



Raising Expectations for Better Futures

NEW RESOURCES TO ENGAGE FAMILIES IN
EMPLOYMENT PLANNING!

TIER 2. PAVING THE WAY TO EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS: ACTION STEPS FOR FAMILIES

Facilitator Guide





This training was developed by the Massachusetts Partnership for Transition to Employment (MPTE), a federal system change project designed to improve transition outcomes that lead directly to paid employment and/or post-secondary options for individuals with ID/DD. The MPTE is led by the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services with partners that include Department of Developmental Services, MA Rehabilitation Commission, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Autism Commission, Institute for Community Inclusion, Mass Advocates Standing Strong, The Arc of MA, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, MassFamilies, and the MA Developmental Disabilities Council. MPTE is funded through September 2021 by a 5-year federal grant from the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.



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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Session and Target Audience

The modules in this tier are intended to build from the information provided in the Tier 1 trainings. Tier 1 aimed to help families of youth and young adults with disabilities see that employment is possible. Tier 2 provides information on how families can support that goal.

The modules in this tier are longer (approximately one hour per module), and designed to be presented in three separate sessions. The target audience is families and caregivers of youth and young adults with disabilities, including those with high support needs. However, the information is also useful for self-advocates and professionals that support school to community transition and employment. The modules can be broken up into shorter sessions or the information can simply be used as a guide for having constructive conversations about employment with families.

The Charting the Life Course Family Perspective on Employment Portfolio is used as the main action-planning tool throughout the three modules. At the end of each module, attendees are asked to complete a specific section of the portfolio. The result is families being led through a thoughtful examination of their loved one's available supports, skills and traits, and possible strategies for supporting employment success moving forward. By doing so, families can get a clearer picture of their loved one not just as a person with a disability who requires eligibility-based services to succeed, but as an individual with goals, a strong support system, and skills desired by employers.

As with Tier 1 the tenor of the Tier 2 sessions should be positive – encouraging families to embrace their role in supporting employment success. Parent training sessions should convey accurate information and also provide attendees with an opportunity to connect with others with similar experiences. It is important to avoid overly technical explanations of eligibility criteria or making assumptions about program appropriateness or possible employment outcomes based on the severity of a disability. The goal is to create hope, not to overwhelm or to dissuade families from taking action.

Please note that the term “competitive employment,” or its variations used in this session, refer to a paid job in the community, at a business, of a person's choosing, at minimum wage or prevailing wage for that business, working alongside people with or without disabilities, with or without supports. Segregated employment (alongside only other people with disabilities) at sub-minimum wage is not the outcome this session is advocating for. However, it is understood that people may require or choose to have a combination of competitive employment and other types of services.



Overview of Content

This set of training modules provides families with information, strategies, tips, and tools to help them support their loved one towards success in competitive employment. The modules are designed to be delivered in sequence as each builds off of the previous sessions. Attendees are first encouraged to set a goal of competitive employment and given tools to identify action steps. Next, the case is made to focus on “work experiences” and families are given concrete examples of ways to build skills through activities in the home. Finally, understanding that many individuals may need additional supports to be successful in employment, strategies are given to navigate employment supports in Massachusetts.

Module 1: Setting Goals and Taking Action

Setting a vision and taking action are essential steps for families as they work to help their loved one prepare for employment success. This session will utilize the Charting the Life Course Family Perspective on Employment Portfolio to lead families through the process of supporting people in finding potential job matches and mapping out steps to achieve an employment goal. Main topics will include how to set employment goals, identifying skills and attributes that employers are looking for, and finding individualized action steps that put a person on the path to a job in the community.

Module 2: Essential Skills for Employment Success: What Families Can Do at Home

The most important partner in preparing a youth or young adult with a disability for employment success are families. And the best places to help people learn new skills and responsibilities are at home and in the local community. This session will offer families effective strategies to help their loved one build skills and find work experiences in the community. Building off of the first module, the Charting the Life Course Family Perspective on Employment Portfolio will be used to identify likes, dislikes, and skills that lead to a good job match.

Module 3: Understanding and Navigating Employment Supports in Massachusetts

Some people with disabilities benefit from eligibility-based supports to help them find and maintain employment. Families often find themselves in the position of coordinating a confusing system of supports - all with their own verbiage and criteria. This session will untangle this complex web of service options and help families better understand which options may be the best for their loved one. Attendees will learn about helping their loved ones have a voice in the process, the role of schools, vocational rehabilitation, and Department of Developmental Services employment supports. In addition, vital information about Social Security benefits will be shared so families can make good decisions about employment based on accurate information.



Facilitator Responsibilities

Facilitating effective parent training sessions requires planning, preparation, and the ability to create a welcoming environment so families and caregivers feel safe to express concerns and ask questions. This may mean holding meetings in neutral locations (not schools), holding sessions during hours most convenient for families, providing meals, childcare, or a stipend, or partnering with a trusted advocacy organization.

This particular set of training materials is focusing on helping families support their loved one towards a real job in the community. You don't have to be an expert in disability employment issues to facilitate a training, but it helps to have knowledge of the key issues. The only real requirement is that you strongly believe that competitive employment is possible for people with all types of disabilities. If upon review of the materials you feel the information is out of your comfort zone, consider bring in a co-presenter knowledgeable in transition and employment.

Remember that the purpose of parent training is not to get families to sign up for a specific program or to provide eligibility-based program information in great detail. Families and their loved ones will make decisions on the goals and supports that work best for them. Our job is to provide them with accurate information and the opportunity to ask questions and connect with possible community supports. If done correctly, the parent training session will energize attendees and leave them hopeful and ready to take action towards employment.

Presenter notes have been provided, but they should not be considered a script. The intention of the presenter notes is to provide facilitators with the main talking points for the slides in each Module. Reviewing the material thoroughly before conducting a session will increase your comfort level with the content and make the session better for families.

Tips include:

- » Know the material
- » Bring in a co-presenter if needed
- » Have appropriate meeting space, including audio/visual
- » Consider recording the session for those who can't attend live
- » Supply handouts to attendees
- » Be willing to acknowledge that you don't have all the answers
- » Leverage local schools and advocacy groups to help promote the training
- » Connect families to resources who can answer their questions



Using the Discussion Questions and Related Resources

The presenter materials for each module (below) include a set of discussion questions and related resources. The discussion questions are designed to be follow up questions a facilitator would use with a group that has just been through one of the modules. A presenter can use these questions to generate reflection and processing around the module topic. They allow for deeper discussion on strategies and barriers to implementing employment planning based on what individual families are experiencing. The related resources are family friendly materials that support the module topics and can be used as handouts or accessed via the internet and shown to attendees.

Role of the Massachusetts Partnership for Transition to Employment

The Massachusetts Partnership for Transition to Employment (MPTE) is a project designed to improve employment outcomes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities transitioning from school to adult life. The MPTE Consortium involves an array of partners, including the Department of Developmental Services, MA Rehabilitation Commission, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, the Institute for Community Inclusion, Mass Advocates Standing Strong, The Arc of MA, and the MA Developmental Disabilities Council. Development of these materials was supported by MPTE under its Family Engagement focus area.



Module 1

Setting Goals and Taking Action

SLIDES AND PRESENTER NOTES

Module 1

Setting Goals and Taking Action

Raising Expectations for Better Futures



Slide 1: Title Slide



Session Goals

- **Set high expectations around work possibilities**
- **Involve your loved one in imagining and planning for work**
- **Develop ideas by identifying skills and interests**
- **Match those skills and interests to jobs in the community**
- **Put together an employment goal and first action plan**



Slide 2: Session Goals

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This module introduces Tier 2 of the Train the Trainer module. In the first tier, we explored the idea that work is for everyone, including youth with high support needs, and that competitive employment in the community is possible. This slide lists goals for this session. In this set of slides, we start with some ideas on taking first steps to help set and reach loved one's employment goals.

Talking Points

- » This continues the conversation around work possibilities for youth, including youth with high support needs.
- » Everyone is capable of working in the community, it's about finding a good job match for your loved one.
- » Getting your loved one involved early in the conversation about work is important.
- » Most of us want to work at something that interests us.
- » Helping your loved one identify skills and interests is an early step in finding a good work match.
- » Knowing what community employers are looking for is important, too.
- » School can prepare youth for community based work.
- » This information will help in putting together work goals.



Why Work?

- **Make and manage money**
- **Work with others**
- **Make friends**
- **Learn new skills**
- **Make decisions**
- **Other?**

What are some fears about your loved one entering the workforce?



Slide 3: Why Work?

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » The intention of this slide is to generate interaction and to set the tone for viewing youth and young adults with disabilities as capable future employees. As you review the slide, generate ideas from participants on the benefits of working in a competitive, inclusive, community based job. This will build on information presented in Tier 1 (an overview of work possibilities). This session presents information that will help raise expectations for competitive, inclusive, community based work. It explores ways to identify skills and interests and how they are connected to possible work avenues. At the end of the session, the trainer(s) will help participants develop an initial action plan with the goal of competitive, inclusive, community based work in mind.

Talking Points

- » During this session, we hope to explore opportunities for work by talking about expectations for work for youth with disabilities, including youth with high support needs.
- » Why work? Of course, making money is a main benefit of a job, and your loved one can learn and practice money management skills associated with earning money.
- » Many jobs provide opportunities to interact with co-workers on the job, before and after work, and during breaks.
- » Work can also be a place to develop closer relationships.
- » Work situations provide opportunities to learn other decision-making, social, independent living, and specific work skills.

Follow-Up/Discussion Question(s)

- » What are some hopes about your loved one entering the workforce? What about your fears?



Expectations and Work

If you have *high expectations* for **competitive integrated employment, your loved one is more likely to have a job compared to youth whose parents did not hold those high expectations.**

Definition**

Competitive integrated employment means full-time or part-time work at minimum wage or higher, with wages and benefits similar to those without disabilities performing the same work, and fully integrated with co-workers without disabilities (Pacer Center).



Slide 4: Expectations and Work

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This slide shares information on the importance of having high expectations for work for youth.

Talking Points

- » Having high expectations for employment (and in other areas) for your loved one is important.
- » Communicate those expectations with your loved one and others early.
- » Your loved one is more likely to have a job compared to youth whose parents did not hold those high expectations.
- » Competitive integrated employment means full-time or part-time work at minimum wage or higher, with wages and benefits similar to those without disabilities performing the same work, and fully integrated with co-workers without disabilities.

Follow-Up/Discussion Question(s)

- » What are some ways to start talking with your loved one about your expectations for competitive, integrated work?

Additional Resources/References

- » <https://www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/laws/workforce-innovation.asp>
- » https://www.thinkwork.org/sites/default/files/files/parent-expectations_F.pdf



Engage and Encourage

Begin early to engage and encourage your loved one to be active in thinking about work possibilities

- **Encourage and provide opportunities for choice making, self advocacy and self determination at home, in the community, at school**
- **Share your expectations for employment**
- **Ask them to share their interests and skills with you, other family members, friends, trusted adults, school**
- **Respect their ideas and choices**
- **Encourage developing new interests and skills**
- **Allow for changing ideas**

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Slide 5: Engage and Encourage

Purpose of the Slide/Notes to Presenter

- » This slide encourages participants to engage and encourage their loved one to envision and move towards their goals for work.

Talking Points

- » Making choices, self advocacy, and self determination are important skills to have, so practicing them in different settings is important.
- » Having high expectations for work is an ongoing conversation.
- » Sharing interests and skills with family members, friends and trusted adults helps in raising expectations and developing networks.
- » Remember that developing work ideas or interests may include areas that haven't been considered and that may even surprise others.
- » Encourage developing new interests and skills.
- » As your loved one gets older, tries out new interests, and has more experiences, they may change their mind about what they want to do.

Follow-Up/Discussion Question(s)

- » How can you encourage choice making, self advocacy, and self determination for your loved one throughout their day?

Additional Resources/References

www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-aframeworkforeffectively-2019.pdf#page=4



Talking About Employment

What you can do at home:

- Discuss everyday jobs and what people do to earn money
- Connect skills and interests to different job types
- Visit career exploration websites to find out about jobs
- Set a short term goal around employment

School can help:

- Ask for support to achieve employment goal
- Use school-based Transition Planning Form to explore job interests & build skills
- Ask about Pre-ETS programs in your school district



Slide 6: Talking About Employment

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This slide lists some ways that families can help their loved one think about work and how they can take steps to set an employment goal.

Talking Points

- » Just raising your loved one's awareness of jobs is a good first step. That means talking about work and jobs in general.
- » Connect work to earning money.
- » Point out jobs that you and your loved one see in the community, on TV, or online.
- » Connect skills and interests to jobs.
- » Think about one step your loved one can take to start to connect their interests to possible jobs.
- » School can help prepare for community based work. That includes developing goals and connecting with services, like Pre ETS.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » How are you talking to your loved one about work and earning money?



How do I Help Identify Skills and Interests?

- **Focus on strengths**
- **Observe what they like to do at school, in the community, or in their free time**
- **Ask love one, family, friends for ideas**
- **Where and when are they their best selves?**
- **Use picture vision boards**
- **Take an interest survey**



Slide 7: How Do I Help Identify Skills and Interests?

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This slide is shown to help participants think about how to help their loved ones set goals by first identifying skills and interests.

Talking Points

- » When we talk about setting goals, it's often based on a person's interests and preferences.
- » How can you help your loved one to start thinking about goals for work? To begin, focus on your loved one's strengths.
- » If you or they get stuck on this, consider asking family members, friends and others for their ideas.
- » Another way to get some ideas on their interests and strengths is to observe your loved one and take note of what kind of activities make them happy and engaged across different settings like at home, at school, or in the community.
- » Using a picture vision board can also help your loved one show their interests and or goals.
- » There are also sets of questions or surveys that can help with ideas.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » How does your loved one show their interests and skills?

