

# Charting the LifeCourse



## Daily Life & Employment

Before you know it, school will be ending and adult life beginning. Transition is a time to think about what adult life will look like and explore what you will be doing as part of daily life when the school bus stops coming! You will likely make choices based on what you like and what you want to do. This guide is designed to help you and your family think about questions to ask, things to do, and resources to lead you to a job, career, volunteering, college or continuing education, and ultimately, the life you want.

### LIFE DOMAIN



#### Daily Life & Employment

*What a person does as part of everyday life— school, employment, volunteering, communication, routines, life skills.*

### LIFE STAGE



#### Transition

*Transitioning from school to adult life (14-21)*

To find out more about how to use the Life Course employment materials, please contact:

#### Connecticut Family Support Network (CTFSN)

[ctfsn.org](http://ctfsn.org)

1-877-FSN-2DAY (1-877-376-2329)



or

#### PATH Parent to Parent/Family Voices of Connecticut

[pathct.org](http://pathct.org)

1-800-399-PATH (1-203-234-9554)



PROVIDED BY THE  
CONNECTICUT  
COMMUNITY  OF PRACTICE  
FOR SUPPORTING FAMILIES

**Charting the Life Course: Daily Life & Employment Guide – Transition Age  
Connecticut Edition**

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Charting the Life Course: Daily Life & Employment (2015) was created by Jane St. John and Michelle C. Reynolds, Ph.D. at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Institute for Human Development, University Center on Developmental Disabilities. Together in partnership, the Connecticut Community of Practice for Supporting Families adapted it to fit the needs of Connecticut. For more information about this product and other LifeCourse Supporting Families materials, visit [supportstofamilies.org](http://supportstofamilies.org).

**This document provides information of a general nature and is designed for information and educational purposes only and does not constitute medical or legal advice.**

# WHAT IS THIS, and who is it for?



This guide is one in a series of LifeCourse domain guides focused on Daily Life and Employment. It is intended to help you, your family, or the people who support you think about what you like and want to do as you grow from childhood into young adulthood and beyond. This guide will help you think about questions to ask, things to do, and resources to access that lead to a job, career, volunteer position, or continuing education of your choice.

## Youth and Families

Parents, step-parents, foster parents, siblings, grandparents and extended family play an important role in the lives of youth who are starting to think about what they will do when high school ends, and taking control of their own lives. The transition years are critical in shaping the future of a young person with disability. What happens during this time can have a lasting effect, good or bad, on the life that an individual leads as an adult. Employment may or may not have been considered as an option, but the reality is that school is ending and the young adult will want to have meaningful activities in their new phase of life!

More and more, there is an expectation that this will include employment or related activities. College or other continuing education opportunities might also be part of the picture. There are strategies and skills that can be learned and implemented during this time of transition that can assist a young person to have the job and/or career they choose when they are an adult based on their likes, dislikes, gifts, talents and abilities.

This guide provides the questions to ask or think about, and strategies to get the answers and move closer to the desired result. It is not intended to be all inclusive, but is a starting place for youth and families to individualize it to meet their own unique needs. It is meant to be a conversation starter as youth and families begin to think about and plan for adult life.

## Supporters

Community members, employers, support coordinators, teachers, counselors, therapists and others can use this guide to help transition age youth and their families think about and plan for the future, and support a trajectory toward real jobs and real lives for people with disabilities. Youth and families often don't know what they don't know, and this guide provides some of the questions to ask or think about and the resources to look for the answers and next steps toward employment and career goals. Potential employers and community members can use the packet to better understand the goals and needs of individuals seeking employment, and how to provide a more inclusive environment. It can also be a source of professional development for those who support individuals and families.

# WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW

before getting started?



*Charting the LifeCourse* is a framework created to help individuals and families of all abilities and all ages develop a vision for a good life, think about what they need to know and do, identify how to find or develop supports, and discover what it takes to live the lives they want to live. Individuals and families may focus on their current situation and stage of life but may also find it helpful to look ahead to think about life experiences that will help move them toward an inclusive, productive life in the future.

Even though it was originally created for people with disabilities, this universally-designed framework may be used by any person or family making a life plan, regardless of life circumstances.

## FOUNDATION OF THE LIFECOURSE FRAMEWORK

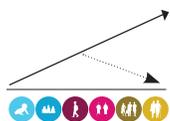
The following are the building blocks of the LifeCourse framework. They are the core principles and values that are important as we begin to think differently about what it means to support individuals with disabilities and their families to have good lives.

**Core Belief:** All people have the right to live, love, work, play, and pursue their life aspirations.



### ALL People

ALL people, regardless of age, ability or family role, are considered in our vision, values, policies and practices for supporting individuals and families.



### Life Stages and Trajectory

Individuals and families can focus on a specific life stage, with an awareness of how prior, current and future life stages and experiences impact and influence life trajectory. It is important to have a vision for a good, quality life, and have opportunities, experiences and support to move the life trajectory in a positive direction.



### Life Outcomes

Individuals and families plan for present and future life outcomes that take into account all facets of life and have life experiences that build self-determination, social capital, economic sufficiency and community inclusion.



### Family System and Cycles

People exist and have give-and-take roles within a family system. Roles adjust as the individual members change and age. Individuals and families need supports that address all facets of life and adjust as the family ages through family cycles and the roles and needs of members change.



