

# Illinois workNet Youth Guide

April 2017

*Get started with each of the 4 modules below to get tools and tips on how to achieve your career, training, and employment goals!*



**Set Your Goals**

Get Started

**Here's How:**

- Explore your skills and interests,
- Explore career pathways, and
- Find training.



**Present the Best You**

Get Started

**Here's How:**

- Start a resume,
- Use social media as a marketing tool, and
- Network with people you know.



**Apply for Jobs**

Get Started

**Here's How:**

- Beware of fraud and learn experiences from your job, good and bad,
- Fill out applications, and
- Ace the interview.



**Work and Play**

Get Started

**Here's How:**

- Spend your earnings wisely,
- Find supportive services, and
- Focus on success.

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## Set Your Goals

### Get Started Setting Your Goals

When you start thinking about your future and your goals, you want to be doing something that you love and are interested in. With that in mind, you will also need to be able to support yourself in whatever career path you choose. The first step is exploring your skills and interests then using that to start exploring careers. You will find important information, like wages, trends, and training requirements. This information is key to making an informed decision on what you will pursue.

After you have found career areas that you are interested in, you can use these areas to choose classes, clubs, and volunteering to take part in. You can also use this to find training programs and opportunities that you may want to learn more about or start a plan to apply. This will give you more information and help you determine if you really want to get into that career area.

**Start exploring, stay focused, and succeed in your future!**

## Explore Skills & Interests

Before starting training or a career it is important to look at all your options. Whether you have a goal to be a nurse or architect, it is important to make sure you know all about your interests, skills, and values and how they might fit with that career choice. Use the skills and interests surveys available on Illinois workNet to start learning about yourself.

Also use this article to find out more information:

- [Match Your Skills and Interests to a New Career](#)



Log-in to your Illinois workNet account to access the skill and interest surveys anytime from your account dashboard!

### The Four Surveys Available Include:

#### Interest Profiler

(10-20 minutes) - Profiler can help you identify your interests and match them with a wide variety of careers.

#### SKILLS Profiler

(10-20 minutes) - SKILLS helps you identify occupations that use the skills you like. It also helps you recognize skills that transfer between occupations.

#### Work Importance Locator

(5-15 minutes) - The Work Importance Locator can help you learn more about your work values and help you decide what kinds of jobs and careers you might want to explore.

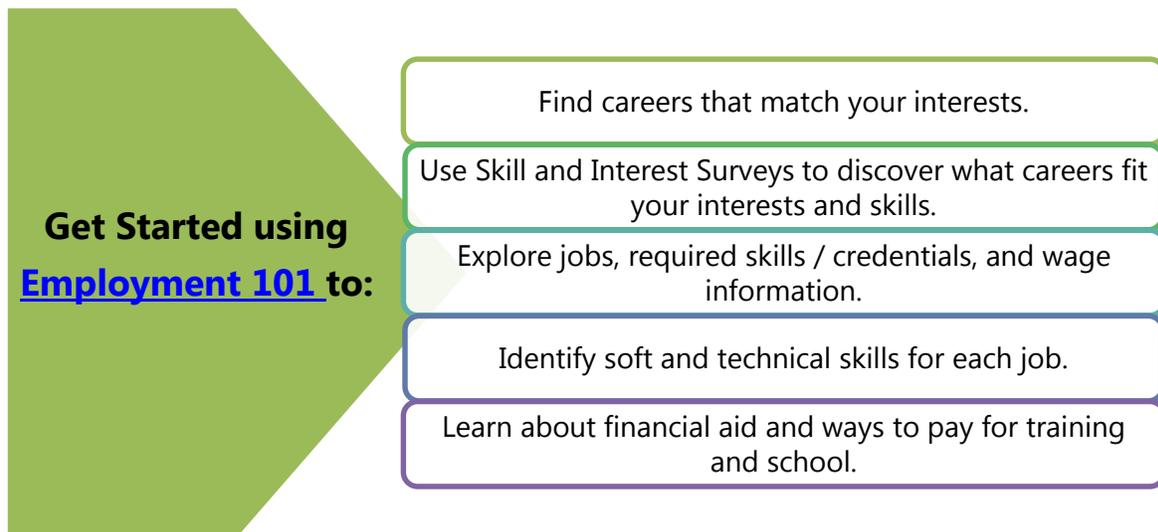
#### Career Cluster Inventory

(5-25 minutes) - This inventory will identify how important the work aspect is to you.