Additional Resources/References

<https://artfulparent.com/make-vision-board-works-10-steps/>



Ideas to start

Try these tools and resources to gather information and start a plan

- **Gather information - *Positive Personal Profile***
- **CtLC Planning Trajectories**
- **Massachusetts Career Information System (CIS)**
- **O*NET**

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Slide 8: Ideas to Start

- » Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes In this slide, we explore more ways to gather information on skills and interests, and then think about how to match them to types of jobs.

Talking Points

- » There are many different tools to help you think about skills, interests, and how to find a job that is a good match.
- » Charting the Life Course is a type of person centered planning that helps gather information and create goals.
- » Another type of person centered planning in the Positive Personal profile.
- » Using tools like the Massachusetts Career Information System and O*Net is useful in learning about what jobs might be a good match for your loved one's interest and skills.

Additional Resources/References

- » Charting the Life Course
<https://www.lifecoursetools.com/>
- » Massachusetts Career Information System
<https://portal.masscis.intocareers.org/>
- » O*NET
<https://www.onetonline.org/>
- » Dr. Kit
<https://www.drkit.org/>



Positive Personal Profile

- Many perspectives
- Strength based
- Experiences
- Environment
- Dislikes
- Accommodations
- Travel

Address:	Date:
Contact Specialist: <input type="checkbox"/> Self <input type="checkbox"/> Family member <input type="checkbox"/> Friend <input type="checkbox"/> Other	How long has the interviewee known the person? <input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 years <input type="checkbox"/> 3-5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 5-10 years <input type="checkbox"/> more than 10 years
How do you prefer to be contacted? <input type="checkbox"/> By phone <input type="checkbox"/> By mail	
Interests and Preferences	
What are some activities the individual enjoys?	
What are preferences when the individual is with you? (sports, hobbies, etc.)	
In what environmental conditions does the individual thrive? (quiet, solitary, many people, etc.)	
What are some of their likes?	
How does the individual react to a new task?	
What are some dislikes?	
Life and Work Experiences	
What are the individual's greatest work experiences?	
What are the individual's greatest work challenges?	
What are the individual's greatest work accomplishments?	
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What are the individual's greatest work accomplishments?	

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Slide 9: Positive Personal Profile

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This is an example of a planning tool to help gather information that will lead to a vision and action plan. Information can come from the loved one, family, friends, school or community organization staff. Because information is gathered from different people, it can offer a more holistic view of the person across different environments. There is also a section for generating creative ideas for supporting the individuals as they move forward.

Talking Points

- » This profile form can capture detailed information on your loved one from different sources. That information can add to what you observe when you are with your loved one.
- » It gathers information on likes, dislikes, work experience, skills, environment and other preferences, accommodation or support needs including transportation.
- » All this information can help when generating ideas for future activities including work, and thinking about support needs.
- » This, like the vision board helps your loved one express goals, interests and preferences.

Additional Resources/References

- » Developing a Positive Personal Profile
https://employmentfirstma.org/files/PositivePersonalProfile_Transcen.pdf



Charting the Life course

Sharing your loved one's vision on one page

- **What do you want to do during daytime (school) hours when school is over?**
- **What does your ideal day look like?**
- **What makes a bad day for you?**
- **Have you thought about college or vocational training for a specific job or career?**
- **What kind of job do you think you would like?**

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Slide 10: Charting the Life Course

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This introduces Charting the Life Course as a way of organizing ideas and developing goals. These questions will help participants generate or refine ideas for what they envision their loved one doing after leaving school.

Talking Points

- » Nationally driven, research based planning tool.
- » Helps answer the question: What do families need to know to support a family member across the life span?
- » An action plan will help your loved one reach their work goals.
- » Before creating an action plan, there needs to be a vision or goal. Let's think about what the vision is for your loved one after they are done with high school.
- » Think about what you envision them doing if they had the right supports and resources.
- » These are some questions that can help you plan.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

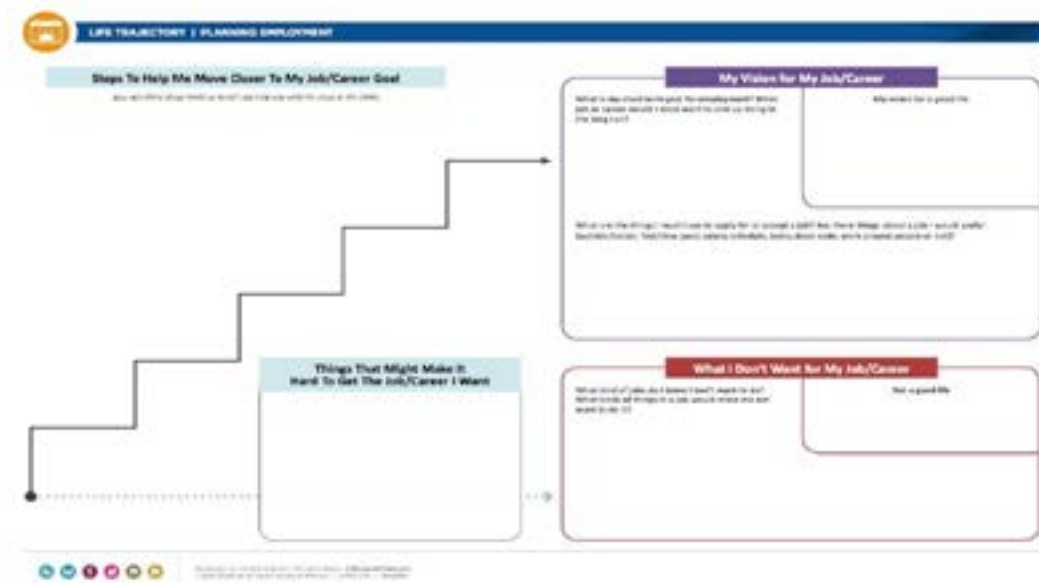
- » All the questions on this slide are helpful in planning, but often when starting to plan, it's almost easier to think about what you or your loved one doesn't want. What are some things you do not want for your loved one?

Additional Resources/References

- » Charting the Life Course
www.lifecoursetools.com/



CtLC Trajectory



Slide 11: Charting the Life Course Trajectory

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This slide shows a blank CtLC trajectory planning tool for planning for employment. This can help in organizing your thoughts. Some find starting at the “What I want” section helpful, others may find it more helpful to start in the “Dislikes” or “what I don’t want” just below that. Adding comments in the “what has helped” top left and “What has gotten in the way” can offer ideas for supports and resources.

Talking Points

- » Here is a planning tool to help think about vision and supports.
- » The upward arrow points to “My Vision...” Some find that a good place to start.
- » Many find the box below that (lower right), “Dislikes” On the previous slide, we talked about this as more helpful as a starting point, especially if you and or your loved one aren’t sure about ideas for work, yet.
- » Now take a look at “What has helped” (upper left side) in getting closer to what is wanted or further away from what isn’t (box on the bottom).
- » The steps on the upward arrow represent steps you can take to reach your loved one’s vision. For each step, think of something you can do to move you closer to your loved one’s vision.

Additional Resources/References

- » CtLC Daily Living and Employment Planner
www.lifecoursetools.com/lifecourse-library/exploring-the-life-domains/daily-life-and-employment/



Massachusetts Career Information System

- Interests
- Types of jobs
- Education and Training

<https://masscis.intocareers.org/default.aspx>



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Slide 12: The Massachusetts Career Information System

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This slide introduces the MA Career Information System, which can be used to assess interests, find jobs that match interests, and required training or education for specific jobs.

Talking Points

- » This site from the US Department of Labor and the MassHire Department of Career Services (MDCS) is designed to provide occupational and educational information to help people make better-informed career and school choices.
- » MA CIS is a site that can help figure out interests and find jobs or work areas that match.
- » It lets you browse so you can learn about a lot of different types of jobs.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » If there is time and internet access, the trainer can demonstrate a session with input from participants.

Additional Resources/References

- » Massachusetts Information System
<https://masscis.intocareers.org/materials/portal/home.html>



Interest Inventories—Sample Items

The screenshot displays the 'INTEREST PROFILER SHORT FORM' interface. It features a red navigation bar at the top with options like 'FILE', 'ASSESSMENT', 'REPORTS', 'CREATE', 'IMPORT', and 'EXPORT'. Below this, there are two sample items, each with a title, five response buttons, a progress bar, and a 'Next' button. The first item is '15. Design programs' and the second is '24. Operate a computer'. The interface is clean and user-friendly, with a clear focus on the assessment questions.

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Slide 13: Interest Inventories—Sample Items

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Here are sample items from the Interest Inventory on the Mass CIS. This interest profiler has 180 items across different job categories. There is a shorter version with 60 questions.

Talking Points

- » Here are 2 sample questions from the Interest Inventory.
- » There are 60 questions on the short version and 180 questions in the long form.



Results from an interest inventory

Social

Your Score : 26

People with social interests like work activities that assist others and promote learning and personal development. They prefer to communicate more than to work with objects, machines, or data. They like to teach, to give advice, to help, or otherwise be of service to people.

Artistic

Your Score : 26

People with artistic interests like work activities that deal with the artistic side of things, such as forms, designs, and patterns. They like self-expression in their work. They prefer settings where work can be done without following a clear set of rules.

Investigative

Your Score : 19

People with investigative interests like work activities that have to do with ideas and thinking more than with physical activity. They like to search for facts and figure out problems mentally rather than to persuade or lead people.

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Slide 14: Results from an interest inventory

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This is an example of the Interest Inventory score sheet. It lists scores in different categories: Artistic, social, conventional, enterprising, realistic, investigative. These categories are associated with different jobs, and the higher scores indicate an interest in that area.

Talking Points

- » This is an example of the Interest Inventory score sheet. It lists scores in different categories: artistic, social, conventional, enterprising, realistic, investigative.
- » These categories are associated with different jobs, and the higher scores indicate an interest in that area.
- » This information helps identify possible job or job areas for your loved one.
- » Once the inventory is completed, you'll get a score across different areas that can guide you and your loved one to potential jobs associated with these scores.



Slide 15: My Next Move

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This is another career information website from My Next Move / O*NET and the US Department of Labor called My Next Move. This site has information on finding out about interest areas and exploring different jobs and industries.

Talking Points

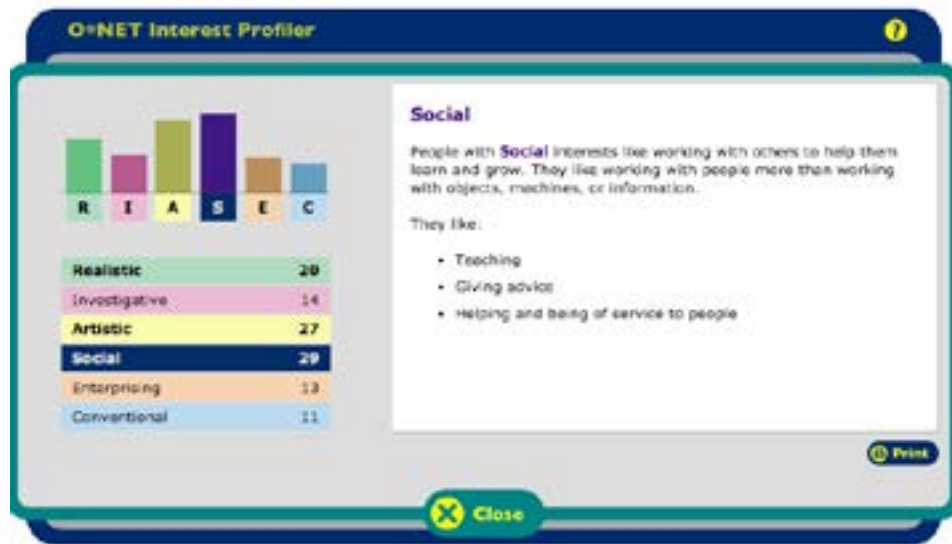
- » Here is another way to discover your interests and match them to possible careers.
- » This website is from the U.S. Dept. of Labor that matches all these qualities to job types.
- » Can look at jobs by entering keywords.
- » Can explore jobs by industries, too.

Additional Resources/References

- » O*Net Online
www.mynextmove.org/



My Next Move O*NET Profiler



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Slide 16: My Next Move O*Net Profiler

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This shows the results of the interest profiler and a description of the category with the highest score.

Talking Points

- » Like the Mass CIS, this will give you scores across different areas.
- » There is also information in the job outlook, or the expected numbers of workers needed for the future.
- » Online and can be done remotely.
- » Can be done at your own pace.

Additional Resources/References

- » O*Net Online
www.onetonline.org/



Activity

Try one of the interest surveys

- https://masscis.intocareers.org/onet_short_ip/onet_short_ip_intro.aspx
- <https://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip>



- **What did you find out?**
- **What kinds of jobs might be a good match?**
- **Do you think this would be helpful for your loved one?**



Slide 17: Activity

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This is an opportunity for participants to try out one of the career interest websites.

Talking Points

- » Take a few minutes to explore one or both sites. If you have the time, try finding some jobs based on your interests.
- » Try the short form if you only have a few minutes.
- » Let's try it out! It's a good starting point.
- » You can also try this out at home with your loved one and at your own pace.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » What did you find out?
- » What kinds of jobs might be a good match for you?
- » Do you think this would be helpful for your loved one?
- » What modifications or accommodations would be needed for your loved one to participate?