### Life Domains

People lead whole lives made up of specific, connected, and integrated life domains that are important to a good quality of life. These include daily living, community living, safety and security, healthy lifestyles, social and spirituality, and citizenship and advocacy.



### Individual and Family Supports

Supports address all facets of life and adjust as roles and needs of all family members change. Types of support might include discovery and navigation (information, education, skill building); connecting and networking (peer support); and goods and services (daily living and financial supports).



### Integrated Delivery of Supports

Individuals and families access an array of integrated supports to achieve the envisioned good life, including those that are publicly or privately funded and based on eligibility; community supports that are available to anyone; relationship-based supports; technology; and that take into account the assets and strengths of the individual and family.



### Policy and Systems

Individuals and families are truly involved in policy making so that they influence planning, policy, implementation, evaluation and revision of the practices that affect them. Every program, organization, system and policy maker must always think about a person in the context of family.

To learn more about the LifeCourse framework, visit [supportstofamilies.org](http://supportstofamilies.org).

# WHAT DOES IT TAKE

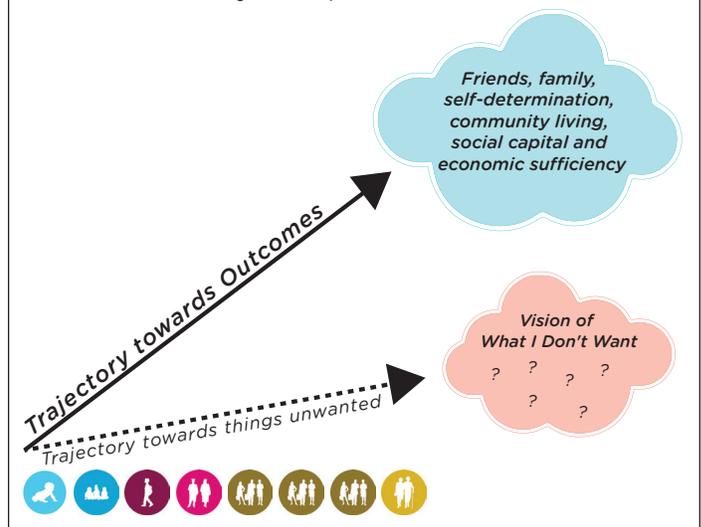
to get to the good life?



Every child, from a young age, dreams about what they want to be, where they want to live, if they will get married and have a family, and what their life will look like when they are grown. Parents often encourage their children to dream big, even when it might seem like the dream is out of reach. It should be no different for a child with a disability or special healthcare need. As the child becomes a teenager, it is even more important for the youth and the family to have a vision of what the future might look like. Even as an adult, it is important to keep a vision of the future in mind into adulthood and senior years. The best gift a parent can give a child is optimism and high expectations, offering encouragement, support, and experiences to prepare for the road ahead.

Think about shooting an arrow. You need to have a target at which to aim, or the arrow might go off course and not land where you would like. The goal is for the arrow to go towards the bulls-eye of the target. If the goal is to have inclusive, good lives in the community as adults, then from a young age, the child and the family can begin to aim for that goal and set a path to get there. This is called a life trajectory. If individuals and families want to achieve enviable lives in the community, then they must have a vision

**FIGURE 1.** Trajectory toward the Good Life



of where the trajectory is aimed. What does that enviable life look like? What kind of things would be part of that life? They also might want to keep the things in life they DON'T want in mind, and make sure life experiences and events aren't pushing them that direction. By having a vision for the future from a young age, it is more likely that the life trajectory will lead the person to the life of which they dream.

On the next two pages, you will find a worksheet to begin to create your own employment trajectory.

First, on the left side of the large **purple** bubble on the upper right side of the page, list a few things that make a good life for you, in general (not specific to employment). These are often the things you want that employment will help make possible!

Next, list your long-term vision for employment in the large **purple** bubble on the right side. In the lower section of the purple bubble is space for you to list conditions, preferences and support needs.

**Conditions** are things you **MUST** have in order to apply for or accept a job. **Preferences** are those things you would **LIKE** to have in a job. Conditions and preferences could include things such as salary, schedule, benefits, environment,

benefits, job tasks, or dress code. **Support Needs** are things that will help you be successful getting and keeping a job. Examples could include your particular learning style, job accommodation needs or transportation.

In the **red** box on the bottom right, list the things you don't want in your life overall on the left. On the right, list the things you don't want in your employment vision.

The boxes along the trajectory arrow are to help you think about and list life experiences you have had or need to have at the transition and adult life stages. List life experiences or events that help you move toward your desired employment vision **ABOVE** the line in the box, and the experiences and events that could move your trajectory toward the things you don't want, **BELOW** the line.

# EMPLOYMENT TRAJECTORY WORKSHEET

## Past Life Experiences

LIST past life experiences and events that support your employment vision.

## Future Life Experiences

LIST current/ future life experiences that continue supporting your employment vision.

LIST past life experiences that push the arrow toward things you don't want.

LIST life experiences to avoid because they push you toward things you don't want.

Write  
current age  
in the STAR





## VISION for a GOOD LIFE

LIST what you want your OVERALL  
"good life" to look like ...

LIST what you want for your  
"good life" EMPLOYMENT vision...

Conditions:

Preferences:

Support Needs:

\*See page 3 for explanation & instructions

## What I DON'T Want

LIST what you DON'T want in  
your OVERALL life...

LIST the things you don't want in  
EMPLOYMENT...



