

> FOSTERING CAREERS

A GUIDE FOR SUPPORTIVE ADULTS HELPING YOUTH

CAREGIVER COMPANION
GUIDE TO FOSTERING
CAREERS: A ROADMAP TO
YOUR FIRST JOB



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WHY WAS THIS GUIDE WRITTEN

Did you know that 70% of all jobs require some form of post-secondary education?

Now more than ever, it is imperative that we start conversations early with young adults to get them thinking about their first work experience and exploring careers that might interest them. The activities and resources presented can also be used as goals and objectives for a youth's needs and services plan, transition plan, and case plan.

WHAT IS THIS GUIDE ABOUT?

Thank you for being the caregiver or supportive adult for a young person looking to get that first job and begin exploring their career interests. We all know that this is no easy task and that having a mentor to guide a young adult through the process is key. This guide will offer comprehensive information and activities to help you engage a young adult in thinking about work and their future. This is a companion guide to the [Fostering Careers: A Roadmap to Your First Job](#) which provides an overview for young adults on the documents and steps they need to take to get that first job.

Please note that the activities are written in a youth friendly voice, but they are meant to be done alongside a supportive adult who can help the youth better understand, digest, and think critically about the information.

WHERE DO I START?

Since many young adults are in search of that first job experience, a good place to start is by helping them with working through the [Fostering Careers: A Roadmap to Your First Job](#) guide starting at the age of 14. And a great place to start is to make sure they have all their right to work documents.



Once a youth gets all the right to work documents together, getting the other necessary items in place like a resume, cover letter, etc. can be daunting. Remember, there are workforce programs in place that will help. Many programs are available that will provide training and even paid internships. If you want to link your young adult to one of these programs, see the information below:



How do I know the young adult I am working with is ready for a training and internship experience with the workforce system?

Have a conversation beforehand to make sure the young adult is equipped with the tools to be successful is key.

In addition to all the tools, here are some helpful questions to discuss with your young adult:

Can you answer these questions? If so, you are ready to go!

What are the requirements for participation? Can I commit to that many hours?
How many hours of work are offered per week? Can I commit?
Can an employer contact me via phone and email (If you need help getting a phone, contact iFoster)?
How long will the program last?
Do I have transportation?
How long will it take to get there or is the distance too long for me to travel?
Am I responsible with my time? If I am running late or am going to miss an appointment, do I call to let people know?
Can you pass a drug test? This includes marijuana as well, even if you have a medical card?
Do you have child care (if applicable)?



Whether you refer your young adult to the Workforce System or you work with them directly to complete the Youth Guide, it is important to make sure they:

- ☐ Have identified their support system and who they can count on (See Pg. 6 of Youth Guide)
- ☐ Participate in a Mock Interview with you (See Pg. 20 of Youth Guide for sample questions)
- ☐ Have set up an appropriate voicemail (See. Pg. 23 of Youth guide)
- ☐ Get all their right to work documents (See pg 8 of Youth Guide)
- ☐ Have interview clothing (See pg. 22 of Youth Guide)
- ☐ Have identified references and know their contact information (See Pg. 24 of Youth Guide)
- ☐ Have a typed resume and cover letter that is saved and easily accessible (See Pg 11-18 of Youth Guide)
- ☐ Have an appropriate email, if not, please help them set one up (See Pg. 23 of Youth Guide)
- ☐ Understand marijuana and drug testing policies (See Pg. 25 of Youth Guide)

WHAT IS THE CAREER EXPLORATION PROCESS AND HOW DO SPRINGBOARD JOBS LEAD TO CAREER PATHS?

In addition to getting that work experience, it's important to talk about building interest and exploration in working. Due to the re-traumatization of foster care, young adults struggle with building healthy connections and understanding that no one goes it alone in getting to a career or attaining educational goals. A young adults first job is a springboard to practicing the soft skills need in the workplace. A first job can also be a great way to network, boost self esteem and autonomy.

Your role is to help youth explore what they're interested in, realize their potential and help them dream about their future. This process also requires supportive adults to motivate youth to persist when it gets hard, accept their decisions, and help them learn from their failures.

To help guide the career exploration piece, this guide several activities for you to complete along with the young adult. It is important to revisit these every 6 months as career interests may change.

