

Career Development for Youth with Disabilities

June 2011

Age and Disabilities Odyssey

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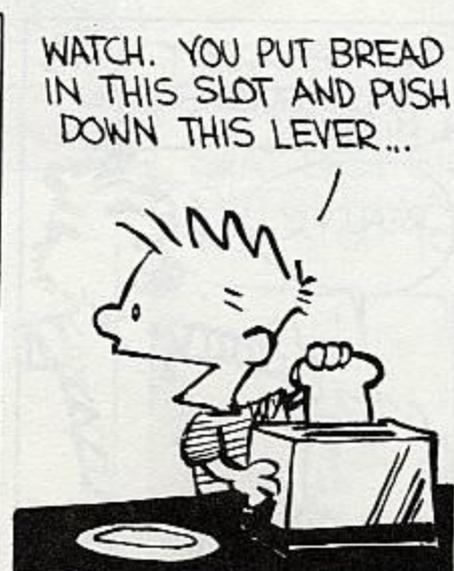
MN Dept. of Employment and Economic
Development

The logo for Pathways TO EMPLOYMENT features the word "Pathways" in a dark blue, cursive script font. Below it, the words "TO EMPLOYMENT" are written in a dark blue, all-caps, sans-serif font. A thin, light blue horizontal line is positioned above the word "TO".

Pathways
TO EMPLOYMENT

Pathways to Employment

- Minnesota's Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) (2005-2011)
- Federal program to develop a comprehensive system of employment supports for people with disabilities
- MN Goal 5 (of 6): "Strengthen transition services and work experiences for youth and young adults"
- www.positivelyminnesota.com/pte



Guideposts for Success

- Research-based outline of what ALL youth need to make successful transitions into adulthood: www.ncwd-youth.info (resources and publications)
- Adds what else youth with disabilities need
- The 5 Guideposts:
 - School-Based Preparatory Experiences
 - Career Preparation and Work Based Learning
 - Youth Development and Leadership
 - Connecting Activities
 - Family Involvement and Supports

Career Preparation & Work-Based Learning

- Career preparation and work-based learning experiences are essential in order to form and develop aspirations and to make informed choices about careers.
- Can be provided during the school day, through after-school programs and will require collaborations with other organizations.
- All youth need a systematic approach to gain information on career options.
- A well defined process can assist in making appropriate career choices based on valuable information.

Prepare for a Career!



Understand Yourself Step 1

What are you good at? What are your interests?
What is important to you?

Explore Your Options Step 2

What are the careers that match your strengths and interests?
How can you get hands-on exposure to them?
What type of training is needed for these careers?

These things can help you understand careers better:

Business Tours	Internships
Career Camps	Job Shadowing
Career Exploration Classes	Labor Market Information
Career Information Tools	Mentoring
College Tours	Service Learning
Informational Interviews	Volunteering

Develop a Career Plan Step 3

What are your career goals?
What steps will you take to reach them?
What supports do you need in order to be successful?

Expand Your Skills Step 4

What is the difference between "soft"
and "occupational" skills?
What are all of the options for building these?

Youth:

Career and Technical Education Classes
General Education Academics
Student Professional Organizations
Work Experiences
Work Skills Competitions

Youth and Adults:

Adult Basic Education
Apprenticeship
Community, Technical, Four-Year College and Beyond
Customized Training
Military
On-the-Job Training
Short-term Training
Work Readiness Workshops

Obtain and Advance in Employment Step 5

How will you find a job? How will you keep it?
How can you advance into other positions?

PLANS CAN CHANGE! You can go back to any step at any time!

The Flow of Career Preparation

Other things to think about:

- What about housing, transportation, day care, health insurance?
- If you have "public benefits," how will work affect them?
- Where do I go if I need help?

Step 1: Understand Yourself

- Discovering skills and interests: Can be done formally or informally. Start early!
 - Career Planning Begins with Assessment:
www.ncwd-youth.info
(resources and publications)
 - Use a portfolio to document accomplishments:
www.efoliominnesota.com

Core Ideas about Strengths Perspective

- Every individual, family, group, or community has strengths.
- We do not know the upper limits of a person's ability to grow and change.
- Disability may be a source of opportunity.
- Generating options and alternative pathways to a goal is fundamental.

Step 2: Explore Career Options



Step 2: Explore Career Options

- It is impossible to make sound decisions about careers without being thoroughly exposed to the options- in more than one format.

