



Picture Your Future

EXPLORING YOUR TRANSITION GOALS

SECOND EDITION

Trust

Alaska Mental Health
Trust Authority



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

A proud partner of the American Job Center Network

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Exploring Careers and Work.....	4
Training and Education After High School.....	25
Independent Living and Supports.....	35
Managing Anxiety and Depression.....	49
Communication and Relationships.....	54
Community Experiences and Fun.....	61

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Why make a plan?

Your plan is your map to help you reach your goals.

Imagine two people who wanted to collect berries.

- One person didn't know where to go or how to pick berries, or even what kinds they could eat.
- Another person knew the kind of berries they wanted, they knew where to go to get them, and the best time to pick them so there would be a lot of them.

Which one do you think would be more successful in their goal to pick berries?

In this same way, the more you know about your goals and how to reach them, the better the chance you will be successful.

Making a Transition Plan

What is your dream for your life? What do you like to do? What are you good at? What do you enjoy? Discovering what is special about you, and what you want your future to look like are the first steps in setting goals for your future.

If you have an IEP (Individualized Education Program) at school, after age 16 you will have a *transition plan*.

Your transition plan will include your interests to help you prepare for life after school. This workbook will ask questions to guide you in thinking about your dreams so they can be included in your plan.

Your plan can include activities and goals for many areas of your life. These include:

- **Work and Career—**
What kind of work do you want to do? How will you help provide for yourself and your family?
- **College or Education After High School—**
What education will you need after high school to reach your career goals?
- **Independent Living and Supports—**
Do you want to stay in your home town or village? Do you want to live by yourself, with your family, or with friends? What skills will you need as you grow up and live more on your own?
- **Mental Health—**
How can you manage feelings of stress, anxiety, and depression?
- **Relationships—**
What skills do you need to build friendships and healthy connections to people in your community?
- **Community Experiences—**
What do you like to do for fun?

Setting SMART Goals

A goal is something you want to do or accomplish. Setting goals helps you to get things that you want in life. Most big goals need to be broken down into smaller action goals in order to be achieved. This helps you feel confident and make progress. The best goals are *SMART*, and the actions needed to achieve them are built right in.



1) When you set a goal, practice making sure it has all of these parts in it:

Specific—What exactly are you trying to accomplish or do?

Measurable—How will you know you completed your goal?

Attainable—Do you have everything you need to do it right now?

Relevant—Is it in line with my values? Does it line up with other goals I have?

Time Based—When will I do the actions in my goal? Knowing *when* you will do the actions in your goal makes it more likely you will do them.

Example: “I am going to wash and fold all of my dirty clothes before dinner.”

What do you want to do? (Specific): Wash and fold all my dirty clothes.

How will you know it’s done? (Measurable): All my dirty clothes are washed and folded.

Do you have everything you need to do it? (Attainable): I have the skills and the time.

Will this goal help me do what I want? (Relevant): The goal is clear and focused and lines up with my larger goal to keep my room clean.

When will I do it? (Time Based): Get it done by dinner time.

2) Ask yourself, “how confident am I that I can do what I said in my goal?”

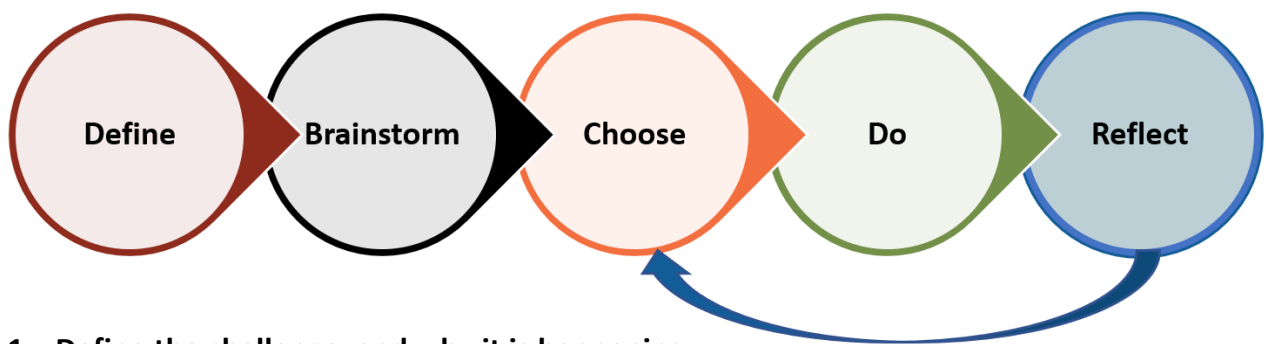
If you are not very confident, what can you change to boost your confidence?

In the example above, maybe getting it done by dinner isn’t enough time. If that part was changed to “before bedtime” you could feel more confident you could get it done.

How to Face a Challenge

When you set a goal, it is normal that you will run into challenges that you didn't expect. When you face a challenge and are able to get past it, it makes you stronger and builds your confidence.

Next time you face a challenge, try these steps to find a way forward.



1. Define the challenge, and why it is happening.

In this step, you think about your situation. What is causing it to happen? Ask yourself a series of “Why” questions to understand it better.

2. Brainstorm possible actions.

What needs to be done, or what needs to be changed, in order to face your challenge? You can share your goals with family members, Elders or a trusted friend. See if they offer ideas or stories that help you.

3. Choose an action to try.

4. Do the action you decided to try.

5. Reflect.

Did your action help you face your challenge? If not, you can choose another idea to try.

What is a challenge you have today? _____

What are three ways you could you face this challenge? _____

Pick one action to try, and do it: _____

Did your action help you face your challenge? _____ **If not, choose another one to try.**

Adapted from the Traditional Alaska Transition Curriculum (2020)



From Job to Career

Josh enjoyed his job working in a restaurant. He started as a busser, who sets and clears the tables and keeps things clean. Josh liked talking with the customers, and after seeing what the waiters did, he wanted to learn that job.

He was trained to take orders, serve the food, and collect the money customers paid.

Josh found that he enjoyed working in the busy restaurant. He liked the people he worked with, and he liked seeing happy customers.

He decided he wanted to get training in how to be a manager, so he could help more with the business side of running a restaurant.

Exploring Careers and Work

When you were younger, people may have asked you, “what do you want to be when you grow up?” Maybe you wanted to be a nurse, a teacher, a basketball player, a hunter, or something else. What did you want to be or do for work when you were younger? How about now? This section of the workbook will help you explore different kinds of work.

Let’s look at some words to know:

Job

Specific duties a person does, usually for pay. Jobs help a person develop skills, explore interests, and pay the bills.

Career

Your path in the kind of jobs or profession you work in. The way your jobs, experiences, and training builds, growing in pay or responsibility. People who want a career think about their long-term goals with each new job, education, and/or training.

Look at Josh’s story and answer these questions:

What **jobs** did Josh do at the restaurant?

What did he like about working in a restaurant?

In this example, Josh’s **jobs** were *busser* and *waiter*. His **career**, if he decided to grow his skills and take on more responsibilities, would be in the *restaurant industry*.

Skills, Interests, and Aptitudes

How do you choose a career? First, you need to know some things about yourself.

The following pages will ask you some questions to get you started. If you are not sure about a question, ask a family member or a teacher for ideas.

Things you enjoy

Think about the things you enjoy doing. It could be playing basketball, reading, making art, dancing, or playing video games. **Write down 3 things you enjoy.**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Your aptitudes

Aptitudes are YOUR natural talents. Maybe you can sing well or you find drawing easy. You might be quick at solving math problems or figuring out video games. **Write down 3 things you are good at.**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Your skills

Skills come from study or practice. You may know a lot about something you have studied, or a have wicked hook shot in basketball from practicing. You might be good at catching fish, sewing, or fixing things.

Write down 3 skills you have.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



What kind of work might use YOUR skills and aptitudes? _____

Values

Our values are the things that are important to us. They are things that motivate us and help us make decisions. If **family** is high on your value list, you might be interested in a career that allows you to spend time with your family. If money is important to you, you will want a job that pays well.

What is important to you?

1. Read through the values here. **Write in any that are missing**, but important to you.
2. Next, **circle your top 5** from the list that are most important for you.

Independence

Success

Culture

Challenge

Friendships

Honesty

Learning

Family

Helping Others

Money

Team Work

Creativity

Expensive Things

Community



When you do work that matches your skills, interests, likes, and values, you are more likely to be happy in your work and career.

Work places: What would you like?

Jobs happen in many kinds of places. Some people like to work with other people, and enjoy an energetic, busy work environment. Other people like working quietly on their own. For example, if you really like being outside, then a job inside at a desk all day might not be a good fit.

Think about what you might like. **Circle the items below that you like, and cross out the ones you don't. You can put a question mark if you don't know.**

- Outside work
- Inside work
- Quiet place
- Noisy Place
- Working alone
- Working on a team
- Regular hours
- Flexible hours
- Physical work
- Office paperwork
- Travel for work
- Home every night
- Repeating task
- Variety of tasks
- Working with people
- Working with numbers
- Working with ideas
- Working with my hands



No career or job is perfect in every way, but you are more likely to be happy in a workplace that you like. As you look at different job possibilities, you can compare what you wrote here to see if it fits for you.

Relationship Skills at Work

Relationship skills are some of the most important skills you need to get and hold a job. These are some of the skills employers are looking for.

Look at these skills and put a check mark next to the skills you feel you have, and circle those you would like to get better at.

