



# Age 13 – 15

## Family Guide for Vocational Training

Ages 13-15 can be a pivotal time in honing skills related to independence and self-determination. Your child might take a more active role in his or her IEP meeting; even helping to run the meeting or expressing interests and preferences. There are opportunities for your child to engage in self-advocacy skills and take more responsibility in other activities (e.g., showing independence and responsibility). Encourage your child with specific feedback and praise when you see your child initiate or take responsibility by commenting on what you observe. Saying, "I like the way you got your stuff together and into your backpack this morning," will tell your child specifically what he or she is doing well and not just that she is doing a "good job!"

13-15	Themes	Examples
Explore jobs & careers	• Talk about potential future vocations	• Look through trade magazines, explore job matching activities on the internet (visit <a href="http://www.fyitransition.org">www.fyitransition.org</a> that provides information specifically designed for youth and their families).
	• Volunteer activities in the community	• Faith community, Rotary Club, United Way, community clean-up day, fund-raisers.
	• Job shadowing	• Bring your child to work day, opportunities with neighbors or friends.
Understand preferences	• Continue to explore your child's preferences and strengths	• Talk about what vocations appeal to your child and what aspects of the job are appealing. • Link current preferences to required continued education and preparation.
Improve work skills	• Increase life skills	• Help with dinner preparation, cleaning, doing laundry. • What do I need to know when I'm alone? • How to ask for help.
	• Increase independence in organizations	• Help your child to take on responsibilities outside of home; with structure and support.
	• Incentives for work	• Provide a wage tied to chores or other activities (e.g., feed the pets, weed, clean the garage, organize a cabinet, fold clothes).
	• Budgeting and money management	• Increased involvement in grocery shopping; including making lists, estimating costs, and the transaction with the cashier.
Partnerships	• IEP begins to explore topics related to transition. • Discussion with school about diploma options. • Discussion about services for adults with disabilities for support at home, work, and community.	

