

# 3. What are my career and college options?



Like most young people, you are probably nervous and excited about getting a job, earning your own money or pursuing a career. In this section, you will explore opportunities to figure out what you like and don't like, and what you might like to study or do for work. Then you will explore or develop the supports that are right for you so you can get a job, learn a skilled trade or go to college and earn a degree.



## Getting a job

Ideally, when you leave school, you will know what the summer and the next year will look like. You could leave school with a job or post-secondary education plans in place. Many young people start getting jobs during the

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summer or work part-time while they are still in high school. You can begin setting these goals and identifying the right supports to help you as early as age 14. You become eligible to get a job when you turn 16. Talk with your family and transition team so they can help you set a job goal and connect you to transition services, pre-employment services or other resources to help you reach your job goal.

Your team can also help you plan for specific career training or a degree. When you attend a training or degree program, you will be responsible for telling the program what support you need to be successful. Talk to your instructors about accommodations or tutoring. Accommodations vary from school to school. Contact the ones you are interested in to find out what they offer.

## **Career training and education**

### **Trade school**

A trade school (also known as a technical school) offers hands-on training for a specific job in a skilled trade career. Examples include an electrician, dental hygienist, plumber, certified nurse's assistant, paralegal, graphic designer, cosmetologist, welder or computer technician.

### **Apprenticeship programs**

Apprenticeship programs train people to become skilled workers in a trade through paid hands-on work and classroom learning. Apprenticeships are considered full-time employment. Examples of apprenticeship jobs include a construction worker, iron or steel worker, health care technician, plumber, elevator installer, brick or stone mason, mechanical insulation worker, carpenter or concrete finisher.

### **Community college**

Community colleges provide two-year degrees that can be transferred to colleges or universities. Community colleges offer workforce development and skills training. They also offer a range of noncredit programs, such as community enrichment programs and cultural activities that you can take for fun.

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## **Online college**

Online colleges allow students to take classes and complete a degree program completely online. Many traditional colleges and universities also offer online coursework or degree programs.

## **Four-year college or university**

A four-year college offers undergraduate degree programs that lead to a bachelor's degree in a specific area of study. Students pursue a bachelor's degree to prepare for a profession, graduate study or both.

A university is a group of schools that offer both undergraduate and graduate degrees. At least one of these schools is a college where students receive a bachelor's degree. The other schools in a university are graduate schools where students earn advanced degrees such as a master's or a doctorate.



### **What is my role?**

Your role is to share your vision and goals for future education, a job and career with your family, teachers and others who help you plan. If you go to college, you will be responsible to advocate for yourself, disclose your disability and arrange your accommodations.



### **What is my family's role?**

Your family's role is to support you during the planning process, help you decide on the right diploma option, access transition services and support you to pursue future education, get a job and build a career. Your family can also help you advocate for yourself when you are in college or a training program.



## Career and College Trajectory Worksheet

### Past life experiences

What experiences have you had in the past that support your vision?

### Future life experiences

What current or future experiences do you need to support your vision?

### Past life experiences

What past experiences have pushed you toward things you don't want?

### Future life experiences

What experiences do you need to avoid because they push you toward things you don't want?



## Trajectory Worksheet (*continued*)

### **What I want**

- What kind of job or career do I want?
- Where do I want to work or go to school?
- Do I know what my diploma options are?
- What diploma option best fits my needs and future goals?

### **What I don't want**



## Start Worksheet Questions: Mapping My Career and College Resources

### **Technology**

What can I use or do to help me stay organized and do my school work?

What apps can help me with my schedule and responsibilities?

What technology helps me at school?

What technology can help me communicate?

### **Personal strengths and resources**

What ways do I help others at home, at school or in my community?

What classes do I enjoy?

How will I pay for college?

### **Community resources**

What places do I like in my community?

What jobs may be available in my community?

What trade schools, apprenticeship programs or colleges are available in my community?

How can I connect with the schools or colleges that interest me?

What kind of degree or training programs interest me?

Where can I volunteer or do an internship?

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## **Personal strengths and resources**

How do I talk about my strengths and the supports I need to be most successful at school or work?

What skills could I practice to get ready for job interviews?

## **Relationships**

Where are some places my friends and family work where I might like to work?

Who do I know in my community who is working?

Do I know anyone going to a college or training program that interests me?

How can I meet new people and make new friends after school ends?

Do I know anyone that receives disability services at a local college?

Who do I know with the same interests as I have?

## **Services I may be able to get**

Where can I find help to pay for college?

Do I know how to apply for financial aid?

Do I know how to apply for supports from Vocational Rehabilitation?

Who is on my planning team?

Have I talked with my planning team about how I can use supports I may be able to get in college or in a training program?



## Star Worksheet: Mapping My Career and College Resources

Write your goal in the star. With the right support, anything is possible! List ideas that help make your goal possible in each category. See page 6 for questions and resources to get you started.