BUILDING RAPPORT

ASSESSING STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS

UNDERSTANDING BARRIERS AND REALITY TESTING

EXPLORING OPTIONS AND CAREER PLANNING

NORMALIZING SETBACKS AND PLANNING FOR THEM



THE ROLE OF RAPPORT

Most youth in the child welfare system have encountered countless adults who have come in and out of their lives. Some are there to genuinely help, while others are not. Because many have been let down by seemingly supportive adults, those of us who are here to offer support have to work harder to build the relationship. The truth is, if you don't have rapport, you won't be able to build the relationship needed to do the hard work!

SOME WAYS YOU CAN BUILD RAPPORT IS BY:

- Keeping promises when we say we are going to do something!
- Listening without judgement, validating their experiences and struggles.
- Sharing your own struggles with finding work or how you came to the job or career you are in.
- Remembering to laugh!
- Remembering the mantra that no matter how difficult things get or how much pushback you encounter, "This is a good kid having a hard time."

As you embark on these conversations with the youth about their hopes, dreams, wishes for the future, your job is to listen and guide and not to prescribe and direct.

FRAMING OUR MINDSET: THE MAMBA MENTALITY

We all know Kobe Bryant as one of the best basketball players of all time. Some people think he has natural talent and was born a great basketball star. But not many people know that he would practice basketball from 5am-7am every day before school.

He later went on to call this drive the Mamba Mentality. Take a look at Kobe describing this mindset [here](#).

Mamba Mentality is a constant quest to be the best version of one's self and it was developed by 5 time NBA champion Kobe Bryant!

"If you want to be great in a particular area, you have to obsess over it. A lot of people say they want to be great, but they're not willing to make the sacrifices necessary to achieve greatness."

KOBE BRYANT

As the supportive adult, you are about to begin an exciting journey supporting a young person to get to know themselves bit better, explore their strengths, interests, passions and plan out how they can turn these into a future career. Remember that it won't be easy and setbacks are bound to happen, but if you both embrace the Mamba Mentality, there is no stopping you!

TALK IT OUT

With your young adult discuss these questions:

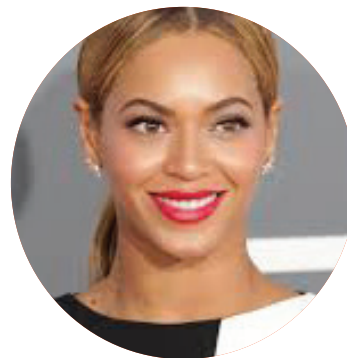
1. How could you apply the Mamba Mentality to your life?
2. What is something you feel you could put more work in to accomplish? What would that look like?

EVERYONE STARTS SOMEWHERE

Have you ever wondered how successful people got their start?



Did you know **Barack Obama's** first job was scooping ice cream at Baskin Robbins when he was 16?



Did you know that **Beyoncé's** first gig was sweeping hair off the floor at a hair salon when she was 14?

This guide will help you and a young adult think through how to move from that first job to a career path which generally will require post-secondary education. Remember to work through the guide and have fun exploring!

What kind of lifestyle do I want to have?

SUPPORTIVE ADULT:

Guide the young adult in this activity.

Close our eyes and imagine yourself in 15 years. How old will you be? Where will you be? What will it feel like? Where will you be living? Who will you be surrounded by?

Dreaming about our goals and lifestyle is an important first step in thinking about what career we want. It also helps us figure out which careers might help us afford the lifestyle we want. So, let's imagine the life we want and figure out how much it's going to cost us to get there.

ACTIVITY 1

Choose Your Lifestyle

PURPOSE:

To have you think about the lifestyle you want and how much money you need to make to have it.

TIME:

Plan for 60 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Internet access
- Activity link:
www.cacareerzone.org/budget
- A member of your support team that you can talk to about the results

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Go to www.careerzone.org/budget
2. Click on the tab for "Budget how much money you'll need" and complete the series of questions.
3. Remember, this activity is designed for you to calculate how much it will cost to live your ideal life. So be honest with yourself when answering the questions. Remember to add any additional expenses you may already have, like childcare, a car payment or credit card debt at the end.

At the end of the activity you will receive a report and it will tell you how much you will need to lead the lifestyle you want. Remember, in 15-20 years things will cost more so these numbers will change.

TALK IT OUT

1. How much money will you be spending per month to live the life you want? How much will this be per year?
2. Were you surprised by how much things cost? Why or why not?
3. Do you think the career you're interested in will earn you enough money to afford this lifestyle?