## Explore Careers

Once you start gaining work experience, you will want to start thinking about what career you may want to have when you get older. There are many, many options, so it never hurts to start thinking early. Now is the perfect time to start exploring career options and get an idea of the areas that interest you most.

You don't have to make up your mind right away. However, it's still a good idea to think about the areas you might want to work in. If you are working a summer job, you can ask yourself what parts you like and what parts you don't like. This information can help you make decisions about career areas, too.



You can also use these articles and resources to learn more about exploring careers:

- [Explore Careers, Wages, and Trends](#)
- [Look At The Big Picture When Selecting Your Career Path](#)
- [What You Should Know When Selecting Your Career Path](#)
- [What to Know About Wages & Trends](#)

## Find Training

Now that you have learned your skills and interests and have explored careers, you are ready to find the perfect training program, college or university.

Start by using these articles to help you in your selection process:

- [Weigh Your Training Program Options](#)
- [Decision Making Process When Selecting a Training Program](#)



If you are eligible for WIOA funding you can search for approved programs on the [WIOA Approved Training Program](#) page.



If you are paying out of pocket or looking for financial aid you can use the [Public & Private Training Program Search](#) to find even more available programs.

### Types of Training Programs Available

- Art and Design Schools
- Public Community Colleges and Universities
- Private Colleges and Universities
- Technical and Vocational Schools
- Trade Schools

Apprenticeships are another great opportunity for certain careers. [Start here to find available registered apprenticeship opportunities.](#) Here is an article that can provide additional information about apprenticeships:

- [Get Into an Apprenticeship Program](#)

There are a lot of resources to help you pay for training and college as well. Use the resources below to get started and be closer to starting your training and education:

- [What Kind of Financial Aid is Right for You?](#)
- [7 Phases of College Financial Aid Award Packaging](#)
- [How to Make Informed Student Loan Decisions](#)
- [5 Tips When Applying for Financial Aid](#)

Here are some additional resources to get you prepared for college or a training program:

- [College Planning: Being Prepared](#)
- [College Admission Tests: ACT, SAT & GRE](#)
- [Supporting Yourself While in School](#)



## Present the Best You

### Get Started Presenting the Best You

Starting the job search process can be exciting and rewarding. You may think that it will be harder for you because you have less job experience, but you may be surprised. School activities, clubs, sports, and more will help you succeed. The first step is to be sure that you are presenting the best "you" to potential employers and networking contacts. This will help you start on the right foot and make great lasting impressions.

Your resume is the first place to get started. It lets you market yourself and communicate the value you can add to an organization, workplace, or school. Once you have a fresh new resume, you can use social media and networking to get yourself out there. Make sure you have a professional online presence that employers can view to learn more about you. Then network like it's your job! Get out there with your [elevator speech](#) and talk to people you already know, and get involved in new things in your community to build even more relationships.

The next three sections work together to prepare you for the next step, [applying for jobs](#).

## Start a Resume

A resume is used when applying for jobs, internships, apprenticeships, and more.

The first step in creating a great resume is to find the format that fits you.



Check Which Resume Type Is Right for You		
<b>Chronological</b>	Outlines educational and work experience in a timeline.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Combination</b>	Combines some of the features of functional and chronological resumes. It highlights skills and experiences as well as a brief job history.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Functional</b>	Highlights skills and accomplishments. This is best for individuals with little work experience or those with gaps in employment.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Next, add skills and experience.

- Use [action verbs and keywords](#) to add attention getting content to your resume.
- Use school clubs, activities, etc. and pull skills you learned while participating in these.

## Tools and Tips

- Have your resume proofed and reviewed by multiple people. Family members and teachers are good options.
- Log in to your Illinois workNet account to access the **Resume Builder** and your resumes anytime from **your dashboard!**
  - [Resume Builder Quick Start Guide \(PDF\)](#)
  - [Resume Builder Tools \(PDF\)](#)
- Use the Resume Samples below as guides for creating your best resume:

Youth Academics  
([PDF](#))

Youth Arts and  
Entertainment([PDF](#))

Youth Sports  
([PDF](#))

Youth Technology  
([PDF](#))

Youth Other  
([PDF](#))

Accounting  
Internship([PDF](#))

Fashion Internship  
([PDF](#))

Little Work  
Experience([PDF](#))

Summer Internship  
([PDF](#))

## Social Media

We use social media every day to post statuses and pictures and to share interesting stories with family and friends. While this is fun for us, you may not realize that not everything you put on social media is private. Depending on what you're posting, this can be a pro or a con when job searching.

