

Timeline for Planning

Awareness of Employment (Grades K-5)

- Discuss what work is and what jobs you know about.
- Participate in career days at school.
- Take part in household chores (e.g., sorting laundry, setting the table, cleaning your room, etc.).
- Take part in neighborhood jobs (e.g., delivering the paper, mowing the lawn, shoveling snow, etc.).
- Make decisions and choices about things at home (e.g., what to wear to school) and at school (e.g., what classes to take).
- Learn basic academic skills (e.g., reading, math, and writing).
- Share hopes and dreams for the future (e.g., what types of jobs you like).
- Practice explaining what help you need to get your work done.

Explore Employment Options (Grades 6-8)

- Volunteer for school jobs (e.g., office monitor, guidance assistant, mail attendant).
- Volunteer in the community (e.g., neighborhood groups, religious groups).
- Job shadow (observe employment environments and tasks) with parents/family/friends.
- Learn about variety of careers through Career Center/Library/Internet to find job/career options.
- Tour businesses to see what kind of work they do and what jobs they offer.
- Talk to adults about what they do for work.
- Identify interests and skills.
- Build on your academic skills (include writing and other communication skills).
- Learn about and be able to explain what accommodations/modifications you need.
- Begin career portfolio (include updated resume, job applications, letters of reference, career research findings, mock or practice interview results).

Planning and Preparing for Employment (Grades 9-10)

- Continue taking courses in your area of need (e.g., if you are not good in math, continue taking math classes beyond the requirements).
- Practice completing job applications (online and on paper).
- Identify people classes that will help you with your career goal.
- Take classes that relate to career or job options.
- Make copies of work-related documents (social security card, birth certificate, work permit).
- Contact Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) four semesters prior to graduation.
- Complete work experiences based on interests.
- Participate in any career exploration/preparation classes offered by your high school.
- Learn about resources and make connections with community agencies.
- Complete interest inventories and self-directed searches at the high school or on the Internet.
- Continue to revise your career portfolio.

Exploring Employment/Career Options (Grades 11-12)

- Reexamine your needs preferences and interests with regard to careers based on your work experiences.
- Learn about training requirements in your career area of interest.
- Research labor market and find jobs by going to the Bureau of Labor Statistics website. <http://www.bls.gov/>
- Develop transportation strategies (e.g., drivers license, independent travel skills training, public or para transit with or without attendant).
- If appropriate, apply for Social Security Income.
- Participate in school to work program with your high school (e.g., apprenticeship, work study, co-op). Participate in paid work experiences in the community (ask each employer for a letter of reference describing your skills and attitude on the job).
- Continue to revise your career portfolio.