to the student is a prevailing wage (at least minimum wage). This is also a requirement for DVR Youth OJT and regular OJT.
- ☐ A student must be under 20 years of age to legally be paid an Opportunity Wage (considered a training wage and less than the current minimum wage). The student can work no more than 89 days for the employer at the Opportunity Wage (must switch to prevailing/at least minimum wage thereafter).

### **Step 3: Confirm the Arrangement in Writing**

- ☐ Establish a written agreement with the employer that spells out the commitments, responsibility, and liability.
- ☐ Get all parties involved (employer, student, parents/guardian, school staff) to review and sign the agreement.



# Recommended Employment Resources & Trainings for Teachers

When supporting students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) to reach their integrated employment goals, you might find you need to develop new knowledge and skills. This fact sheet can help you understand the kinds of information available and strategies you can use to improve your skills to support to pursue integrated employment.

## Key Areas and Topics to Learn About

<b>Working with Employers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Benefits of Integrated Employment</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Networking and Connecting Strategies</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Negotiating with Employers</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Employer Hiring Incentives</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Fair Labor Standards and related laws</li></ul>	<b>Transition Partners and Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Division of Vocational Rehabilitation</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Employment Support Agencies</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Long-Term Care Programs</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> SSA Work Incentives</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Job Center Services</li></ul>
<b>Individualized Assessment &amp; Planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Self-Directed Employment Planning Methods</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Vocational Assessment Methods, including Discovery</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Job Search Tools and Techniques</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Career Exploration Strategies</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Job Development and Customized Employment Strategies</li></ul>	<b>Providing On The Job Supports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Disability Disclosure and Requesting Accommodations</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Workplace Analysis</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Job Coaching, including Task Analysis and Systematic Instruction</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Assistive Technology in the Workplace</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Facilitating Natural Supports</li></ul>

## Recommended Ways to Learn about Community Partners

- ⦿ Become familiar with the Transition Action Guide and the Technical Assistance Guide for Adults Seeking Integrated Employment. These can found on the [WI Division of Vocational Rehabilitation \(DVR\)](#) website.
- ⦿ Participate on your local area [Transition Action Council \(TAC\)/County Community on Transition \(CCoT\)](#).
- ⦿ Tour your local [Job Center](#) and [Aging and Disability Resource Center](#) with students.
- ⦿ Arrange meetings with or request presentations from your local Division of Vocational Rehabilitation office, Aging and Disability Resource Center, Employment Service Provider, Work Incentive Benefits Specialist, and a Family Care or IRIS representative.
- ⦿ Host a Transition Night at your school or in your district. Visit the [Let's Get to Work](#) website for an information sheet on how to Host a Transition Night at your school.
- ⦿ Arrange job shadows, tours, and informational interviews with employers.

## Recommended Trainings and Conferences

In-person trainings on integrated employment topics are organized by the Transition Improvement Grant (TIG) Coordinators, CESA's (Cooperative Education Service Agencies), Transition Action Councils (TACS)/County Communities on Transition (CCoTs), and Wisconsin APSE. Many of these event announcements are disseminated through listserves and email or posted on <http://witig.org/> and [employmentnetworkwi.org](http://employmentnetworkwi.org).

Several conferences featuring information about best practices in transition and integrated employment are also offered throughout the year. Breakout sessions at conferences generally only allow an introduction to a topic area (unless there is a specific pre-conference training or professional track). However, conferences do provide the opportunity to get new ideas and resources as well as network with other professionals.

- ⦿ Statewide Transition Conference (Feb) <https://www.edevents.org/>
- ⦿ Youth Transition Conference (Mar) <https://www.facebook.com/YouthTransition>
- ⦿ WI Employment First Conference (Apr) <http://www.wiemploymentfirst.com/>
- ⦿ Summer Inclusion Institute (Jul) <http://www.beloinandbrandl.com/>
- ⦿ WI APSE Conference (Oct) <http://www.wiapse.org/>
- ⦿ Wisconsin Transition Academy (Oct) <http://www.witig.org/transition-academy/>
- ⦿ Statewide Self-Determination Conference (Nov) <http://www.wi-bpdd.org>

## Recommended On-Line Learning Sources

There are so many resources on the internet it is hard to sift through them all to find the best options. In addition to the [DPI Transition webpage](#) and [WITIG.org](http://WITIG.org) website, the websites listed below should be your “go to” websites for information, tools, and webinars. Spending about 15 minutes each week exploring a website from this list is one way to learn without a large time commitment.

[Center on Transition to Employment](#)

[Let's Get to Work](#)

[Rural Institute Transition & Employment](#)

[Griffin-Hammis Associates](#)

[Marc Gold & Associates](#)

[TransCen Inc.](#)

[Institute for Community Inclusion](#)

[National APSE](#)

[US Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy](#)

[Job Accommodation Network](#)

[National Collaborative on Workforce & Disability for Youth](#)

[VCU Work Support](#)

[The LEAD Center](#)

[Paths to Employment Resource Center](#)



# Effective Job Development Strategies

Special Educators and Transition Coordinators play a vital role in connecting students with intellectual and developmental disabilities to employers for career exploration, work experiences, and permanent jobs. The concept of 'job development' can seem daunting. Here are some effective strategies and resources you can use with students to make the most of your time and effort.

## Reflect on your own employment journey.

What led you to your first job opportunities? Most likely you pursued experiences based on your interests and who you (or your family) knew. You took on new responsibilities, took some risks, and tried new things. Through these experiences you gathered information to make choices about your future. In other words, you developed your self-determination skills. Similarly, students with disabilities develop their path to employment through exposure and a wide-variety of experiences in their communities. As you create plans with your students each year, keep this in mind.

## Invite & involve parents.

Employment exploration and skill development doesn't just happen at school - youth acquire skills at home and through activities on the evenings and weekends. Families are often instrumental in helping youth find their first job opportunities. After all, family members are community members who are connected to employers!

You can foster positive, collaborative relationships with families by:

- ⦿ inviting their participation,
- ⦿ encouraging them to have high expectations, and
- ⦿ helping them understand how they contribute to the employment planning process.

**For more information  
& resources visit**

[www.letsgettoworkwi.org](http://www.letsgettoworkwi.org)

The National Collaboration on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD for Youth) has created [Guideposts for Success: A Framework for Families Preparing Youth for Adulthood](#) and many other resources to help you understand how to cultivate productive partnerships with families. A series of webcasts for parents and educators is also available on the Let's Get to Work website.

## Engage in meaningful planning with students so you connect with the right employers.

Before you start contacting employers, engage students and their families in planning. What are the student's primary interests? What are their transferrable skills? What conditions need to be present at the workplace for success? Answering these will help you generate a list of the **right** employers to contact. In addition to your school's transition planning tools, you can use:

- ⦿ The **Self-Directed Transition Planning Tool** helps students and their planning teams think about employment goals.
- ⦿ The inControl Wisconsin **Self-Directed Employment Planning Modules** are a free learning and planning series for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).
- ⦿ The **Discovery Process** is used to identify a student's transferrable skills, ideal conditions, and workplace contributions to successfully negotiate a job with an employer. Information and webinars on Discovery can be found on the Montana Rural Institute's Transition and Employment website or at [www.WorkSupport.com](http://www.WorkSupport.com).

## Carve out time to network with employers effectively.

Most jobs are found in the hidden job market. This means that most job opportunities are never advertised. To find them, you must network!

- ⦿ Connect with employers based on an individual student's desire to learn about their workplace and pursue work in their industry.
  - Don't ask for a job when you make the first contact! Ask the employer to provide a tour of the business, an informational interview, or a job shadow. Most employers are open to such opportunities. This gives the employer a chance to meet the student without the pressure of having to offer a job.
  - Make sure you and the student arrive prepared to ask questions and share information about the student's interests, skills and abilities.
  - During the visit, listen for unmet needs the employer might have.
  - After, follow up with a thank you note and consider how you could make contact with that employer again.
- ⦿ Engage in relationship mapping with students and families to find out who they are connected to. Enlist the student and family's help in making contact with these people.
- ⦿ Connections to employers already exist with your school through DECA and school-to-work programs. Talk to the school staff involved in these programs about using these contacts for students with disabilities.
- ⦿ Involve students as much as possible in your networking efforts. Attend job fairs with them. Request to present to the local Chamber, Service Clubs or business networking groups with them. Prepare students to talk about their interests and the contributions they can make to the workplace.
- ⦿ Collaborate with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's Business Services Consultants and employment service providers in your area.
- ⦿ Host a Community Conversation focused on increasing employment opportunities for youth with disabilities. Information about planning Community Conversations can be found on the Let's Get to Work website.
- ⦿ If time permits, join a service organization or business networking group.



**Developing employment opportunities for students boils down to getting to know your students' employment goals and skills, getting to know the needs of employers in your community and finding the right matches between the two. There are a number of strategies and tools you can learn about and use. To be the most successful learn about them and pick the ones that work best for you, your students, and your community.**

# Collaboration

Local Education Authorities (LEA's), and specifically transition coordinators and high school special educators, need to develop collaborative relationships that expand outside of school and district personnel to family members, key system and adult service partners, and community/business contacts.





- **Identifying Transferrable Skills** by sharing the types of activities their daughter or son likes to do while at home and in the community and considering which of those the person is good at doing
- **Creating a List of Favorite Places** their son or daughter enjoys going to help the team consider characteristics of those environments (who is there, what happens, is it noisy or quiet, light or dark, indoors or out) as potential workplaces are identified
- **Determining Support Needs** of their daughter or son when engaged in a range of activities both in and out of school (home and community support needs might be different from those provided in the educational environment)

- **Developing a Set of “Non-Negotiables”** or the list of “must-haves” for their son or daughter (e.g. – specific time for a weekly dinner out, no work on Sundays, workplace on bus line)
- **Developing a Set of “Ideal” Elements** or the list of what will likely work best for their daughter or son in terms of work type, place, schedule (e.g. - distance from home to workplace, time of the day the person seems most energetic, focused, and willing to learn and work)
- **Formulating a List of Existing Connections** by thinking about potential employers everyone on the team knows and highlighting those who already know their son or daughter through family friends and activities
- **Building Work Ethic** by assigning chores at home, talking about the positive aspects of family members’ careers, and sharing all of the good reasons to get and keep a job
- **Supporting a Code of Conduct for Work** by establishing expectations for following rules and cooperating to accomplish tasks
- **Reinforcing Skills** necessary for successful employment by encouraging independence and maturity (getting up and ready for the day, keeping room clean, maintaining positive interactions with others)

## Family involvement during transition benefits students by supporting them to:

- ⊙ Maintain a high quality of life
- ⊙ Obtain and keep meaningful employment and enjoy job satisfaction
- ⊙ Seize opportunities to make choices and self-direct their own lives
- ⊙ Focus on independent living

## Additional Resources

Let’s Get to Work **Employment Planning Tool**

Let’s Get to Work **What’s After High School Family Education Video Series**

InControl Wisconsin **Self-Directed Employment Planning Modules**



# Supporting Families to Expect Employment

Starting in the earliest of years, the actions and attitudes of educators' impact family expectations for the future. Districts that maintain high levels of inclusion throughout the school years and provide community work experiences during high school increase family expectations for employment after high school. Here are some tips for educators to establish a culture of high expectations, develop partnerships, help families learn about options, and strengthen coordination foster employment success for youth with disabilities.

## Developing partnerships:

- ⊙ Send a letter at the beginning of the school year with your picture and information about your role in transition.
- ⊙ Open lines of communication by phone, email, and text. Respond to questions and concerns quickly, even if it is just to say you got their message and will respond later.
- ⊙ Engage family members in preparing for the IEP/PTP meeting by providing information about the transition planning and seeking their input on each part.
- ⊙ Ensure information parents receive is positive and strengths-based.
- ⊙ Use motivational interviewing to develop plans with families rather than 'telling' them what to do.
- ⊙ Involve families in the student's Discovery process and ensure their input on the transition portion of the IEP.

***The most powerful force*** in changing transition outcomes for young people with significant disabilities is not ultimately found in the transition plans we craft, the educational services we offer, the instruction we provide, or the systems we build, but rather in the expectations and aspirations individual parents hold for their sons and daughters.

We carefully considered a number of factors during high school that might influence whether or not students were working for pay in the community during the first two years after high school. And what we learned surprised us. We found that young adults with significant disabilities whose parents definitely expected them to obtain post-school work way back in high school were ***more than five times as likely to have paid, community employment within two years after exiting.***

Erik W. Carter *What Matters Most: Research on Elevating Parent Expectations* TASH Town Hall, December 2014

## Supporting families to learn about options:

- ⊙ Invite families with students in 7th to 12th grade to annual transition resource fairs.
- ⊙ Consider the time of day of your parent information events. It may be that events held during the daytime have better attendance from families.
- ⊙ Offer employment planning activities for youth while parents attend information sessions on transition.
- ⊙ Share student stories and videos from the LGTW website before families complete the Post-Secondary Transition Plan (PTP).
- ⊙ Organize an employer panel for parents.



## Strengthening coordination for success:

- ⦿ Work to develop a strong, collaborative relationship with the local Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) counselor through regular communication about students and encourage families to advocate for their youth in the employment planning process.
- ⦿ Ensure that the student's Individual Education Program (IEP) and Individual Employment Plan (IPE) are being shared and discussed as a team with the family.
- ⦿ Encourage families to ask DVR how they can be part of the job finding process and discuss those ideas as a team.
- ⦿ Remind students and parents to touch base with DVR about progress on a regular basis and provide assistance as needed.



At first, James's family was reluctant to have him work in the community and they did not want to apply for DVR services. School staff continued to encourage the family to consider community employment for James. The family agreed to let the school's transition coordinator set up a work experience with a local American Family Insurance office. ***DVR Youth On-the-Job Training*** was used while James learned the job. The match has been a success and James' parents' expectations for his future have changed dramatically.

Watch James' Video at [www.letsgettoworkwi.org](http://www.letsgettoworkwi.org)

### Additional Resources

Erik W. Carter *What Matters Most: Research on Elevating Parent Expectations* TASH  
Town Hall, December 2014

#### On the Let's Get to Work Website:

What's After High School Family Education Video Series

Self-Directed Employment Planning Modules

LGTW Self-Directed Transition Planning Tool

Families as Partners Fact Sheet



# Parent Transition Survey

Name (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Age of son or daughter \_\_\_\_\_

Disability \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the box that best indicates your answer to the following questions:

	I Strongly Disagree				I Strongly Agree			
1. I have been involved in all planning for the future of my son or daughter.								
2. My son or daughter has been actively involved in planning for his/her own future.								
3. My son or daughter has post-high school goals for community living that are meaningful to him/her.								
4. My son or daughter has post-high school goals for further education and/or employment that are meaningful to him/her.								
5. My son or daughter has post-high school goals that are individualized and based on his/her interests.								
6. My son or daughter has been consistently involved in general education classes and extra-curricular activities with peers who do not have disabilities.								
7. My son or daughter has regular opportunities to be involved in community and civic activities.								
8. My son or daughter is gaining skills to maximize independence.								
9. My son or daughter is learning information and skills that will lead to a high school diploma, college, and/or a job.								

10. I feel that I am a partner with the school in implementing plans to help my son or daughter accomplish his/her goals.								
11. Teachers and other school staff communicate with me about my son's/daughter's progress.								
12. I understand the ways teachers and school staff support my son or daughter to accomplish his/her goals.								
13. Teachers and other school staff provide specific information about ways to work on goal attainment at home.								
14. I feel I understand how to help my son or daughter reach his/her goals.								
15. The school is providing my son or daughter with ample opportunities to explore employment options through community-based experiences.								
16. My son or daughter has opportunities to explore employment options through supports provided at home.								
17. Attending college or technical school is an important part of post-high school planning for my son or daughter.								
18. Paid employment in the community is an important part of post-high school planning for my son or daughter.								

**19. I would like more information about: (circle all that apply)**

Long Term Care Eligibility

Guardianship

Soc. Sec. Benefits Counseling

ADRC (Aging and Disability Resource Center)

MCO (Managed Care Organization) or County Intake

DVR (Division of Vocational Rehabilitation)

Work Incentive Programs

Youth Leadership Groups

Additional Sources of Transition Information

Parent Groups

TAC (Transition Advisory Council)

Adult Service Providers

Community Living Options

Long Term Care Application Processes

Other topics: \_\_\_\_\_

**20. When thinking about transition planning, my biggest concerns are: (circle all that apply)**

Paid Employment

Living Arrangements

Friendships

Health Issues

Social Security Benefits

Transportation

Safety Concerns

Support Services

College/Tech School Entrance

Schedule Changes (time without paid support)

Other areas of concern: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please share any additional comments or questions you may have about the process of transition from school to adult life for your son or daughter:**

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**Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!**







# Engaging with Policy-Makers on Employment

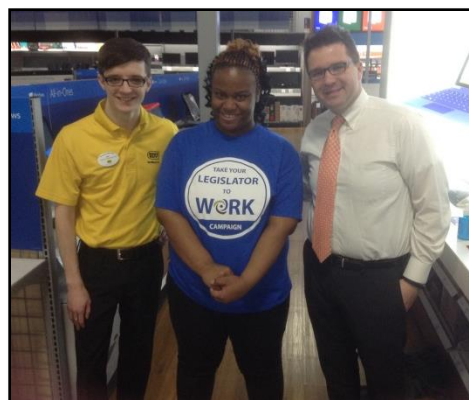
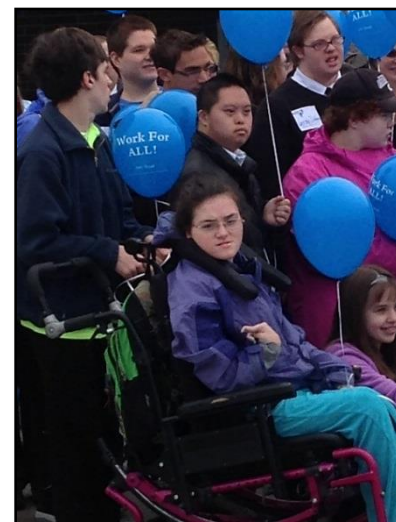
School districts in Wisconsin have faced budget and policy challenges in recent years and those challenges have affected transition services and student outcomes. At the same time, the long term care system that provides supports to adults with disabilities has also faced changes and budget cuts. Efforts to help policy-makers understand the employment needs and goals of youth with disabilities can have a positive impact on local and state-level policy decisions. And, involving students to advocate for policies that are important to them is a great way to support development of self-advocacy skills and civic responsibility. Finding contact information for legislators and policy-makers in your area is only a few clicks away at [whoismyrepresentative.com](http://whoismyrepresentative.com).

Below are four ideas for engaging with policy-makers that proved successful for a Let's Get to Work school. These ideas do require some investment of time and funds, but can have big yields in terms of relationship-building and impact. Mini-grants and donations may be available in your district, through the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities, business groups or civic associations to off-set costs.

**Hold a Breakfast or Luncheon** to talk with multiple policy-makers about the need for employment opportunities and other resources, such as transportation. Organize a gathering with a select invitation list to keep the number of people in attendance relatively low. Have the breakfast or luncheon at your school, a restaurant or another public space where food can be served, people can network, and students can present. In addition to legislators and policy-makers from your area, local employers are also invited. This is a great opportunity to showcase your school's work and transition program.

**Host a Town Hall Meeting** to engage a broader range of stakeholders and community members in a discussion about employment with one or two legislators or policy-makers. This type of event has a larger number of attendees than a breakfast or luncheon. The Town Hall portion of the event is typically led by the legislator(s) who attends as they take questions and comments from the audience. Information and a set of questions for the policy-maker(s) are developed and provided ahead of time to assist with preparation. Legislators and policy-makers have the opportunity to get to know constituents in addition to hearing about the importance of employment for youth with disabilities.

**Participate in "Take Your Legislator to Work,"** a campaign that demonstrates to legislators firsthand the desire people with disabilities have to work in their community and shows them when people with disabilities are working they are also contributing to the local economy, which strengthens our state's economy. For more information or to arrange a visit: <http://wi-bpdd.org/takeyourlegislatorwork/>.



## Steps for Convening a Breakfast, Luncheon, or Town Hall Meeting:

1. Contact one or more of the legislators/policy-makers that represent your area to extend the invitation.
2. Set a date, time, and location based on the availability of the legislator(s) willing to attend.
3. Create and send out invitations to a range of stakeholders based on the type of event (students, family members, teachers, employers, DVR personnel, adult service providers, and community members).
4. Make personal contacts by dropping off invitations face-to-face and placing calls in follow-up to e-mailed and mailed invitations.
5. Plan an agenda that incorporates the introductory presentation by students and an introduction and thank you for legislator/policy-maker(s).
6. Support students to develop and practice a presentation to introduce the topic of employment for youth with disabilities (can include a brief formal presentation with data points, personal stories, and/or video).
7. Send the legislator/policy-maker(s) information to help them prepare. This could be the introduction students plan to use along with briefs about employment from the WI Board for People with Developmental Disabilities and other organizations, along with potential questions that might be asked. Helpful resources can be found at [www.wiemploymentfirst.com](http://www.wiemploymentfirst.com).
8. Invite local media, including newspaper, television, and radio to cover the event (intention to do so should be shared with the legislator/policy-maker(s)).
9. Plan for the food that will be needed.
10. Have one or more topic experts at the event to guide discussion and support policy-maker(s) as needed.

**Create a Proclamation** to declare that your city or town supports employment opportunities in the community for everyone. This action, in conjunction with meetings and events convened to generate discussion with policy-makers, is another great way to increase attention to the needs of youth with disabilities to have job opportunities in the community. The picture to the right is from an event held at a grocery store where a student from the school district works. The Mayor was in attendance to sign the proclamation and have a bagging contest with the student. The store supplied snacks and the entire event happened during regular store hours. The “Work for ALL” proclamation is alive and well in that community!



# Ideas for Hosting a Transition Night

**What is a Transition Night?** A Transition Night is an event designed to provide students with disabilities and their families with a comprehensive set of information about the steps and agencies involved in the process of planning for employment and life after high school.

**Why should we host a Transition Night?** There are several good reasons to consider hosting a transition night:

- ⊙ Making a coordinated effort to gather information and resources for a Transition Night can assist teachers and school staff to learn about the multiple agencies and types of services that their students will be transitioning to – and that is beneficial for teachers and students alike.
- ⊙ Beyond increased understanding about the transition process, a Transition Night offers an opportunity for a variety of partners (teachers, school administrators, students, parents, adult service providers, county or state representatives) to meet face to face and develop more personal relationships that can result in better collaboration on behalf of students.
- ⊙ Bringing students and their family members together to learn about resources, services, people, and places available to them can help everyone feel more comfortable planning for, starting, or continuing the transition process.
- ⊙ Students and their families can also engage in honest conversations about their fears while encouraging and inspiring each other to see the vast possibilities that lie ahead.
- ⊙ A Transition Night is a great way to ensure that your school provides students and families with much needed information!

## Who will come to our Transition Night?

People who typically attend Transition Nights are:

Students with disabilities	Family members	Teachers
Vocational support providers	Home support providers	Transportation providers
Staff from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)	Staff from colleges and postsecondary education institutions	Staff from the local area Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)
Staff from the county and/or managed care organization and IRIS program	Staff from the independent living center serving the area	Staff from Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) regional centers
Local work incentives benefits specialists		

You might not get someone from each of the groups above at your Transition Night, but inviting all of them is recommended. There might be additional transition partners specific to your area not on the list that you will want to invite. Some or all transition partners might want to have a table to share information, such as brochures and services provided, and talk with people after the presentations.

## Who should we ask to present at our Transition Night? People who typically present at a Transition Night include:

- ⊙ Students who have recently gone through the process and transitioned to successful employment, sometimes along with a family member and/or their employer, to share their stories
- ⊙ Students in the process of transitioning who are already working at community jobs or gaining work experience that they enjoy – can also be with a family member and/or employer
- ⊙ Teachers supporting current and former students through the transition process to talk about the benefits of employment and ways school is helping facilitate paid jobs
- ⊙ Staff from colleges and postsecondary education to inform students and family members about options available to students with disabilities
- ⊙ Staff from vocational support agencies to talk about the services they can provide
- ⊙ Staff from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to share information about the services provided and the application process
- ⊙ Staff from the county and/or Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) to discuss the process of determining eligibility for adult long-term supports
- ⊙ A work incentives benefits specialist who can provide basic information about Social Security and other benefits and how to access their services before starting a job



**How do we organize a Transition Night?** Although your process might look a little different, and this list is not detailed, the general steps might look something like this:

1. Decide if it makes sense for your school to work with other schools nearby or through the Transition Action Council (TAC)/County Community on Transition (CCoT) group to expand the invitation circle.
2. Form a committee to plan and execute your Transition Night.
3. Determine a place, date, and time that you believe will work reasonably well for students, family members, and presenters (evenings & weekends generally work best).
4. Make contacts to key presenters to confirm a date and time and arrange for interpreters, if needed.
5. Reserve the space, then create and distribute an invitation.
6. Develop an agenda for the evening to ensure organization and flow.
7. Secure audio-visual equipment as needed.
8. Figure out if there is a small budget to provide dinner or snacks (always a nice touch).
9. Have someone maintain a list of people who rsvp to attend.
10. Before the day of the event, coordinate: making copies, food pick-up or delivery, setting up, greeting attendees, keeping track of time, assisting presenters, and cleaning-up.





# School and DVR Collaboration

For youth with more significant barriers to employment, applying for Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) services *at least two years prior to graduation* is a critical step toward successful, gainful employment. During transition, teachers and DVR counselors *share* responsibility to coordinate plans and help students achieve their post-school employment goals.

## Tips to Increase Collaboration:

- ⊙ **Arrange a meeting for the special education team with the school's DVR counselor at the beginning of each school year.**
  - Provide DVR with information about students who are ready or nearly ready to begin seeking employment.
  - Ensure that all students with disabilities and their families have the opportunity to get connected with DVR when the time is right for them.
- ⊙ **Host a 'DVR night' at school one or two times per year for students and their families.**
  - Invite your local DVR counselor or representative to provide an overview of DVR services and how to apply for services.
  - Include all current sophomores with disabilities and their families so they can attend and learn about DVR.
- ⊙ **Invite the DVR counselor to meet with students and their families during the school day.**
  - Set aside a room and arrange student and school staff schedules to participate as needed.
  - Meetings can take place periodically or on a regular schedule (i.e. once per month) depending on student needs and DVR counselor availability.
- ⊙ **Send home DVR information for students and families unable to attend meetings and gatherings and follow up with families to answer questions and provide assistance as needed.**
- ⊙ **Keep track of which students have applied for DVR and which still need to apply.** Provide assistance to students and families to gather information and complete the referral process on the DVR website.
- ⊙ **When students and families apply for DVR services, ask them to list the designated special education teacher/case manager or transition coordinator on the application so that releases of information can be sent from DVR to the school.**



- ⊙ **Provide a copy of the student's IEP to the DVR counselor.**
  - Share what has already been done with the student in order to avoid duplication or starting over.
  - Use the "Guidance for Teachers Providing School Related Information to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)" document to determine what kinds of information to give DVR.
- ⊙ **Request a copy of a student's plan with DVR so that IEP and Transition plan goals can be aligned with the DVR plan.**
- ⊙ **Keep students active and engaged in planning by developing career exploration and work experiences with them.**
  - Schedule time to sit down with each student every couple weeks to review what has been done.
  - Make a list with the student and email it to the DVR counselor as an update.
- ⊙ **Consider helping students create a Google account and email so that they can log their job shadows, tours, work experiences, career inventory and assessment results, etc.** This document can be shared with the DVR counselor and can also go with the student once they leave high school.
- ⊙ **Invite the DVR counselor to the annual IEP/transition planning meeting or schedule a separate meeting with DVR to discuss what's working, what's not working, and how to improve and make changes this year.** Develop a specific action plan to make progress toward the employment goal.



## Additional Resources

[Guidance for Teachers Providing School Related Information to DVR](#)

[Transition Action Guide](#) & [Online Training Module](#)

[WI Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Website](#)



**"Let's Get to Work"**  
**A Project for the Employment of Youth  
with Disabilities**  
in conjunction with  
**DVR's On the Job Training Hiring Initiative**

**What is the "DVR On the Job Hiring and Training Initiative"?**

This initiative provides an opportunity for ALL DVR consumers in transition to work for wages before exiting high school. It provides a longer timeframe (up to 500 hours) and a higher wage subsidy (up to 100% reimbursement) to allow an employer to offer competitive employment to a youth with disabilities. It is based on an existing DVR OJT program providing a 50% wage reimbursement during the first 90 days of employment: an effort that has resulted in permanent employment for 83 to 88% of participants.

The Youth Transition OJT allows for a higher % of wage subsidy to be determined upon negotiation with an employer and DVR staff to offset increased training costs for youth with more significant barriers to employment.

