

SCHOOL & Work

In this section...

- Learn about Choices
- Plan for a Career
- Plan for College
- Get a Job
- Be a Life-Long Learner

Plan for School and Work!



Learn About Choices

As you work your way through high school, think about the future.

What do I plan to do with my life?

What kind of work and activities will I enjoy and do to keep busy?

Do I want to learn or train more? Do I want to stay in school?

How will I earn money?



Your next choice might be to get a job, get job training, go to college, join the military, or enroll in disability day programs. Some youth decide they need a break before they make their next step. But, in general, it is a good idea to plan ahead so you are ready.

With a diploma

Four basic ways to end high school education:

With a certificate of completion

With a certificate of general educational development, called a GED

Dropping out with no diploma or certificate

Do you have a plan for finishing high school? Why is it right for you?



Our first piece of advice is that it is a good idea to work on getting a diploma, even if it takes some extra work or time.

Youth who get diplomas are more likely to get a job and are more likely to earn higher pay. Those of you who don't plan to get a diploma can still work towards getting a job, but you will need to make other plans to get yourself ready to work.

Some youth with a disability who have an Individualized Education Program (or IEP) are not ready for a diploma at the end of senior year. There are options to stay in the high school system for 12+ programs to get further training to be ready for adult life. You can stay in these programs up until the year you turn age 22 and then get a certificate of completion or a diploma, depending on the work you have completed.

Students who did not get a diploma can consider taking a GED test, but this takes work too. Youth with disabilities may apply for special testing, called testing accommodations, which require special documents from an evaluation by a psychologist or doctor. You can study for the GED test by studying on your own, using workbooks and online practice questions, going to GED classes at testing centers or other settings, paying for an online prep course, watching the TV special GED channel, and getting private tutors. You can form your own study groups with others too.

Even dropping out of high school takes planning. Before making a big decision, you need to look at the pros and cons and your reasons for wanting to leave. Learn which jobs you might be able to get without finishing high school. Learn about GED program choices. You need to talk about your options with teachers and parents. Make sure you have the right info before you take your next step.

Finish high school or equivalent

- High school diploma
- High school certificate
- GED



Get a job

- Trades, like carpentry or plumbing
- Services, like a server or barber
- Sales, like in a department store or hobby shop
- Agriculture, like raising crops or animals
- Professional, like a teacher or scientist



Learn extra skills

- Volunteer activities
- Trade school
- Vocational training
- Military (with a diploma)
- College or university
- Adult day programs



PLAN For a Career

Why does
having a job
matter?



Work lets you meet new people

Having work is a way to feel part of your community. It is a way to feel like you are doing something valuable and important. It is a way to make money. It is good for your self-esteem. People with disabilities make good workers. Bosses who work with people with disabilities can tell you that they get the job done and stay with their jobs.

Work gives you structure in your life and a source of income

Many people with disabilities would like to work but they have concerns. They worry about the effects their disability may have on getting a job. They worry about how money earned from a job will affect Social Security and medical benefits.

Work gives you a way to feel proud and self sufficient

Some people with disabilities, such as some with difficult learning challenges, might not feel ready to be in any job settings after high school. Look at the different types of employment below to see what might be helpful for you.

Useful fact sheets

<http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/disabilitybenefitsandwork/works.html>



Learn about benefit eligibility

There are special work incentives programs, like Indiana Works, that can help people with disabilities learn how to have a job while balancing their need for other government services. Independent Living Centers and Vocational Rehabilitation Services can also help with benefit eligibility.

Supported employment

uses programs to help you succeed, like job coaches, specialized training, transportation, or assistive technology.

Types of Employment

Adult day services

are an option to provide a variety of activities and supports for individuals who want to be active and continue to work on life skills for daily living, and social and work skills, too.

Sheltered employment

is usually a protected and supervised place where there is the stimulation and learning needed for work without the competition or stress in other work settings that some people might not be ready for.

Employment First Indiana

aims to support individuals with disabilities so that they can work at their fullest potential.

Competitive employment

means being out in the public workforce on your own.

You need to decide what you enjoy, what you are able to do, and what jobs are available.

You can work on getting to know yourself, explore your interests, your strengths and your experiences. Have you volunteered to work in a setting that you like, like in an office or a store, or with animals or little children? Think if you would like working in any of the settings you already know about.

