

Why participate in Secondary Transitional Experience Program (STEP)?

1. I already have a part time job. Why should I enroll in the STEP program?

The job that you currently have may/may not be a job for which you will remain in for a long time. Many people change jobs and careers over the course of a lifetime of work.

The STEP program provides many services to students. The STEP program can provide opportunities for career exploration, guidance and career counseling, and coordination of post secondary education and training. With the help of STEP, you can better reach your potential and identify a career goal that will be meaningful.

The STEP Coordinator will be able to help you if you are interested in a different job or in helping to maintain your current employment.

“Students with disabilities who participate in vocational coursework and community-based work experiences are also more likely to obtain and maintain employment after high school.” (Rabren, Dunn, and Chambers, 2002).

2. I am planning on going to college. Why should I participate in STEP?

The purpose of attending college and receiving further education after high school is to improve your skill set. An improved set of skills will give you a solid foundation and improve outcomes for being independent in life.

Participating in a school based program for employment increases your chances of realizing your goals after high school and after college. The DRS STEP counselor will help you with decisions after high school, and help you access the services and assistance you may need to make a good transition to college. Funding for training may also be available.

“The odds of being stably employed and working full-time for an average young adult with a disability who has participated in a school program are over 1.2 times higher than they are for those who have NOT participated in a school-based program.” (Shandra and Hogan, April 2008)

3. My disability presents many challenges. How will STEP help me?

STEP offers many services. Of most importance are the development of social and personal skills needed to maintain successful employment. These are considered soft skills. Work experiences in the community allow students to gain soft skills that are transferrable to many settings at school, home and in the community, including volunteer opportunities.

The DRS STEP counselor may be able to help you get the Reasonable Accommodations you need after high school and the assistance of a Job Coach for a limited time.

Working during high school makes a significant impact on students' development including self determination skills, career awareness and goals, development of workplace values, and establishing a vocational identify. (Vondracek and Profeli, 2003)