Additional Resources/References

- » Massachusetts Information System
<https://masscis.intocareers.org/materials/portal/home.html>
- » My Next Move
www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip
- » Short form O*Net Profiler
https://www.onetcenter.org/dl_tools/ipsf/Interest_Profiler.pdf



Setting a Goal

**Goals helps us do the things we want to do and live the life we want to live.
Goals are like a destination on a map.**

Different kinds of goals:

Short term

- something you want to do soon
- help you move closer to the long term goal.
- allows time for planning.

Long term

- something you want to do in the future.
- requires time and planning
- may change over time or with experience



Slide 18: Setting a Goal

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This introduces goals and goal setting as part of the planning process

Talking Points

- » You need to set up short term goals to reach your long term goal.
- » It's ok to change your mind.
- » As you try new things, your ideas and like and dislikes might change.
- » Those changes can give you new ideas and shape new goals.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » Are you in the job you thought you would be in when you were younger? How has your career path evolved? How might that path look for your loved one?



Sample Goals

Interest identification

- I will identify 3 things I'm interested in.
If I'm not sure, I will take an interest survey to get some ideas.

Job awareness

- I will find 3 kinds of jobs match my interests and skills
- I will list 3 jobs I definitely don't want

Exploration

- I will set up an informational interview with a local business that matches an interest area.

Immersion

- I will apply for a job or volunteer position in an area that interests me to gain real work experience.



Slide 19: Sample Goals

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This slide shows some sample goals

Talking Points

- » These are some examples of career goals in the area of interest identification, job awareness, job exploration, and job immersion.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » Do you have examples of employment goals for your loved one?

Additional Resources/References

- » I'm Determined
www.imdetermined.org/



How to communicate vision for work to others

- **If you haven't, seek ways to learn about how to advocate for your loved one.**
- **Rehearse talking points**
 - your loved one's interests & preferences
 - your expectations for your loved one's future, including competitive integrated work
 - home and community activities that currently support your loved one's vision
- **Share vision with others**
- **Share supports and accommodations used**
- **Connect with like-minded families, community and school members**



Slides 20 & 21: How to communicate vision for work to others

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This slide outlines ideas for sharing vision with others and advocating for competitive integrated employment.

Talking Points

- » There are family advocacy organizations to help you learn how to advocate for your loved one.
- » If you're not sure how to share your loved one's vision, including expectations for work, it might help to write down and rehearse some talking points.
- » Share information the kinds of supports and accommodations that your loved one uses at home and at school.
- » Connect with like-minded families, community and school members through school or community based groups.
- » Ask school or agency workers how they'll help your loved one reach their goals.
- » Make sure annual goals are based on appropriate assessments.
- » Discuss safety concerns and any ideas you might have on how to address them.
- » Paid work in the community before leaving school is a predictor for paid work in the community after leaving school.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » Do you have any suggestions on how, when or where to share information on expectations, vision, work ideas?

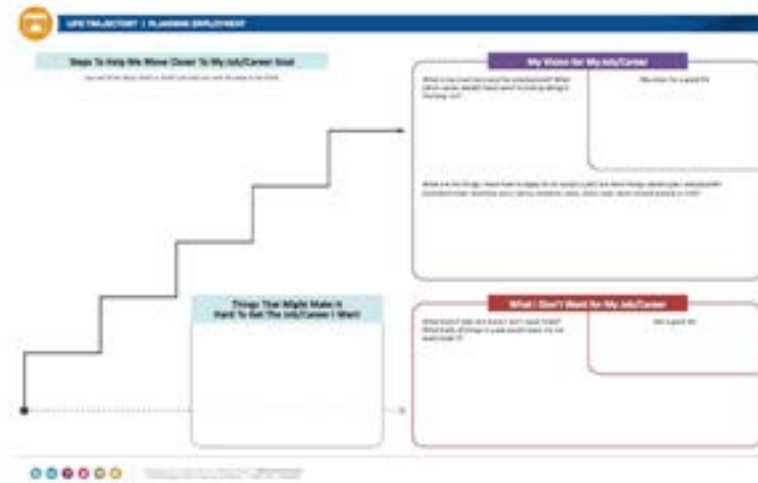
Additional Resources/References

- » Quick Guide: Preparing Students for Competitive Integrated Employment
https://transitionta.org/sites/default/files/Quick_IntegEmploy_Final.pdf



Activity

What are some first steps you can take to help support your loved one and their vision?



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Slide 22: Activity

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This slide explains the Charting the Life Course Planning sheet that was shown earlier on slide 11. This is an opportunity for the participants to start or continue developing a vision and thinking about desired outcomes for their loved one.

Talking Points

- » This was shown earlier in this slide presentation.
- » Remember, the upward arrow points to “My Vision...” Some find that a good place to start.
- » Many find the box below that (lower right), “Dislikes” even more helpful as a starting point, especially if they are not sure about a vision yet.
- » Now take a look at “What has helped” (upper left side) in getting closer to what is wanted or further away from what isn’t (box on the bottom).
- » The steps on the upward arrow represent steps you can take to reach your loved one’s vision. For each step, think of something you can do to move you closer to your loved one’s vision.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » If there is time, the trainer can review each section and suggest that participants begin to make some notes on a copy of the trajectory.

Additional Resources/References

- » CtLC Daily Living and Employment Planner www.lifecoursetools.com/lifecourse-library/exploring-the-life-domains/daily-life-and-employment/



Next Steps



Raising Expectations for Better Futures



Slide 23: Next Steps

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This is the final slide of the presentation. Encourage participants to look over and try out some of the tools shared.

Talking Points

- » We've reviewed information that can help you and your loved one envision a future that includes work, and develop plans to reach your goals.
- » Try out some of the websites to help your loved one match interests to possible job areas.
- » Set a small, first goal and fill in the action plan to help you achieve that goal.
- » End of session follow-up/discussion questions:
 - Have you ever tried a kind of planning like the ones we reviewed here?
 - If so, what did you like about planning like this? What was hard or not as helpful about this kind of planning? Do you have any advice for someone just starting out?
 - If you haven't planned like this before, what strikes you as helpful? What parts seem hard or not helpful?
 - Who might help you start or continue planning like this?
- » After participating in this session, what is a first step you can take to:
 - Raise your and others' expectation for competitive integrated work for your loved one?
 - Add to what you already know out about your loved one's interests and preferences?
 - Record your vision of work for your loved one?
 - Share your plan with others?

Additional Resources

- » The Arc Of Massachusetts <https://thearcofmass.org/>
- » Families Organizing for Change <https://massfamilies.org/>
- » The Federation for Children with Special Needs <https://fcsn.org/>
- » Pacer Center <https://www.pacer.org/>



Activity

In Module 1 we will be using the expanded trajectory exercise from the Charting the Life Course Family Perspective on Employment Portfolio (2nd page). Attendees are asked to fill in their vision for their family member's career and overall good life. Once that is done they should then fill in the "past life experiences" and "moving forward" sections where they are asked to reflect on what is currently being done, and what can be done, to lead towards or away from that vision. If time allows have attendees share what they came up with.

Discussion Questions

- » Have you ever tried a kind of planning like the ones we reviewed here?
- » If so, what did you like about planning like this? What was hard or not as helpful about this kind of planning? Do you have any advice for someone just starting out?
- » If you haven't planned like this before, what strikes you as helpful? What parts seem hard or not helpful?
- » Who might help you start or continue planning like this?
- » After participating in this session, what is a first step you can take to:
 - Raise your and others' expectation for competitive integrated work for your loved one?
 - Add to what you already know out about your loved one's interests and preferences?
 - Record your vision of work for your loved one?
 - Share your plan with others?

Related Resources

The Arc of Massachusetts

<https://thearcofmass.org/>

MassFamilies

<https://massfamilies.org/>

The Federation for Children with Special Needs

<https://fcsn.org/>

Pacer Center

<https://www.pacer.org/>

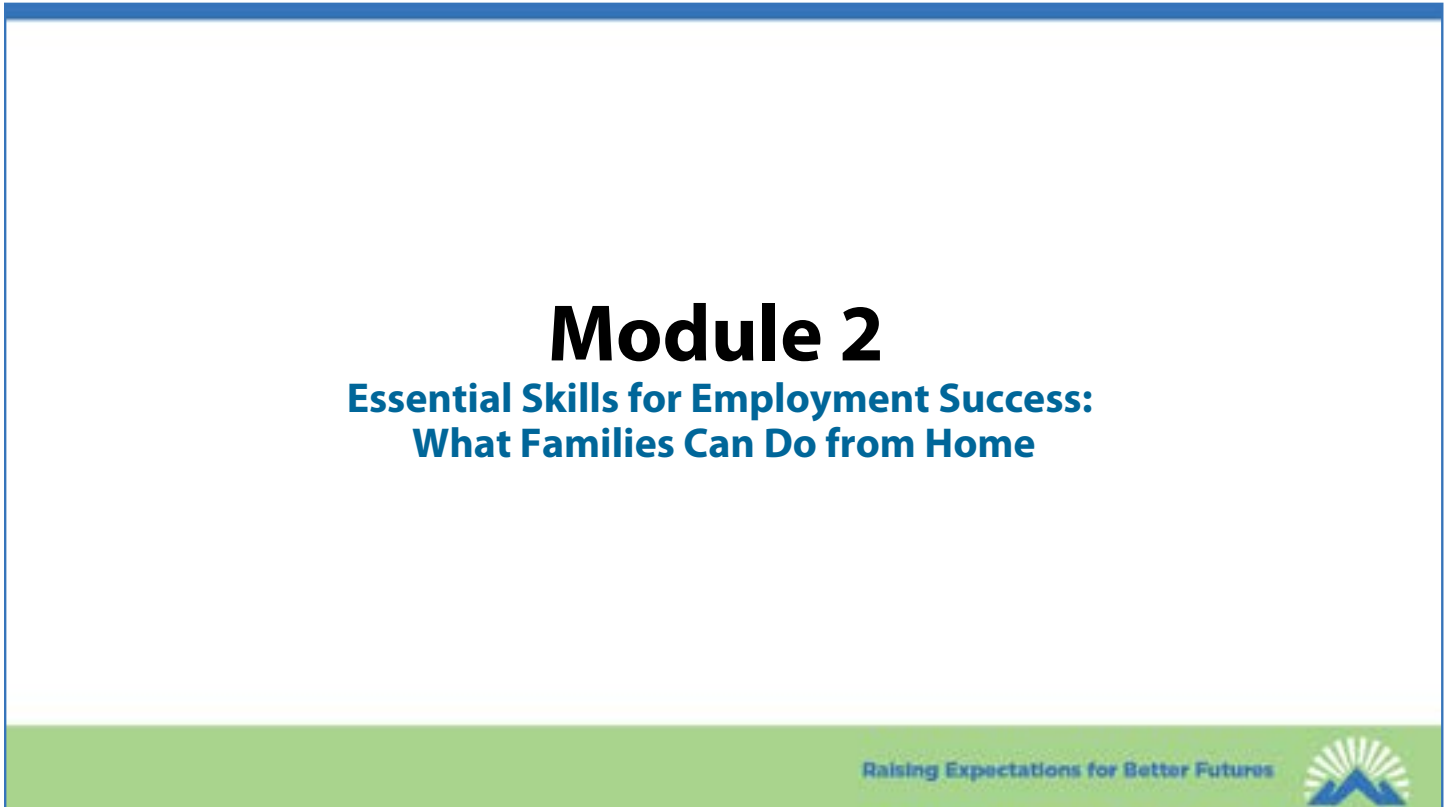




Module 2

Essential Skills for Employment Success: What Families Can Do From Home

SLIDES AND PRESENTER NOTES



Slide 1: Title Slide

Talking Points

- » Introduce speakers.
- » If time allows have attendees introduce themselves.



Session Agenda

- **The importance of work experiences**
- **Building needed skills for employment**
- **The preparation process: Explore, Prepare, and Act**
- **Alexa's story**
- **Complete corresponding section of CtLC
Employment Portfolio**



Slide 2: Session Agenda

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » To let attendees know which topics the session will cover and any other logistics.

Talking Points

- » Go over session logistics such as timing, breaks, and location of restrooms.
- » This session is intended to help families embrace competitive employment as the preferred option for their loved one with a disability.
- » It will provide information on the importance of work experiences and offer strategies on assisting people with disabilities to build skills needed for employment success.
- » At the end of the session we will work through the corresponding section of the Charting the Life Course Family Perspectives on Employment Outcomes Portfolio.
- » This session is the second in a three part series designed to increase the capacity of families to support their loved one towards employment success.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » If time allows presenters can ask attendees to describe what they are hoping to get out of the session. What questions about employment do they have going in?

Additional Resources/References

- » If session is being done in person, presenter should provide a copy of the slides in notes pages format, the Charting the Life Course Family Perspectives on Employment Outcomes Portfolio, and any other tools and resources referenced during the session.



Group Discussion

**Please describe some of your loved one's strongest skills, experiences, or attributes.
(Things that will help them get and keep a job)**

What are some skills or supports that your loved one will need to be able to be successful on the job?



Slide 3: Group Discussion

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » To generate interaction and to set the tone for viewing youth and young adults with disabilities as capable future employees.

Talking Points

- » Ask attendees to think about their loved one's strongest skills, experiences and attributes that would help them become employed. They can be small things like being motivated, friendly, or specifics like being good with technology or knowing how to use power tools. Encourage people to share their answers.
- » We do this to give families, caregivers, and professionals the opportunity to look at the people they support in broader terms than just "a person with a disability."
- » Reinforce that all of the skills, attributes, and work experiences being shared are things that employers are looking for.
- » Continue the discussion by asking attendees to identify some skills their loved one will need to learn or supports they will need to have to be successful in the workplace. Examples could be "needs to manage time better," or "will need transportation assistance."
- » Point out that learning new skills and finding the right supports are all part of the career journey.