PRO TIP: Remember that it's important to help a young adult think about these questions with an open mind. As you explore the conversation, these questions are meant to build a dialogue between you and the young adult in a supportive and encouraging way. The youth's spending habits may be overly ambitious for the career they will pick, and that's ok. Our job is not to come from a place of judgement, but use guiding questions to get them to see this and discuss what changes may need to take place.



WHAT ARE MY STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS?

Now that you have thought about the lifestyle you'd like to have, let's think about what your strengths and interests are and how these might guide you to a particular career.

It can be helpful to think about these questions early in your career journey, because they can help you figure out what your first steps might be.

What do I
enjoy doing?

What do I
want my life to
be like in the
future?

Do I like
working with
people or more
independently?

How much
money do we
need or want
to make?



ACTIVITY 2

Take the Gladeo Quiz

PURPOSE:

To give you a chance to think about your personal interest and how they may match up with different careers.

TIME:

Plan for 60 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Internet access
- Activity link:
gladeo.com/gladeo-quiz-landing
Note: You will need to set up a profile to access the quiz
- A member of your support team that you can talk to about the results

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Go to gladeo.com/gladeo-quiz-landing and create profile.
2. On the top right, click on "Take the Quiz" You will have several categories of questions to answer. Remember, to select what you are interested in and excited by. The test is trying to better understand your interests to determine which careers might be a good fit.
3. Complete the series of questions.

YOUR RESULTS

Your results will tell you a bit about your personality type. Are you an organizer, a persuader, a people person?

EXAMPLE



THE BUILDER

Enjoys working with practical things you can see or touch and making them better - tools, animals, and machines. Enjoys the outdoors. Likes to work with THINGS.



THE ORGANIZER

Enjoys structured tasks, working with numbers, records, or machines in an orderly fashion. Likes to work with DATA.



THE PERSUADER

Enjoys persuading, influencing and leading people. Good at selling things and ideas. Likes to work with PEOPLE and DATA.

TALK IT OUT

Discuss the results of the personality breakdown.

1. Does this seem to match your personality?
2. Was anything surprising or unexpected?

→← YOUR CAREER MATCHES

After you take a look at the personality profile, you can scroll down and look at your career matches. This is where things get really exciting! Does this seem to match your interests?



Visual Merchandiser

Apparel & Accessories The Builder



Fashion Designer

Apparel & Accessories The Persuader



Assistant Director

Entertainment, Media & Sports
The Organizer

Entertainment Marketing

Entertainment, Media & Sports
The Organizer

Technical Writer

Entertainment, Media & Sports
The Organizer

Writer

Entertainment, Media & Sports
The Persuader

Social Media Specialist

Entertainment, Media & Sports
The Persuader

Multimedia Producer

Entertainment, Media & Sports
The Persuader

After you take a look at the list of careers that came up as a match, think about which would be you

TOP THREE

1.

2.

3.

LET'S DIG A LITTLE DEEPER



Exploring careers means we not only think about what work would be interesting to us, but we also have to think about:

1. How much it pays?
2. Will there be jobs available?
3. What type of schooling is required?

The next activity will help you think through these things so that you can be equipped with all the necessary information.



DIGGING DEEPER INTO MY CAREER CHOICES

Digging deeper means we think about the lifestyle we want and the career choices that can get us there. There may be some surprises here, so brace yourself. You may find that a career you thought you wanted to do, may not earn you the amount of money you need to sustain the life you want. Or you may find a career you're interested in, but there won't be many jobs available. These are all important things to think about, so let's get started!

ACTIVITY 3

Comparing and Contrasting My Career Interests

PURPOSE:

To compare and contrast your career interests based on salary, education and future growth.

TIME:

Plan for 60 minutes

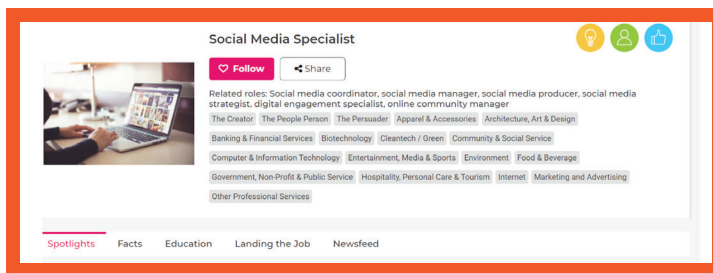
MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Internet access
- Your Gladeo log in information
- A member of your support team that you can talk to about the results

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Go to <https://gladeo.com> and log in
2. Scroll down to Your Career Matches
3. Click on the careers of interest to
4. you and read up about them.
5. Complete the series of questions.