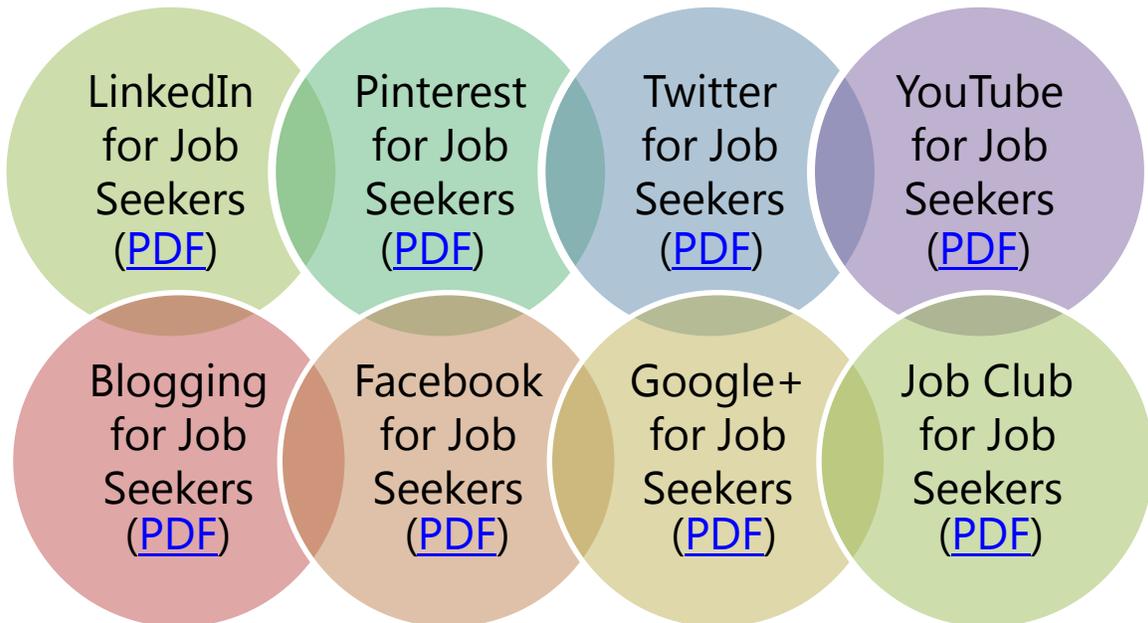
Before you start making changes to your social media presence, be sure to Google yourself to see what employers might see if they were to do the same. This can give you an idea of what information you may need to change or get rid of.

You can promote yourself to an employer by having a professional presence on social media. Here are a few tips on how to get the best social media presence:

Have a profile picture that will make a good impression. [Avoid selfies or other pictures that may not portray your best self.](#)

Check your privacy settings to ensure you are not showing more information about yourself than necessary. Ensure any public information that is showing is in line with the information you included on your resume and promotes your activities and other accomplishments.

**Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are all social media sites you can use to search for jobs! Use the guides below to get started:**



## Networking

Before getting started with networking, be sure to have a great [elevator speech](#). This speech will help you make a great impression while offering a brief message about yourself. Your elevator speech should not be more than 45 seconds and should include this information:



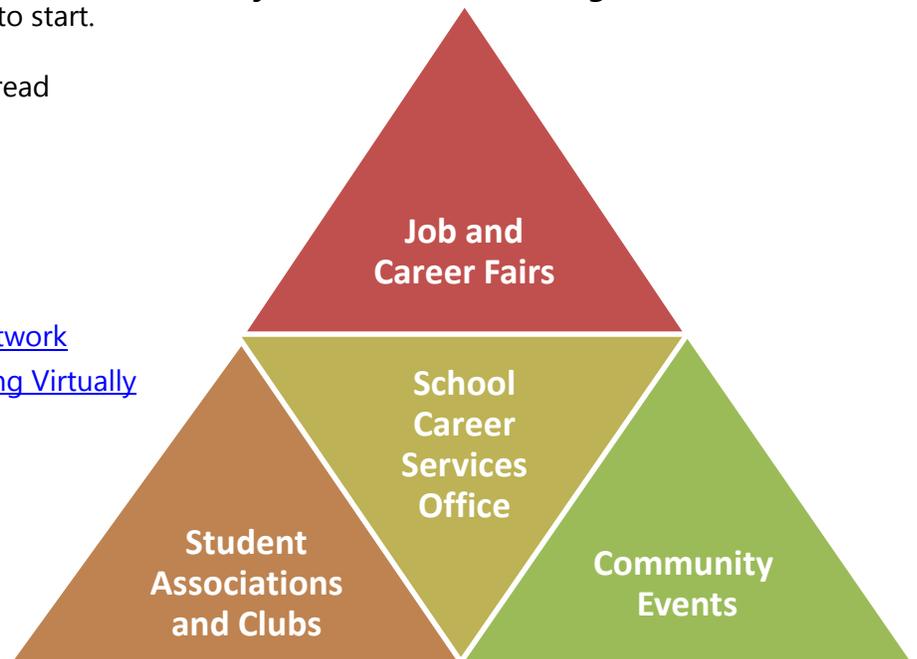
A great way to find job opportunities and get good references is to start with the people you already know. Parents, teachers, friends, neighbors, coaches, doctors, local businesses, volunteering contacts, or student organization advisors are all great contacts you may already have from networking.