**Elements of the OJT Initiative**

- The placement must be developed individually for each youth in transition based on their interests and skills.
- It must be with a competitive community based employer and in an integrated setting.
- It is developed with direct DVR staff contact with the employer. School staff may assist in a manner similar to the way job developers assist in other OJT development.
- It is likely that it will be used after age 16 because of child labor laws and the lack of positions available in many communities for youth under age 16.
- The consumer will maintain the employment after the OJT period ends.
- Some youth will stay in the position permanently and some youth may go on to other opportunities like training (post-secondary or occupational) or other employment opportunities just like their peers.
- Other DVR services can be provided when someone is using a Youth Transition OJT such as job coaching.

**The Youth Transition OJT is not:**

- A temporary job, job shadow, or work experience.
- An established "slot" or position in which employed youth can be rotated.
- A job provided at school.
- A job provided in a non-integrated setting.
- A job that pays less than the prevailing wage.

For additional information and/or questions about the Youth Transition OJT you may contact Meredith Dressell at [Meredith.Dressel@dwd.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Meredith.Dressel@dwd.wisconsin.gov) or Kathleen Enders at [Kathleen.Enders@dwd.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Kathleen.Enders@dwd.wisconsin.gov).

The Let's Get to Work project, funded by the Administration on Developmental Disabilities and awarded to the WI Board for People with Developmental Disabilities, supports schools and communities seeking to improve the integrated, community-based employment of youth with I/DD. By focusing on community assets, elevating expectations, and expanding opportunities for youth while still in high school, this project provides technical assistance, training, on-site coaching and funding for activities.



## DVR needs information to assist with determining:

- If the student has a disability
- The impact the disability has on their ability work
- How their disability impacts them in the following areas: self-care, communication, mobility, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work skills, and work tolerance
- Any accommodations the student needs
- Student's career interests, skills and experiences

**Teacher Documentation that may address these items: (once a student/family or guardian submit a referral to DVR, a release of information must be signed prior to sharing school records with DVR staff)**

### ✓ Current IEP including PTP

- Provide a copy of the student's most current IEP, including: Placement page, Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance, IEP program summary
- Current reading, writing, and math levels

### • Relevant course information and performance (PTP Course of Study)

- Information on classes the student has taken related to their interests and employment goal; including grades and/or progress reports.

### ✓ School Psychological Reports - most current evaluation

- Reports or assessments related to the student's disability, limitations, learning style, accommodation needs, etc.

### ✓ Assistive technology or accommodations reports

- Any assessment, teacher reports, etc. that describe rehabilitation or accommodation needs.
- Include information on any assistive technology (AT) or augmentative communication devices the student uses, in which setting, and purpose. Also include any AT that the student has used that has not worked in the past.

### ✓ Work Experience/ Volunteer reports or observations

- If a student has completed a work experience or volunteer experience information:
  - Location(s), dates, work performed, supports needed, strengths observed
  - Goals and outcomes
  - Soft skills, work skills, interpersonal skills observed
  - Any identified barriers to employment

### ✓ Vocational Assessment reports

- For example: Career Occupational Preference System (COPS), Career Cruising, Life Centered Career Education (LCCE), Career Exploration Inventory (CEI), Transition Planning Inventory (TPI), Enderle-Severson Transition Rating Scale (ESTR-J and ESTR-III)
- Interest Inventories

### ✓ Home/Community Experiences

- Reports or observations from family or school that pertain to the student's disability, limitations, interests, strengths, interpersonal skills, mobility, etc. while in the community.

### ✓ Teacher/School Personnel Observations & Other Documentation

- Observations/information that would be relevant to DVR's eligibility and the required seven functional areas. This can be shared informally - email, letter, an official report, etc.

### ✓ Summary of Performance (SoP) if completed or in-progress draft

### ✓ Medical reports or outside assessments (Encourage the family to share)

- Any reports that diagnose or describe the student's disability or limitations (e.g. mental health records, doctor's reports, etc.)



# Community Conversations

Community Conversations are a highly effective way to bring people together to talk about community issues. Let's Get to Work pilot high school sites have used Community Conversations to create awareness as well as to discuss strategies and resources that can help youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) get jobs in their communities.

## What is a Community Conversation?

Community Conversations are events or gatherings to talk about ways to improve a local problem.

- ⊙ Conversations are held at a welcoming place.
- ⊙ Typically last about 2 hours.
- ⊙ 2 – 3 questions are provided by the organizers.
- ⊙ People discuss the questions in small groups to share their experiences and ideas about the issue at hand.
- ⊙ Food is usually included.

## What are the benefits/outcomes?

- ⊙ Paid jobs!
- ⊙ Make new connections; learn new resources.
- ⊙ Increased quality of life.
- ⊙ Jump start to heightened awareness.
- ⊙ Together, people generate solutions.



## Who is invited?

Everyone is needed and invited! Including: families, students, church members, employers, neighbors, service providers, school staff, and more!

## Why do these conversations work?

- ⊙ Conversations can be easily adapted so anyone can actively participate.
- ⊙ People who participate in these conversations feel they have really been heard.
- ⊙ Builds community pride.
- ⊙ Real, lasting change is most likely to happen when the answers and plans come from the people who live in the community.

## For tools to help you plan a Community Conversation:

**Launching Inclusive Efforts through Community Conversations: A Practical Guide**

**Let's Get to Work Quick Guide: sample invitations, agendas and materials**

**A Community Conversation....**  
a gathering of local La Crosse County community stakeholders to discuss empowering our youth with disabilities through employment and community involvement!



Holmen High School was fortunate to get a federal grant through the Board for People with Developmental Disabilities to work on increasing employment outcomes and inclusive community involvement for our youth with disabilities from 15-17 years of age. Come and share your insights and hear what some local community members are already doing and where we can go from here!

We **VALUE** and **NEED** your input!





# Community Conversation Planning Form

When your team or group is ready to hold a community conversation about employment opportunities for youth with disabilities, you can use this form, along with the booklet titled: **Launching Inclusive Efforts through Community Conversations**, to get started.

**Step 1:** List 2-3 Ideas for the main focus of your conversation. (What aspects of this topic would the group like to explore to expand opportunities for students?)

**Examples:** Strengthening the School-Business Partnership, Increasing Awareness of Student Employment Goals, Ways the Community can Support Students to become Productive Citizens

1)

2)

3)

**Step 2:** Develop 3-4 draft questions around that topic that you could give community conversation attendees to answer.

**Example:** How can we engage more individuals with disabilities in civic activities?

1)

2)

3)

4)

**Step 3:** Make a list of the people who will plan the event.


**Step 4:** List 2-3 ideas for the location:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

**Step 5:** Choose a month and 2-3 prospective dates:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

**Step 6:** Think about the planning timeline:

Task	Person Responsible	Target Date
1st planning meeting		
Location secured/Date confirmed		
Draft invitation and agenda		
2nd planning meeting		
Invitations finalized and out		
Questions finalized		
Logistics and agenda finalized		
Community Conversation		
Post-conversation tasks and follow-up		

**Step 7:** Consider ways to get students/individuals with disabilities/family members/employers involved.



# Ideas to Increase Employers at Community Conversations on Employment

Many districts in Wisconsin have been hosting Community Conversations aimed at developing local solutions to increase employment outcomes for youth with disabilities. They have experienced varying degrees of employer attendance at their events. Below are strategies schools have used to boost the number of employers at these events.

- ⦿ **Check the calendar.** Before setting the date and time for your event, be sure to call the Chamber or local business association to determine if there are conflicting events. The Chamber staff person might also be able to give you some advice on the time of day to hold your event that would work best for employers in the area.
- ⦿ **Involve students with invitation distribution.** Take a few students out with you to stop into businesses and personally invite employers to your event. This helps students develop their social skills as well as show employers that students with disabilities are ready and able to work.
- ⦿ **Send out a press release.** Work with your local newspaper to publicize the event. Share it in your school newsletter and any other media outlets that you have in your community.
  - Ask for air time from a local radio or news station. Have students present the concept of employment for all. You can even pair students up with local employers that you already work with!
- ⦿ **Ask employers to invite other employers.** Your school already has relationships with employers. Ask your current employers to talk about your event at their networking functions and personally invite other employers in your community.
- ⦿ **Create a list of everyone you know.** Take the time to brainstorm a list of all the people the planning committee knows and the places they go in their community. Committee members should extend personal invitations to the people on their list.
- ⦿ **Invite families and alumni.** Parents and alumni may be business owners or managers. Be sure to send the invitation out to families and alumni in the district through school envelopes, emails and newsletters.
- ⦿ **Call employers a day or two before the event.** Employers are busy. They might have gotten the invitation a few weeks before the event, intended to attend, but then forget about the event. A friendly reminder call could be the answer to get them there!





- ⦿ **Enlist the help of people who are well connected.** Every school or community has a person who seems to know everyone in town. Perhaps it's the school secretary, the football coach or a real estate agent. Ask this person to extend personal invitations to the people they know.
  - Attend staff meetings of schools in your district (as well as your own). Showcase the work their former students are doing with a short presentation from students or use a PowerPoint with lots of pictures. Be sure the purpose for the Community Conversation is clear.
  - Give each person two invites and ask them to personally invite an employer or business manager in charge of hiring. Better yet, have them offer to attend WITH them!
- ⦿ **Contact your county's Job Center Manager.** The Job Center is connected to employers in your community. They may be willing to send the invitation out or make copies available for employers at upcoming business events or job fairs.
- ⦿ **Partner with your district's Career and Technical Education staff to broaden your reach.**
- ⦿ **For employers that say they can't attend, ask them for a 15 minute breakfast meeting.** Bring breakfast, a presentation from youth, and an offer to help them fill open spots!



One of the most effective things you can do to get employers to your Community Conversation is to **call them a day or two before the event to remind them!**



# 12 Ways to Connect with *More* Employers


Teachers supporting students with transition goals aren't always sure where to start when it comes to working with employers. There are a number of ways to build partnerships with local employers. Below is a list of possible strategies for you and your school to consider.

## School and Student-Focused Ideas to Try:

- ⦿ **Collaborate with People and Programs at your School** – It is likely that Vocational-Technical teachers, Business Education/DECA and the school-to-work coordinator at your school already have connections to a number of employers. Help get students with disabilities connected with career development activities already taking place through your school. If there is a community service requirement for graduation, ensure that students with disabilities have the same requirement and access to the same opportunities to be out in the community volunteering along-side their peers who do not have disabilities.
- ⦿ **Coordinate Service Learning Opportunities** – If your school doesn't already have a service learning requirement for graduation, consider adding one. Service learning helps students build work and social skills, as well as connections to community members through contribution and meaningful community involvement. The skills learned and connections made become essential ingredients for connecting with future employers – either through the opportunities directly related to the service learning organization or by tapping into the personal networks of people that are met through the service learning opportunity.
- ⦿ **Host a Job Fair** – Organize a job fair at your school with local employers. There may be other local partners that can help you organize one. Inquire with the other vocational and business programs within your school, the local colleges, as well as with your local Job Center. Job Fairs are a great way for employers to meet students, conduct interviews, and collect resumes. And, job fairs help your school and students learn from local employers.
- ⦿ **Use Personal Networks** – Did you know that most jobs are never advertised? Most people find employment opportunities through their friends, family, and other personal connections. You can expand your employer networks by including the networks of other teachers, students, and their parents by asking them about the businesses with which they have connections and enlisting their help to make initial connections with them.
- ⦿ **Request Informational Interviews, Business Tours, and Job Shadows** – Connect with employers based on students' desires to learn about their workplace and pursue work in their industry. Don't ask for a job when you make the first contact with an employer! Rather, ask the employer to provide a tour of the business, an informational interview, or a job shadow for the student(s) to learn more about the employer. Most employers are open to such opportunities. Make sure students arrive prepared to ask questions and share information about their interests and skills. During the visit, listen for unmet needs the employer might have. After, follow up with a thank you note and consider how you could make contact with that employer again.



## Community-Wide Outreach Ideas:

- ⦿ **Host a Community Conversation** – Community Conversations are an extremely effective way to bring community members, including employers, together to talk about community issues. The Let's Get to Work (LGTW) project experienced great success connecting with employers using Community Conversations. More information for planning a Community Conversation is available in the Collaboration section of the LGTW Quick Guide. [www.letsgettowork.org](http://www.letsgettowork.org)
  - ⦿ **Have an “Amazing Race to Employment”** – LGTW schools developed a fun and effective activity to connect with employers while building student confidence and communication skills. Dubbed the “Amazing Race to Employment,” students are broken into small groups to stop into several local businesses for a short “meet and greet.” They arrive at a business and, with the help of a teacher, ask for the manager/owner, introduce themselves, say the purpose for their visit, and ask a couple key questions (for example, What qualities do you look for in a new employee?, or How does one apply for a job here?). School staff inquires with the owner/manager about the possibility of following up. At the end of the activity, school staff have accumulated dozens of potential employment contacts! More information about the [Amazing Race to Employment](#) can be found in the LGTW Quick Guide.
- 
- ⦿ **Work with your PIE group** – Find out if your community has a Partners in Education (PIE) group. Partners in Education is a volunteer group comprised of area business, education, and community leaders who are committed ensuring youth are on the path to successful careers and future employment. Talk to the staff involved in these programs about also using these contacts for students with disabilities.
  - ⦿ **Create a Public Service Announcement (PSA)** – PSA's can be an effective way to raise awareness in your local community about the power of employer partnerships to increase employment opportunities for youth with disabilities. The LGTW pilot schools created PSAs, all of which are featured on their webpages in the LGTW website under the 'Pilot Schools' navigation tab.
  - ⦿ **Collaborate with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Business Services Consultant in your area** – Each Workforce Development Area in the state has a DVR Business Services Consultant whose primary responsibility is to connect with employers about employing job seekers with disabilities. Contact your local DVR Business Services Consultant to explore ways in which you can collaborate. Contact information is found at: [https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/pdf\\_files/bsc\\_contact\\_list.pdf](https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/pdf_files/bsc_contact_list.pdf).
  - ⦿ **Network with Local Business Groups** – Carve out time every month to meet with the local Chamber of Commerce, service organizations, and/or business networking groups to create ongoing relationships with employers in your community. Involve students as much as possible in your networking efforts. Request to present to these groups with students. Prepare students to talk about their interests and the contributions they can make to the workplace
  - ⦿ **Collaborate with the Job Center's Youth Programs Adult Employment Service Providers** – Contact them to discuss how you can share employer contacts and avoid duplicating efforts with local employers.

# Let's Get to Work's Amazing Race to Employment

Teachers supporting students with transition goals aren't always sure where to start when it comes to working with employers. The 'Amazing Race to Employment' is one example of how Let's Get to Work schools overcame that challenge. The 'Amazing Race' can be a fun and effective way to connect with employers while building student confidence and communication skills. At the end of the 'Amazing Race,' school staff will have accumulated dozens of potential employment contacts!

**Purpose of the Activity:** To expose students with and without disabilities to local businesses where they might seek employment, while also exposing as many businesses as possible to students who want to work.

**Objective of the 'Game:'** You can make the Amazing Race to Employment a fun activity by creating a game-like atmosphere, where small groups of students are competing with one another to approach the most employers and gather the most business cards and job applications. Each employer, business card and job application counts as 1 point. The team with the most points at the end of the activity wins the game!

**Who is Involved:** Small groups of students with and without disabilities (3-4 students in each group make a team) and adult chaperones for each group.

**Materials:** Clipboards with a checklist of different businesses for each student group, writing utensils, school brochures about student employment (with contact information for the Transition Coordinator), nametags, iPads for pictures/video, envelopes for business cards and applications, transportation.

## Before the Event:

- ⊙ Seek parental permission for all of the students
- ⊙ Develop a set of 3-5 possible question cards for students to use with the employer:
  - *What are 3 skills a good employee should have?*
  - *What is something we wouldn't know about your business?*
  - *How does your business advertise job openings?*
  - *What kinds of positions do you typically hire for?*
  - *How does one apply for a job here?*
- ⊙ Contact local TV stations for coverage of the event.

## Sample Plan for the Day:

- 7:40am** Give students an overview and instructions for the day
- Go into local businesses and ask for the manager
  - Give a strong handshake
  - Tell the manager about the activity
  - Have the manager answer a question about employment or their business.
  - Ask for a business card and/or application
  - Give the employer the school employment brochure.
  - Ask if it is okay for a teacher to contact them about employment opportunities for students (If agreed to, teacher takes down the contact information by the business name on the clip board)
  - Thank them for their time
- 7:50am** Practice the script with teammates and adult chaperones

- 8:10am** Practice the script and the questions with the Career and Business Communications Class (Students from class role play as business managers)
- 8:40am** Have an exciting “send-off” for the Amazing Race student teams (At Holmen High School, the Principal fired off the track starting gun and Career and Business Communication students created human tunnel for the Amazing Race teams to go through as they ran to the school vans to start the event!)
- 8:55am** Teams travel to all of the local businesses listed on their sheets
- Each team has a unique list of about 10-15 businesses from the local area (restaurants, retail, pet stores, etc.)
  - Points awarded to teams for getting business cards and applications
  - Students take turns speaking (for introductions, questions, etc.)
- 12:15pm** All groups meet for lunch (at a local park or somewhere off campus) to talk about the day, and tally points to see which team won the race. Discussion points about the day to use with students include:
- Which was your favorite/ideal place to work? Why?
  - What parts did you feel you did really well at?
  - What was your biggest challenge of the day?
  - Review some of the managers’ answers to the Amazing Race Questions.

### Example Script:

“Hello. Can I please speak to a manager?”

*Manager Approaches - Handshake and Smile*

“Hi. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and we are a group of students with all kinds of abilities from Holmen High School. We are doing the Amazing Race to Employment to learn more about the businesses where we would like to work. We have one question for you to learn more about your business. Please pick a card, and answer the question on the back.”

**\*\*Ask Question\*\***

“Would it be okay for my teacher, \_\_\_\_\_, to contact you about jobs for \_\_\_\_\_ High School students?” “Do you have a business card or application we could have?”

“Thank you! Have a great day!” *Handshake and Smile*





# You Can Work & Keep Your Benefits:

## Work Incentives Benefits Counseling 101

Are you afraid you might lose your benefits if you earn money from a job or a business? The truth is, you can work and keep the benefits you need! Fear of losing benefits is one of the most common reasons why people with disabilities choose not to work. Benefit programs like Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid (MA) can be confusing, resulting in a lot of misinformation.

Special provisions and protections are in place to that help people with disabilities work and earn a living. These provisions are called 'Work Incentives' and there are people known as Work Incentives Benefits Specialists throughout Wisconsin that can help you understand and navigate your benefits so that you can work and earn money.

As you begin to earn money from work, it is important that you start to understand the benefits you have, how your benefits might change if your life changes, and your responsibilities. This might seem overwhelming but don't worry, a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist can help.

### Examples of How Work Incentives Help

**Jarod** is 19 years old. He attends an 18-21 year old Transition program and has started working in his first paid job for 20 hours per week at minimum wage. Since Jarod is under 22 years old and regularly attends school, he is able to take advantage of the Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE). With the SEIE, Social Security excludes a portion of Tim's earnings when determining his SSI cash payment amount. In fact, up to \$1,780 of Tim's income per month or a total of \$7,180 per year (2016 amount) will not be counted when figuring out his SSI payment amount.

**Youa** has been working as clerk for a local bank. She is worried that accepting a raise from her employer would make her ineligible for SSI (causing her to lose Medicaid). By meeting with a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist, Youa learned that she does not have to worry about her Medicaid coverage. A Work Incentive called Continuation of Medicaid Coverage under 1619(b) allows her to keep Medicaid even after earnings from work are too high for an SSI cash payment. Youa's Medicaid benefits will continue until she reaches the Wisconsin state threshold amount of \$33,622 (2016 amount) in annual earnings. Even after that there are ways she might be able to have a higher threshold determined based on her individual circumstances.

**Miguel** worked with a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist to write a Plan to Achieve Self-Support (or PASS) to set aside income that would normally affect his SSI payment. He set aside money for three years to purchase equipment and supplies to start up a mobile ice cream business. PASS plans can be used to set aside money to go to school, start a business, or get vocational training that helps a person achieve his/her employment goals.

These are just a few examples. A Work Incentives Benefits Specialist can provide you with information about all of the Work Incentives available to you.



## When to contact a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist

It takes time to learn about your benefits, the sooner you get started the better! If you are in high school, you should begin learning about your benefits before you begin working and earning money so that you can maximize your earning potential.

## What to expect from a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist

Work Incentives Benefits Specialists will provide you with different levels of service. They can answer general questions about benefits by phone or email or they can provide you with a detailed “Benefits Analysis.”

A Benefits Analysis is a written document that explains, in simple and plain language, all of the benefit programs you receive, what your responsibilities are, and how life changes and work earnings will impact these benefits. The Work Incentives Benefits Specialist will meet with you in- person to review your benefit analysis and give you an opportunity to ask questions. The Benefit Specialist is available to you after you review your summary to answer your questions by phone, in person, or by email. You should expect timely, individualized service!

## How to prepare for a meeting with a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist

- ⦿ Think about your job goals. How much do you want to work? How much money would you like to make (or are you currently making)? Do you want to be self-employed?
- ⦿ Write down your questions or concerns.
- ⦿ Make a list of all the benefits you get and the amounts, if you know them. Gather up as much documentation of your benefits as you can. The Work Incentive Benefits Specialist can help answer questions about a variety of public benefits, as well as private benefits you are receiving.



## Finding a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist

You can find a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist in your area by visiting [www.wibsa.org](http://www.wibsa.org) or by talking to your transition teacher. If you are working with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) you can ask your DVR Counselor about Work Incentives Benefits Counseling services.

## How Work Incentives Benefits Counseling Services are paid for

Work Incentives Benefits Counseling is a service frequently purchased by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). If you are working with DVR, you can ask your DVR counselor about including Work Incentives Benefits Counseling services on your Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) with DVR.

If you are not working with DVR, the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) program is an option. WIPA services are funded by the Social Security Administration, so they are free-of-charge. You can find the WIPA service provider in your part of the state by visiting: <http://www.eri-wi.org/programs/WIPA/>.



# Connecting Students to Work Incentives Benefits Counseling Services: A Checklist for Teachers

It is important that youth with disabilities who receive public benefits, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid (MA), learn about Work Incentives. Since special educators and transition coordinators connect high school students and their families to resources and services that will help them achieve post-school success, Work Incentives Benefits Counseling (WIBC) services should be included!

## Steps to take to connect students to WIBC Services:

1. **Provide students and families information about WIBC services.** The Let's Get to Work project has developed a [WIBC Fact Sheet](#), which can be found on the Let's Get to Work website. The WIBC Fact Sheet can be emailed to families or printed.
2. **Talk to DVR about WIBC services.** If the student is involved with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), the student could add WIBC to their employment plan with DVR. Students not yet working with DVR could receive WIBC services from the local Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program (WIPA) at no-cost. Locate a WIPA service provider at <http://www.eri-wi.org/programs/WIPA/>.
3. **Help students and families prepare for the first meeting with the WIBC service provider.** The WIBC service provider will explain to the student and family how to prepare for the first meeting, including gathering documentation of any benefits received and income of the student and/or family. You might need to provide information to the family about wages and hours of past or prospective paid work experiences.
4. **Check back to ensure that they have met with the WIBC service provider.** After the initial meeting, the WIBC service provider verifies benefits and writes a detailed report for the student about their benefits and the Work Incentives that apply to them.



5. **Review and revisit the benefits analysis.** Benefits are confusing and students and families can easily feel overwhelmed by them. Talk with the family about what they learned from the WIBC service provider. Do they seem to understand the report? Do they have continued concerns about losing benefits with work? Encourage families to follow up as often as needed with the WIBC service provider or invite the WIBC service provider to a transition meeting or IEP to be a resource for the entire team as the student moves forward with employment planning.

## Quick Review Checklist

Steps	Date Completed	Notes
1. WIBC information provided		
2. DVR contact about WIBC need		
3. Preparation for WIBC meeting		
4. Confirmation of meeting		
5. Follow-up with student and family		

### Additional Resources

For the most current information and resources about Work Incentives Benefits Counseling in Wisconsin, visit the Work Incentives Benefits Specialist Association (WIBSA) at [www.wibsa.org](http://www.wibsa.org)





# Braiding Resources

Plan coordination and collaboration across systems is considered a ‘best practice’ in Transition and Employment Supports. Individuals and systems benefit in tangible ways when collaboration occurs: youth with disabilities achieve personally meaningful outcomes, and schools and service systems maximize resources most efficiently.

In Wisconsin, we have a great opportunity to collaborate and braid resources. The Interagency Agreement between the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the Department of Health Services (DHS) lays the foundation on which these three important partners in Transition work together. This agreement is intended to “clearly define necessary relationships, policies, and procedures between the DVR, the DPI and the DHS in order to create common understandings and establish collaborative efforts regarding services that will ultimately improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.”

## How Schools Support Integrated Employment

Starting at age 14, school staff plays a primary role in helping students develop personally meaningful postsecondary employment goals. The IEP Team determines the necessary supports and transition services to engage students in career awareness, opportunities to explore career options, and develop connections with employers and other outside agencies to help students gain experience in a variety of jobs within their local community.

## How DVR Supports Integrated Employment

DVR provides services to assist job seekers to address barriers to employment and find employment. Schools support students to connect with DVR at least 2 years prior to graduation. Prior to that time, DVR can provide technical assistance to students, teachers and parents upon request. DVR can provide counseling, technical assistance and funding for job training supports, may pay a students’ wages during internships, and much more.

Resources can and *should be* combined for *every* job seeker. How these resources are braided together can and *should be* individualized for *each* job seeker. There is no cookie cutter approach to braiding resources!

## How DHS Children’s Long Term Care (CLTS) Supports Integrated Employment

CLTS service coordinators assist youth in setting goals and coordinating the programs and services that support these goals. CLTS offers services, such as mentoring, that are designed to help youth build employability skills beyond the school day.



## Stories

### Jayden



At age 15, Jayden wanted to start working in the summer. He was unsure what kind of work he wanted to do. With help, Jayden made a plan at his IEP meeting to explore job options. Jayden's school staff set up job shadows and

informational interviews with local businesses. After exploring some options, Jayden decided that he wanted to work at a movie theater or in a mailroom over the summer. Jayden's IEP team helped him fill out a DVR referral and connected him with DVR. Jayden, his mom, and school staff met with DVR to develop his Individual Plan for Employment (IPE). The team developed the following plan:

- ✓ **DVR:** DVR pays an adult service provider to do a Discovery assessment. With the results of the Discovery Assessment, DVR pays the adult service provider to develop an internship/work experience with a local business.
- ✓ **School:** After Discovery is completed, school staff works with Jayden to use that information to create a visual resume that highlights his strengths and skills. The IEP team may consider providing school staff to support Jayden during the summer in additional job experiences.
- ✓ **Family:** Jayden's parents, being well-known business owners themselves, share names of people they know who have businesses that offer the type of work that Jayden is interested in. The team will decide who should make the initial contact and who will follow up with the lead to the business.
- ✓ **CLTS Waivers:** Jayden, his family, and his CLTS Waiver Service Coordinator decide to include Mentoring on his Individual Service Plan (ISP) to help him practice using the public bus system so he can get to work independently and safely.

### Emma

Emma is a junior in high school. She would like to explore careers and post-secondary education programs for veterinary technician, groomer, or trainer. Emma lives in a rural community. Since many employers are far away and the school only employs one special education teacher and one special education assistant, it is difficult for staff to leave school with Emma for exploration activities. At her IEP meeting, Emma and her team developed a transition plan to move forward:



- ✓ **DVR:** Provide information about training programs that fit Emma's job goals. Authorize an adult service provider to seek out a job that meets her interests. Use the Youth On-the-Job Training reimbursement as an incentive to pay the employer, if needed. Discuss possible mileage reimbursement for Emma's parents to get her to and from the job.
- ✓ **School:** Support Emma to research labor market info using [www.dpi.wi.gov/acp/wicareercruising](http://www.dpi.wi.gov/acp/wicareercruising) and other resources. Arrange informational interviews and job shadows with the animal hospital, dog grooming salon, and other businesses – some may occur during the school day and some may be on the weekends or evenings. Staff will help her practice interviewing skills.
- ✓ **Family:** Assist Emma with researching post-secondary training programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities ([www.thinkcollege.net](http://www.thinkcollege.net)) and have programs that meet the identified training requirements of her job goal.
- ✓ **CLTS Waivers:** Emma uses her long-term support services to work with a mentor to practice social skills needed during interviews and as an employee. When she gets a permanent job in her community, she can receive ongoing job support through her long-term support waivers.

# Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) Waivers

## Fact Sheet for Teachers

### What is CLTS?

The Children's Long Term Support Waivers make Medicaid funding available to support children who are living at home or in the community and who have substantial limitations due to developmental, emotional, and/or physical disabilities. A range of different services and supports are identified based on an assessment of the child's specific needs and identified goals or outcomes.

A Support and Service Coordinator (SSC) works with families to identify goals or outcomes and develop a long-term support plan called an Individual Service Plan (ISP).

### Who is eligible?

A child must:

- be under 22 years of age;
- be eligible for Wisconsin Medicaid, including:
  - be a United States citizen or have acceptable immigration status;
  - be a Wisconsin resident;
  - not have income in their name in excess of the current Medicaid standards;
- live at home or in a foster care setting;
- have a level of care need that is typically provided in an institutional setting such as a hospital or nursing home; and
- be able to receive safe and appropriate care at home and/or in the community;



All children or young adults must meet these basic requirements for CLTS Waivers eligibility. To qualify for certain types of funding, there may be additional requirements (example: Autism Treatment Services).

### How does a family apply?

The parent or guardian should contact the County Human Services Department where they live and let them know they are interested in long-term support services for their child. Someone will discuss the various programs and resources that may be available in the county for the child based on their needs and the services available.

To apply, the county agency worker will assist the family with some or all of the following:

- Completing an application packet;
- Scheduling a home-visit for the county service coordinator to meet with the family in the home to help complete the assessment of the child's needs;
- Determining the child's "Level of Care" need using an online functional screening tool that the county service coordinator will complete;
- Determining the child's disability status
- Coordinating Wisconsin Medicaid eligibility (some counties have waiting lists so it's best to contact the county as soon as possible to find out about eligibility).

## What are some examples of services the CLTS Waivers could provide?

Care Management/Support & Service Coordination \* Communication Aids \* Supportive Home Care \*  
Counseling & Therapeutic Services \* Daily Living Skills Training Mentoring \* Home Modifications \* Adaptive  
Aids \* Respite Care \* Specialized Medical & Therapeutic Supplies \* Supported Employment

This is not an inclusive list of services. For more information including descriptions of each service, please visit the Children's Services website below.

Collaboration between school team and CLTS team members can facilitate progress toward goals for students with disabilities. If you're not sure whether a student has CLTS, you can ask the family.

## For More Information on CLTS...

Families can contact the Children's Services Division of the county that makes eligibility determinations. For a list of county agencies and contacts, please visit: [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/areaadmin/HSDListing.asp](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/areaadmin/HSDListing.asp)

For more information on the CLTS Waivers, please visit:  
[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/children/clts/waiver/family/index.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/children/clts/waiver/family/index.htm)

CompassWisconsin: Threshold provides eligibility determinations for some counties:  
<http://compasswisconsin.org/>

## Additional Resources

Aging and Disability Resource Centers  
<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc/index.htm>

You Can Work brochure  
[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/P0/p00516.pdf](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/P0/p00516.pdf)

Statewide Transition Information  
[www.witig.org](http://www.witig.org)

Department of Health Services Employment Initiatives Section  
<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/clts/waiver/transition/youcanwork.htm>



# Acronyms

ADRC [Aging and Disability Resource Center](#)

BA [Benefits Analysis](#)

CAP [Client Assistance Program](#)

CCoTs [County Community on Transition](#) (formerly known as TACs – Transition Action Councils)

CESA [Cooperative Education Service Agencies](#)

CIP [Community Integration Program](#)

CLTS [Children’s Long Term Supports](#)

CMS [Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services](#)

COP [Community Options Program](#)

CYSHCN [Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs](#)

DCF [Department of Children and Families](#)

DHS [Department of Health Services](#)

DOL [Department of Labor](#)

DPI [Department of Public Instruction](#)

DVR [Division of Vocational Rehabilitation](#)

DWD [Department of Workforce Development](#)

HCBS [Home and Community Based Services](#)

I/DD [Intellectual and Developmental Disability](#)

IDEA [Individuals with Disability Education Act](#)

IEP [Individualized Education Program](#)

ILC [Independent Living Center](#)

IPE [Individualized Plan for Employment](#)

IRWE [Impairment-Related Work Expenses](#)

ISP [Individual Service Plan](#)

JC [Job Coach/Job Coaching](#)

JD [Job Developer/Job Development](#)



LGTW [Let’s Get to Work](#)

LTS [Long Term Services](#)

MA [Medicaid](#)

MCO [Managed Care Organization](#)

NSTTAC [National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center](#)

PASS [Plan to Achieve Self-Support](#)

PTP [Postsecondary Transition Plan](#)

SDS [Self-Directed Supports](#)

SEA/  
Para [Special Education Assistant](#)

SEIE [Student Earned Income Exclusion](#)

SI	<a href="#">Systematic Instruction</a>	TIP	<a href="#">Transition Improvement Plan</a>
SSDI	<a href="#">Social Security Disability Insurance</a>	VR	<a href="#">Vocational Rehabilitation</a> (sometimes used interchangeably with DVR)
SSI	<a href="#">Supplemental Security Income</a>	WIA	<a href="#">Workforce Investment Act</a>
TA	<a href="#">Task Analysis</a>	WIBC	<a href="#">Work Incentive Benefits Counseling</a>
TAG	<a href="#">Transition Action Guide</a>	WIBS	<a href="#">Work Incentive Benefits Specialist</a>
TAN	<a href="#">Transition Advisory Network</a>	WIOA	<a href="#">Work Innovations &amp; Opportunities Act</a>
TCN	<a href="#">Transition Collaboration Network</a>	WIPA	<a href="#">Work Incentives Planning and Assistance</a>
TIG	<a href="#">Transition Improvement Grant</a>	YOJT	<a href="#">Youth on the Job Training Initiative</a>







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Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities/Let's Get to Work Project



**LET'S**

**GET TO**

Launching youth with disabilities  
into the workforce

**WORK**

# QUICK GUIDE

## ON TRANSITION TO EMPLOYMENT

A collection of resources and tools for teachers and school staff supporting the transition to integrated, community employment for students with disabilities. The Quick Guide will give you the tools and information you need, when you need it!

Developed by  
Nancy Molfenter, Ph.D.  
and Shannon Webb for the  
Wisconsin Let's Get to  
Work Project



Find the QUICK GUIDE at  
[www.letsgettoworkwi.org](http://www.letsgettoworkwi.org)



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Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities/Let's Get to Work Project

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# The 5 C's

## of Evidence-Based Practices in Transition for Students with Disabilities

The most commonly identified best practices in transition can be condensed into the **Five C's** of Evidence-Based Transition Programming to Increase Employment Outcomes for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities:

1

**COORDINATION of TRANSITION SERVICES**—In order for best practices in transition services to be consistently implemented within any school or district, there must be a staff position dedicated to overseeing the educational services being offered to facilitate successful passage from school life to young adult life for students. This is particularly the case with regard to students with more significant disabilities.

2

**COURSEWORK, including EXTRA-CURRICULARS and COLLEGE ACCESS**—Students with disabilities need to take classes and have extra-curricular opportunities throughout their education that are inclusive and related to life skill and career development goals. This practice has been shown to increase student, family, and teacher expectations that helps students to develop peer relationships and appropriate social and employment soft skills earlier than students who do not have inclusive opportunities. In addition, students who have had more and broader inclusive opportunities have increased academic outcomes, which also put them in a better position for having expanded access to postsecondary education opportunities, career options, and ultimately higher paying jobs after completing a transition program.

3

**CAREER GOALS**—Students must be supported to consider and establish employment goals for their future that are self-determined, individualized and have been developed with direct involvement of students themselves, parents, family, and other team members. Coursework and planning for students should follow the goals that are established.

4

**COMMUNITY INTERNSHIPS & JOBS to GAIN WORK EXPERIENCE**—Students need opportunities to directly explore and practice the types of jobs they are interested in pursuing. Experiences should be varied, based on individual career goals, continue through the summer months, and provide students opportunities to develop a range of work and life skills. Students should have a minimum of two paid experiences prior to exiting school.

5

**COLLABORATION with STUDENTS, FAMILIES & a VARIETY of COMMUNITY MEMBERS**—Local Education Agencies (LEA's), and specifically transition coordinators and high school special educators, need to develop collaborative relationships that expand outside of school and district personnel to family members, key system and adult service partners, and community/business contacts.

# The **5 C's**

## of Evidence-Based Practices in Transition for Students with Disabilities



**COORDINATION** of transition services,  
including fostering Self-Determination



**CLASSES** and extra –curricular activities  
are inclusive with peers who do not  
have abilities, including postsecondary  
education opportunities



**CAREER GOALS** that are individualized  
and based on strengths and interests



**COMMUNITY WORK EXPERIENCE** including  
paid jobs



**COLLABORATION** with a variety of partners,  
including family members, employers, DVR,  
long-term care and WIBC

**The Quick Guide will help you implement the 5 C's.**

# Let's Get to Work Quick Guide

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For more samples, tools and resources check out the online version of the  
Let's Get to Work Quick Guide.

<http://www.letsgettoworkwi.org/index.php/lgtw-resource-guide/>

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## Coordination

In order for best practices in transition services to be consistently implemented within any school or district, there must be a staff position dedicated to overseeing the educational services being offered to facilitate successful passage from school life to young adult life for students. This is particularly the case with regard to students with more significant disabilities





# What is Transition Coordination?

## Why do we need to consider Transition Coordination & what does that mean?

Coordinating Transition Services for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities is one way that schools and districts can help ensure that students have better employment and life outcomes in adult life. Transition coordination simply means that someone is following the progress of students toward their short and long-term goals while tracking the implementation of research-based practices for each student. LGTW developed a tool for tracking the comprehensive set of services and activities for individual students that have demonstrated positive impact on employment outcomes. This tool called the “Transition to Employment Services Rating Scale.”

## What’s the difference between Transition Coordination & Case Management?

A number of the tasks designated part of transition coordinator might also be typical tasks for assigned case managers, so your school and district probably already have someone doing these:

- ⊙ **Assessments:** Making sure that Age-appropriate Transition Assessments are conducted at least annually based on the identified needs of each student
- ⊙ **Longer Term Goals:** Supporting students to set Post-Secondary Goals and review those at least annually based on assessments and additional information from students & family members
- ⊙ **Classes:** Outlining a Course of Study outlined for students that are aligned with their post-secondary goals
- ⊙ **Annual Goals:** Ensuring that Annual Goals are developed and reviewed at least every six months to support progress toward post-secondary goals
- ⊙ **Short-term Goals:** Working with students to create Semester/quarter Goals that align with annual goals
- ⊙ **Extra-curricular Activities:** Providing information and opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities and school events
- ⊙ **Self-Advocacy:** Activities for students designed to promote the development of Self-Advocacy skills, including understanding of their disability and the supports that help them be successful
- ⊙ **Career Exploration:** Researching and talking with people about future jobs of interest based on assessment results



## What additional coordination activities have been used by Let's Get to Work pilot schools?

### ⊙ Community Connections and Direct Experiences

- Developing relationships with employers to identify employment needs in the community so that students can be prepared for jobs that are available
- Introducing students to prospective employers through tours, informational interviews, and job shadows
- Hosting community conversations

### ⊙ Connecting with DVR and Adult Services

- Providing information and referral forms to students and families
- Inviting the DVR counselor to attend IEP meetings or come to the school
- Provide information about adult services intake
- Host a Transition Night for families and invite DVR and Adult Service Agencies to present

### ⊙ Work Trials and Employment

- In conjunction with DVR, support students to seek internships, temporary, and ongoing paid work

### ⊙ Independent Living skills

- Provide development opportunities through in-school as well as community activities

### ⊙ Looking at student outcomes at least twice annually

- Utilize the Transition Services Rating Scale or other means of reviewing implementation of EBP's

### ⊙ Talking with students and families regularly and adjust goals as needed

- Align goals and services with IPE written by DVR as applicable



## Additional Resources

WI Department of Public Instruction Transition Services List

Wisconsin Transition Improvement Grant

National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT)

Transition Action Guide (TAG)





## **Transition Services Rating Scale**

for assessing the provision supports for students with disabilities to reach employment goals

This tool was designed by Nancy Molfenter and Ellie Hartman as part of the LGTW Wisconsin grant project to help high school special educators and transition teachers with: 1) Tracking the use of evidence-based practices for individual students, and 2) Identifying transition service needs in order to address existing gaps.

## Transition Services Rating Scale

**Background:** Items on this scale span **7** areas shown to increase successful transition from high school to integrated employment for students with disabilities. These areas include: *Self-Determination, Individualized Employment Goals, Collaboration with Transition Partners, General Education Classes & Extracurricular Activities, Community Work Experiences, Postsecondary Education, and Targeted Coordination of Transition Services.*

**Purpose:** This tool was designed to help high school special educators and transition teachers with: 1) Tracking the use of evidence-based practices for individual students, and 2) Identifying transition service needs in order to address existing gaps.

**Point System:** This scale uses a point system designed to measure the degree to which a student has engaged in evidence-based transition to employment activities since the last time the tool was completed. Each item describes a specific activity for students with disabilities linked to a higher likelihood of being employed after school.

1 point is given for each instance of the student engaging in the activity described. For some items, there is a secondary criterion that receives *1 or more extra points* as listed. \*Secondary criteria are awarded extra points because these items have demonstrated a stronger impact on employment outcomes.

For example, on item 1., if a student practiced sharing information about her/his disability to two different special education teachers and the student also shared disability information with one general education teacher, a 3 would be placed on the first line. An additional extra credit point is added for the instance of sharing with the general education teacher with a 1 on the next line. The total for the item would be 4.

### Section I - Self-Determination

1. Student can identify her/his strengths and impact of disability to:
  - a. Case manager and special education staff
  - b. General education teachers
  - c. Prospective employers/community members

1 point for every occurrence of student self-disclosing disability to someone from the list above 3

\*Add 1 *extra* point for each time the student self-disclosed his/her disability to a general education teacher or prospective employer/community 1

Item points (add numbers from both lines above here) 4

If the student self-disclosed disability information to one special educator, one general educator, and one prospective employer/community member, 3 points are given on the first line. In this case, 2 extra points would go on the second line – 1 extra point each for the general education teacher and the prospective employer. The Item Total would be 5.

1 point for every occurrence of student self-disclosing disability to someone from the list above 3

\*Add 1 *extra* point for each time the student self-disclosed his/her disability to a general education teacher or prospective employer/community 2

Item points (add numbers from both lines above here) 5

Points for each item and section accumulate over time to create an ongoing tracking system for transition to employment activities. Items and sections receiving more points are areas of current strength in terms of the student's transition services. Items that receive 0 points and sections with minimal points indicate areas of need in the scope of transition services for the student. Goals for next steps in transition activities can be developed based on results.

**Using Results:** By completing the scale over the course of transition years, educators can track the opportunities for individual students in each of the included areas linked to positive employment outcomes. Using the tracking form provided, teachers can identify, and then provide, opportunities that have been lacking or underrepresented in transition planning and services previously.

By reviewing scores across a group of students at a high school or in a district, educators and administrators can identify areas of strength as well as gaps in transition services for students with disabilities.

**Recommended Frequency of Use:** This scale will be most helpful to teachers and students if completed at the beginning, middle, and end of each academic year starting in the first school year that the student enters at age 14. Completing the scale for a student mid-year will allow educators time to adjust services and activities for the second half of a given school year to increase attention to transition activities, as well as assist in planning for summer opportunities.

**\*Note:** Although the majority of activities listed in the scale typically happen through high school services, Special Education Teachers/Transition Coordinators might need to gather information from family members and other partners in transition for a few items on this scale.

**Student Name:**

**Age and Grade:**

**Completed By:**

**Date of Completion:**

**Section I - Self-Determination**

1. Student can identify her/his strengths and impact of disability to:

- Case manager and special education staff
- General education teachers
- Prospective employers/community members

1 point for every occurrence of student self-disclosing disability to someone from the list above\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 *extra* point for each time the student self-disclosed his/her disability to a general education teacher or prospective employer/community\_\_\_\_\_

Item points (add numbers from both lines above here) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Student can identify what accommodations he/she needs in:

- a. Education settings
- b. Employment/community settings

1 point for every occurrence of student self-identifying accommodation needs to someone

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

3. Student can self-advocate for accommodations needed in

- a. Educational settings
- b. Employment/community settings

1 point for every *documented* occurrence of student asking for needed accommodation  
\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 *extra* point for each time the student asked a general education teacher or employer\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

**Section I Points** (add numbers from all "Item Points" lines here) \_\_\_\_\_

## Section II – Individualized Planning and Goals

4. Student provided direct input into the development of her/his annual transition and post-school employment and education goals.

Examples – *documented* discussions with student prior to and at planning meeting, review and revision of goals based on student data or transition assessment results.

1 point for each documented event of gathering student input toward goals\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 extra point for any meetings that were student-initiated or student-led\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

5. Student's family member(s) provided input for annual transition and post-school employment and education goals

Examples – *documented* discussion with family at planning meeting, transition survey completed by family, direct contact with family to gather input

1 point for each documented event of gathering family input for employment goals

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

6. Student has annual goals and objectives designed to directly support progress toward individualized post-school education and employment goals.

Examples – learning to use public transportation to facilitate independence getting to college or work, using assistive technology to successfully complete a general education class, learning to follow a set list of instructions to develop skills for completing job tasks, or learning how to follow a time schedule without assistance

1 point for each annual goal that directly aligns with post-school goals  
points\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 extra point for each annual goal aligned with post-school goals that was self-identified by the student (student directed the team to include the goal through input)

\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

- 2 Student's annual and post-school employment and/or education goals have been revised as a result of community work experiences

1 point for each goal revised as a result of community experience

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

**Section II Points\_\_\_\_\_**

### Section III - Collaboration

7. Student and IEP team have worked with **general education** staff to identify classes and extra-curricular opportunities.

Examples – *documented* review of all available general education classes and clubs or extracurricular activities offered at the school (opportunity mapping), discussions with general educators about classes and activities the student plans to attend, meetings with general educators.

1 point for each documented consultation with general education staff

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

8. Student and his/her family have met with **guidance** counselor or equivalent person at school to discuss options for higher education and career plan.

1 point for each time student met with guidance staff

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

9. Student and her/his family have been provided information about **Vocational Rehabilitation** (VR) services.

1 point for every documented occurrence of information being provided \_\_\_\_\_

\*Add **1 extra point** if an **application** has been submitted to **VR** \_\_\_\_\_ +

\*Add **another 1 extra point** if student has Individual Plan for Employment (**IPE**) \_\_\_\_\_ +

\*Add **an additional 3 extra points** if **VR services** are being used to facilitate paid employment \_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

10. Student and her/his family have been provided information about the process of seeking resources from adult or long term care services.

Examples: Contacts for adult services intake (local aging and disability resource center, local state or county authority on disability services, social security, mental health, and health care benefits), and agencies that provide supportive services (home supports, recreation support, personal care assistance, mobility training, and transportation).

1 point for every different/new resource shared with student and her/his family

Item points\_\_\_\_\_



11. Student and her/his family have been provided with information about integrated employment service providers available in the community where they live.  
Examples: Transition night at school where integrated employment support providers are present, brochures given to student and family, student and family meet with former students who are using the provider to learn about the services offered.  
\*Note – DO NOT count information provided about sheltered/segreated workshop settings in points for this scale.

1 point for each different *integrated employment* support provider introduced\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 extra point for every prospective *integrated employment* support provider the student and her/his family have met or been in contact with\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

12. Student and family have been provided information about obtaining work incentives benefits counseling to learn about how to keep needed benefits when working.  
\*Note: this is *not* the same as applying for public benefits through a *Benefits Specialist*

1 point for each *documented* time information was provided\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add **1 extra point** if student has had an analysis completed by a *Work Incentives Benefits Counselor* (WIBC) \_\_\_\_\_+

\*Add an **additional extra 1 point** if that WIBC was part of the Work Incentives Benefits Specialist Association (WIBSA)\_\_\_\_\_  
(*this item for Wisconsin only – can be found on website using the name of WIBC*)

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

**Section III Points**\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Section IV - High School Classes and Extra-Curricular Activities**

13. Student has had support to review the list of classes offered to all same-grade peers and participate in making choices about the classes he/she is taking now and will take in the future (opportunity mapping).

1 point per *documented* opportunity for student to choose from classes offered\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 extra point for each class chosen by the student that was placed on his/her schedule\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

14. Student is currently enrolled in general education classes with peers who do not have disabilities.

1 point for each *inclusive* gen ed class the student is taking at this time\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 extra point for every current gen ed class with content directly related to a post-school education or employment goal\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

15. Student has had opportunities to choose from the list of school-sponsored extracurricular activities offered to all other same-grade peers based on her/his talents and interests. (opportunity mapping)

1 point for every *documented* opportunity provided for the student to choose inclusive extra-curricular activities offered through school

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

16. Student is actively involved in extracurricular activities with peers who do not have disabilities.

\**Note:* DO NOT count activities designed especially for students with disabilities such as Best Buddies or Special Olympics for points on this scale.

1 point for each extracurricular activity the student chose and actively participates in at this time\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 extra point for each activity directly related to post school education or employment goal\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Section IV Points \_\_\_\_\_**

#### **Section V – Community Work Experiences**

17. Student has had one or more volunteer experiences in the community.

1 point for every new different volunteer experience since last completion of scale\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 extra point for each of the different or new experiences directly related to employment goal\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

18. Student has gone on job shadows and/or tours of community businesses for the purpose of career exploration.

*\*Note:* DO NOT include tours of sheltered workshops in the points for this scale.

1 point for each new and different job shadow/business tour since last completing this scale\_\_\_\_\_

*\*Add 1 extra point for new job shadows/business tours in fields directly related to post school employment goal*\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

19. Student has participated in work study, service learning, or another program to obtain school credit for time working or volunteering at a community business/organization.

1 point for each new opportunity to earn credit for community work experience since last completion of scale

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

20. In conjunction with community work experiences, the student has been provided opportunities to practice and develop social and soft skills needed for optimal employment success.

Examples: Job skills class, assigned mentoring, use of video modeling, implementation of social and/or soft skills curriculum, job coaching

1 point for each new and different formal learning opportunity provided since last completion of scale \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Add 1 extra point if social and/or soft skills training took place in community setting*\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

21. Student has had one or more paid integrated jobs in the community.

Note: DO NOT count paid work experience at sheltered workshops in the points for this scale.

1 point for each current paid integrated community job\_\_\_\_\_

*\*Add 1 extra point for each paid job directly related to post-school employment goal*\_\_\_\_\_

*\*Add 3 additional extra points for each current job that is paid directly by the employer (student is on company payroll)*\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

**Section V Points**\_\_\_\_\_

## Section VI - Postsecondary Education Goals

22. The student has had opportunities and support to explore options for postsecondary education that matches intended career choice.

1 point for college or postsecondary vocational-technical education goal\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 point if the postsecondary goal is directly related to the employment goal\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

23. Student has a program of study planned through her/his Individual Education/Transition plan (IEP/ITP) and/or Individual Learning Plan (ILP) or Academic Career Plan (ACP) that is aligned with postsecondary education goal.

1 point for course of study plan and postsecondary education goal alignment

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

24. Student and her/his family have been provided information about specific college or postsecondary vocational-technical education programs that might be a good fit.

\*Note: DO NOT include points for providing information about segregated vocational training programs such as sheltered workshops on this scale.

1 point for each college or vocational-technical institution introduced\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add **1 extra point** for every new postsecondary education institution toured since last completion of scale\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add **2 extra points** for each college class the student has taken through dual enrollment since the last completion of the scale \_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

## Section VI Points\_\_\_\_\_

## Section VII - Coordination of Transition Services

Coordination of transition planning services involves assistance to students with disabilities to engage in all of the activities covered in this rating scale. There are sometimes Additional required goals and activities as determined by the team and IEP.

25. Student has a designated school staff member assigned to coordinate and oversee the delivery of transition services, including course of study, annual goals, postsecondary education and employment goals, and all related transition activities.

1 point if formal transition coordination is an assigned job\_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 1 extra point if the transition coordinator's time is dedicated full-time to that role\_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

26. Student's transition plan and services are reviewed regularly to ensure

1 point for this completion of the transition services rating scale \_\_\_\_\_

Item points\_\_\_\_\_

**Section VII Points\_\_\_\_\_**

**Summary of Section Points**

I. \_\_\_\_\_

II. \_\_\_\_\_

III. \_\_\_\_\_

IV. \_\_\_\_\_

V. \_\_\_\_\_

VI. \_\_\_\_\_

VII. \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Points \_\_\_\_\_**

**Transition Service Goals based on Section Scores:**

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



[illegible]

- I - Self-Determination - Item 1.
- I - Self-Determination Item 2.
- I - Self-Determination Item 3.

- II - Goals Item 4.
- II - Goals Item 5.
- II - Goals Item 6.
- II - Goals Item 7.

Goals Section Total
III - Collaboration Item 8.
III - Collaboration Item 9.
III - Collaboration Item 10.
III - Collaboration Item 11.
III - Collaboration Item 12.
III - Collaboration Item 13.

III - Collaboration Section Total

IV - Classes/Extra-Curriculars Item 14.

IV - Classes/Extra-Curriculars Item 15.

IV - Classes/Extra-Curriculars Item 16.

IV - Classes/Extra-Curriculars Item 17.

Classes/Extra-Curriculars Section Total	
V - Community Work Exp Item 18.	
V - Community Work Exp Item 19.	
V - Community Work Exp Item 20.	
V - Community Work Exp Item 21.	

V - Community Work Exp Section Total	
VI - Postsecondary Ed Item 22.	
VI - Postsecondary Ed Item 23.	
VI - Postsecondary Ed Item 24.	

VI - Postsecondary Ed Section Total

VII - Coordination Item 25.

VII - Coordination Item 26.

VII - Coordination Section Total

Total Points





# 3 BIG IDEAS for Supporting Self-Determination in Transition to Employment

Promoting self-determination for students with disabilities by affording decision-making and leadership opportunities has been recommended for many years. And, applying self-determination principles to transition and employment planning is also a well-established best practice. The Let's Get to Work (LGTW) Quick Guide includes a list of free resources available to help teams implement activities designed to promote self-determination. Below are three BIG IDEAS for supporting students to be self-determined in planning for employment.

## 1. Make Time for Student-Led Preparation to Foster MEANINGFUL INVOLVEMENT

- a) **Get Students THINKING about their Career Goals** – In preparation for goal-setting and IEP meetings, students can be engaged in opportunities to consider their own interests, abilities, and learning needs. Some options for making this happen can include: *hold individual and group discussions about a variety of jobs; talk about what jobs students have already tried at home and school; watch videos about various careers and jobs; visit local businesses; have guest presenters; and use information-gathering tools* such as the LGTW Employment Planning Tool or the Self-Directed Employment Planning Modules and Workbook (links to both are available in the Career Goals section of the LGTW Quick Guide). Once a student has had time to consider what they like to do, what they are good at doing, and the types of jobs and places that interest them most, they are better prepared to set goals for themselves.

- b) **Support Students to EXPRESS their Career Goals** – Educators are accustomed to writing student goals, but *students can benefit when they are engaged to write down, type, or verbally express their own goals.*

Taking part in developing goals can promote a deeper understanding of the fact that transition and employment goals are all about them. When getting personal goals from thought to written or verbal form, both short and longer-term goals should be outlined, since one leads to the other. Starting with the end in mind and then working backward (backward planning design) is usually most effective. Laying out the small steps or “achievable chunks” needed to accomplish the employment goal makes the process less overwhelming for students and the whole team. Another important step is letting students know that goals can change – setting them is a starting point, not an ending point!

### Support students to:

- ✓ **THINK** about their career goals
- ✓ **EXPRESS** their career goals
- ✓ **PREPARE** visuals about their career goals
- ✓ **PRACTICE** sharing their goals

- c) **Help Students PREPARE Visual Representations** – Students can *create written and/or electronic documents about their interests, abilities, and support needs.* The format can include pictures, videos, audio files, words, or a combination. The product can be a poster, a visual resume, a presentation like PowerPoint, or something else the student wants to use. The best format really depends on the individual student (another opportunity to provide choice).

- d) **Provide Time for Students to PRACTICE Sharing their Goals** – Once a student sets short and long-term employment goals, gets them down on paper, and prepares a format for sharing them, **teachers can facilitate discussions and presentation by students**. This practice can happen one-on-one, in small groups, in classes, and with trusted friends and educators. After some practice, students will be ready to take the lead on presenting their goals and plans to their family members, other team members, and in more formal meetings.

## 2. Commit to Student-Led Planning Meetings that Promote LEADERSHIP

Once students have created visual plan representations and practiced, they can **take the lead in sharing that plan, including short and long-term goals, at IEP meetings**. When students are well-prepared and clearly express what they want to accomplish, teams usually find working together toward those goals happens more easily and enlisting support and help of other team members with potential employer connections and tasks also unfolds more naturally because goals are clear and person-centered. Team members generally want to be supportive, and students can lead the way to explain how everyone on the team can be helpful in supporting their career objective.



