



# Why Early Work Experiences Matter

## Introduction

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Early work experiences help students gain the skills and knowledge they need to achieve their employment goals. Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (2014), students with disabilities receive Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) designed to add to the transition services already occurring in the school. Specifically, these services help students explore their options and interests for postsecondary education and ultimately employment as adults. Vocational Rehabilitation supports the school by helping to connect them with local providers. Providers of Pre-ETS are a support to the school, not additional work for the school. Below are just a few of the many benefits of providing students with work opportunities.

## Benefits

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- Discover career interests, likes, dislikes, skills, and talents
- Identify workplace and vocational preferences
- Develop soft skills including work habits, problem-solving skills, flexibility skills and how to following through on tasks
- Practice work skills at an actual job or workplace
- Build occupational skills related to future job interests
- Develop an understanding of employer expectations
- Identify potential supports and accommodations for the student
- Learn which supports and accommodations are successful for the student
- Develop confidence in work and leadership skills
- Link classroom learning to work
- Increase motivation to stay in school
- Prepare student for employment in the community
- Build a competitive resume





- Promote high expectations of people with disabilities among community members
- Expose employers to youth with disabilities that have skills matching their employment needs

## Early Work Experience Resources

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### **National Technical Assistance Center on Transition**

<https://www.transitionta.org/>

### **Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center**

<http://www.wintac.org/topic-areas/pre-employment-transition-services>

### **Vocational Rehabilitation Youth Technical Assistance Center**

<https://y-tac.org/>

### **National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability**

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/>