## Why do people work?

The quick answer is to make money to support themselves financially and get the things they want. But work is also an opportunity to build friendships, learn new things, and achieve a sense of accomplishment, competence and pride! Working gives people something to do with their time, adds structure to their day, builds social networks, and helps attain a sense of purpose. Work is an important part of adult identity, and this is as true for individuals with disabilities as it is for anyone. Having the right job can greatly increase satisfaction with and quality of life.

Sometimes people with disabilities encounter barriers to employment. Some common barriers include not knowing what kind of job they want to do, not having the skills needed for a particular job, not having work experience, and other issues such as transportation and needed accommodations. Another barrier can be the lack of expectation of the individual, family or other supporters that the person can and should be employed.

People with disabilities have a higher rate of unemployment than the general population. But it doesn't have to be that way. People with disabilities often want to work, and are able to work if given the support and preparation they need to be successful.

It begins early and continues throughout the life course. Beginning in childhood, families, schools, friends, community members, support coordinators and other supporters can encourage the child to develop a vision for their future, including what kind of job they would like to have. All children dream about what they want to be when they grow up, and children who happen to have a disability or special healthcare need are no different! As children prepare to leave high school, they begin to focus even more on jobs, careers, college or continuing education. As adults, sometimes we make the decision to change jobs or careers, and eventually begin to think about retirement.

## A Change In Our Thinking...

In the past, many people with disabilities have not had many chances to find employment in their community alongside their non-disabled peers. They commonly worked in jobs that were created just for people with disabilities and segregated from the rest of the community. Some reasons why people with disabilities may not have had access to employment were:

- Low expectations about what people with disabilities can contribute as workers;
- Stereotypes about what type of work people with disabilities can do;
- Focus on the limitations of a person with a disability instead of their abilities and skills;
- Lack of exposure to work experiences in the community.

Today, the way we think about employment for a person with a disability has changed. People with disabilities are also valued employees in their communities. People with disabilities want to work and their families and supporters to see beyond old stereotypes and focus on the person's skills, abilities, and interests when thinking about employment. People with disabilities can and do hold real community jobs as productive and valued employees.

## REAL LIFE EMPLOYMENT STORIES



### **This is Briana.**

Briana is employed as a receptionist and clerical support at the West Region Main Office for the Department of Developmental Services. She has always wanted a job where she felt respected and could share her skills. She took a positive approach and did her research about the company, practiced her communication skills, and brushed up on her computer knowledge before she interviewed. Now that she has the job, Bri hopes she is an inspiration to people who are thinking they want to work but are afraid of what the job might be.



### **Meet Will.**

Will is employed as a Clerk 1 for the Department of Motor Vehicles in the Wethersfield office. Will is a valued employee who works 36 hours a week and is making above minimum wage with standard yearly raises and benefits. He has a few hours a week for job coaching but he has made many friends at his job and they have been an amazing support to him. Everyone knows him at the Wethersfield DMV. Will loves his job, the respect that his coworkers give him, and the friends he has made.



### **This is Cheryl.**

Cheryl has been employed at a day care for seven years. She works 20–40 hours a week depending on the needs of the day care. She makes sure the children are always safe, assists with preparing meals, assures all the supplies are ordered and in place so they are available throughout the day to all staff, regularly cleans the toys, assists with outdoor supervision, reads during story time, changes diapers, but most of all Cheryl has fun playing and being with the children. Cheryl loves working with children. She is living her dream job!



### **This is Gene.**

For over 10 years, Gene has been walking or riding his bike to work at Carter Chevrolet in Manchester. Gene is the go-to Maintenance Worker and is responsible for maintaining the grounds. He takes care of the trash, recycles the cardboard and metal, and takes pride in sweeping up around the business. Gene enjoys coming to work every day – Monday through Friday. He has an amazing relationship with his boss and coworkers. He has great work buddies that all support each other throughout the day. Gene absolutely LOVES his job!

These stories were summarized from the Connecticut Employment Idol video series published by the Connecticut Department of Developmental Services. To watch the Employment Idol videos, visit:

<http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?q=508598>

# Discovering WHO



Before you can make decisions about what you want to do in your adult life, like the kind of job or career you want, you have to learn about yourself and your interests. What do you have a passion to spend your day doing? What is it about work that is appealing to you? What's going to ignite a fire in you that will make you get out of bed and contribute each day?

No one knows you and your interests better than you and those closest to you. One way to begin this process is by creating a One Page Profile. A One Page Profile is a short introduction to a person, which captures key information on a single page. On the next page is a template for you to create your One Page Profile. You should include enough detail that someone who has never met you would have a good idea of who you are and understand what matters to you.

**What people like and admire about me:** This is a list of your positive strengths, talents and qualities. Ask family or others who know you well for input, or do this exercise as a group activity.

**What's important to me:** Things about your life that are important to you, including people, places, interests, passions, hobbies, possessions, rituals, routines, as well what's important related to work. What are things that you value the most and make you who you are?

**How to best support me:** Identify specific kinds of support that are helpful to you and what is not. Think about the support you need to create the best environment and outcomes in your life.



Ben recently made the transition to adulthood and created his own One Page Profile in the process of planning for the future.