You can look around at what jobs are out there. Find out if your school or community will have a career fair. Look at wanted ads in newspapers and online, or look at ideas on sites like <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/majors-careers>.

You can ask others to help you come up with ideas. My Future at www.myfuture.com is another website with info about colleges, careers and military service provided by the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Defense, Education and Labor.

You can try some volunteer or internship activities to get a taste for types of jobs that are interesting to you.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) serves to prevent discrimination and permit individuals with disabilities to participate fully in all aspects of society.



What subjects do you like in school?

What things do you enjoy doing outside of school?

What is important to you about a job?

These types of questions are found in a **Career Inventory**. Here are a few ways to take an inventory:

1. Talk with your guidance counselor at school. Your counselor can help you take an inventory and then go over the results with you.



2. **Drive of Your Life** is a fun online career exploration game that helps students learn more about themselves and careers. You answer questions about yourself and then go on a virtual drive to learn more about careers you choose at:

www.driveofyourlife.org



3. Take the paper and pencil interest inventory downloaded from www.okcareertech.org/cac/Pages/resources_products/Career%20Path/CareerPath_interests.pdf. Then share your results with someone to talk over the next steps.



Let's talk about different careers.

There are lots of different jobs in each field. Here is a list to get you thinking:

Arts, AV Technology & Communication

Working in the arts and media includes all the jobs that go into making art, television, radio, newspapers, theater and movies, both behind the scenes and out in front of the camera, stage or microphone.



Architecture and Construction

Architects and engineers design and build structures. Skilled workers, like carpenters or plumbers and other workers, are called tradesman. They work on making new buildings or repairing existing buildings.



Health Science

People can work in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or science in all the fields that help with the health of people and animals, like assisting people or working in labs.

Agriculture

Agriculture is the business of farming and growing crops and raising animals.



Transportation

Moving people and things around is called transportation. It includes all the work of running things like buses and taxis, railroads, ships, and airplanes.



Business and Marketing

Workers in business and marketing do all the jobs that it takes to sell things to people. Banks and stores are all part of the business world.

Education and Training

All types of schools and training programs have teachers and other staff to make their programs work. They can work with people of all ages.

Hospitality and Human Services

These jobs can provide a service or do something for other people, like hotel desk clerks or waiters, or case managers or community center workers.

Information Technology

IT is the name for working with computer systems.



Public Safety

Helping to keep people safe includes all the work around departments like police, fire and ambulance services. Safety jobs can be found working for the government or private companies.



Manufacturing

All the jobs that make things are called manufacturing. It can include working with big machines or making things by hand.

Activity



What field sounds interesting to you? What kind of work can you imagine yourself doing?

Can you explain why this might be a good fit for you? How does it match your interests and abilities?

Hopefully your career inventory gave you some new ideas. Next you need to learn more about careers you find interesting. Try some of these activities:

1. Talk with your guidance counselor or a librarian at the public library. They can both help you to find more info about careers you think are interesting.
2. Talk with your parents or your friends' parents about their careers. Ask them about why they like what they do.
3. If you know someone who has a career you are interested in, see if you can get permission to shadow for a day or part of a day at their work.

Write about or draw a picture about your ideas for your future career.

You may already have the necessary skills to start your career or you may find that you need to get some more schooling or training.

1. The career that matches your skills, interests, and personality the closest may be the one for you. Will you need accommodations for your career? Is it likely you will be able to get the accommodations you need? Do you need the help of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS)? You may be eligible for VRS if you have an impairment that interferes with your ability to work and you need and want their help to get into a job.

For more tips, visit:
<http://www.do2learn.com/JobTIPS/index.html>

2. Choose your career goal. Once you've decided what job is the best fit, then you can begin to develop a plan. Do you have all the training you need? Do you have experience that makes your ready? Do you need to think about adjusting your goals for a better fitting idea? Do you need special equipment due to your disability?

3. If you need more training, learn about program and schools that offer the education you need. Are you eligible for the training? How do you have to apply? Is there a wait to get into the program?

4. Once you are prepared and trained and ready to look for a job, learn about job hunting tips.

5. Prepare your resume, and practice job interviewing. For more tips, check out **page 38** of this workbook!

Skills and Training
Now that you've thought about some possible careers, let's think about what skills and training you need.

