

PREPARING YOUR CHILD/ YOUNG ADULT FOR WORK



TIP SHEET

DISCLOSURE

Disclosure comes from the word “disclose,” which means to open up, to reveal, or to tell. When you disclose, you are releasing personal information about yourself for a specific purpose.

Should your young adult disclose his/her disability to an employer?

If the decision is to disclose their disability, what is most important/helpful is for them to provide the following information:

- How his/her disability affects their ability to learn and perform effectively.
- The supports and services they will need in order to access, participate in, and do well in their studies, community and job.
- Your young adult must decide what and how much of this sensitive information is necessary to reveal in order to obtain the needed supports and services.

HOW YOU CAN HELP YOUR YOUNG ADULT DISCLOSE THEIR DISABILITY, IF THEY CHOOSE TO:

- Learn the legal aspects and terminology of disability disclosure.
- Discuss the disability openly with them to increase their ability to advocate for support.
- Discuss if/when the best time to disclose, should be (before, during or after interview).
- Encourage and practice ways of disclosing their disability. The more they practice the more natural they can come across.
- Look at various resources to help you both learn about disclosure (see below).

Resources for disability disclosure

Disability Disclosure video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oOuczENU_dU

The 411 complete book on Disability Disclosure, a free workbook for youth and one for adults:

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure>

KNOW THE FACTS

A recent study of 319 employers revealed that employees with disabilities:

- **Had the same job performance ratings as employees without disabilities.**
- **Did not require any more of supervisor's time.**
- **Were no more likely to be absent, late or have off-work time than any other employee.**
- **Did not have more workplace accidents.**
- **Were less likely to leave the job.**



ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES FOR YOUR YOUNG ADULT DISCLOSING THEIR DISABILITY

ADVANTAGES OF DISCLOSURE:

- Receive supports or reasonable accommodations to be successful at work.
- Opportunity to discuss their disability with prospective employers to determine whether the job will be a good fit.
- Determine if the requirements of the position can be met, with or without reasonable accommodations.
- Possibly develop a coworker mentor relationship.
- Legal protection against discrimination (as specified in the Americans with Disabilities Act).
- Reduces stress, since protecting a "secret" can take a lot of energy.
- Full freedom to look at health insurance and other benefits.
- Ability to speak freely should he/she face changes at work.
- Improves self-image through self-advocacy.

DISADVANTAGES OF DISCLOSURE:

- Relive bad past experiences of loss of job or negative peer relationships.
- Being left out or becoming an object of curiosity.
- Different treatment from others or unfairly judged.
- Experience conflicting feelings about how they see themselves.
- Be viewed as needy, not self-sufficient, or unable to perform on par with his/her coworkers.
- Be overlooked for a job, team, group or organization.