## I PITY THE FOOL WHO DOESN'T LIKE



## BEN'S ONE PAGE PROFILE!

### WHAT PEOPLE LIKE & ADMIRE ABOUT ME

- I like to make other people feel good and be happy.
- I have a great smile and a contagious laugh. I frequently "get the giggles"!
- I'm fun, silly and friendly!
- I am a dedicated volunteer in my community
- I am an Eagle Scout and an adult leader in scouting - been involved in service through scouting since first grade.
- I am a man about town!
- My tattoo!!
- My great hugs!
- I am willing to try new things...
- I remember songs and who sings them
- I am not usually a complainer, even though sometimes I am in pain or uncomfortable

### WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO ME

- My family and friends
- Volunteering at the Fire Station, wearing my uniform and badge
- Going to the library
- Going to church
- My TV, DVR, and radio/CD player (I like to play them all at once sometimes)
- My iPad
- WWE wrestling - I love when my brother Matt takes me to live shows
- Nascar Racing (Jeff Gordon is my favorite driver)
- Going to country music concerts
- Feeling like I belong
- Being like everybody else, not being treated differently
- Getting a tattoo (already planning my next tattoo)
- Having control over my life as much as possible
- My Excelsior Springs Tigers - especially football
- Riding horses at NTRC
- Facebook friends
- Having an occasional beer with friends
- Having a purpose and being productive

### HOW BEST TO SUPPORT ME

- I need help remembering things, like what I did or who I saw today.
- I get confused easily so I need help not getting lost or turned around when I am out and about.
- I know what times I am supposed to take my meds, but I need help getting them out and getting refills.
- I get anxious sometimes, need to be reassured that people I care about will be there for me.
- I don't like to spend time alone, but I am working on it, help me not be so anxious when I am alone for short periods of time.
- I sometimes need someone to steady me if I get off balance.
- I need to rest or extra support if I have to do a lot of walking or standing. If I am shopping, it helps if I am the cart-pusher.
- I need support keeping in touch with friends and family and practicing having good conversations.
- I'm friendly even though I may not look you in the eye at first

For more tools to help you navigate the transition to employment, visit [lifecoursetools.com](http://lifecoursetools.com)

# MY ONE PAGE PROFILE

What people like and admire about me

What's Important to me

How to best support me



Sometimes if you have not worked before it's very difficult to make a decision on what type of work you may be interested in. That's when some exploring comes in handy. What is job exploration? Think of it as investigating and experiencing different work situations, talking with others who do the type of work you are interested in, asking them how they got their position they are in, watching someone else do the job for a period of time, and, even trying it out if you have a chance. Identifying all the different aspects of different jobs allows you to identify what the job entails and how it matches your interests.

The following section is to help you think about different types of employment, and other considerations that you might want to take into account as you explore. Place a check mark (✓) next to the items that you would like to explore further. It also includes descriptions of different types of careers based on interests and abilities, with lists of examples of jobs in each career category. It might be helpful to have a pencil handy and circle some of the careers or specific jobs that you think you are interested in learning more about.

## Do I want to work for an already existing business?

- Full time employment:** Job in which a person works a minimum number of hours defined as such by his/her employer. Standard is 5 eight hour days, for a total of 40 hours a week.
- Part time employment:** Work fewer hours per week than full time. Commonly workers are considered part time if they work fewer than 30 or 35 hours per week.
- Temporary employment:** Employee is expected to leave the employer within a certain period of time.
- Seasonal employment:** Temporary employment in which the employee is expected to only work a certain season. It could be a calendar year season (summer) or a holiday season (Christmas).

## Would I prefer to create my own business?

- Odd jobs:** Part time work comprised of a variety of jobs, such as handyman work or housekeeping.
- Self-employment:** Earning income directly from customers, clients or other organizations as opposed to being an employee of a business (or person).
- Freelancer:** A person who is self-employed and is not committed to a particular employer long term. These workers are sometimes represented by a company or an agency that resells their labor and that of others to its clients.
- Micro-enterprise:** A type of small business, often registered, having five or fewer employees and requiring seed capital of not more than \$35,000.

## Do I want to continue my education?

- Community College:** Publicly funded two year educational institution, granting certificates, diplomas or two year associate's degrees. Many also offer continuing or adult education programs.
- Four year College or University:** These schools offer bachelor's degrees, which are usually completed in four years of full-time study, and some may also have a graduate school that offer masters degrees.
- Technical or Trade School:** These schools offer a certificate, degree, or diploma from a career college and will train you for a specific career, trade, or a variety of technical positions, including automotive technician, computer technician, hairstylist, medical assistant, truck driver, and many other fields.

## What else should I think about?

- Physical strain of job: physical labor, sitting all day at a desk or table, and everything in-between
- Climate: indoor/outdoor, climate controlled setting or not
- Working in a group or working alone
- Doing one part of a job, or doing the whole thing from start to finish
- Repetitiveness or predictability
- Education or training required to hold the job

# EXPLORING CAREER POSSIBILITIES

## Realistic Careers (Do'ers)

Require mechanical ability and a desire to work with objects.

- Mechanic/Automotive
- Farming/Agriculture
- Landscaping
- Forestry/Fish & Game
- Construction
- Law Enforcement
- Athletic Trainer
- Animals/Zoology
- Floral Designer
- Electrician
- Carpenter
- Chef/cook

People who have athletic ability, prefer to work with objects, machines, tools, plants or animals or to be outdoors

## Investigative Careers (Thinkers)

Involve observing, analyzing, or solving problems.

- Computers/Information Technology (IT)
- Medical careers (doctor, medical technician, pharmacist)
- Meteorologist
- Surveyor
- Veterinarian

People who like to observe, learn, investigate, analyze, evaluate or solve problems

## Artistic Careers (Creators)

Require a desire for creative experiences.