The Power of Work Experiences

One of the best predictors of employment success for people with disabilities is having meaningful work experiences while in high school.

- **Informational interview**
- **Job Shadowing**
- **Volunteering**
- **Internships**
- **Paid entry-level job**



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Slide 4: The Power of Work Experiences

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » It is important that attendees make the connection between youth employment success and the opportunity to have meaningful work experiences in the community.

Talking Points

- » Research suggests that youth, including those with disabilities, who have meaningful work experiences or a paid job while in high school will have improved employment outcomes as adults.
- » Unfortunately, students with more significant disabilities often don't have access to these types of work experiences.
- » Therefore it is vital that families advocate for these work experiences.
- » A work experience is a chance to practice real work, and should be done at a business in the community doing a job that matches what the student is interested in.
- » **Consider this example:** The young lady pictured on the slide is interested in a career working with animals. She does not know about the wide range of jobs in that field, so she asks a local Veterinarian for an Informational Interview to learn more. She is still interested in learning more so she seeks an opportunity to Job Shadow a Veterinarian Assistant for half a day. To help build her resume she Volunteers once a week at the local animal shelter. When she nears graduation she get an opportunity to work inside an animal clinic as part of an Internship program. Given all of these quality work experiences she finds a Paid Entry-Level Position working as a Vet Tech.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » Have any of your loved ones had work experiences before? If so, what were they?
- » What type of jobs do you think your son or daughter would be interested in exploring?



CtLC planning tool section

LIFECOURSE PORTFOLIO : FAMILY PERSPECTIVE ON EMPLOYMENT

NAME OF PERSON COMPLETING: _____ DATE: _____

GENERAL TIP: _____

WHAT ARE MY FAMILY MEMBER'S SKILLS, POSITIVE TRAITS AND INTERESTS TO HELP WITH EMPLOYMENT?

WHAT ARE THE BEST STRATEGIES TO SUCCEED? BY FAMILY MEMBERS WITH EMPLOYMENT?

What are your family members' strengths and weaknesses? _____ How do they best succeed? _____

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Slide 5: Family Perspective on Employment Outcomes Portfolio

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This slide prepares attendees to complete the corresponding section of the Charting the Life Course Family Perspective on Employment Outcomes Portfolio at the end of the session.

Talking Points

- » Please take out your copy of the portfolio.
- » In each of the three sessions we will ask you to complete one section of the portfolio to better help you set goals for competitive employment for your loved one.
- » For this session we will focus on answering the questions found in the three boxes on the right side of the first page.
- » You may wish to keep this in front of you as we move through the session.

Additional Resources/References

- » Charting the Life Course resource materials: www.lifecoursetools.com/



Build skills and
set expectations
at home

Practice applying
those skills in
the community

Seek jobs that
match interests
and skills



Slide 6: Building Blocks of Employment Success

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This slide offers a model of the building blocks of employment success. The purpose is to simplify the steps so attendees don't feel so overwhelmed about supporting their youth.

Talking Points

- » As a parent or a caregiver it can feel overwhelming to think about your loved one with a significant disability finding a job being successful. It is OK to have questions and concerns. To make it simpler, we are suggesting you focus on some key building blocks to employment success.
- » Begin by setting the expectation with your loved one, and everyone that supports them (including educators), that a paid job in the community is the goal. Use the opportunity to use common responsibilities in the home to build skills.
- » Find opportunities for your loved one to practice soft and hard skills in the community. This may include practicing navigating public transportation, making eye contact while speaking, or maintaining appropriate hygiene.
- » Resist the temptation to think about "jobs people with disabilities can do". Rather, seek work experiences and paid jobs that match your loved ones interests and skills. It is OK for people to get entry-level jobs doing thing they may not want to do forever. But it is not OK to put somebody into a job that is restrictive just because they have a disability.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » Do you currently have your loved one do chores in the home?
- » When you are in the community with your loved one do you try to find opportunities for them to practice skills (such as using money or communicating with others)?
- » Have you and your loved one talked about various jobs that might match their skills and interests?



Soft Skills

- **Teamwork**
- **Being punctual**
- **Dressing appropriately**
- **Responsibility**
- **Good attitude**



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Slide 7: Soft Skills

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » If families understand the importance of soft skills in employment success they'll be more motivated to help build those skills through activities in the home.

Talking Points

- » Soft skills are the interpersonal and self-direction skills we all use to be successful in jobs and living independently.
- » They are important because every job requires a person to have some level of soft skills.
- » These skills include working as part of a team, being places on time, dressing appropriately, showing initiative, and having a positive attitude.
- » For many of us, our soft skills were nurtured through the expectations our families had of our behavior and level of responsibility.
- » Therefore, families of individuals with disabilities can help build these skills and should see it as important.
- » The slide includes an example of a picture board that can be used to work on the steps needed to get dressed and get to a vehicle.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » Sometimes a person's disability makes soft skills particularly challenging.
- » Are there any soft skills that your loved one excels at?
- » Are there any soft skills that your loved one will find a challenge?

Additional Resources/References

- » Skills to Pay the Bills Video Series:
www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5-XYot2VKQM9o8zNFuVWXMhrNLSTkEpM
- » Helping Youth Develop Soft Skills for Job Success: Tips for Parents and Families: www.ncwd-youth.info/publications/helping-youth-develop-soft-skills-for-job-success-tips-for-parents-and-families/



Positive Mental Attitude (PMA) Roll the Dice!



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Slide 8: Positive Mental Attitude (PMA): Roll the Dice!

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Provides an activity that can be used to boost self-image and positive attitude of youth.

Talking Points

- » Having a positive attitude self-confidence are among the soft skills employers value most.
- » This is a simple activity families or professionals can do with individuals to help them see that they have skills and attributes that others appreciate.
- » The slide has a description of the question that should be asked for each possible roll of a die.
- » Information gathered can also be included on a vision statement (described later) and a resume.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » Presenters may wish to have an oversized die and run the activity with attendees.



Self Reflection

Self reflection is like looking into a mirror and describing what you see. It is a way of evaluating yourself and how you work.

I am most proud of my ability to _____

One area I would like to improve is _____

Some ways I can work to improve this skill are _____



Slide 9: Self Reflection

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Offers an activity to help youth reflect on their current skills and talents, and to plan for acquiring skills they would like to have.

Talking Points

- » Another simple activity for building soft skills is self-reflection. This entails having your loved one look into a mirror and describe what they see.
- » Some possible reflection questions are listed on the slide. Others might include “What I am most looking forward to about becoming an adult is _____.”, or “What concerns me most about getting a job is _____.”
- » Have your loved one tell you their answers if they are comfortable with it and use it as an opportunity to have discussions about self-image, skills and employment.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » Do you believe that your loved one has a strong sense of their own self-worth and skills?
- » What can you do as a family member to help your loved one have a positive perception of themselves?



Building a Vision Statement

[www.kentuckyworks.org/
2018/08/07/brighter-
futures-vision-statement/](http://www.kentuckyworks.org/2018/08/07/brighter-futures-vision-statement/)

Andy Meredith, High School Senior

Strengths Social Determined Shows initiative Hard working Independent Motivated Creative	Vision Statement: I got my own studio. My job is taking pictures. I got a small house. I got married to Maggie. I also work at Publix. It is really fun. I keep my money in the bank. I want to go to college and live in a new house by myself. My friends will come to my new house.
Areas I need help: Reading Math Counting money Managing time Keeping track of a schedule	Accomplishments: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Worked at Publix since April 2017Earned Eagle Scout Award 2018Worked on Yearbook staff and lettered in Woodstock High School Mountain Side TeamPhotography exhibited at Anna's Angels benefit auction and Russian Medical Colleges When works for me: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Fear modeling and supportAge-appropriate awards, events, money, music.Specific explanations When doesn't work for me: <ul style="list-style-type: none">BullyingRemoving me from friends

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Slide 10: Building a Vision Statement

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Shows an example of a “vision statement” where youth express their goals for the future, identify areas they need support, and detail their strengths and accomplishments.

Talking Points

- » This is an example of a Vision Statement where an individual gets the opportunity to express their dreams, goals, accomplishments, preferences, and support needs in their own words.
- » This makes for a great classroom activity, or something a family can help with at home.
- » The Vision Statement helps people tell their story in a visual way and can double as a resume. It also helps the world see a person not only as a person with a disability, but as a person who has their own dreams, skills, and aspirations.
- » The URL on the slide takes you to a Word template of this vision statement. The University of Kentucky has made this available free of charge. Anybody can insert their picture and information and create their own Vision Statement.

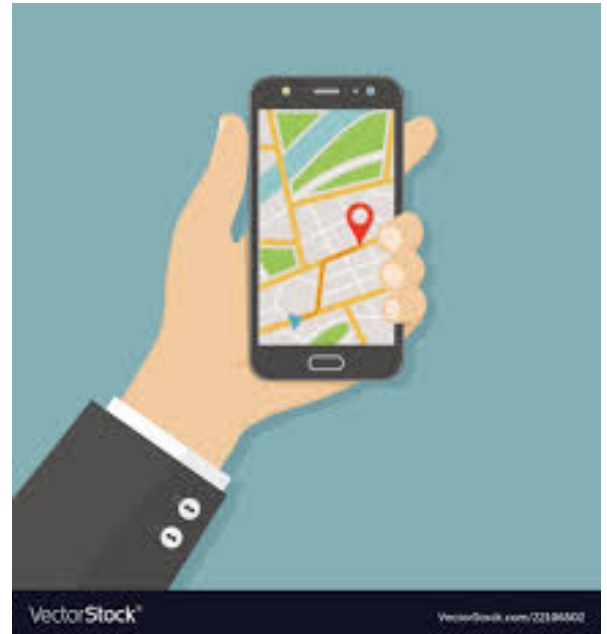
Additional Resources/References

- » Website with free Vision Statement examples and template:
<https://www.kentuckyworks.org/2018/08/07/brighter-futures-vision-statement/>



Hard Skills

- **Operating a wheelchair**
- **Counting money**
- **Navigating from point A to point B**
- **Using technology**
- **Getting dressed**
- **Riding a bicycle**
- **Using machinery**



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Slide 11: Hard Skills

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Highlights the importance of teaching youth the real (hard) skills needed to live independently and be successful in employment.

Talking Points

- » We previously talked about the importance of soft skills to employment success. But families should also understand the value of teaching their loved one hard skills, or those real world skills that people use to function day to day.
- » These include things like navigating from point A to point B, cooking a simple meal, getting dressed, or counting money.
- » We certainly understand that the impact of a disability will mean that people may need support achieving some of these skills. It will look differently for everyone. For example cooking a meal may entail following a recipe and using an oven for one person while another may need support to use a microwave safely.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » What are some hard skills that you think would lead to employment success?
- » What hard skills does your loved one excel at?

Additional Resources/References

- » Helping Youth Build Work Skills for Job Success: Tips for Parents and Families:
www.ncwd-youth.info/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/infobrief_issue34.pdf



Building Responsibility

Finding ways for young people to have responsibilities helps them be good employees.

- **Chores**
- **School work**
- **Own bank account**
- **It's OK for young people to take risks and to experience failure. The goal is to have them give a good effort.**



Slide 12: Building Responsibility

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Youth with disabilities need opportunities to build responsibility. This slide encourages attendees to consider giving youth chores and allowing them to take risks.

Talking Points

- » Sometimes families of youth with significant disabilities shy away from assigning them chores or responsibilities in the home. This may be due to behaviors or mobility/dexterity challenges. However, many of us learned responsibility by having to take care of a pet, do the dishes, or take out the garbage.
- » On a broader scale building responsibility can mean that a person is accountable for completing their school work, exercising regularly, or treating others with respect. This ability to be responsible will translate to the workplace.
- » Building responsibility might mean that your loved one will need to be pushed to try new things and go outside of their comfort zone. In doing so they may not succeed right away. That is OK, because taking risks and failing is also a valuable learning experience.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » When you were growing up, how did your family help you build responsibility?
- » Can you describe a situation where you gave your loved one some extra responsibility? Were they successful or did they struggle a bit?



What are Employers Looking For?

We need to translate the skills and talents of youth into what employers are looking for.

“I am _____, and that allows me to _____.”



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Slide 13: What are Employers Looking For?

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This slide includes an exercise for youth where they explain a skill or talent they have in terms of its usefulness to an employer.

Talking Points

- » It is important to consider what skills employers are looking for in an employee. For example, a retail store will be looking for a person who can operate a cash register or organize stock. A landscaper might want a person who doesn't mind working outside, is physically strong, or who can use lawn equipment. Your loved ones have skills that can be matched to employer needs.
- » Jobs can be “customized” to meet individual strengths and employer needs. For example, a person might not be able to operate a cash register, but is excellent at moving stock from the back to the displays and is helpful and friendly.
- » Youth with disabilities may have difficulty translating their strengths and skills to what employers are looking for. The activity on the slide is good practice.
- » Help your loved one fill in the blanks of this sentence - “I am _____, and that allows me to _____.” For example, “I am flexible and that allows me to take on new jobs easily.”

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » Presenters can have attendees complete this activity by thinking about themselves.
- » What are some ways a person who has difficulty communicating could share their skills and strengths with an employer?



