

# 10 Things Employers Can Do to Support Youth with Disabilities:

- ◆ Provide youth with opportunities to try out different skills in order to get the right job "fit." Consider allowing youth to volunteer for a limited time, in order for them to explore skills and for the business to better understand the youth's capabilities.
- ◆ Consider job "carving," which is combining a certain set of duties across positions into a single job for a youth with a disability.
- ◆ Take advantage of resources that specialize in offering technical assistance on supporting people with disabilities on the job: Independent Living Centers, vocational rehabilitation, or the Job Accommodation Network website, <http://www.jan.wvu.edu/>
- ◆ Consider matching youth with mentors or role models on the job. Think of co-workers as natural supports for small issues, such as reminders, locating necessary work-related items, etc.
- ◆ Encourage connections between youth with disabilities and their co-workers: work get-togethers, eating lunch together, social outings.
- ◆ Get to know business owners who employ youth with disabilities. Ask them about issues that may arise and if they would be available to answer questions from other businesses interested in employing youth with disabilities.
- ◆ Ask your local chamber of commerce to keep a directory of organizations that employ youth with disabilities or have youth volunteers with disabilities.

- ◆ Consider alternative application methods: applying on tape instead of with a written application.
- ◆ Talk with colleagues about successes. Spread the word to other business owners and managers that hiring youth with disabilities can be both productive and mutually rewarding.
- ◆ Ask the youth and his/her family what accommodations are necessary. People with disabilities often have the most creative and least expensive solutions.

*Waisman Center, University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Developed in collaboration with the Healthy & Ready to Work Youth Advisory Board members.*

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