## 3. Ensure that Evolving Goals Based on Experience is the EXPECTATION

This idea really involves knowing when to go back to the first one. When students begin to gain experience with different jobs in a variety of settings, there is a higher likelihood that both short and long-term goals will change. Sometimes goals need slight tweaks, and sometimes they need complete overhauls. **Truly supporting self-determination means allowing students to draw from their experiences and go back to square one when they figure out that they don't really want the kind of job they originally thought they did.** Maybe a student had a goal to become a pre-school teacher based on experience babysitting cousins, but figured out changing diapers was not something he wanted to do each day at a job. Or perhaps a student's employment goal was to become a chef, until she realized that cooking at home is much more pleasant than trying to get through the busy dinner rush at a restaurant. Everyone becomes self-determined by learning from successes and failures, and the education system best promotes actual self-determination by allowing dignity of risk, trial and error – and going back to the drawing board with students as many times as needed.

## Additional Resources

The [Let's Get to Work Quick Guide](#) has many additional resources to help you support students' self-determination and goal setting. Resources you may find helpful include:

- [Self-Directed Transition Planning Tool](#)
- [Self-Directed Employment Planning Modules](#)
- [Transition Services Rating Scale](#)
- [Discovery Notes Form](#)

# Information & Resources for Promoting Self-Determination

Being self-determined is important for success in employment and life in general. Numerous resources are available to assist teachers and students with disabilities as they work to build self-determination skills. There is no “best” way or resource, but certain practices, including: 1) supporting students to become involved in leading their own planning meetings, 2) offering choices among available options for classes and extra-curricular activities, and 3) providing opportunities to practice self-determination in natural settings, are recommended.

The Let's Get to Work Library of Self-Determination Resources will help you explain to teams why self-determination is so important in transition and expanding the scope of ways you teach it. Some of the resources are stand-alone, while others can be used with additional items as indicated within the documents. The library of resources can be found at <http://www.letsgettoworkwi.org/index.php/lgtw-project-resources/self-determination-resource-library/>.

## Self-Determination Resource Webpage

### Background Information on Self-Determination:

- **NTLS2 Fact Sheet** – research findings on self-determination for youth with disabilities
- **NCET Research to Practice Brief** – about self-determination and tips for promoting it
- **Whose Life Is It Anyway?** – different perspectives on self-determination for a transitioning youth
- **Opening Doors to Self-Determination** – a guide for teachers, students, and families

### Practice Information and Tips:

- **DCDT Fact Sheet** – goal-setting for youth with disabilities along with a list of additional resources
- **Foundations** – a toolkit about fostering self-determination for educators
- **Lesson Plan Examples** – on various topics that can be used or adapted when working on self-determination
- **Fostering Self-Determination** – a set of activities and lesson plans to build self-determination skills
- **Self-Determination Ideas from Paraprofessionals** – a set of specific ways to promote self-determination compiled from a survey of paraprofessionals in WI along with lists of resources for each

### Resources Geared Toward Students:

- **The Speak-Up Guide** – a resource book students can use on its own or with accompanying materials
- **The 3 R's of Self-Determination** – a student practice guide about rights, responsibilities, and resources for increasing self-determination
- **Leadership Tips for Youth** – a list of ideas for youth interested in gaining self-determination skills through leadership roles

### Resources Geared Toward Parents:

- **Fostering Self-Determination** – A parent-to-parent guide for providing opportunities for children and youth to build self-determination skills along with a list of additional resources for parents and teams



Youth presenting information to the Mayor to promote integrated employment

Youth presenting at a Town Hall meeting with Senator Leibham on why they want to work in the community



## Additional Resources

There is a lot of information available about self-determination on-line. Below are a handful of websites with great information.

- **[www.imdetermined.org](http://www.imdetermined.org)** – a website with resources for youth, educators and parents focused on helping youth with disabilities take control of their lives.
- **[www.wiyouthfirst.org](http://www.wiyouthfirst.org)** – a website for youth, about youth; includes information and resources about a variety of transition topics. Look for the companion page on Facebook!
- **[www.ncwd-youth.info](http://www.ncwd-youth.info)** – innovative strategies, Guideposts for Success, helpful tips all in one location.
- Check out the annual **Self-Determination Conference** held each November at the Kalahari Resort in the Wisconsin Dells. The conference empowers people with disabilities to have more control over their lives. For more information, visit **[www.wi-bpdd.org](http://www.wi-bpdd.org)**.

# Classes

## *Including Extra-Curriculars and College Access*

Students with disabilities need to take classes and have extra-curricular opportunities throughout their education that are inclusive and related to life skill and career development goals. This practice has been shown to increase student, family, and teacher expectations and helps students to develop peer relationships and appropriate social and employment soft skills earlier than students who do not have inclusive opportunities. In addition, students who have had more and broader inclusive opportunities have increased academic outcomes, which also put them in a better position for having expanded access to postsecondary education opportunities, career options, and ultimately higher paying jobs after completing a transition program.





# Why High School Inclusion Matters: Factors to Consider

Inclusion of students with significant disabilities at the high school level has been long debated and undoubtedly presents challenges for districts and schools. However, there are evidence-based reasons for implementing inclusive practices. And, students with and without disabilities alike will benefit.

## Gains in Academic Performance

Studies have shown that when students with disabilities take more general education classes with peers who do not have disabilities, academic gains are made, even with the use of largely modified and adapted curriculum and materials.<sup>1, 2</sup> Think of it this way, any exposure to the general education content is better than none. And, schools that implement inclusion report being pleasantly surprised at the level of participation seen that educators previously thought were not possible. General education classes in high school are also correlated to college attendance and any college attendance is linked to better employment and life outcomes.<sup>3</sup>

## Benefits for Students without Disabilities

Studies have found that the majority of secondary students without disabilities report never or rarely seeing students with significant disabilities at their schools, and having almost no opportunity to interact with peers who have disabilities.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, the majority also report that they would like to get to know students with significant disabilities. Varied research over a number of years has demonstrated that academic achievement is not negatively affected for students without disabilities when their peers with disabilities are included in general education classes. In fact, there is some evidence that serving in a peer tutor role can provide academic benefits for students without disabilities.<sup>5</sup>

## Increases in Social Interaction

Logic dictates that students with disabilities will have more social interactions with peers who do not have disabilities when they are in general education classes and extra-curricular activities side by side. Research confirms that is indeed the case.<sup>4, 5</sup> It just makes sense that it is easier to get to know people if you spend time with them. Two important aspects of providing opportunities for social interactions through inclusion is affording students with disabilities **chances to be in the same places at the same times** as their peers without disabilities and **thoughtful coordination without adult hovering**. In other words, special and general educators should work together to orchestrate seating, expectations, peer supports, materials, content delivery, and participation without the constant presence of adults in close proximity to students with disabilities.

## Optimal Practices Require Individualized Planning

The [10 Practical Ways to Foster Inclusion](#), along with this and other resources in the [LGTW Quick Guide](#) provide inclusive strategies drawn from research as well as the direct experiences of several [Let's Get to Work](#) pilot schools. However, there is no one right or best way to implement inclusion. Just as both special and general educational practices are most effective when the needs of individual students are placed at the forefront of thinking and planning, the same is true of inclusive practices. For one student, science classes and related school clubs might be optimal. For another, music and art could be the perfect way to relate to peers through shared passion. Some might be in general education classes most of the day, while others still may need to build up their comfort level or balance small group direct instructional time with time in general education.



1 Browder, D. M., & Cooper-Duffy, K. (2003).  
4 Salend, S. J., & Duhaney, L. M. G. (1999).

2 Cole, C. M., Waldron, N., & Majd, M. (2004).  
5 Carter, E. W., & Hughes, C. (2005).

3 Landmark, L., Ju, S., & Zhang, D. (2010).  
6 Siperstein, G. N., Parker, R. C., Bardon, J. N., & Widaman, K. F. (2007).

## Examples from LGTW Pilot Schools

**Andy**, a young man who uses a wheelchair and communicates in a variety of ways but says very little, has always attended a wide variety of classes at his high school. He particularly likes culinary classes. Often, Andy gets assistance in classes from his peers without disabilities, and is provided valued roles such as delivering notes from the office or reading in the library when he becomes restless and needs to leave class before the end of the period. When visiting his school, it is obvious that many of his peers without disabilities know him and appreciate his presence there. People wave and say hello in the hallways and when he goes for lunch, he sits at a table with some students who do not have disabilities. Andy's favorite hobby is making spirit key chains with friends to sell before school and at school sporting events. The friends he makes key chains with are peers without disabilities.



**Chris** has always been involved in some general education classes and especially enjoys science and history, but used to have an adult attend most classes with him. Over the past two years, classes have been added to his schedule and adult support simultaneously faded where possible. With daily check-ins and collaboration between his case manager and general education teachers, Chris has been very successful and takes great pride in his ability to complete his work and get good grades. His social interactions have also increased since he has an adult with him less frequently.

**Tom** had very limited time with peers who did not have disabilities until last year. Then, his high school implemented two specific strategies to increase inclusion: having students with and without disabilities go to homeroom together and the development of classes co-taught by a general and special educator. By the end of the first semester after those changes, Tom had made several friends without disabilities, began eating lunch with them, and started seeing them socially outside of school. Soon after that, Tom invited other students with disabilities to join the group for lunch, thus expanding not only his own social network, but also doing the same for his peers with disabilities.



**Sarah** had a busy schedule in high school, working in the coffee shop, attending classes, and socializing with friends. It was not always easy, as she sometimes became frustrated and has tough days, even acting aggressively toward peers without disabilities at times. Not being included was never an option at her high school and she got the support she needed from not only special educators, but also general educators and peers without disabilities when she was having a difficult time. The distinction of “those kids” or “your kids” is not apparent in an inclusive environment and she was not permanently removed from classes or activities because of behavioral issues. Sarah had friends who stuck by her in high school and have stayed in touch after graduation – just like anyone would want.

## Inclusion is Long-Term Thinking

*Incorporating Inclusive practices has short-term pay offs, but also represents long-term thinking that can be closely tied to more positive transition and employment outcomes. Exposure to academic content, increased chances of attending college, learning and practicing social skills, and getting to know more people before leaving high school are among the benefits for students with disabilities. As a result, those who have had more inclusive opportunities are better prepared for work and the adult world overall.<sup>7, 8</sup> Their counterparts without disabilities leave high school better prepared to accept, live, and work side-by-side with individuals who have disabilities, thus helping create more inclusive communities not just during high school, but well beyond.*





# 10 Practical Ways to Foster Inclusion

High school inclusion for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) can happen in natural ways that primarily involve having students with I/DD in the same places, for the same activities, at the same times as their peers without disabilities. Innovative educators and paraprofessionals can take on different roles that allow students with I/DD to take part more fully in the range of activities offered by schools. For some, this means re-thinking disability as well as the ways special education staff spend their time. Helping students with disabilities blending into the fabric of the school community, and be viewed in terms of strengths and positive contributions, is the ultimate goal of inclusion.

The following are 10 field-tested ideas to help expand or strengthen inclusion in your school:

## 1. Develop class schedules in typical ways.

- Use the same class scheduling system everyone else uses to create a plan for all 4 years of high school.
- Help students and families look at classes offered to students in the same grade level.
- Make sure classes connect with the student's interests and goals.
- Just like everyone else, help all students with disabilities map out a course of study that will prepare them to accomplish their postsecondary education and employment goals.

## 2. Add or expand co-teaching.

- Special educators can be lead teachers for a portion of instructional time working with *all* students in conjunction with general educators.
- Special educators bring expertise in universal design for teaching, scaffolding of information, and ways to accommodate for multiple learning styles.
- Special educators can modify and adapt content and materials for anyone in a class who has a need.
- Co-teaching can be integrated into one or two courses at a time per grade level based on demand for classes and educator knowledge/strengths.

## 3. Make homerooms/advisory time inclusive.

- Include students with I/DD in general education homerooms so they can access activities such as: meeting with advisors to discuss school and grade-level issues; checking in on status of academic performance; getting extra help with assignments; and making plans for participating in school events, field trips, and service projects.

## 4. Support students with disabilities to use & serve as peer tutors.

- Include peer tutoring in a variety of subjects and allow students with disabilities to be tutors for peers in areas in which they excel.
- Encourage students with disabilities to share their personal experiences to help their fellow students better understand the nature of their disabilities and how those impact their lives.

### Benefits of Inclusion

Inclusion is linked to better post-school outcomes for youth with disabilities, including college attendance and employment.

School inclusion goes hand-in-hand with preparing all students to be college and career ready.

Students and educators gain a deeper understanding of similarities between students with and without disabilities.

Peer-to-peer relationships evolve as students spend time together.

All students benefit from getting to know others who are different from them.

## 5. Facilitate and encourage inclusion at school events.

- Foster student interactions at field trips, dances, assemblies, and student body meetings by having students go with their inclusive homeroom or advisory class and provide limited adult supervision. (No hovering)

## 6. Foster fully inclusive lunchtimes.

- Ensure students with I/DD are included during lunchtime - whether that is based on their classes, grade, homeroom or random assignment – whatever method is used for all other students.
- Encourage peers to help students with disabilities who may need assistance with purchasing or carrying their lunch rather than assigning an adult.



## 7. Expand participation in sports, clubs, and extra-curricular activities.

- Provide students with I/DD information about *all* clubs, sports, and activities that are available at their grade level.
- Students with and without disabilities who do not possess keen athletic abilities can serve as sports' team managers and helpers.
- Encourage peers without disabilities to invite students with I/DD to clubs or activities of interest.
- Consider holding meetings during lunch or study hall times if afterschool transportation is an issue.

## 8. Extend in-school work experiences to everyone.

- Offer all student jobs found within the school to both students with and without disabilities to help them gain valuable work experiences together (e.g. running the school store or coffee shop, assisting with office tasks, helping in the cafeteria, and working on grounds-keeping).
- Avoid setting up separate jobs only for students with disabilities.

## 9. Promote service learning for all students.

- Ensure that students with and without disabilities are completing their service or volunteer requirements for graduation in the same places and at the same times, based on interests and schedules.

## 10. Provide shared career exploration activities.

- Build connections between special education staff and vocational/technical teachers to support students with I/DD to engage in career exploration and planning, such as classes, on-line research, business tours, career fairs, guidance counseling, and career presentations with peers who do not have disabilities.

# Additional Resources

Seeds of Inclusion Conference – every March at UW-Oshkosh

Inclusive Schools Network – a variety of ideas and resources



# High School Opportunity Map

This opportunity mapping tool is intended to provide an example of how information about classes and extracurricular activities can be compiled. Compiling comprehensive information into one document or web-based location can assist teachers and students with disabilities when considering classes and extracurricular activities available.

Opportunity Mapping can be an effective way to assess classes and activities that have not been offered to students with disabilities, but that could open opportunities to learn and be engaged in the school community along-side peers without disabilities.

Please take a few minutes to read through the entire survey prior to filling it out.

**School Name:**

**Number of students attending:**

**Name(s) of school personnel completing the opportunity map survey:**

## Opportunities for Student Involvement

This portion of the survey is intended to capture the array of coursework and student activities offered to all students at the school.

### 1. Please check all types of courses offered at the school:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family and Consumer Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Music
<input type="checkbox"/>	Art	<input type="checkbox"/>	Foreign Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical Education
<input type="checkbox"/>	Business	<input type="checkbox"/>	Geography	<input type="checkbox"/>	Political Science
<input type="checkbox"/>	Computer Science	<input type="checkbox"/>	Graphic Design	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reading
<input type="checkbox"/>	Driver's Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Health Sciences	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science
<input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/>	History	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social Studies
<input type="checkbox"/>	English	<input type="checkbox"/>	Math	<input type="checkbox"/>	World Affairs

Please list additional courses not mentioned above:

### 2. Please indicate the types of school sponsored activities that are offered:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Assemblies/Pep Rallies	<input type="checkbox"/>	Concerts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plays
<input type="checkbox"/>	Band	<input type="checkbox"/>	Forensics	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student Council
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chorus	<input type="checkbox"/>	Newspaper	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yearbook

Other (please specify)

**3. Please check all academic clubs currently offered at the school:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poetry
<input type="checkbox"/>	Astronomy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Geography	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rocket Building
<input type="checkbox"/>	Aviation	<input type="checkbox"/>	History	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reading
<input type="checkbox"/>	Biology	<input type="checkbox"/>	Math	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science
<input type="checkbox"/>	Debate	<input type="checkbox"/>	National Honor Society	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social Studies
<input type="checkbox"/>	DECA (marketing and management)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Odyssey of the Mind	<input type="checkbox"/>	Writing

Other (please specify)


**4. Please check all fine and creative art clubs currently offered at the school:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Anime (Japanese animation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drumming	<input type="checkbox"/>	Painting
<input type="checkbox"/>	Choir	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jazz	<input type="checkbox"/>	Photography
<input type="checkbox"/>	Drama/Theatre	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knitting	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pottery
<input type="checkbox"/>	Drawing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Orchestra		

Other (please specify)


**5. Please check all foreign language/culturally-based types of clubs currently offered at the school:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	African American	<input type="checkbox"/>	German	<input type="checkbox"/>	Latin
<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hispanic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Russian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hmong	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sign Language
<input type="checkbox"/>	French	<input type="checkbox"/>	Italian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spanish
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gay-Straight Alliance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Japanese		

Other (please specify)


**6. Please check all game and recreation clubs currently offered at the school:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Chess	<input type="checkbox"/>	Meditation and Yoga	<input type="checkbox"/>	Video gaming
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Movies	<input type="checkbox"/>	Word games (scrabble/pictionary)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fitness and exercise	<input type="checkbox"/>	Music		

Other (please specify)


**7. Please indicate political clubs that currently exist at the school:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Young Democrats	<input type="checkbox"/>	Young Independents	<input type="checkbox"/>	Young Republicans
--------------------------	-----------------	--------------------------	--------------------	--------------------------	-------------------

Other (please specify)


**8. Please check all service-oriented clubs currently offered at the school:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Amnesty International	<input type="checkbox"/>	FCCLA (Family Career and Community Leaders of America)	<input type="checkbox"/>	SADD (Students Against Drunk Driving)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Combating Poverty and Homelessness	<input type="checkbox"/>	KEY Club (Informs students of volunteer opportunities)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Students for Informed Response (addressing international issues)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Diversity Alliance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local service clubs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Environmental Issues
<input type="checkbox"/>	R.O.T.C.				

Other (please specify)


**9. Please check all sports offered at the school:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Basketball	<input type="checkbox"/>	Field Hockey	<input type="checkbox"/>	Soccer
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bowling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Football	<input type="checkbox"/>	Softball
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cheerleading	<input type="checkbox"/>	Frisbee	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tennis
<input type="checkbox"/>	Climbing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Golf	<input type="checkbox"/>	Track
<input type="checkbox"/>	Crew/Rowing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hockey	<input type="checkbox"/>	Volleyball
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cross Country	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lacrosse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Water Polo
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rugby	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weight lifting
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dance Team	<input type="checkbox"/>	Running	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrestling

Other (please specify)


**10. Please check all volunteer and job opportunities that exist for students at the school (either for credit or not for credit):**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Attendance Aide	<input type="checkbox"/>	Peer Tutor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student Services
<input type="checkbox"/>	Concession stand	<input type="checkbox"/>	School Store	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teaching Assistant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Library Aide	<input type="checkbox"/>	Score Board	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ticket Sales
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lighting Assistant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Set Design	<input type="checkbox"/>	Usher
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lunchroom Assistant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sound Assistant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yearbook layout and graphic design
<input type="checkbox"/>	Office Aide	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sports Statistician	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yearbook Writer

Additional roles not listed above:


**11. Please indicate all career development information and activities currently offered through the school:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Apprenticeships	<input type="checkbox"/>	Internships	<input type="checkbox"/>	PEP (Personal Education Planning)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Career Days	<input type="checkbox"/>	Interview Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Resume Writing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Career Exploration Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Job Hunting Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	College Information
<input type="checkbox"/>	Job Shadowing (going to visit people working in particular jobs)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scholarships	<input type="checkbox"/>	Informational interviews with employers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Military				

Other (please specify)


## Involvement of ALL Students

This portion of the survey is intended to encourage reflection on the general level of participation by students with significant disabilities in the variety of school-wide opportunities offered.

### 12. How is information about courses and extracurricular opportunities shared with the student body?

	Activity Advisors		Mailings		School Website
	Daily Announcements		Newsletters		Student to Student
	Department Announcements		School Bulletin Board		Teachers
	Filers		School Catalogs		

Other (please specify)


### 13. Please estimate how many students with significant disabilities are generally participating in the various types of opportunities at the school:

(Participation being defined as being in the same activity and at the same time as students without significant disabilities.)

	Most		Some		Few		None
Academic Classes (general)							
Academic Clubs							
Arts							
Career Development							
Cultural							
Foreign Language							
Games and Recreation							
Political							
School Community							
School Jobs							
Service-Oriented Activities							
Sports							

Please provide any additional information you think would be helpful:

--

### 14. What is or could be done to increase participation by students with significant disabilities in the various opportunities offered at the school?

Yes, this happens at the school		Seems like a good idea to try
---------------------------------	--	-------------------------------

General educators make suggestions for a particular student based on interest area(s)					
General educators present information to students and ask what they might want to try					
Intentional discussions at IEP-PTP meetings about the variety of opportunities available					

Parents are provided with information about courses and activities and make suggestions (send home catalogs/lists)				
Special educators make recommendations for particular student based on interest area (s)				
Special educators present information to students on a regular basis and ask what they might want to try				
Students with significant disabilities are provided experiential opportunities to attend a variety of activities				
Students without disabilities invite students				
with significant disabilities to attend classes and activities				

Please provide any additional thoughts or ideas for increasing participation by students with significant disabilities:

## Questions for Reflection

These questions were developed based on feedback from school personnel after completing the survey. They are intended to assist support teams and educators to move forward in their efforts to more fully include students with significant disabilities in general education classes and extracurricular activities.

**15. Which activities at our school are truly shared?**

**16. Which factors support such activities?**

**17. What barriers exist to the participation of students with disabilities in some activities?**

**18. What changes could we make to increase the number of inclusive activities?**

**19. Who could we engage as partners to help increase the range and quality of activities?**

**20. How will we measure the success of our efforts?**

## OPPORTUNITY MAPPING NEXT STEPS

1. Does a full list of options available at our school already exist or does that need to be created?
2. What classes and activities currently include students with significant disabilities?
3. What action steps will increase participation of one or more students with significant disabilities?
4. Who will help set targets, develop and implement action steps, and track progress?

ACTION STEP PLANNED	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	BARRIER ENCOUNTERED & SOLUTION	TARGET DATE	RESULTS





## **Least Restrictive Environment for IEP Work Placements for Youth in Transition**

A [June 22, 2012 letter](#) from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services outlines how Least Restrictive Environment Requirements (LRE) under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) applies to transition work placements for youth. School districts often have questions on this topic as they are required to report the extent to which all students with disabilities are educated with their nondisabled peers. Understanding how to report an integrated work placement for youth receiving transition services requires different analysis than what districts may use in calculating time spent in a classroom. This guidance is intended to clarify reporting requirements, answer questions for IEP teams and ensure that youth with disabilities are receiving transition services, including work experiences, in the most integrated setting.

### **Is an individualized education program (IEP) Team required to include work placement in a transition-age student's IEP?**

In Wisconsin, transition requirements begin no later than in the first individualized education program (IEP) that will be in effect when the child is 14. Nationwide, the age is 16. At this point, the IEP must include a statement of appropriate, measurable postsecondary goals for the child based on age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment and, where appropriate, independent living skills. It also must include a description of the transition services needed to assist the child in reaching the goals. Work placement can be an appropriate transition service for a youth with a disability, but is not a required component of an IEP. An IEP team would determine whether a work placement is an appropriate transition service for the student and if so, would then be required as part of the student's IEP.

### **Must a school provide a written notice of placement for a work setting if it is included in a student's IEP?**

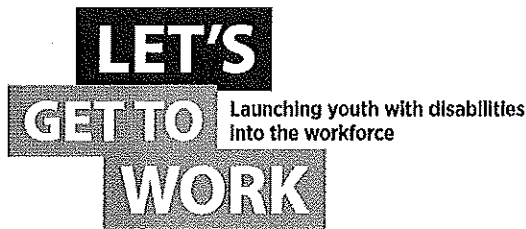
Yes, if a work placement is included in a student's IEP, it is considered part of the student's educational program. Therefore, parents must receive prior written notice before initiating or changing a work placement.

### **Is a work placement for a youth required to meet Least Restrictive Requirements (LRE)?**

LRE means that a student with a disability, to the maximum extent appropriate, is educated with children without disabilities. When a work placement is part of a student's IEP it must comply with LRE and thus IEP teams must consider the supplementary aids and services that could be provided to allow a youth to participate in a work placement with his or her peers without disabilities. A work placement in a segregated environment would only be determined

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as appropriate by law if the IEP team agrees that even the use of supplementary aids and services would not support a youth to participate in a work experience in a more integrated setting.

**What types of supplementary aids and services should an IEP team consider when determining a least restrictive work placement?**

Supplementary aids and services available to students with disabilities are defined generally in the law as "aids, services and other supports". These aids and services should be based on peer reviewed research and are intended to help a student meet goals, make progress and participate with peers without disabilities. The National Secondary and Transition Technical Assistance Center has analyzed evidence-based practices to teach job skills. Their list of reviewed practices includes such things as job coaching to teach employment skills, video modeling, picture cues, and other assistive technology. These supports could be provided through a variety of funding mechanisms, including Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). The employment supports provided by VR can include Youth Transition On-the-Job Training (OJT); temporary work/internship, supported employment work trials, etc. Again, only after use of supplementary aids is discussed and considered by an IEP team would discussion of a more restrictive work placement be allowed by law.

**When the IEP team fills out the IEP questions that ask if the child will be educated in the same environment s/he would be educated if the child did not have a disability, must the IEP team consider transition work placements?**

Yes, the IEP team must consider whether the transition work placement is in a competitive job environment that includes people without disabilities that non-disabled students might also avail themselves of (e.g., internships and apprenticeship programs), or in a non-competitive sheltered environment. If the latter, the IEP team must answer this question "no" and then proceed to answer the following question on the IEP document which asks why the child cannot be educated in the general education environment with appropriate supplementary services and supports.

**How does a district accurately report on work placements for youth with disabilities?**

Educational time spent in an age-appropriate community-based work placement that includes individuals with and without disabilities should be counted as time inside the regular classroom when calculating the percentage of time spent inside the regular classroom. This is true regardless of whether special education support is provided to the student in this setting. Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction provides specific guidance on accurate reporting for IDEA Indicator #5 and WI State Performance Plan (SPP), Indicator #20.



The following example outlines how districts would count an integrated setting in a work situation:

*Educational time spent in age-appropriate community-based settings that include individuals with and without disabilities, such as college campuses or vocational sites, should be counted as time spent inside the regular classroom. For example, a job placement at McDonalds would not be considered a removal because McDonalds employs people with and without disabilities. A placement at a sheltered workshop would be a removal as this environment is exclusively for people with disabilities. A student segregated at the library or the office without contact with non-disabled peers would be considered removed from his/her non-disabled peers.*

Similar to how classroom composition is reviewed for this purpose, IEP teams must also consider the composition of the work place (whether a majority of the employees are people without disabilities) and the extent to which the other non-work periods of time at the placement are spent with people without disabilities when determining the work placement time which will be counted as "regular class room with nondisabled peers".

#### **How do State Educational Agencies monitor least restrictive environment in work placements?**

SEAs have the responsibility to monitor LRE in all settings. If there is evidence that a school district is making placements that are inconsistent with LRE, the State Education Agency will conduct a review and if there is no justification for certain segregated placements, it may assist in planning or implementing any necessary corrective action.