- Artist
- Actor/Actress
- Entertainer/Performer
- Photographer
- Writer
- Graphic design
- Music/Art Teacher
- Fashion

People who have artistic, innovating, or intuitional abilities and like to work in unstructured situations using their imagination and creativity

## Social Careers (Helpers)

Involve supporting, informing, training, or enlightening others.

- Health Careers (CNA, medical assistant)
- Dental Hygienist
- Librarian
- Social Work
- Counselor
- Teacher
- Volunteer services
- Recreation
- Religious ministry

People who like to work with people to enlighten, inform, help, train, or cure them or are skilled with words

## Enterprising Careers (Persuaders)

Involve influencing, persuading, or leading others.

- Real Estate Agent
- Travel Agent
- Sales/Retail work
- Auctioneer
- Hotel Manager
- Hostess/Greeter/Receptionist

People who like to work with people, influencing, persuading, leading, or managing for organizational goals or economic gain

## Conventional Careers (Organizers)

Conventional careers entail working with information, numbers, or details.

- Office/Clerical/Secretary
- Bookkeeper (accounting)
- Data entry
- Bank Teller
- Mail Carrier/Post Office Clerk
- Bank Teller
- Clerk
- Janitorial/Housekeeping
- Food Service

People who like to work with data, have clerical or numerical ability, carry out tasks in detail, or follow through on others' instructions



This section is to help you think about HOW you can begin to work on different aspects of your next phase of life. Who can help you with job exploration, getting a summer job, filling out applications, or answer questions you might have? Who might be

able to assist you with your needs once you get a job? What kinds of supports might help you and where do you find the supports you need?

Everyone uses a variety of resources and supports to get through their day-to-day routines. People build upon their own assets, skills, and capabilities. Most of us have people in our lives that do things for us (and vice versa). We tap into available community groups, clubs, organizations, and resources. And who doesn't use technology these days?

Ideally, when someone has different abilities or support needs they might need to access eligibility-based supports, but should also remember to look to the same types of supports that anyone else would use!

In order to support a trajectory to an inclusive, quality, community life, supports for individuals and families should ideally be a combination and partnership of the personal strengths and assets of the individual and family, relationship-based supports, technology, community resources, and eligibility-based supports.

**Personal assets and strengths** are those things that a person or family brings to the table. It might be tangible resources, or it might be the knowledge, skills, strengths, personality or capabilities of the person.

**Relationship-based supports** are the things with which family, friends, neighbors, co-workers and other people can help. One person probably can't provide all the support a person might need, but several people might each be able to do one thing!

**Technology-based supports** could be anything from specialized technology, computers, ipads, smart phones, to something as simple as an alarm clock.

**Community-based supports** are those things that any community member can access. This might include community centers, parks and recreation, public transportation or faith based resources.

**Eligibility-based supports** include those services or things that someone is eligible to access based on disability, age, income or other specific criteria.

Sometimes, a person might rely so much on systems supports that it can get in the way or interfere with relationships, community and other things that are important to them. The trick is to provide just enough support, where and when the person needs it, for them to be able to live the life they would like.

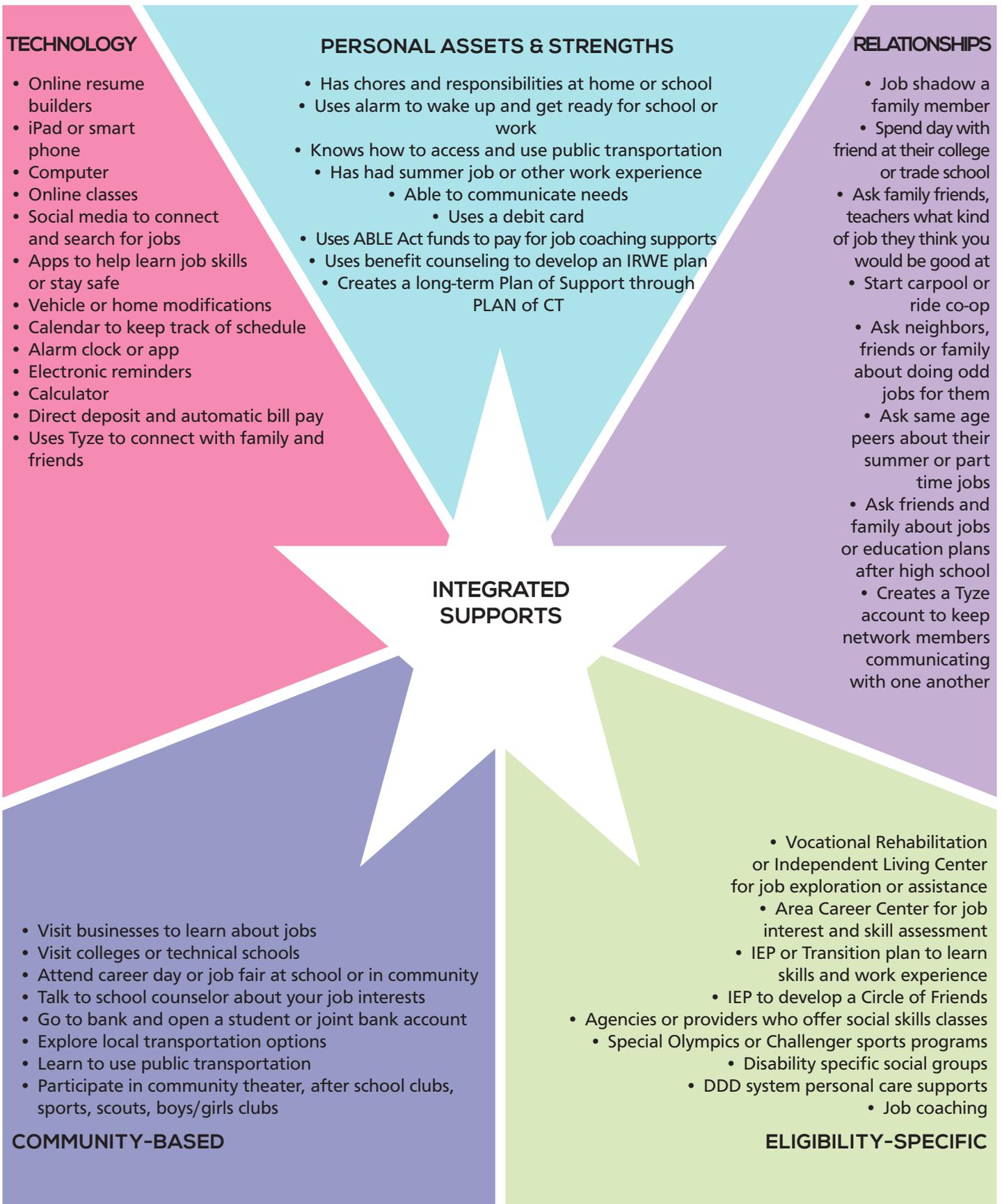
People need supports to lead good lives. Using a combination of lots of different kinds of support helps to plot a trajectory toward an inclusive, quality, community life.

