

Youth Self-Determination (YSD)

Preparing for Work: Jobs, Careers, and Finding Work

Stacie Rulison, Facilitator



Ground Rules



Cameras on when possible



Use chat or raise hand to talk (Zoom or actual hand)



Listen to better understand



Ask questions

Question of the Day

Sara is getting ready to leave for work her car won't start. It is 7:30am and she needs to be in by 8:00am. What should Sara do? What choices does she have?



What We Will Do Today

- Talk about jobs and careers; steps to finding jobs, job skills and job descriptions Answer questions in chat
- Watch one or more videos
- Get practice activities to do before next time

Preparing for Work Topics

**1. Communication
and Soft Skills**

**2. Knowing Myself
and What I Need
at Work**

**3. Jobs, Careers,
and Finding a Job**

4. Getting a Job



SELF-DETERMINATION



SELF-ADVOCACY



Career Clusters



Steps for Finding a Job



Job Descriptions



True or False

Taking a work self-assessment
can help you understand the
type of job you might enjoy

- True



Which statement below is true about workplace accommodations?

- A. Asking for a flexible schedule, checklist, quiet place to work
- B. Asking to play games on your phone for 3 hours when you work a 4-hour shift because it's fun
- C. Asking your co-workers how much money they make



True or False

You have to disclose your disability in an interview.

False!





Career Clusters

Thinking about Employment

- Working or volunteering to get experience or skills
- Learning soft and hard skills (or willing to learn)
- Preparing for a career by getting experience in certain jobs
- Being flexible
- Thinking about and plan for finding a job



Work Goals

- Setting job or work goals
 - In your individualized education program (IEP) as part of transition planning
 - After taking self-assessments, get experience in areas of interests and strengths
- Work goals can change
 - Getting experience can help us decide on work goals



Types of Work and “Career Clusters”



Job or Career?

Career

- Usually longer term
- May need to get more education after high school
- Get more job experiences and training to move forward

Job

- May be short or long term
- Work to get paid
- Limited advancement in pay and responsibility
- May find new things you are interested in



Either is fine—if it meets your goals or needs

Career Advancement

Goal: to be a policeman



Career Clusters (Areas)

- Big group of jobs that share similar skills or work tasks
- Helps you explore work by looking at the kind of things you already like doing
- Great place to where your personal strengths and interests shine



17 Career Clusters

- Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
- Architecture and Construction
- Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communications
- Business Administration and Business Management (Sales)
- Education and Training
- Energy
- Finance
- Government and Public Administration
- Healthcare and Health Science
- Hospitality and Tourism (Service)
- IT (Information Technology)
- Human Services
- Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security
- Manufacturing
- Marketing
- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)
- Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics



Included in this week's home activities

[US Department of Education](https://www.ed.gov/)

Career Cluster: Arts Example

Careers in the Arts, Audio/Video Technology, & Communications use creativity in different kinds of media. This includes visual arts, performing arts, design, journalism, and entertainment.



Example jobs: costume attendant, photographer or assistant, makeup artist, graphic designer or assistant, print shop assistant, theater stagehand, video production assistant, social media content developer or assistant, librarian or library media aide, sign production worker, embroidery machine operator, museum assistant, artist



Included in this week's home activities

Career Clusters

www.youtube.com/watch?v=DisRY1JQ9CA



[Transition Abilities](http://transitionabilities.com/)

[https://transitionabilities.com/](http://transitionabilities.com/)

Microenterprise

- Another type of work: self-employment
- Tailored to individual's strengths and support needs
- Small customized business (1-5 employees)
- More control over work, schedules, tasks
- Builds social networks and community connection
- Alternative to traditional employment
- Common businesses:
 - Arts and crafts (e.g., jewelry, customized gifts)
 - Baking and treats (e.g., dog treats, baked goods)
 - Services (e.g., pet-sitting, yard maintenance; gift wrapping)





Taking Action to get a Job and Job Description Introduction





Getting Experience

Volunteering

- Not paid, way to get experience, try different jobs, meet new people, get references, temporary

Internships/Co-op/Apprenticeships

- Paid or unpaid, learn job skills, get experience, build network and meet people

Job Shadowing/Job Sampling/Work-based Learning

- Paid or unpaid
- Job Shadow/Sampling: observe someone in a job, ask questions, and learn more about the job itself
- Work-based learning: work for a period of time, usually with a job coach, to get experience





Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) and Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP)

- No cost-they decide if you are eligible for services
- Can get work experiences and training: job shadowing, job readiness, job coaches, self-advocacy, communication skills, and more
- Services start at 14 years with pre-employment transition services (pre-ETS) and have an IEP, 504 Plan, medical diagnosis and vocational rehabilitation for people who no longer have IEP
- MRS: In regions throughout Michigan: [MRS Locator](#)
- BSBP specializes in people with blindness or visual impairments and are in regions throughout Michigan: [BSBP Local Offices](#)





Complete Your Personal Profile



My Personal Profile

James Smith • Age 17 • Grade 11 • Prepared July 2026

My Employment Goal

I want to work in Information Technology as a computer help-desk and support technician. I love troubleshooting computers and helping people solve tech problems. My goal is to earn an IT certification and start with a part-time internship in a school or office IT department where I can keep learning about hardware and software.

What Is Important to Me

- A clear daily routine and knowing what to expect
- Quiet spaces where I can concentrate
- Being treated with respect and given time to process
- Time with my family, my dog Biscuit, and building computers

What People Like & Admire About Me

- Honest, dependable, and always on time
- Great memory for facts and details, especially technology
- Patient and highly focused on tasks I care about
- Kind and loyal to my friends and family

How to Best Support Me

- Give instructions in writing or as a step-by-step checklist
- Tell me about schedule changes ahead of time
- Allow short breaks in a quiet area when I feel overwhelmed
- Be direct and specific — clear expectations beat hints
- Noise-reducing headphones and softer lighting help me focus

Example Personal Profile

- This should be completed and updated as information changes

A blank template and this example are in the Template and Examples handouts



Complete Your Employment Supports



My Employment Supports

John Smith • Employment Supports Document

My Workplace Accommodations

- Quiet, low-traffic work area to limit noise and sensory overload
- Noise-cancelling headphones allowed during independent tasks
- A printed daily schedule and written task checklists at my station
- Advance notice before any change to my routine or duties

My Assistive Technology

- Visual, step-by-step task reminders on my phone and tablet
- Timers and alarm cues to help me move between tasks
- Text-to-speech tool for reading longer instructions
- Noise-reducing earbuds for the busiest times of day

My Support People

- A job coach from Michigan Rehabilitation Services for my first weeks
- One coworker mentor I check in with each shift
- A supervisor who gives clear, one-step-at-a-time directions
- Family who help me practice my work routine at home

My Services & Job Coaching

- MRS-funded job coaching, reduced gradually as I gain independence
- Travel training to ride the fixed-route bus to work
- Regular check-ins with my MRS counselor to review goals
- Follow-along support after hire for long-term success

- When you disclose, let them know what accommodations you need

A blank template and this example are in the Template and Examples handouts



Create a Resume

John Smith

123 Main Street | Lansing, MI 48933 | (517) 555-0148 | john.smith@email.com

Skills

Customer service, communication, teamwork, time management, problem solving, attention to detail, adaptability, and basic data analysis.

Education

- Lansing Central High School, Lansing, MI
- High School Diploma | June 2026
- College Preparatory Coursework, GPA: 3.6

Experience

June 2025 – Present

Sales Associate | Lakeside Outfitters | Lansing, MI

Assist customers, operate the point-of-sale system, organize inventory, and maintain the sales floor. Recognized for reliable attendance, friendly service, and helping train two new team members.

September 2024 – May 2025

Volunteer Tutor | Lansing Community Youth Center | Lansing, MI

Provided weekly math and English homework support for middle school students, prepared practice activities, and shared progress updates with the program coordinator.

Clubs/Activities/Sports

- Varsity Soccer Team, 2023–2026
- Student Council Member, 2024–2026
- Community Food Drive Volunteer, 2024–2025

Additional Skills

- Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Google Workspace
- Cash Handling
- Phone and email communication

- Make it 1 page
- Objective is not required, list skills
- Make sure all spelling and grammar is correct
- Use action verbs to start bullets and experience descriptions
- Use correct “tense” (past=what you did or present=what you are doing now)
- Be consistent with formatting

A blank template and this example are in the Template and Examples handouts



Create a Cover Letter



Cover Letter Example

John Smith
123 Main Street
Holt, MI 48866
(555) 123-4567
john.smith@email.com

July 7, 2026

Hiring Manager
Store Management Team
Aero Company, Inc.
225 Hosmer
Lansing, MI 48910

Dear Hiring Manager:

I am contacting you regarding the open Stocking and Inventory Associate position with Aero Company, Inc.. My background in inventory support, stocking shelves, organizing merchandise, and assisting with store operations makes me a strong candidate for this position.

