

Workplace Readiness Toolkit

Practicing Employment Skills at Home

Developed by the Center on Transition Innovations at Virginia Commonwealth University

Schools and families have important roles to play in developing students' academic and functional performance in preparation for life after high school. When teachers and families work together, they can create opportunities for consistency in routine, expectations, and skill enhancement across all content areas. To effectively promote the continuation of skill development, it is essential for schools to partner with families to provide support and develop opportunities for skill improvement in the home.

The home environment provides a wide variety of opportunities for students to practice skills and work on IEP goals with and without the use of technology. This Workplace Readiness Toolkit was developed as a resource to assist teachers and support families of students with disabilities as they prepare students for a successful transition to employment.

Acknowledgement

The VCU Center on Transition Innovations would like to thank the Virginia Department of Education for their support and contributions to this toolkit. This product is public domain. Authorization to reproduce it in whole or in part is granted.

For further information about the Center on Transition Innovations, please visit our website at centerontransition.org

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About this Toolkit

Why Workplace Readiness Skills?

This resource is designed to provide activities to reinforce and embed Virginia's 21st Century Workplace Readiness Skills at home. Workplace readiness skills are personal qualities, people skills, and professional traits that are necessary to maintain employment. These skills are important because they are the most desirable skills employers are searching for in potential employees. Skills such as communication, teamwork, integrity, problem-solving, work ethic and initiative, are essential for workplace success.

These skills take time to develop and must be practiced and reinforced across various environments. Teachers partnering with families can help students develop these skills at home. This will further assist students in generalizing skills across various environments to better prepare them for competitive employment.

Contents of Toolkit

This toolkit includes weekly activities to reinforce workplace readiness skills that have already been taught at school. Each activity sheet focuses on one specific workplace readiness skill that can easily be practiced at home, supplemented with technology, and varied with modifications to meet the needs of all students. Each skill learned builds upon the next skill and should continue to be reinforced at home, school, and community throughout the semester and school year. It is important to note, workplace readiness skills should not be taught or reinforced in isolation. They should be incorporated into the daily routine of a student. Teachers and families have the flexibility to modify the activities to meet the needs of each student and family.

Each activity sheet includes:

- Introduction and definition of one workplace readiness skill
- Menu of activities to do as a family
- At least one activity that doesn't require technology
- Reflection questions for families to utilize to provide feedback to educators

Activity sheets in this toolkit are available for the following workplace readiness skills:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. Initiative and Self-Direction | 10. Teamwork |
| 2. Work Ethic | 11. Efficiency and Productivity |
| 3. Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving | 12. Professionalism |
| 4. Creativity and Innovation | 13. Workplace Safety |
| 5. Integrity | 14. Information Literacy |
| 6. Listening and Speaking | 15. Information Technology |
| 7. Conflict Resolution | 16. Information Security |
| 8. Customer Service | 17. Mathematics |
| 9. Respect for Diversity | 18. Reading and Writing |

How to Use this Toolkit

As you begin using this toolkit, consider the roles and responsibilities of the teacher and the student's family in the process.

1. Teachers initially teach the 21st Century Workplace Readiness skills in the educational and community settings.
2. Teachers communicate with families about the skill, how it is taught in the classroom, and the ways in which families can reinforce the skill at home.
3. Teachers download or email weekly activity sheets to family.
4. Families use an activity sheet as a guide for reinforcement.
5. Family provides teacher feedback on student strengths and support needs.
6. Teacher provides additional resources and support if needed.
7. Teachers and families continue to reinforce student skill development within the home and classroom.

Teacher Role

Teachers, as you are addressing these skills with students, their families can explore and reinforce these skills at home. Stress to families the important role they play in developing these essential employment skills. In order to gain their understanding and interest in collaborating to enhance these critical skills, engage with families in a manner that is most effective for them. Consider using virtual meetings, phone calls, flyers, texts, or emails to communicate with families before, during and after typical school hours.

Role of the teacher

- Introduce the skill to the family member and discuss how it was taught in the classroom and how it can be enhanced in the home.
- Discuss the importance of learning the skill and how it impacts workplace performance.
- Support families in understanding their role in reinforcing these skills and how sharing their own experience with these skills can be beneficial to their students.
- Gather feedback from families on student performance and support needs.
- Provide additional resources as necessary.

Educators can share these activities with families weekly during the semester in multiple ways:

- Have a virtual meeting or a phone conference with parents weekly to describe the value of the workplace readiness skill learned and how it might be part of the routine at home.
 - Develop a weekly class e-newsletter for families. The newsletter can include a link to the corresponding activity sheet for home use.
 - Email families on the same day each week, describing what was instructed and reinforced in school related to the workplace readiness skill. Attach the matching activity sheet.
 - Post information about the workplace readiness skill and a link to the at-home activity sheet on the school's learning management system to be accessed by the students and families.
-

Please be sensitive to the needs of each family and encourage participation as much as possible. Ask families and students for feedback on activities and information gathered each week that might better inform students' education and career planning.

Family Role

The activities in this toolkit are meant to provide an opportunity for families to reinforce workplace readiness skills at home. This will occur in collaboration with teachers on student understanding and attainment of the skills. These activities will generate purposeful discussions about work, careers, and identifying one's strengths, interests, and preferences.

Role of the family

- Reinforce the workplace readiness skills at home and in the community to help students generalize skills across various environments.
- Identify students' skills, strengths and support needs.
- Discuss resource needs with the teacher.
- Communicate with the teacher on student's performance while demonstrating skills at home. Also discuss areas of need for future educational planning.

Suggestions for families

- Spend a little time reviewing the work readiness skill together as a family.
- Share some examples of your experiences with the targeted work readiness skill. Discuss how you demonstrated this skill at home or at your job.
- As a family, select at least one of the activities and determine a good time to complete the activity.
- Once you have completed the activity, share the information gathered with your child's case manager.
- Identify opportunities within the home and community to reinforce each skill.

The information gathered through these activities will help inform your child's transition planning activities while providing them with vital skills for employment.

Additional Resources

For additional resources on workplace readiness skills, visit

- [VDOE's 21st Century Workplace Readiness Skills for the Commonwealth](http://doe.virginia.gov/instruction/career_technical/workplace_readiness) (doe.virginia.gov/instruction/career_technical/workplace_readiness)
- [Virginia's Educational Resources System Online \(VERSO\)](http://cteresource.org/wrs) (cteresource.org/wrs)
- [ODEP's Skills to Pay the Bill's](http://dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills) (dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills)

Strategies to Increase Success

Some of the activities in this toolkit may present challenges for your child that may not have been addressed within the activity sheets. The purpose of this document is to provide some strategies to help increase success while using the toolkit.

General Strategies

Positive Reinforcement

It may seem simple, but providing praise or a tangible reward when your child succeeds is an effective way of ensuring continued success. It is also a great motivator. Follow these guidelines to make your positive reinforcement as effective as possible:

- Make sure to provide reinforcement immediately after good behavior
- Make sure praise you give is specific (“I like how you were careful putting away those utensils”)

“First... Then...”

People are much more likely to do things they don’t want to do when they know they get to do something they do want to do next. If your child is resistant to completing tasks in this toolkit, try scheduling the tasks right before something they really look forward to. If they continue to object, you can remind them “first we’ll do this, then we can do what you want to do. The quicker we do it, the sooner we can get to what you want.”

Easy, Easy, Hard

Research has shown that success leads to success. If your child is having difficulty with one task, or is refusing to attempt it, try asking them to complete a few short, easy tasks you know they can do first. It can look something like this:

- (Easy) Ask them to wipe the table
- (Easy) Ask them to give you the rag so you can put it away
- (Hard) Ask them to clear some of the plates from the table

You know best which tasks are easy and which are hard for your child. Remember to provide lots of positive reinforcement after the easy tasks. This will make it much more likely that your child will try the harder task when you ask them to.

Offer Two-Way Choices

Rather than asking abstract questions that may prove challenging and frustrating to answer, consider asking your child to compare two options, and select which option is better.

Example:

Tommy always waits until the last minute to do his work, and doesn’t tell anyone when it’s done. Jenna does it right away and talks to her boss about it. Who is showing a good work ethic - Jenna or Tommy?

