YES Youth Employment Solutions Center

www.yestoemployment.org



Career Development Guide

Introduction

The Youth Employment Solutions (YES!) Center is committed to improving competitive, integrated employment outcomes for transition-aged youth and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

This Career Development Guide is the final product of the YES! Center and is intended to be a helpful resource for people with disabilities who want to learn more about how to how to identify career interests and passions and pursue them. This Guide has four sections:

Section 1: What is a career? Section 2: Knowing yourself

Section 3: Identifying your career interests and skills

Section 4: Self-Advocacy

We created this Guide to be interactive: each section includes activities for you to complete as you think about and learn about developing a career path. You'll also find website and video links included in this web-based Guide which we encourage you to visit and view.

Throughout this guide, you will learn about developing a career plan. The image below helps explain the process – know yourself, exploring, finding a job, learning new skills and creating a plan.



On behalf of the YES! Center and its partners, TASH and TransCen, we hope you find this Career Development Guide to be helpful to you and that you'll share it with your friends and associates who are also considering jobs and careers.



Section 1: What is a Career?

What you will learn (Learning Objectives)

- 1. What work is (paid employment) and what it is not (volunteering, hobbies)
- 2. Why people work (income, contribute, achieve passion, networking, connectedness)
- 3. How to move from a "job mindset" to a "career mindset"

Key words/ideas used in this chapter

Job

• Career

Passion

Responsibilities

• Income (hourly, salary)

• Full-time

• Part-time

Benefits

Volunteer

Short-term

• Long-term

• Benefits package

What is a job?

A job is a part-time or full-time, short-term or long-term opportunity, and tends to focus on earning money so that you can pay your bills.

What is a career?

A career is a long-term professional journey driven by your passions and interests. A career is a series of related employment jobs in an area, field or industry that provides experience for your future.

In other words, a job that leads to another job, that leads to another job, leads to a career!

Both "jobs" and "careers" give us a way to earn enough money to support yourself, but they do not mean the same thing. It is important to know if you are looking for a job or a career.

Let's take a look at the specific differences between a job and a career.

- A job requires you to know certain basic skills
- A career may require additional training or a degree
- A job is something you apply for
- A career is something you create
- A job can be limited (doing the same task over a long period of time)
- A career requires a "growth mindset" that allows you to continue to learn and expand your skills and knowledge

Ask yourself:





Are you in it for the short term? Or the long term?

If you're in it for the short term, it could be hard to get fully motivated! When you're working at a job that you don't care much about, you might do the minimum rather than being all in.

Did you know that most people have 10 different jobs in their lifetime?

Building your career is like a video game. Each level of the game is a different job that teaches you new things. Working towards a career means that you are committed to playing the game to get better over time and advance to higher levels. As you move to the different levels of the game, you learn more skills and increase your interests.

- At one job, you might learn new skills.
- At another, you might identify new interests.

As you move through different jobs, you will gain more skills, responsibilities, and pay.

Attitude plays a big part in deciding if you want a job or a career.

A career attitude requires you to always be thinking about your long-term goals – what you want in the future.

The actual difference between a job and career is your mindset. How seriously do you take what you do? Are you passionate about it? Are you coasting through your days or are you soaking up your experiences and learning new skills and gaining new interests?

To develop a "career mindset" think about:

- What are you passionate about?
- What impact do you want to have on your community or on the world?
- How will you add value?
- What is your legacy? (what do you want people to remember about you)

One key difference between the mindset of having a job versus a career is that jobs give you paychecks and careers give you experience. You might even consider a career as a type of life long education.

You apply for jobs and may work several of them without a lot of thought for the future.

A career involves moving in one work-related area or aiming for some sort of long-term goal. So, a key difference between jobs and careers lies is the way you view work (just a job for a paycheck) and plan for your career (taking jobs where you are learning new skills and gaining more responsibilities – and earning a bigger paycheck).

For example, you could take a part-time job as a dishwasher in a restaurant to earn money to pay your bills. This would probably be considered a JOB rather than a career.

Why? Because your primary reason for doing this work is to earn money. You may not be particularly passionate about dishwashing, but you are earning a paycheck to pay your bills.



You could work as a babysitter over the summer and find out that you love the job and want to plan a career where you work with children. This job then becomes the beginning of a CAREER journey!







Babysitter



Daycare Worker



Kids Camp Counselor

Why is Career Planning Important?