Tell them what you are looking for, the type of job you seek, and see if they may know about an opportunity or have suggestions of places to start.

For more info on networking, read these articles:

- [Get Prepared to Network](#)
- [Networking Opportunities Are All Around You](#)
- [Illinois Virtual Job Club Network](#)
- [Top Ten Tips for Networking Virtually](#)

**Getting involved in new networking opportunities in your community is another great way to network. You can get started with:**





## Apply For Jobs

### Get Started Applying for Jobs

Now that you have created your winning resume, get it out there and start applying for jobs and getting interviews! Like your resume, a job application tells employers a lot about you. While searching for a job, you may encounter some postings or opportunities that seem too good to be true. The tips and information below will help you decide what is a good opportunity or not. Your resume and application have personal information, so being smart and safe in your job search is important.

After you have learned the lessons of job searching, you're ready for the next step: interviewing. Interviews give you a chance to meet with employers and let them know why you are the right person for the job. You get to bring all of your great skills, experience, and traits that you have described on your resume and put them to action. By using the articles, worksheets, and information below, you will be able to ace your interview and land the perfect job!

The next three sections work together to prepare you for the next step, [keeping a balance between work and play](#).

## Preparing for the Search

Before starting any job search, you should have a plan to keep track of all of the places you have applied, the date you applied, and other important information. Use a tool like our [Job Search Record Worksheet](#). Doing this will help you stay organized during your search and ensure you don't duplicate applications.



## Risk of Spam

- The internet can be a great tool for job searching – but not all sites are trustworthy. Before you start your online job search, be sure to do research to find the best job search sites - especially for youth.
- Spammers and fraudulent postings are all over, so it is important to be able to spot the differences. Avoid postings that seem suspicious or too good to be true. Here are some other signs to watch for:
  - If the posting is written with typos or bad grammar
  - You receive emails from strange email addresses
  - You are contacted at strange hours
  - You are asked to pay money, or
  - You are asked to provide personal information such as your social security number over the phone or via email.

Get started with the [Illinois workNet JobFinder](#) to find job listings near you.

If you are under the age of 16 and would like to work, you will need a work permit. You can [learn more about Work Permits here](#).

With these tips you will be able to search for the right job for you, while staying safe during the process.

## Filling Out Applications

Now that you have created a great resume and know how to start your search, you are ready to fill out applications. Applications are the first impression employers have of you, so make it count!

### When picking up an application:

- Always come prepared with your resume and have all the information you may need to apply for a job.
- Dress for success. Though it is not an interview, it could turn into one, so you want to look your best and make a great impression.
- Get the specifics in [this article](#).

### When filling out the application:

- Know what days and hours you can work. You need to have this information to put on the application. Be honest and be as flexible as you can. Employers like this in potential employees.
- Add skills that match the job opening. When adding skills to the application, pull them from your resume, however, don't just list unrelated skills just for the sake of it. Instead, use only the best skills that apply to the work you will be doing for that job position.

### Extra Tips:

- Don't use people as references without telling them! They need to prepare to answer calls from potential employers.
- Print clearly if the application is hand written.
- Spelling and grammar are a must. Do not ignore these.
- Complete every section of the application. Do not leave any sections blank.
- Set aside time to fill out the application or if you are asked to have an interview. Be thorough, but concise and timely.

With these tips, you will be making a great impression on employers and will be on the road to landing a great job!