- **Career Exploration Courses:** A great first step

- **Career Information Tools:**

iseek www.iseek.org

Career Videos <http://www.acinet.org>

Labor Market Information

www.positivelyminnesota.com/Data_Publications/Data

- **Getting into the community to see things hands-on! (more to come)**

Step 3: Develop a Plan of Action

- Once a career pathway or specific job goal is identified, the next steps should be written out and revisited frequently
- Both steps in high school and after high school should be outlined
- Should also address other things that may impact career success. a.k.a. “Connecting Activities”:
 - Transportation
 - Child Care
 - Healthcare
 - Assistive Technology
 - Housing
 - Interagency Involvement/ Other Supports Needed

Step 4: While in High School

- “Soft skills” and “occupational skills” training:
 - work readiness workshops/classroom seminars
 - work-based learning/internship
 - career and technical education
 - classes align with post-secondary pathways
 - work skills competitions
 - student organization involvement

Spectrum of Work Based Learning Experiences

Tours:

Students take part in tours of worksites. Employer-led tours of site which provides students with information on requirements of different jobs.

Rotations:

Students work in a number of different departments or for different employers, to explore different occupations within an industry cluster.

Entrepreneurship:

Students create an alternate work program, are their own boss, earn money, create a project, run their business, and earn high school credit.

Internships/ Co-Ops:

Students participate in paid work experience with employer, school coordinator and student agreeing to follow training plan. Students take vocational and work related classes at school.

Tours

Job Shadowing

Rotations

Mentoring

Entrepreneurship

Service Learning

Internships /Co-Op

Youth Apprenticeship

Job Shadowing:

Students make brief worksite visits to spend time with individual workers learning what their jobs entail.

Mentoring:

Students are paired with "adult peers" from the workplace who provide guidance and encouragement on career-related, interdisciplinary projects.

Service Learning:

Students unpaid work, geared to the public good, integrated with school learning through projects or similar mechanisms.

Youth Apprenticeship:

The integration of academic instruction and work-based learning. The student commits to one or two years of paid work experience in a specific trade and is registered as a youth apprentice.

Youth With Disabilities May Also Need Support In:

- Understanding the relationships between secondary transition planning IEP and career planning
- Communicating about their disability and when to disclose
- Reasonable accommodations in education, training and employment settings
- How work may affect their public benefits (ie. SSI, SSDI, or MFIP): DB101

Step 5: After High School

- Make sure the best fit for training is explored:
 - On-the-job training
 - Customized training
 - Apprenticeships
 - Community/ technical programs
 - Four-year colleges and beyond

4 MN Programs:

- DB101
- E-Connect
- Minnesota Camps to Careers
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services



Introducing Disability Benefits 101 (DB101)

A comprehensive resource on benefits and employment

Information disability benefit programs

Tools to show connections between work and benefits

Tailored plans for moving forward

Links to MN's information network

Disability Benefits 101

Working with a disability in Minnesota



Font Size - + En Español

[Home](#) [Your Situation](#) [Programs](#) [Estimators](#) [Glossary](#) [News](#) [Forums](#) [Tutorials](#)

Disability Benefits 101 is a place where Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aliquam lacinia orci eu libero scelerisque adipiscing. [> More](#)

Your Situation

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Work & Benefits

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Youth & Benefits

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New to Benefits

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Programs

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Cash Benefits

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Health Coverage

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Job Planning

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Estimators

Benefits and Work Estimator

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MA-EPD Estimator

In the News

Article A Title

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Talk to an Expert

Mon-Fri 8:30-5:00

[Live chat: Online Now](#)

[1-866-333-2466](#)

[Email a Question](#)

TO EMPLOYMENT

<http://mn.db101.org/>

Background

- A proven model in CA - www.db101.org
- In 2007, Pathways to Employment (PTE) decided to adapt the CA DB101 website to MN's benefit.
- Is being integrated into the Disability Linkage Line Statewide Information and Assistance System.



Pathways
TO EMPLOYMENT

PTE's Systems Objective

- Nobody is discouraged from pursuing work based on **misinformation or lack of information**
and in time...
- Work becomes part of the plan – people are **encouraged** to explore work as a viable option to build wealth and expand community connections.