Let's look at two people who go to work every day. One person has a career plan, and the other person does not. Who followed a career plan and who did not?

Juan (Career Plan)

| High School | After High School | Future |
|--|--|---|
| Volunteers at the local animal shelter Gets a job at a local veterinarian's office cleaning rooms and the waiting area Wants to find out how to get a better paying job working with animals | Interns with a Veterinary Tech at the veterinarian's office Promoted to Vet Tech Assistant at the veterinarian's office for \$12/hour Takes classes at the local community college in animal science | Earns Veterinary Technician Degree Is hired as a Veterinary Technician for \$18/hour In five years wants to become a Senior Vet Tech and supervise others |

Marcus (Does Not Have a Career Plan)

| High School | After High School | Future |
|---|--|--|
| Volunteers at the local animal shelter | Gets a job working at a local factory | Looks for career in health care industry |
| Gets a job at a local veterinarian's office cleaning rooms and the waiting area Wants a job that pays more money | Gets laid off from this job Gets a job as an aid in a nursing home for \$10/ hour | Continues working as an aid in a nursing home; gets raise to \$11/hour May consider taking classes to get Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) license |

Most people believe that a career is better than a job because a career typically uses your skills and interests and allows you to grow and learn.

If you see something as "just a job," you probably aren't getting much satisfaction from it.

If you commit to something as a career, you will be inspired to learn more about that field and work in jobs that further your career goals.



Career Goal - Office Manager

Job #1 - part-time clerical support

Job #2 – part-time administrative assistant

Job #3 - full-time executive administrative assistant



Career Goal - Veterinarian Technician

Job #1 – part-time job at an animal shelter

Job #2 - part-time job in a dog grooming business

Job #3 – part or full-time veterinarian assistant



Career Goal - Carpenter

Job #1 – part-time job with a hobby store assembling furniture or other items

Job #2 – part-time job with Habitat for Humanity

Job #3 – apprentice with a carpenter

Remember, a job is for the here and now. A career sets you on a path for the future!

Don't worry if you are unsure of what you want to do right now. Other parts of this guide will help you learn about your interests and skills to discover what you might want to do in the future.

Activity - Learn about your career plan

Interview someone who is currently working in a career (can be someone just starting out, or someone who has been in their career for a while). Ask how they got to this point -

| 1. | How did they choose their career? |
|------|--|
| 2. | Who helped them? |
| 3. | What did they do to get into their career? |
| 4. | Did they change their career? |
| | flections: What I have learned about myself or skills you have or need to learn to move forward - get ady for what you'll do in the next chapter: |
| a. | What do you think about having a career vs a job? |
| | |
| b. | How can your current job lead to your future career? |
| c. \ | What did you learn from the interview? |
| Gı | reat job completing part 1. Celebrate learning about having a career mindset! |



Section 2: Knowing Yourself

What do you think about these comments below? Are they talking about you?



I am not just one thing; I am many things!

I am not the **same** every day; I am **changing!**

I am more than just what I do;
I am what I believe, what I feel, what I know!

I am a human **being;** Not just a human **doing!**

I know I am important; I am unique, no one is like me!

What you will learn (Learning Objectives)

- 1. I will learn more about who I am?
- 2. I will learn what is important to me?
- 3. I will learn how to make good decisions about my future?
- 4. I will learn who is helpful to me on my journey

Key words/ideas used in this chapter

- Uniquely me: I am one of a kind
- Knowing myself: ways I see myself learning and doing different things to make important choices
- Who I am, my identity: how I see myself is the "inner me" and how others see me is my "outer me"
- Interests: what I like to do
- Priorities: what I want to do or learn first
- Mentor: a person I trust, and I like what they say and do
- Life-long journey: what I decide today might change on my journey as I get older
- **Learning from my mistakes:** getting confused and not doing what is expected is not always a bad thing, it is a chance for me to learn from my mistakes

Discovery Me Activity Series

By doing this "Discover Me Activities Series" you will learn about:

- Who you are
- How others see you
- Ways you can use this information to find a career you will like