Offer “Yes” or “No”

Rather than asking your child to come up with their own stories or examples, consider asking your child to listen to your story, and then say “Yes” if it is a good example, or “No” if it is not.

Example:

My coworker leaves sticky notes all over his desk that have information like his passwords for websites, important phone numbers, and names of customers. Is he doing a good job protecting information, Yes or No?

Avoid Consequences

Try to avoid consequences, even if your child is getting frustrated or refusing to participate. Often our first instinct is to impose a punishment when children act out, but research shows that providing positive reinforcement is more effective for good behavior. Make sure it is clear to your child what you want them to do. It is okay to take a break and try again later.

Provide Warnings

Let your child know a few minutes before you are going to ask them to do something. About 5 minutes before it is time to start a work task, say “in 5 minutes, I’m going to ask you to do something for me.” Giving notice before transitioning between tasks helps lower frustration, especially if the task is difficult or not preferred.

Spread it Out

Many of the activities have multiple parts. If your child gets fatigued or loses focus easily, try spacing out each step of the activity. You can complete an activity over a couple of hours, days, or even weeks. Everyone develops skills and learns at a different pace.

For Non-Readers

If your child has limited reading ability or does not yet read, some of the activities listed in this kit may need to be adapted for them. In general, the best approach will be to replace written information with spoken information, or even pictures that communicate the same things. For example:

Visual Schedules

Visual Schedules use pictures or drawings in place of words.

Task Breakdowns

To help with learning a task, break the task into small individual steps. Take pictures of each step in the task you want your child to do. Put the picture/steps in order and provide it to your child to help them learn.

Workplace Readiness Skill

Personal Qualities and Abilities

Activity Sheet

Skill 1

Taking Initiative and Self-Direction

It is often not enough for us to wait around for someone to tell us what to do. It is our responsibility to do what needs to be done without being asked. Employers look for employees who show initiative and self-direction by attending to their responsibilities. If you see something that needs to be done, do it!

Description of Taking Initiative and Self-Direction

Taking initiative and being self-directed means to initiate or look for ways to help and accomplish tasks without being told to by someone else.

Examples of showing initiative:

- Complete a chore without being told.
- Independently ask for work when you don't have a lot to do.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice taking initiative. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: Taking Initiative is Cool

1. Watch [Taking Initiative is Cool](https://youtu.be/ALtsSru4jzE) (youtu.be/ALtsSru4jzE) with your child.
2. Provide examples of when you took initiative at home and at work. Discuss ways your child can take initiative at home.
3. Together, go through your home and identify things that need to be done or ways your child can demonstrate initiative. Describe WHY these things are important to do.
 - Examples: taking out the trash, washing dishes, picking up clothes, getting the mail, or turning the lights off in rooms not being used.
4. From those tasks that were identified, have your child make a list of three chores or activities they can be responsible for and set a date and time for when each activity will be completed.
 - To track the chores, try an app like [ChoreMonster](https://bit.ly/choremonster-app) (bit.ly/choremonster-app). All smartphones should have a Notes app that your child can use to track their chores.

Activity 2: For Hire

1. Make a “For Hire” list of chores that need to be completed around the house. Assign payment or reinforcement to each chore. Payment can be something that is reinforcing like money, a new book, or time on the computer.
 - Try [Our Home](http://ourhomeapp.com) (ourhomeapp.com) for an app to track chores.
2. When your child wants to earn some type of payment, have them check the “For Hire” list and negotiate their desire to be “hired” for specific jobs.

Activity 3: Scavenger Hunt

1. Tell your child they are going on a scavenger hunt for items they need for their day.
2. Have each family member hold onto an item that is reinforcing or needed (Wifi password, book, keys, game, hat, etc.). Make sure the family members aren’t all hanging out in one area so your child needs to search a bit for each member of the family.
3. Have your child go on the hunt. In order to complete the hunt, your child take the initiative to seek out each family member. If your child requests the item from the correct person then that family member will give it to them. If not, the item will be held “captive” for the rest of the day.
4. To make this activity a bit more challenging, set a limit of time they have to complete the hunt. For example, you may tell your child they have 30 minutes to get all of the required items. It can be easy to get distracted with each item instead of searching for the next item on the list!

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your child better understand taking initiative and self-direction?
- What was easy or hard about learning and practicing this skill?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue to practice this skill with my child?

Workplace Readiness Skill

Personal Qualities and Abilities

Activity Sheet

Skill 2

Work Ethic

In the workplace, being dependable, having a positive attitude, and giving your best effort are valued traits. These traits are all a part of the skill called work ethic. When someone has a strong work ethic, they bring value to employers because they make sure tasks get done well.

Description of Work Ethic

Demonstrating work ethic means that you always work to the best of your abilities, you are dependable and accountable for your actions.

Examples of showing work ethic:

- Giving 100% when folding laundry, even though you are tired because you stayed up too late.
- Telling your boss you made a mistake on a report instead of hiding it or blaming it on someone else.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice work ethic. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: Strong Work Ethic - Family Discussion

1. Talk with your child about what makes a strong work ethic and why it is important at work and home.
2. Share examples from your job, home, or community of people who demonstrated a strong work ethic and those that have not. Discuss the outcomes of both.

For example:

A co-worker in my landscaping company was responsible for mowing the lawn. My co-worker often stayed up late and was tired during work hours. She would take an extra-long time mowing the lawn because she just didn't feel like moving faster. The company started losing business because my co-worker showed a poor work ethic by not trying her best.

3. After the discussion, work together to write, draw, or tell a story that demonstrates a positive work ethic.
 4. Take it a step further and role-play or act out the story you developed together.
-

Activity 2: Work Ethic at Home

1. With your child, identify chores within the home or community (e.g., grocery store) that will be your child's responsibility.
2. Create a monitoring chart to review your child's work ethic while completing their task. Include behaviors like, "tried my best," "completed the chore" and "completed the chore in a timely manner."

For example:

- Use a printable sheet (example found on page 12).
 - Use an app like [I-Connect](http://iconnect.ku.edu) (iconnect.ku.edu) or [Score IT](http://bit.ly/scoreit-ios) (bit.ly/scoreit-ios) to monitor progress.
3. Every time your child completes an assigned chore or responsibility, complete the monitoring chart and provide feedback on what they did well. Discuss how they can improve.

Activity 3: Work Ethic Examples

1. Talk with your child about what makes a strong work ethic and why it is important at work and home. Share some examples of how you have shown a positive work ethic at home or at work.
2. Read the following scenarios, and ask them to say "Yes" or "No" as to whether this is an example of a good work ethic:
 - a) Marco is given a project at work, and he says he will have it finished in four days. He works on it a little bit every day, and shows his boss the finished project on the fourth day.
 - b) David has a task that he doesn't know how to do. He is too nervous to ask for help. After a week, and he still hasn't finished it.
 - c) Kia has to pick up her kids after school, so she leaves work a little bit early. She wants to make sure she gets her work done, so she also shows up to work a little bit early to make up for it.
3. For more practice, develop additional scenarios.

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your family better understand demonstrating work ethic?
- What was easy or hard about learning and practicing this skill?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue to practice this skill?

Activity 2 Example Sheet

Below are two examples of how you can create a monitoring system for building work ethic:

Example 1:

Directions to use:

1. In the first column write down the chore.
2. Write out the desired work ethic behaviors in the top row (you can, but do not need to use the examples provided).
3. After the chore is completed, put a checkmark, sticker, or initials in the box if your child exhibited the behavior.
4. In the last column provide the total of exhibited behaviors.

Chore	Completed the entire chore	Completed the chore to the best of my ability	Finished in a timely manner	Total
Mow yard	✓	✓	–	2/3
Make the bed				

Example 2:

Directions to use:

1. In the first box in the first column, write down the chore.
2. Write out the desired work ethic behaviors in the boxes below the chore (you can, but do not need to use the examples provided).

Chore: Mow the Yard	Completed	
I completed this chore the best of my ability.	YES	NO
I completed ALL parts of this chore.	YES	NO
I finished this chore in a timely manner.	YES	NO
Total:	/3	

Workplace Readiness Skill

Personal Qualities and Abilities

Activity Sheet

Skill 3

Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving

We encounter a number of problems throughout our daily lives, particularly in work settings. Some problems are big and some are small. Employees are often asked to solve simple and complex problems. Being able to think critically and solving problems is a skill needed for success in the workplace.