Positive attitude

Confidence

Following directions

Staying focused

Sense of humor

Good listener

Conversation skills

Asking questions when I don't understand

Helping others

Paying attention to nonverbal body language

Managing my own emotions

Speaking up for myself

Managing my time

Staying calm when I feel stressed

Working to meet a deadline

Being part of a team



Career Interest Survey

Finding a career that is interesting to you will make work enjoyable. When you like what you are doing, you naturally try harder, do better, and feel good about what you accomplish.

This interest survey will help you match your interests to possible careers. **Put a check mark next to the statements that most sound like you.** Next, write how many check marks are in each color.

Red

- I like working outside
- I like to build things
- I like to figure out how things work
- I like using tools

Total _____

Orange

- I like music and art
- I like writing stories or poems
- I can play an instrument
- I like to make up games

Total _____

Yellow

- I like math and science
- I like to invent new things
- I am good with computers
- I like working alone to solve problems

Total _____

Green

- I like to follow a schedule
- I like to keep track of my money
- I like math and computers
- I like to be organized

Total _____

Blue

- I like to take risks
- I like to finish things I start
- I like to compete in sports and games
- I like to pick what my friends play

Total _____

Purple

- I like to take care of people
- I like to help my friends
- I like to work with a group
- I like having a lot of friends

Total _____

Which colors have the most check marks?

Careers to Explore...

Which colors had the most check marks? Look here for ideas for what kinds of careers might be a good fit for you.

Red

“Hands-on”

You like building, working outside, and using tools.

Electrician
Commercial Fisher
Chef
Subsistence
Mechanic
Construction

Orange

“Creative”

You like to create new things and use your imagination.

Photographer
Artist/Actor
Drafter
Graphic Designer
Reporter

Yellow

“Thinker”

You like to work alone, solve problems, and do math.

Researcher
Pharmacist
Engineer
Scientist

Green

“Organizer”

You like a schedule, to keep things neat, and friends rely on you

Librarian
Office Worker
Accountant
Banker
Web Developer

Blue

“Leader”

You like to lead, be active, and like competition

Lawyer
Business Owner
Community Leader
Management
Coach
Police Officer/VPO

Purple

“Helper”

You like to help friends, working with others, and getting along with others

Teacher
Nurse/Doctor/Healer
Counselor
Tour Operator
Restaurant Worker

**The next pages will tell you a little more about these kinds of jobs.
As you look at them, notice which jobs seem most interesting to you.**

“Hands-on”

People who are “hands-on” design, plan, build, manage and take care of where we live, work and play. Some design and build roads, bridges, schools, playgrounds or homes. Some work in a skilled trade, like carpentry or electrical work. Others design the inside of buildings or take care of outside areas. Others work in agriculture or in fishing. Many of these jobs are **in demand in Alaska**.



Do you like...

- building things?
- working in teams?
- figuring out how things work?
- Working with tools?



Are you...

- good with your hands?
- logical?
- good at following instructions?
- good at solving problems?
- concrete (prefer real things to thoughts and ideas)?

Related classes:

- Math
- Physical Sciences
- Art
- Computer
- Drafting
- Shop
- Small engine repair

Activities and groups:

- Math clubs
- Model building
- Lego robotics
- Drawing
- Help with local garden
- Volunteer for programs like Habitat for Humanity
- Hunting and Fishing

Example Jobs	Pathway
Carpenters Electricians	Construction
Technicians Surveyors	Design/Pre-construction
Road repair crew Building Maintenance Plumbers Generator operator Mechanics	Maintenance/Operations
Fishing Boat Captain Deck hand Fish processor	Commercial Fishing



“Creative”

People in **creative industries** draw on a mix of creative and technological skills in their work. They should be able to speak and write clearly. Careers include news anchors, directors, authors, costumers, graphic designers, and sound technicians.



Do you like...

- writing?
- performing?
- using your imagination?
- technology?
- playing an instrument?



Are you...

- creative?
- a "people person"?
- impulsive?
- expressive?
- independent?

Related classes:

- Art/Graphic Design
- Music
- Speech/Drama
- English

Activities and groups:

- Theater
- Band or choir
- Photography or Videography
- School newspaper or yearbook
- Blog or Vlog
- Speech or debate clubs
- Writing

Example Jobs	Pathway
Film / Video Editors Audio & Video Equipment Technicians	Audio / Video Technology and Film
Writers / Editors Broadcast Technicians	Journalism and Broadcasting
Choreographers Directors Actors	Performing Arts
Graphic Designers Artists & Animators	Visual Arts



“Thinker”

People in **science, engineering, and math** use math and science in areas such as research, testing and development. Some design and conduct experiments. They collect data, answer questions and try to solve problems. Many of these jobs are **in demand in Alaska**.



Do you like...

- learning about science?
- conducting experiments?
- building things from scratch?
- paying attention to details?
- figuring out how things work?



Are you...

- curious?
- logical?
- organized?
- good at fixing things?
- good at math?
- Detail oriented?

Related classes:

- Math
- Physical Sciences
- Computer

Activities and groups:

- Math clubs
- Science fairs
- 4-H Club
- Building models

Example Jobs	Pathway
Chemists Microbiologists Soil & Plant Scientists Math Teachers	Science and Math
Medical Researchers Lab worker	Research
Civil Engineers Mechanical Engineers	Engineering



“Organizer”

People who are **organizers** work in many kinds of jobs. They can work in finances and banking, libraries, and offices. They usually like to keep a schedule, and they pay attention to details and order.

Many of these jobs are **in demand in Alaska**.



Do you like...

- solving puzzles?
- following instructions?
- analyzing facts to predict outcomes?
- using computers?
- making decisions?
- putting things in order?
- designing?

Are you...

- organized?
- detail-oriented?
- practical?
- persuasive?



Related classes:

- Math
- Art
- Computer
- Economics
- Language Arts
- Social Studies

Activities and groups:

- Math clubs
- Web site design
- Video games
- Puzzles
- Work on Fundraisers

Example Jobs	Pathway
Teller Banker	Banking Services
Computer repair Web designer Software developer	Information Technology Services
Office worker Office manager	Administrative Services



“Leader”

People with leadership strengths work in jobs where they need to lead and supervise others. They are usually good communicators, and have confidence in what they do.



Do you like...

- making decisions?
- leading groups?
- starting projects?
- managing information?



Are you...

- organized?
- persuasive?
- willing to take risks?
- assertive?
- confident?

Related classes:

- Math
- Language Arts
- Economics
- Computer
- Social Science

Activities and groups:

- Math clubs
- Help with fundraisers
- Sports and Fitness

Example Jobs	Pathway
Business manager Banker Administrator Tribal Government Community Leader	Business
Lawyer Police officer/VPO Security Guard Firefighter	Law enforcement and Emergency Services
Pilot	Aviation
Military/ National Guard	Armed Services



“Helper”

People who are helpers usually like people, and like to support others. This can look be a health professional (doctor, nurse, health aide), it can be working in food services, or it can be a profession like counseling. It could be a job in human services or customer service. Many of these jobs are **in demand in Alaska**.



Do you like...

- helping people with problems?
- volunteering?
- working as part of a team?
- entertaining?
- organizing events?

Are you...

- friendly?
- patient?
- curious?
- good at paying attention to detail?
- energetic?
- a good listener?



Related classes:

- Social Studies
- Physical Sciences
- Computer
- Home Economics
- Health and Wellness

Activities and groups:

- Tutoring
- Baking
- Sports and fitness
- School events planning committee

Example Jobs	Pathway
Teacher’s Aide Teacher	Education
Personal Health Aide Community Health Aide Counselor Nurse/ Doctor	Health
Food services Restaurant manager Tour guide Hunting/Fishing Guide	Hospitality
Hairdresser Receptionist	Services



Alaska Jobs in Demand



When you are choosing a job or career, it is good to know if the job is available, and if it will pay enough money to meet your needs. There are some kinds of jobs that are **in demand**, which means they are much needed in Alaska. If you train for these jobs, you are likely to have work. Look at these jobs, and circle any that you think sound interesting.

“Hands-On” Jobs in Demand in Alaska

Job	Income per month	Pathway
Fishing Workers	\$3,480	Agriculture
Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, and Greenhouse	\$2,870	
Captains, Mates, and Pilots of Boats	\$6,720	
Landscaping Workers	\$3,290	Construction/Maintenance
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Workers	\$3,839	
Grounds Maintenance Worker	\$3,839	
Construction Laborers	\$4,284	
Civil Engineering Technicians	\$5,065	
Carpenters	\$5,555	
Airplane Mechanics	\$6,217	
Civil Engineers	\$8,534	

“Organizer” Jobs in Demand in Alaska

Job	Income per month	Pathway
Bookkeeping and Accounting	\$4,200	Finance
Accountants and Auditors	\$6,344	
Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers	\$6,148	Information Technology
Computer/Info Systems Managers	\$10,539	

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“Helper” Jobs in Demand in Alaska

Job	Income per month	Pathway
Teacher Aides	\$2,923	Education
Childcare Workers	\$2,854	
Librarian	\$5,800	
School Teachers	\$5,575	
Personal Care Aides	\$3,411	Health
Community Health Aides	\$4,031	
Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers	\$2,996	
Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors	\$4,636	
Social and Human Service Assistants	\$3,600	
Medical Assistants	\$4,040	
Dental Assistants	\$4,078	Hospitality
Fast food worker	\$2,385	
Dishwashers	\$2,347	Retail
Cashiers	\$2,726	
Driver/Sales Workers	\$2,980	
Hairdressers	\$3,107	Services
Janitors and Cleaners	\$2,960	
Receptionists	\$3,152	
Recreation Workers	\$3,788	
Bus Drivers (City)	\$5,158	
Customer Service Worker	\$3,497	
Office Clerks, General	\$3,745	

Note: Most of the data in this section is based on the Alaska Department of Labor Statewide Wages using 2023 data. Job titles not available on DOL site researched on the web. Average monthly salary assumes 40 hours per week for 4 weeks.