August 2012

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# Preparing Students for College Checklist

**Middle and high school special education teachers play an important role in helping students with disabilities to understand the array of college options available, plan for those options, and leave high school prepared for postsecondary education aligned with their goals.**

STEPS	DATE COMPLETED	NOTES/NEXT STEPS
1. Consult with school/career counselor about college options for student and set up a student meeting with the counselor		
2. Compile information about several college/postsecondary education options to share with student and family		
3. Talk with student and family about possible college options and plans for postsecondary education, including financial planning		
4. Support student to explore career interests and research education needs that coincide with those interests		
5. Complete age-appropriate transition assessments to help determine appropriate postsecondary, annual, and short-term goals for student		
6. Work with student and their family to develop postsecondary employment and education goals based on interests and strengths		
7. Assist student to map out a course of study that will help them prepare for their postsecondary education and employment goals		
8. Explain the differences between services allowable in an IEP versus a 504 plan since IEP's cannot carry over to college		



STEPS	DATE COMPLETED	NOTES/NEXT STEPS
9. Work with the student, family, and IEP team to reduce support and increase independence of the student to complete work for classes, implementing the types of supports that will be available in college and gradually reducing services that will not be (e.g. – paraprofessional support, modified assignments)		
10. Introduce additional technology and supports for student to try in various classes as part of the strategy to increase independence and prepare for college (Kurzweil, Dragon, smart pens audio recording, electronic pens, note-taking assistance, study groups, tutoring)		
11. Work with the student and family to increase independence in health care and understand the need to schedule their own appointments, understand medication side effects and be responsible for health insurance information.		
12. Provide information about DVR to student and family so they can apply to seek assistance in overcoming employment barriers, including barriers to career-related education needs if they choose to do so (if student is already connected with DVR, ask if post-secondary education is part of the current plan with DVR)		
13. Encourage student and family to schedule visits at colleges of interest, including meeting with someone from the disability services center at each, and check in with students and families to find out their thoughts after visits (list specific colleges in notes section)		

## Additional Resources

[Think College Wisconsin](#)



## Career Goals

Students must be supported to consider and establish employment goals for their future that are self-determined, individualized and have been developed with direct involvement of students themselves, parents, family, and other team members. Coursework and planning for students should follow the goals that are established.







## Self-Directed Employment Planning Modules

This on-line series was developed by Shannon Webb and Nancy Molfenter through inControl Wisconsin with funding made available from the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities. The set of modules was designed to help people with disabilities and their family members think about their integrated employment options, understand employment supports, and create a plan to achieve their integrated employment goals.

### Purpose

The intended purpose is to provide job seekers with disabilities and those who support them with information about ways to become employed, factors to consider, and resources available. The information can also be helpful to teachers and support providers.

The series is called the **Self-Directed Employment Planning Modules** because it is very important for individuals with disabilities and their families to be involved in planning and decisions about the future. Work is a part of life for most adults and having a disability does not mean someone cannot work. In fact, the authors and sponsors of this training believe that **everyone** can work, regardless of disability. We hope that these modules and materials will be helpful in paving a path to employment for people who use them.

### Content and Structure of the Modules

There are 12 modules total. The series starts with an Introduction, next there are 10 content modules, and then a Conclusion module. The titles of the 12 modules are:

- Introduction to Self-Directed Employment Planning
- One: Everyone Can Work
- Two: A Working Life
- Three: Thinking About Your Future
- Four: Overcoming Barriers to Employment
- Five: Dealing with Public Benefits Issues When You Work
- Six: People Involved in Planning and Providing Employment Supports
- Seven: Understanding Employment Supports
- Eight: Understanding Resources for Employment and Advocating for What You Need
- Nine: Getting the Help You Need to Implement Your Employment Plan: Working with an Employment Support Agency
- Ten: Getting the Help You Need to Implement Your Employment Plan: Hiring Individual Employment Supports
- Conclusion Module: to review and complete an Employment Plan

Each section of this series will take most people 30 to 60 minutes to complete, including answering the Workbook questions at the end. The modules can be viewed one at a time or back to back. Parts or all of any module can be viewed more than one time.

### **inControl Wisconsin Website**

A list of the modules and descriptions can be found on the Self-Directed Employment Planning web page on the inControl Wisconsin website [www.incontrolwisconsin.org](http://www.incontrolwisconsin.org). To view any module, simply click on its title.

The modules were created to be viewed one after the other in the order listed as the information from one module is the foundation for the next. Viewing the modules in order can help people learn the information and build an employment plan. However, users can skip modules or view the modules in the order of greatest interest.

### **Materials**

There is a **Workbook** that goes with this training as well as a **Resource Guide**. Those can be downloaded by selecting 'Resources' in the top right corner of this training. Each of the 10 content modules has a corresponding section in the workbook. At the end of each module, there are Workbook questions to answer and the answers to these questions can help to formulate an Employment Plan at the end.

### **Accessing the Materials**

Before starting the modules, we recommend downloading and printing the Workbook. You can find the workbook by clicking on the 'Conclusion' tab on the left hand side menu of the Self-Directed Employment Planning Module webpage or if you are watching a module, you can select the 'Resources' in the top right corner of the module.

The Resource Guide can also be found the same way.

There is also a full written narrative that goes with each module that can be printed. These can be found under the description of each module on the website or by clicking on the 'Resources' tab when you are watching a module.





WISCONSIN BOARD FOR PEOPLE  
WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION» PLANNING TOOL

**LET'S**

**GET TO**

**WORK**

Launching youth with disabilities  
into the workforce

Developed by: Shannon Webb & Nancy Molfenter for the  
Wisconsin Let's Get to Work Partner Schools and Students

# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION» PLANNING TOOL

## A NOTE ABOUT THIS TOOL BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

This planning tool was created to help students and their support teams come together to talk and think about employment goals. The following 7 pages can serve as a guide to teams and will work best when the information compiled is a true reflection of the student's experiences, thoughts, and opinions. Teamwork throughout this process by a group of people who know the student well is important. This tool is not intended to be a form for one time completion, rather it is designed to be an ongoing guide for teams to use as students move through transition, build life skills, and engage in educational and work experiences in preparation for adulthood.

A notes section on the back of this form has been provided for additional information and planning purposes.

# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION» PLANNING TOOL

**My circle of support:** (family, teachers, friends, and other people in my life who support me the most right now and how they help me)

Name and relationship	How they help me

**My weekly schedule:** (include community activities, classes, recreation, household chores, etc)

Saturday
Sunday
Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday

# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION» PLANNING TOOL

**My interests/favorite things to do are:**

**Things I do not like to do are:**

**Five positive statements about me:** (ask friends, family, school staff, employers, etc to describe my unique personality characteristics and talents)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION» PLANNING TOOL

## Academic Involvement:

Classes I have taken	Classes I would like to take (use opportunity map to brainstorm options)

## School Related & Extra Curricular Activities:

Previous and current involvement	Things I would like to be involved in (use opportunity map to brainstorm options)

You can find the Opportunity Map and other tools to support youth to obtain employment in the community in the LGTW Quick Guide at [www.letsgettoworkwi.org](http://www.letsgettoworkwi.org).

# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION» PLANNING TOOL

**Civic and Community Involvement:** (List activities and volunteering done with groups and organizations)

[illegible]

**Volunteer & Work Experiences:** (List school-based and community-based work experiences)

[illegible]



# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION» PLANNING TOOL

**Transferable Skills:** (list what I am good at doing that could be applied in a work setting)

My specific skills	I can do this Independently	I can do this with initial training	I can do this with ongoing support

**Things important to my optimal learning and success in school activities, community involvement, and work experiences:** (List supports, accommodations, environments, best times of day, etc.)

--

**Based on the information above, my Transition Career Goal is:**


# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION» PLANNING TOOL

## Career Exploration Strategies:

Interest area	On-line Research	Informational Interview	Job Shadow	Mentor-ship	In School Work Experience	Unpaid Internship	Paid Internship	DVR Paid Work Experience	Other

## Connecting for Employment Exploration:

People we know	Workplace & job title	Their community involvement	How we will connect

# SELF-DIRECTED TRANSITION» PLANNING TOOL

Summarize the Team Action Plan:

Who (name)	What (task)	By when (time frame or deadline)

When we will get back together and who should attend?

What should be communicated between now and then and how will it be communicated?

The next time we meet we will:



Review what we have done,



Consider what we have learned, and



Use this new information to create another team action plan that keeps us moving forward!

# SELF-DIRECTED **TRANSITION**» PLANNING TOOL

PLANNING NOTES:

# Developing Individualized Career Goals

Helping students with disabilities choose and work toward postsecondary employment goals is an essential component of transition services. In addition to using age-appropriate assessments, Career Pathways, and the Postsecondary Transition Plan (PTP), students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) benefit from specific strategies in order to develop truly individualized career goals. As students gain experience and knowledge about themselves and the world around them, their career goals will evolve.

## Strategies to Use:

To Gather Ideas	To See & Try Jobs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Afford opportunities for students to take different classes and be involved in extra-curricular activities</li><li>• Involve family members in the process to learn about home life, preferences &amp; transferrable skills*</li><li>• Use one or more assessments &amp; planning tools</li><li>• Meet as a team to discuss ideas and make a list of employer connections</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Spend time in various community settings doing different activities</li><li>• Schedule business tours</li><li>• Set up informational interviews</li><li>• Arrange for job shadows &amp; trial work experiences</li><li>• Support short-term volunteer activities</li><li>• Activities, experiences &amp; jobs that do not go well are part of the goal development process</li></ul>

\*Transferrable skills are tasks and activities a student already knows how to do, such as mowing grass, putting away clothes, washing the car, and setting the table, that can translate into work skills.



## More Ideas to Consider:

- Use age appropriate assessments designed for students with significant disabilities (see resources section on the back page)
- Review examples of planning activities and tools (see the resources section on the back page)
- Use the free Self-Direct Employment Planning Modules (see resources section on the back page)
- Meet as a team regularly or find other ways to share information during the employment planning process
- Ensure that students have ample time to experience a variety of community and work settings
- Document all experiences and outcomes so the information can be used for goal development
- Check out more tools you can use in the Community Work Experience [link] section of the on-line LGTW Quick Guide on Transition to Employment [link]

## Meet Devon

Devon is a high school senior who has had goals in place to work and attend college for the past couple of years. About a year and a half ago, he had the chance to complete a paid work experience at a bank. At the end of the work experience, the bank did not offer him a job, and that was very disappointing. But, Devon and his team did not give up. He worked with his teacher, DVR, and a service provider to try another temporary work experience at a grocery store near his school. He enjoyed the work at the grocery store a lot, but that employer also did not offer him a job. With the help of his team, Devon kept looking for a job. A different grocery



store in a neighboring town offered Devon a chance and he started working there several hours per week. It was not too long before

his team, including Devon, his supervisor at work, and his vocational support agency felt he no longer needed a job coach with him for all of his work time. Devon is narrowing down his goals through actual experience.

He enjoys his job at the grocery store and is looking forward to starting classes at a local community college.

## Meet Eddie

Eddie is a high school junior who wants to be an auto mechanic. With the help of his teachers, DVR, a vocational service provider, and his family, he has set short and long term employment goals. Right now, he is taking classes at his high school that will help him apply to an auto repair certificate program at the technical college near where he lives after graduation. He also set a goal to work as a car detailer for a local car dealer, but through exploration discovered he can't do that until he turns 18. In the meantime, he got assistance to obtain a part-time paid job at a banquet hall to get work experience and earn some cash. Eddie has individualized short and long term employment goals, and a plan to match those.



## Additional Resources

Self-Directed Transition Planning Tool – **Let's Get to Work Quick Guide**

Assessing Students with Significant Disabilities for Supported Adulthood: Exploring Appropriate Transition Assessments by Dr. Mary E. Morningstar

Thought Sauce by Griffin-Hammis Associates

Individualized Employment Planning Model from the Rural Institute

Information available through the PACER Center

Self-Directed Employment Planning Modules from **In Control Wisconsin**

# Creating a Meaningful Week with Youth with Disabilities: Using Employment and Other Community Supports

For most young adults, a typical week revolves around a work and/or school schedule and is surrounded by time with friends, hobbies, home chores, volunteering, shopping, exercise, faith groups and other personal interests. The same should be true for people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) who need supports. Planning a meaningful week with a student with disabilities as he/she prepares to leave high school begins by considering typical activities for young adults and how these fit with the student's goals and preferences first. Necessary services and supports can then be put in place based on the choices the student has made.

As you plan employment, post-secondary education, career development, and other life goals with students with I/DD who need ongoing support, don't limit your thinking to the options that have been available in the past. Increased expectations for community-based services and flexibility are being built into the adult long-term care service system, which will better accommodate the lifestyle choices of individuals with disabilities. This means transition planning can be more flexible too!

## Chris's Story

Chris is what some teachers call a 'super-super senior who has an Intellectual Disability. He completed twelfth grade two years ago and has been participating in his local school district's transition program since then. Last year, he took 2 classes per semester at the technical college and worked with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to complete 2 temporary work experiences. This year, Chris decided to continue taking classes in a variety of subjects through the technical college and began working part-time at a grocery store with assistance from a local vocational support agency. Recently, he had his hours at the grocery store increased and reduced the number of hours per week he has job coaching. He would also like to add a second job. Outside of school and work, he enjoys fishing, spending time with his friends and girlfriend, and volunteering at his church. Of course, he has to dedicate some of his time to school work, shopping, cooking, and cleaning. All of these, along with his support needs, will be part of his plan when he exits school services next year. Having work, school, and a number of ongoing activities already in place before school exit makes the transition less stressful and more seamless. On the next page you will examine Chris's weekly schedule and learn about the types of services and supports he receives to engage in activities that are important to him.



## Adult Long-Term Care Services

Adult long-term care services provide people with supports to engage in personally meaningful activities. Youth with disabilities can apply for adult long-term care services through the county's **Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)** starting at age 17 years, 6 months. If found eligible for these



services, youth and their families in most regions of the state can choose to receive adult long-term care services through one of two programs: **Family Care** or **IRIS**.

The Family Care and IRIS programs will then work with the youth and his/her planning team (which includes DVR and school staff) to determine how he/she wants to spend his/her day, what is most important to him/her, the community resources available, the natural support options, and the formal, paid supports that the individual needs to achieve goals, increase independence, maintain optimal health, and expand employment and community involvement. The following list are some Adult Long Term Care services that can be used to support meaningful activities and community involvement.

<b>Individual Supported Employment</b>	<p>These are the supports to help someone find and maintain <i>integrated employment</i>, which includes competitive, customized, or self-employment. Integrated employment means being employed in a typical workplace with co-workers who do not have disabilities, paid directly by the business for which they work (not the employment service provider), and earning at least minimum wage.</p> <p>These services should be <i>individualized</i> and include any combination of the following: vocational/job-related discovery or assessment, person-centered employment planning, job placement, job development, meeting with prospective employers, job analysis, training and systematic instruction, job coaching, job supports, work incentive benefits counseling, training and work planning, transportation and career advancement services. Typically, DVR provides the 'up-front' services necessary to obtain employment (including assessment, work incentives benefits counseling, work experience funding, job development and initial job coaching). Once DVR services are complete, ongoing supports are transitioned to the Family Care or IRIS plan.</p>
<b>Small Group Supported Employment</b>	<p>This service provides another option for employment in the community. People are supported to work in small groups, are typically employed by the service provider, and may or may not be paid at least minimum wage. If this service option is used, it should be a stepping stone for getting an integrated job. A person can use Small Group Supported Employment services <u>and</u> Individual Supported Employment services during the week (i.e. working in an integrated job for part of the week and in a group employment arrangement for the other part of the week). This service can also support people in career exploration and other activities that can move them toward integrated employment.</p>
<b>Community-Based Pre-Vocational Services</b>	<p>This is a short-term, time limited service to prepare individuals for integrated employment. Services are provided individually or in small groups and activities take place in the community (not at the employment service provider building). Activities include job shadows, tours, informational interviews, support to attend classes at the Job Center, short-term volunteering, unpaid work experiences, and other kinds of career exploration and soft skill development in community settings. People who get part-time jobs in integrated employment can also use this service to continue volunteering and do other activities outside of their job that help sustain employment (e.g. soft skill classes, job clubs).</p>
<b>Other Types of Services that can Support Community Involvement</b>	<p>These include Daily Living Skills Training, Supportive Home Care, and community-based Day Services. These services have broad definitions that describe how they are intended to be used to support people to build skills in the community and access and connect with community resources. This could include: taking an art, cooking, or dance class at a community college, joining a ski or tennis club, volunteering at the local food pantry, and other ways of engaging in social and recreational opportunities with members of the community who share similar interests. These services can be provided individually or in small groups.</p>



## Chris's Weekly Schedule & Supports

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>AM</b>	Church  Volunteer at Church	Design Class Study	Speech Class  Fitness on campus	Design Class Study	Speech Class  Fitness on campus	Volunteer at Church	Relax at home Laundry
<b>PM</b>	Hang out with girlfriend  Housework	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Volunteer at animal shelter  Shopping
<b>Evening</b>	Study & get things ready for work	Housework  Fishing	Dinner at mom & dad's  Watch TV	Hang out with girlfriend	Housework  Watch TV	Dinner/movie with friends	Hang out with girlfriend

**Community Involvement** – Chris gets a ride to church from a fellow parishioner. After the service, a Supportive Home Care staff who he has hired using Self-Directed Support (SDS) through the adult long-term care program meets him at church to support him in his volunteer activities. This same staff supports him to volunteer at the Animal Shelter on Saturday's as well.

**Technical College Classes** – Chris's father drives him to class each morning on his way into work. After class, Chris meets with a tutor available through the technical college to study.

**Work** - Individual Supported Employment staff meets Chris at the technical college campus to take him to work. The job coach helps Chris get started at work and checks in regularly with his employer. The job coach is available more often when Chris needs to learn new work tasks. Chris gets a ride home from a co-worker or, when one is not available, takes a reduced fair taxi cab, which he pays for out of pocket and claims as an Impairment Related Work Expense (IRWE) with his Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

**Errands, Chores and Home Life** – Chris uses a combination of Supportive Home Care services and natural supports from his family to engage in housework, laundry, and shopping. He has on-call/video supports for emergencies funded by his long-term care plan.

**Fitness and Recreation** – Chris receives supports from a Community-Based Day Service agency six hours a week for fitness and recreational activities. He also belongs to an informal local fishing group that meets in the early evening and he has an active social life. Chris's family helps him arrange transportation for these activities and Chris provides funding for mileage reimbursement to these drivers through his long-term care plan.





## Community Work Experiences

Students need opportunities to directly explore and practice the types of jobs they are interested in pursuing. Experiences should be varied, based on individual career goals, continue through the summer months, and provide students opportunities to develop a range of work and life skills. Students should have a minimum of two paid experiences prior to exiting school.



# 7 Ways for Students to Gain Work Experience

High schools students with and without disabilities alike can benefit from spending time at a variety of community businesses to find out about different types of work and jobs. The first step in the career exploration process is typically to complete one or more interest inventories. Without direct exposure and experience, however, students might not understand the choices they are making. Therefore, the goals and objectives students set are not always on target to help them find meaningful work that is a good fit for their individual skills and interests. Direct exposure to community businesses can be achieved in a variety of ways.

Try using a combination of the following options to better support career development for youth:

1. **Business Tours** – Based on student interests, teachers can set up tours at local businesses for one or more students. Students prepare questions ahead of time and then gather information directly from the person(s) who conduct the tour. After the tour, teachers meet with students to talk about what they saw, what they liked, and what job tasks they noticed being done. Business tours provide an excellent opportunity for students to see a range of work environments to help them consider what factors in a workplace will be important to them.



Business Tour at Vita Plus in Madison, WI

2. **Informational Interviews** – When a student has an expressed interest in working at a particular business or specific type of job, a teacher supports the student to schedule an interview with people who work in the place or field of interest. The student should prepare a set of questions to ask based on what she/he wants to know about that workplace and job duties.
3. **Job Shadows** – Once a student has more specific ideas about a job(s) she/he would like to try, that can be a good time for teachers to work with the student to identify possible places to go and watch jobs being done. A student should make a list of things they want to find out during a job shadow to make the most of the experience. Job shadows may take place where students toured and/or conducted informational interviews.
4. **Volunteer Work** – Volunteering can be a great way to gain direct work experience and build a resume. Some high schools offer service learning credit for the hours students spend volunteering. It is important that teachers follow labor laws when setting up and supporting volunteer opportunities. ***Students should not be volunteering their time on an ongoing basis to complete work that others in the same business or organization are paid to do.***

5. **Internships** – Businesses offer internships to help students learn about the work they do and get direct experience. Internships are time-limited and can range from a few weeks to a few months. High school students can seek internship opportunities with assistance from teachers and career counselors. In many areas, there are school-business partnerships called Partners in Education (PIE) through which internships are made available to students. School credit is sometimes available.
6. **Paid Temporary Work Experiences** – Students with disabilities may have the chance to work at a job for pay before the business officially hires them. This can be through an arrangement with the school district to pay the wages for a certain period of time or when a student applies and is found eligible for services through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). Students with disabilities and their families typically apply for DVR services when they decide it is time to start looking for a paid job; however, DVR recommends that students apply **at least two years prior to graduation**. Once a student begins working with a DVR counselor, they will usually choose an employment or vocational support agency. Someone from that agency will assist the student, in conjunction with teacher and school staff, to look for a job. DVR can pay wages for a temporary work.
7. **Jobs** – Many high school students work part-time in the evenings, on weekends, and over the summer to make money, get work experience, and learn the soft skills needed for successful employment. Students and their families can apply for services through DVR to help with looking for a paid job and getting assistance with job training. DVR might consider using an option called Youth on the Job Training (YOJT) when an employer wants to hire a student with a disability, but an extended period of training might be needed. With YOJT, DVR reimburses an employer for the wages paid to a student while they are completing their job training and then the employer becomes fully responsible for the wages and benefits.

Paid employment for youth with disabilities while still in high school is the number one predictor of successful employment outcomes as an adult.



# Making the Most of Summer: 3 Ways Let's Get to Work Pilot Schools Expanded Summer Employment Opportunities

For many high school students, summer is not only about being off from school but time to work and earn money for spending, toward a car, or maybe saving for college. High school is also a time for first “real” jobs, not only for the purpose of making money, but to learn soft skills that employers are seeking such as responsibility, work ethic, following directions, showing up on time, attending to personal appearance, and being a team player. So, it stands to reason that youth with disabilities need to be afforded the same opportunities to gain these skills – and earn money – as their peers without disabilities through summer work experiences.

1) **Continued School Support** – Extended School Year (ESY) funding can be used for students at paid jobs over the summer months to maintain job coaching and personal assistance deemed necessary for employment and other skill levels to remain constant. Summer School classes can be geared toward the attainment of employment skills and designed to match the structure of summer programming available. Here are some examples from the Let's Get to Work Pilot Schools.

- One school held a three-week summer program called “World of Work” through which students toured local businesses and spent time engaged in activities related to their employment goals. Students and teachers alike expanded employer connections during that time. Most recently, this school offered participating students work experiences with several local employers and paid the students stipends through district funds.
- Another school created a two-week summer school session focused on employment, which included instruction on using public transportation, going on business tours, and talking with local employers about job qualifications. Students practiced asking employers if they were hiring and picking up applications and learned how to answer common interview questions.
- Another school created a three-day “Employment Academy” for students to engage in job shadows and an immersion into employment planning, giving everyone a jump start for the fall.
- Schools also developed summer options by collaborating with nearby districts to pool resources for summer offerings. At one pilot site, three districts collaborated to provide a summer school class that focused on continuing life skill development (e.g. shopping, cooking, laundry, etc.).

## *Begin planning for summer early.*

At age 14, talk with students and families about preparing for future summer work. Once a student is interested in working, begin planning several months before summer as it might take that long to find a job.

2) **Collaboration with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)** – When students with disabilities have established services from DVR, including an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), a variety of services can be used over the summer months. Below are some examples from Let's Get to Work Pilot Schools.

- The transition coordinators or teachers arranged work experiences or part-time summer jobs (even if the work is just seasonal). Once the employment situation was lined-up, DVR provided funding to a vocational services agency to provide job coaching and check-in support for the students at work.



- For students still exploring employment through work experiences, the DVR counselor worked with an employment support agency or individual job developer to set up one or more short-term, paid experiences for the student during the summer months.
- A student who had a paid job during the school year and required assistance on the job was supported by DVR funded services (job coaching and transportation) over the summer months because school supports were not available. Services were planned well ahead of time with the DVR counselor.

#### ***Collaborate with Transition***

***Partners well in advance.*** DVR and service providers can provide the resources for students to have work experiences and paid jobs over the summer. However, determining eligibility and setting up services typically takes time just like finding a job. So plan ahead!

- Schools connected students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to youth employment programs funded through the Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act (WIOA), such as the Job, Education, and Training (JET) Program. More information about such programs can be obtained from the student's DVR Counselor or your local job center.

### **3) Family Support** – Families can be critical partners in finding and supporting summer jobs and volunteer experiences. Many youth with and without disabilities find their first jobs through personal connections. Here are some examples of how Let's Get to Work Pilot Schools partnered with families for employment experiences.

- One pilot student was supported by his family to volunteer at community baseball games and work at festivals over the summer months. These experiences enabled him to develop job skills and have a valued social role in his community.
- Several students worked for family members over the summer by babysitting for younger siblings or cousins, mowing lawns, working at an uncle's masonry business, and helping a family member's delivery business.
- Families provided transportation for work and volunteer experiences over the summer. A young man walked to work at his permanent paid position with a bank during the school year (the bank was a few blocks from the school). His family provided transportation over the summer months.

***Involve Families.*** Remember that most young people find their first jobs or volunteer experiences through their family connections. Engage families in discussions about who they know and how they can support summer experiences – and why these are just as important for youth with disabilities.



# Getting to Work: Transportation Options for Students with Disabilities

As you plan for ongoing paid employment with students, it is essential that you do so with the “end in mind” and consider how students will get to and from work.

Before seeking employment, the student and his/her employment planning team should discuss the full range of options and map out the areas and times transportation is available. This is part of finding a good job match in a location that will work and important information to have when negotiating terms of employment, including where the student will conduct his/her job search and hours available for work. With each student consider the following questions:

- ⊙ **What** are the transportation options?
- ⊙ **Where** is transportation available?
- ⊙ **When** is transportation available?
- ⊙ **How much** does it cost?
- ⊙ Is it **flexible**? Is it **reliable**?
- ⊙ **Does** the student need travel training?
- ⊙ Is it **sustainable** over the long term?



## Consider These Possible Transportation Options:

- ⊙ **Find a job within walking or biking distance** - support can be provided to help students learn how to safely navigate within their community.
- ⊙ **Ride public transit** - mobility trainers can help students learn how to ride the bus safely.
- ⊙ **Set up a Ride Share** - family members, friends, other students, or co-workers might be willing to provide rides to or from work if they are traveling in the same direction. Travel stipends could be provided through private pay or possibly through long term care funding (Children's Long Term Support, Family Care, or IRIS). The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has a ride-share service that matches people who need a ride to people who will give rides. <http://www.dot.state.wi.us/travel/commuter/index.htm>.
- ⊙ **Take a reduced-fare taxi** - some communities offer reduced fare rides for people with disabilities.
- ⊙ **Get a driver's license** - with additional support and accommodations for driver's education and testing, learning to drive might be a viable option.
- ⊙ **Specialized transportation** - this could be funded by long term care if the student is enrolled in Children's Long Term Support, Family Care or IRIS. Be sure to talk with the long-term care representative about transportation options.

- ⦿ **Getting a ride from the job coach** - if the student is supported by a supported employment agency at work, the job coach might be able to provide transportation.
- ⦿ **Learn about the other Transportation Assistance Programs in your area** - Independent Living Centers, Community Action Programs, and Aging and Disability Resource Centers are good places to contact to ask about local transportation assistance programs.

## Transportation Funding Options:

- ⦿ If the job is during the school day, districts can often include transportation to and from jobs in transition services through school vehicles, staff vehicles, or contracted providers.
- ⦿ If the job is after school, on the weekend or during the summer: the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) could be an option to provide limited-term funding for transportation when the student initially begins work. The transportation cost would need to be transitioned to another source after a certain number of weeks or months as determined by the DVR counselor and employment planning team.
- ⦿ Once DVR is done covering the costs of transportation to and from work, the costs could be paid for out of pocket (after all, the student will be earning money and might be able to afford the transportation), or long-term care (Children's Long-Term Support, Family Care or IRIS) could be used to cover the transportation costs.
- ⦿ Using a Work Incentive called Impairment Related Work Expense (IRWE) may be an option (pronounced "er-wee" for short). If the student is unable to drive due to an impairment and incurs out-of-pocket costs to get to and from work for specialized transportation, operating a modified vehicle, or for paying a driver these costs might be considered an IRWE by the Social Security Administration. To learn more, contact a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist by talking to the DVR counselor or calling the local Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) program: [www.eri-wi.org/programs/wipa](http://www.eri-wi.org/programs/wipa).
- ⦿ Saving money in a Plan to Achieve Self Support (PASS) to purchase a vehicle to get to and from work could also be an option. PASS is a Work Incentive through the Social Security Administration. To learn more about PASS, talk to a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist or visit: [www.passplan.org](http://www.passplan.org).



# 6 Steps for Providing Employment Supports

The process of providing assistance to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in seeking employment and succeeding at a job can be outlined in 6 steps: Assessment, Planning, Job Search, Job Training, Fading Support, and Ongoing Support.