WHAT INFORMATION CAN I LEARN ABOUT EACH CAREER?



SPOTLIGHT will allow you to read about real people in this job.

FACTS will tell you how much money you can expect to make.

EDUCATION will give you an idea of what schooling is required and how you can prepare.

LANDING THE JOB provides you with a roadmap to the career.



Don't forget to watch the video about the careers and the industries to learn more.

Take some time to browse through all the different careers. Read up about them, learn what others are saying and what it takes to get there!

Next, let's compare a few you're interested in. Go through the information in the descriptions and complete the chart below.

CAREER NAME	SALARY	GROWTH POTENTIAL	EDUCATION REQUIRED

TALK IT OUT

The Youth at Work Program provides opportunities to explore these questions and more while the youth earns \$15 per hour in an internship. To learn more, take a look at how you can refer a youth.

1. Which of these careers seems most interesting to you? Why?
2. Which of these has a salary range that meets your budget from Activity 1?
3. Which of these careers is projected to grow significantly?
4. What are the educational requirements? Are you able and willing to commit to these?
5. Can you see yourself doing the job duties for these careers?
6. Does this information make me lean more toward one of these three or am I still undecided? What information do I still need to decide? Who can help me?

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Talk to people in
the profession

By now one of the careers may be looking like a frontrunner, or maybe you are torn between two. A great way to explore more about a career is by talking to someone in real life.



You can do this by asking your school counselor about any upcoming career fairs where professionals come to talk about their jobs and answer questions.

You can do a job shadow where you spend the day at work with someone in that profession. Ask someone in your support network or a counselor if they have anyone to connect you with.

If they're not available for a job shadow, most professionals would be happy to spend some time doing an informational interview. This is an opportunity for you to ask questions like:

- What do you like most/least about this work?
- How did you start out?
- What education did you need to complete?
- What advice would you give to someone wanting to get into this career?



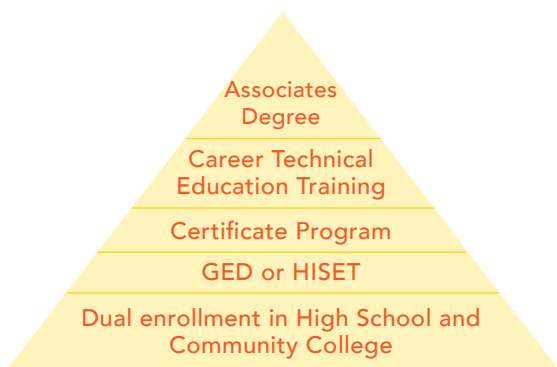
PRO TIP: This is a great opportunity to help connect the young adult you are working with to someone in your network who may have a career the youth is interested in. Think about ways to support them going on a job shadow or doing an interview. Can you help provide them a ride? Do they need professional clothing? Do they need to practice with you what to say or ask? These are all great ways to help prepare them for this opportunity.

LET'S TALK ABOUT EDUCATION

As you know, approximately **70% of jobs leading to a career will require some form of education after high school**. This does not mean that everyone will automatically go to college after high school or that everyone will get a four-year degree.

THERE ARE OTHER EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL.

Other Post-Secondary Educational Options at Community Colleges



Traditional Educational Path

High School Degree or High School Equivalency

Associates Degree
(Community College)

Bachelor's Degree
(4 Year College or University)

Master's Degree

Ph.D, Law Degree, etc.



TAKE A LOOK AT NURSING AS A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF THIS:

[GLADEO.COM/CAREER/NURSE](https://gladeo.com/career/nurse)

Let's say Michael wants to be a nurse. He just graduated with his GED, take a look at some of the steps he might take:

NURSING CAREERS	MICHAEL'S ACTION STEPS
Getting a job	Michael is working at a CVS pharmacy after getting his GED and is taking classes at a Community College to get his Medical Assistant certificate. He is earning \$15/hr at CVS.
Medical Assistant	Michael gets his medical assistant certificate and gets a job as a medical assistant at a doctor's office. He is earning \$17/hr