Example

Step 1: Get teen debit card (Greenlight or FamZoo)

Step 2: Load card with \$20

Step 3: Work with youth to set a menu

Step 4: Have youth take lead for buying related groceries (under budget)

Step 5: Use debit card to make transaction

Step 6: Have youth help make the meal

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Slide 14: Example

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This is an example of how a families can take some of the previously mentioned concepts to help youth build skills and responsibility.

Talking Points

- » Now, let's put some of the strategies we been discussing together in an example of something you can do in the home to build skills.
- » If they don't have one already, help them get a teen bank account and debit card. Load the card with \$20. Work with them to set a menu for a family dinner. Something that requires multiple ingredients and that needs to be cooked. For example, pork chops, a rice side dish, and green beans; or pasta, red sauce, garlic bread, and salad. Take your loved one to the grocery store and have them purchase components for the meal with their debit card. Finally, help your loved one prepare and serve the meal. Maybe even have everyone in the family dress up for the occasion.
- » These exercise reinforces money management, planning a task to an outcome, organizing, working as part of a team, problem solving, using kitchen appliances, and dressing for the occasion.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » Different people may require more support to do an activity like this. The purpose is to practice skills to the greatest extent they are able.
- » Consider using a picture board (also called task boards) to show the steps in the task.
- » Celebrate your success while you eat!

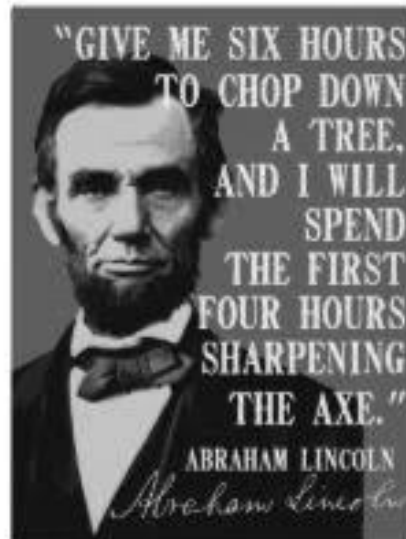
Additional Resources/References

- » There are many examples of picture boards on websites like Pinterest. Education supply and support websites also offer templates.



The Process

Explore
Prepare
Act



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Slide 15: The Process

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This slide introduces the 3 main steps for helping youth through the employment process: Explore, Prepare, and Act.

Talking Points

- » It might be easier for a family to think of career preparation in terms of a process with the following steps: 1) Explore, 2) Prepare, and 3) Act.
- » The quote on the slide is meant to reinforce the idea that preparation is perhaps the most important step for being successful in a task. We must prepare our youth to be successful in the workplace. Placing people into competitive jobs without the proper skills or supports can sometimes result in a negative experience.
- » “Explore” refers to youth exploring the types of career options that match their interests and skills. Often, youth with disabilities have a limited idea of what types of jobs there are in the world. The more we can expose them to different settings and tasks, the wider their job choices may be.
- » Once youth have explored some possible career areas it is then necessary to “prepare” them to be successful in the workplace. This entails identifying the skills needed to do their preferred job and assessing if the youth has those skills or needs to acquire them. The previous slides on work experiences and building soft and hard skills speaks to this need.

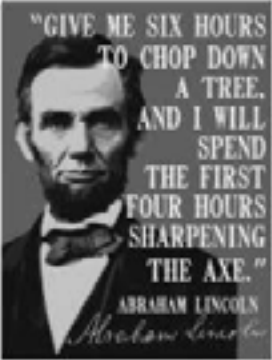
continued






The Process

Explore
Prepare
Act



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Slide 15: The Process (continued)

- » Finally it is necessary to “act” on the job goal by seeking a work experience or paid job in the field of interest. Keep in mind that the first job should not be the last job a person ever has, and that it is OK if the first job is challenging.
- » It is not uncommon for youth to cycle through this process a few times before they find the right fit for them.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » This is the same process that most of us followed to begin our career path. As stated before, entry-level jobs are very valuable, but our ultimate goal to set youth on a path to have a career in a field that interests them. These steps can be done while a person is working in an entry-level position.

Additional Resources/References

- » Understanding the New Vision for Career Development: The Role of Family:
www.ncwd-youth.info/publications/understanding-the-new-vision-for-career-development-the-role-of-family/



Explore Career Options

- **Set employment goal early**
- **Build responsibility**
- **Explore community-based options**
- **Advocate for work experiences**
- **Use your networks**



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Slide 16: Explore Career Options

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This slide is to help families and guide the conversation on how they can help their loved one explore careers.

Talking Points

- » Employment goals can be set in the home by just having conversations about employment and then exploring online and in the community on a specific interest.
- » Families can ask for an employment goal to be added to the IEP so the school can support the individual with a specific employment goal.
- » Building independence and confidence in individuals by obtaining different relationships outside of school can help with communication skills as well.
- » Have the participants think about their own community/network; are there art classes, sports, internships or dance classes. It never hurts to approach an organization and ask how one can get involved.
- » Do you know someone that owns a business that would be willing to consider having your son/daughter work there one day a week? A neighbor that has a dog - would they let your loved one walk the dog?
- » The school could help with finding work experiences - an internship that could be created at the school.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » Think about all the different types of jobs that may be available in an employment setting. For example - a flower shop is not just about making floral arrangements. There are many different types of jobs in one setting - think broadly about all of the options.
- » It is important for families to understand that they can have a role in supporting and exploring options for employment and by doing so, it will help their loved one better understand what they want and what they don't want for a job.



Using Personal Networks

- **Family**
- **Friends**
- **Places of worship**
- **Businesses you frequent**
- **Neighbors**
- **Book club**
- **Co-workers**



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Slide 17: Using Personal Networks

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This slide encourages families to use their own personal networks to help find work experience and employment opportunities for their youth.

Talking Points

- » The term “personal network” may seem formal, but it simply refers to all the people that you know and interact with. It may be family, neighbors, co-workers, friends, people you worship with or are part of your book club. Everybody has a personal network and they are a valuable resource to help find work opportunities for youth.
- » Schools and employment programs may be tasked with finding youth work experiences or paid jobs, but they don’t know all the employers in your area. Families can be a partner in the process by suggesting possible work matches and accessing their networks for contacts.
- » For example, let’s say a youth wants to explore automotive careers but the school or employment provider does not have any contacts in that industry. The family can ask their network if they know anybody at an auto repair business or dealership, and if they could facilitate a contact (name, phone number, mention that somebody will be contacting them).
- » With social media it is easier than ever for people to access their networks.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » What was your first job and did your family play a role in helping you get it?



Getting Involved



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Slide 18: Getting Involved

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Another way youth with disabilities can build employment skills is to be involved in extra-curricular and community based organizations

Talking Points

- » Another important strategy for helping youth build responsibility, teamwork skills and social connections is to encourage them to be involved in school and community activities.
- » Unfortunately, options can seem limited for such opportunities for youth with significant disabilities. Families are encouraged to prioritize getting youth involved in things like choir, drama, scouting, and sports. Many communities also have unique opportunities like community gardens, clubs catering to specific interests, and church activities.
- » Remember that involvement in these activities should be included on the resume or vision statement.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » What were some activities you were involved in as a youth?
Can you describe some skills that you acquired as a result?
- » Is your son or daughter currently involved in extracurricular or community-based activities?
What has been the impact of that involvement?



Preparing for Employment

- **Social Skills**
- **Hygiene**
- **Safety–school, community, transportation, appropriate relationships**
- **Expanded use of technology**
- **Practice independent skills**
- **Focus on the skills needed to obtain and maintain a job!**



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Slide 19: Preparing for Employment

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » This slide is intended to help families think about the skills that are necessary to not only obtain a job but also maintain a job.

Talking Points

- » Social Skills can enhance and cultivate friendships, help resolve conflict, work on appropriate conversation, and help to reduce anxiety in social situations. These skills are needed in a workplace especially when working with different individuals and can help to work with an employer.
- » Hygiene and personal grooming may not be something that someone thinks about as a skill to help stay employed but for some, it is a learned skill.
- » For most families, safety is the biggest concern. It is really important that families talk about this as it relates to becoming employed and being out in the community. Schools can help with skill building around safety and preparing students on how to be safe in the community and eventually in the workplace. You can ask the families what it is that they fear and how they think the school could be helpful and what they can do to provide skill and knowledge.
- » Technology is a great tool and can support in safety skills for transportation– texting when someone arrives at a destination, using google map, MBTA app., ride share apps that have built in safety features.

continued





Preparing for Employment

- Social Skills
- Hygiene
- Safety—school, community, transportation, appropriate relationships
- Expanded use of technology
- Practice independent skills
- Focus on the skills needed to obtain and maintain a job!



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Slide 19: Preparing for Employment (continued)

- » Technology can also be used for communication. A smartphone or device can be used to keep a list of activities that need to be completed at a job site, create a list of conversation starters, and set a timer to get up on time. Ask the school about other ways to use technology to enhance someone's life and allow them to do more.
- » Ask families to think of ways that their loved ones could start to become more independent within the community. Think about the things that we do for our loved ones each day that they could possibly do on their own. Start having them do it themselves but with support that might be needed. Do you brush your daughter's hair each day? Have her to go in front of a mirror and start to practice and do it herself – first with support and then fade the support. Start to show them how to do their own laundry and purchase items at a store, order food at a restaurant or takeout on the phone.
- » Review with families all the skills needed to obtain and maintain a job and to have them start to think about these skills and to work with the school, the community and at home to support their loved one.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » What is your loved one's biggest strength?
- » What supports are needed to help your loved one prepare for employment?



Navigating Transportation and Options



**Consider all
options for
transportation**



**Start early and often—
take walks and discuss
safety, point out traffic
signals – eventually
allow for a short walk
to the mailbox or a
neighbor’s house—
baby steps**



**Travel Training
Goal in IEP**



**Public
Transportation/
Ride Share/The
Ride**



**Use of
Technology**

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Slide 20: Navigating Transportation and Options

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » In this slide we want to say up front that we understand that not everyone will be using public transportation and/or ride share but for those that are able to do so, they should think about all of the options available in their area and help to prepare their loved one to access different options.

Talking Points






- » The presenter can start by asking everyone if they are apprehensive about their loved one using any type of transportation. Most caregivers do have apprehension and that is why it is so important to make sure all the skills discussed on the previous slide are being worked on in school, at home and in the community.
- » Travel training should be added as a goal in the IEP early. Start by being out in the community and going on walks. Progress to more outings in the community with smaller groups and more focus on safety in traveling, finally allowing for small independent trips in your neighborhood such as to mail a letter or take a short walk. Everyone involved needs to feel comfortable with traveling more independently.
- » If public transportation is an option, start out with one or two destinations, ride with your loved one and start to fade the support once everyone feels ready – that could mean being on the same bus but not sitting together.


continued





Navigating Transportation and Options

				
Consider all options for transportation	Start early and often—take walks and discuss safety, point out traffic signals—eventually allow for a short walk to the mailbox or a neighbor’s house—baby steps	Travel Training Goal in IEP	Public Transportation/ Ride Share/The Ride	Use of Technology

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Slide 20: Navigating Transportation and Options (continued)

- » Technology can be very helpful (as discussed in previous slides). Ride share has safety options (you are able to share your ride with someone else), the MBTA has an app to help navigate the transit system, and they offer travel training
- » If traveling independently will NOT be an option, The Ride is something that some may be eligible for and you can still support your loved one by assisting in practicing the skills needed to contact The Ride. They also have a pilot program with reduced fares for ride share

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » What is your biggest fear with transportation?
- » Do you have a goal in your loved one’s IEP around transportation?

Additional Resources/References

- » <https://help.uber.com/driving-and-delivering/article/share-your-trips-with-family-and-friends-?nodeId=9890b65b-e204-46a4-8bae-fa444faed74c>
- » www.mbta.com/accessibility/travel-training
- » www.mbta.com/accessibility/the-ride/on-demand-pilot



Actions Towards Employment

- **Less time in school and more time in the community!**
- **Work Experience – every little bit counts!**
- **Break down what a day “on the job” would look like and practice the routine.**
- **Connect with state agencies to understand the support that may be available.**



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Slide 21: Actions Towards Employment

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » In this slide the presenter will want the families to think about the actions needed for their loved one to move closer to being employed.

Talking Points


- » Not all families will have a loved one that will stay in school until the age of 22 but for those that do, it will be important for them to advocate for more time outside of the school's four walls and much more time in the community having different types of experiences.
- » In the previous slides, we discussed skills needed to be employed, this is a good time to continue to practice those skills in real world situations. Internships, grocery store purchases, taking public transportation, volunteering at a food bank or community center, ordering lunch at a restaurant, practicing taking ride share.
- » It is also a good time to start to review what a “day on the job” would look like and practice the routine – preparing the night before by putting out proper clothing, setting a timer to wake up, setting a morning routine, thinking about transportation to and from a work site.
- » Communication skills are important for employment. Practice these skill in the community. Technology can be useful, use the iPhone to write down notes and/or lists of what to do on the job – also for some, sentence starters if they get stuck on how to ask basic questions of their peer or manager.


continued 



Actions Towards Employment

- **Less time in school and more time in the community!**
- **Work Experience – every little bit counts!**
- **Break down what a day “on the job” would look like and practice the routine.**
- **Connect with state agencies to understand the support that may be available.**



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Slide 21: Actions Towards Employment (continued)

- » Discuss state agencies and support that they may provide – Pre ETS, job coach, 688 referral. Don't put too much focus on this but make sure they know that there are supports available. It is more important to work on the skills needed to get the job at home and in community and not always to rely solely on state services.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » The school can be a great partner by providing opportunities in the community and practicing skills. Have you had this discussion with them?
- » Share the MRC Pre-ETS application with participants.