As you will see from my attached resume, I have experience performing inventory duties, stocking shelves, front-facing merchandise, keeping work areas organized, and helping customers find what they need. I understand the importance of accuracy, reliability, and attention to detail when handling products and maintaining store displays. My work habits, willingness to learn, and commitment to completing tasks correctly would allow me to contribute positively to your team.

If you have questions, or if you would like to schedule an interview, please contact me at (555) 123-4567. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss how my inventory and stocking experience can benefit Aero Company, Inc.

Sincerely,

John Smith

Enclosure: References

- Gives more details and expresses interest in a specific job
- Why you are interested
- How your skills relate to the job
- More information about you and your experiences
- Have someone review it
- Usually submitted with a resume

A blank template and this example are in the Template and Examples handouts



Create a List of References-Example

Think of people from volunteering, work, school



John Smith
123 Main Street, Lansing, MI 48933
517-555-0148
John.smith@email.com

References

Date

Michael Johnson, Former Lawn Care Client
Neighborhood Lawn Care
michael.johnson@example.com; 517-555-0166

Sarah Miller, **English** Teacher
Lansing High School, Career Readiness Teacher
sarah.miller@example.com; 517-555-0182

David Thompson, Community Volunteer Supervisor
Lansing Community Center TITLE: Volunteer Coordinator
E-MAIL: david.thompson@example.com; 517-555-0134

- Put in alphabetic order by their last name
- Get permission to use their name as a reference
- Use neighbors, teachers, other professionals
- Have at least 3

A blank template and this example are in the Template and Examples handouts



Use Your Network

- Getting leads on possible jobs
- Connecting with friends, neighbors, teachers, and professionals who know you and your strengths and want to see you succeed
- Using vocational rehabilitation (MRS and BSBP)
- Attending career fairs
- Talking to others about topics you have in common, for example “how did you decide to work in this job?”





Application: Example

- Download from website or fill out online
- Complete and take in to employer
- Correct information
- Correct spelling
- Print neatly or type
- Have someone review it

EMPLOYMENT / JOB APPLICATION	
PERSONAL INFORMATION	
Date: <u>July 8, 2026</u>	
FULL NAME: John <u>S</u> Smith First Middle Last	
ADDRESS: 123 Main Street Street Address Apt/Suite	
Lansing, MI 48933 City State Zip Code	
E-MAIL: john.smith@email.com PHONE: 517-555-0148	
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN): On file / provided upon hire	
DATE AVAILABLE: July 15, 2026 DESIRED PAY: \$15.00 ☒ HOUR ☐ SALARY	
POSITION APPLIED FOR: Entry-Level Production Assistant, Aero Company	
EMPLOYMENT DESIRED: ☐ FULL-TIME ☒ PART-TIME ☐ SEASONAL	
EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY	
ARE YOU LEGALLY ELIGIBLE TO WORK IN THE U.S.? ☒ YES ☐ NO*	
HAVE YOU EVER WORKED FOR THIS EMPLOYER? ☐ YES* ☒ NO	

PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT	
EMPLOYER 1: Neighborhood Lawn Care Client Company / Individual	
E-MAIL: reference.available@email.com PHONE: 517-555-0199	
ADDRESS: 456 Oak Avenue Street Address Apt/Suite	
Lansing, MI 48912 City State Zip Code	
STARTING PAY: \$10.00 ☒ HOUR ☐ SALARY ENDING PAY: \$10.00 ☒ HOUR ☐ SALARY	
JOB TITLE: Lawn Care Helper RESPONSIBILITIES: Mowed lawns, trimmed edges, cleaned up clippings, and maintained reliable weekly service.	

A blank template and this example are in the Template and Examples handouts



Personal Information Worksheet

- Create as a way to have information for resumes and applications
- Fill out online or print and complete by hand
- Take it with you for completing applications



Personal Information Worksheet

Complete this information and keep it with you when filling out job applications.