“Leader” Jobs in Demand in Alaska

Security Guards	\$4,016	Security
Correctional Officers	\$5,646	
Coaches	\$3,875	Services
Firefighters	\$4,454	
Business and Financial Operations Managers	\$6,691	
Compliance Officers	\$6,739	
Police Officers	\$7,281	
Commercial Airplane Pilots	\$11,345	

“Thinker” Jobs in Demand in Alaska

Job	Income per month	Pathway
Zoologists and Wildlife Biologists	\$6,521	Science
Environmental Scientists and Specialists	\$7,091	
Environmental Engineers	\$8,576	Engineering
Engineers, All Other	\$9,260	

“Creative” Jobs

Not as many jobs in this category are in demand in Alaska, but it doesn't mean you can't find a job in the creative industries.

Want to explore other jobs, or see how much jobs pay?
 Visit <https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/wage/index.html>

Work in Your Community

What kinds of jobs are in your community? What jobs help the community and keep everything running? Communities benefit when young people get training to fill important roles that keep things working well.

Community leaders make decisions for the community with their local knowledge of the people and the land.

Communities need roads built and repaired, buildings maintained, and safe water and sewer systems.

Every community relies on people in health-related jobs such as nurses, doctors, traditional healers and Tribal Doctors, Community Health Aides and others to help keep community members healthy.

Write down at least 5 kinds of jobs you can think of.

Put a star by any that you think are interesting.

Try Out Different Kinds of Work

If there are jobs you are interested in, see if you can job shadow or volunteer to learn more about it. Adults in your life may be very willing to help you explore if their type of work is a good fit for you.

What are work places you would like to try out?

Who in your life could you ask to visit their work and see what they do for a day?



Checking Out Different Kinds of Work

Judy was interested in working in a toy store. She enjoyed being around kids, and liked talking to people. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) had some money to pay Judy for work experience if there was a store willing to host and train her.

The youth group leader at her church knew someone who owned a toy store, and introduced them to Judy to see if she was a good fit. The store was willing to give it a try.

Judy loved working at the store, and she worked hard to follow directions and get all of her tasks done each shift.

At the end of the work experience, the store decided to hire Judy because they liked having her there.

Student Highlight: Sparking an Interest in Welding

The first time that seventeen-year-old Autumn Mayo tried arc welding, she felt invincible. “Holding my own clamp and arc welding myself, I felt like powerful like Zeus,” Mayo said. “Like I’m holding lightning. It was crazy.”

Mayo, who graduated from Sitka High School this spring, started welding less than two years ago, when she signed up for a metalworking elective. When they started the welding portion, something just clicked.

“I liked the rhythm you needed, like, the hand-eye coordination, and the almost Zen state,” Mayo said.

Going to college had never felt like quite the right path for Mayo – but for a long time, she wasn’t sure what *was* the right path.

She knew she wanted some education after high school, but wasn’t sure what it would be. With welding, she could see a future.



“I just started welding, not even considering it as a possible career until I realized how much I enjoyed it,” she said. “And that I was good at it, and it could be a career, and it’s something that I’d want to really focus on and get better at and improve. So it was like a crazy surprise.”

Mayo leaves for school in August. She says after training, she wants to work welding boats.



What is one interest you could develop into a job skill?

Article adapted for use in this book and used with permission. Original article by Meredith Redick can be found at <https://www.kcaw.org/2024/06/18/sitka-high-grad-says-sparks-flew-the-first-time-she-tried-welding/>. Published Jun 18, 2024.

Subsistence

In many parts of Alaska, living from what the Land provides is an important part of work, fun, and providing for the family.

Depending on where you live, you may gather berries, bird's eggs, mushrooms, kelp, and other important foods. You or a family member may harvest caribou, deer, moose, fish, birds, seals, whales, and other important animals.

Every season in Alaska brings different opportunities to enjoy time on the Land and feed family members, Elders, and the community.

Subsistence can be an employment goal itself. By learning how to do subsistence activities, you can get your own food and can trade for items you need. You can also make things to sell from what you have hunted (like sewing a hat from the leather) or gathered (making jam from berries).

What does your family or people in your community harvest from the Land?

What subsistence activities do you like to do?

What subsistence activities do you want to learn?

Making Jam to Sell

Nathan and his sister needed to make some money. They were saving up to buy a new video game they wanted. After returning from a fun family trip picking berries, Nathan had the idea that they could pick more to make jam and sell it in the community.

Nathan and his sister picked berries, and then his mom helped them learn to make and can the jam.

They set up a table, and let the neighbors know they were selling jam using their grandmother's recipe. They quickly sold all the jars of jam.

They made another batch, and sold that too. They were able to reach their goal, and get the video game with the money they made.



Photo of jars by Charlene Hadley and used with permission

Self-Employment

What if instead of working at a job for someone else, you had a business? Many people in Alaska have small businesses that help them earn the money they need while doing something they enjoy.

Can you think of anyone you know who sells something they make? Or a family member that owns a business? What kind of business is it?



Examples of self-employment

- Snow shoveling
- Lawn care and mowing
- Traditional Alaska Native arts and crafts
- Selling other things you make
- Photographer
- Dog-walker

Photo of gloves by Charlene Hadley and used with permission

If you are interested in being self-employed, you can brainstorm using these questions:

What can I make or do?

From that list, what are people willing to pay for?

Would the price people pay be less than what it costs me to make or do it, so I can make a profit? (You can ask a teacher or adult to help you figure this out.)

Benefits and Challenges of Being Self-Employed

From this list, **circle what you think are the two best things** about being self-employed.

You are your own boss

You choose your own hours

You have more freedom to choose what you do with your time

You get to use your creativity to face challenges

From this list, **circle two things you think would make self-employment challenging:**

You may not get paid on a regular basis

You may have to work longer hours in the beginning to build your business

It may be hard to get the money needed to start a business

You will have to learn a lot and face many challenges as you figure out your business

If you are interested in working for yourself full time or part time,
you can learn skills to help you reach your goals.



Photo of canned goods by Charlene Hadley.
Used with permission



Patty Fox and other students learn to make fry bread in a class in Kipnuk. Photo by Travis Fernandez used with permission.



Think about your future

There are things to think about as you consider college or training after high school.

- How will college or other training help me reach my goals?
- What kinds of programs or degrees am I interested in?
- Can I do some or all of it online from my home community, or do I need to go to a different place?
- How much do the programs I am interested in cost?
- What kinds of training will get me a job that is needed in my community?

It might feel like a lot to figure out, but this section will help you think about it.

Training and Education after High School

Education beyond high school can be the key to the kind of life you want.

If you complete some type of education or training after high school graduation, you are more likely to:

- have a wider range of job options;
- develop lifelong learning skills;
- be in a better position to help your family and community;
- have a job and keep a job compared to people who have not finished or only completed high school; and
- earn more than workers with less education.

College and Other Kinds of Training

College used to mean leaving home and going away to a bigger city. Now, there are many options for college and other training that can help you get a better job. As you explore careers you are interested in, you can see what kind of education and training is needed for each one.

- For some careers, you can get started right out of high school.
- Some careers require a certificate or shorter-term training before you can get a job.
- Other careers require a college degree.

In many careers, there are ways to get started with a little training. Next, you can get more education as you are working in the career to advance to better jobs.

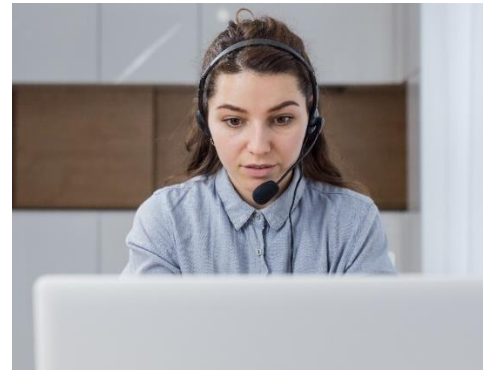
College degrees can be completed over time while you work, or you can go full time to get them completed faster. There are 2-year degrees, 4-year degrees, and advanced degrees that take longer.

Occupational Endorsements

Occupational Endorsement Certificates (OEC) are a great way to get started in a career without spending as much time and money on a degree. These certificates provide the specialized knowledge and skills needed in specific employment sectors. Most take one or two semesters to complete. Many OECs count toward a degree if you decide to build on it. Here are some examples of what students can do with OECs.

Health Information Management

Jill was very organized and liked structure. She liked to be in places that had structure and rules to follow. She enjoyed technology, and working with computers. A family friend who worked in a doctor's office thought Jill might enjoy working in Health Information Management. Health information professionals use computer skills to form the link between doctors, patients, and technology.



In one semester, full time, Jill could finish an OEC in Healthcare Information Technology. She could work in a doctor's office or a veterinarian's office. If she liked the work, she could build on it by working toward a Health Info Management Associate's degree.

Certified Nursing Aide



Justin enjoyed helping care for his grandmother who lived with his family. He was patient and kind. Justin was interested in a job that helped people. His aunt worked as a nurse, and she thought he would enjoy working in health care.

He decided to apply for the Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) program, which is a one semester program. It teaches the basic skills needed to assist nurses and to be efficient health care team members. CNAs are in demand, so there would be steady work once he completed the program and passed a state test. It could build into a career in nursing. With this training, he could do work that was important to his community.