Description of Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving

Being a critical thinker and a problem solver means when you have a problem, you work to solve the problem. You think of and evaluate potential solutions, and take action to solve the issue.

Examples of showing critical thinking and problem-solving:

- You are doing laundry for the first time on your own and not sure if you are doing it right. Instead of giving up, you do an internet search on how to do laundry or ask a family member for help.
- You overslept and missed your ride to work. Instead of calling your supervisor to say you can't come to work, you call to say you will be late. You then schedule an Uber to get to work.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice critical thinking and problem-solving. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: Four Steps of Problem-Solving

1. Watch [Soft Skills: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving](https://youtu.be/hPil44XEKgs) (youtu.be/hPil44XEKgs) with your child.
 2. Discuss what the problem was in the video and how the employee solved the problem.
 3. Go over the following 4 steps to problem-solving (it is helpful if you can write out or draw a picture of each step):
 - a) Identify the problem.
 - b) Think about ways to solve the problem.
 - c) Evaluate each solution and pick the best one.
 - d) Put your solution in action and evaluate to make sure it worked.
 4. Practice the 4 steps of problem-solving by watching the video [Stuck on an Escalator](https://youtu.be/YQUAs3syuJE) (youtu.be/YQUAs3syuJE).
 5. After viewing the video, go through the 4 steps to talk about how they could have solved this problem.
-

Activity 2: Solving Problems Around the House

1. Throughout the week, use situations that naturally occur or create problems for your child to practice problem-solving.

For example:

- The TV won't turn on (you unplugged it).
- They cannot find the bread to make a sandwich (you hid it).
- Your child cannot find their shoes.

2. Give time to see if your child will solve the problem on their own.
3. If they cannot solve the problem, go through the 4 steps (mentioned in Activity 1) of problem-solving together.

Activity 3: Recognizing the Problem

The first step in solving a problem is recognizing that there is a problem. Use this activity to help your child start recognizing when there is a problem.

1. Collect pictures that show problems. You can use pictures from the internet, magazines, books, or ones you draw. If pictures are not available, you can just act out several problems.
2. Show the picture to your child and ask, "Is there a problem happening in the picture?"
3. Next ask, "what is the problem?" If your child is not at the point they can tell you the problem, that is fine! Just discuss what the problem is together.

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your family better understand critical thinking and problem-solving?
- What was easy or hard about learning and practicing this skill?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue to practice this skill with my child?

Workplace Readiness Skill

Personal Qualities and Abilities

Activity Sheet

Skill 4

Creativity and Innovation

Too often, we think of creativity in terms of visual arts, such as painting, or performance arts like acting. However, creativity is a necessary skill in many, if not most, jobs. Being creative and innovative means thinking of new and resourceful ways to solve problems and doing new things.

Description of Creativity and Innovation

Having creativity and innovation means you employ originality, inventiveness, and resourcefulness in the workplace.

Examples of creativity and innovation:

- Use a wagon to bring in a lot of groceries at one time instead of making multiple trips.
- Paint a beautiful mural on a blank wall.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice creativity and innovation. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: Circle Maker

1. Have a family discussion on what it means to be creative and innovative using the definition above.
For example:
If you work at a grocery store and come up with a simpler method for bringing in grocery carts this is creativity and innovation.
2. Have each family member discuss a way they have been creative and/or innovative at home, school, or work.
3. Ask each family member to draw 10 circles on a piece of paper.
 - a) Set a timer for 2 minutes.
 - b) Turn each circle into something else. Don't worry about quality. It doesn't matter if you draw well.
 - c) Have family members share the pictures they created.
 - d) Discuss what was easy and what was challenging about creating something new.

Activity 2: 7-Day Project

1. Choose a creative task that you want to do *each day for 7 days*.

For example:

Create a dance video, take photos, make posters, create a different sandwich, draw a dream, write a new line to a song, write a new paragraph to a story, devise a different football play, learn new coding technique, bake a new tasty treat, develop one solution to a world problem, etc.!

2. Try using an app to help with managing daily projects like [Trello](https://trello.com) (trello.com).
3. Record each day's progress. You may also choose to share the progress daily on social media.
4. At the end of the 7 days, have your child share their 7-Day Project with your family and teacher.

Activity 3: Seeing Creativity in Action

1. Use magazines, photo albums, yearbooks, or other sources to identify famous people, teachers, family members, or friends being creative.
2. Talk about what makes them creative and innovative.
3. Share that your child is creative like the people they saw in the pictures, even if it is in a different way.
4. Have your child demonstrate their creativity by doing things like:
 - Creating a drawing or craft
 - Writing a story or poem
 - Helping to organize a closet, cabinet, or refrigerator in the home
 - Developing an activity for a younger sibling or pets

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your family better understand demonstrating creativity and innovation?
- What was easy or hard about learning and practicing this skill?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue to practice this skill with my child?

Workplace Readiness Skill

Personal Qualities and Abilities

Activity Sheet

Skill 5

Integrity

Acting with integrity is important to success in the workplace. Employers want an employee that they can trust and someone who treats others with respect and fairness.

Description of Integrity

Having integrity means you follow workplace rules, procedures, and policies. A person with integrity is honest, fair, and respectful.

Examples of showing integrity:

- Tell the truth when you broke your sister's phone instead of trying to blame it on someone else.
- Use a work computer for only work-related tasks and not personal use.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice integrity. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: Talk about Integrity

Use the following activity to introduce and discuss integrity.

1. Watch this video [Global Values: Integrity](https://youtu.be/_ums7gbrcPc) (youtu.be/_ums7gbrcPc) with your child.
2. Have each person share what integrity means to them personally.
3. Share examples of when you have acted with integrity or witnessed it in other people.

For example:

During lunch my coworkers were gossiping about another colleague who just got in trouble with the boss. Instead of gossiping with my coworkers, I walked away.

4. Draw four circles, one for home, work, community, and school. Ask your child how they can show or act with integrity in different environments. Have your child put ways they can show integrity in each of the circles.

For example:

- a) Home: I can speak kindly to my sister even when I am mad.
 - b) School: I won't cheat on my test even if it is hard.
 - c) Work: I won't look at my phone because that is the rule even though I know I won't get caught.
 - d) Community: I will pay for everything I take out of a store.
-

Activity 2: Role-Playing Integrity

Practice integrity by thinking through scenarios that test integrity.

1. Create scenarios that could happen within the home or workplace.
 - Use the [Writing Your Moral Code worksheet](https://bit.ly/writing-your-moral-code) (bit.ly/writing-your-moral-code) for examples or think of your own.
2. For each scenario, have your child tell you or act out:
 - What they would do.
 - The benefits of reacting that way.
 - The consequences of not acting with integrity.
3. If your child has difficulty thinking about how they would act with integrity in each scenario, develop different scenarios of people acting with and without integrity and ask them to say “Yes” or “No” as to whether or not this person’s behavior represents their integrity.

Activity 3: Movies with Integrity

Watch a movie that shows examples of characters acting with integrity.

1. Pick out a favorite movie or TV show to watch together.
2. Let your child know that you will pause the movie or show throughout to see if a character’s actions were a good example of integrity.
3. Pause the movie or show when someone has or has not acted with integrity.
4. Ask, “Did that character act with integrity?” If not, discuss how they could have acted differently to show integrity.

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your family better understand demonstrating integrity?
- Did you find practicing this skill difficult or easy and why?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue reinforcing this skill?

Workplace Readiness Skill

Interpersonal Skills

Activity Sheet

Skill 6

Listening and Speaking

Have you ever gotten in trouble for not listening? Have you had trouble talking to others? Listening and speaking skills are critical parts of workplace communication in almost all jobs. The ability to understand what another person is saying and the ability to express your thoughts will help improve your job performance.

Description of Listening and Speaking

Listen and speaking means you attentively pay attention and ask questions to clarify meaning; you share ideas clearly in a manner appropriate for the setting and audience.