• Current Contact Information

- Name (first, middle, and last): _____
- Address (street, city, state, and zip code): _____
- Phone numbers (including area code)
 - Home: _____
 - Work: _____
 - Cell: _____
- Email address: _____
- Driver's license number (including state and exp.): _____
- Social Security number: _____

• Former Addresses (List in chronological order, from newest to oldest. Include street, city, state, and zip code)

- Address: _____
- Address: _____

• Educational History

- School name: _____
 - School address: _____
 - School phone number (main line): _____
 - Course of study: _____
 - Graduation/completion date: _____
- School name: _____
 - School address: _____
 - School phone number (main line): _____

- Course of study: _____
- Graduation/completion date: _____

• Other Trainings and Certifications

- Workshop, training, or certification: _____
- Provided by: _____
- Date: _____
- Workshop, training, or certification: _____
- Provided by: _____
- Date: _____
- CEUs (if applicable): _____

• Employment History

- Company name: _____
- Company address: _____
- Company phone: _____
- Name of supervisor and title: _____
- Your title: _____
- Main duties: _____
- Dates of employment: _____
- Hours per week: _____
- Salary: _____
- Reason for leaving: _____

• Employment History (Continued)

- Company name: _____
- Company address: _____
- Company phone: _____
- Name of supervisor and title: _____
- Your title: _____
- Main duties: _____
- Dates of employment: _____
- Hours per week: _____
- Salary: _____
- Reason for leaving: _____

A blank template is in the Template and Examples linked to handouts



Job Descriptions

- Explains parts of the job the applicant may be required to do
- Includes hard and soft skills
- Always review the job description and if job says “must have” skills, they will be required to qualify for the job; if the job description says “has the ability to...”, it means whoever does that job has the ability to learn it
- Skills noted in the job description will likely be the skills covered in the interview
- We will cover this relationship in our next session.





Job Description



JOB DESCRIPTION-EXAMPLE

Job Title: Stocking and Inventory Associate

Company: Aero Company, Inc.

Location: On-site

Job Type: Part-time

Position Overview

Aero Company, Inc. is seeking an organized, self-initiating, and reliable Stocking and Inventory Associate to join our logistics team. In this role, you will be responsible for maintaining the accuracy of our inventory, receiving and processing incoming shipments, and ensuring that materials are properly stocked. Your work will directly support our operation and help us maintain high standards of service.

Key Responsibilities

- Receive, unload, and confirm incoming shipments for damage.
- Organize, stock, and arrange inventory in the warehouse or stockroom areas.
- Prepare and pack items for outgoing shipments.
- Maintain a clean, safe, and organized workspace to meet safety standards.

Job Qualifications & Skills

Hard Skills (Technical & Physical Abilities)

- **Inventory Management Software:** Experience with using Excel to confirm inventory.
- **Equipment Operation:** Proficiency with scanners, barcode readers, and basic warehouse equipment (e.g., pallet jacks, hand trucks). Forklift certification is a plus.
- **Physical Abilities:** Ability to lift, push, and pull up to 50 lbs regularly and remain on your feet for 5 hours.
- **Data Entry Accuracy:** Strong numerical skills for accurate tracking, of stock counts.

Soft Skills (Interpersonal & Behavioral Attributes)

- **Attention to Detail:** Keen eye for spotting issues in shipment logs, damaged goods, or misplaced inventory.
- **Time Management:** Ability to prioritize tasks effectively in a fast-paced environment to meet shipping and restocking deadlines.
- **Teamwork & Collaboration:** Excellent communication skills to work with logistics, purchasing, and team members, and floor managers.
- **Problem-Solving:** Proactive attitude toward identifying inventory errors and tracking down missing items.

Education and Experience

- High school diploma or equivalent preferred.
- 1–2 years of experience in warehousing, logistics, retail stockrooms, or inventory management is preferred but not required.

- Lists the responsibilities
- Lists hard and soft skills
- Note where it says “ability...”-means you are able to gain the skill
- Lists education and experience requirements

This is in the Template and Examples linked to handouts

Video

www.youtube.com/watch?v=AVLPPTp7z74



What is one thing that sticks with you after watching this video?

True or False

Looking at the career clusters can give me a better idea of what job I might want to do in the future.