Fisheries Management OEC

David lived in Southeast Alaska and loved being outside. He was interested in nature and in fishing. One of his friend's parents worked as a wildlife biologist. He encouraged David to check out the Fisheries Management Occupational Endorsement (OEC). He could do most of it online from his home community. This online program provides practical job-ready skills and knowledge in a reduced time commitment. He could study the basics of fisheries and focus on salmon enhancement. This would only take one semester, and then he could work for his Tribe at a hatchery and have a good job.

Jade lived in a community on the Kuskokwim river. She also loved being outside, and enjoyed fishing with her family. She was interested in the Fisheries Management OEC as well. She wanted to get a job working with salmon weirs. A weir is a wall in a river that is used to manage salmon in rivers. Jade liked that she could build the OE into a certificate, and then into a degree. Each level of this program builds on the next, and you can do a little at a time. Each level opens up more possibilities within the career of fisheries management. She would be able to get a good job with Fish and Game or with the US Fish and Wildlife department.

Both David and Jade wanted to help maintain a healthy fish population. They wanted there to be many fish to feed their communities for many years to come.

Here are some of the OECs available in Alaska. **Circle any you want to learn more about.**

Accountant	Behavioral Health Assistant	Healthcare Information Tech
Certified Nurse Aide	Fisheries Management	Baking and Pastry Arts
Medical Billing	Corrections	Medical Office Coding
Dental Assistant	Financial Services Rep	Pharmacy Tech
Facility Maintenance	Executive Assistant	Welding

Programs to Build Job Skills and Start Your Career

Vocational Programs—



Learning a trade can be a good path to a job and career that usually takes less time and money than a college degree. Many jobs pay well and are needed in most communities.

Many of the programs now offer online options so at least some of it can be done from your home community. They offer good student support to find jobs and develop needed job skills. Alaska's vocational and technical center is called AVTEC. It is located in beautiful Seward, Alaska.

These are AVTEC's training programs. **Put a star next to any you want to learn more about:**

Culinary Arts	Work as a chef or a baker
Industrial Electricity	Work in gas, mining, energy, construction, and more. It is a path to becoming an electrical apprentice.
Business and Office Tech	Work as an accountant or as an Admin Assistant in an office.
Industrial Welding	Work in construction, gas, mining, and heavy equipment industries.
Construction Tech	Work to build, install, maintain, and repair structures.
Diesel and Heavy Equipment Tech	Learn to service, maintain, and repair equipment ranging from semi-trucks to bulldozers
Industrial Machine and Maintenance	Work as an electro-mechanical technician or as an electrical construction apprentice.
Information Technology	Support use of computer networks and computers.
Plumbing and Heating	Work to repair and install plumbing and heating.
Refrigeration	Work to install, maintain, and repair refrigeration units.

Many trade related jobs require training and an apprenticeship. **An apprenticeship is where you work with a certified expert to learn the skills to do a certain kind of job.**

AVTEC and Job Corp programs prepare you to get an apprentice position.

Apprentices are paid based on their skill level.

Job Corps—

Job Corps is the nation's largest FREE education and job training program for young adults. The program provides hands-on career training for students ages 16 through 24. This leads to entry-level positions in careers that are in demand. The program includes both “hands-on” and class-based training.

Students live on campus and attend the program in Palmer, Alaska.



Here are the careers you can train for through Job Corps. **Put a star next to any you want to learn more about.**

Manufacturing	Work as a carpenter, an electrician tech, welder, or a building maintenance worker.
Finance and business	Work as an accountant or an office admin assistant.
Healthcare	Work as a Certified Nurse Assistant or Clinical Medical Assistant.
Homeland security	Work as a security guard.
Hospitality	Work in a restaurant as a cook, chef, or baker.
Renewable resources and energy	Work to treat or transfer water and wastewater.

Online Learning

Online learning can be a great option for students who want to work on a degree or certificate in their home community. Online learning can be more flexible than attending in person, but it may take more self-discipline and focus. Online programs have good supports in place to help students with the technology needed to do an online program.

Some programs have you do classes online, and then come in-person for a part of the program. This combination is a good way to get both the information and hands-on experience needed for most careers. Financial aid can be used for online programs.



Where Do You Want to Live?

Some students want to stay in their home community, and others may have a goal to live someplace else. If you want to experience a different place as you gain independence and get training for a career, you can choose to attend a college or program away from your home community.

If you currently live in a small village community, maybe you want to attend a program in the nearest hub community. Maybe you are interested in seeing what life is like in a bigger city. If you live in a big city, you might be interested in seeing another part of the state while you get your training. Alaska students also might think about attending a program Outside of Alaska.

If the work you want to do requires more training or education, what kind of setting do you want to be in? **Put a check mark next to all you are interested in.**

- My home community at a local college or training program.
- My home community doing an online program.
- Start by doing some classes online, and then move to another place for more training.
- Move to a different place like _____ to attend a college or training program.



My Ideas for Training or Education After High School

Now that you know a little more about training and education after high school, answer the following questions. **Draw a circle around your answers.**

What kinds of education or training are you interested in?

Occupational Endorsement Certificate (OEC)

Vocational Program (like AVTEC or Job Corps)

College degree (2 year)

College degree (4 year)

Apprenticeship (varies depending on career)

How do you want to learn?

I like in person classes

I like to learn online

I like a combination of online and in-person learning

Paying for College or Training

Most education and training programs cost money to attend. You will need to pay for tuition (the fee for your classes) and books. You will have to pay for living expenses (like rent, internet, electricity, phone, and food).

Most students use a combination of saving for college, working during college, and getting financial aid. **Financial aid is money that helps you pay for college or training.**

Some financial aid has to be paid back (loans) and some doesn't (grants and scholarships). It is best to take out as little in loans as possible, because it can be hard to pay it back later.

You will learn more about managing money and creating a spending plan or budget in the next section.



Put It Together

Now let's put your ideas for possible careers and training together. Follow these steps to set some goals.

- 1. Explore your interests** to find what kinds of careers you would like.
- 2. Find out what education or training after high school is required** for those jobs, and what kind of income you could make.
- 3. Research what kinds of programs are available**, and what fits you best. Consider the costs of the program, if it is online or in-person, and where it is located.
- 4. Talk with your family and teachers about ways you can get started.** There may be classes or activities you can do now to give you experience to support your goals.

Let's see those steps in action by seeing how a student named Jack did them.

- 1. Explore your interests:** Jack is good with his hands and likes fixing things. When he answered the questions in the career interest survey, he found out he fit the “hands-on” category best. He wanted to learn more about the jobs of *architect* and *carpenter*.
- 2. Required training:** He asked his teacher to help him find out about the education needed for those two jobs. They looked at AKCIS online and found out information for each one.

Carpenter	Architect
Needs a high school diploma plus classes at a trade school (6–18 months) and an apprenticeship (2–3 years). Classes are hands-on. Average Salary: \$65,000/year	Needs a Bachelor's degree in Architecture (5 years) and an apprenticeship (3 years). Classes focus on math, science, and design. Average Salary: \$91,000/year

- 3. Programs:** Next he explored the costs and options for the programs.

Carpenter	Architect
Two options in Alaska: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AVTEC program, costs about \$12,000 including housing and food. It's a 6-month program located in Seward. • Job Corps program, free based on family income. It's an 18 months program located in Palmer. He could do the 2-year apprenticeship in his local community.	There is not a program for this in Alaska. Out of state costs to get a Bachelor's degree in Architecture are about \$180,000. Scholarships and financial aid could help bring the cost down some. It might be hard to do find an apprenticeship in his local community.

Jack thought about the costs of the programs and what he wanted for his life. He wanted to live and work in his local community to be near his family. He didn't think a 5-year degree that focused on math would be a good fit for his strengths. He decided that carpentry might be a good fit. He liked that he could do the training in Alaska, and then do the apprenticeship in his home community.



- 4. Ways to get started.** He looked for ways to get experience that would help him know if carpentry was a good fit. Jack signed up to take a shop class. He asked if he could help his uncle as he did a remodeling project at his house. He volunteered on community building projects.

Your Turn

- 1. Circle the career interest area that fits you best:**

Hands-on Creative Thinker Organizer Leader Helper

Pick two jobs from that interest category that you want to explore:

_____ and _____

- 2. Use AKCIS to find what education/training is required for these two kinds of jobs.**

Job		
Degree or training		
How long to get it		
Income you could make		

- 3. Research what kind of programs offer the education/training for these two jobs.**

Job		
Cost		
Offered online or in home community?		
Offered in Alaska, or only in the lower 48?		

- 4. What is one activity you can do to explore or get started in one of these jobs?**

My Ideas

Think about what you discovered in this section of the workbook. Use this space to write down your thoughts or draw a picture about what you want for your future.





Independent Living and Supports

As you grow up, you are learning skills to help you in your life. You are learning about yourself, and what you can do, and what you want out of life.

This section will help you think about some of the skills you need to be more independent and create the life you want.

In this section you will:

- Explore housing options
- Think about what helps you succeed
- Think about your health care
- Learn about managing money, resources, and time

Where will you live?

- Sam wants to live in an apartment with a roommate on his own.
- Jules wants to live with her brother and his wife.
- Tom wants to live in a group home with staff but have his own room.
- John dreams of owning his own home.
- Suzie wants to have an apartment in the city where her aunt lives.
- Pat wants to stay with her mom.

What is your dream for where YOU want to live?

Housing Options

Each community in Alaska offers different options for housing. Which of these are in your community?