How it Can Be Used

Independently

Accessed directly by people with disabilities & their families to:

- explore
- create plans
- identify options
- connect to help & other resources

Facilitated

Used by those who support people with disabilities to:

- gather information
- explore possibility
- debunk myths
- plan for work
- streamline workflow

Professional

A comprehensive resource to use for:

- staff/agency training
- outreach
- reference
- recruitment

E-Connect

- An innovative model for connecting students with disabilities to caring adults in the community.
- Communication between mentor and mentee is through email with occasional face-to-face meetings.
- The goal of E-Connect is to help students better understand the workplace and gain skills for future employment.
- Lead by University of MN, Institute on Community Integration



Objectives for Youth

- Integrate e-mentoring with achievement of transition/IEP goals
- Build motivation for academic learning
- Enhance self-esteem
- Improve skills in writing, computers, social interaction, career readiness

Objectives for Youth

- Connect to positive role models in the world of work
- Provide expanded opportunities to help youth with disabilities become successful adults

Objectives for Mentors/Employers

- Increase awareness of youth with disabilities and their potential
- Increase employee morale through rewards of mentoring
- Improve business, community and school connections

E-Mentoring Team

- Mentee: a student who wishes to learn more about work and careers
- E-Mentor: a volunteer who mentors a young people by using electronic communications
- Community Coordinator: a liaison between school and community partners
- Employer Coordinator: a liaison who coordinates activities and recruits mentors at employment site
- Classroom Coordinator: a teacher or other staff who works with students on career development

E-Mentoring Youth: Business Commitment

- Interest in supporting youth
- Commitment for one semester or school year
- 1 hour of training

E-Mentoring Youth: Business Commitment

- 15 to 30 minutes weekly of online mentoring
- 2 face-to-face meetings per semester
- Willingness to adhere to goals and boundaries

E-Connect Curriculum

- Focuses on skills for future education and employment
- Provides a weekly topic and framework for e-mail and classroom discussion
- Allows dialog between mentor and mentee on a specific topic
- Provides information, resources for mentor and mentee

Resources

- E-Connect Website

<http://ici.umn.edu/mnhighschoolhightech/econnect.html>

- Institute on Community Integration

www.ici.umn.edu

Minnesota



Camps to Careers

www.campstocareers.org

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Minnesota Camps to Careers (C2C)

Began in 2007 as “Minnesota Manufacturing Camp”



Expose youth and young adults with disabilities (ages 15 to 21) to the many opportunities in manufacturing:

- ▶ 2-week camp
- ▶ 18 youth with disabilities
- ▶ Held at Hennepin Technical College
- ▶ Included:
 - hands-on projects
 - industry tours
 - speakers
 - post-secondary education connections

2007 Camp Components

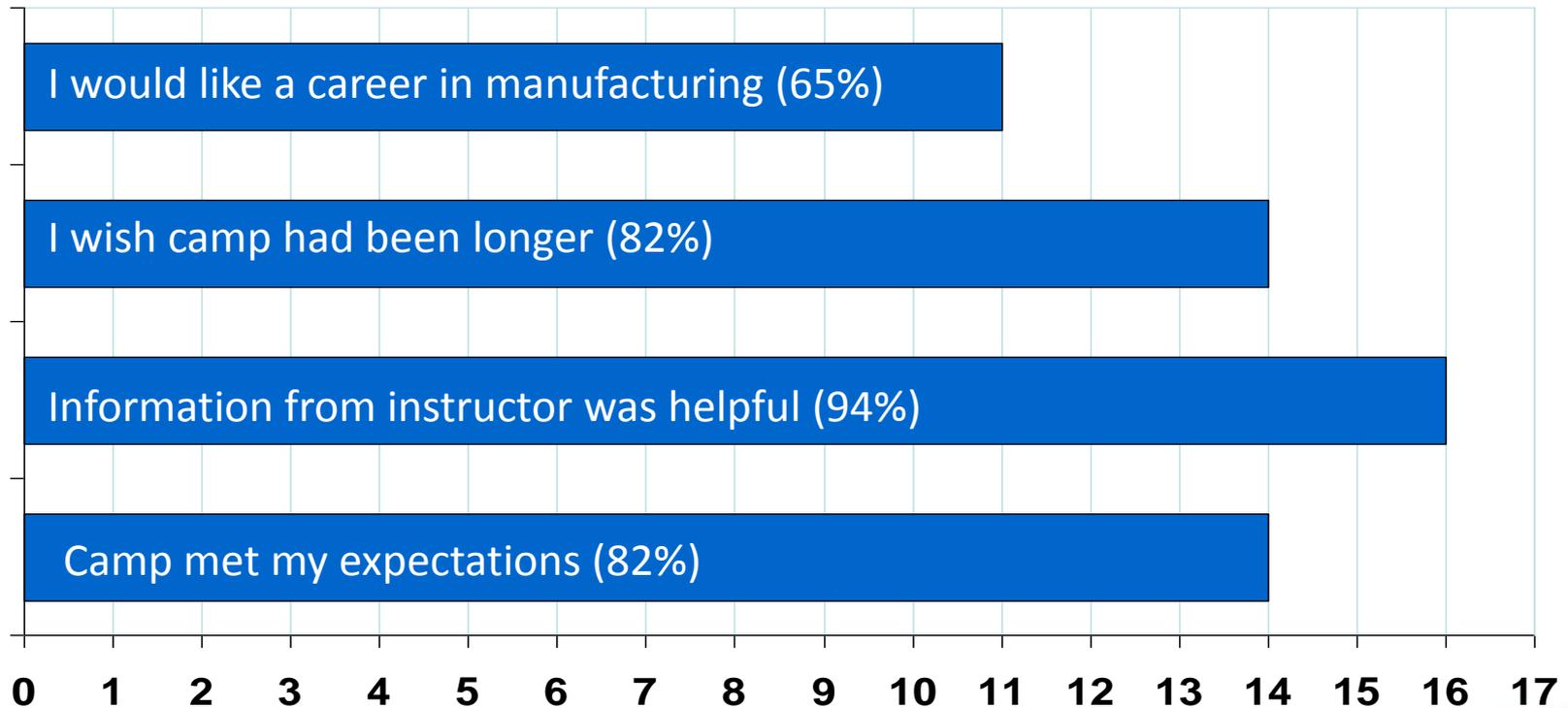
Classroom Experiences:

- Safety modules
- CAD (mechanical drafting)
- Machining
- Welding
- Fluid power
- Robotics

Campers went home with projects, such as a small spade, which they created



Overview of Student Feedback- 2007



2008: Central MN Took the Lead

A Broad Vision was Created:

“A system of meaningful career development opportunities for ALL youth is in place as a means to achieve a smooth system of meeting current and future business workforce needs”



Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

Pathways
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Overview of 2010 and 2011



- 9 planning teams
- 19 summer and after-school camps/ year
- Manufacturing, health care, art, information technology, STEM, business, renewable energy
- After-camp internships
- Youth Apprenticeships

Unique features of C2C

1. High-wage, high-demand industries
2. Held on college campuses
3. Focus on ALL youth, including youth with disabilities
4. Building options beyond camps for step-by-step career development
5. Local/ regional cross-agency teams



Guiding youth through career development steps

1. Self-discovery activities prior to camp
2. Exploration and more discovery at camp
3. Creating a plan for next steps, including work experiences and skill-building after camp



More information...

All materials are online at:

<https://sites.google.com/site/minnesotacampstocareers/>

- ✓ How-to Manual
- ✓ Team roles and organizational structure
- ✓ Timeline
- ✓ Curriculum
- ✓ Forms



Putting Possibilities to Work

Career Services for Students and Young Adults with Disabilities

Minnesota's Vocational Rehabilitation Services



Vocational Rehabilitation Services

- Vocational Rehabilitation Services is Minnesota's individualized employment service for persons with significant disabilities.
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services works with youth transitioning from high school as well as adults at any age.



Putting Possibilities to Work

- A Vocational Rehabilitation Services counselor is assigned to every high school in the state.
A directory is available at:

www.positivelyminnesota.com/vrs



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Positively Minnesota website, which is the Department of Employment and Economic Development. The page features a navigation menu with categories like 'JOB SEEKERS', 'BUSINESS', and 'GOVERNMENT'. A search bar is located at the top right. The main content area includes a banner for the state of Minnesota and three columns of links for job seekers, business, and local government. The footer contains copyright information and links to privacy policy, accessibility, and site map.

POSITIVELY
Minnesota
Department of Employment and Economic Development

Text Only Type Size: A A A Email Page Print Page RSS

Search Entire Site For Keyword(s) Go

JOB SEEKERS BUSINESS GOVERNMENT Programs & Services Data & Publications Calendar of Events About Us Contact Us

Minnesota
Department of Employment and Economic Development
Other states talk big but deliver small. We're big on deeds.
See Why Minnesota is positively the best place to live,
work and do business.

FOR JOB SEEKERS

- Recently Unemployed
- Find a Job
- WorkForce Centers
- More Options...