Adapted from *Mapping Your Future*

Vocational Rehabilitation Services might include:

- Vocational counseling and guidance
- Training for a job, like on-the-job training or vocational schools or university classes
- Job placement assistance and follow-up support
- Short term medical treatment to help an impairment and achieve a vocational goal
- Rehabilitation technology assistive devices and services

You can fill out a VRS application to help decide if you are eligible. If you are a junior or senior in high school, it could be a good time to contact VRS. You can invite them to your annual School Case Conference. Their website is www.vrs.in.gov and their phone number is 1-800-545-7763.

Adapted from *Indiana FSSA, Moving On, Life After High School Brochure*

What services do VRS provide?



PLAN FOR COLLEGE

If you find that you need more school after high school to meet your career goals, you need to prepare for the differences between high school and college or vocational training. Colleges offer academic programs where students earn credits toward formal degrees like associate and bachelor diplomas in areas of study like journalism or biology. Vocational trainings are technical or skills programs that provide learning usually in hands-on skills, like auto mechanics and nursing assistants. Trip to College is an Indiana website with information about schooling after high school at www.triptocollege.org



Colleges are required to have programs and physical access plans for people with disabilities. Check out different college's programs and facilities.

Get More Info

**The Association for
Higher Education and
Disability**

<http://ahead.org>

Special programs for students with intellectual challenges include models where students join in activities or classes with students without disabilities and/or learn in life skills classes with other students with disabilities.

Get More Info

Think College is a website with options for people with intellectual disabilities

www.thinkcollege.net
or
www.thinkcollegeindiana.org

There are several steps to get ready for college:

Preparing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What courses should you take in high school to be ready? ● What tests do you need to take for your applications? ● Do you have info from recent learning evaluations that will help you explain your special needs and accommodation requests?
Choosing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How do you pick a college? Look at websites and college search books at the library. Visit college fairs and plan to schedule campus visits. ● Would living at home, near to home or far away be good for you? ● What special programs or services might you look for? ● Would online college programs be a good idea for you?
Applying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Look at college websites to learn about admission requirements. ● Start working early on applications. Ask others you trust to read your essays and give you their thoughts. ● Remember to check and stay within all the deadlines.
Paying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Find out about financial aid to help pay for your training. Do you need to send a financial aid application? (www.fafsa.ed.gov) ● Do you have any savings to pay for your education? ● Do you qualify for any programs like <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21st Century Scholar? (www.in.gov/ssaci/2345.htm) • or PASS account? (Plan to Achieve Self Sufficiency) (www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityresearch/wi/pass.htm) ● Are there special scholarships that youth with disabilities can apply for (www.disaboom.com/scholarships)?
Start ready! Once you are accepted into a program, learn all you can about how to be successful.	

College is Different from High School!

Students with disabilities must learn that requirements for accommodations for disabilities in high school are different from the requirements that apply in college.



The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973

provides rights that require high schools to provide a **free appropriate public education (FAPE) to each child with a disability.**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504

requires colleges to provide **access to appropriate academic adjustments as necessary** to ensure that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

Colleges are not required to lower or substantially modify essential requirements. This means that a college will typically allow a request for adjustment only if the student can still meet what the college defines as the essential learning of the course or program. Colleges will allow some accommodations as long as you can still learn all of the material.

High School...

High schools provide an organized way to learn each student's needs and design individualized education plans for students with disabilities. **Modifications of classes and materials are required by law.**

High schools perform special evaluations to identify areas of need for students with disabilities.

In high school, there is a specific structure to the schedule of classes and homework assignments that everyone is expected to follow.

In high school, the rules of behavior and grades are written and have a minimum standard that you must follow.



But College...

Colleges have longer processes for academic adjustments. **Modifications are not required.** Students must identify themselves and are responsible for knowing and following the procedures. Most schools have a special office to help support students with disabilities.

Colleges do not perform these evaluations. Typically specific documentation of a disability is required from the student's doctor.

In college, there are irregular schedules for classes and assignments. Teachers expect you to be responsible for attending class and getting your work in on time.

In college, you are responsible for your own behavior, dress, and language. **You are expected to reach beyond a basic level to become an expert in your area of study.**

Get A Job

1. Search job recruitment and human resources sites, attend job fairs or ask the place where you would like to work if they are taking applications.