Additional Resources/References

- » www.mass.gov/service-details/pre-employment-transition-services-pre-ets-0



Case Study – Alexa’s Story

- **Inclusion in school and in the community**
- **Expectation to “pitch in” at home and do chores – just like her sisters but modified**
- **After School at a local Boys & Girls Club – eventually led to more friendships and work opportunity**
- **IEP goals – internships in school, work on transportation skills, social skills, technology, safety, independent living skills**
- **Using Social Capital – Alexa had her first internship at City Hall when she was 15 years old and first paid position at a local floral shop**



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Slide 22: Case Study—Alexa’s Story

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Introduce a story about one family and their daughter Alexa’s journey to employment.

Talking Points

- » Full inclusion in school and in the community with mentors.
- » High expectations at home – start at an early age with chores and responsibility.
- » Practice independence in community.
- » After School at The Boys & Girls Club of Dorchester to develop more independence and Alexa was eventually employed there.
- » Employment goals were added to the IEP. There are so many jobs within a school and everyone needs to get creative! School store, office work, bus greeter for younger students etc.
- » Using your social capital – look within your community and connections through friends and family – network!
- » First job was an internship at City Hall and employed at a local flower shop (using social capital).



Alexa's Story, continued

- **Alexa wanted to go to college – MAICEI and “You’re With Us”**
- **Started spending less time in school and more time out in the community**
- **Person Center Planning – Alexa wants to work in retail**
- **Technology – supports with travel, money management, safety, setting timers/ reminders, sentence starters for communication**
- **Working with state agencies on support available after age 22**
- **Alexa got a job at TJ Maxx just prior to leaving school at age 22**



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Slide 23: Case Study: Alexa's Story, continued

- » Higher Education opportunities through MAICEI (dual enrollment) and You're With Us at Northeastern
- » Safety and travel training goal added to the IEP that included Sex Education
- » Less time in school and more time out in the community working on skills necessary to become more independent and employed.
- » Person Centered Planning assessment tool to plan future needs and goals. The supports identified to be employed were added as new goals to the IEP and an action plan was put in place
- » Technology – ride share, money management application, using an iPhone as an alarm clock and assisting with communication.
- » Connecting with state agencies to start the process of what supports would be offered when turning 22 – support at home and at work.
- » The end result - Alexa got a job at TJ Maxx, she has a job coach and she uses Uber and the MBTA to travel (with safety features). Today she is still with the “You're With Us” program, auditing classes at Northeastern with mentors and uses Self-Direction with DDS and works at TJ Maxx and Coleen's Floral Shop.

Follow-Up/Discussion Questions

- » All of these experiences led to Alexa being employed. Think about the experiences that your loved one is having now. How can they lead to them being employed?

Additional Resources/References

- » www.mass.gov/orgs/departments-of-developmental-services
- » www.yourewithus.org/
- » www.mass.edu/strategic/maicei.asp
- » www.mass.gov/dds-self-directed-services#:~:text=DDS%20Self-Directed%20Services%20Helps%20an%20individual%20to%20have,on%20their%20vision%2C%20path%2C%20preferences%2C%20beliefs%20and%20abilities.



Next Steps: Complete Corresponding Section of CtLC Portfolio

- 1. What is my family member good at or interested in?**
- 2. Why is it important TO ME for my family member to work?**
- 3. What are the best strategies to support my family member to find and keep a job?
(Please answer the 4 sub-questions.)**



Slide 24: Next Steps: Complete Corresponding Section of CtLC Portfolio

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Provides directions for attendees to complete the corresponding section of the Family Perspectives on Employment Outcomes Portfolio.

Talking Points

- » The Charting the Life Course Family Perspective on Employment Outcomes Portfolio is designed to help families map supports, identify personal reasons to explore employment for their loved one, and to set the stage for action steps.
- » Families will be asked to complete one portion of the portfolio for each of the 3 sessions in the series.
- » Please refer to the right side of the first page of the portfolio and answer the questions:
 - 1) What is my family member good at or interested in?
 - 2) Why is it important TO ME for my family member to work?, and
 - 3) What are the best strategies to support my family member to find and keep a job?
(Please answer the 4 sub-questions.)
- » If time allows, we can share our answers.



Activity

In Module 2 we use the Charting the Life Course Family Perspective on Employment Portfolio reflection boxes to help attendees identify traits, values, and strategies for supporting employment for their loved one. Have people answer the questions in the 3 boxes on the right side of the portfolio. If time allows have people share their answers.

Discussion Questions

- » Thinking back to when you were growing up, in what ways did your family prepare you to be successful in employment?
- » What are you currently doing to help your loved one with a disability build skills, attitudes or habits that will help them succeed on the job?
- » Is your family member with a disability currently involved in any school extracurricular activities or community-based clubs? If so, what skills do you see being developed by them participating?
- » Are there any parts of the presentation that resonated with you or that caused you concern?

Related Resources

Helping Youth Develop Soft Skills for Job Success: Tips for Parents and families

www.ncwd-youth.info/publications/helping-youth-develop-soft-skills-for-job-success-tips-for-parents-and-families/

Helping Youth Build Work Skills for Job Success: Tips for Parents and families

www.ncwd-youth.info/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/infobrief_issue34.pdf

Soft Skills to Pay the Bills (Guide and Video Series)

www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/program-areas/individuals/youth/transition/soft-skills





Module 3

Understanding and Navigating Employment Supports

SLIDES AND PRESENTER NOTES

Module 3

Understanding and Navigating Employment Supports

Raising Expectations for Better Futures



Slide 1: Title Slide



A holistic approach to supports



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Slide 2: Holistic approach to supports

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

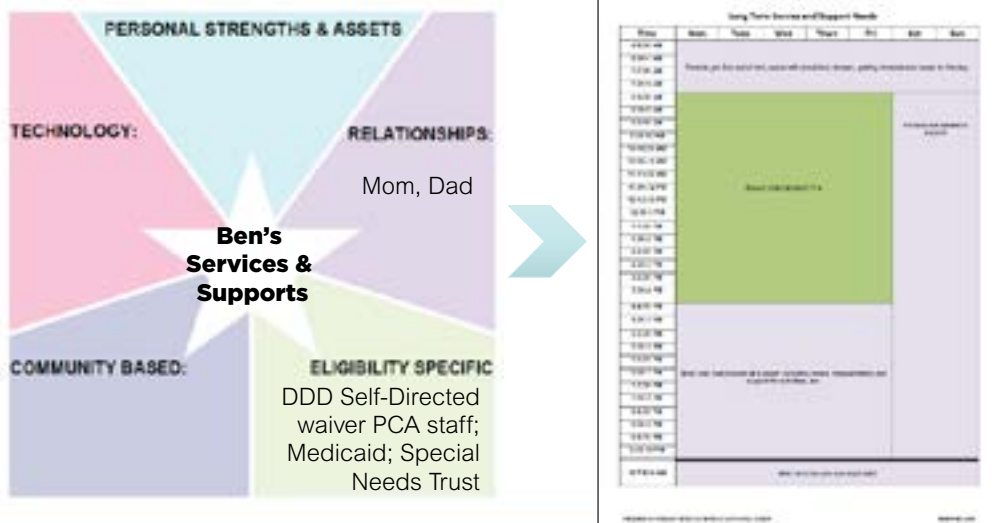
- » This image illustrates the roles of family & community in supporting people with disabilities and the need to think holistically about supports. Note how the “green” service category comes between the person and family/community in the middle illustration; the model on the right is what we want, a more integrated approach that relies on all sources of support.

Talking Points

- » Often when we think about transition for young people, we go straight to eligibility for adult disability services.
- » But such services are only one piece of the puzzle. Each person - with or without disabilities - is already surrounded by family and community.
- » Traditional service models can come between the person and their community, by leading to placement in largely segregated day and employment programming.
- » Instead, we can look for ways to combine eligibility-specific disability services with other sources of support. This session will help you identify and start to access the full range of supports available to you and your loved one.



Combining Sources of Support Opens Up Opportunities



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Slide 3: Combining Sources of Support (1)

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Illustrates how thinking about more sources of support can make life more interesting for the individual & provide more respite for parents. Note how Ben's schedule in the example is all eligibility-specific services, and time with parents.

Talking Points

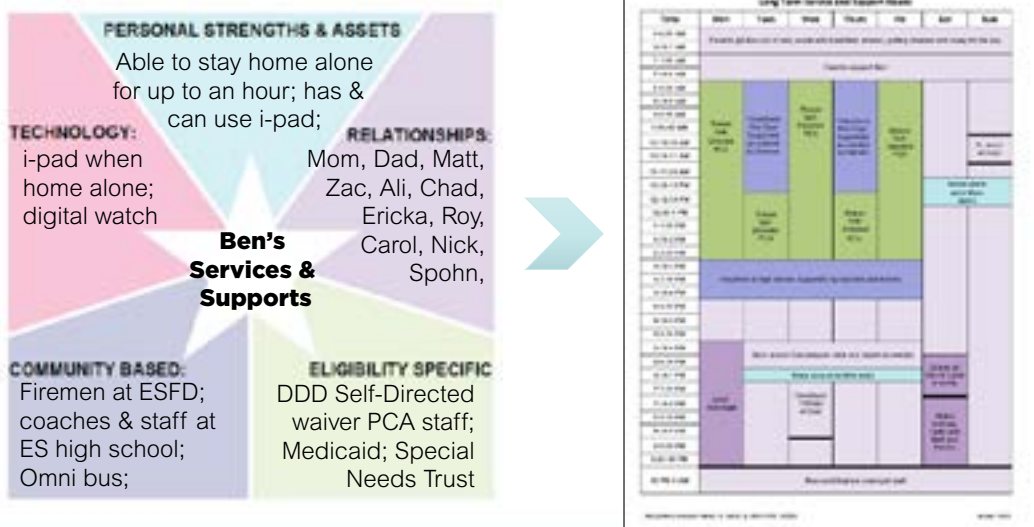
- » We'll go into each segment of the integrated supports star in more detail later, but this is a good illustration of how thinking more broadly can lead to a richer array of supports and activities.
- » Initially, Ben's family focused primarily on his parents and paid services as sources of support. He spent his days with staff, and evenings & weekends with Mom & Dad.

Additional Resources/References

- » Integrated Supports Star examples & videos from LifeCourse Nexus:
www.lifecoursetools.com/lifecourse-library/foundational-tools/family-perspective/



Combining Sources of Support Opens Up Opportunities



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Slide 4: Combining Sources of Support (2)

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Illustrates how thinking about more sources of support can make life more interesting for the individual & provide more respite for parents. Note how Ben's schedule in this image is more colorful & varied.

Talking Points

- » When Ben's family started looking at other sources of support, they identified new ways of thinking about Ben's days. He learned to stay home alone for short periods of time, with some technology for support and communication. He spent time volunteering at the local fire station. He spent time on evenings and weekends with friends and extended family. All these resources enabled Ben to have a more colorful life – and his parents to have some respite from their role as primary caregivers.



The Integrated Supports Star Can Help Identify Those Sources of Support



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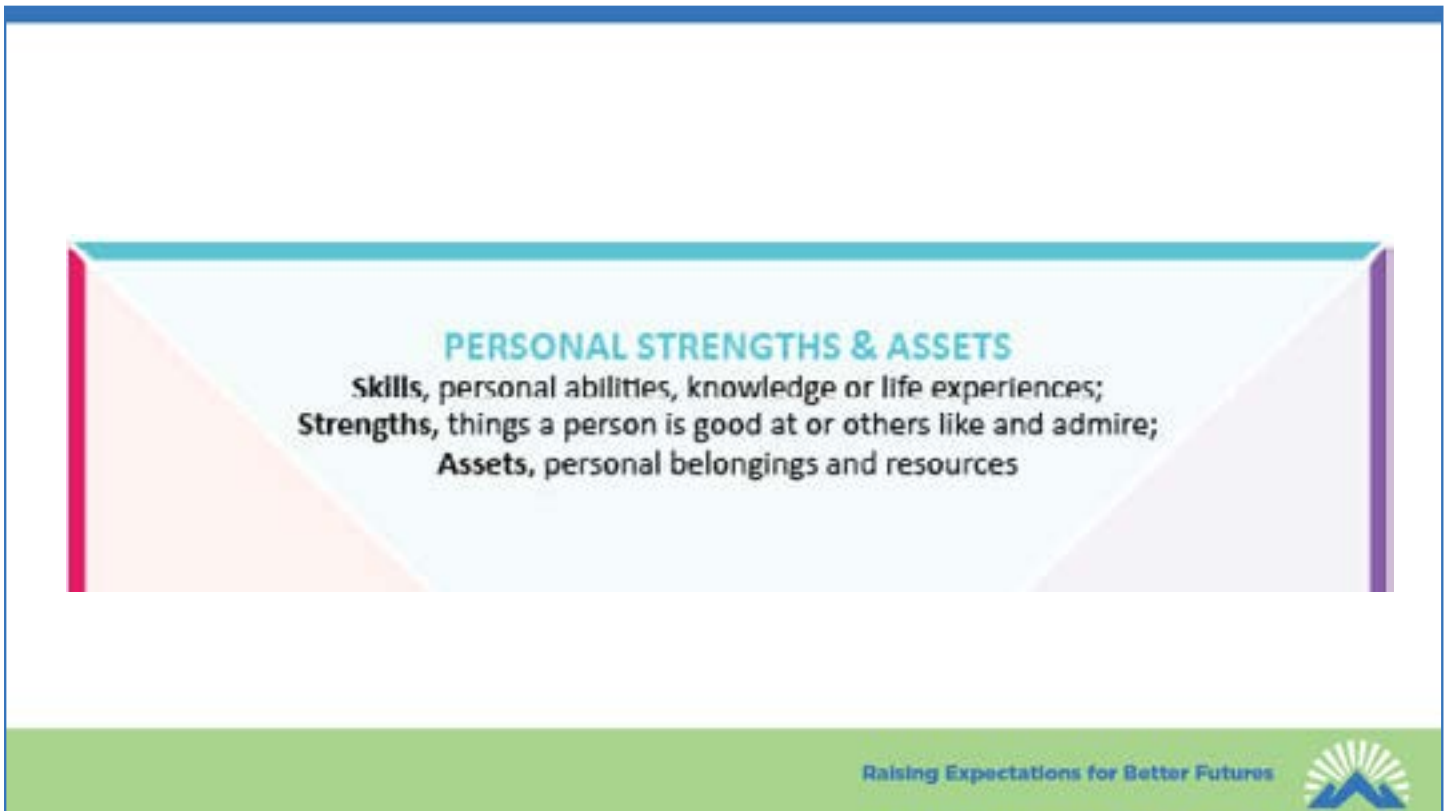
Slide 5: Integrated Supports Star

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Overall visual of Integrated Supports Star. This is just a lead-in to the following slides which will go into each section in more detail.