Examples of listening and speaking:

- You speak to your mother clearly and calmly to figure out a solution to the Wifi not working properly even though you are frustrated.
- A customer is complaining about a product your store sells and you quietly listen to their problem without interrupting.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice listening and speaking skills. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: Improving Listening Skills

1. To introduce the concept of active listening, watch the short video: [How to Improve Your Listening Skills](https://youtu.be/D6-MleRr1e8) (youtu.be/D6-MleRr1e8).
2. Review the four steps outlined for improving listening skills.
 - a) Focus on the speaker.
 - b) Avoid interrupting.
 - c) Avoid prejudging or making up your mind before listening.
 - d) Show your interest.
3. Use this list of ways to improve active listening, and evaluate the listening skills in the following video. Discuss specific examples of what the person did correctly or how they could have improved their active listening. [Sheldon is a Bad Listener](https://youtu.be/-O18rYBieww) (youtu.be/-O18rYBieww) - stop at 1:16.

Activity 2: Practice Listening and Speaking

1. To improve listening skills, teach the SLANT strategy. It may be helpful to write each step out.
 - S** – Sit up straight
 - L** – Lean forward and listen
 - A** – Answer
 - N** – Nod your head
 - T** – Track the speaker
2. Practice active listening using SLANT. Have your child listen as each family member talks about: the best part of their day; the worst part of their day; something they hope to do after the meal / conversation.
3. After each family member shares, have your student repeat the answers provided and ask one follow-up question.
4. Switch and have your child tell the family about their day.
5. You can adjust the skill level by decreasing or increasing the number of topics in each conversation. You can also increase or decrease the difficulty of the topics.

Activity 3: First Step: Eye Contact

Eye contact is a big part of letting people know you are listening. It also helps us to engage others when we are speaking. Eye contact is often a skill that needs to be developed. Using this activity will help build eye contact.

1. Sit facing your child and let them know you are going to practice eye contact.
 2. Do the following activities for 5 seconds to practice eye contact (increase or decrease the time based on your child's current skill level):
 - a) Make eye contact for 5 seconds with no distractions (no talking, no noise in the background).
 - b) Make eye contact for 5 seconds while talking to your child.
 - c) Make eye contact for 5 seconds while your child is talking to you.
 - d) Make eye contact for 5 seconds with your child's favorite show on in the background.
 3. Remember – it is okay if your child cannot maintain eye contact at first. Do this activity once a day until each step is mastered, then start increasing the time.
-

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your family better understand listening and speaking?
- What was easy or hard about learning and practicing this skill?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue to practice this skill with my child?

Workplace Readiness Skill

Interpersonal Skills

Activity Sheet

Skill 7

Conflict Resolution

Conflict and problems at work are natural and can happen when talking with a coworker, a boss, or a customer. Conflict can make us feel discouraged or upset, making the skill to resolve conflict a necessary one. Being able to resolve conflicts at work leads to increased problem-solving skills, productivity, communication, and independence.

Description of Conflict Resolution

Being able to resolve conflicts means you can negotiate agreeable solutions to personal and workplace issues.

Examples of conflict resolution:

- You work out a computer schedule with your sibling to ensure that each of you is able to get work done instead of fighting over who gets on the computer.
- You and a coworker calmly talk and compromise on how to get a project done when you disagree on how it should be done.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice conflict resolution. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: Discussion on Conflict Resolution

1. Watch this video [Conflict Resolution](https://youtu.be/EABFilCZJy8) (youtu.be/EABFilCZJy8) with your child.
 2. Discuss the different techniques in the video for conflict resolution.
 - a) Stop and recognize what you are feeling.
 - b) Take a deep breath and count backwards from 10 if feeling really angry.
 - c) Tell the other person how you feel and what you want in a calm, respectful way.
 - d) Listen and let the other person tell you how they are feeling and what they want.
 - e) Find a compromise or solution that you both feel good about.
 - f) If that doesn't work, ask someone to help mediate the conflict.
 3. Brainstorm with your child different conflicts that could happen at work and use the strategies from the video to solve the conflict.
-

For example:

A coworker eats your lunch, a coworker talks on their phone too loudly, or a coworker is always interrupting you when you are trying to talk.

Activity 2: Resolving a Real Conflict

1. As a family, think of a conflict that has happened or is happening at home (an example might be sharing the bathroom and needing to use it when someone else is). Write this conflict on a piece of paper.
2. Work together to figure out how to resolve the conflict by following the steps:

Step 1: Talk about the feelings your child feels when they think about the conflict (i.e. frustration, anger, sadness, or annoyance).

Step 2: Have your child listen to how others feel about the problem and what they need or want.

Step 3: Think of as many solutions as possible. At this point, any idea is worth writing down.

Step 4: Go through each of the options with your child to decide what would happen if your child picks that idea to resolve the conflict.

For example:

Your child might decide to do nothing about the conflict. Ask “what happens if you do nothing?” and talk about the emotion they expressed at the beginning. Talk about how if you decide to do nothing, that emotion may not go away, and also could get worse.

Step 5: Ask your child which option seems like it would best resolve the conflict or make the problem go away.

Activity 3: Keeping Calm During Conflict

Conflict cannot be resolved peacefully if we cannot manage our emotions. Use this activity to help develop strategies to help your child stay calm.

1. Start by having a discussion on how we might feel when something doesn’t go our way (when we have a conflict). You can do this by talking, drawing pictures, or acting it out safely.
2. Together, make a list of things that can help people calm down.

For example:

Common ideas are taking deep breaths, going for short walks, talking with someone, having a squeeze object like a pillow or stress ball, and using apps like *Serenity* – iOS (bit.ly/serenity_ios); Android (bit.ly/serenity_android).

3. Pick one or two items that you want to use.
-

4. Together, pretend you are upset and practice using the calm down technique.
5. The next time your child is upset, see if they use the strategy independently. If not, that is okay! Just remind them of the strategies they practiced.

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your family better understand conflict resolution?
- What was easy or hard about learning and practicing this skill?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue to practice this skill with my child?

Workplace Readiness Skill

Interpersonal Skills

Activity Sheet

Skill 8

Customer Service

Good customer service is one of the keys to keeping customers returning to a business and is a required skill for many employees. A large part of customer service is simply being nice, polite, and helpful to customers.

Description of Customer Service

Customer service is the assistance and advice provided by a company to those people who buy or use its products or services.

Ways to demonstrate customer service:

- Take a family member a glass of water because you notice they are getting hot working outside in the garden.
- Provide helpful, courteous, and knowledgeable assistance to a customer who cannot find an item in the store.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice customer service skills. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: The L.A.S.T. Method

1. Watch the YouTube video: [How to Give Great Customer Service: The L.A.S.T. Method](https://youtu.be/dnpMqQnt8WY) (youtu.be/dnpMqQnt8WY). This video will introduce you to the Listen, Apologize, Solve, and Thank (L.A.S.T.) method of providing customer service.
2. Take the [quiz](https://bit.ly/LAST-method_quiz) (bit.ly/LAST-method_quiz) for the L.A.S.T. Method.
3. Review the following video and discuss the examples they provide of both effective and ineffective customer service practices. Talk about the positives and negatives of each scenario. [Poor vs Great Customer Service](https://youtu.be/Zy1h49_L8ME) (youtu.be/Zy1h49_L8ME).

Activity 2: Take a Trip

To see customer service in action, plan a trip to a business in the community.

1. Together, decide where you want to go to see customer service in action. This can be a place you are already planning to go to, like the grocery store.
2. Before going, tell your child that the goal is to see how employees provide customer service.
3. While at the business:
 - Point out when you see an employee providing customer service.

- Ask an employee a question like, “Where can I find the bread?”

4. After the visit:

- Rate the customer service experienced and observed at the store.
- Ask your child questions like:
 - Were the employees nice? If so, how did you know? (Did they smile, ask you if they could help, say expressions such as “thank you” and “how are you today?”)
 - Were the employees able to help you get your needs met? (Was your order right, did you get your food on time, did they help you with a problem?)
- Have your child tell you how it made them feel to have good or bad customer service.
- Ask if your child is likely to return to that business because of the customer service experience.
- Ask your child to list some reasons businesses need employees who can provide excellent customer service. For example: so customers return to them, and customers recommend their business to others.