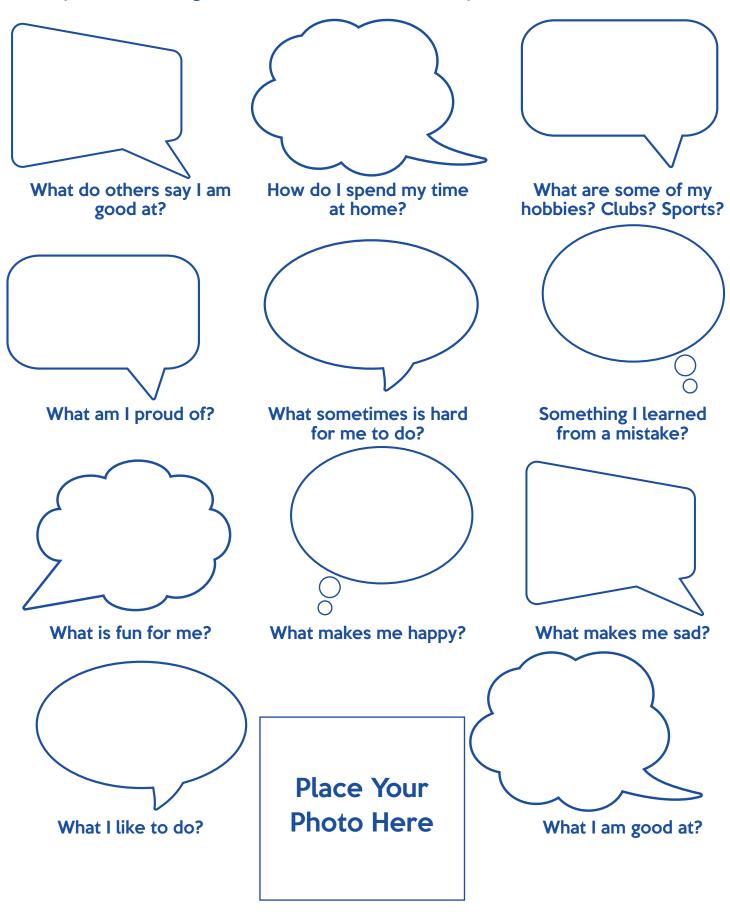
Feel free to ask a person you trust to help you answers these questions. Have fun discovering the Outer and Inner you!

Activity 1: Discovering me! The Outer Me. How I see myself?

Name: _____ Date: _____

| Question | Your Answer |
|---|-------------|
| A volunteer job I liked. | |
| A volunteer job that was "so, so". | |
| Who is important in my life? Family Members: Friends: Co-Worker or Teacher: Faith Leaders: Other: | |
| Who do I go to for help or support? | |
| Supports I need to do what I want? | |
| Someone I really admire and respect? | |
| Compliments people give me? | |
| One word that describes me right now? | |
| One word that describes who I want | |

Activity 2: Discovering me! The Inner me. How I see myself?



Name: _____ Date: _____

Activity 3: Talk to someone you trust about how you described the Outer You and Inner You!

Invite someone you trust to review your discovery about the Inner You and the Outer You. Do this somewhere you will not be interrupted. Do this somewhere you can talk privately. Having this talk can be just as helpful as your exploring your Inner You and Outer You.





Activity 4: Let us celebrate your accomplishments!

You have learned about you and who you are. What you like and what you do not like? Ways you like to spend your time and with whom?

1. Write down three things you learned about yourself by doing these activities.

a.

b.

c.

2. Pick the title of a song or movie or character in a book that describes you.

Get ready for what you will be doing in the next section.

Think about using what you learned about yourself and your interests for work and a career. This can help you identify your career interests.

To learn more check out these resources:

- 7 Habits for Highly Effective Teens, author Sean Covey https://www.amazon.com/Habits-Highly-Effective-Teens-Miniature/dp/076241474X/ref=tmm_hrd_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=
- I am determined website (good day plans) https://imdetermined.org/resource/good-day-plan/





Section 3: Identifying Career Interests & Skills

Introduction

If you are not sure what you want to do for a career, that's okay! There is more than one path to your dream career and there's also more than one dream career!

Your skills and interests could be a great match for all kinds of careers – even some you haven't heard of yet. What's important is figuring out which careers excite you.

What you will learn (Learning Objectives)

- 1. Identify yours skills and interests
- 2. Identify career possibilities
- 3. Develop a career action plan

Key words/ideas used in this chapter

- Career
- Goal
- Job shadow
- Informational Interview
- Internship
- Apprenticeship
- Volunteering

Remember, a career is not just a job. A career is many jobs that builds into a career. Think about all of your past jobs or other work experiences – what did you like? What didn't you like? Looking at your past, helps you plan for your future!