FOR BUSINESS

- Starting a Business
- Managing a Business
- Locating in Minnesota
- More Options...

FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

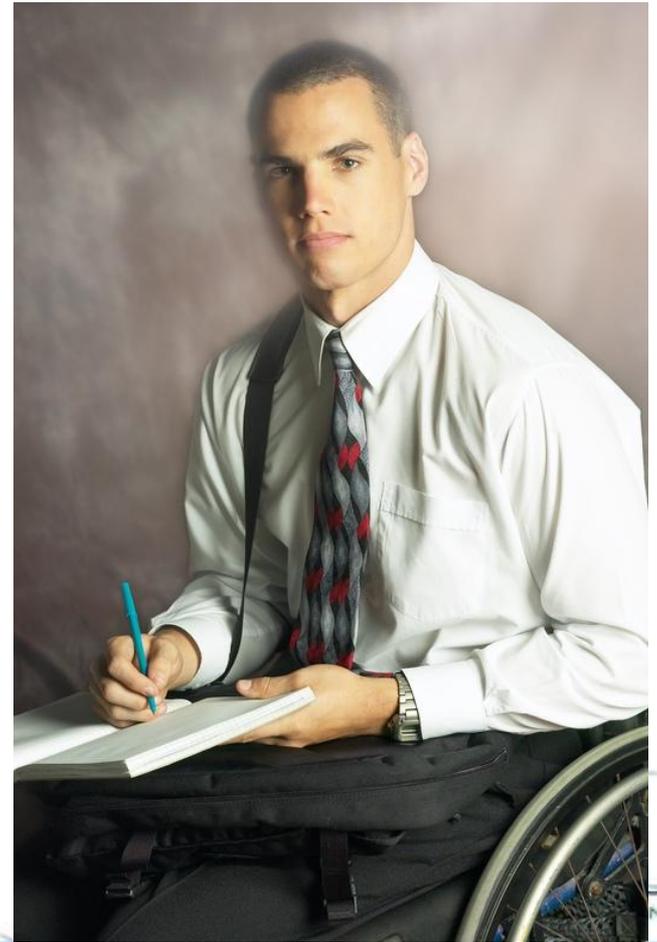
- Financial Assistance
- Shovel Ready Site Certification
- Business Subsidy Reporting
- More Options...

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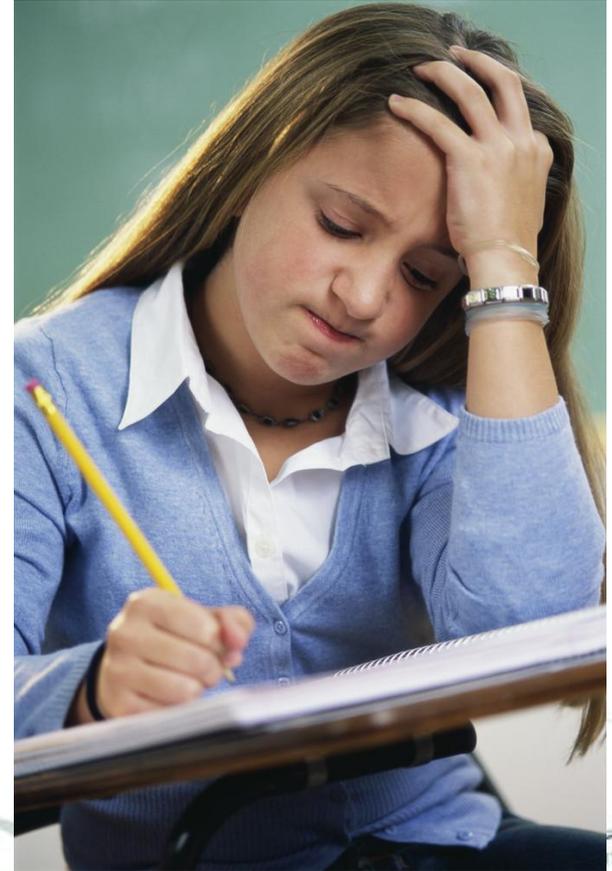
When Should Students be Referred?

In general, the best time for a Vocational Rehabilitation Services referral is about two years before graduation.