2. Write or update your resume that tells about your school and work history (See the resume worksheet).

3. You may be asked for a cover letter to explain why you want the job.

4. Complete the job application form. These often are found online.

9. If it is a good fit for you, you take the job and report to work. Learn your job. Make sure you understand what is expected of you, so you can do good work. Ask questions if you don't understand.

The usual steps in getting a new job:

5. Schedule and have a successful interview with the job recruiter (See the interview preparation checklist and questions).

8. You get a phone call and get offered the job. Usually you can then learn about how much you will be paid, what your work schedule and start date will be and if there are benefits included with the job. Your employer may now ask about accommodation needs or you may make a request (See the letter format).

7. Often there may be a waiting period while the employer interviews others and then tries to pick the best person for the job. Sometimes you might be asked to have a second interview.

6. It is a good idea to send a thank you note for the chance to interview.

Resume Worksheet

Make a copy of this blank worksheet before you fill it out. Fill in the worksheet thoroughly. Save it as a resource; update it each year. Put your completed worksheet with your records and keep it for future use.

RESUME

Name:

Date updated:

I. Personal Information

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone:

E-mail:

Temporary Address (if different):

City:

State:

Zip:

II. Education

High School:

Location: (City/State)

Dates: (Year started/ended)

Undergraduate College:

Location: (City/State)

Degree:

Dates: (Year started/ended)

Major(s):

Minor(s):

Major GPA:

Overall GPA:

Other schools attended (except high school), training or certificates received, licenses obtained:

III. Experience Information

(consider **all** experience- paid, unpaid, volunteer, etc. Make an entry for all previous experiences.)

Position title:

Organization name:

Address:

City:

State:

Dates employed (months & years only) From: To:

Names of supervisor(s):

Description: *Combine the duties, qualities and accomplishments together and write a strong job description.*

Duties and responsibilities:

What qualities were important and helped you be successful in this position:

Specific accomplishments or contributions you made to this job:

IV. Talents and Skills

Write here special talents, skills, training, languages (artistic, computer skills, special licenses, significant achievements), etc:

V. Activities

- Memberships (*in clubs or community groups, volunteer & religious organizations. Include name of association, offices held and the dates you began and ended that activity.*)
- Awards and Honors (*academic include scholarships, athletic, social, civic*):
- Professional activities (*articles written, presentations, projects displayed*):

VI. Personal References

List references on a separate page. Offer 3 work or school references and 1 personal reference, if you can. *Get permission from your references before using their names!* Send each a thank you note for their help, and keep them updated on your job search.

- | | | | |
|----|-----------|--------|--------|
| 1. | Name: | Phone: | Email: |
| | Address: | City: | State: |
| | Position: | | |
| 2. | Name: | Phone: | Email: |
| | Address: | City: | State: |
| | Position: | | |
| 3. | Name: | Phone: | Email: |
| | Address: | City: | State: |
| | Position: | | |
| 4. | Name: | Phone: | Email: |
| | Address: | City: | State: |
| | Position: | | |

Request for Accommodations - Letter to Employer

Accommodations may include specialized equipment, facility modifications, adjustments to schedules or duties, or other solutions. The Job Accommodation Network (JAN), a service of the U.S. Office of Disability Employment Policy (<http://askjan.org> and 800-526-7234), gives free consults on work accommodations. It is your responsibility as the person with a disability to request accommodations. You might do this by writing a letter like the type below:

Date of Letter

Your name

Your address

Employer's name

Employer's address

Dear (e.g. Supervisor, Manager, Human Resources, Personnel):

Introduce yourself and your enthusiasm for the particular job

Identify yourself as a person with a disability

State that you are requesting accommodations under the ADA

Identify specific job tasks which are likely to cause you difficulty

Refer to attached medical documentation if appropriate*

Identify your accommodation ideas

Request your employer's accommodation ideas

Ask that your employer respond to your request in a reasonable amount of time

Sincerely,

Your signature

Your printed name

Cc: Names of people who will get a copy of the letter

**You may want to attach medical documentation to your letter as proof that you are a person with a disability in need of accommodation.*

Adapted from the Job Accommodation Network

Interview Checklist

If an employer is interested in your application, you may be asked for an interview. Some people feel stressed during interviews. It helps to prepare so you can make the best impression. Here is a checklist to use as you get ready:

Preparation- 2-3 days before the interview

- ☐ I have collected information about the business.
- ☐ I know the first and last name of the interviewer.
- ☐ I know why I want to work for the business.
- ☐ I have read through some common interview questions.
- ☐ I have prepared some answers to common interview questions. I might make some notes.
- ☐ I have prepared a list of questions that I would like to ask the interviewer.
- ☐ I have an up-to-date resume with complete references ready.
- ☐ I plan to bring my identification (driver's license, Social Security card).
- ☐ I know exactly where the interview will be and how long it will take me to get there.
- ☐ I have decided what to wear to the interview.
- ☐ I have scheduled a full night's sleep before the interview.