- **House:** A stand-alone building. It can be small or big. Some can hold one family, or some hold more than one family.
- **Apartment:** Many apartments in one building. Some are small, with one open room, called a studio apartment. Some have many rooms and bedrooms.
- **Shared living:** A house or apartment where roommates share the common living spaces and have a bedroom to sleep in.
- **Group home:** Shared living with staff to help with meals and other supports the people that live there need.
- **Dorm:** Apartment housing for college students.

What is your dream? What will your home be like?

Put a check next to the options you are interested in.



I want to...

- Live in my home community
- Live in a different community: _____
- Live with family
- Live with a room mate
- Live with more than one room mate
- Have my own room
- Have my own apartment
- Have my own house
- Other: _____
- Other _____



What do you picture your home will look like?

What do you think you will like about living there?



Empower Yourself

Empowerment is a process that helps you gain control of your life. People who are empowered have the knowledge and ability to take charge, be leaders, and help their community.

Empowerment means that you can:

- Get information and resources.
- Make your own decisions.
- Choose from different options.
- Stay positive when you are trying to make a change.

If you have challenges because of a disability, it is good to understand what helps you do your best. In school now, and in work and life later, knowing what you need can help you succeed.

What are you really good at? What are things you like about yourself?

What are some things you want to do, but have a hard time doing?

Is there anything that helps you do those things you want to do?

In school, your teachers may have ways they support your learning. These are called **accommodations**. Check any of these things that help you at school:

- Extra time to get things done
- Help with reading
- Help with writing
- Help with math
- Picture schedules
- Being told what is next or what to do
- When someone shows me what to do
- Other: _____

Supports

Supports are things in your life that help you do what you want to do. Write in what helps you under each kind of support.

What *people* help you? (Examples: Family members, teachers, Aides, interpreter)

What *assistive technology* helps you? (Examples: iPad for communication, hearing aids, apps, spellchecker)

What *accommodations* help you? (Examples: More time to do things, pictures, being told, being shown, time by myself to calm down)

Does *medicine* help you? (Example: Some people take medicine to help them focus or stay calm).

Advocate for Yourself

As you get older, it's important to know what you need to be successful. Colleges, training programs, and employers can offer accommodations and supports for people with disabilities. The difference is, you have to advocate for yourself and what you need.

What is Self-Advocacy?

Self-Advocacy is learning how to speak up for yourself, and make your own decisions about your life. It is learning how to get information about things that are of interest to you. It is finding out who will support you. It means knowing your rights and your responsibilities. It is about facing challenges and reaching out to others when you need help and friendship (WrightsLaw).

Why is Self-Advocacy Important?

So that you have the knowledge you need to succeed, and are given the chance to participate in decisions about your life (WrightsLaw).



When Jess started college, she had a very hard time at first. She was used to having more support during classes, and found living in the dorm with a lot of noises very upsetting. She went to talk to someone in the Disability Support Services office. Together, they talked about accommodations she could ask of her instructors for her classes. They moved her to a single room in the dorm so she could better control the sounds around her. These things helped her start to enjoy college more.

What is a job accommodation?

A job accommodation is a change to a job or work environment that makes it possible for a person with a disability to do their job duties. Accommodations may include special equipment, changes to the work environment or adjustments to work schedules or responsibilities.



Dennis has a goal to work in an office. At his job interview, he told the employer about things he would need to be successful. He would need more time when doing things like copying and stapling. He would need some time in the middle of the day three days a week to attend physical therapy. His employer was able to adjust his schedule and make sure Dennis had extra time for some tasks. Dennis loved the people he worked with and was great at his new job.

Learning Styles

How do you learn best? Some people learn best through pictures and videos. Some people learn from hearing information. Others learn through reading and writing. For some, they learn best when they are doing something and interacting physically with it. These are called *learning styles*.



Visual learners learn better through watching, pictures, and videos.



Hearing learners learn better by listening.



Reading/writing learners learn better through written language.



"Hands-on" learners learn through doing, practicing, and acting.

Talk about this with your teachers. **What helps you learn best?** You can ask for more of your learning to be in a style that fits you.

As you get older, you take on more responsibility for your own learning. Most people learn best through pictures, videos, and by doing. Some work training, like Job Corps and AVTEC use a lot of hands-on learning. College and other training programs rely more on reading and writing and listening. If this isn't how you learn best, you may need to find videos or ways to practice what you are reading or hearing.

- **Jolie was a visual learner.** Reading was difficult for her. When she could watch a video it made more sense. She could remember information better. If Jolie was having a hard time understanding something in a class, she would ask her teacher to help find a video online that explained the main ideas.
- **Pat learned best through doing things and using his hands.** He found that when he was studying new information, it helped him remember better if he acted it out. He also looked for ways to practice a skill instead of just reading about it.

Which learning styles fit you best? Circle one or two ways you remember new information better. Ask your teacher if you don't know.

Visual (Watching)

Hearing

Written Language

Hands-on

Ask for What You Need

When you are empowered, you can feel more confident to ask for what you need or want, or to share your ideas. It is good to know what you want, and to communicate that to others. You might not always get what you want, but communicating about it is an important skill. When you can share your ideas, you can get support from others to do the things you want to do. *Ask your parent or teacher for ideas if you don't know.*

Do you feel comfortable asking a teacher for what you need? _____

Do you feel comfortable asking a family member what you need? _____

Do you feel comfortable asking a friend for something you need? _____

What helps you feel more comfortable? _____

What helps you succeed in school? _____

What would help you succeed in a job? _____



Taking Charge of Your Health

As you get older, it is important to start to be more independent with your own health care. During childhood, your parents and caregivers usually help with your health and health care needs—they call for appointments, fill out forms, make decisions about treatments, and keep track of medications. As you get older, managing those needs becomes your own responsibility. These are skills to learn as part of your transition to an adult.

Put a check mark next to any of these that are true for you now, and circle any that you want to be able to do in the future:

I know how to make a doctor's appointment.

I know the names of medicine I take, and why I take them.

I know about my health history and health problems I have now, or have had in the past.

I am the one who talks to the doctor in an appointment.

I feel comfortable asking questions of my doctor when I don't understand.

I feel comfortable meeting with a doctor without my parent, guardian, or staff.

I can fill out the forms at the doctor's office.

I can answer the doctor's questions about my health and my body.

I know what kind of health insurance I have.

I can pick up my medication from the pharmacy.

If you have more things circled than checked, that is okay! It gives you some ideas of things you can work on and learn to do.



Managing Your Money and Resources

An important skill for living is making a spending plan, also called a budget. It is a way to keep track of your expenses (things you have to spend money on) and your income (money that comes in). It is a skill to learn how to manage money and other resources. You can get better at it with practice.

What are some expenses that your family has to keep your household running?

What things does your family have to pay for?

What are examples of income, or money coming in? How do people get the money they need to pay their expenses? Does your family trade or barter for things they need?

When you are in college or a training program, or living on your own, you will need to have a budget or spending plan to help you manage your money. Learning this skill while you are in high school will give you a good head start!



Wants vs. Needs

When you make your spending plan, it is important to think about the difference between things you **need** and things you **want**. Things you need are like food, housing, water...the basics of everyday life. Things you want are more optional, like a new toy or video game.

Many people pay for the things they *need* first, and then they can decide how much to spend on things they *want*, and also how much to put in savings.

A budget helps you see your income and expenses, so you can make better choices.

It can help you find ways to reduce your expenses or increase your sources of income so you don't over spend. *You want your income to be more than your spending.*

Tim's Spending Plan

Tim wants to buy a pair of new basketball shoes, so he made a budget to better understand money coming in and money going out. His expenses are more than his income.


Income	Amount	Expenses	Amount
Money from my job	\$40	Debt (owes) to brother	\$10
Money from grandma	\$20	Cell phone bill	\$10
		Video game	\$15
		Ordering out	\$20
		Basketball shoes	\$100
		Savings account	\$10
Total income	\$60	Total spending	\$165

1. Which of the expenses are *wants*, and which are *needs*?

2. Where can he make different choices in his spending, to reduce his expenses?

3. What else could Tim do in his spending plan, to get the shoes he wants?

When your expenses are more than your income, you need to find ways to:

 **Get more income**

 **Reduce your expenses**

Living Expenses	Ways to reduce costs
Food	Eat out less, cook for yourself more, spend less on drinks.
Entertainment	Find activities that don't cost money, limit activities that do cost money. Limit the number of subscription services you sign up for (Spotify, Netflix, Hulu, Disney+).
Phone	Get a phone plan that meets your needs without a lot of extra fees. Stay within your data plan limits. Get a pay as you go phone.
Computer	Research what kind will be best for the program or college you plan to attend, so you invest in the right kind. Buy a reliable used computer.
Clothes and shoes	Choose an amount you can spend that fits your budget, and stick to it.

Expenses of College or Training Program	Way to reduce costs
Tuition (cost of training or classes)	Choose a program that costs less, or that offers better financial aid. Going to a program in Alaska, if you are an Alaskan resident, is usually cheaper than going to the lower 48.
Books	Instead of buying new, see if you can buy a used book, share a book, or borrow a book.

Choices: For many people, having a phone is important. If you can get one phone for \$20 a month that works for your needs, or you could get a fancier one for \$40 a month, you can choose if that extra \$20 a month is worth it to you.



Savings Account

It is easy to spend all the money you get. What if before you spent it, you took a small amount and set it aside?

If you put \$10 each month away without spending it, how much would you have after a year? _____

You can use this method if you are saving up for something that costs more than the money you have now. You can also have it in case there is an unexpected problem or bill. Unexpected life costs can be stressful, but if you have some savings, dealing with an unexpected cost is inconvenient, not a crisis.

