

Background

Youth with visual impairments have particularly low employment rates. Research shows that finding a job independently is beneficial, yet these youth often rely on others to find jobs for them.

The goals of this program are to:

- Develop the job search skills of youth with visual impairments
- 2) Strengthen youths' job search self-efficacy and self-confidence
- 3) Encourage a proactive approach to finding employment
- Help youth develop strategies to overcome barriers to employment



A job search skills training program designed for youth with visual impairments, ages 16 to 22 years

About 40 hours of content focusing on various aspects of job-seeking ranging from identifying strengths and skills to starting a new job

Two trainers deliver the content through group and individual activities

(see examples on next page)



Active learning:

Youth use their knowledge & skills to find answers & solve problems

Referent power:

Trainers develop a motivating influence by building respect & trust

Enhancing self-efficacy:

Youth observe others perform behaviors well, practice the behaviors, & get positive feedback

Building social support:

Trainers model supportive behaviors; youth get positive feedback from trainers & each other

Overcoming barriers to success:

Youth prepare to overcome jobseeking challenges or setbacks

Researchers at the National Research & Training Center on Blindness & Low Vision developed the *Putting Your Best Foot Forward* materials based on the *School to Work* program. The method is based on active learning principles and the group activity model developed by the Michigan Prevention Research Center in the JOBS program. The JOBS program has extensive evidence of its effectiveness in improving job obtainment for its participants.







Main Topics and Sample Activities



Identifying strengths & skills & the employer's point of view

Youth work in small groups to evaluate completed job applications

Youth set goals for the program and complete a personal data sheet



Presenting your skills & thinking like an employer

Youth brainstorm features of a good resume and discuss disclosure strategies

Youth practice filling out job applications and write a resume



Finding job vacancies

Trainers use roleplay examples to model calling personal contacts for job leads

Youth call their personal contacts and search for job openings on the internet



Preparing for a job interview

Youth interview an employer to learn about interview and hiring processes

Youth call
employers to ask
about job
openings and
develop a
transportation
plan



The job interview as a whole & starting a new job

> Youth interview each other through a roleplay exercise

Youth identify
accommodations
for specific jobs
and interview with
employers

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