The next few pages will help you explore the people, places, technology and resources that will help you figure out what kind of a job or career you want, as well as support your efforts to find a job, keep a job, and have the on-the-job supports to help you be successful.

The Star on page 15 provides examples of supports in each of the five categories working together to support an employment goal or vision. The Star on page 16 is for you and your family to LIST ideas of supports that can work together to help you work toward your specific long or short term employment goals.

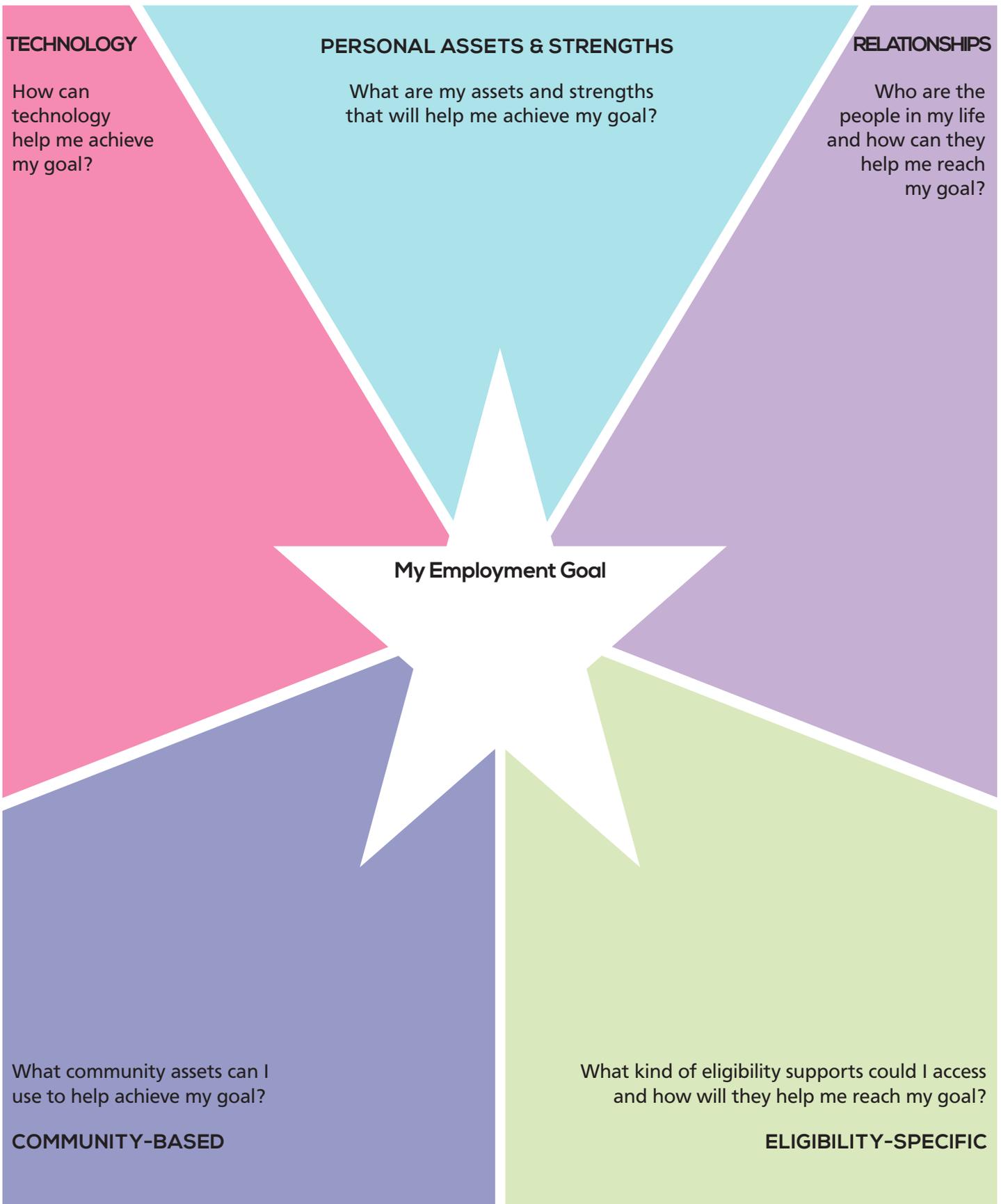
Finally, on page 17, you will find resources that can help you figure out and start taking steps toward your employment vision and goals.