## Acing the Interview

### Preparing for the interview

- Research the company so that you are familiar with it.
- Practice interviewing with someone to get a feeling for the situation.
- Use these documents to help you with practice questions, and the do's and don'ts of interviewing:
  - [Preparing for an Interview with Minimal Experience User Guide \(PDF\)](#)
  - [Preparing for an Interview Article](#)
  - [Types of Interviews Article](#)
  - [Possible Interview Scenarios \(PDF\)](#)
  - [Most Common Questions Asked in an Interview \(PDF\)](#)
  - [Top 10 Interviewing Questions When You Have Minimal Experience \(PDF\)](#)
  - [Questions to Ask During an Interview \(PDF\)](#)
  - [Questions Never to Ask During an Interview \(PDF\)](#)

### During the interview

- Start with these helpful items:
  - [Ace Your Interview Article](#)
  - [What to do During an Interview Article](#)
  - [Interviewing Do's and Don'ts \(PDF\)](#)
- Dress for success - [Interview Clothes: Do's and Don'ts Article](#)
- Leave your phone in the car or on silent in your bag.
- Arrive at least 10 minutes early. This shows you are serious and reliable.
- Greet the interviewer with a firm handshake, and make eye contact.
- Keep good posture and manners. Don't chew gum, interrupt, or fidget.
- Ask good questions. Use the ones you practiced from the above documents.

### Follow up after an interview

- Use the [What to do after an Interview article](#).
- Send a thank you note or email 1-2 days after the interview.
- Follow up with the employer to check on the job. This shows your interest.
- Using these tips and tools will help you ace your interview and land the perfect job.

You have done the research, made a great impression with your resume and application, and now you have an interview. Now is really the time to shine!



## **Work and Play**

### **Get Started with Work and Play**

Earning money is a great feeling. And spending your money is the easy part, right? Just make sure that while you are having fun, you are also being responsible. Creating a budget can help you get more out of your money and can help you reach your long-term goals.

While you may be earning money, you may still need some extra help with some things and need to connect to local resources. You can find transportation and other resources to help you succeed.

It is important to focus on being a great employee but also it is important to think about the future, your goals, and how you can utilize your experience and skills to build your resume and focus on your success now and in the future.

## Spend Wisely

Now that you have started working, paychecks will start coming in. It can be tempting to spend your paychecks on fun things. While it's okay to do that, it is very important to plan what you want to achieve with your money. Trying to spend wisely can be a balancing act, however, with these tips, it can be easier:



Work hard, stick to your budget, and have fun to reach your goals!

## Supportive Services

When working to reach your career, training and employment goals, there may be some times when you need a little more help. Illinois workNet has resources you can turn to.

Supportive services include financial assistance, tips on loans and paying for school, transportation, public assistance, and more.

Use these resources to help keep you on track and help you reach your goals.

- [Ways of Getting to Work](#)
- [Get the Help You Need](#)
- [Getting Started with Money Management - Young Adults](#)
- [Safe and Productive](#)

If you need specific assistance there are locations throughout the state of Illinois that offer services that can help you. You can find locations that offer WIOA services and other sites where staff are able to assist you in finding resources for your job search, career preparation, and referrals for work support such as financial aid, child care, and much more.

Get started and find locations near you with the [Illinois workNet Service Finder](#)! Use the key of icons below to identify the Referral sites you need:

 This location offers referrals for child care.	 This location offers referrals for housing and shelter.
 This location offers referrals to assist persons with disabilities.	 This location offers referrals to assist immigrants.
 This location offers referrals for financial assistance.	 This location offers referrals to help assimilate the formerly incarcerated.
 This location offers referrals for food and nutrition assistance.	 This location offers referrals for transportation.
 This location offers referrals for health care.	 This location offers referrals for all categories of veterans
 One or more of the referral types shown is offered state-wide. Contact this location to find out which referrals are offered throughout Illinois.	

## Focus on Success

Whether you are keeping your job, going back to school, or both, it is important to plan ahead. You want to keep building your resume and your skill set as you move forward in life.

**Volunteering is a good way to earn skills and experience while padding your resume. You can also use it to find new interests. Learn about volunteering with the below articles**

[Volunteer Guidelines](#)

[Volunteering Builds Skills Employers Want](#)

[Volunteer Opportunities in Your Community](#)

[Benefits of Volunteering](#)

The information, guidance, and knowledge you gained from this experience can make your next job search easier. Before your next search, be sure to:

- Update your resume with any new skills and experience you have gained.
- Practice interviewing. Before you interview, you should have a refresher to be prepared for any situation. Plus, your skills and experience have changed. This means your answers to interview questions have probably changed, too.

Use your skills and interests, career exploration, and training program information to guide you through the process to land your dream job and work on building your resume and skills while on the path to success.

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