



It's YOUR Future!

Information for Eighth and Ninth Grade Students

Past, present, future. Many things have happened in your past, and there are probably many things happening right now. The future is ahead and who knows what will happen then!

Planning ahead can make a big difference in what happens for you in the future. If you receive special education services at school and are in the ninth grade or above in Minnesota, this information is for you.

To plan ahead, start thinking about what you want in life. Planning for the future can be fun and exciting. You can think about the skills and interests you have now, and those you would like to develop in the future. As you plan, you might consider:

- 1. What do I like to do now? What excites me? What am I good at now?**
- 2. What would I like to be doing five years after I finish high school?**

One way to look at this is like taking a trip.

- You are **HERE** (#1 above) and you want to go **THERE** (#2 above) in five years.
- This might seem like a slow trip, but it's good to have lots of time to plan, learn, try things, and change your mind (and direction) if you want to.

For example, when you and your family take a trip to the grocery store, you think about what it will take to get from here (home) to there (your end goal, the grocery store). When you make a grocery list and take the correct roads or bus route, you are more likely to arrive where you planned to go and have a successful trip.

The same is true for education planning.

- Take a good look at where you are now, and then where you want to go and what you want to do in the future.
- Talk with your parents and teachers to plan what it will take to get there.

It's your "trip" -- **your** life. It is very important for you to be involved in the planning to the best of your ability. Share your ideas with your parents, other adults, and your teachers. Speak up for yourself. Take responsibility for yourself. Know that you have a right to do so. When you do, it is much more likely that you will have the future that you want.

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Plan ahead and start thinking about what you want in life!