Activity 3: Providing Customer Service at Dinner

1. Ask your child to help you with dinner. They can play the role of a waiter.
2. Have your child take drink and food orders from each person in the family – the “diners” at your restaurant. Have them practice what they will say with you, and make sure it shows good customer service skills.
3. Afterward, provide feedback on their customer service skills.
4. Another time, have you and another family member ‘serve’ your child. This time they get to be the customer. Have one person show good customer service and the other poor customer service.
5. Ask your child which they enjoyed more.

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your family better understand customer service?
- What was easy or hard about learning and practicing this skill?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue to practice this skill with my child?

Workplace Readiness Skill

Interpersonal Skills

Activity Sheet

Skill 9

Respect for Diversity

In light of recent events, diversity may be a challenging topic to address. Yet, being able to work cooperatively with individuals from different backgrounds, beliefs, abilities, and experiences is key to success in any work setting.

Description of Respect for Diversity

Respecting diversity means accepting that there are differences among people related to age, gender, culture, race, values, social status, and ability. It also means being able to work well with people who look, act, or think differently.

Examples of respect for diversity:

- Watching television shows or reading books with characters who are of a different race or culture.
- Acknowledging a coworker's celebration of a holiday that you do not celebrate.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice working respectfully with everyone. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: Teens Talk About Diversity

1. Watch the YouTube video: [Teens Talk About Diversity](https://youtu.be/LFNuRJm4LMs) (youtu.be/LFNuRJm4LMs) with your child.
2. Discuss what diversity means to them in their everyday lives.
3. Ask your child to identify a person they know who is of a different race, culture, gender, religion, or has a disability and how they know them. Share your own experiences working with diverse groups.
4. Review the [R-E-S-P-E-C-T handout](https://bit.ly/RESPECT_handout) (bit.ly/RESPECT_handout) and what each statement means when working with people from diverse groups.
5. Remind your child that while each person in your family has differences, each bring strengths to the family to accomplish tasks in the home (meal prep, housekeeping, etc.) and the same is true when working with people from diverse backgrounds on the job.

Activity 2: My Neighborhood

1. Talk to your child about what diversity means. Ask or share what makes them unique (strengths, talents, skills).

2. Take a walk, bike ride, or drive around your neighborhood. Or, go somewhere in the community, like a restaurant.
3. Ask your child if they saw:
 - A person from a different race.
 - A person from a different gender.
 - A person who is a senior citizen.
 - A person with a disability.
 - A person from a different country or culture.
 - A person who speaks a different language.
 - A house of worship where people practice a different religion.
4. Talk about how diversity is all around us. Talk to your child about what they have in common with the people observed and what may be different.
5. Review the [R-E-S-P-E-C-T handout](https://bit.ly/RESPECT_handout) (bit.ly/RESPECT_handout) with your child. Share your experiences with working with people from diverse backgrounds and the importance of showing respect.

Activity 3: What is Special About Me and You?

1. Have a discussion with your child about what makes them special. Have your child and family members think about what makes them special in terms of their strengths, personality traits, appearance, clothing, religion, hobbies, etc. Write or draw each special thing about your child.
2. Have your child think about a person who seems different from themselves. Discuss what makes that person special. Write or draw out all of the special things about that person.
3. Find the commonalities and circle what is similar. This can help us see that even those who seem different from us can share similarities with us.
4. Find some of the differences and circle them. This can help us see that even where we are different we are special. Diversity is good. The world needs people who have all different types of special skills and strengths.

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your family better understand respect for diversity?
- What was easy or hard about learning and practicing this skill?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue to practice this skill with my child?

Workplace Readiness Skill

Interpersonal Skills

Activity Sheet

Skill 10

Teamwork

In life, we often find ourselves working with others to accomplish a goal like a class science project or painting a room in the house. At work, teamwork is key whether you are working with a customer, a supervisor, or with your coworkers. In fact, teamwork is something that employers want to see and a lot of times they will ask about it in an interview.

Description of Teamwork

Teamwork means sharing responsibility for collaborative work and respecting the thoughts, opinions, and contributions of other team members.

Examples of teamwork:

- Help make dinner with a family member.
- Listen to ideas and develop a social media marketing plan with two coworkers.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice teamwork. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: Discussion on Teamwork

1. Have a conversation as a family about teamwork. To do this, have your child list all of the ways they work with other people to get work done (this can be at home, in school, or in the community).
 2. Once you have this list, break down each example.
 3. Talk about the team and the roles each person plays to work towards finishing their task.
 4. To illustrate teamwork, get 10 pieces of paper and some tape. As a family, work together to build the tallest structure you can. The building must be able to stand on its own.
 5. After you build the tower, talk about what the experience was like.
 6. Discuss the different roles each person played.
 7. Talk about what went well on their team. Highlight what your child did well.
 8. Reflect on what each person could do better and how this would improve the team.
-

Activity 2: Teamwork in Action

1. Come up with a project that needs to be done in the house by multiple family members (ideas: hanging a picture, yard work, dishes, cooking, or cleaning).
2. Break down all of the tasks for the project (e.g., cleaning, return items to where they belong, vacuum the floor). The app [ToDoist](https://todoist.com) (todoist.com) helps make organizing and tracking tasks easier!
3. You can assign different tasks to different family members.
4. Complete the project together using the list of tasks.
5. Discuss how the project went after completion.
 - Did everyone complete their assignment tasks?
 - If not, how did that impact the group?
 - How did working as a team positively impact the outcome of the project?
 - What was hard or easy about working together?
6. If this is a project that is ongoing (like dishes) make this a regular team effort. You can switch up the teams and responsibilities each week.

Activity 3: Trusting your Team

1. Set up an “obstacle course” in your house or yard – you can use cardboard boxes, hula hoops, or any items you have on hand to make obstacles. Layout some rope or rulers to set a start and an endpoint.
2. Put a blindfold on and ask your child to guide you through the path without letting you touch the obstacles.
3. Switch and lead your child. Depending on your child’s skills and interests, you can make it more difficult by conducting one round with spoken instructions only. You can conduct another round in silence and guide by holding hands.
4. After, discuss the importance of trust and teamwork to accomplish a task.

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your family better understand teamwork?
- What was easy or hard about learning and practicing this skill?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue to practice this skill with my child?

Workplace Readiness Skill

Professional Competency

Activity Sheet

Skill 11

Efficiency and Productivity

Efficiency and productivity are essential to getting things done at work or at home. As tasks pile up it is easy to become overwhelmed and unsure of where to start first. Efficiency and productivity skills help us to know what needs to get done first and allow us to make a plan on how to get those tasks accomplished.

Description of Efficiency and Productivity

Being efficient and productive means you plan, prioritize, and adapt work goals in order to manage time and resources.

Examples of being efficient and productive:

- Make a grocery list before shopping in order to stick to the budget and get all needed items quickly.
- Create a to-do list of all your work for the day with the most important tasks at the beginning of the list.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice efficiency and productivity. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: Illustrating Prioritizing with a Jar

1. Collect needed supplies: a large jar, rocks, stones, pebbles, sand, or loose dirt.
2. Start with a discussion on efficiency and productivity. Use the definition above and discuss what that means at home and at work.
3. Fill the jar with as many rocks, stones, pebbles and sand as will fit. Fill the jar in any order of materials you wish.
4. Empty the jar and then fill it this time starting the largest rocks. Next, fill it with the next to the largest, and then the next largest and so on.
5. Discuss which method allowed the most material to fill into the jar.
 - The 2nd method of putting in the largest rocks first probably allowed you to fill it with the most materials.
6. Explain: The rocks (due to size) would be like your most important tasks or goals to complete. Then the stones would be the next most important and then gravel, and then sand. If you fill up your time with the least important tasks first (the sand) you will not have space for the most important tasks.