Talking Points

- » Today we're going to walk you through the integrated supports star with a goal of identifying how resources in each of these five areas can help support your loved one's vision for a good life now and in the future.
- » The Charting the life course integrated supports star is a tool for identifying supports in five areas. You'll recognize some of these colors from Ben's schedule in the previous slide.
- » Teal is personal strengths & assets, such as Ben's gaining the skills to stay home alone for short periods of time.
- » Purple is relationships – family, friends, neighbors, and other community members.
- » Green is eligibility-specific services such as those provided by schools or DDS.
- » Blue is community-based resources such as local businesses, parks and churches.
- » And pink is technology – both assistive technology specifically for people with disabilities and generic technology such as iPhones and iPads.
- » The rest of this module will review the star, point by point.



Slide 6: Personal Strengths & Assets (definition)

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Sets the stage for further exploration of this part of the star on next slide.

Talking Points

- » Review the definition of personal strengths & assets on this illustration.



Personal Strengths & Assets

- **What did you learn from Module 1 that you can enter into the star re: your loved one's personal strengths & assets?**



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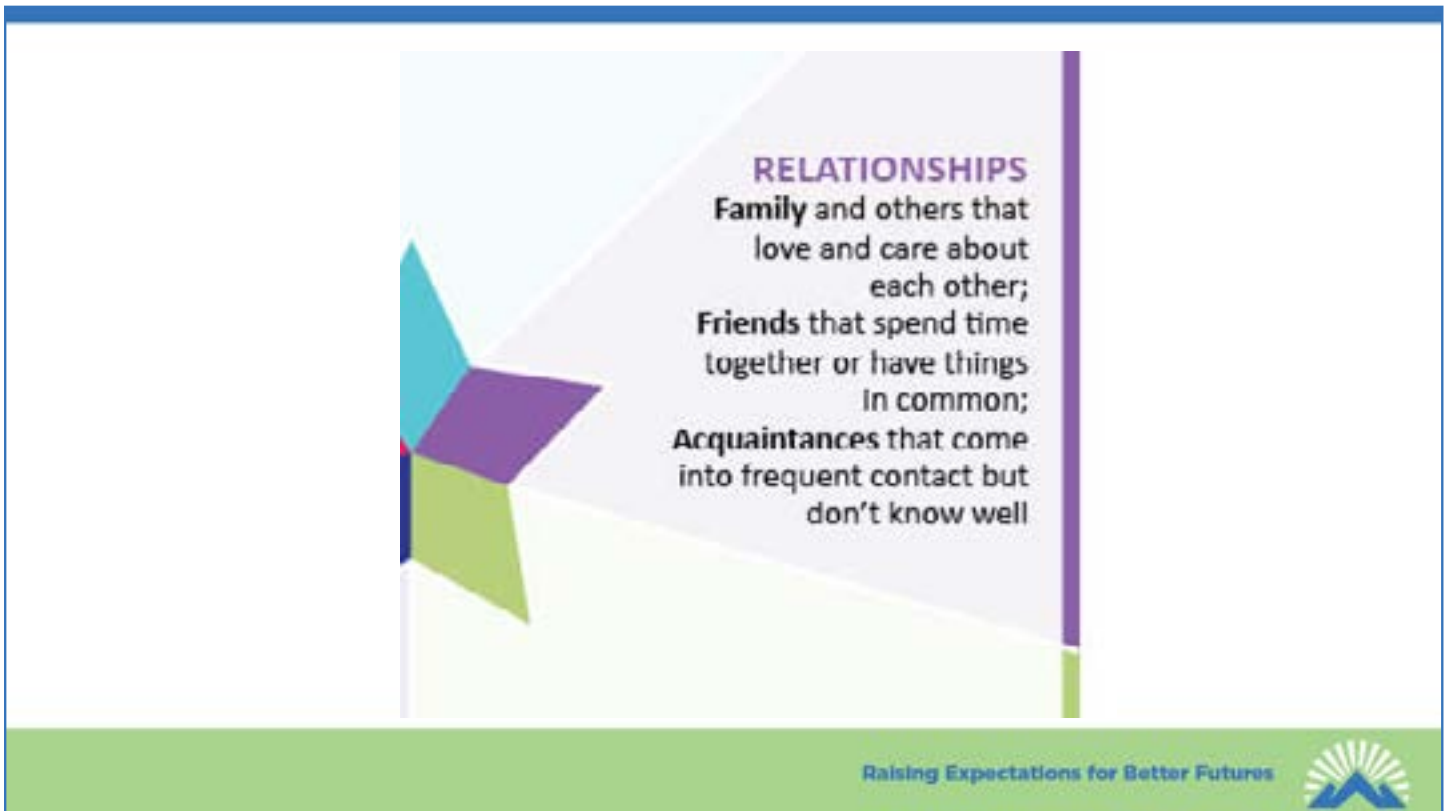
Slide 7: Personal Strengths & Assets (prompt)

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Get participants to reflect on Personal Strengths & Assets.

Talking Points

- » Ask participants to jot a few ideas in the Personal Strengths and Assets section of the star on their portfolio.
- » Personal strengths & assets are an important starting point for thinking about loved one's supports.



Slide 8: Relationships (definition)

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Focus on Relationships; Sets the stage for further exploration of this part of the star on next slide.

Talking Points

- » Review the definition on this illustration.



Relationships

- Parents, siblings, other family
- Friends
- Teachers
- Neighbors

Relationships

- **Who do you know who has a job your loved one might be interested in?**
- **Who does your loved one know?**
- **How can they build more community relationships now that might lead to future opportunities for jobs or community engagement?**



Slide 9: Relationships (prompt)

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Get participants to reflect on Relationships

Talking Points

- » Ask participants to jot a few ideas in the Relationships section of the star on their portfolio.
- » Keep in mind not just close relationships but acquaintances too (neighbors, classmates, etc.). We all benefit from having a wide network of loose connections, in addition to our close friends & family members.



TECHNOLOGY
Personal technology anyone uses;
Assistive or adaptive technology with day to day tasks;
Environmental technology designed to help with or adapt surroundings

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Slide 10: Technology (definition)

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Define Technology & set the stage for further exploration of this part of the star.

Talking Points

- » Review the definition on this illustration.



Technology

- **How do you use technology in your day-to-day life and job?**
- **How does your loved one use technology?**
- **Are there new tools they could be learning to use that will help them with employment in the future?**

Technology

- Cell phone
- iPad or computer
- Alarm clock
- Assistive technology
- Online resume builders
- Online classes or training
- Internet job search

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Slide 11: Technology (prompt)

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Get participants to reflect on Technology

Talking Points

- » Ask participants to jot a few ideas in the Technology section of the star on their portfolio.
- » The role of technology has accelerated since COVID-19, with many options for individuals, families and providers to access remote or technology-based supports. A lot of these options use devices you might already have, such as iPhones and iPads.
- » Think about the need for not just the technology itself but also the skills to use it safely & maintain an appropriate online persona.



Slide 12: Community Based (definition)

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Sets the stage for further exploration of this part of the star on next slide.

Talking Points

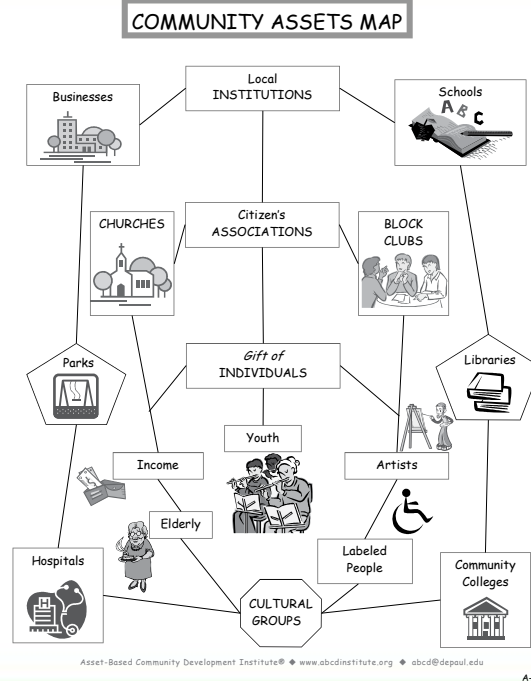
- » Review the definition on this illustration.



Community Based

- Libraries
- MassHire Career Centers (<https://www.mass.gov/masshire-career-centers>)
- Community Education Programming
- Volunteer opportunities
- Local business associations

Community Based



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Slide 13: Community Based (prompt)

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Get participants to reflect on Community Based resources.

Talking Points

- » Ask participants to jot a few ideas in the Community Based section of the star on their portfolio.
- » Communities have a lot to offer, including many resources available to anyone in the community with or without a disability. This list and example Community Assets Map can give you some ideas to get started.



Discussion Questions

- **In filling out your star, what was one thing that surprised you?**
- **What lessons did you learn?**
- **What next steps are you going to take based on what you learned?**



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Slide 14: Discussion Questions

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Lead a discussion of the first four points of the star, using the questions on the slide. If you have a large group, consider setting people up in groups of 5-6, either in person or via Zoom breakouts.



Slide 15: Eligibility Specific (definition)

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

- » Sets the stage for further exploration of this part of the star in the next portion of the presentation.

Talking Points

- » Review the definition on this illustration.



Eligibility Specific: Navigating State Services in Massachusetts

- Special education and transition to work services at school
- Department of Developmental Services employment and day services (<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/department-of-developmental-services>)
- Pre-employment transition services (<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/pre-employment-transition-services-pre-ets-0>)
- Vocational rehabilitation (mass.gov/vocational-rehabilitation)
- Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative (<https://www.mass.edu/strategic/maicei.asp>)

Eligibility Specific

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Slide 16: Eligibility Specific: Navigating State Services in Massachusetts

Purpose of the Slide/Presenter Notes

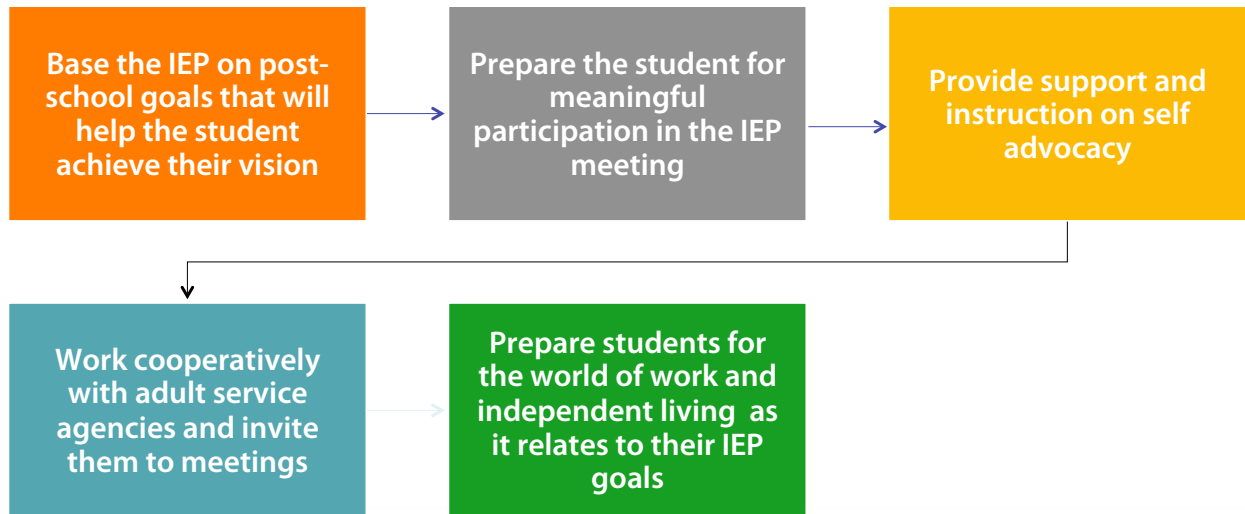
- » Transition to Part 2 of this module, on eligibility specific services in MA.

Talking Points

- » Next we will move on to discussing some of the specific eligibility-based services available to youth and families in Massachusetts.



