



School & Community Supports for Employment Success

Jeanne Helling and Jane Rock

January 11, 2014

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?

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

The Importance of Work

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



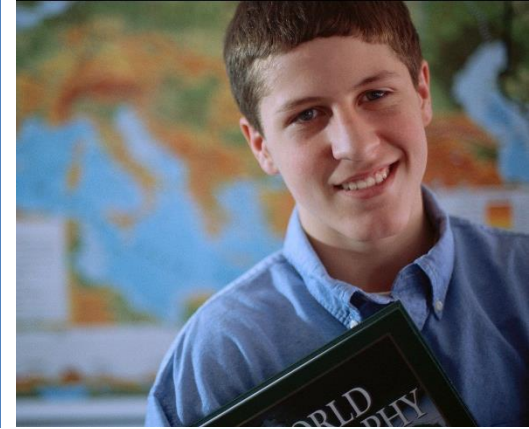
**What All Youth Need:
The Guideposts for Success
(suggested from 30 years of research)**

YOUTH NEED SUPPORTS TO:

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

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**



Career Cluster Interest Inventory

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

(Extra copies available!)

Common Career Assessment Tools Used in Iowa

- **I Have A Plan Iowa:** Comprehensive information on transition planning, career exploration and college preparation
IHaveAPlanIowa.gov
- **Iowa Transition Assessment:** Offers multiple web-based tools to help identify students' interests, preferences, strengths and needs for employment
transitionassessment.northcentralrrc.org

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**



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 on time?
- Take work direction?
- Have enthusiasm and a good attitude?

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

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!**



Are you ready?

Self-Advocacy Checklist Activity

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

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

Connect to Other Supports: Know Your Community Partners

- Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- County services or Case Management services
- Centers for Independent Living
- Workforce Development Centers
- Job Corps and other work preparation programs
- Your own network of contacts

**** See Resource Tables for lots of info !!!**

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!**

IVRS (continued)

If going directly into the workforce we can:

- Help build your job-seeking skills and job retention knowledge
- Help you find a job that is a good fit for you!
- Help with job applications and resume-writing
- Prepare you for job interviews

IVRS (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

IVRS (continued)

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

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
- Services can begin!

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!**

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**

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**

Thank You for Coming!

- Jane Rock, MBAEA Transition Specialist
jrock@aea9.k12.ia.us (563) 344-6288
- Jeanne Helling, Iowa Vocational
Rehabilitation Services Supervisor
jeanne.helling@iowa.gov (563) 588-4697