



# School & Community Supports for Employment Success

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February 7, 2015

Developed under a grant from the Office of Special Education Programs.  
CFDA#84.323A Award#H1323A070019

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## Questions we will address:

- How can I prepare my son or daughter for employment?
- How can the IEP and transition process support employment goals?
- What adult service resources can support future learning and employment?
- What are some steps I can take to help my youth prepare for transition and working?

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## Involved Families are Critical

- Youth with involved families are more likely to have better transition outcomes
- You can help your child prepare for work and find work experience and paid work opportunities
- Look at your own personal networks to find work experience and paid work opportunities

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## The Importance of Work

- Provides connection to the community
- Gives a sense of purpose and accomplishment
- Helps build social skills and responsibility
- Provides income

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## What All Youth Need: The Guideposts for Success (suggested from 30 years of research)

### YOUTH NEED SUPPORTS TO:

- Explore careers
- Develop work skills
- Develop a voice in their life
- Connect to other supports beyond high school

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## Early steps: Career Assessments

- Are commonly used to identify career interests, current work skills and needed accommodations
- Can be as simple as a quick paper and pencil screen to a more involved work site evaluation
- Are often done as part of school transition program or to inform employment plans by services such as Vocational Rehabilitation

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## Career Cluster Interest Inventory

Assess your own interests:  
What career cluster matches up  
for you?

(Extra copies available!)

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## Common Career Assessment Tools Used in Iowa

- **I Have A Plan Iowa:** Comprehensive information on transition planning, career exploration and college preparation  
[IHaveAPlanIowa.gov](http://IHaveAPlanIowa.gov)
- **Career Cruising:** Web based career site, used as an alternative to IHAPI in PV and Davenport
- **[www.mbaa.org](http://www.mbaa.org):** Free, downloadable assessments for Living, Learning and Working (Click under Special Education/Transition/Transition Assessments)

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## Prepare for Work While in High School

- Develop work experiences while in high school to increase adult work success
- Use IEP to focus on building work skills
- Practice disability self-awareness and disclosure in high school



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## Employability “Soft” Skills

Employers seek employees who have strong interpersonal communication and responsibility skills. Does your youth:

- Maintain personal appearance?
- Communicate so others can understand?
- Show personal responsibility, including showing up for work (or class) on time?
- Take work direction?
- Have enthusiasm and a good attitude?

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## Give Youth a Voice in Their Life



- Your youth should be expected and encouraged to express their career interests
- Your youth should be given opportunities to exercise skills in self-advocacy

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## What is Self-Awareness?

You can help your youth understand their disability and how it affects them.

### DOES YOUR YOUTH:

- Know what their disability is?
- Know how it impacts them?
- Know how to tell others about their disability?

**Self-awareness helps youth advocate for themselves!**

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## Are you ready? Self-Advocacy Checklist Activity

- What skills does your youth already have?
- What do they need help with?

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## IEP Employment Success

- Student strengths, interests and preferences
- Transition Assessments (for Working!)
- Post-secondary Expectation (for Working!)
- Course of Study (courses & activities needed to pursue post-secondary expectations)
- Goals (linked to assessments and PSEs)
- Services, Supports, Linkages, Accommodations, Assistive Technology

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## Connect to Other Supports: Know Your Community Partners

- Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services
  - County services or Case Management services
  - Centers for Independent Living
  - Workforce Dev. Centers - IowaWORKS
  - Job Corps and other work preparation programs
  - Your own network of contacts
- \*\* See Resource Tables for lots of info !!!**

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## Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services - IVRS

- Helping you think about what to do after high school
  - Providing vocational counseling to steer you in the right career path
  - Re-cap of assessments and more
  - Now what – Vocational Goal is determined!
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## IVRS can...

If going directly into the workforce we can:

- Help build youth's job-seeking skills and job retention knowledge
  - Help youth find a job that is a good fit!
  - Help with job applications and resume-writing
  - Prepare youth for job interviews
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## IVRS can... (continued)

If going directly into the workforce we can also:

- Set up on-the-job training or apprenticeship programs
  - If needed, talk with employers on YOUR behalf
  - Provide on-the-job support
  - Provide accommodation assistance
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## IVRS helps with training!

If going into a training program we can:

- Discuss college options with you – where do I begin?
- Help you get support you need to succeed
- Tuition assistance for college or training
- Follow up on your training progress
- Occupational tools, licenses and transportation

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## IVRS Application Process

### A few easy steps!

- Intake and Orientation are scheduled at the high school or VR Office.
- Complete IVRS application and other forms soph, jr or sr year (parent signature required if student is under 18)
- VR Counselor gathers documentation and determines eligibility
- Once eligible and off wait list....Services begin!

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## IVRS – Waiting List?

- Once eligible, you MAY go on a waiting list – that’s a good reason to apply as a sophomore!
- The length of time on waiting list depends on a number of factors.
- When off waiting list, services can begin!

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## Who is your Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor?

- Josie Strodman – all districts in Scott County
- Jeff Joseph – all districts in Muscatine and Cedar Counties
- Kelly Rose – Columbus Junction only
- Paul Vogt – all districts in Clinton County
- Ellen Secor – all districts in Jackson County

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## Employment Matrix – Beyond Vocational Rehabilitation!

- Check out the list of employment-related services on the back of the matrix
- Select the top 2-3 services you are interested in for your youth
- Look on the front of the Matrix to see which organizations provide those services

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## Parent Action Steps (see hand-out)

- **Prioritize** - Choose your top 1-3 things to do
- **Schedule** – set yourself some deadlines
- **Review** – review your action steps frequently to keep moving forward
- **Repeat** - as you complete an item see what is next on the list and again set priorities

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## Thank You for Coming!

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