

Module 2: Overcoming Barriers to Employment

Part 4: Job Seeking and Job Supports

Welcome to the Promise parent learning module about job seeking and job supports. In this module, you'll learn about effective ways to get a job and options for extra support on the job.

Job Seeking

Are you worried that there are not many jobs in your community or that your child would have a hard time competing for a job? If so, there are steps you can take to overcome this challenge.

Tap into the Hidden Job Market

Did you know that most jobs are never advertised? Most jobs exist in what's called the hidden job market. People tap into the hidden job market by networking with people they know. Also, many young people find their first jobs through their family and friend connections.

To help your child tap into the hidden job market, you can make a list of the people you know and the places you go. There is a relationship mapping activity sheet that you can download from the Promise parent learning community.

Work with Job Developer

The second thing you can do is talk to your school and DVR counselor about working with a job developer. Job developers help people find job openings, and they network with employers to hire people with disabilities. Some job developers have skills to negotiate job carving or job customization with employers. This approach can be especially helpful for job seekers with significant disabilities.

If you choose to work with a job developer, make sure your child meets with the job developer often and is involved in his or her own job search as much as possible. Also make sure your child and the job developer follows through on their job seeking responsibilities. If your job developer is not following through, talk to your DVR counselor.

More Job Seeking Strategies

Other job seeking strategies you and your child should consider are talking to your DVR counselor about using the DVR work experience or youth on-the-job-training programs, use the [job seeker tools](#) at the Wisconsin Job Center, either by going there in-person or using the website at jobcenterofwisconsin.com. Prepare job applications ahead of time and bring them to refer to when filling out applications during job seeking times. Polish up interview skills by doing mock interviews at school or at the job center.

Self-Employment

And consider self-employment or microenterprise as an option. People with disabilities can be successful business owners. You can learn more about customized self-employment by talking to your DVR counselor.

Job Supports

Will your child need extra help and support to learn a job and possibly keep a job over the long term? If so, there are a number of ways your child can be supported to be successful at work.

Natural Supports: The first way that people are supported at work is through natural supports. Everyone relies on natural supports at work. Natural supports are simply the other people at work like supervisors and co-workers.

Assistive Technology: Another option for support could be assistive technology. Assistive technology can be low-tech solutions, such as a picture task board, or high tech solutions, such as a computer screen reader that can help your child perform their job more efficiently or independently. Ask your DVR counselor about getting an assistive technology evaluation.

Job Coaches: Other types of job supports include job coaches, which are provided by DVR, your school, or a long-term care program if you are enrolled in one. Job coaches are paid to provide workplace supports above and beyond the support that your supervisor or co-workers naturally provide. Job coaches don't take the place of natural supports, but they can help your child learn a job.

For some people, learning a job can take awhile. Job coaches can provide that extra support on the job or off the job. For example, they can help your child get to work, to check in with your child during the day or week, or problem solve with your child after work hours.

Personal Assistance: Personal assistance in the workplace is another option if your child needs support on a job for health and safety reasons. Workplace personal assistance can be provided if your child is enrolled in a long-term care program.

Personal Care: Another option is personal care. If your child needs personal care services at work, such as help using the bathroom or help eating a meal, personal care can be provided if your child is eligible for family care or IRIS long-term care programs at age 18.

Conclusion

This concludes the parent training module on job seeking and job supports. If you have questions, talk to your DVR counselor about your questions and concerns.