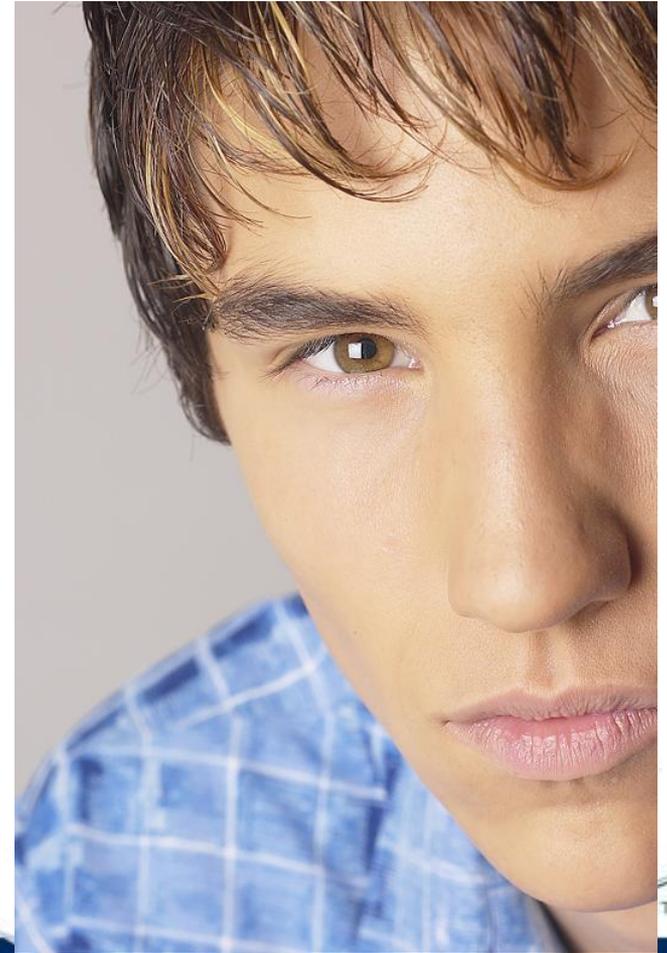
Which Students Should be Referred?

High school students with disabilities that affect their ability to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment will have the opportunity to learn about WorkForce Center and Vocational Rehabilitation Services.



Eligibility is Based on:

- **Documentation** of a physical or mental condition which causes a **substantial impediment** to employment.
- Evidence that the individual **requires** vocational rehabilitation services in order to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment.
- The presumption that the individual is able to **benefit** from Vocational Rehabilitation Services in terms of an employment outcome.



Serious Functional Limitations

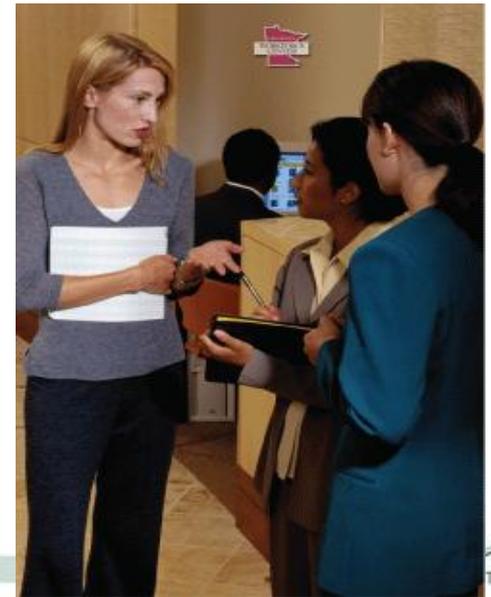
- Mobility
- Self-Direction
- Self-Care
- Interpersonal Skills
- Communication
- Work Tolerance
- Work Skills

Services Can Include:

- Counseling and guidance
- Interest and ability testing
- Help getting and keeping a job
- Advocacy at school and work
- Training and education
- Job seeking skills education
- Equipment/assistive technology

Understanding Services Offered at Local WorkForce Centers:

- Phone, computers, internet and fax for career planning and job search use
- Resume writing, interviewing and other job search workshops
- Job fairs
- State's job bank available:
 - www.minnesotaworks.net



- Ongoing communication between the student, IEP/ IIP/ 504 team and Vocational Rehabilitation Services is essential for student success



NEW Videos!

<http://www.youtube.com/user/pacercenter>

Funded by VRS ARRA Stimulus dollars, 6 video-vignettes were created by St. Peter and Bemidji high school students

The topics of their films include the following:

- Independent Living
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- WorkForce Centers
- Self-Advocacy
- Healthy Hobbies
- Post-secondary accommodations

Contact Information

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