


Preparing for Employment



When family members have high academic and employment expectations for their children with disabilities, the youth experience greater success in those critical areas. Family members' awareness of their children's potential employability and the importance of work are likely to influence positive employment outcomes for youth with disabilities.

The following are considerations in preparing your son/daughter for employment.



Communicate

... with your son/daughter.

- Talk with your son/daughter about the future and his/her interests, dreams, and aspirations.
- Help your son/daughter identify his/her strengths, skills, and talents.
- Help your son/daughter learn about his/her abilities and disability.
- Build your son's/daughter's ability to self-advocate (speak for her/himself) by supporting her/his engagement in IEP team meeting and activities at home & in the community.

...with your son's/daughter's IEP team.

- Remember that you are a critical member of your son's/daughter's IEP team and no one knows your child better than you.
- As an IEP team member, offer information and assistance when discussing/creating your child's IEP and assist your son/daughter in expressing their needs and interests. Ensure that information, such as the following, is shared.

Your son/daughter's strengths/weakness

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Your son/daughter's interests/abilities/aspirations

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Any special knowledge about your son/daughter

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Others that you would like invited to the IEP meeting

Social Skills

- Work with your son/daughter to enhance social skills.



Dimensions of social skills needed in school, community and the work place:

- Peer Relational Skills
- Self-management Skills
- Compliance Skills
- Assertion Skills

- Create occasions for your son/daughter to be socially active in the community where these social skills can be role played/modeled/practiced. Examples may include the following.

Making purchases at local stores

Ordering food at local restaurants

Using public transportation

Doing his/her own banking

Job-Readiness Skills

- Help your son/daughter learn job-related skills to be better equipped and prepared for employment opportunities. Such skills include communication, interpersonal, and decision making. Examples include:



Research to Gain a Better Knowledge of Secondary Transition:



- Know your rights and responsibilities
 - + Laws/regulations/policies
 - + Procedural Safeguards Notice
- Learn about community agencies that provide services to support students including:
 - + Counseling Services
 - + Job Coaching
 - + Job Training
- Learn/ask about supports that will be available following graduation for your child
- Use the PA Secondary Transition Guide – www.secondarytransition.org
- Review and Utilize the Planning for the Future Checklist - <http://tinyurl.com/PAChecklist>
- Maintain copies of all school records and medical information
- Keep lists of all contacts that you make with agencies such as:
 - + The Office of Mental Health/Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities (MH-IDD)
 - + Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)
- Attend the PA Community on Transition Annual Conference – (go to www.pattan.net for more information)

Work-based Learning Experiences

- Discuss in IEP team work-based learning experiences such as the following: career exploration, job-shadowing, work sampling, service learning, internships, apprenticeships, paid employment, mentoring,

Also see: http://www.transitionta.org/sites/default/files/postsecondary/Timeline_8-6.pdf

Resources: Preparing for Employment



- The Importance of Employment: Why Work? [Guide Sheet] – Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (November 2016)
- Career Pathways [Guide Sheet] – Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (November 2016)
- Job Skills [Guide Sheet] – Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (November 2016)
- Customized Employment - [Guide Sheet] – Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (November 2016)