Do you have a savings account now? _____

If yes, what are you saving for? Something special? College? Other?

If no, would you like to start a savings account? _____

What is one goal you have related to your budget? _____

Do you want to learn more about managing your money and resources? _____



Managing Time

Time is another resource you have. You have to choose how to spend your time. Do you spend it with your family? Doing homework? Working? Sleeping? Playing sports or video games? Watching videos? How do you decide what to do? It takes practice and skills to manage your time in a way that support your goals in life.

Read this story and circle the things that help Danny manage his time.

Danny is a senior in high school. He has a job working at the grocery store. He likes to spend time playing video games with his brother. He usually has at least an hour of homework to do each night. When he first got his job, he had a hard time getting his homework done. He would go to work after school, come home and play video games, and then he was too tired to do his homework. Sometimes after school he would be talking to his friend, and realize he was late for work.



He thought about his goals, and made the following plan:

- **Being on time for work:** He decided he would talk to his friend at lunch. After school, he would tell his friend he couldn't talk, and he would go directly to work.
- **Getting his homework done:** After work, he did his homework right after dinner.
- **Choosing time to play video games:** If he had time after finishing his homework, he played video games. Before he started playing, he would decide how much time he had to play, and he set a timer. When the timer went off, he knew it was time for bed. He wanted to be sure he got enough sleep.

Look at the following time management skills. Put a check mark next to the things you already know how to do, and circle the skills you would like more practice with.

- Get up in the morning, get ready, and arrive on time to school or work
- Get homework done, at a time I am alert and focused
- Get work and school tasks done in the time given to do them
- Choose how much time I spend on phone or watching videos
- Go to bed early enough to get enough sleep to feel rested
- Use a "to-do" list to keep track of important things I need to get done
- Use a schedule to help me know what I need to do
- Choose to spend time getting exercise or doing something outside
- Choose to focus on one thing until it is done

My Ideas

Think about what you discovered in this section of the workbook. Use this space to write down your thoughts or draw a picture about what you want for your future.





Eli's Path to Hope

Eli, a 16-year-old in rural Alaska, struggled with depression after his parents divorced. He felt tired, unmotivated, and stopped joining his family for subsistence fishing, which he used to love. A teacher noticed Eli withdrawing and encouraged him to talk with a school counselor.

Through counseling, Eli learned tools like journaling, setting small daily goals, and spending time outdoors. The counselor also helped Eli talk openly with his dad about his feelings. Slowly, Eli started feeling better. He returned to fishing with his family and even began teaching his younger siblings.

He found joy in life again, one step at a time.

Managing Anxiety and Depression

Life can feel overwhelming sometimes, and it's normal to deal with anxiety or sadness. The good news is, there are ways to manage these feelings and take care of your mental health. Think of your mind like a muscle—just like you can train your body, you can build skills to handle tough emotions. In this section, you'll learn simple, practical tips to help you feel more in control, improve your mood, and reduce stress. You've got this—and you're never alone in figuring it out.

Remember, these are skills you can include in your IEP and transition plan.

Circle the feelings that you want to learn tools to help you manage:

Nervous

Sadness

Overwhelmed

Lonely

Panic

Low self-worth

Restless

Empty

Self-doubt

No hope

Embarrassment

No energy

Frustration

Feeling stuck

Feeling out of control

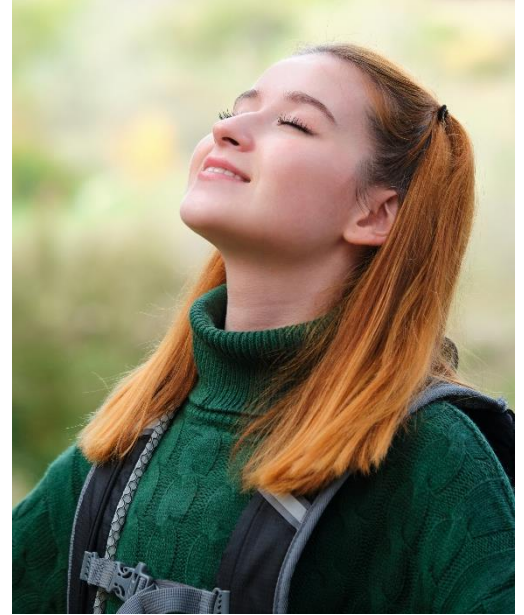
Less interest in things you usually like

Managing Anxiety

Anxiety and stress are feelings we all have, especially when things get tough. If you have a disability, these feelings might sometimes be stronger. It's important to learn how to notice and manage these feelings. This section gives you easy tips and an activity to help you recognize your anxiety and find ways to feel better.

Tips for Managing Anxiety and Stress—

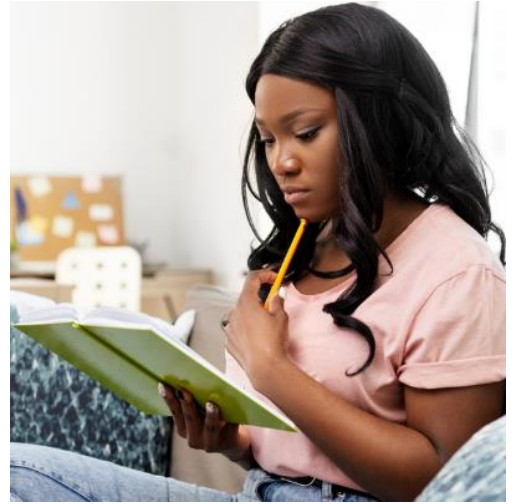
1. **Take Deep Breaths:** Take a moment to breathe in through your nose, hold it for a few seconds, and then breathe out slowly through your mouth. This helps calm your mind and body.
2. **Stay Organized:** Use a calendar to write down homework and important dates. Being organized can help you feel less stressed.
3. **Talk About Your Feelings:** Share your worries with a friend, family member, or teacher. Talking can make you feel better.
4. **Take Breaks:** If you start to feel overwhelmed, take a short break. Step away from what you're doing, stretch, or take a quick walk to clear your mind.
5. **Stay Active:** Doing something active, like walking, dancing, or playing a game, can help you feel happier and reduce stress.
6. **Practice Mindfulness:** Spend a few minutes each day focusing on what's happening right now. Notice what you see, hear, or feel without judging it.
7. **Be aware of your social media and digital time:**
 - Practice screen free time to do things outside or with your family or friends.
 - Remember, images you see on social media are often digitally altered and don't always show real-life.
 - Cut ties with those who post negative comments about you and be responsible when posting comments about others.



What are two things you can try, to calm feelings of anxiety and stress?

What does your anxiety feel like? What causes it?

1. **Create a Feelings Journal:** Use a notebook or your phone to keep track of how you feel. Each day, write down when you feel anxious or stressed and what is happening around you at that time.
2. **Look for Patterns:** After a week, read through your journal. Do you see any patterns in what makes you anxious? Are there certain situations or people that trigger those feelings?
3. **Identify Symptoms:** Next to each entry, write down how your body feels. Do you notice signs of anxiety, like a fast heartbeat, sweaty hands, or feeling restless? This helps you understand how anxiety affects you.
4. **Share Your Findings:** If you feel comfortable, share your journal with someone you trust. They can help you think of ways to manage your anxiety in those situations.



Use your senses to calm down

If you feel your anxiety ramping up, try this way of calming down by using your senses to connect you to the present moment.



5 things you see—Look for 5 objects around you and notice the shape, texture, and color.



4 things you touch—Touch 4 things around you and notice how they feel. Smooth? Warm? Hard? Soft?



3 things you hear—Listen to the room. Notice 3 sounds in the room where you are.



2 things you smell—Close your eyes and breathe in through your nose. What can you smell in the room where you are?



1 thing you taste—Is there a taste in your mouth? If there is not a taste, picture a strong flavor such as a lemon, a mint, or a piece of candy.

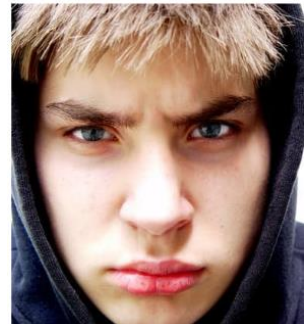
Managing Depression

Being a teenager can be tough, but it shouldn't feel hopeless. If you have been feeling sad most of the time for a few weeks or longer and you're not able to concentrate or do the things you used to enjoy, talk to a trusted adult about depression. **There are good treatments for depression that can help you feel better and enjoy life.**

Do I have depression?

Put a check mark next to those that are true for you in the last 3 weeks.

- Do you often feel sad, anxious, worthless, or even “empty”?
- Have you lost interest in activities you used to enjoy?
- Do you get easily frustrated, irritable, or angry?
- Do you find yourself withdrawing from friends and family?
- Have your eating or sleeping habits changed?
- Have you felt very tired or had memory loss?
- Are your grades dropping?
- Have you thought about suicide or harming yourself?



If you are having some of these symptoms, it is important that you let your teacher or the school counselor know, so you can get help. You can feel better!

Source: National Institute of Mental Health—www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/teen-depression

How do I get help for depression?

- **Talk to a trusted adult** (such as your parent or guardian, teacher, or school counselor) about how you’ve been feeling.
- **Ask your doctor** about options for professional help. Depression can be treated with psychotherapy (also called “talk therapy”), medication, or a combination of medication and talk therapy.
- **Spend time with friends or family**, even if you don’t feel like you want to.
- **Stay active and exercise**, even if it’s just going for a walk. Physical activity releases chemicals, such as endorphins, in your brain that can help you feel better.
- **Keep a regular sleep schedule.** Most teens need 8–10 hours per night. Try to go to bed at the same time and get up at the same time. This can help your brain and overall health.
- **Eat healthy foods.** What you eat can directly impact how your brain works and how you feel. A balanced diet with fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and healthy fats can reduce the risk of depression and anxiety. Poor nutrition can make mental health issues worse.