- 1) **ASSESSMENT of Skills, Interests, and Preferences in Natural Settings through an Individualized, Strength-based Process such as Discovery** – The best way to help someone figure out what types of jobs they might like and be good at is to spend time with them in a variety of settings, and particularly places where they already spend blocks of time, such as their home. Talking with family members and others who know the person well to gather detailed information about activities they enjoy and places they like to be is important too. Through this type of assessment process, a list of skills, preferences, and employment themes can be created.
- 2) **PLANNING for an Employment Goal with Supports Needed based on Assessment Outcome** - From the list of skills, preferences and employment themes, a goal can be set and a plan put into place to accomplish it. Through a team process, people who know an individual well can assist them to determine what tasks and activities they enjoy, what tasks and activities they are good at, the places where they like to spend time, and the types of jobs that might bring the three sets of information together. Through this type of planning process, vocational themes can be identified and an employment goal created.
- 3) **JOB SEARCH through Connections at Community Businesses that have Job Opportunities Aligned with Assessment** – Once an employment goal has been established, the person seeking employment and their team can consider the variety of community connections they have that can be used to reach out to prospective employers. Typically, when a team thinks about the number of people they know collectively, multiple links to employers within the preferred vocational theme(s) exist. Those links can then be used to begin talking with prospective employers about employment possibilities.
- 4) **JOB TRAINING in Conjunction with the Employer and Business Processes** – After a job offer has been made, the new employee often needs assistance to learn to complete assigned job duties. Two critical elements of the job training process are having accurate information about the job description of the person being trained and working directly with the employer to provide the same information given to other new employees as well as to understand precisely how the employer expects the job duties to be completed. Teaching strategies that include breaking tasks down into smaller parts and creative ways to adapt materials and maximize learning should be used.





- 5) **FADING and Planning for Greater Independence** – Over time, the goal is always to foster the greatest possible independence at work. Using an individualized planning and job search process, a job seeker is able to identify good matches in employment. With effective teaching strategies, a new employee can learn to complete many parts of the job with little or no direct support. The last step toward fostering optimum independence is through the development of natural supports in the workplace. By working hard to learn the job and making an effort to be a good team member on the job, individuals with disabilities build relationships with their employer and co-worker that contribute to maximum independence and success. Employment support providers can support the development of such relationships by taking intentional steps to help the employee do their job well, fit into and become a part of the work culture, get to know co-workers, and, above all, not become overly reliant on paid services at work.



David with his supervisor and co-worker who now provide natural supports.

6) **ONGOING SUPPORT** –

The last phase of employment supports can be long-term, or for as long as the person stays at the same job. For most people, this step comes six months to a year after employment was obtained, but this timeline varies based on individual learning styles and support needs. Ongoing support can be several hours of direct service per week, daily or weekly face-to-face check-ins at work, monthly contact in person or by phone, and different levels of support in between. Teams, including the employee and the employer, are usually involved in deciding what is needed for ongoing support. At this point, employment supports are in place to insure ongoing success, and the expectation is that help will be provided if issues arise. These can be challenges that need to be addressed, such as a refresher training on one or more parts of the job, or it can be because the employer is adding hours, job duties, and/or responsibilities and the employee needs additional assistance to grow in their employment situation.



# Tips & Steps for Job Coaching Students with Disabilities

Job coaching is often needed when a youth with a disability begins a new job. The degree and amount depends on the individual student and the job. There are several steps that can be taken to optimize the effectiveness of job coaching and foster increased independence. Successful job coaching actually begins before a student's first day on the job.

Remember, the ultimate goal of job coaching is independence. A new job situation should be set up for success. Job coaches should not be promised on a full-time or permanent basis to employers. Think of job coaches as teachers and employment consultants; they are there to facilitate learning and foster on-the-job problem-solving.

## Step 1: Exchange information with the employer before the first day of work.

### Information to get from the employer:

- Written job description and work schedule
- New employee handbook/policies and procedures
- Training protocol description
- Decision about job coach attendance at training (is it ok with the employer?)
- Date(s) and times to report for training and who to see upon arrival
- Name(s) and contact information for supervisor
- A list of items the student/employee should bring on the first day (documentation, identification, name tag, uniform)

*\*Once obtained from the employer, this set of information should be provided to the student, her/his family, and those who will be involved in job coaching.*

### Information to provide to the employer:

- Relevant information about learning and communication styles of the student
- Information about job coaching, including the intention to teach, coach, and fade
- Name(s) and contact information for people anticipated to be coaching at the business
- A written description of the job coaches' roles and responsibilities
- Request for one or more job coaches to observe and conduct a job site analysis
- A formal request for one or more job coaches to participate in training with employee
- Time and opportunity to ask questions, share concerns, and set boundaries for coaches

## Step 2: With the employer's permission, conduct analyses to lay the groundwork for success before the first day of work (analyses might include gathering/exchanging some of the information listed above or verifying it)

### The three types of analysis that should be completed before the student begins the job:

<b>Worksite Analysis</b>	Used to write-up a "lay of the land" description of the workplace and identify potential barriers to success on the job (e.g. a corner that might be tight for a wheelchair, a soda machine in a break room that could prove a distraction, an area of the workplace that is very noisy).
<b>Job Analysis</b>	Used to create the list of required tasks, materials needed, the order the employer wants tasks completed, and then start development of steps for each of the discrete tasks (preliminary task analysis) to be used for systematic instruction. *Job and Work Site Analyses can be combined.
<b>Task Analysis</b>	Used to list <u>all</u> steps required for each job duty. This can be accomplished by using specific task analysis forms, checklists, a job duty notebook, or electronic software such as used with an iPad or iPod Touch.

### Important tips for conducting these analyses:

- During **Worksite and Job Analyses**, coaches can start to consider potential points within the work routine where simple adaptations might be useful (e.g. pictures of work materials or stages of work completion, a basket or shelf to hold a particular set of materials, color coded signs or bins for different types of work materials). Any ideas for making work tasks easier should be discussed with both the employee and the employer for approval before implementation.
- The key to effective **Task Analysis** is to start off with enough detail so the employee learns each small part of the job task correctly and in the right order. Steps are then combined, or collapsed as the employee learns them. For example, the initial task analysis for folding a towel might include 15 steps, but go down to 5 as independence is achieved.

Examples of forms that can be used or adapted to conduct work site, job, and task analysis, as well as examples of adaptations, can be found at [Link to: LGTW Implementation Guide/Effective Community Work Experiences].

### Step 3: Implement systematic instruction to teach multiple job tasks.

Through the new employee training, and then with job coach assistance, the steps of each job task are modeled for the new employee. Using the task analysis information created for each part of the job, the coach determines the lowest level of prompting/support needed by the employee for each step. Documenting the level of support provided to complete each step allows the job coach to avoid over-supporting and effectively reduce support in increments toward the goal of independence.

### Step 4: Support natural workplace communication.

Job coaches can encourage the employee to ask questions and interact directly with his/her supervisor and co-workers rather than going through them. Job coaches can also model effective ways for co-workers to speak and communicate directly to the employee. The stronger the employee's relationships are at work, the better the chances of the job situation working out in the long run.

### Step 5: Step back from direct teaching and coaching.

As the student/employee learns the job tasks and develops working relationships on the job, coaches spend less time directly in the environment, while remaining available for consultation and problem-solving.

## Additional Resources

**The Roles of a Job Coach** – Virginia Commonwealth University  
Region III CRP-RCEP Fact Sheet

**Job Coaching in the Workplace** – [www.askjan.com](http://www.askjan.com)

**Job Coaching Strategies** – Attainment Company



# Discovery Notes

Designed for capturing information during a community activity, job shadow, or work experience

Student:

Observer:

Date:

Describe the activity that was observed:

How long did the student participate in the activity?

Describe the environment:

Describe anything that seemed to be of particular interest to the student:

<u>Specific</u> tasks performed:	He/she does this:		
	Independently	With Verbal or Gestural Prompt	With direct assistance
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Overall, what seemed to work well and not so well for the student during this activity?

Works	Doesn't Work

If the student has been observed doing this same activity/job before, describe any notable changes during this observation:





# Career Exploration Activities Tracking Form

Designed for logging the types and number of community career exploration activities

Student Name:

School Year:

Date & Purpose of Visit (tour, informational interview, job shadow)	Business or Organization Name, Address, Contact	Type of Business or Organization	Characteristics of the Environment	Student Reactions to the visit	Person Completing this form





# Student Work Experience Record

Designed for compiling information about the outcomes of a work experience

Student name:

Person Completing this Form:

Work experience location:

Work experience dates:

Name and contact information of employer/supervisor:

Type (Volunteer, Internship, Unpaid Work Experience, Paid Work Experience, and Employment):

If paid, list hourly rate of pay:

Was the student paid by DVR or directly by the employer?

Transportation arrangements - How did the student get to and from the work experience?

## Work experience weekly schedule:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursdays	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

Total hours per week:

Was the experience paid or unpaid?

Did the supervisor complete a work evaluation feedback form for the student? Attach or describe the feedback here.

Who supported the student on the job and for how long?

Were the supports paid, unpaid or natural supports?

Describe the work environment in detail:

Describe the workplace culture in detail:

List the Work Tasks below.

In the column to the right, indicate the student's level of performance by the end of the work experience. If task analysis and systematic instruction were used, attach more detailed information.

[illegible]

Describe the strengths the student demonstrated during the work experience:

Describe aspects of the job that were challenging for the student:

Describe the kinds of training, workplace supports and job coaching techniques that worked best:

Describe any adaptations, modifications, and/or assistive technology implemented to help the student become more independent on the job:

Describe any tasks or work environment aspects to avoid in the future:

### Questions for the student and family:

What did the student like about the work experience?

What parts of the job does the student feel she/he did well?

Were there aspects of the job she/he did not enjoy?

What does the student feel he/she learned from the work experience?

What does the student want to improve as a result of the work experience?

Does the student want to pursue another job like this? Why or why not?

**After reviewing the outcomes of this work experience, next steps toward employment will be:**





# Frequently Asked Questions about Student Work Experiences

High School Students can begin to seek employment at age 14 in Wisconsin. When it comes to employment for high school students with disabilities, many businesses, families, and school staff have questions about providing these opportunities, including work experiences and internships. These questions might be about safety, liability, and legal considerations. There are protections to ensure that everyone involved is covered.

## The Frequently Asked Questions Addressed in this Document:

- What are “community employment experiences” for students with disabilities?
- Who pays the student’s wages during a paid community employment experience?
- How much students should be paid?
- Do parents and/or guardians need to give permission for their child to be involved in community employment experiences?
- What about liability? Who is responsible if something happens?
- If the student is doing work tasks at the jobsite, how do we know if the community employment experience should be paid or unpaid?
- Should we have a written agreement in place?
- How many hours can a student engage in a community employment experience?

## What are “community employment experiences” for students with disabilities?

Community employment experiences, including internships, are opportunities involving local businesses that help youth with and without disabilities learn about jobs and explore career options so they can begin to determine their goals after high school. Community employment experiences can be paid or unpaid. Paid experiences are preferable and should be considered first, however, unpaid experiences can also provide valuable community job training and can be a way for students to gain exposure in an area of strong interest to them.

Unpaid Community Employment Experiences	Paid Community Employment Experiences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ informational interviews</li><li>✓ job shadows</li><li>✓ company tours</li><li>✓ volunteer service</li><li>✓ student work-skill activities (including assisting with a school-based entrepreneurial venture or completing tasks within the school district)</li><li>✓ unpaid work experiences</li><li>✓ service learning programs</li><li>✓ unpaid internships</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ part-time employment (while in school or over the summer – this can be time-limited or ongoing)</li><li>✓ employment connected with DVR Youth Transition On-the-Job Training</li><li>✓ earning income through a self-employment venture</li><li>✓ Employability Skills Certificate Program</li><li>✓ WI Cooperative Education Skill Standards Certificate Program</li><li>✓ WI Youth Apprentice Program</li><li>✓ paid internships</li></ul>

## **Who pays the student's wages during a paid community employment experience?**

For part-time or summer employment, the business typically hires and pays the student directly. There are resources available to assist in providing jobs to students with disabilities. In some cases, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) may reimburse the business for training wages paid to the student for an agreed upon time period, this is known as DVR Youth On-the-Job Training. In a DVR Youth On-the-Job training arrangement, the student is hired by the business, the business pays the student's wages, and DVR provides reimbursement to the business for at least 50% of the student's wages for up to 500 hours. The details of a DVR Youth On-the-Job Training opportunity would need to be agreed upon with DVR before the student begins working. After the training agreement has ended the student is considered a permanent employee. If the student requires assistance to maintain an acceptable level of performance, supports may stay in place for that student beyond the agreement period.

For Employability Skills Certificate Program, WI Cooperative Education Skill Standards Certificate Program, and WI Youth Apprenticeship Program, students are directly hired and compensated by the business.

## **How much should students be paid?**

Students should be paid the prevailing and commensurate wage but at least the minimum wage. Student may also be considered "Opportunity Employees." Opportunity Employees are not yet 20 years old and have been in employment status with a particular business for *90 or fewer consecutive calendar days* from the date of initial employment. A link to more information about Wisconsin's Minimum Wage Rates, including the Opportunity Employee Wage, can be found in the resources section of this document.

Use of the DVR Youth On-the-Job Training requires payment of the prevailing wage, which may be more than the minimum wage. Once the training agreement period has ended the prevailing wages will continue to be paid by the business.

## **Do parents and/or guardians need to give permission for their child to be involved in community employment experiences?**

It is best practice for school staff to involve parents and/or guardian(s) in planning community employment experiences. Just like other school or program field trips and activities, schools may ask parent(s) and/or guardian(s) to sign permission slips or consent forms to engage in community employment experiences if the student is under 18 or if the student has a legal guardian. If a student is seeking a paying job, a parent or guardian will need to assist in the completion of a Wisconsin work permit. If the student is over 18 and does not have a legal guardian, the student can provide consent. However, if the student wishes, schools should involve parents or other allies in planning community employment experiences with the student.



## What about liability? Who is responsible if something happens?

Every student needs to be covered by liability insurance while doing community employment experiences.

For paid community employment experiences, the business provides the liability coverage just as they would for any employee they hire, *even when DVR is providing reimbursement (even if temporarily) to the business for some or all of the student's wages*. The student's school may also have additional community employment experience (or 'Work-Based Learning') liability coverage that covers all their students (regardless of disability). Schools can provide businesses with a copy of this coverage. In case of injury at the workplace, students in paid community employment experiences would be covered by the business's workers' compensation insurance.

For unpaid community employment experiences, the school (or youth program if one is involved) provides the liability coverage, similar to other school activities such as field trips. Most schools have liability coverage that includes a community employment experience (or 'Work-Based Learning') endorsement. School staff should also verify with parents/guardians that the students involved in community employment experiences have health insurance coverage through a private plan or Medicaid program.

## If the student is doing work tasks at the jobsite, how do we know if the community employment experience should be paid or unpaid?

Generally speaking, if the community employment experience is time-limited (e.g. one week, one month, or a specified number of hours) as determined by the IEP team and/or the business in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act *and* is primarily for the benefit of training the student on *new skills* (not for the direct benefit of the business), the business is not required to pay the student wages. If the opportunity is to be unpaid, then the expressed purpose of the experience is for the student to gain job skills. Therefore, the benefits to the student should be *clearly defined* in an unpaid work experience.

If the student can perform the job tasks independently and the business begins to derive "productive work" from the student (meaning that the business is benefiting from the tasks or assignments being done by the student), schools have an obligation to revisit the working relationship with the business and student. To continue any community employment experiences with this same business, the student must be provided with different responsibilities and tasks to learn.

According to the Fair Labor Standards Act, ALL FOUR of these criteria must be in place for a student to work in an unpaid arrangement with a business:

1. The student is directly trained and continually under the supervision of school staff;
2. No employees at the business have been displaced by the student - i.e. the business cannot lay off or reduce the hours of other employees or chose not to hire if they otherwise would due to the presence of the student;
3. The student is not entitled to a job at the completion of the experience. However, businesses can

- offer employment to students who complete the training; and
4. The business, student, and parent or guardian all enter the arrangement with the understanding that the student is not entitled to wages or other compensation for the time spent in the experience.

If all of these four criteria are not met, the business *must* provide wages to the student as an employee.

### Should we have a written agreement in place?

Yes, it is best to have a written agreement in place before starting the community employment experience. Additionally, paid work experiences require Work Permits or Youth Apprenticeship agreements. School staff takes the lead on developing this agreement with input from the business. The agreement should provide specifics on commitments and responsibilities of the business, the student, the school, and the parent/guardian, and is signed by those involved. The DVR Youth Transition On-the-Job Training opportunity has an established agreement form which will be provided by the DVR Counselor. Community Employment Experience Agreements examples can be found in the Resources section of this document.

### How many hours can a student engage in a community employment experience?

Job Shadows, Company Tours, Informational Interviewing, Service Learning and Volunteerism	There is no limit to the number of hours that a student can be engaged in these opportunities. Involvement should be determined based on preferences of the student/family and the number and types of opportunities that can be developed.
Unpaid Internships, Student Work-Like Activities and Unpaid Work Experiences	Per the Fair Labor Standards Act: Vocational explorations - 5 hours per job experienced Vocational assessment - 90 hours per job experienced Vocational training - 120 hours per job experienced  <i>Best practices suggest unpaid employment experiences should be less than 40 hours total and internships should be limited to 10 hours or fewer per week.</i>
Paid Employment	State child labor laws prohibit work during times that minors are required to be in school, except for students participating in work experience and career exploration programs approved for credit.  State and federal laws do not limit the hours that minors, age 16 or over, may work.  14 & 15 year olds can work up to 8 hrs/day on non-school days and 3 hrs/day on school days.  For more info: <b>WI Department Workforce Development on Child Labor Laws</b>

## Additional Resources

**School-to-Work Experiences & Wage and Hour Fact Sheets** – US Department of Labor

**Wisconsin Work-Based Learning Guide** – WI Department of Public Instruction

**Child Labor Laws & Minimum Wage Rates** – Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development information on

**Community Employment Experience Agreements Examples** – NCWD Youth

## Glossary

**DVR Youth On-The-Job Training** – A direct hire of a student by a business with DVR providing the business reimbursement for at least 50% of the salary and fringe benefits paid by DVR for up to 500 hours. The business provides the student with on-the-job orientation and training. DVR is currently piloting a youth project in response to the Let's Get to Work grant project.

**Entrepreneurial Venture** – a school or community -based enterprise involving students with and without disabilities to sell products or services to the school community and/or broader community. Examples include a school store, coffee cart, hand-made greeting cards, and graphic/printing services.

**Informational Interview** – A student meets with a business to ask structured questions about the business and/or career field.

**Internship** - a time-limited, structured experience with an business during which a student completes a set of planned activities, a project, or set of learning objectives designed to give the student an understanding of a particular business or career field. Internships can be paid or unpaid opportunities.

**Job Coaching** – additional assistance, above and beyond the training and supervision typically provided by an business to an employee, for people with disabilities to learn how to perform job tasks to the business's specifications and learn the soft skills necessary to fully integrate into the workplace.

**Job Shadow** - A student follows an employee at a workplace for one or more days to learn about a particular job or career field.

**Student Work-like Activities** – Supervised, unpaid work activities in school for one hour or less per day primarily for an educational purpose that benefits the student. Examples include helping in the cafeteria, collecting recycling, cleaning a classroom, or helping in the school office or library.

**Service Learning** - “a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.” ([National Service Learning Clearinghouse](#))

**Self-Employment** - is working for one's self instead of a business. Self-employed people draw income from a trade or business they operate.

**Unpaid Work Experience** – a time limited opportunity for a student to learn new work related responsibilities and skills at a workplace. If used for vocational training purposes any one unpaid work experience with a business cannot exceed 120 hours/year. During an unpaid work experience, the student must be learning new skills and the business must not be receiving substantial benefit from the tasks the student is performing.

**Volunteerism** – Volunteerism is a community services that is performed for non-profit organizations in duties *clearly and often* performed by other volunteers. Volunteerism is not the same as unpaid work experiences or internships. Students may not volunteer for a for-profit business. Volunteering can be used to build skills and get connected to community.



# Checklist for Arranging Community Work Experiences

This checklist can serve as a guide for educators when setting up four distinct types of community work experiences: 1) volunteer, 2) temporary unpaid work, 3) temporary paid work, and 4) permanent paid work. This tool was designed to accompany two other Let's Get to Work informational documents: the FAQ about Student Work Experiences and the companion FAQ for Employers. Both are available in the Let's Get to Work Quick Guide at [www.letsgettoworkwi.org](http://www.letsgettoworkwi.org).

## Step 1: Meet as a Team & Obtain Necessary Permissions

- ☐ Meet with the student and her/his family to identify preferred types of experiences and locations where they already have established connections.
- ☐ Let the student and family know that documents including: a social security card, birth certificate, vaccination records, and school or state ID will likely be needed.
- ☐ Assist with referral to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) if needed and invite the DVR counselor to participate in a discussion about planning work experiences and potential use of DVR-funded services during the process.
- ☐ If the student has already been deemed eligible for DVR services, meet as a team to talk about the choice of vocational support providers and division of labor between school staff and the DVR-funded services (e.g. contacts to prospective employers, transportation, support at the experience(s), troubleshooting if issues arise).
- ☐ If the student has already chosen a vocational service provider, a representative from that agency will also be involved in meetings/discussions.
- ☐ Get permission forms signed (if needed by your high school/district) for the student to engage in community employment experiences if she/he is under legal guardianship.
- ☐ Make arrangements to get a work permit if the student is under age of 18.

## Step 2: Check Compliance with Labor Laws

### **For volunteer experiences:**

- ☐ The experience must be for an organization with non-profit status (educational, charitable, religious, community service).
- ☐ School staff must supervise the student(s) at all times while volunteering.
- ☐ Student(s) volunteering cannot displace one or more paid employees.
- ☐ If student(s) is under 18 and/or has guardianship in place, consent must be obtained.
- ☐ If student(s) is under 18, she/he cannot volunteer in an area or use equipment prohibited by child labor laws.

**For temporary unpaid work, all 4 of the following criteria must be met:**

- ☐ Student is directly trained and continually under supervision of school staff.
- ☐ No employee(s) at the business are displaced by the student.
- ☐ Student is not entitled to the job at the completion of the experience (but the business can offer employment to student).
- ☐ All parties involved understand the student is not entitled to wages or other compensation for the time spent in the experience.

**For temporary paid work, determine how the student will be paid:**

- ☐ The employer hires the student directly for seasonal work or a discrete set of tasks and pays wages to the student.
- Or-**
- ☐ The employer offers the work opportunity but does not hire the student directly. DVR pays the student's Temporary Work Experience wages through a third party.

**For permanent paid employment, determine if On-the-Job Training (OJT) will be used:**

- ☐ With the DVR Youth On-the-Job Training (YOJT) program\*, the employer hires the student directly, pays wages to the student and DVR uses YOJT funds to reimburse the employer for up to 500 hours of the student's wages during the initial job training period.
- Or-**
- ☐ With the "regular" DVR On-the-Job Training (OJT) program\*, the employer hires the student directly, pays wages to the student and DVR uses the regular OJT funds to reimburse employer 50% of the student's wages for 12 weeks during the initial job training period.

\*Working directly with DVR, the employer chooses which OJT to use unless the student will exit school services during the use of OJT, then the regular OJT must be utilized.

**For ALL paid experiences:**

- ☐ Ensure the wage paid to the student is a prevailing wage (at least minimum wage). This is also a requirement for DVR Youth OJT and regular OJT.
- ☐ A student must be under 20 years of age to legally be paid an Opportunity Wage (considered a training wage and less than the current minimum wage). The student can work no more than 89 days for the employer at the Opportunity Wage (must switch to prevailing/at least minimum wage thereafter).

### **Step 3: Confirm the Arrangement in Writing**

- ☐ Establish a written agreement with the employer that spells out the commitments, responsibility, and liability.
- ☐ Get all parties involved (employer, student, parents/guardian, school staff) to review and sign the agreement.



# Recommended Employment Resources & Trainings for Teachers

When supporting students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) to reach their integrated employment goals, you might find you need to develop new knowledge and skills. This fact sheet can help you understand the kinds of information available and strategies you can use to improve your skills to support to pursue integrated employment.

## Key Areas and Topics to Learn About

<b>Working with Employers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Benefits of Integrated Employment</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Networking and Connecting Strategies</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Negotiating with Employers</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Employer Hiring Incentives</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Fair Labor Standards and related laws</li></ul>	<b>Transition Partners and Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Division of Vocational Rehabilitation</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Employment Support Agencies</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Long-Term Care Programs</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> SSA Work Incentives</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Job Center Services</li></ul>
<b>Individualized Assessment &amp; Planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Self-Directed Employment Planning Methods</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Vocational Assessment Methods, including Discovery</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Job Search Tools and Techniques</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Career Exploration Strategies</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Job Development and Customized Employment Strategies</li></ul>	<b>Providing On The Job Supports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Disability Disclosure and Requesting Accommodations</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Workplace Analysis</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Job Coaching, including Task Analysis and Systematic Instruction</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Assistive Technology in the Workplace</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Facilitating Natural Supports</li></ul>

## Recommended Ways to Learn about Community Partners

- ⦿ Become familiar with the Transition Action Guide and the Technical Assistance Guide for Adults Seeking Integrated Employment. These can found on the [WI Division of Vocational Rehabilitation \(DVR\)](#) website.
- ⦿ Participate on your local area [Transition Action Council \(TAC\)/County Community on Transition \(CCoT\)](#).
- ⦿ Tour your local [Job Center](#) and [Aging and Disability Resource Center](#) with students.
- ⦿ Arrange meetings with or request presentations from your local Division of Vocational Rehabilitation office, Aging and Disability Resource Center, Employment Service Provider, Work Incentive Benefits Specialist, and a Family Care or IRIS representative.
- ⦿ Host a Transition Night at your school or in your district. Visit the [Let's Get to Work](#) website for an information sheet on how to Host a Transition Night at your school.
- ⦿ Arrange job shadows, tours, and informational interviews with employers.



## Recommended Trainings and Conferences

In-person trainings on integrated employment topics are organized by the Transition Improvement Grant (TIG) Coordinators, CESA's (Cooperative Education Service Agencies), Transition Action Councils (TACS)/County Communities on Transition (CCoTs), and Wisconsin APSE. Many of these event announcements are disseminated through listserves and email or posted on <http://witig.org/> and [employmentnetworkwi.org](http://employmentnetworkwi.org).

Several conferences featuring information about best practices in transition and integrated employment are also offered throughout the year. Breakout sessions at conferences generally only allow an introduction to a topic area (unless there is a specific pre-conference training or professional track). However, conferences do provide the opportunity to get new ideas and resources as well as network with other professionals.

- ⦿ Statewide Transition Conference (Feb) <https://www.edevents.org/>
- ⦿ Youth Transition Conference (Mar) <https://www.facebook.com/YouthTransition>
- ⦿ WI Employment First Conference (Apr) <http://www.wiemploymentfirst.com/>
- ⦿ Summer Inclusion Institute (Jul) <http://www.beloinandbrandl.com/>
- ⦿ WI APSE Conference (Oct) <http://www.wiapse.org/>
- ⦿ Wisconsin Transition Academy (Oct) <http://www.witig.org/transition-academy/>
- ⦿ Statewide Self-Determination Conference (Nov) <http://www.wi-bpdd.org>

## Recommended On-Line Learning Sources

There are so many resources on the internet it is hard to sift through them all to find the best options. In addition to the [DPI Transition webpage](#) and [WITIG.org](http://WITIG.org) website, the websites listed below should be your “go to” websites for information, tools, and webinars. Spending about 15 minutes each week exploring a website from this list is one way to learn without a large time commitment.

[Center on Transition to Employment](#)

[Let's Get to Work](#)

[Rural Institute Transition & Employment](#)

[Griffin-Hammis Associates](#)

[Marc Gold & Associates](#)

[TransCen Inc.](#)

[Institute for Community Inclusion](#)

[National APSE](#)

[US Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy](#)

[Job Accommodation Network](#)

[National Collaborative on Workforce & Disability for Youth](#)

[VCU Work Support](#)

[The LEAD Center](#)

[Paths to Employment Resource Center](#)





# Effective Job Development Strategies

Special Educators and Transition Coordinators play a vital role in connecting students with intellectual and developmental disabilities to employers for career exploration, work experiences, and permanent jobs. The concept of 'job development' can seem daunting. Here are some effective strategies and resources you can use with students to make the most of your time and effort.

## Reflect on your own employment journey.

What led you to your first job opportunities? Most likely you pursued experiences based on your interests and who you (or your family) knew. You took on new responsibilities, took some risks, and tried new things. Through these experiences you gathered information to make choices about your future. In other words, you developed your self-determination skills. Similarly, students with disabilities develop their path to employment through exposure and a wide-variety of experiences in their communities. As you create plans with your students each year, keep this in mind.

