

General Information

At age 14, you may start thinking about being more independent. This may include thinking about getting a job. You may need some extra time and support to learn the skills you will need for a job.

How can the IEP help?

An IEP is an individualized education plan. If you have an IEP schools are required to help you create a transition plan at age 14. This plan should have activities to help get you ready for life after high school. It is important that you are part of the IEP process.

If your goal is to work after high school, IEP's should help you:

- Express yourself. This is called self-advocacy.
- Explain your needs.
- Learn and practice work-related skills that help you find and keep a job. You may need help with; interviews, returning phone calls, being on time.
- Find resources in your community that can help you find a job.

What are my employment options?

*It is important to remember that **all** people can work with the right support. There are many job options for people with disabilities. Some common ones are:*

- **Volunteer work.** *This can help you improve work skills and learn your interests and talents. It also gives you a chance to socialize. Volunteering does not always lead to paid employment.*
- **Competitive employment.** *Work in a job for an employer. You compete with all other job applicants for the job. You are paid and get benefits often provided for that job.*
- **Customized employment.** *Work at a job an employer creates for you. It matches their unmet needs with your skills and abilities. You do not compete with other applicants for the job.*
- **Self-employment (or Micro-Enterprise).** *Own and operate your own business. Often this is done with support from an adult service agency.*
- **Facility-based employment (Sheltered Employment).** *Working in a community group setting under close supervision. Employees are paid based on piece rate or productivity.*

Who can help me reach my goals?

Most counties in Wisconsin have employment agencies. They provide supports and services that help adults with special needs meet their work goals. These agencies will help you:

- Find information about your interests, skills, abilities and needs.
- Learn and improve job skills.
- Look for jobs in the community.
- Get on-the-job training and support as you learn your job.
- Understand employment benefits for people with disabilities who want to work and still receive SSI or SSDI. This is called work incentive benefits counseling.

For more information about employment:

- Regional Centers for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs: <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/health/children/RegionalCenters/index.htm>
- Request Wisconsin Dept. of Public Instruction's publication Opening Doors to Employment: Planning for Life after High School from your teacher or download it for free at <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sped/pdf/tranopndrs-employmt.pdf>
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR): <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/>
<https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/job-seekers/transition/>
- Waisman Center Healthy & Ready to Work Fact Sheets: I Want to Work!: <http://www2.waisman.wisc.edu/hrtw/YFS.pdf>

If you do not have a computer or internet access, you can use a computer in The Daniel M. Soref Family Resource Center on the first floor of Children's Wisconsin. Your local public library might also have computers.

This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.