- True



Next Time



- Will review more about applying for jobs
- Interviews and questions
- Interview Strategies
- Interview Follow-Up

Home Activities





Preparing for Work-Home Activities Checklist

Session 3: Finding a Job, Networks, Tools, Resources

Name: _____ Date: _____

Use the checklist below to work through the assigned home activities for Session 2.
We will discuss the home activities from Session 2 when we meet for Session 3. |

Done	Activity
	<u>Activity 1</u> Complete Activity 1: Complete the Career Cluster and Types of Jobs within Clusters Activity
	<u>Activity 2</u> Complete Activity 2: Review the Finding a Job Checklist. Start working through that process, indicating what you will do in each step.
	<u>Activity 3</u> Complete Activity 3: Review the Templates and Examples documents provided. You can use any of the templates to create your own documents. You can change them to meet your needs or interests.
	Review the Week 3 Resources provided

Home Activities Checklist

Out of Class Activities

- Start with your Home Activities Checklist
- Work with your parents on this if you have questions



1. Career Cluster Activity

Career Clusters: What They Are and Types of Jobs within the Clusters

For this activity, you might want to ask your parents, caregivers, or someone you trust to work through this with you, or review it after you are done and talk about it with you.

Review the career clusters and example jobs below and do the following:

- Review the results from any work-related self-assessments you completed and note what jobs were suggested for you.
 - If you did not complete a self-assessment, you may want to do that before going through the career clusters.
 - Look through the assessments from Session 1, or here is an assessment you could look at: and complete: [O*NET® Career Exploration Tools](#)
 - If you did not complete the self-assessment, and do not want to do one, you can note possible jobs based on your interests-taking the self-assessment may help you find jobs you did not know were there.
- Look at the career clusters below. What jobs were suggested for you based on your self-assessment?
- When you find the career cluster for jobs the assessment suggested, or based on your strengths and interests, check the box and write down the jobs you want to find out more about on the line provided.
 - If you do not find the exact job under the career cluster examples, you can add it under the cluster to find out more about it.
- Check the box for the ones you have no interest in learning more about.

1. Agriculture

The Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources cluster involves working with nature to produce food and other products. Workers in this field also manage natural resources and care for the environment. People in these jobs might work on farms, in forests, or with animals.

Example jobs: Landscaper, park ranger, greenhouse worker, groundskeeper, farm worker, stable assistant, animal care attendant, dog groomer assistant, nursery worker, park maintenance worker, florist assistant (working with flowers and plants)

- ☐ I want find out more about a job or jobs in this career cluster. The job or jobs I am interested in are: _____
- ☐ I am not interested in learning more about this career cluster.

2. Architecture/Construction/Maintenance/Grounds

In this cluster, workers design, build, and maintain various structures. This includes houses, factories, offices, schools, roads, sewers, and more. The careers in this cluster require creativity, problem-solving, and technical skills to create safe and functional buildings and infrastructures.

Example jobs: architect, construction worker or construction assistant, pipelayer, painter or painter's helper, drywall finisher or assistant, flooring installer or assistant, maintenance technician, custodian, building maintenance worker, warehouse material handler, electrician, electrician apprentice, handyman

- ☐ I want find out more about a job or jobs in this career cluster. The job or jobs I am interested in are: _____
- ☐ I am not interested in learning more about this career cluster

Out of Class Activity-1

- Work with your parents, a peer, or mentor to complete if needed

2. Steps to Finding a Job Checklist

Steps to Finding a Job Checklist



Name: _____

Complete this checklist as you are preparing to get a job. Always have your parents, family member, teachers, or / someone else review each document for grammar, spelling, and overall content

Done	Steps and Description
	1. Get experience through job shadowing, job sampling, work-based learning, or internships/co-op/volunteer • Work with Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) or the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP) for opportunities to get this experience. These services are free and based on eligibility. Use the MRS or BSBP Locator (for the office nearest you) • Notes:
	2. Complete your Personal Profile and Employment Supports • Use goals, support needs, strengths, and interests to look for jobs

Out of Class Activity-2

- Work with your parents, a peer, or mentor to complete if needed

Your Actions for Next Week:

Review and follow your Home Activities Checklist)

- a. Complete the **Workplace Readiness Checklist** (pick the one of your choice to do)
- b. Complete the **Learning Preferences Checklist** (pick the one of your choice)
- c. Complete the **Disclosure & Accommodations** Scenario
- d. Review Link **Additional Resources** on accommodations, disclosure, and assessments.

We are here to support you!



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For more information visit

www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org

Call 800-552-4821

En Español 313-217-1060

لغة العربية 248-963-0607

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