If you need to talk, the 988 Lifeline is here.
To get help, call or text the [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](https://www.988lifeline.org) at 988, or chat at [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org).

What mental health skills do you want to work on? Circle or write in your answers.

Manage anxiety	Express my feelings in a healthy way	Work with a counselor
Eat healthy foods	Improve my communication	Stay active and exercise
Time with friends/family	Keep a regular sleep schedule	Limit social media use

Source: National Institute of Mental Health—www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/teen-depression



Communication and Relationships

Positive healthy relationships make our lives meaningful and more enjoyable. Relationship skills are important at school, with family, at work, and in other community settings.

For some, relationship skills come easily, but most people have to practice and learn them.

This section will focus on some of the skills that will help you make and keep friends, navigate social situations, and get support from others when you need it. These skills can be included in your IEP goals as a way to help you grow confidence in building good relationships.

Good Friends

Julie and Charlene knew each other since they were very little. They were in the same year at school. In middle school, they both started dancing in the local dance group and they became friends.

They enjoyed doing the same kinds of activities like laughing over funny videos. They talked about their lives and their dreams. When one of them was having a hard time, the other would listen and try to help. They encouraged each other to reach goals. They celebrated joyful moments. It was good to have a friend to share life with.

What makes a good friend?

Circle the things that you think are important:

- Listens to me
- Shares things with me
- Likes to do the same things I do
- Likes to talk about the same things I do
- Helps when I am facing a challenge
- Celebrates with me when I reach a goal
- Encourages me to follow my dreams
- Is nice to me
- If we disagree, we can work it out
- Says they are sorry if they make a mistake
- Forgives me when I make a mistake

Social and Emotional Skills

Cindy was friendly and very shy. Sometimes, she would have very strong feelings that she didn't know how to share. A few times, she had felt so frustrated in class that she yelled and threw her books. The other students had backed away from her, which made her sad. She didn't mean to act that way. Her teacher and parents helped her make a plan to practice how to react differently when she felt frustrated. She would practice noticing sooner when she was having a strong feeling. If she noticed she was feeling frustrated, she would take 3 deep breaths. If she still felt frustrated, she would ask for help in a calm voice. With practice, Cindy had more confidence in noticing what she was feeling, and expressing it in a way she felt good about.



What skill did Cindy want to work on? _____

How did her parents and teachers help her learn the skill? _____



Billy loved being in class and learning new things. When he was working in a group with other students, he felt excited and wanted to share everything he knew. Sometimes, this meant other students didn't get a turn to share. Billy needed practice in listening and letting other people have a turn. He worked with his teacher and mom to make a goal to listen to others and to acknowledge what they said before sharing his idea. With practice he got better at this skill. When he was a little older, he got a job where he worked on a team. He was able to take turns sharing ideas to come up with a team plan.

What skill did Billy want to work on? _____

How did his mom and teacher help him learn the skill? _____

Learning skills like how to communicate, listen, make friends, and handle your feelings are all areas you can include in your IEP.

Positive and Confident Attitude

Think about a time you felt positive and confident. What did it feel like? Now, think of a person you know who is positive and confident. What does it look like? How is it to be around them? Read through these descriptions, and **decide if it describes a person with a positive and confident attitude. Put an “X” under “yes” or “no” for each one.**

What they do	Yes	No
Doesn't want to change		
Takes pride in their work		
Communicates well with others		
Friendly with others		
Does not follow directions well		
Works cooperatively with others		
Learns from mistakes		
Only does the bare minimum		
Works hard		
Is usually late for work or school		
Offers to help others		
Helps others <u>only when asked</u>		
Gossips about others at work or in class		
Makes suggestions to make things better		
Waits to begin a new task until told		
Shows respect for Elders		

A positive and confident attitude can help you improve your relationships, make and keep friends, and succeed at work. These are skills you can work on through your IEP.

Different Kinds of Relationships

There are many kinds of relationships between people. It is good to know what kinds of relationships you have and what kinds of relationships you want in your life.

Type of Relationship	Definition	Examples
Family	People we are connected to through some form of kinship.	Parents, brothers/sisters, aunts/uncles, and grandparents.
Acquaintance	People in your life that you know, but who are not friends or relatives.	Neighbors, teachers, Elders, co-workers, staff, and paid caregivers.
Friend	People we trust, respect, care about, and feel that we can confide in and want to spend time with.	The people you share your joys and challenges with, and who shares theirs with you.
Romantic Relationship	A relationship where people feel strongly attracted to each other, emotionally and physically.	Boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, wife, and life partner.

Your Relationships

You can set goals about building relationships you want. Think about the people in your life.

What are you satisfied with? Circle the answers that fit you, or write in your own.

I have many friends.

I get along with the people in my life.

I have friends to spend time with.

I get along with teachers at school.

What do you want to be different? Circle the answers that fit you, or write in your own.

I want to have more friends to spend time with

I want a better relationship with my family members, teachers, and/or co-workers

I want to have a boyfriend or girlfriend (romantic)

Relationship Circles Activity

This activity will help you see the relationships in your life, and where you might want to make changes. It helps to know the people you can call on when you need support.

Instructions:

On the following page, write in the names of people you know for each circle.

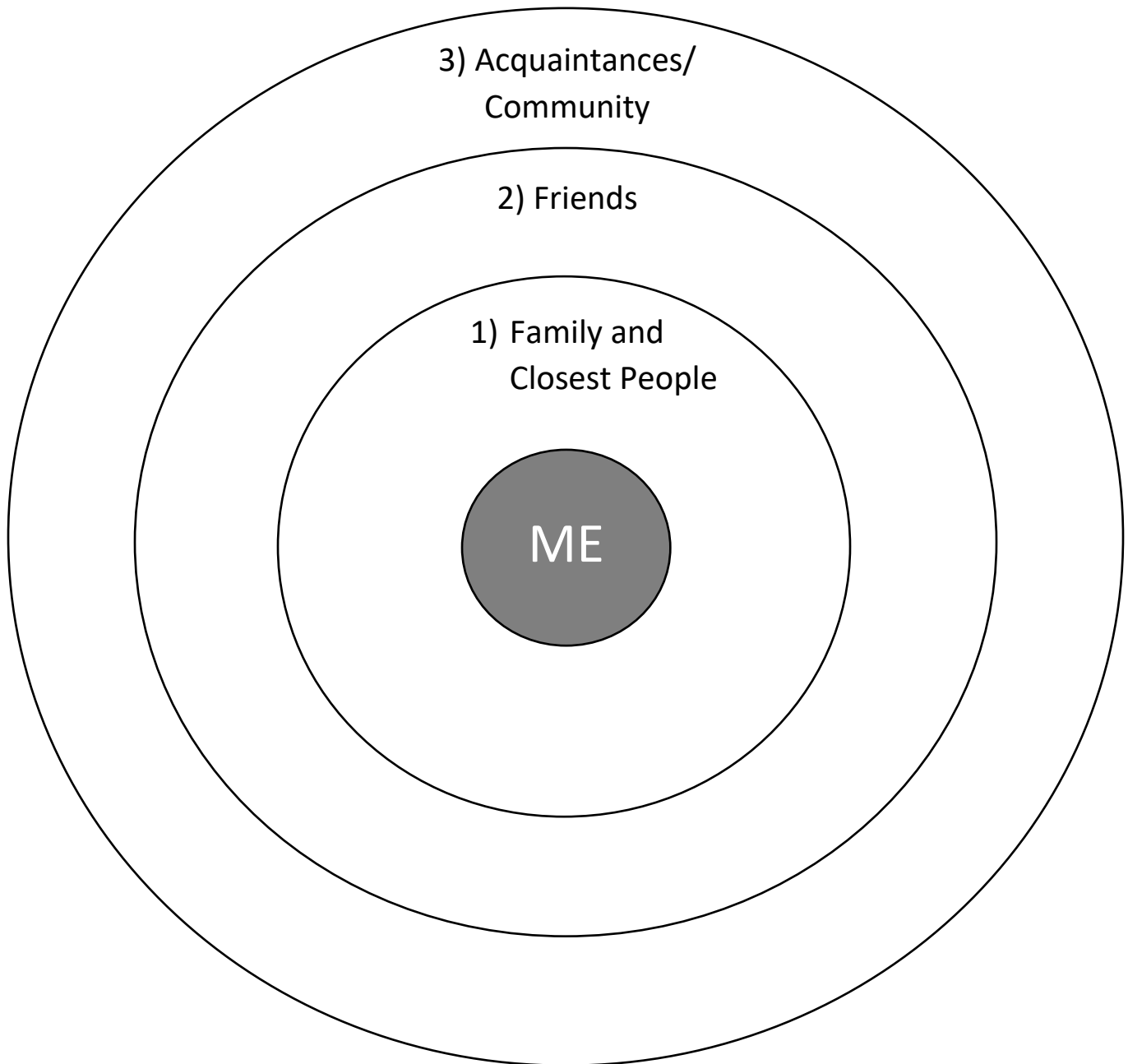
- **First Circle (Family):** These are the people closest to you. They know you well and you spend a lot of time with them day to day. They are people you trust. Include parents, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, grandparents and other people you feel are your family.
- **Second Circle (Friends):** These people are close to you, but usually less physically close. They don't live with you, but you can share your dreams with them, and you listen to each other when you face challenges. Include the names of your friends.
- **Third Circle (Acquaintances):** These people are in your community or your workplace. You may see them often, but they are not people you usually share personal information with. Look at people in this category to develop into friends, if you need more in your friends circle. Include Elders and teachers that care about you; co-workers; boss; neighbors you know; and support staff or paid caregivers.