# INTEGRATING SUPPORTS FOR EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES



# MAPPING MY EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

Write your employment goal in the center of the star. List ideas for supports and strategies to make your goal possible in each of the categories.



# Resources for EMPLOYMENT



The resources below are arranged by the categories of the Integrated Supports Star you just learned about. Connect with these resources to access tools and information to help you carry out your vision for employment.

## PERSONAL ASSETS & STRENGTHS

**National Gateway to Self-Determination:** [ngsd.org](https://ngsd.org)

Offers resources and personal video stories related to self-determination and employment.

**Think College For Students:** [thinkcollege.net](https://thinkcollege.net)

Provides resources for parents, information on affording college, and peer-lead advice for youth who want to go to college.

**Federal Student Aid:** [bit.ly/finaidforidd](https://bit.ly/finaidforidd)

Ideas for affording college.

**National Disability Institute's Real Economic Impact (REI) Network:** [realeconomicimpact.org](https://realeconomicimpact.org)

Offers ideas to help individuals with disabilities work, save, and advance their financial skills and improve their economic stability.

**Connect-Ability Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) Benefits Counseling:** [bit.ly/ctdorsbenefits](https://bit.ly/ctdorsbenefits)

Get accurate information, so that you can make good decisions about your vocational goals, your potential earnings and your health insurance needs.

**ODEP Soft Skills to Pay the Bills:**

[dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/](https://dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/)

"Skills to Pay the Bills" is a curriculum developed by ODEP focused on teaching "soft" or workforce readiness skills to youth, including youth with disabilities.

## RELATIONSHIP-BASED

**TYZE:** [bit.ly/ctDDStyze](https://bit.ly/ctDDStyze)

A private, online platform that connects people privately so they can organize supports and communicate easily with their circle/team. TYZE can be used to post daily activities, photos, send messages, create tasks, make appointments share documents and create a calendar to keep everyone up to date.

**National Parent Center on Transition & Employment:**

[pacer.org/transition/](https://pacer.org/transition/)

Provides resources and information to help young adults prepare for college and careers.

**Fostering Self-determination among Children & Youth with Disabilities (PDF):** [bit.ly/waismanFSD](https://bit.ly/waismanFSD)

Written for parents by parents, this guide shares strategies to foster self-determination in your child with a disability.

## TECHNOLOGY

**Connecticut Tech Act Project (CTTAP):** [cttechact.com](https://cttechact.com)

Helps people with disabilities of all ages and all disabilities, as well as family members, employers, educators and other professionals have access to Assistive Technology devices and services.

**It's My Future App:** [ngsd.org/home/ipad-apps](https://ngsd.org/home/ipad-apps)

iPad and iPhone app with self-paced videos designed to support people with developmental disabilities to become more self-determined and meaningfully participate in discussions about their future.

## COMMUNITY-BASED

**Connecticut (CT) Career Planning Info (PDF):**

[bit.ly/CTcareerplanning](https://bit.ly/CTcareerplanning)

Provides an overview of the career planning process and the CT Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Career Plan. The guide will help you plan and implement the process and assist you in the development of the career plan itself.

**CT Job Centers:** [ctdol.state.ct.us](https://ctdol.state.ct.us)

Offers free workshops and other services to those who have lost a job, want to change careers, or are new to the job search.

**National Collaborative on Workforce & Disability for Youth:** [ncwd-youth.info](https://ncwd-youth.info)

A collaboration of experts and families who provide information on employment and youth with disabilities.

## ELIGIBILITY-SPECIFIC

**CT DDS Eligibility:** [bit.ly/ctDDSeligibility](https://bit.ly/ctDDSeligibility)

Information to apply for IDD or autism services

**CT DDS Employment:** [bit.ly/ctDDSEmployment](https://bit.ly/ctDDSEmployment)

Everything you want to know about DDS employment services.