Activity 2: Developing a Daily Schedule

1. Together, think about all the activities your child typically needs and wants to accomplish throughout their day. Examples: morning routines, schoolwork, meals, chores, fun activities like video games or playing basketball.
2. Write or draw these tasks out on a piece of paper. Discuss when these activities need to be completed and which activities are priorities. Example: eating breakfast comes before brushing teeth.
3. Put activities into a daily schedule in order of importance and when tasks need to be accomplished.
 - To create the schedule try: [Done](https://bit.ly/done-app) (bit.ly/done-app), your smartphone's calendar, [printable picture schedules](https://bit.ly/picture_schedules) (bit.ly/picture_schedules), or [Habitica](https://habitica.com) (habitica.com).
4. Set goals within routine that increase efficiency and productivity. Example: I will complete my nightly routine in 30 minutes.
5. At the end of each day, talk about what went well and what could be improved the next day.

Activity 3: Distractions and Efficiency

1. Set up a task for your child that involves repeatedly building as many as possible of something simple (for example, a small Lego tower, sticking pipe cleaners into styrofoam balls, connecting as many paper-clips as possible, etc.). Ask them to do it with no other rules, and see how many they can make in a minute or two.
2. Progressively add rules to make the task harder (like, clap twice between each completed build, sing a song while building, do it standing on one leg, wear thick gloves, etc.).
3. Compare the amounts produced from doing it *efficiently* to doing it inefficiently. Which was more productive and why?

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your family better understand how to demonstrate efficiency and productivity?
- Did you find practicing this skill difficult or easy and why?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue reinforcing this skill?

Workplace Readiness Skill

Professional Competency

Activity Sheet

Skill 12

Professionalism

People often think of professionalism as how someone is dressed. However, professionalism is more than just appearance. Professionalism includes reporting to work on time, how people behave, and the way individuals communicate with each other in the workplace. Acting like a professional is important to success at any job.

Description of Professionalism

Being professional means meeting organizational expectations regarding work schedule, behavior, appearance, and communication. It also means presenting the very best version of yourself at all times.

Examples of professionalism:

- Be dressed and ready to go on-time when leaving the house for an appointment.
- Give a firm handshake and make eye contact when meeting a manager or coworker for the first time on the job.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice professionalism. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: What's In Your Closet

1. Review the Skills to Pay the Bills video: [Enthusiasm and Attitude](https://youtu.be/-vk-99seC_l) (youtu.be/-vk-99seC_l).
 2. Talk with your child about the difference between the two examples and what professionalism means to them.
 3. Have your child straighten up their closet or area where clothes are kept and challenge them to select a complete outfit they could wear to a job interview. Discuss hairstyles, grooming, and other ways they will need to prepare.
 4. Take a picture or have your child take a selfie of their "professional look" and post it in your child's room.
-

Activity 2: Professionalism at Home

1. Talk to your child about qualities that demonstrate professionalism.
 - Punctuality
 - Appearance
 - Appropriate communication
 - Honesty/Integrity
2. Set guidelines for the professionalism you expect from your child in the home and create a checklist with a yes/no rating.

For example:

Stay-at-Home Professional Checklist		
	YES	NO
I get up on time daily.		
I have good hygiene (ex. bath/shower, brush teeth, clean hair and nails).		
My clothes are clean and neat every day.		
I do my chores and finish them on time.		
I speak with respect to all family members.		
I help out around the house without being asked.		
I use my free time wisely (reading vs. video games or TV).		
I speak positively to and about others.		
My social media posts are positive and appropriate.		

3. Rate your child and then have your child rate themselves on the Stay-at-Home Professional Checklist above.
4. Compare ratings and agree to work on one task for a week to improve professionalism.

Activity 3: A Professional Schedule

1. Create a daily schedule for your child. In each time block, give them two choices. One choice is a professional home activity and the other choice is a non-professional home activity (taking a shower or watching TV).

2. Go over the daily schedule with your child. For each time block ask your child which is the more professional activity (taking a shower or watching TV?). Once they pick the more professional activity (taking a shower because hygiene is important in the workplace) add that activity to the specific time block in the schedule.
3. We all get breaks at work, so allow your child to pick a break time activity after completing several professional activities in a row.

Example of a daily schedule:

Time	Choices	Selected Activity
9 AM - 10 AM	Take a shower or play video games	Shower (hygiene is important for professionalism)
10 AM - 11 AM	Work on schoolwork or take a nap	Schoolwork (focusing on work is the professional choice)
11 AM - 12 PM	Work on schoolwork or take a nap	Schoolwork (focusing on work is the professional choice)
12 PM - 1 PM	Work on schoolwork or lunch	Lunch (taking breaks to refuel is important)
1 PM - 2 PM	Clean your room or text with friends	Clean room (a clean workspace is important)

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your family better understand professionalism?
- What was easy or hard about learning and practicing this skill?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue practice this skill?

Workplace Readiness Skill

Professional Competency

Activity Sheet

Skill 13

Workplace Safety

Following safety rules and understanding risks is important to decreasing the potential for injury to ourselves and others. This is true at home, at work, and in the community. As an employee, it is your responsibility to adhere to safety standards and protocols.

Description of Workplace Safety

Being safe at work means following safety rules and guidelines and knowing what is a risk to self and others.

Examples of workplace safety:

- Wear ear and eye protection when mowing the lawn.
- Wear non-slip shoes in restaurant kitchens.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice workplace safety. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: Safety Starts at Home

1. Many of the hazards that are present in the workplace, such as hot surfaces, cleaning products, and heavy lifting, are also present in the home. Review the list of common hazards on the “Common Hazards” handout (found on page 38).
2. Ask your child:
 - Which of these do you find in or near your home?
 - Which of these do you find at school?
3. After reviewing and discussing Common Hazards, check out your own home for hazards. While your family engages in activities in areas of your home (kitchen, living room, etc.) check the rooms for safety hazards using the “Hazard Hunt” (found on page 39). Work together to figure out how to identify hazards and how to keep yourself safe.
4. You can continue this activity when you are out in the community by identifying hazards you see in restaurants, stores, or other community locations.

Activity 2: Making a Plan for Increasing Safety

1. Review the following short video (2-4 minutes) to become more familiar with common workplace safety issues.
 - [It's Your Job Student Video: Training Works](https://youtu.be/6Gm8Uej4JMs) (youtu.be/6Gm8Uej4JMs)
2. After reviewing the video, identify a few hazards that you would like to help address at home, school, work, or in the community.
3. Then review the following free or low-fee apps to help you address the identified hazards with information on your phone.
 - [15 Practical Workplace Safety Apps for Apple and Android](https://bit.ly/15-workplace-safety-tips) (bit.ly/15-workplace-safety-tips)
4. Write out a plan on how to decrease identified hazards at home, school, work, or community.

Activity 3: Labeling Safe and Unsafe Conditions

1. Together, go through your home (inside and outside) and label common places, items, and machines as a potential safety hazard. Use colored stickers (red for unsafe), or paper with an X to note potential safety hazards. Go back through the house and point out things, like the stove, and ask your child if it is a safety hazard.
2. When you identify “unsafe” items in the home, present your child with two choices of how to interact with that item – one should be safe, and one should be unsafe. Ask your child which is the ‘right’ way.
3. Create a safety plan for when unsafe situations occur. The plan might include when to call 9-1-1 (fire) and what information to provide.
4. Practice the safety plan.

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your family better understand workplace safety?
- What was easy or hard about learning and practicing this skill?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue to practice this skill?

Common Hazards

Review this list of common hazards.

Safety Hazards	Chemical Hazards	Biological Hazards	Other Health Hazards
Hot surfaces Slippery floors Ladders Machines Sharp knives Hot grease Circuits Lack of fire exits Motor vehicles Cluttered work areas Falling objects Violence Areas too bright Areas too dark	Cleaning products Pesticides Solvents Acids Asbestos Lead Ozone (from copiers) Wood dust Mercury Poor air quality Gasoline	Viruses Bacteria Molds Animal diseases Bird diseases Insect-borne Diseases Poison ivy Poison oak Used needles	Noise Vibration Radiation Heat or cold Repetitive movements Awkward posture Heavy lifting Fast pace of work Discrimination/harassment Stress

Hazard Hunt

Instructions:

While spending family time in areas of your home, look for hazards, identify how this hazard might harm you, and what you can do to stay safe. See the example below.

