



The Independence, Inc. Youth Employment Program (YEP!) is a program that matches youth 15-21 years of age with members of the business community for job skill development. Independence, Inc. serves as the temporary employment agency for the participants. We pay all wages, employee taxes, and worker's compensation insurance for the youth. In return, the business provides the opportunity for the young person to gain valuable work experience necessary for future employment goals.



YEP! Participant, Patricia Jarvis, during her work trial at the Baldwin City Market.



YEP! Participant, Angel Fitzgerald works to clean and prepare a fish tank during his work trial at Pet World, Lawrence, KS

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Maximizing the independence of people with disabilities through advocacy, peer support, training, transportation and community education



independence INC
for people with disabilities

- advocacy
- peer support
- training
- transportation
- community education



Youth Employment Program

Community-based paid work trial and skill development program for youth with disabilities ages 15-21

www.independenceinc.org

YEP! By the Numbers

Ages
of
Youth
Served

15-21

Hourly
Wage Paid
to the Youth

\$7.25

of
Hours in the
Work Trial

80

% of
Youth
Participants
that Leave the
Program with
Paid Employment

79%

of
Participating
Employers

73

Why Yep!?

The Youth Employment Program (YEP!) of Independence, Inc. provides community-based, paid employment combined with life & social skills development for youth with disabilities ages 15-21. Youth targeted for the program have limited or no prior paid work experience.

Program Structure

- Independence, Inc. serves as the primary employer covering all wages, certification of liability and job supports. (Min. wage of \$7.25)
- Youth participate in 80 hour, community-based, work trials at local, participating businesses to gain valuable work experience.
- Upon completion of the 80 hour work trial, businesses have the option to offer employment but are NOT required to do so.
- Youth can complete up to two 80 hour work trials at separate businesses.



"I tried on my own to get jobs in the past. No one would hire me, and I became scared. Here (at TJ Maxx), no one discriminates against me or puts me down because of my disability. I am excited to have a job and get a paycheck."
-Sandy S., shown as she received her first paycheck

The Responsibilities of a YEP! Student

- Attend work every day
- Arrive to work on time
- Do not leave early or request to leave early
- Follow the employer's instructions
- Get along with all supervisors and co-workers
- If you have to miss a day of work, you must call in ahead of time according to company policy
- Communicate with Job Coaches or Work Experience Coordinators if you are going to be absent
- If you don't communicate with your employer or coordinator, you will be docked a portion of your incentive
- If too many days of work are missed, you will not pass the cooperative work experience program (this decision will be made by your Job Supervisor and the Work Experience Coordinator)
- You must go to work and school every scheduled day
- Always stay busy on the job. Take initiative to find work to do. Ask Questions.

"YEP! has been wonderful! The students are given an opportunity to earn a paycheck, which in turn helps them to create a budget in the real world."
-Mistie Copas-Thomas, Community Transition Social Worker, USD 497, Lawrence Public Schools

Thank You YEP! Partners!

- United Way of Dg. Co. (Yep! grant funder)
- Baldwin City Public Schools
- Eudora Public Schools
- Lawrence Public Schools