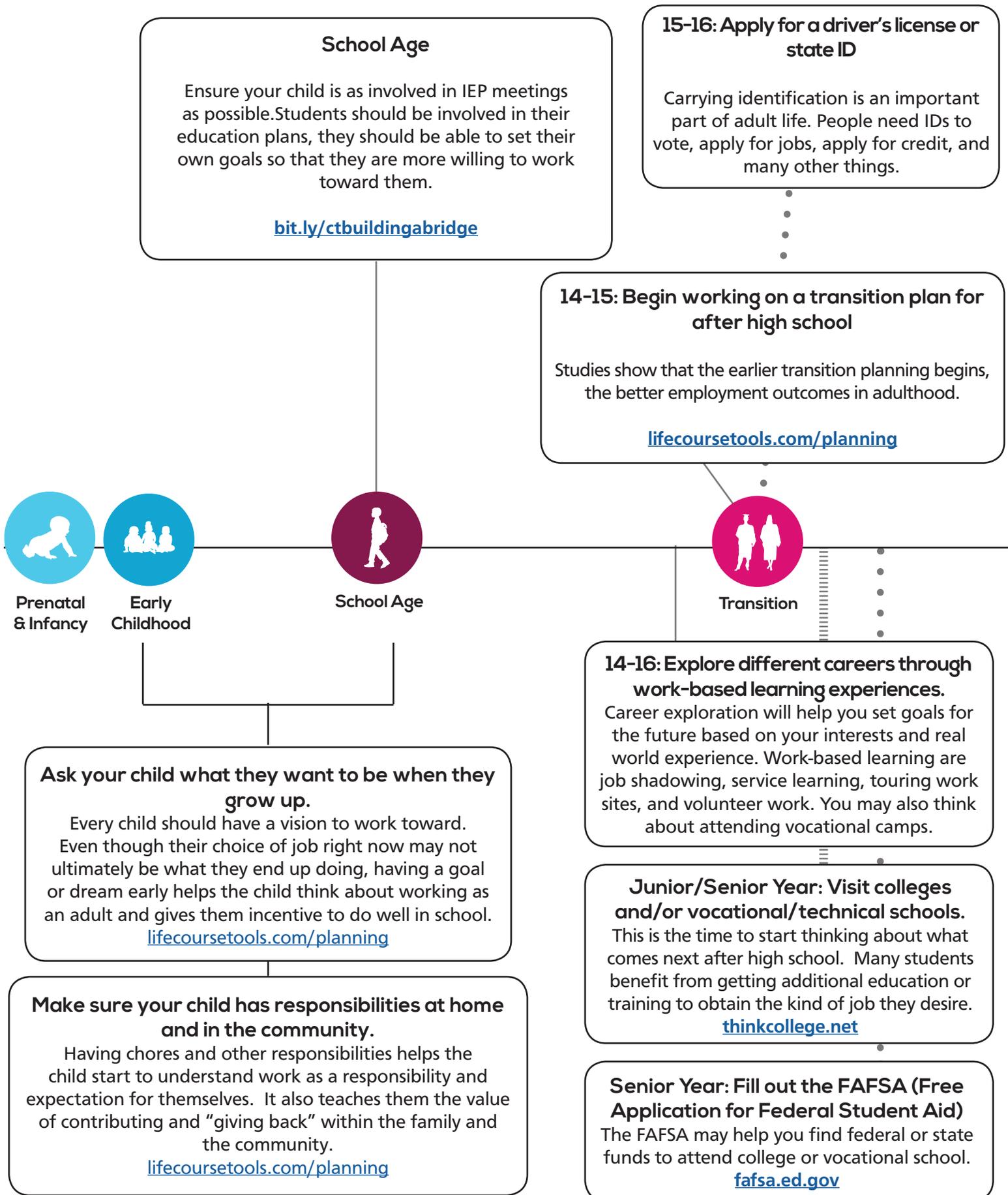
**CT Department of Social Services:** [ct.gov/dss](https://ct.gov/dss)

Information for eligibility- based social services.

**CT DORS Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (Vocational Rehabilitation):** [ct.gov/brs](https://ct.gov/brs)

Information for employment support services.

# GETTING READY FOR WORK: What to do & when to do it





**18: Consider whether or not to apply for benefits such as SSI and/or Medicaid**

It is important to consider all aspects of benefits. Weigh the positives and negatives to decide what is right for you and your family.

[ssa.gov](http://ssa.gov)

**Anytime: Explore transportation resources in your area, such as public transportation.**

Learning to use public transit may provide rides to apply for jobs or get to work once you are employed.

[thekennedycenterinc.org](http://thekennedycenterinc.org)

**Anytime: Connect with a VR Counselor for employment support.**

VR specializes in employment and training services that can assist you in becoming employed.

[ct.gov/brs](http://ct.gov/brs)

**18: Young men must register for Selective Service.**

It's the law!



Adulthood



Aging

**16-18: Participate in paid community work experiences**

It's important while you're in school to engage in some real work experiences to help you further discover areas of interest and build job skills. This might include finding a summer or part-time after school job. Parents, you might also talk to your school to explore opportunities that might be available for school sponsored internships or work experiences for your student.

**17: Explore options and alternatives to guardianship**

At age 18, everyone gets control to make decisions about their own lives, unless a court says otherwise. Guardianship seriously limits a person's rights and freedoms and should only be pursued after exploring and considering the alternatives.

[ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=3589&Q=556150](http://ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=3589&Q=556150)

**Anytime: Contact a local Center for Independent Living (CIL)**

CILs provide support for independent living skills development, employment, advocacy and benefits planning.

[ct.gov/brs/cwp/view.asp?a=3890&q=461420](http://ct.gov/brs/cwp/view.asp?a=3890&q=461420)

## CONNECT WITH US

PATH  
pathct.org  
1-800-399-PATH

CTFSN  
ctfsn.org  
1-877-FSN-2DAY



We are interested in your feedback about the *Charting the LifeCourse - Daily Life and Employment Guide*. Your thoughts and suggestions are valuable as they will help us improve the packet to make it more useful to individuals, families, and professionals.

Use the QR code or survey link to answer 5 short questions about how you are using this document in your life or work, and any suggestions for improvement.

Share your thoughts here: [goo.gl/Iz7Mey](https://goo.gl/Iz7Mey)