It's important to think through your career decision carefully. You want to find a career that you will enjoy and that motivates you to go to work every day. Thinking through how to determine a career that meets all your most important interests and needs is important.



Find your interests

Knowing what you like doing gives you a good start when looking for a career. Start by recognizing what you are interested in – what do you do in your free time? What hobbies do you like? Think back to when you were in school – what were your favorite classes and why? Are you part of any groups – do you like being around other people? Do you enjoy being outside more than inside?

| Things/Activities I like | Why I like these things/activities |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |



List your skills

What are you good at doing? What is easy for you? Choosing a career with job tasks that you can do easily helps you feel more capable and competent. Your skills are your assets – skills are what you bring to a career that will add value to a business.

| What I'm good at (skills I have) | How do you know? Do you have experience? Has someone told you? |
|----------------------------------|--|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |



Discover what skills you want to learn

Are there skills you want to learn but have not tried yet? List those skills and why you want to learn them. This could be a skill that goes along with something that interests you but you may not have had the opportunity to try it yet.

| I'd like to learn this skill | Because |
|------------------------------|---------|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Remember with any experience:

- There are no mistakes only lessons
- Always self-reflect and learn from every experience good and not so good!

What can you do to learn about your career interests? Follow these links below and watch these videos to learn more.

Job Shadowing - spending time following a professional as they work.

https://youtu.be/CyAQb8to6Zs

Informational Interviews - interviewing someone in the career you are interested in.

https://youtu.be/MutSnIFSW9Y

Internships - an opportunity to work at a business for a fixed period of time, with or without pay.

https://youtu.be/YvX96bbRIV8

Apprenticeships - a real job where you learn, gain experience, and get paid.

https://youtu.be/okIB65YlwaM

Volunteering – freely giving your time to a cause, helps you learn about different types of jobs, make new friends, expand your network, and helps with social skills

https://youtu.be/2szQhR4oZtA

Career Path Activity Series

Thinking about what you are good at and what you like doing will help to choose a career that matches your skills and interests.

| Act | tiv | itv | 1 |
|-----|-----|-----|---|
| | | | |

| Activity 1 |
|--|
| Let's take a look at your interests a little more! |
| 1. What subjects have you enjoyed studying at school? Why? |
| |
| a. Did you like the teacher or the people in your class? What was it about the teacher or people in your class that you liked? |
| b. What did you like about the subject? |
| c. What did you connect to about the subject? |
| 2. What subjects were your least favorite at school? Why? |
| |
| 3. Rank these activities. (1 being your favorite and 4 being your least favorite:) |
| Activities that use a lot of words or letters |
| Activities using numbers |
| Activities using pictures, images or visuals |
| Physical activities |
| Could you see yourself in a career where your top choice was a big part of what you do every day? |

Activity 2

Follow the link to take this career survey and see what you come up with! Talk with someone about what you found out about yourself (family member, friend, teacher, job coach).

https://careerquiz.org/?gclid=CjwKCAjw9ailBhA1EiwAJ_GTSomye2rGtBeuJ3cGJMyXBUlksXvIJ_ZpB-4GO4Ll9xhWDz9GrDjr94RoCS8YQAvD BwE

Activity 3

Now that you have looked at your strengths, skills and interests, you should make a list of careers to think about. It's helpful to have at least 5-8 career choices because there is no such thing as one dream career! Lots of careers could be a great match for you. Have you got some 'dream careers' high on your list already? Use those top choices to expand your careers list.

Take a look at the different "career clusters" in the link below to help you identify what you might be interested in doing. You can even take the student survey to help you identify your top 3 career interests.

https://careertech.org/career-clusters

| Career | Interests, strengths and skills you currently have |
|--------------------|---|
| Teaching Assistant | Enjoy working with children, have experience babysitting and volunteering at church daycare |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Activity 4

Now, narrow down your list of careers – remember there may be more than one dream career out there waiting for you. Pick careers you are interested in. Choose careers that match your skills so far (or pick a career where you can build– your skills).

After researching, what are your top 3 career choices?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Do your top career choices have similar qualifications and skills that could be useful in your future career journey?

Part 2 - Creating a Career Action Plan

Now that you've done all this thinking to choose a career that's right for you, the next step is to list some achievable goals.

To make your top career choice a reality, what do you need to work on in the next few months? In the next few years?

Create a career action plan. A career action plan is a roadmap that will take you from Point A (choosing a career) to Point B (getting a job that leads to a career).

