

Monthly tips and resources featured in **What's Next?** are created for young adults, their families, and supporters who are exploring options for life after high school in Indiana.

## Tips for Getting a Summer Job

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Yay! It's almost summertime! You are so excited for summer because you get a break from school, maybe a vacation, time to hang out and do whatever you want, and ... you are finally old enough to get a SUMMER JOB!

Research has shown that summer job experiences are important for the lives and future careers of students without disabilities (Mortimer, 2010). Research has also revealed that summer job experiences of all sorts are just as vital for students WITH disabilities. (Carter et al., 2010).

Although youth with disabilities often overlook summer work experiences in competitive integrated settings, they can get positive work experiences from short term summer-related goals and activities.

### 5 ways to get summer work experience

1. Find tasks do at home or in your neighborhood to practice work skills before you're old enough to legally work. Anything from completing chores, baby-sitting, helping someone take care of their yard, or learning to code. Activities like these will help when looking for a job in the future.
2. Seek out **volunteer** or school activities you can participate in. You can volunteer with organized groups, clubs at school, or on your own. Anything from helping a local food pantry, community garden, groups for children, gathering, organizing, and donating items to a local homeless shelter, domestic violence shelter, or any other place in need can help you gain important job experiences for your future.
3. **Shadowing** a job or completing a job internship could provide positive opportunities for you to explore potential areas you are interested in. You may

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also find ideas about accommodations, modifications, and natural supports that could benefit you in future employment.

4. **Networking** is the art of finding job opportunities from friends, family, and other people you know. This is a very important job searching skill you can begin learning and using while a teenager. Building relationships with people in your community can provide networking opportunities and references for future job applications.
5. **Apply!** Even if you are unsure about getting the job, just applying helps you practice important job skills like completing applications, finding references, and gathering all the information needed to apply. If you land an interview, this provides wonderful practice and could lead to being hired.

Summer job experiences will teach you more about yourself, your interests, and how to practice job application and work skills. Comb through the websites below to find a variety of summer employment opportunities and ideas.

## Resources

- [Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking and Technology \(DO-IT\)](#)  
*List of internships from our friends at Washington University.*
- [USA.gov](#)  
*Help with government employment and employment laws.*
- [Youth.gov](#)  
*Detailed discussion and set of resources for youth with disabilities.*
- [Project Indy](#)  
*Youth jobs initiative founded by Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett.*
- [Learn More Indiana](#)  
*Deep dive into the ways to gain experience, including a list of Indiana internships.*

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**What's Next?** is a project of the Center on Community Living and Careers and  
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