The Role of the School



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Slide 17: The Role of the School

Purpose of Slide

- » In this section we will focus on the services available in Massachusetts for students with disabilities. First, we will start with school services.
- » Notes to Presenter Be sure to reference the IDEA (the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). The role of school in transition is centered around IDEA, which mandates that schools help prepare students for post-secondary life.

Talking Points

- » These services are required by federal and state laws and should begin at age 14. These boxes illustrate what services the school should provide in addition to academics.
- » Example: John's vision is to work in a garden center. Some appropriate IEP objectives might be travel training, appropriate social greetings, learning about common plants and how to care for them, and working on money management.



Tips for Parents re: the IEP process

- **What is a transition assessment & what to ask for**
- **Track the essential elements:**
 - Individual Transition Plan at age 14
 - Offer real work experience and paid internships
 - Information on reaching the age of majority
 - Schools to issue a 688 referral 2 years before leaving school
- **Advocating for what your student needs**
- **Stay informed! Join your school's SEPAC, attend trainings, transition fairs**



Slide 18: Tips for Parents re: the IEP Process

Purpose of Slide

- » Illustrate the key questions parents have and benchmarks that school should provide.
- » Notes to Presenter These are key elements in developing a transition plan for the student which then is integrated into the IEP.

Talking points

- » Transition assessments. There is no one stop shop! The type should be guided by what else do you need to know about the student. What information is missing?
- » Know the timelines.
- » Age 14 transition plan.
- » 688 referral 2 years before leaving school.
- » Reaching the age of majority (18 years old). What does this truly mean? Reaching Adulthood, Decision Making Support, financial benefits, voting!
- » School offering work experience and internships.
- » Networking with others can be an important source of both information and support.



Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment (MAICE)

- Offers opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities, ages 18–22, to attend college or university
- Schools currently participating:
 - Community Colleges
 - State Universities
 - UMASS

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Slide 19: Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative

Purpose of Slide

- » Provide an overview of the Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative.

Notes to Presenter

- » This option benefits students who are looking for a college experience.

Talking Points

- » MACEI is a partnership between the college or university and the school system.
- » Provide opportunities for taking classes, person centered planning, independent living and travel training, paid work and internships, social opportunities and extracurricular activities on campus.
- » Available for students 18-22 who have not passed MCAS or for students 21-22 who have passed MCAS but are still eligible for Special education services.
- » Currently have 11 sites throughout Massachusetts: Community colleges, state colleges and universities.



Vocational Rehabilitation

Provided by Commission for the Blind (MCB) and Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC)

- **Eligible individuals have physical or mental impairment or are legally blind and causes barriers to employment**
- **Services can include**
 - **Interest and aptitude surveys, diagnostic evaluations**
 - **Job placement and coaching**
 - **Assistive technology**
 - **Benefits counseling**
 - **College or vocational training**

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Slide 20: Vocational Rehabilitation

Purpose of Slide

- » To provide an overview of vocational rehabilitation in Massachusetts.

Notes to Presenter

- » Important to note that 2 state agencies provide VR services- Mass Rehab Commission and Commission for the Blind. Each has their own eligibility criteria.

Talking Points

- » Describe eligibility of MRC and COB.
- » Elements of VR- assessment, training, placement.
- » Benefits Counseling- how work can affect federal and state benefits such as Social Security and MassHealth.



**Pre-
Employment
Transition
Services**

Pre-ETS

- **Provided by both Mass Commission for the Blind and Mass Rehabilitation Commission.**
- **For any student age 14 years or older with a documented disability**
- **Core Services:**
 - **Job exploration counseling , Work readiness training, Work-based learning experiences, Counseling in post-secondary education, Self-advocacy**
- **Provided consultation**

Slide 21: Pre-Employment Transition Services

Purpose of Slide

- » Provides an overview of Pre-ETS services (Pre-Employment Transition Services).

Notes to Presenter

- » Distinguish that MCB and MRC both have programs, but services are similar. Do not need to formally apply for services as they can access through school.

Talking Points

- » Offered in conjunction with schools and community Pre-ETS providers.
- » Open to any student age 14 -22 who is potentially eligible for services
- » A doorway to employment- resume preparation, interviews, assessment, etc.



Department of Developmental Services (DDS)

Eligibility

- **Adults with an Intellectual disability (can include other diagnosis such as Autism, Cerebral Palsy, etc)**
- **Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder without an Intellectual Disability, Smith-Magenis Syndrome, Prader Willi syndrome**

Provides

- **Day and employment services**
- **Residential supports**
- **Family Support**
- **Service Coordination**



Slide 22: Department of Developmental Services (DDS)

Purpose of Slide

- » Provide an overview of DDS services as an adult.

Notes to Presenter

- » Important to note that as an adult the eligibility shifts. Must have an intellectual disability before the age of 18 or an ASD diagnosis before age 21.

Talking Points

- » Basic components at 22 or leaving school- family support, day and employment, residential and service coordination.
- » No longer an entitlement based on eligibility and availability of funding.
- » Services are different for Autism Spectrum Disorder with no Intellectual Disability.



DDS Day and Employment Supports

- **Community Based Day Services (CBDS)**
 - Pre employment
 - Community access
 - Volunteering
 - Internships
- **Competitive Integrated Employment**
 - Job Placement
 - Job Coaching
 - Group or individualized
 - Remote

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Slide 23: DDS Day and Employment Services

Purpose of Slide

- » An overview of DDS Day and Employment Services.

Notes to Presenter

- » These are some of the options offered by DDS.

Talking Points

- » Differences between Community Based Day Support and Employment.
- » People can receive both.
- » Some also receive services from MRC or MCB.



Tips For Working With DDS

- **Different Eligibility process for Adult services. You should apply before 18- recommend age 17**
- **Develop a relationship with your family member's Transition Coordinator.**
- **Have them attend IEP meetings prior to 22**
- **The Transition Coordinator develops the Individual Transition Plan at least 6 months before leaving school.**
- **Access assistance from DDS Central office Ombudsman if needed**

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Slide 24: Tips For Working With DDS

Purpose of Slide

- » An overview of tips to transition smoothly to DDS.

Notes to Presenter

- » Emphasize the Importance of the role of the Transition Coordinator from DDS and making sure they are eligible for adult services.

Talking Points

- » Importance of a vision statement (Trajectory).
- » DDS Transition Coordinator should attend IEP meetings before leaving school.
- » A 688 referral to adult services is essential 2 years before leaving school.
- » An Individual Transition Plan documents the needed services as an adult. Must be done 6 months prior to leaving school. The ITP is not an entitlement to services.



Publicly Funded Health Insurance

- **MassHealth**
State of Massachusetts Medicaid Program
 - Pays for Long term Support Services- Personal Care Assistance, Adult Family Care, Day Habilitation, Skilled Nursing, Durable Medical equipment
 - Medical expenses- co pays, prescriptions
- **CommonHealth**
Access to MassHealth benefits by paying a premium based on income
- **Premium Assistance**
Reimbursement of private health insurance fees if you carry both MassHealth and private insurance
- **Medicare**
Federal program for adults over 65 or have a qualifying disability or illness

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Slide 25: Publicly Funded Health Insurance

Purpose of Slide

- » Overview of publicly funded healthcare programs in Massachusetts.

Notes to Presenter

- » Important for people to realize at age 18 no longer considered under parents' income. Important to apply for MassHealth. Pays for many services as an adult.

Talking Points

- » Explain difference between MassHealth Standard (meets income guidelines) and CommonHealth for the working disabled or for kids under 18 and family is over income. You pay a premium to receive this service.
- » Premium Assistance is offered if you carry both MassHealth and private health insurance.
- » Use a MassHealth Navigator if you need any assistance. Autism Insurance Resource Center, others.



Federal Benefits- SSI and SSDI

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)

- **Eligibility**
 - Disabled
 - Based on Work history
 - Deceased spouses work history
 - Parent of a child if disabled before 22
 - Not means tested
- **Will also receive Medicare**

Supplemental Security income (SSI)

- **Eligibility**
 - Disabled
 - Low Income
 - Asset limit \$2000
- **Application**
 - Online or visit an office
- **Will also receive MassHealth**



Slide 26: Federal Benefits—SSI and SSDI

Purpose of Slide

- » Overview of Federal/State benefits.

Notes to Presenter

- » Stress the Importance of Applying at age 18. When you become eligible for SSI MassHealth is automatic and pays for services.

Talking Points

- » Note differences between SSI and SSDI.
- » Eligibility and Benefits (info is on slide).



Able Accounts

- **How much?**
 - Money in the account does not impact Medicaid benefits and balances below \$100,000 do not impact SSI benefits.
- **What can I use it for?**
 - Expenses to help improve health, independence or quality of life
- **Eligibility**
 - Receiving benefits under Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).
 - Disability prior to age 26
- **Managed by Fidelity Investments**
For more info contact MEFA-www.mefa.org/save/attainable-savings-plan

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Slide 27: ABLE Accounts

Purpose of Slide

- » What is an ABLE Account?

Notes to Presenter

- » Account can be set up to save up to \$100,000 without affecting benefits.

Talking Points

- » Money can only be used for certain goods and services (i.e., college, buying a car).
- » Check out the Massachusetts Educational Finance Authority (MEFA) website to see how to apply and what you can spend the funds on.
- » Funds are managed by Fidelity in Massachusetts.



YOU CAN WORK AND STILL GET BENEFITS!



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Slide 28: You Can Work and Still Get Benefits!

Purpose of Slide

- » You can still work and collect benefits!

Notes to Presenter

- » Biggest myth: Work prevents you from collecting benefits.

Talking Points

- » Benefit Counselors at MRC can assist you and answer your questions.



Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE)

- **Student Beneficiaries** can work and earn up to **\$1870 per month** and up to a maximum **ANNUAL** exclusion of **\$7750** without earnings being counted.
- **Qualifications:**
 - In grades 7-12 and attending school 12 hours per week
 - In a college or university for at least 8 hours a week
 - In a skills training program to prepare them for a paying job at least 12-15 hours per week
 - SEIE is not automatic and must be requested in writing
 - Ends one month before the 22nd birthday

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Slide 29: Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE)

Purpose of Slide

- » Illustrate the rules around earnings while you are still in school and benefits.

Notes to Presenter

- » Important to have work experience while you are a student. Leads to the likelihood of employment as an adult.

Talking Points

- » Illustrate on the slide how much students can earn.



Questions and Answers Discussion

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Slide 30: Questions and Answers and Discussion

Purpose of Slide

- » Q&A and discussion.

Notes to Presenter

- » See below for links to state services and advocacy organizations.

Talking Points

- » Discussion: What are one or two adult services do you most envision pursuing to help round out your star?
- » If you have a large group and enough remaining time, consider setting people up in groups of 5-6, either in person or via Zoom breakouts, to reflect on their responses to the above question.



Activity

For Module 3 we will be using the Integrated Supports Star in the Charting the Life Course Family Perspective on Employment Portfolio. The star asks attendees to map out current supports their loved one has access to in 5 key areas. The exercise is designed to encourage families to look beyond eligibility-based supports as the only source of employment supports. Have people think about how their loved one will be supported to find and maintain employment, and what they have available to them in the 5 areas. Ask people to share out if time allows.

For more information on using the Integrated Supports Star visit:

www.lifecoursetools.com/lifecourse-library/integrated-supports-star/

Discussion Questions

- » Who here has accessed formal employment supports for your loved one and what has your experience been?
- » How well do you feel your loved one's school program is doing (or did) in preparing them for employment?
- » Do you feel Social Security benefits (such as SSI) have been a positive thing or a limiting factor in envisioning employment for your loved one?

Related Resources

Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN)

www.fcsn.org

- Training in all areas of the IEP
- Call in Center
- LINK Center (on Transition)
- Planning a Life!
- Transition Guide

Disability Law Center (DLC)

www.dlc-ma.org/

- Protection and Advocacy services

Mass Advocates for Children (MAC)

www.massadvocates.org

- Training
- Individual advocacy
- Policy Advocacy

Department of Early and Secondary Education (DESE)

www.doe.mass.edu/sped/secondary-transition/

- Advisories and guides

Massachusetts Concurrent Inclusive Enrollment Initiative (MAICE)

www.mass.edu/strategic/maicei.asp

- Includes map of participating colleges and universities and how to enroll

Mass Commission for the Blind (MCB)

www.mass.gov/vocational-rehabilitation-vr-for-the-blind



Pre Employment Transition Services

www.mass.gov/service-details/pre-employment-transition-services-pre-ets

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC)

www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-rehabilitation-commission

Pre Employment Services

www.mass.gov/mrc-transition-services-for-students-and-youth

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS)

www.mass.gov/orgs/departments-of-developmental-services

- Transition Guide and services

Autism Commission

www.mass.gov/orgs/autism-commission

- Transition Guide

The Arc of Massachusetts (The Arc of MA)

www.arcmass.org

- Training
- Legislative and Policy Advocacy
- Transition Timelines
- Resources

Institute for Community Inclusion/ UMASS Boston

www.communityinclusion.org/

- Think Work!
- Briefs on Transition and Employment

Mass Families Organizing for Change (MFOFC)

www.mfofc.org

- Family Leadership series
- A Full Life Ahead
- Advocacy Boot Camp

Massachusetts Transition to Adulthood Facebook group

www.facebook.com/groups/266094440846756/

How to Make SSI Work for You: Simply Said

www.youtube.com/watch?v=TMRmnluORVg

IEP to IPE: Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities

www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUWT3TcSq9E

Additional Support or Questions

If you have any questions about using or accessing these training materials please contact Jennifer Sullivan Sulewski, Senior Research Associate and Project Manager with the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston (Jennifer.Sulewski@umb.edu).