## Invite & involve parents.

Employment exploration and skill development doesn't just happen at school - youth acquire skills at home and through activities on the evenings and weekends. Families are often instrumental in helping youth find their first job opportunities. After all, family members are community members who are connected to employers!

You can foster positive, collaborative relationships with families by:

- ⦿ inviting their participation,
- ⦿ encouraging them to have high expectations, and
- ⦿ helping them understand how they contribute to the employment planning process.

**For more information  
& resources visit**

[www.letsgettoworkwi.org](http://www.letsgettoworkwi.org)

The National Collaboration on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD for Youth) has created [Guideposts for Success: A Framework for Families Preparing Youth for Adulthood](#) and many other resources to help you understand how to cultivate productive partnerships with families. A series of webcasts for parents and educators is also available on the Let's Get to Work website.

## Engage in meaningful planning with students so you connect with the right employers.

Before you start contacting employers, engage students and their families in planning. What are the student's primary interests? What are their transferrable skills? What conditions need to be present at the workplace for success? Answering these will help you generate a list of the **right** employers to contact. In addition to your school's transition planning tools, you can use:

- ⦿ The **Self-Directed Transition Planning Tool** helps students and their planning teams think about employment goals.
- ⦿ The inControl Wisconsin **Self-Directed Employment Planning Modules** are a free learning and planning series for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).
- ⦿ The **Discovery Process** is used to identify a student's transferrable skills, ideal conditions, and workplace contributions to successfully negotiate a job with an employer. Information and webinars on Discovery can be found on the Montana Rural Institute's Transition and Employment website or at [www.WorkSupport.com](http://www.WorkSupport.com).

## Carve out time to network with employers effectively.

Most jobs are found in the hidden job market. This means that most job opportunities are never advertised. To find them, you must network!

- ⦿ Connect with employers based on an individual student's desire to learn about their workplace and pursue work in their industry.
  - Don't ask for a job when you make the first contact! Ask the employer to provide a tour of the business, an informational interview, or a job shadow. Most employers are open to such opportunities. This gives the employer a chance to meet the student without the pressure of having to offer a job.
  - Make sure you and the student arrive prepared to ask questions and share information about the student's interests, skills and abilities.
  - During the visit, listen for unmet needs the employer might have.
  - After, follow up with a thank you note and consider how you could make contact with that employer again.
- ⦿ Engage in relationship mapping with students and families to find out who they are connected to. Enlist the student and family's help in making contact with these people.
- ⦿ Connections to employers already exist with your school through DECA and school-to-work programs. Talk to the school staff involved in these programs about using these contacts for students with disabilities.
- ⦿ Involve students as much as possible in your networking efforts. Attend job fairs with them. Request to present to the local Chamber, Service Clubs or business networking groups with them. Prepare students to talk about their interests and the contributions they can make to the workplace.
- ⦿ Collaborate with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's Business Services Consultants and employment service providers in your area.
- ⦿ Host a Community Conversation focused on increasing employment opportunities for youth with disabilities. Information about planning Community Conversations can be found on the Let's Get to Work website.
- ⦿ If time permits, join a service organization or business networking group.



**Developing employment opportunities for students boils down to getting to know your students' employment goals and skills, getting to know the needs of employers in your community and finding the right matches between the two. There are a number of strategies and tools you can learn about and use. To be the most successful learn about them and pick the ones that work best for you, your students, and your community.**

# Collaboration

Local Education Authorities (LEA's), and specifically transition coordinators and high school special educators, need to develop collaborative relationships that expand outside of school and district personnel to family members, key system and adult service partners, and community/business contacts.



- **Identifying Transferrable Skills** by sharing the types of activities their daughter or son likes to do while at home and in the community and considering which of those the person is good at doing
- **Creating a List of Favorite Places** their son or daughter enjoys going to help the team consider characteristics of those environments (who is there, what happens, is it noisy or quiet, light or dark, indoors or out) as potential workplaces are identified
- **Determining Support Needs** of their daughter or son when engaged in a range of activities both in and out of school (home and community support needs might be different from those provided in the educational environment)

- **Developing a Set of “Non-Negotiables”** or the list of “must-haves” for their son or daughter (e.g. – specific time for a weekly dinner out, no work on Sundays, workplace on bus line)
- **Developing a Set of “Ideal” Elements** or the list of what will likely work best for their daughter or son in terms of work type, place, schedule (e.g. - distance from home to workplace, time of the day the person seems most energetic, focused, and willing to learn and work)
- **Formulating a List of Existing Connections** by thinking about potential employers everyone on the team knows and highlighting those who already know their son or daughter through family friends and activities
- **Building Work Ethic** by assigning chores at home, talking about the positive aspects of family members’ careers, and sharing all of the good reasons to get and keep a job
- **Supporting a Code of Conduct for Work** by establishing expectations for following rules and cooperating to accomplish tasks
- **Reinforcing Skills** necessary for successful employment by encouraging independence and maturity (getting up and ready for the day, keeping room clean, maintaining positive interactions with others)

## Family involvement during transition benefits students by supporting them to:

- ⊙ Maintain a high quality of life
- ⊙ Obtain and keep meaningful employment and enjoy job satisfaction
- ⊙ Seize opportunities to make choices and self-direct their own lives
- ⊙ Focus on independent living

## Additional Resources

Let’s Get to Work **Employment Planning Tool**

Let’s Get to Work **What’s After High School Family Education Video Series**

InControl Wisconsin **Self-Directed Employment Planning Modules**



# Supporting Families to Expect Employment

Starting in the earliest of years, the actions and attitudes of educators' impact family expectations for the future. Districts that maintain high levels of inclusion throughout the school years and provide community work experiences during high school increase family expectations for employment after high school. Here are some tips for educators to establish a culture of high expectations, develop partnerships, help families learn about options, and strengthen coordination foster employment success for youth with disabilities.

## Developing partnerships:

- ⊙ Send a letter at the beginning of the school year with your picture and information about your role in transition.
- ⊙ Open lines of communication by phone, email, and text. Respond to questions and concerns quickly, even if it is just to say you got their message and will respond later.
- ⊙ Engage family members in preparing for the IEP/PTP meeting by providing information about the transition planning and seeking their input on each part.
- ⊙ Ensure information parents receive is positive and strengths-based.
- ⊙ Use motivational interviewing to develop plans with families rather than 'telling' them what to do.
- ⊙ Involve families in the student's Discovery process and ensure their input on the transition portion of the IEP.

***The most powerful force*** in changing transition outcomes for young people with significant disabilities is not ultimately found in the transition plans we craft, the educational services we offer, the instruction we provide, or the systems we build, but rather in the expectations and aspirations individual parents hold for their sons and daughters.

We carefully considered a number of factors during high school that might influence whether or not students were working for pay in the community during the first two years after high school. And what we learned surprised us. We found that young adults with significant disabilities whose parents definitely expected them to obtain post-school work way back in high school were ***more than five times as likely to have paid, community employment within two years after exiting.***

Erik W. Carter *What Matters Most: Research on Elevating Parent Expectations* TASH Town Hall, December 2014

## Supporting families to learn about options:

- ⊙ Invite families with students in 7th to 12th grade to annual transition resource fairs.
- ⊙ Consider the time of day of your parent information events. It may be that events held during the daytime have better attendance from families.
- ⊙ Offer employment planning activities for youth while parents attend information sessions on transition.
- ⊙ Share student stories and videos from the LGTW website before families complete the Post-Secondary Transition Plan (PTP).
- ⊙ Organize an employer panel for parents.





## Strengthening coordination for success:

- ⦿ Work to develop a strong, collaborative relationship with the local Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) counselor through regular communication about students and encourage families to advocate for their youth in the employment planning process.
- ⦿ Ensure that the student's Individual Education Program (IEP) and Individual Employment Plan (IPE) are being shared and discussed as a team with the family.
- ⦿ Encourage families to ask DVR how they can be part of the job finding process and discuss those ideas as a team.
- ⦿ Remind students and parents to touch base with DVR about progress on a regular basis and provide assistance as needed.



At first, James's family was reluctant to have him work in the community and they did not want to apply for DVR services. School staff continued to encourage the family to consider community employment for James. The family agreed to let the school's transition coordinator set up a work experience with a local American Family Insurance office. ***DVR Youth On-the-Job Training*** was used while James learned the job. The match has been a success and James' parents' expectations for his future have changed dramatically.

Watch James' Video at [www.letsgettoworkwi.org](http://www.letsgettoworkwi.org)

### Additional Resources

Erik W. Carter *What Matters Most: Research on Elevating Parent Expectations* TASH  
Town Hall, December 2014

#### On the Let's Get to Work Website:

What's After High School Family Education Video Series

Self-Directed Employment Planning Modules

LGTW Self-Directed Transition Planning Tool

Families as Partners Fact Sheet





# Parent Transition Survey

Name (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Age of son or daughter \_\_\_\_\_

Disability \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the box that best indicates your answer to the following questions:

	I Strongly Disagree				I Strongly Agree			
1. I have been involved in all planning for the future of my son or daughter.								
2. My son or daughter has been actively involved in planning for his/her own future.								
3. My son or daughter has post-high school goals for community living that are meaningful to him/her.								
4. My son or daughter has post-high school goals for further education and/or employment that are meaningful to him/her.								
5. My son or daughter has post-high school goals that are individualized and based on his/her interests.								
6. My son or daughter has been consistently involved in general education classes and extra-curricular activities with peers who do not have disabilities.								
7. My son or daughter has regular opportunities to be involved in community and civic activities.								
8. My son or daughter is gaining skills to maximize independence.								
9. My son or daughter is learning information and skills that will lead to a high school diploma, college, and/or a job.								

10. I feel that I am a partner with the school in implementing plans to help my son or daughter accomplish his/her goals.								
11. Teachers and other school staff communicate with me about my son's/daughter's progress.								
12. I understand the ways teachers and school staff support my son or daughter to accomplish his/her goals.								
13. Teachers and other school staff provide specific information about ways to work on goal attainment at home.								
14. I feel I understand how to help my son or daughter reach his/her goals.								
15. The school is providing my son or daughter with ample opportunities to explore employment options through community-based experiences.								
16. My son or daughter has opportunities to explore employment options through supports provided at home.								
17. Attending college or technical school is an important part of post-high school planning for my son or daughter.								
18. Paid employment in the community is an important part of post-high school planning for my son or daughter.								

**19. I would like more information about: (circle all that apply)**

Long Term Care Eligibility

Guardianship

Soc. Sec. Benefits Counseling

ADRC (Aging and Disability Resource Center)

MCO (Managed Care Organization) or County Intake

DVR (Division of Vocational Rehabilitation)

Work Incentive Programs

Youth Leadership Groups

Additional Sources of Transition Information

Parent Groups

TAC (Transition Advisory Council)

Adult Service Providers

Community Living Options

Long Term Care Application Processes

Other topics: \_\_\_\_\_

**20. When thinking about transition planning, my biggest concerns are: (circle all that apply)**

Paid Employment

Living Arrangements

Friendships

Health Issues

Social Security Benefits

Transportation

Safety Concerns

Support Services

College/Tech School Entrance

Schedule Changes (time without paid support)

Other areas of concern: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please share any additional comments or questions you may have about the process of transition from school to adult life for your son or daughter:**

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**Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!**





# Engaging with Policy-Makers on Employment

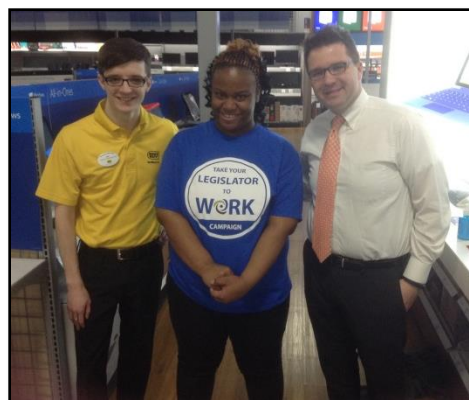
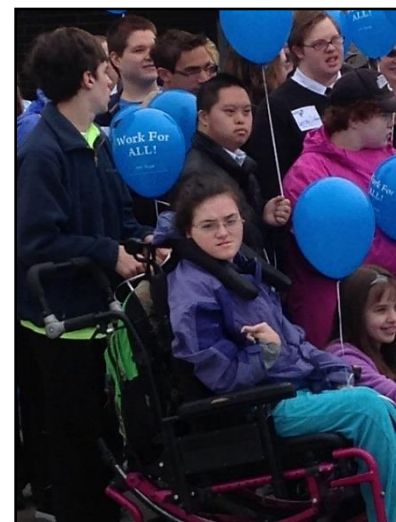
School districts in Wisconsin have faced budget and policy challenges in recent years and those challenges have affected transition services and student outcomes. At the same time, the long term care system that provides supports to adults with disabilities has also faced changes and budget cuts. Efforts to help policy-makers understand the employment needs and goals of youth with disabilities can have a positive impact on local and state-level policy decisions. And, involving students to advocate for policies that are important to them is a great way to support development of self-advocacy skills and civic responsibility. Finding contact information for legislators and policy-makers in your area is only a few clicks away at [whoismyrepresentative.com](http://whoismyrepresentative.com).

Below are four ideas for engaging with policy-makers that proved successful for a Let's Get to Work school. These ideas do require some investment of time and funds, but can have big yields in terms of relationship-building and impact. Mini-grants and donations may be available in your district, through the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities, business groups or civic associations to off-set costs.

**Hold a Breakfast or Luncheon** to talk with multiple policy-makers about the need for employment opportunities and other resources, such as transportation. Organize a gathering with a select invitation list to keep the number of people in attendance relatively low. Have the breakfast or luncheon at your school, a restaurant or another public space where food can be served, people can network, and students can present. In addition to legislators and policy-makers from your area, local employers are also invited. This is a great opportunity to showcase your school's work and transition program.

**Host a Town Hall Meeting** to engage a broader range of stakeholders and community members in a discussion about employment with one or two legislators or policy-makers. This type of event has a larger number of attendees than a breakfast or luncheon. The Town Hall portion of the event is typically led by the legislator(s) who attends as they take questions and comments from the audience. Information and a set of questions for the policy-maker(s) are developed and provided ahead of time to assist with preparation. Legislators and policy-makers have the opportunity to get to know constituents in addition to hearing about the importance of employment for youth with disabilities.

**Participate in "Take Your Legislator to Work,"** a campaign that demonstrates to legislators firsthand the desire people with disabilities have to work in their community and shows them when people with disabilities are working they are also contributing to the local economy, which strengthens our state's economy. For more information or to arrange a visit: <http://wi-bpdd.org/takeyourlegislatorwork/>.



## Steps for Convening a Breakfast, Luncheon, or Town Hall Meeting:

1. Contact one or more of the legislators/policy-makers that represent your area to extend the invitation.
2. Set a date, time, and location based on the availability of the legislator(s) willing to attend.
3. Create and send out invitations to a range of stakeholders based on the type of event (students, family members, teachers, employers, DVR personnel, adult service providers, and community members).
4. Make personal contacts by dropping off invitations face-to-face and placing calls in follow-up to e-mailed and mailed invitations.
5. Plan an agenda that incorporates the introductory presentation by students and an introduction and thank you for legislator/policy-maker(s).
6. Support students to develop and practice a presentation to introduce the topic of employment for youth with disabilities (can include a brief formal presentation with data points, personal stories, and/or video).
7. Send the legislator/policy-maker(s) information to help them prepare. This could be the introduction students plan to use along with briefs about employment from the WI Board for People with Developmental Disabilities and other organizations, along with potential questions that might be asked. Helpful resources can be found at [www.wiemploymentfirst.com](http://www.wiemploymentfirst.com).
8. Invite local media, including newspaper, television, and radio to cover the event (intention to do so should be shared with the legislator/policy-maker(s)).
9. Plan for the food that will be needed.
10. Have one or more topic experts at the event to guide discussion and support policy-maker(s) as needed.

**Create a Proclamation** to declare that your city or town supports employment opportunities in the community for everyone. This action, in conjunction with meetings and events convened to generate discussion with policy-makers, is another great way to increase attention to the needs of youth with disabilities to have job opportunities in the community. The picture to the right is from an event held at a grocery store where a student from the school district works. The Mayor was in attendance to sign the proclamation and have a bagging contest with the student. The store supplied snacks and the entire event happened during regular store hours. The “Work for ALL” proclamation is alive and well in that community!



# Ideas for Hosting a Transition Night

**What is a Transition Night?** A Transition Night is an event designed to provide students with disabilities and their families with a comprehensive set of information about the steps and agencies involved in the process of planning for employment and life after high school.

**Why should we host a Transition Night?** There are several good reasons to consider hosting a transition night:

- ⊙ Making a coordinated effort to gather information and resources for a Transition Night can assist teachers and school staff to learn about the multiple agencies and types of services that their students will be transitioning to – and that is beneficial for teachers and students alike.
- ⊙ Beyond increased understanding about the transition process, a Transition Night offers an opportunity for a variety of partners (teachers, school administrators, students, parents, adult service providers, county or state representatives) to meet face to face and develop more personal relationships that can result in better collaboration on behalf of students.
- ⊙ Bringing students and their family members together to learn about resources, services, people, and places available to them can help everyone feel more comfortable planning for, starting, or continuing the transition process.
- ⊙ Students and their families can also engage in honest conversations about their fears while encouraging and inspiring each other to see the vast possibilities that lie ahead.
- ⊙ A Transition Night is a great way to ensure that your school provides students and families with much needed information!

## Who will come to our Transition Night?

People who typically attend Transition Nights are:

Students with disabilities	Family members	Teachers
Vocational support providers	Home support providers	Transportation providers
Staff from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)	Staff from colleges and postsecondary education institutions	Staff from the local area Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)
Staff from the county and/or managed care organization and IRIS program	Staff from the independent living center serving the area	Staff from Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) regional centers
Local work incentives benefits specialists		

You might not get someone from each of the groups above at your Transition Night, but inviting all of them is recommended. There might be additional transition partners specific to your area not on the list that you will want to invite. Some or all transition partners might want to have a table to share information, such as brochures and services provided, and talk with people after the presentations.



## Who should we ask to present at our Transition Night? People who typically present at a Transition Night include:

- ⊙ Students who have recently gone through the process and transitioned to successful employment, sometimes along with a family member and/or their employer, to share their stories
- ⊙ Students in the process of transitioning who are already working at community jobs or gaining work experience that they enjoy – can also be with a family member and/or employer
- ⊙ Teachers supporting current and former students through the transition process to talk about the benefits of employment and ways school is helping facilitate paid jobs
- ⊙ Staff from colleges and postsecondary education to inform students and family members about options available to students with disabilities
- ⊙ Staff from vocational support agencies to talk about the services they can provide
- ⊙ Staff from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to share information about the services provided and the application process
- ⊙ Staff from the county and/or Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) to discuss the process of determining eligibility for adult long-term supports
- ⊙ A work incentives benefits specialist who can provide basic information about Social Security and other benefits and how to access their services before starting a job



**How do we organize a Transition Night?** Although your process might look a little different, and this list is not detailed, the general steps might look something like this:

1. Decide if it makes sense for your school to work with other schools nearby or through the Transition Action Council (TAC)/County Community on Transition (CCoT) group to expand the invitation circle.
2. Form a committee to plan and execute your Transition Night.
3. Determine a place, date, and time that you believe will work reasonably well for students, family members, and presenters (evenings & weekends generally work best).
4. Make contacts to key presenters to confirm a date and time and arrange for interpreters, if needed.
5. Reserve the space, then create and distribute an invitation.
6. Develop an agenda for the evening to ensure organization and flow.
7. Secure audio-visual equipment as needed.
8. Figure out if there is a small budget to provide dinner or snacks (always a nice touch).
9. Have someone maintain a list of people who rsvp to attend.
10. Before the day of the event, coordinate: making copies, food pick-up or delivery, setting up, greeting attendees, keeping track of time, assisting presenters, and cleaning-up.





# School and DVR Collaboration

For youth with more significant barriers to employment, applying for Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) services *at least two years prior to graduation* is a critical step toward successful, gainful employment. During transition, teachers and DVR counselors *share* responsibility to coordinate plans and help students achieve their post-school employment goals.

## Tips to Increase Collaboration:

- ⊙ **Arrange a meeting for the special education team with the school's DVR counselor at the beginning of each school year.**
  - Provide DVR with information about students who are ready or nearly ready to begin seeking employment.
  - Ensure that all students with disabilities and their families have the opportunity to get connected with DVR when the time is right for them.
- ⊙ **Host a 'DVR night' at school one or two times per year for students and their families.**
  - Invite your local DVR counselor or representative to provide an overview of DVR services and how to apply for services.
  - Include all current sophomores with disabilities and their families so they can attend and learn about DVR.
- ⊙ **Invite the DVR counselor to meet with students and their families during the school day.**
  - Set aside a room and arrange student and school staff schedules to participate as needed.
  - Meetings can take place periodically or on a regular schedule (i.e. once per month) depending on student needs and DVR counselor availability.
- ⊙ **Send home DVR information for students and families unable to attend meetings and gatherings and follow up with families to answer questions and provide assistance as needed.**
- ⊙ **Keep track of which students have applied for DVR and which still need to apply.** Provide assistance to students and families to gather information and complete the referral process on the DVR website.
- ⊙ **When students and families apply for DVR services, ask them to list the designated special education teacher/case manager or transition coordinator on the application so that releases of information can be sent from DVR to the school.**



- ⊙ **Provide a copy of the student's IEP to the DVR counselor.**
  - Share what has already been done with the student in order to avoid duplication or starting over.
  - Use the "Guidance for Teachers Providing School Related Information to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)" document to determine what kinds of information to give DVR.
- ⊙ **Request a copy of a student's plan with DVR so that IEP and Transition plan goals can be aligned with the DVR plan.**
- ⊙ **Keep students active and engaged in planning by developing career exploration and work experiences with them.**
  - Schedule time to sit down with each student every couple weeks to review what has been done.
  - Make a list with the student and email it to the DVR counselor as an update.
- ⊙ **Consider helping students create a Google account and email so that they can log their job shadows, tours, work experiences, career inventory and assessment results, etc.** This document can be shared with the DVR counselor and can also go with the student once they leave high school.
- ⊙ **Invite the DVR counselor to the annual IEP/transition planning meeting or schedule a separate meeting with DVR to discuss what's working, what's not working, and how to improve and make changes this year.** Develop a specific action plan to make progress toward the employment goal.



## Additional Resources

[Guidance for Teachers Providing School Related Information to DVR](#)

[Transition Action Guide](#) & [Online Training Module](#)

[WI Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Website](#)



**"Let's Get to Work"**  
**A Project for the Employment of Youth  
with Disabilities**  
in conjunction with  
**DVR's On the Job Training Hiring Initiative**

**What is the "DVR On the Job Hiring and Training Initiative"?**

This initiative provides an opportunity for ALL DVR consumers in transition to work for wages before exiting high school. It provides a longer timeframe (up to 500 hours) and a higher wage subsidy (up to 100% reimbursement) to allow an employer to offer competitive employment to a youth with disabilities. It is based on an existing DVR OJT program providing a 50% wage reimbursement during the first 90 days of employment: an effort that has resulted in permanent employment for 83 to 88% of participants.

The Youth Transition OJT allows for a higher % of wage subsidy to be determined upon negotiation with an employer and DVR staff to offset increased training costs for youth with more significant barriers to employment.

**Elements of the OJT Initiative**

- The placement must be developed individually for each youth in transition based on their interests and skills.
- It must be with a competitive community based employer and in an integrated setting.
- It is developed with direct DVR staff contact with the employer. School staff may assist in a manner similar to the way job developers assist in other OJT development.
- It is likely that it will be used after age 16 because of child labor laws and the lack of positions available in many communities for youth under age 16.
- The consumer will maintain the employment after the OJT period ends.
- Some youth will stay in the position permanently and some youth may go on to other opportunities like training (post-secondary or occupational) or other employment opportunities just like their peers.
- Other DVR services can be provided when someone is using a Youth Transition OJT such as job coaching.

**The Youth Transition OJT is not:**

- A temporary job, job shadow, or work experience.
- An established "slot" or position in which employed youth can be rotated.
- A job provided at school.
- A job provided in a non-integrated setting.
- A job that pays less than the prevailing wage.

For additional information and/or questions about the Youth Transition OJT you may contact Meredith Dressell at [Meredith.Dressel@dwd.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Meredith.Dressel@dwd.wisconsin.gov) or Kathleen Enders at [Kathleen.Enders@dwd.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Kathleen.Enders@dwd.wisconsin.gov).

The Let's Get to Work project, funded by the Administration on Developmental Disabilities and awarded to the WI Board for People with Developmental Disabilities, supports schools and communities seeking to improve the integrated, community-based employment of youth with I/DD. By focusing on community assets, elevating expectations, and expanding opportunities for youth while still in high school, this project provides technical assistance, training, on-site coaching and funding for activities.

## **DVR needs information to assist with determining:**

- **If the student has a disability**
- **The impact the disability has on their ability work**
- **How their disability impacts them in the following areas: self-care, communication, mobility, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work skills, and work tolerance**
- **Any accommodations the student needs**
- **Student's career interests, skills and experiences**

**Teacher Documentation that may address these items: (once a student/family or guardian submit a referral to DVR, a release of information must be signed prior to sharing school records with DVR staff)**

### ✓ **Current IEP including PTP**

- Provide a copy of the student's most current IEP, including: Placement page, Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance, IEP program summary
- Current reading, writing, and math levels

### • **Relevant course information and performance (PTP Course of Study)**

- Information on classes the student has taken related to their interests and employment goal; including grades and/or progress reports.

### ✓ **School Psychological Reports - most current evaluation**

- Reports or assessments related to the student's disability, limitations, learning style, accommodation needs, etc.

### ✓ **Assistive technology or accommodations reports**

- Any assessment, teacher reports, etc. that describe rehabilitation or accommodation needs.
- Include information on any assistive technology (AT) or augmentative communication devices the student uses, in which setting, and purpose. Also include any AT that the student has used that has not worked in the past.

### ✓ **Work Experience/ Volunteer reports or observations**

- If a student has completed a work experience or volunteer experience information:
  - Location(s), dates, work performed, supports needed, strengths observed
  - Goals and outcomes
  - Soft skills, work skills, interpersonal skills observed
  - Any identified barriers to employment

### ✓ **Vocational Assessment reports**

- For example: Career Occupational Preference System (COPS), Career Cruising, Life Centered Career Education (LCCE), Career Exploration Inventory (CEI), Transition Planning Inventory (TPI), Enderle-Severson Transition Rating Scale (ESTR-J and ESTR-III)
- Interest Inventories

### ✓ **Home/Community Experiences**

- Reports or observations from family or school that pertain to the student's disability, limitations, interests, strengths, interpersonal skills, mobility, etc. while in the community.

### ✓ **Teacher/School Personnel Observations & Other Documentation**

- Observations/information that would be relevant to DVR's eligibility and the required seven functional areas. This can be shared informally - email, letter, an official report, etc.

### ✓ **Summary of Performance (SoP) if completed or in-progress draft**

### ✓ **Medical reports or outside assessments (Encourage the family to share)**

- Any reports that diagnose or describe the student's disability or limitations (e.g. mental health records, doctor's reports, etc.)





# Community Conversations

Community Conversations are a highly effective way to bring people together to talk about community issues. Let's Get to Work pilot high school sites have used Community Conversations to create awareness as well as to discuss strategies and resources that can help youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) get jobs in their communities.

## What is a Community Conversation?

Community Conversations are events or gatherings to talk about ways to improve a local problem.

- ⊙ Conversations are held at a welcoming place.
- ⊙ Typically last about 2 hours.
- ⊙ 2 – 3 questions are provided by the organizers.
- ⊙ People discuss the questions in small groups to share their experiences and ideas about the issue at hand.
- ⊙ Food is usually included.

## What are the benefits/outcomes?

- ⊙ Paid jobs!
- ⊙ Make new connections; learn new resources.
- ⊙ Increased quality of life.
- ⊙ Jump start to heightened awareness.
- ⊙ Together, people generate solutions.



## Who is invited?

Everyone is needed and invited! Including: families, students, church members, employers, neighbors, service providers, school staff, and more!

## Why do these conversations work?

- ⊙ Conversations can be easily adapted so anyone can actively participate.
- ⊙ People who participate in these conversations feel they have really been heard.
- ⊙ Builds community pride.
- ⊙ Real, lasting change is most likely to happen when the answers and plans come from the people who live in the community.

## For tools to help you plan a Community Conversation:

**Launching Inclusive Efforts through Community Conversations: A Practical Guide**

**Let's Get to Work Quick Guide: sample invitations, agendas and materials**

**A Community Conversation....**  
a gathering of local La Crosse County community stakeholders to discuss empowering our youth with disabilities through employment and community involvement!



Holmen High School was fortunate to get a federal grant through the Board for People with Developmental Disabilities to work on increasing employment outcomes and inclusive community involvement for our youth with disabilities from 15-17 years of age. Come and share your insights and hear what some local community members are already doing and where we can go from here!