There is no right or wrong answer! This is a tool to help you think about the relationships in your life. If there is a category that is empty, brainstorm ways with a teacher or parent on how you can build relationships in that area.

Content adapted from article: <https://agileleanlife.com/relationship-circles/>

Relationship Circles



Are relationship skills something you want to work on and improve? _____

What skills are the most important to you? Circle the best match or write in your answer.

Communication

Listen better

Cooperation

Take turns

Start friendships

Express emotion

My Ideas

Think about what you discovered in this section of the workbook. Use this space to write down your thoughts or draw a picture about what you want for your future.





Connect Through an Interest

What do you like to do for fun? Finding others that like doing the same things or who have the same interests can be a great way to make new friends and connect to your community.

The girls in the picture above from Circle, Alaska, enjoy performing in their local cultural dance group. They spend time learning the dances and songs that are important to their community.

There are many kinds of clubs and community interest groups that do activities together.

Find out what is available in your community!

Community Experiences and Fun

Being part of a community makes life more meaningful. Community members like being together and have things in common that connect them. Finding activities that you enjoy doing can be a good way to connect to your community to get more out of life.

What do you like to do for fun?

Circle the things that you are interested in, and cross out the things you don't like:

Camping	Soccer
Baking	Gardening
Hiking	Hunting
Cooking	Hockey
Ice Skating	Visiting with friends
Swimming	Fishing
Walking	Singing
Basketball	Dancing
Board games	Having Pets
Collecting food from the land (like berries)	Writing stories or poems
Video games	Going to Church
Collecting Things (stamps, coins, dolls)	Watching TV/Movies/Videos
Sewing	Youth group
Painting	Playing an instrument
Football	Listening to music
Building things	Drawing
Photography	Beading
Texting friends	Acting
Learn about animals	Riding Bicycles

Different Ways to Get Involved

Common Interests—

Often people who are interested in something like to do and learn about it together.

Examples: Chess club, Lego robotics, drumming, bird watching, sewing, beading, painting, Native Youth Olympics.



Photo: Greg Kim / KYUK

What are things you like to do with others?

What are some of your interests that others might also enjoy? _____

Community Activities—

What fun events happen every year where you live? What events are popular?

You can attend these events for fun, or find ways to get more involved.

Examples:

- If you enjoy basketball, go to games or even volunteer to take tickets.
- If you like the state fair, enter something you grew in your garden, or an animal you raised, or a picture you made. Volunteer to watch over an area at the fair.
- If you like to attend the holiday craft sales, consider making things to sell.



Photo: Robert Woolsey KCAW

What are your favorite events that happen in your community? _____

Would you be interested in getting more involved with the event? _____



Volunteering—



Helping others or working as part of a team on a community goal can be a great feeling.

- If you love animals, consider volunteering at your local pet shelter.
- If you like working with a team, volunteer on a community project.
- Help serve food at a shelter or distribute food and supplies to families in need.
- Volunteer at a kid’s camp if you like working with children.

Have you volunteered before? What did you do? _____

Would you like to do some volunteering? _____

Church—



Being part of a religious community is an important part of life for many people. There are often groups and activities that the church members do together, such as youth group, community service, bible study, choir and special events.

Are you or your family involved with a church? _____

If yes, what kinds of church activities do you like to attend? _____

Sports—

Recreational leagues are sport teams that play for fun, and include many ability levels. See what sports are available in your community, and consider trying one out.

What sports do you enjoy? _____

Would you like to be on a community team? _____



Traditional Arts and Culture—



If you are Alaska Native, explore and connect with your culture by learning a traditional craft like beading, sewing, or carving. Learn your Tribe’s heritage language, dance, and/or songs that have been passed down through your Ancestors.

What traditional arts or cultural activities are you interested in learning? _____

Subsistence Activities—



People all around Alaska enjoy being outside on the Land. Many people enjoy subsistence activities like hunting, fishing, and collecting foods like berries and plants. Some families have a fish camp every summer. They work together to put up the fish everyone will eat. This is a special time of working together, enjoying nature, and laughter. For some Alaskans, there are deep cultural ties to the land and special ways of harvesting animals and plants. For many, it is a very important way to have enough food to eat. Being part of these activities can be a great way to feel connected to your family, community, and the land.

What subsistence activities do you like to do? _____

What subsistence activities do you want to learn? _____

Other Interests—



Maybe you enjoy playing an instrument, or riding an ATV.

What other things do you like to do for fun? _____

Photos: Seal hunt and beaded gloves pictures provided by Charlene Hadley and used with permission.

Your Interests Can Lead to Jobs

Joey loved dogs. He had a pet dog at home, and loved taking care of her by taking her for walks, feeding her, and throwing the ball for her. He had taken her to puppy class and taught her to sit and come. His teacher suggested that he sign up to volunteer at the local pet shelter where animals that need homes go. He went once a week and took dogs for walks, and helped feed the cats and clean up their cages. One of the people at the shelter saw that Joey was really good with dogs. He asked if Joey would want a job as a dog walker. He helped Joey put up an ad, and soon Joey was making money walking dogs after school.



Cathy enjoyed taking pictures. She had a natural talent for catching special moments with her camera. She was shy, but found it easier to talk to people when she was taking their picture. Her older sister asked Cathy to take some pictures for her Senior pictures, because she couldn't afford a professional to do it. The pictures turned out so well, her sister's friends asked Cathy to take theirs as well. Word got out, and soon Cathy was getting paid to photograph birthday parties, families, and other events.

Rosie's grandfather was an Elder and often had pain in his hands. Rosie and her mom gathered plants and dried them. They mixed them into a healing salve, which is like a lotion with medicine in it. It helped him a lot, and he was able to work on his carving projects without as much pain. Neighbors heard about it, and wanted Rosie's salve. She made a bigger batch, and quickly sold those too. Rosie and her mom worked together to make more salve for people to buy, and soon they had a small business that Rosie felt really good about.



People that know you can help you brainstorm interests of yours that could become a job.

What do you like to do? _____

Are there community groups who also do that activity? _____

Would there be some kind of service related to that activity that people would buy?

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References:

- Rhode Island Youth Transitions Workbook (2015)
<https://health.ri.gov/forms/worksheets/YouthTransitionWorkbook.pdf>
- Wrightslaw definitions of Self-Advocacy quoted from
<https://www.parentcenterhub.org/priority-selfadvocacy/>

My Transition Goals

Name: _____

Instructions: Use the workbook pages to explore your thoughts about your goals for the future. Next, copy some of your answers below before moving to the next section. When you are finished, you will have a summary that you, your family, and your teachers can make into a plan.

Exploring Careers and Work

Skills, Aptitudes, and Interests (page 5)—

Things I enjoy: _____

Things I am good at (aptitudes): _____

Things I can do (skills): _____

Values (page 6)—Five values that are important to me:

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

5. _____

Work Places (page 7)—Four work places I would like:

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

Relationship Skills at Work (page 8)—Four skills I would like to get better at:

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

Career Interest Survey (page 9)—The kinds of jobs that fit me the best (Circle two):

Hands-on

Creative

Thinker

Organizer

Leader

Helper



Work in Your Community (Page 20)—

Two jobs in my community I am interested in learning more about:

1. _____ 2. _____

Work places I would like to visit and try out?

1. _____ 2. _____

Subsistence Activities (page 22 and 64)—

Subsistence activities I like to do: _____

Subsistence activities I want to learn: _____

Self-Employment (page 23)—

I am interested in having my own business (circle one): Yes No

If yes, the kind of business I want to explore: _____

Training or Education After High School

I am interested in these kinds of education or training after high school (page 31) (circle any):

College degree (2-year or 4-year or Advanced)

Occupational Endorsement Certificate (OEC)

Vocational Program (AVTEC/Job Corps)

Where I want to get my training or education (page 31) (Circle any you want):

Home community, local program

Home community online

Start online, then move for more training

Move to _____ for training/education

Two careers and training I am interested in (page 33):

_____ and _____



Independent Living and Supports

What I want my home to be like (page 36): _____

Empower Yourself (page 37)

My strengths: (What are you good at? What do you like about yourself?)

My challenges: (What is challenging for you to do?) _____

What helps me do the things that are challenging (page 38)?

People who help me: _____

Technology that helps me: _____

Accommodations that help me: _____

Medicine that helps me: _____

What would help me do well at school? (page 43) _____

What would help me do well at work? (page 43) _____

How do I learn best? (page 40) (Circle any)

Watching Hearing Reading Hands-on

Taking Charge of My Health (page 42)—

The skills I want to learn next to take care of my own health:

1. _____

2. _____



Managing Money (page 46)—

I want to learn more about managing my own money (circle one): Yes No

One goal I have related to my budget (spending plan): _____

Managing Time (page 47)—Two time-management skills I want to work on:

1. _____

2. _____

Managing Anxiety and Depression

Mental Health Skills (page 53)—Two mental health skills I want to work on:

1. _____

2. _____

Communication and Relationships

Relationship Skills (page 57)—Two relationship skills I want to work on:

1. _____

2. _____

Community Experiences and Fun

Four things I like to do (page 61)

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

Four kinds of activities I would like to learn about or explore (pages 62–64):

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

An interest I have that could lead to a job (page 65): _____