NURSING CAREERS	MICHAEL'S ACTION STEPS
<p>Certified Nurse Assistant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State-certified training program, 100 hours that cover daily hygiene, bedside care, vital-sign measurement, common health problems and chronic illnesses. • Programs at community colleges, vocational and technical schools, and in hospital and nursing homes • Pass competency exam 	<p>Michael completes his CNA certificate and gets a job as a CNA at a doctor's office. At night he enrolls in a nursing program at the Community College.</p> <p>He is earning \$20/hr</p>
<p>Licensed Vocational / Practical Nurse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 year accredited nursing program (technical schools and community colleges) • Get licensed by passing the National Council Licensure Examination or NCLEX-PN 	<p>After 1.5 years, Luis earns his Licensed Vocational Nurse degree and is promoted at his original job to that position. He wants to keep going with his schooling, so he continues at the Community College to get his Associate's Degree in nursing.</p> <p>He is earning \$60,000 per year</p>
<p>Registered Nurse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 ways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor's degree of Science in Nursing: includes general studies and nursing education while focusing on leadership development, 4 years. • Get licensed by passing the National Council Licensure Examination or NCLEX-PN • Get licensed by passing the National Council Licensure Examination or NCLEX-RN 	<p>Michael completes his Associate's Degree in nursing and passes the nursing exam. He is again promoted at work to a Registered Nurse.</p> <p>He is earning \$80,000 per year</p>

As you can see, Michael started out at CVS stocking shelves and he gradually worked his way up over the course of 2-3 years to a Registered Nurse. This was not easy. It required him to be in school and working and pushing himself. It did pay off for him. In a few short years he went from earning \$15 an hour to \$80,000 per year.



PRO TIP: It's important to research what the job growth opportunities are and what is worth your time investment. A student may be interested in something, but the jobs available may be low. Being aware of this along with the requirements to reach that career is key.



Now, let's take a look at **Asia's story**. Asia is 21 and has been working at Chipotle for the last year. Recently, she was talking to her friend's cousin who works as a Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Installer. After talking to her supportive adult, Asia does some more research about the salary and what the day to day looks like. She finds out that starting pay for a HVAC Installer is \$24/hour and can go up to \$35/hour, for a level three technician.¹ She is very interested and decides to keep her day shift at Chipotle and pursue the classes she needs to attain this career. Her friend directs her to the Los Angeles Trade Tech website as a place to start. Let's take a look at how Asia goes about her planning.

FIRST she goes to [LATTC | Construction Maintenance & Utilities](#) to explore a bit more about the career.

NEXT she is able to look at [GetSharePointFile.ashx \(lattc.edu\)](#) to get a better understanding of what courses are required

FINALLY she finds the office hours for the department [LATTC | Advanced Transportation & Manufacturing](#) and goes in person to see what she needs to do to enroll. They are able to connect her with a counselor who is able to answer her questions and help her enroll

Did you know that most of the California Community Colleges have interactive sites where you can search for particular degrees, certificate programs, and what classes are required.

Take a look at the LATTC Academic Pathways site.

- [LATTC | About Pathways](#) or this one from
- [Los Angeles Southwest College Health and Human Services | L.A. Southwest College \(lasc.edu\)](#)

Looking for a Community College near you?

- [Find a College | California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office \(cccco.edu\)](#)

¹ HVAC Mechanic | Salary in Los Angeles, CA | Salary.com

CREATING YOUR GAME PLAN

Just like Michael, you can begin planning out the steps to take in working toward a future career. Remember that this is only a rough draft. Plans will change and you may encounter obstacles, but having an idea of what needs to happen to get to your destination is key in your success. Success does not happen by accident. Remember Kobe Bryant waking up at 5am to practice his skills? This action plan is your opportunity to begin putting in the hard work it will take to achieve your goals.

ACTIVITY 4

Creating a Plan

PURPOSE:

To create short and long term personal, work, and educational goals as they relate to a particular career.

TIME:

Plan for 120 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Internet access
- Pencil/pen
- Action Plan Activity Sheet
- A member of your support team that you can talk to about the results

INSTRUCTIONS:

With your supportive adult, complete the action plan below:

What is my career goal?

What education do I need for this career?

What is my motivation to get there?

(here think of one or two reasons you want to achieve this career goal. For example: to better provide for my family, to prove to myself and others I can do it, to give back to others.)



Remember to make your goals small and tangible. For example, if you are in high school, your first school goal doesn't have to be something big like get my diploma, it can be something like, pass my English class with a B or better.

	SCHOOL GOALS	WORK GOALS	BARRIERS TO BE ADDRESSED	PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP ME	TIMELINE
FIRST STEP					
NEXT STEP					
NEXT STEP					
NEXT STEP					
NEXT STEP					



Marijuana and drug testing for most skilled labor jobs: Remember, most skilled labor jobs will require a clean drug test.