We **VALUE** and **NEED** your input!







# Community Conversation Planning Form

When your team or group is ready to hold a community conversation about employment opportunities for youth with disabilities, you can use this form, along with the booklet titled: **Launching Inclusive Efforts through Community Conversations**, to get started.

**Step 1:** List 2-3 Ideas for the main focus of your conversation. (What aspects of this topic would the group like to explore to expand opportunities for students?)

**Examples:** Strengthening the School-Business Partnership, Increasing Awareness of Student Employment Goals, Ways the Community can Support Students to become Productive Citizens

1)

2)

3)

**Step 2:** Develop 3-4 draft questions around that topic that you could give community conversation attendees to answer.

**Example:** How can we engage more individuals with disabilities in civic activities?

1)

2)

3)

4)

**Step 3:** Make a list of the people who will plan the event.


**Step 4:** List 2-3 ideas for the location:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

**Step 5:** Choose a month and 2-3 prospective dates:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

**Step 6:** Think about the planning timeline:

Task	Person Responsible	Target Date
1st planning meeting		
Location secured/Date confirmed		
Draft invitation and agenda		
2nd planning meeting		
Invitations finalized and out		
Questions finalized		
Logistics and agenda finalized		
Community Conversation		
Post-conversation tasks and follow-up		

**Step 7:** Consider ways to get students/individuals with disabilities/family members/employers involved.



# Ideas to Increase Employers at Community Conversations on Employment

Many districts in Wisconsin have been hosting Community Conversations aimed at developing local solutions to increase employment outcomes for youth with disabilities. They have experienced varying degrees of employer attendance at their events. Below are strategies schools have used to boost the number of employers at these events.

- ⦿ **Check the calendar.** Before setting the date and time for your event, be sure to call the Chamber or local business association to determine if there are conflicting events. The Chamber staff person might also be able to give you some advice on the time of day to hold your event that would work best for employers in the area.
- ⦿ **Involve students with invitation distribution.** Take a few students out with you to stop into businesses and personally invite employers to your event. This helps students develop their social skills as well as show employers that students with disabilities are ready and able to work.
- ⦿ **Send out a press release.** Work with your local newspaper to publicize the event. Share it in your school newsletter and any other media outlets that you have in your community.
  - Ask for air time from a local radio or news station. Have students present the concept of employment for all. You can even pair students up with local employers that you already work with!
- ⦿ **Ask employers to invite other employers.** Your school already has relationships with employers. Ask your current employers to talk about your event at their networking functions and personally invite other employers in your community.
- ⦿ **Create a list of everyone you know.** Take the time to brainstorm a list of all the people the planning committee knows and the places they go in their community. Committee members should extend personal invitations to the people on their list.
- ⦿ **Invite families and alumni.** Parents and alumni may be business owners or managers. Be sure to send the invitation out to families and alumni in the district through school envelopes, emails and newsletters.
- ⦿ **Call employers a day or two before the event.** Employers are busy. They might have gotten the invitation a few weeks before the event, intended to attend, but then forget about the event. A friendly reminder call could be the answer to get them there!



- ⦿ **Enlist the help of people who are well connected.** Every school or community has a person who seems to know everyone in town. Perhaps it's the school secretary, the football coach or a real estate agent. Ask this person to extend personal invitations to the people they know.
  - Attend staff meetings of schools in your district (as well as your own). Showcase the work their former students are doing with a short presentation from students or use a PowerPoint with lots of pictures. Be sure the purpose for the Community Conversation is clear.
  - Give each person two invites and ask them to personally invite an employer or business manager in charge of hiring. Better yet, have them offer to attend WITH them!
- ⦿ **Contact your county's Job Center Manager.** The Job Center is connected to employers in your community. They may be willing to send the invitation out or make copies available for employers at upcoming business events or job fairs.
- ⦿ **Partner with your district's Career and Technical Education staff to broaden your reach.**
- ⦿ **For employers that say they can't attend, ask them for a 15 minute breakfast meeting.** Bring breakfast, a presentation from youth, and an offer to help them fill open spots!



One of the most effective things you can do to get employers to your Community Conversation is to **call them a day or two before the event to remind them!**

# 12 Ways to Connect with *More* Employers

Teachers supporting students with transition goals aren't always sure where to start when it comes to working with employers. There are a number of ways to build partnerships with local employers. Below is a list of possible strategies for you and your school to consider.


## School and Student-Focused Ideas to Try:

- ⦿ **Collaborate with People and Programs at your School** – It is likely that Vocational-Technical teachers, Business Education/DECA and the school-to-work coordinator at your school already have connections to a number of employers. Help get students with disabilities connected with career development activities already taking place through your school. If there is a community service requirement for graduation, ensure that students with disabilities have the same requirement and access to the same opportunities to be out in the community volunteering along-side their peers who do not have disabilities.
- ⦿ **Coordinate Service Learning Opportunities** – If your school doesn't already have a service learning requirement for graduation, consider adding one. Service learning helps students build work and social skills, as well as connections to community members through contribution and meaningful community involvement. The skills learned and connections made become essential ingredients for connecting with future employers – either through the opportunities directly related to the service learning organization or by tapping into the personal networks of people that are met through the service learning opportunity.
- ⦿ **Host a Job Fair** – Organize a job fair at your school with local employers. There may be other local partners that can help you organize one. Inquire with the other vocational and business programs within your school, the local colleges, as well as with your local Job Center. Job Fairs are a great way for employers to meet students, conduct interviews, and collect resumes. And, job fairs help your school and students learn from local employers.
- ⦿ **Use Personal Networks** – Did you know that most jobs are never advertised? Most people find employment opportunities through their friends, family, and other personal connections. You can expand your employer networks by including the networks of other teachers, students, and their parents by asking them about the businesses with which they have connections and enlisting their help to make initial connections with them.
- ⦿ **Request Informational Interviews, Business Tours, and Job Shadows** – Connect with employers based on students' desires to learn about their workplace and pursue work in their industry. Don't ask for a job when you make the first contact with an employer! Rather, ask the employer to provide a tour of the business, an informational interview, or a job shadow for the student(s) to learn more about the employer. Most employers are open to such opportunities. Make sure students arrive prepared to ask questions and share information about their interests and skills. During the visit, listen for unmet needs the employer might have. After, follow up with a thank you note and consider how you could make contact with that employer again.





## Community-Wide Outreach Ideas:

- ⦿ **Host a Community Conversation** – Community Conversations are an extremely effective way to bring community members, including employers, together to talk about community issues. The Let's Get to Work (LGTW) project experienced great success connecting with employers using Community Conversations. More information for planning a Community Conversation is available in the Collaboration section of the LGTW Quick Guide. [www.letsgettowork.org](http://www.letsgettowork.org)
  - ⦿ **Have an “Amazing Race to Employment”** – LGTW schools developed a fun and effective activity to connect with employers while building student confidence and communication skills. Dubbed the “Amazing Race to Employment,” students are broken into small groups to stop into several local businesses for a short “meet and greet.” They arrive at a business and, with the help of a teacher, ask for the manager/owner, introduce themselves, say the purpose for their visit, and ask a couple key questions (for example, What qualities do you look for in a new employee?, or How does one apply for a job here?). School staff inquires with the owner/manager about the possibility of following up. At the end of the activity, school staff have accumulated dozens of potential employment contacts! More information about the [Amazing Race to Employment](#) can be found in the LGTW Quick Guide.
- 
- ⦿ **Work with your PIE group** – Find out if your community has a Partners in Education (PIE) group. Partners in Education is a volunteer group comprised of area business, education, and community leaders who are committed ensuring youth are on the path to successful careers and future employment. Talk to the staff involved in these programs about also using these contacts for students with disabilities.
  - ⦿ **Create a Public Service Announcement (PSA)** – PSA's can be an effective way to raise awareness in your local community about the power of employer partnerships to increase employment opportunities for youth with disabilities. The LGTW pilot schools created PSAs, all of which are featured on their webpages in the LGTW website under the 'Pilot Schools' navigation tab.
  - ⦿ **Collaborate with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Business Services Consultant in your area** – Each Workforce Development Area in the state has a DVR Business Services Consultant whose primary responsibility is to connect with employers about employing job seekers with disabilities. Contact your local DVR Business Services Consultant to explore ways in which you can collaborate. Contact information is found at: [https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/pdf\\_files/bsc\\_contact\\_list.pdf](https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/pdf_files/bsc_contact_list.pdf).
  - ⦿ **Network with Local Business Groups** – Carve out time every month to meet with the local Chamber of Commerce, service organizations, and/or business networking groups to create ongoing relationships with employers in your community. Involve students as much as possible in your networking efforts. Request to present to these groups with students. Prepare students to talk about their interests and the contributions they can make to the workplace
  - ⦿ **Collaborate with the Job Center's Youth Programs Adult Employment Service Providers** – Contact them to discuss how you can share employer contacts and avoid duplicating efforts with local employers.

# Let's Get to Work's Amazing Race to Employment

Teachers supporting students with transition goals aren't always sure where to start when it comes to working with employers. The 'Amazing Race to Employment' is one example of how Let's Get to Work schools overcame that challenge. The 'Amazing Race' can be a fun and effective way to connect with employers while building student confidence and communication skills. At the end of the 'Amazing Race,' school staff will have accumulated dozens of potential employment contacts!

**Purpose of the Activity:** To expose students with and without disabilities to local businesses where they might seek employment, while also exposing as many businesses as possible to students who want to work.

**Objective of the 'Game:'** You can make the Amazing Race to Employment a fun activity by creating a game-like atmosphere, where small groups of students are competing with one another to approach the most employers and gather the most business cards and job applications. Each employer, business card and job application counts as 1 point. The team with the most points at the end of the activity wins the game!

**Who is Involved:** Small groups of students with and without disabilities (3-4 students in each group make a team) and adult chaperones for each group.

**Materials:** Clipboards with a checklist of different businesses for each student group, writing utensils, school brochures about student employment (with contact information for the Transition Coordinator), nametags, iPads for pictures/video, envelopes for business cards and applications, transportation.

## Before the Event:

- ⊙ Seek parental permission for all of the students
- ⊙ Develop a set of 3-5 possible question cards for students to use with the employer:
  - *What are 3 skills a good employee should have?*
  - *What is something we wouldn't know about your business?*
  - *How does your business advertise job openings?*
  - *What kinds of positions do you typically hire for?*
  - *How does one apply for a job here?*
- ⊙ Contact local TV stations for coverage of the event.

## Sample Plan for the Day:

- 7:40am** Give students an overview and instructions for the day
- Go into local businesses and ask for the manager
  - Give a strong handshake
  - Tell the manager about the activity
  - Have the manager answer a question about employment or their business.
  - Ask for a business card and/or application
  - Give the employer the school employment brochure.
  - Ask if it is okay for a teacher to contact them about employment opportunities for students (If agreed to, teacher takes down the contact information by the business name on the clip board)
  - Thank them for their time
- 7:50am** Practice the script with teammates and adult chaperones

- 8:10am** Practice the script and the questions with the Career and Business Communications Class (Students from class role play as business managers)
- 8:40am** Have an exciting “send-off” for the Amazing Race student teams (At Holmen High School, the Principal fired off the track starting gun and Career and Business Communication students created human tunnel for the Amazing Race teams to go through as they ran to the school vans to start the event!)
- 8:55am** Teams travel to all of the local businesses listed on their sheets
- Each team has a unique list of about 10-15 businesses from the local area (restaurants, retail, pet stores, etc.)
  - Points awarded to teams for getting business cards and applications
  - Students take turns speaking (for introductions, questions, etc.)
- 12:15pm** All groups meet for lunch (at a local park or somewhere off campus) to talk about the day, and tally points to see which team won the race. Discussion points about the day to use with students include:
- Which was your favorite/ideal place to work? Why?
  - What parts did you feel you did really well at?
  - What was your biggest challenge of the day?
  - Review some of the managers’ answers to the Amazing Race Questions.

### Example Script:

“Hello. Can I please speak to a manager?”

*Manager Approaches - Handshake and Smile*

“Hi. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and we are a group of students with all kinds of abilities from Holmen High School. We are doing the Amazing Race to Employment to learn more about the businesses where we would like to work. We have one question for you to learn more about your business. Please pick a card, and answer the question on the back.”

**\*\*Ask Question\*\***

“Would it be okay for my teacher, \_\_\_\_\_, to contact you about jobs for \_\_\_\_\_ High School students?” “Do you have a business card or application we could have?”

“Thank you! Have a great day!” *Handshake and Smile*





# You Can Work & Keep Your Benefits:

## Work Incentives Benefits Counseling 101

Are you afraid you might lose your benefits if you earn money from a job or a business? The truth is, you can work and keep the benefits you need! Fear of losing benefits is one of the most common reasons why people with disabilities choose not to work. Benefit programs like Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid (MA) can be confusing, resulting in a lot of misinformation.

Special provisions and protections are in place to that help people with disabilities work and earn a living. These provisions are called 'Work Incentives' and there are people known as Work Incentives Benefits Specialists throughout Wisconsin that can help you understand and navigate your benefits so that you can work and earn money.

As you begin to earn money from work, it is important that you start to understand the benefits you have, how your benefits might change if your life changes, and your responsibilities. This might seem overwhelming but don't worry, a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist can help.

### Examples of How Work Incentives Help

**Jarod** is 19 years old. He attends an 18-21 year old Transition program and has started working in his first paid job for 20 hours per week at minimum wage. Since Jarod is under 22 years old and regularly attends school, he is able to take advantage of the Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE). With the SEIE, Social Security excludes a portion of Tim's earnings when determining his SSI cash payment amount. In fact, up to \$1,780 of Tim's income per month or a total of \$7,180 per year (2016 amount) will not be counted when figuring out his SSI payment amount.

**Youa** has been working as clerk for a local bank. She is worried that accepting a raise from her employer would make her ineligible for SSI (causing her to lose Medicaid). By meeting with a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist, Youa learned that she does not have to worry about her Medicaid coverage. A Work Incentive called Continuation of Medicaid Coverage under 1619(b) allows her to keep Medicaid even after earnings from work are too high for an SSI cash payment. Youa's Medicaid benefits will continue until she reaches the Wisconsin state threshold amount of \$33,622 (2016 amount) in annual earnings. Even after that there are ways she might be able to have a higher threshold determined based on her individual circumstances.

**Miguel** worked with a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist to write a Plan to Achieve Self-Support (or PASS) to set aside income that would normally affect his SSI payment. He set aside money for three years to purchase equipment and supplies to start up a mobile ice cream business. PASS plans can be used to set aside money to go to school, start a business, or get vocational training that helps a person achieve his/her employment goals.

These are just a few examples. A Work Incentives Benefits Specialist can provide you with information about all of the Work Incentives available to you.



## When to contact a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist

It takes time to learn about your benefits, the sooner you get started the better! If you are in high school, you should begin learning about your benefits before you begin working and earning money so that you can maximize your earning potential.

## What to expect from a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist

Work Incentives Benefits Specialists will provide you with different levels of service. They can answer general questions about benefits by phone or email or they can provide you with a detailed “Benefits Analysis.”

A Benefits Analysis is a written document that explains, in simple and plain language, all of the benefit programs you receive, what your responsibilities are, and how life changes and work earnings will impact these benefits. The Work Incentives Benefits Specialist will meet with you in- person to review your benefit analysis and give you an opportunity to ask questions. The Benefit Specialist is available to you after you review your summary to answer your questions by phone, in person, or by email. You should expect timely, individualized service!

## How to prepare for a meeting with a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist

- ⊙ Think about your job goals. How much do you want to work? How much money would you like to make (or are you currently making)? Do you want to be self-employed?
- ⊙ Write down your questions or concerns.
- ⊙ Make a list of all the benefits you get and the amounts, if you know them. Gather up as much documentation of your benefits as you can. The Work Incentive Benefits Specialist can help answer questions about a variety of public benefits, as well as private benefits you are receiving.



## Finding a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist

You can find a Work Incentives Benefits Specialist in your area by visiting [www.wibsa.org](http://www.wibsa.org) or by talking to your transition teacher. If you are working with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) you can ask your DVR Counselor about Work Incentives Benefits Counseling services.

## How Work Incentives Benefits Counseling Services are paid for

Work Incentives Benefits Counseling is a service frequently purchased by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). If you are working with DVR, you can ask your DVR counselor about including Work Incentives Benefits Counseling services on your Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) with DVR.

If you are not working with DVR, the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) program is an option. WIPA services are funded by the Social Security Administration, so they are free-of-charge. You can find the WIPA service provider in your part of the state by visiting: <http://www.eri-wi.org/programs/WIPA/>.



# Connecting Students to Work Incentives Benefits Counseling Services: A Checklist for Teachers

It is important that youth with disabilities who receive public benefits, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid (MA), learn about Work Incentives. Since special educators and transition coordinators connect high school students and their families to resources and services that will help them achieve post-school success, Work Incentives Benefits Counseling (WIBC) services should be included!

## Steps to take to connect students to WIBC Services:

1. **Provide students and families information about WIBC services.** The Let's Get to Work project has developed a [WIBC Fact Sheet](#), which can be found on the Let's Get to Work website. The WIBC Fact Sheet can be emailed to families or printed.
2. **Talk to DVR about WIBC services.** If the student is involved with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), the student could add WIBC to their employment plan with DVR. Students not yet working with DVR could receive WIBC services from the local Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program (WIPA) at no-cost. Locate a WIPA service provider at <http://www.eri-wi.org/programs/WIPA/>.
3. **Help students and families prepare for the first meeting with the WIBC service provider.** The WIBC service provider will explain to the student and family how to prepare for the first meeting, including gathering documentation of any benefits received and income of the student and/or family. You might need to provide information to the family about wages and hours of past or prospective paid work experiences.
4. **Check back to ensure that they have met with the WIBC service provider.** After the initial meeting, the WIBC service provider verifies benefits and writes a detailed report for the student about their benefits and the Work Incentives that apply to them.



5. **Review and revisit the benefits analysis.** Benefits are confusing and students and families can easily feel overwhelmed by them. Talk with the family about what they learned from the WIBC service provider. Do they seem to understand the report? Do they have continued concerns about losing benefits with work? Encourage families to follow up as often as needed with the WIBC service provider or invite the WIBC service provider to a transition meeting or IEP to be a resource for the entire team as the student moves forward with employment planning.

## Quick Review Checklist

Steps	Date Completed	Notes
1. WIBC information provided		
2. DVR contact about WIBC need		
3. Preparation for WIBC meeting		
4. Confirmation of meeting		
5. Follow-up with student and family		

### Additional Resources

For the most current information and resources about Work Incentives Benefits Counseling in Wisconsin, visit the Work Incentives Benefits Specialist Association (WIBSA) at [www.wibsa.org](http://www.wibsa.org)



# Braiding Resources

Plan coordination and collaboration across systems is considered a ‘best practice’ in Transition and Employment Supports. Individuals and systems benefit in tangible ways when collaboration occurs: youth with disabilities achieve personally meaningful outcomes, and schools and service systems maximize resources most efficiently.

In Wisconsin, we have a great opportunity to collaborate and braid resources. The Interagency Agreement between the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the Department of Health Services (DHS) lays the foundation on which these three important partners in Transition work together. This agreement is intended to “clearly define necessary relationships, policies, and procedures between the DVR, the DPI and the DHS in order to create common understandings and establish collaborative efforts regarding services that will ultimately improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.”

## How Schools Support Integrated Employment

Starting at age 14, school staff plays a primary role in helping students develop personally meaningful postsecondary employment goals. The IEP Team determines the necessary supports and transition services to engage students in career awareness, opportunities to explore career options, and develop connections with employers and other outside agencies to help students gain experience in a variety of jobs within their local community.

## How DVR Supports Integrated Employment

DVR provides services to assist job seekers to address barriers to employment and find employment. Schools support students to connect with DVR at least 2 years prior to graduation. Prior to that time, DVR can provide technical assistance to students, teachers and parents upon request. DVR can provide counseling, technical assistance and funding for job training supports, may pay a students’ wages during internships, and much more.

Resources can and *should be* combined for *every* job seeker. How these resources are braided together can and *should be* individualized for *each* job seeker. There is no cookie cutter approach to braiding resources!

## How DHS Children’s Long Term Care (CLTS) Supports Integrated Employment

CLTS service coordinators assist youth in setting goals and coordinating the programs and services that support these goals. CLTS offers services, such as mentoring, that are designed to help youth build employability skills beyond the school day.





## Stories

### Jayden



**At age 15**, Jayden wanted to start working in the summer. He was unsure what kind of work he wanted to do. With help, Jayden made a plan at his IEP meeting to explore job options. Jayden's school staff set up job shadows and

informational interviews with local businesses. After exploring some options, Jayden decided that he wanted to work at a movie theater or in a mailroom over the summer. Jayden's IEP team helped him fill out a DVR referral and connected him with DVR. Jayden, his mom, and school staff met with DVR to develop his Individual Plan for Employment (IPE). The team developed the following plan:

- ✓ **DVR:** DVR pays an adult service provider to do a Discovery assessment. With the results of the Discovery Assessment, DVR pays the adult service provider to develop an internship/work experience with a local business.
- ✓ **School:** After Discovery is completed, school staff works with Jayden to use that information to create a visual resume that highlights his strengths and skills. The IEP team may consider providing school staff to support Jayden during the summer in additional job experiences.
- ✓ **Family:** Jayden's parents, being well-known business owners themselves, share names of people they know who have businesses that offer the type of work that Jayden is interested in. The team will decide who should make the initial contact and who will follow up with the lead to the business.
- ✓ **CLTS Waivers:** Jayden, his family, and his CLTS Waiver Service Coordinator decide to include Mentoring on his Individual Service Plan (ISP) to help him practice using the public bus system so he can get to work independently and safely.

### Emma

**Emma is** a junior in high school. She would like to explore careers and post-secondary education programs for veterinary technician, groomer, or trainer. Emma lives in a rural community. Since many employers are far away and the school only employs one special education teacher and one special education assistant, it is difficult for staff to leave school with Emma for exploration activities. At her IEP meeting, Emma and her team developed a transition plan to move forward:



- ✓ **DVR:** Provide information about training programs that fit Emma's job goals. Authorize an adult service provider to seek out a job that meets her interests. Use the Youth On-the-Job Training reimbursement as an incentive to pay the employer, if needed. Discuss possible mileage reimbursement for Emma's parents to get her to and from the job.
- ✓ **School:** Support Emma to research labor market info using [www.dpi.wi.gov/acp/wicareercruising](http://www.dpi.wi.gov/acp/wicareercruising) and other resources. Arrange informational interviews and job shadows with the animal hospital, dog grooming salon, and other businesses – some may occur during the school day and some may be on the weekends or evenings. Staff will help her practice interviewing skills.
- ✓ **Family:** Assist Emma with researching post-secondary training programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities ([www.thinkcollege.net](http://www.thinkcollege.net)) and have programs that meet the identified training requirements of her job goal.
- ✓ **CLTS Waivers:** Emma uses her long-term support services to work with a mentor to practice social skills needed during interviews and as an employee. When she gets a permanent job in her community, she can receive ongoing job support through her long-term support waivers.

# Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) Waivers

## Fact Sheet for Teachers

### What is CLTS?

The Children's Long Term Support Waivers make Medicaid funding available to support children who are living at home or in the community and who have substantial limitations due to developmental, emotional, and/or physical disabilities. A range of different services and supports are identified based on an assessment of the child's specific needs and identified goals or outcomes.

A Support and Service Coordinator (SSC) works with families to identify goals or outcomes and develop a long-term support plan called an Individual Service Plan (ISP).

### Who is eligible?

A child must:

- be under 22 years of age;
- be eligible for Wisconsin Medicaid, including:
  - be a United States citizen or have acceptable immigration status;
  - be a Wisconsin resident;
  - not have income in their name in excess of the current Medicaid standards;
- live at home or in a foster care setting;
- have a level of care need that is typically provided in an institutional setting such as a hospital or nursing home; and
- be able to receive safe and appropriate care at home and/or in the community;



All children or young adults must meet these basic requirements for CLTS Waivers eligibility. To qualify for certain types of funding, there may be additional requirements (example: Autism Treatment Services).

### How does a family apply?

The parent or guardian should contact the County Human Services Department where they live and let them know they are interested in long-term support services for their child. Someone will discuss the various programs and resources that may be available in the county for the child based on their needs and the services available.

To apply, the county agency worker will assist the family with some or all of the following:

- Completing an application packet;
- Scheduling a home-visit for the county service coordinator to meet with the family in the home to help complete the assessment of the child's needs;
- Determining the child's "Level of Care" need using an online functional screening tool that the county service coordinator will complete;
- Determining the child's disability status
- Coordinating Wisconsin Medicaid eligibility (some counties have waiting lists so it's best to contact the county as soon as possible to find out about eligibility).

## What are some examples of services the CLTS Waivers could provide?

Care Management/Support & Service Coordination \* Communication Aids \* Supportive Home Care \*  
Counseling & Therapeutic Services \* Daily Living Skills Training Mentoring \* Home Modifications \* Adaptive  
Aids \* Respite Care \* Specialized Medical & Therapeutic Supplies \* Supported Employment

This is not an inclusive list of services. For more information including descriptions of each service, please visit the Children's Services website below.

Collaboration between school team and CLTS team members can facilitate progress toward goals for students with disabilities. If you're not sure whether a student has CLTS, you can ask the family.

## For More Information on CLTS...

Families can contact the Children's Services Division of the county that makes eligibility determinations. For a list of county agencies and contacts, please visit: [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/areaadmin/HSDListing.asp](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/areaadmin/HSDListing.asp)

For more information on the CLTS Waivers, please visit:  
[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/children/clts/waiver/family/index.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/children/clts/waiver/family/index.htm)

CompassWisconsin: Threshold provides eligibility determinations for some counties:  
<http://compasswisconsin.org/>

## Additional Resources

Aging and Disability Resource Centers  
<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc/index.htm>

You Can Work brochure  
[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/P0/p00516.pdf](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/P0/p00516.pdf)

Statewide Transition Information  
[www.witig.org](http://www.witig.org)

Department of Health Services Employment Initiatives Section  
<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/clts/waiver/transition/youcanwork.htm>





# Acronyms

ADRC [Aging and Disability Resource Center](#)

BA [Benefits Analysis](#)

CAP [Client Assistance Program](#)

CCoTs [County Community on Transition](#) (formerly known as TACs – Transition Action Councils)

CESA [Cooperative Education Service Agencies](#)

CIP [Community Integration Program](#)

CLTS [Children’s Long Term Supports](#)

CMS [Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services](#)

COP [Community Options Program](#)

CYSHCN [Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs](#)

DCF [Department of Children and Families](#)

DHS [Department of Health Services](#)

DOL [Department of Labor](#)

DPI [Department of Public Instruction](#)

DVR [Division of Vocational Rehabilitation](#)

DWD [Department of Workforce Development](#)

HCBS [Home and Community Based Services](#)

I/DD [Intellectual and Developmental Disability](#)

IDEA [Individuals with Disability Education Act](#)

IEP [Individualized Education Program](#)

ILC [Independent Living Center](#)

IPE [Individualized Plan for Employment](#)

IRWE [Impairment-Related Work Expenses](#)

ISP [Individual Service Plan](#)

JC [Job Coach/Job Coaching](#)

JD [Job Developer/Job Development](#)



LGTW [Let’s Get to Work](#)

LTS [Long Term Services](#)

MA [Medicaid](#)

MCO [Managed Care Organization](#)

NSTTAC [National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center](#)

PASS [Plan to Achieve Self-Support](#)

PTP [Postsecondary Transition Plan](#)

SDS [Self-Directed Supports](#)

SEA/  
Para [Special Education Assistant](#)

SEIE [Student Earned Income Exclusion](#)

SI	<a href="#">Systematic Instruction</a>	TIP	<a href="#">Transition Improvement Plan</a>
SSDI	<a href="#">Social Security Disability Insurance</a>	VR	<a href="#">Vocational Rehabilitation</a> (sometimes used interchangeably with DVR)
SSI	<a href="#">Supplemental Security Income</a>	WIA	<a href="#">Workforce Investment Act</a>
TA	<a href="#">Task Analysis</a>	WIBC	<a href="#">Work Incentive Benefits Counseling</a>
TAG	<a href="#">Transition Action Guide</a>	WIBS	<a href="#">Work Incentive Benefits Specialist</a>
TAN	<a href="#">Transition Advisory Network</a>	WIOA	<a href="#">Work Innovations &amp; Opportunities Act</a>
TCN	<a href="#">Transition Collaboration Network</a>	WIPA	<a href="#">Work Incentives Planning and Assistance</a>
TIG	<a href="#">Transition Improvement Grant</a>	YOJT	<a href="#">Youth on the Job Training Initiative</a>







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