The Day of the Interview - Remember

- ☐ I have a copy of my resume, references, letters of recommendation, and my identification.
- ☐ I have a paper and pen to take notes.
- ☐ I have my pad of notes on the company, and my list of questions and notes.
- ☐ I have paid special attention to my personal hygiene and clothing.

The Interview- Travel and Arrival

- ☐ I leave early in case of traffic or unexpected problems. I arrive 5 to 10 minutes early.
- ☐ I am relaxed, friendly, and business-like with everyone I meet.
- ☐ I introduce myself to the receptionist and confirm my appointment.
- ☐ I turn off my cell phone ringer before the interview.

The Interview

- ☐ The *Beginning* - I greet the interviewer by name and shake his or her hand.
- ☐ I use positive body language, like I make eye contact, keep my hands in my lap, and sit up straight. I don't fidget or chew gum.
- ☐ The *Middle* - I speak clearly.
- ☐ I listen and allow the employer to finish what he or she is saying without interruption.
- ☐ I stay on topic and ask questions if I don't fully understand what I have been asked or told.
- ☐ I stay away from short answers like yes or no or I don't know. I give an explanation about my education, training, experience, and skills that will make me good at the job.
- ☐ The *End* - I ask my questions that have not already been answered.
- ☐ I state my interest in the job.
- ☐ I thank the interviewer.
- ☐ I check on when I should hear from them or I should contact them.
- ☐ I shake hands and say goodbye.

Follow-up

- ☐ I write and send the interviewer(s) a thank you letter.
- ☐ I stay close to my phone the day they said they would call.
- ☐ If I am to call them back, I prepare my phone conversation and call on time.
- ☐ If I am offered the job, I give them a written answer (whether it is yes or no) within a week.

Ten Common Interview Questions

Think about your answer to these questions. Make some notes for yourself. You might feel more relaxed at the interview, if you practice saying the answers out loud.

1. What experience have you had?

2. Why did you apply for this position?

3. What do you plan to be doing five years from now?

4. Tell me something about yourself.

5. What is your greatest strength?

6. What is your greatest weakness?

7. Why should I hire you?

8. What amount of pay do you require?

9. What days and hours can you work?

10. What will your references or former employers say about you?

Adapted from the Idaho Interagency Council on Secondary Transition's Moving on Binder



Be a LiFe-LONG Learner

Once you have made the step from high school to the next part of life, stick with it. Work on being a good student or worker. Be on time. Know your responsibilities and keep up on them every day. Be a team player. Help others and ask for help when you need it. **Manage your time!**

TIP: Try using a day planner to help remind you about appointments and activities you want to do. Write down meeting times, class times, when to take your medicine, doctor and dentist appointment times, and anything else you don't want to forget!

Date: _____

Day of the Week: _____

6:00 am

7:00 am

8:00am

9:00am

10:00 am

11:00 am

NOON

1:00 pm

2:00 pm

3:00 pm

4:00 pm

5:00 pm

6:00 pm

7:00 pm

8:00 pm

9:00 pm

10:00 pm

Notes:

You might also like to develop the habit of “checking in” with yourself once in a while.

Part of being honest and flexible with yourself is to ask yourself questions and listen to your answers.



Checking In:

- How is it going?
- Do I enjoy what I am doing?
- Do I feel good about myself?
- Am I doing my personal best?
- Do I need to change something I am doing?
- Do I need to get different help to be more successful?



We all may need adjustments in our life from time to time. We don't get everything right on the first try. Maybe in three or five years, you might decide that more education would be a good idea or a new job or a promotion to a different job would be the right next step for you. Or maybe you just want to learn to do something new for fun. Adult education programs and community centers are some ways to find new learning and fun. Talk to your family and friends to get their thoughts. Be a life-long learner!