Kitchen	Hazard	Possible Harm	Safety Measure
ex. stove	hot surface	burns	use pot holders

Living Room	Hazard	Possible Harm	Safety Measure

Another Area of the Home	Hazard	Possible Harm	Safety Measure

Workplace Readiness Skill

Professional Competency

Activity Sheet

Skill 14

Information Literacy

Being able to tell the difference between accurate and inaccurate information is critical in all areas of our daily lives. Technology is used by many to communicate with others, find information, access the community, and inform us about what is happening in the world. To be successful in the workplace, it is essential to develop the skills to locate and organize information and to assess whether it is reliable.

Description of Information Literacy

Having information literacy skills means locating information efficiently, evaluating the credibility of resources and facts, and using the information effectively to accomplish work-related tasks.

Examples of information literacy:

- Evaluate a news story on social media to determine if it is reliable or inaccurate information.
- Determine an email is a scam because you discovered the sender is not from a real company after you researched the company name.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice information literacy. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: Website Treasure Hunt: Evaluating Websites

When searching for information, we often hear “Just Google it.” How do you know what you find is accurate and trustworthy? There are some things to look for on websites to know if what you find is correct and useful.

1. As a family, decide on a topic you want to learn more about and type the topic into your internet search bar.
 - For example, *Why do fireflies light up?*
2. Click on one of the websites that resulted from the search.
3. Begin your hunt to determine if the information on the website is reliable and accurate by looking for these things.
 - a) The site’s purpose is clearly stated.
 - b) There are no spelling or grammatical errors.
 - c) The site is easy to navigate and the information is easy to find.
 - d) The name and contact information of who made the site is clear.

- e) The site was created by someone who is an expert on the topic.
 - f) The site was updated recently (this matters for some topics more than others).
 - g) Check to see if other reliable sources also link to this site by going to the search bar and typing “*link: website address.*”
4. What did you find out about the website? Is it reliable? Can you trust the information?
 - Hint: if you answered Yes to A-G, then your information is reliable and trustworthy.
 5. Discuss how this might be helpful in your current or future work. What if you provided information that was inaccurate and business decisions were made based on false information?

Activity 2: Making a Purchase

We make purchases all of the time online and in stores. This activity helps your child understand how to seek out information to evaluate a purchase.

1. Select a specific item needed for purchase (a type of shoe, a specific movie, a brand of cereal, a piece of furniture, etc.). This purchase can be online or in stores.
2. Tell your child that you need them to find credible and reliable information on the selected item you want to purchase to make sure the product is good.
3. Have your child conduct research to find information on the product. They may want to review websites, check out reviews, speak to someone that has purchased the item before, and/or call customer service and ask questions.
4. Have your child decide whether or not to purchase the item after conducting the research. Have your child tell you why they decided the item was worth purchasing or not. How did they know the information they received was reliable?

Activity 3: Telephone Game

1. Getting started. Players must sit in a circle or straight line. You must be close enough to whisper to another player, but far enough away that others can't hear you.
2. Begin the game. The first person in the line or circle whispers a word or phrase into the ear of the person on their right.

Rules:

- (1) The word or phrase can only be whispered once, so players must pay close attention.
 - (2) The word or phrase should not be too familiar, to ensure it will change from person to person.
 - (3) Only the first player should know the word or phrase. The word or phrase could be written down to help with memory.
-

Examples words and phrases:

- (1) Dogs dig holes for big bones.
 - (2) A queen sat on her throne eating thorny pineapples.
 - (3) Twelve tumbling purple people pulled turnips.
 - (4) The funny bunny hid the colored candy in the colored can.
 - (5) Words: Incredible; Superstitious.
3. The next person whispers to the person on their right and it continues until the last person hears the phrase.
 4. The last person says the word or phrase out loud so that everyone can hear how much it has changed.
 5. Discuss how the phrase or word changed so easily and how quickly wrong information can be spread.

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your family better understand how to demonstrate information literacy?
- What was easy or hard about learning and practicing this skill?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue to practice this skill?

Workplace Readiness Skill

Professional Competency

Activity Sheet

Skill 15

Information Technology

We use technology a lot in our daily lives – for work, home, fun, shopping, etc. Technology devices include items like computers, phones, tablets, and more. When we use the term information technology, we’re talking about a set of skills that lets us interact with various types of technology devices.

Description of Information Technology

Information technology means maintaining a working knowledge of devices, resources, hardware, software, systems, services, applications, and IT conventions.

Examples of information technology:

- Use Excel to create a monthly budget.
- Problem-solve to figure out why your printer is not connecting to your work computer.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice information technology. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: Website Treasure Hunt: Evaluating Websites

Most occupations require some type of technology knowledge to do the job. This activity will help your child discover the technology needed for future careers.

1. Start by visiting the website [O*Net](http://onetonline.org) (onetonline.org).
2. Select an occupation to review. Use your child’s specific career goal or search for an occupation that sounds interesting to them.
3. Find the list of technology skills on the occupation’s summary report.
4. Write down all of the technology skills needed for that occupation.
5. Have your child state if they know or don’t know how to use each type of technology needed for the occupation.
6. Pick one unknown type of technology and research it to learn more about that software or piece of equipment. Find out how someone can learn how to use it.
7. If possible, practice using that technology with your child.

For example: If the unknown piece of technology is an Excel sheet, then take some time to go through Excel on your computer.

Activity 2: Problem-Solving Technology

1. Technology issues happen all the time! Work with your child to make a list of common technology issues that happen in your home (WiFi won't work, lights don't turn on, computer crashes).
2. Together, develop a list of solutions for each technology issue. Some great examples of common solutions are things like "Check to see if the WiFi is connected" or "Turn the computer off and on again." If you don't know the solution, try searching for it on the internet. If your child is having trouble figuring out how to problem-solve, use the problem-solving worksheet provided for this lesson (found at the end of this activity).
3. Once you have made a list, talk to your child about which solution they feel comfortable doing on their own and which they might need to practice.
4. The next time you have a problem with technology in your home, have your child consult the list instead of asking you to fix it!

Activity 3: Telephone Game

1. Create a Bingo board with pictures or names of common technology that can be found at home. Make sure to mix in some known and unknown types of technology to make it more challenging. The board can be handmade or you can use an [online template](https://bit.ly/bingo-board-template) (bit.ly/bingo-board-template). Here is an example of a [technology bingo card](https://bit.ly/tech-bingo-card) (bit.ly/tech-bingo-card)
2. Have your child go through your home and locate different types of technology to get Bingo.
3. You can also just hold up an item and have your child mark off what they think it is to get Bingo.
4. Afterward, discuss how the different types of technology found could be used in the workplace.

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your family better understand information technology?
- What was easy or hard about learning and practicing this skill?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue to practice this skill?

How Do We Solve Problems?

START



1. Define the Problem



2. Brainstorm Solutions



3. Pick a Solution



4. Implement the Solution



5. Review the Results



FINISH

Workplace Readiness Skill

Professional Competency

Activity Sheet

Skill 16

Information Security

The internet has opened a whole new world of learning and connecting with others. But this ease of finding information can come with security risks. Discussions at home can help remind your child about how important it is to keep their information safe. Learning about keeping information safe now will help your child as they get into the working world. It's important to learn how to be safe with other people's information as well.

Description of Information Security

Information security means understanding basic internet and email safety and follows workplace protocols to maintain the security of information, computers, networks, and facilities.

Examples of information security:

- Delete emails requesting your personal information from unknown sources.
- Not letting others use your work passwords.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice information security. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: A Discussion on Cyber Safety

1. To learn about how to stay safe on the internet, watch the video: [Safe Website Surfing](https://youtu.be/yrln8nyVBLU) (youtu.be/yrln8nyVBLU).
 2. After viewing this video with your child, reinforce the importance of checking to see who emails come from or if the links or attachments in emails are safe. Being aware of these clues can help protect your child from phishing.
 3. Have your child complete this [Google phishing quiz](https://phishingquiz.withgoogle.com) (phishingquiz.withgoogle.com).
 4. As your child answers each question, talk about why the answer is right or wrong. The quiz will give you answers and explanations, but your child might have more questions about information security (refer to the included references to help answer the questions).
 5. After the quiz, you can click on the link to "take a few simple steps to better protect your online accounts." This will help ensure future information security.
-

Activity 2: Creating a Safe Password

Having a secure password is one of the first steps in keeping online information safe. This activity will help your child discover how to create and save passwords securely.