Start your career action plan by creating your list of goals, who can help you with the goal and a do-by dates. This is the start of your career action plan You have now taken a big step to not only choosing a career but setting your dream in motion!

| Goal | Who Can Help | Do by (date) |
|------|--------------|--------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Summary

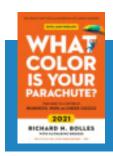
- Career development is the process of exploration and action that shapes a person's career path.
- It includes identifying your skills, abilities, interests, and personality in order to find the best career match.
- Career development is a lifelong process as you learn and grow you could have several career changes in your lifetime.
- There are a lot of things that might influence your career development, including education, finances and family needs.

Reflections: what I have learned about myself or skills you have or need to learn to move into a career?

Celebrate learning about having a career mindset!

To learn more check out these resources:

- What Color is Your Parachute https://www.parachutebook.com/
- 9 Ways to Future Proof Your Career https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newCDV 81.htm





Section 4: Self-Advocacy

Now you know more about yourself and your career interests! This is a great step to get the career you want, you also will need to advocate for yourself. Being a self advocate is all about getting others to listen to what YOU want. You may want to have help from others as you advocate for yourself.

You will learn about advocating for yourself and getting supports for your advocacy in this section.

Key words/ideas used in this chapter

- Advocacy, Self-Advocacy, Career-Self Advocacy
- Mentor
- Network
- Support

What Is Self-Advocacy?

Self-Advocacy is:



A civil rights movement for people with intellectual disabilities



People speaking-up for what they think is important



Something everyone is capable of



Making your case and negotiating for what you want



Making decisions



Making mistakes and learning from them

Self-Advocacy is NOT:



A program



People sitting around and complaining



Only for people who can talk.



Keeping everything the same



Other people making decisions for you



Not taking any chances

Self-Advocacy is:



Realizing you are not alone, joining a self-advocacy group



Self-Advocacy is NOT:

Keeping to yourself



Knowing your strengths, being proud and feeling strong



Putting yourself down



Taking risks, trying new things



Playing it safe, doing the same stuff



Going after your dreams



Sleeping through your dreams



Managing your emotions so others can hear what you have to say



Staying angry



Being curious and asking questions



Being questioned

What is career self-advocacy?

Career Self-Advocacy is:

- Where you speak-up for the career that you want even if others don't agree with you.
- When you make a plan for your career.
- When you show people that you have the skills to do the job.
- When you apply for the job and want an interview.
- When you find people who you trust to help support you.
- When you may need more skills to help you get the job but you don't let that stop you.
- When you don't give up.





Career Self-Advocacy and Supports

You might need support from others to achieve your career goals. You can have a career and make informed choices about your career even if you want or need support from other people. Sometimes other people may help you make decisions. This is called supported decision-making. Even when someone helps you make a decision, the decision is still yours. It is your choice.

Support is when you get help or assistance. When someone gives you support, they are showing that they believe in you. Support is when you receive encouragement from others. You should have supports that help you go after your career goals.

You get to make decisions about who helps you.

Good support:

- Helps you achieve your goals
- Listens to you and what you want
- Let's you make choices and learn from choices
- Does things WITH you not FOR YOU
- Does not share your information with other people unless you have said they can
- ASKS YOU if you want help and only helps with the things
- Is available to you when you need it
- Is kind
- Is positive

Good support does NOT:

- Tell you what to do
- Do things for you

Role Plays: Good And Bad Support

What Good Support Looks Like

Tom: Guess what James, I just got a new job and so excited. But my only problem is that it starts earlier than they said. And I need support to get to the job that starts at 7am and you don't come until 9am. I really hope we can figure this out.

James: I am so happy for you. Let's talk about some ideas on how you can get there. Maybe we can look at other ways like to take a train or bus. Maybe a discount taxi program for people with disabilities who work. If that is not an option than maybe, I can see if the agency can let me come earlier or have some one else come help you get there then I will pick you up. Don't worry will figure it out.

Tom: I can check out the train and bus schedule and call the taxi service to see if they have a discount service. I don't start until next week so we have time. How about we meet again in a couple of days and see what we found out. Then will work it out before you have to start the job.

James: Thanks for helping me figure this out. I am so happy that we can work together as a team. So I can get the job I wanted and not have to wait for something different to come along.

What Bad Support Looks Like

This is a role about someone asking their support person for help when talking about their career interest.

Gary: Jenny today is my meeting with the group who is helping me decide what kind of career I want and what are my first steps.