EXAMPLE:

Meet **Jonathan**, he is 17 years old and has 55 credits toward graduation. He is interested in a teaching career. Let's take a look at how he starts writing his Career Plan.

What is my career goal?

To become a middle school science teacher.

What education do I need for this career?

Bachelor's degree and teaching credential.

What is my motivation to get there?

Help provide a good home for my one year old son and girlfriend.

	SCHOOL GOALS	WORK GOALS	BARRIERS TO BE ADDRESSED	PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP ME	TIMELINE
FIRST STEP	Talk to my counselor about getting my GED and what I need to do.	Find a job as a camp counselor working with kids to get some experience. Continue my job at Chipotle.	Need to get child care for my son so I can focus more on school.	School counselor (GED) Social Worker to help with connecting me with child care.	Talk to counselor and social worker next week.
NEXT STEP	Get my GED	Continue working at Chipotle and job as a camp counselor.	Get my TAP card to make sure I have transportation to get to school.	Teachers and school counselor	Get my GED in 5 months
NEXT STEP	1. Enroll in Community College to get AA degree. 2. Talk to the Community College counselor to see what classes I should take to get a job as a teacher's assistant. 3. Make a list of classes to take to be able to transfer to a four-year school.	Find a job as a Teacher's Assistant	Start studying for my driver's test	Community College Counselor Girlfriend to help me with drivers test and training since she already has a license	Enroll in Community College by February 21st. Complete AA degree by 2024.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR BARRIERS: LIFE HAPPENS

THINGS FOR THE SUPPORTIVE ADULT TO DO

1. Normalize the fact that everyone has setbacks instead of reacting with disbelief, or disapproval.
2. Reassure them that they are still a good person, experiencing a setback.
3. Offer to make a plan and go back to the career guide and see what has to be revised. Are they now pregnant? How will this

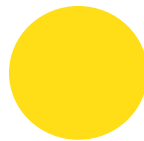
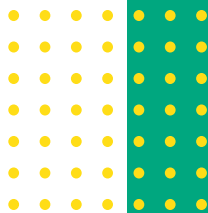


PRO TIP: Remember that youth are still growing and learning and it is our responsibility to not add to their distress during times of difficulty. If a youth shares that they are experiencing a barrier that might set them back we should aim to do the following:

affect their planning? Do they need help getting connected to counseling?

WHAT TO SAY

Now that they have thought about work and a career, it's important to think about what barriers they might encounter. Whether it is getting pregnant, having a criminal record, mental health struggles, drug use... life happens to everyone. It's important to remember that these don't have to end their career goals and dreams.



How we approach the youth during these setbacks is key in helping us keep rapport and ensure their success.

Normalize that youth are still growing and learning.

ACTIVITY 5

Identifying My Hurdles

PURPOSE:

To identify and plan for barriers which may prevent progress with work or school goals.

TIME:

Plan for 30 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Internet access

A member of your support team that you can talk to about the results

INSTRUCTIONS:

With your supportive adult take a look at the list of hurdles below and rate them in order from most challenging to least challenging.

1 = most challenging and 8 = least challenging	
FINDING CHILDCARE	
MENTAL HEALTH	
SCHOOL SCHEDULE	
HOUSING	
TRANSPORTATION	
JUVENILE OR ADULT RECORD	
DRUG USE (including marijuana)	
OTHER	

Now that you've identified some of the roadblocks, what types of support might we need to get past this roadblock?

SUPPORT 1

SUPPORT 2

SUPPORT 3

WHO MIGHT BE THE RIGHT FIT:

Who from your support team can you reach out to in order to get help with some of the support items you've identified?

TALK IT OUT

Take a look at this site www.1degree.org to help connect you with resources in the community that can help.

1. What agency can I reach out to for support?
2. What do I need to say?
3. Will I need to go in person? Do I need help with getting there?
4. What other support will I need?



Remember that we may not always be able to see the roadblocks ahead of us and that is alright. This is another reason why it is so important to have a strong support team, who may be able to see the things we can't and share them with us in an honest and caring way.

As you embark on your career journey remember that setbacks are a part of life. Don't forget why you are doing this and use that to help you get motivated to get back up. Now that you have completed these activities, you are strengthened by the information and knowledge as well as a plan of what you need to do.

Congratulations on the start of an exciting journey.