1. Think of a fun phrase or an event that you remember. It could be a favorite film, or when and which high school your child will graduate from, etc.
For example: Hamilton on Disney Plus summer of 2020
2. Use the first letter from some or all the words in the phrase or title.
For example: HAModpsummero20
3. Change some of the letters into numbers, some into symbols, and some upper and lowercase.
For example: H@Mod+summ3ro20
4. Now that you have created a secure password, as a family, decide where it is safe to store passwords. This could be on a piece of paper in a secure place, on a computer or phone that is password-protected, or an app like [Dashlane](https://dashlane.com) (dashlane.com).

Activity 3: Keeping Information Private

1. Help your child understand which information should be shared with which kinds of people. Using the “What Level of Security?” activity (found on page 48), read or show your child a piece of information and ask them if it could be shared with No One, Friends, or Anyone. Make sure they understand that anyone includes strangers and people they don’t know.
2. Discuss what could happen if you shared the information with the wrong person.
3. Add other types of information to increase difficulty for continued practice.

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your family better understand information security?
- What was easy or hard about learning and practicing this skill?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue to practice this skill?

What Level of Security?

Instructions:
Sort the list of words in the word bank into the categories of security on this page.
Who can you share what information with?

Word bank	No One	Friends	Anyone
My name			
My birth date			
My parents' names			
My phone number			
My favorite song			
My address			
My favorite color			
My Social Security Number			
My Credit Card number			
My email address			
What school I go to			
Photos of me			

Workplace Readiness Skill

Professional Competency

Activity Sheet

Skill 17

Mathematics

People use math at work all the time and sometimes without realizing it. We need math to measure, figure out expenses, and follow a calendar. Working with numbers is an important job skill and building skills for work often starts at home.

Description of Mathematics

Having mathematical skills means applying math skills to complete activities and tasks at work.

Examples of using math skills:

- Use measuring spoons (fractions) to measure ingredients for cooking.
- Count the money in a cash register.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice mathematics. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: Math is in Our Everyday Life

1. Together, watch [Real Life Math](https://youtu.be/HtqllVN9bh8) (youtu.be/HtqllVN9bh8).
2. While watching the video see how many jobs you can think of within each math category named.

For example:

Under measurement, you might realize carpenters, construction workers, cooks, and architects need math skills. At the end of the video, you should have a list of jobs that require math skills.

3. For some, math comes easily. But for many, math is a skill that needs to be practiced. Pick one of these math sites to play a math game together. After all, math can be fun!
 - [Cool Math Games](https://coolmathgames.com) (coolmathgames.com) allow you to search by specific math skills and includes games on numeracy and logic skills.
 - [Softschools](https://softschools.com/math/games) (softschools.com/math/games) offers a variety of math games and practice activities related to basic math skills.

Activity 2: Cooking with Math

1. Cooking is something that often happens daily and requires math skills to follow a recipe. Together, pick a recipe to cook. This can be for a meal or dessert. Something new or something you have cooked before.

2. Have your child follow the recipe with your help. Point out when your child has to use their math skills.

For example:

Measuring a cup of flour or estimating how many chocolate chips to add.

3. To make it challenging, have your child double or halve the recipe.
4. If you need to go to the store to buy the ingredients, work together to calculate the cost of the recipe.

Activity 3: **Let's Build Something**

1. Gather supplies to build a structure. This could be Legos, blocks, sticks, or other items you have laying around the house.
2. Tell your child to build a structure that is 1-foot tall (or any height of your choosing). Your child needs to build it by estimating how tall a foot is.
3. After the structure is complete, provide a ruler or tape measure. Have them measure it and see how close they were to a foot tall.
4. Now, give them the measuring device and tell them to build a 2-foot structure (or any height of your choosing).
5. Once they are done, ask them which structure was easier to build to the exact measurements that you requested.
6. Explain that having the correct materials and instruments is important in math!
7. Talk about what other mathematical instruments we use to make our work easier or more precise (calculators, clocks, and timers).

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your family better understand everyday mathematics?
- What was easy or hard about learning and practicing this skill?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue to practice this skill?

Workplace Readiness Skill

Professional Competency

Activity Sheet

Skill 18

Reading and Writing

Reading and writing are skills people use and need on a daily basis to function in their community and at their work. Almost every task from texting to driving to cooking requires some reading and writing ability. Most jobs also have requirements that involve reading and writing. Some jobs, like being an author or lawyer, require a lot of reading and writing, but most jobs want employees to be able to read simple texts and write simple sentences.

Description of Reading and Writing

Having reading and writing skills means being able to make sense of words on a page and write or type out thoughts or ideas.

Examples of reading and writing skills:

- Reading and writing texts to family and friends.
- Reading and responding to work emails.

Menu of Activities

These activities are designed to help families discuss and practice reading and writing. Choose one or more activities to complete with your child.

Activity 1: Build Vocabulary and Practice Reading

1. As a family, share how you use reading and writing at work or at home. The tasks don't need to be complicated. Share how you use reading and writing and how it helps get the job done.
2. Learning new words can be fun to use during those times that you write for work or at home. Have each person in the family choose a new word to learn.
 - If you are having a hard time finding words, search [merriam-webster.com](https://www.merriam-webster.com) to find fun new words.
3. Have your child pick a word:
 - a) Write down the definition.
 - b) Make a sentence with the word.
 - c) Share the word with other family members.
 - d) Try to use the word in different ways throughout the week.

Activity 2: Creating a Story

1. Have each family member contribute to a family story.
2. One person starts the story and then each person writes a sentence or paragraph to follow the previous entry.
3. At the end, everyone reads the finished story.
4. To make it silly, pick a topic (going to the movies, eating ice cream, traveling in a car) and have everyone write out a sentence or two to contribute to the story. No peeking at your family member sentences until the end!
5. Put all of the sentences together to create a silly story.

Activity 3: Making a Connection

1. If your child is not yet a reader, use this activity to build skills.
2. With sticky notes or paper and tape, go around the house together and write the names of common household items on the notes, labeling them. Place the sticky note on the item. Practice reading the words for the objects together. Point out if the object is also commonly found at work-sites, like computers, phones, or pens.
3. Keep the labels up and encourage your child to try to read the words when they come into contact with the object.

Reflection

Review the questions with your child and respond together after completing the activities.

- Did this information help your family better understand everyday reading and writing?
- What was easy or hard about learning and practicing this skill?
- Why is this skill important to use at home and at work?
- How do we continue to practice this skill in the home and in the community?
- What additional information or resources do I need to continue to practice this skill?

Index

5Cs

In order to meet the changing expectations of the workforce, the Profile of a Virginia Graduate was created to establish a new set of expectations. This profile describes the knowledge, skills, experiences and attributes that students must attain to be life ready. Skills including workplace readiness and the 5C's: critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, collaboration, and citizenship skills.

These 5Cs should be incorporated into daily instruction at school, home, and community as frequently as possible. This workplace readiness toolkit includes activities to enhance workplace readiness skills that align with the skills of critical and creative thinking, collaboration, communication and citizenship.

5Cs	Activity Sheet
Critical Thinking	1.3, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 5.2, 5.3, 6.1, 7.1, 7.2, 8.1, 8.2, 9.3, 10.3, 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 12.1, 12.2, 12.3, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 14.1, 14.2, 15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 16.1, 16.2, 16.3, 17.1, 17.3
Creative Thinking	2.1, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 8.3, 10.1, 10.3, 11.3, 12.1, 16.1, 17.2, 17.3, 18.1, 18.2
Collaboration	1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 4.1, 5.3, 6.3, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 8.2, 9.1, 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 11.3, 12.1, 12.2, 13.1, 13.2, 14.1, 14.3, 15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 16.2, 16.3, 17.3, 18.2, 18.3
Communication	1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.3, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 8.1, 8.2, 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 10.1, 10.3, 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 12.1, 12.2, 12.3, 13.1, 13.2, 14.1, 14.2, 14.3, 15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 16.1, 16.2, 16.3, 17.3, 18.1, 18.2, 18.3
Citizenship	4.1, 8.1, 8.2, 9.1, 10.2, 12.2, 13.2, 13.3, 17.2

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