Jenny: Let's talk about what you may want to say at the meeting?

Gary: I was thinking about a career in being a Self-Advocacy Coordinator. So do you think that would be a good idea for the group to talk about?

Jenny: What makes you think you would be able to do that kind of job?

Gary: Well I have been organizing events and helping them for years.

Jenny: You are not very organized at home like your stuff is all over and your bed is not made. And you don't always plan for things that need to be taken care of. Like when it's your turn to cook you forget to make a list for the store.

Gary: Sometimes when I cook I don't need a list because I already know what to buy because I made it before. You are only here a couple days a week and don't always see what I do. What does making my bed have to do with having a job. Work is important to me so I will do my best and I already know the group. And if need extra help they said there are others to help out. They just need someone who is a peer to relate to and feel that they can trust.

Career Self-Advocacy Mentors and Creating a Mentor Network or Group

You might want to have mentors who support you to learn about how to talk about and take steps toward the career you want. Career self-advocacy mentors may help you achieve your goals.

A mentor is someone who gives you advice or guidance. A mentor asks you questions to help you figure out what you want. A mentor shares things they know. You might have one mentor or you might have several mentors who help you make informed choices about your career interests and go after the career you want. Sometimes people have more than one mentor because no one mentor has all the knowledge or skills to provide all the advice you may need. There are many ways to find mentors.

Activity - Finding Your Mentor

| Think about who you know an | who you might feel comfortable | with having as a mentor. |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|

- 1. Write their names down here:
- 2. Ask to meet with each person to talk about whether they would be able to be a mentor to you. Think about what you want from a mentor and write down (with support if you prefer) the questions you have for each person here:
- 3. After you meet with each person, think about whether they would be a good mentor for you. After all the meetings, think about how many people you need to mentor you as you work on your career and which people you want to ask to be your mentor based on how they can help you. Write down your answer here:
- 4. You might decide to meet with your mentors one-on-one or as a group. It is ok for your mentors to change over time as your needs change, life circumstances change, or you feel like the mentoring relationship is not working for you.

As you work on your career, people may share ideas that are new to you or that you don't understand. You may need to ask more or see examples to better understand their idea and decide if you like the idea. This is part of developing career self-advocacy skills! If you don't understand something, it is ok to say you don't understand and ask questions or ask for support until you do understand. You might say "I think I have to see an example".



Resources that might help you more

Person-Centered Planning: PATH, MAPS, and Circles of Support from Inclusion: https://inclusion.com/path-maps-and-person-centered-planning/

You can use these to help YOU figure out YOUR career path!

There are also professionals and social service agencies that help you with your career goals. These are places in your state or local community. You may need to qualify to receive services.

- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is an employment program individualized to you. Find your state vocational rehabilitation agency: https://rsa.ed.gov/about/states
- Developmental disabilities services provide help to children and adults with developmental disabilities. Find your state developmental services agency here: https://www.nasddds.org/state-agencies/
- CareerOneStop helps people explore careers, get job training, and find jobs. Find a local American Job Center here: https://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp/service-locator.aspx

Reflection Questions:

- 1. What are your concerns about speaking up about your career goals?
- 2. What did you learn from developing your career self-advocacy plan?
- 3. What do you still need to learn?

Conclusion

Thank you for using this Career Development Guide. I hope it helps you as you think about and plan for the career that you are working toward. I also hope you will share this Guide with others who can support you with the activities and exercises it includes and ultimately help you along the way to the career that you want. Also, I hope you share this with your friends and associates who might benefit from this resource as they think about their own career paths.

I want to acknowledge and thank a number of people who worked with me to help make this Guide a reality: Essie Pederson, Katherine McDonald, Laura Owens, Janice Fialka, Micah Fialka-Feldman, and Michael Brogioli.

I wish the best of luck to all who are working toward getting the career they want; please keep advocating for yourself!

With best wishes,

Tia Nelis

Self Advocacy Engagement Coordinator, TASH

About Yes Center Affiliates

YES! Center Partners:



TASH is a national nonprofit organization that advances equity, opportunity and inclusion for people with disabilities including those with the most significant support needs, in the areas of education, employment and community living through advocacy, research and practice. www.tash.org



TransCen Inc., is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving education and employment success of youth and young adults with disabilities. TransCen's work is driven by the believe that employment and active community participation are attainable for all individuals, regardless of disability or other perceived barriers to employment. www.transcen.org

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