



# The Career Development Continuum

## Overview

*Preparing All Youth for Success in College, Career, and Life*

## The Career Development Continuum



Career Development is most effective when youth are provided a sequenced continuum of activities and experiences that address career and college awareness, exploration, and preparation. This is accomplished through a series of classroom activities, workplace exposures, and community experiences over time. Classroom activities support and reflect what's learned in the workplace and community, and workplace experiences support classroom learning. In addition, youth are supported by and provided role models and guidance from families and adults in their communities and neighborhoods. Youth are provided with experiences commensurate with their knowledge, skills, and abilities. These experiences are also compatible with their age and stage of development. In a comprehensive career development system, youth are exposed to a full range of careers and employment opportunities, including those that may or may not be traditional for their ethnicity, race, sex, gender, or background.

### Career Awareness Activities

Career Awareness activities are designed to make youth aware of the wide range of careers and/or occupations that will be available to them in the future. Career Awareness activities help youth become aware of the opportunities that are before them, begin to refine their career interests and goals, understand the skills required for specific occupations or industries, and learn about the expectations of the workplace.

### Career Exploration Activities

Career Exploration activities provide youth with the opportunity to explore fields of interest related to their career goals and/or academic learning. In the workplace, youth work closely with an adult supervisor and participate in appropriate hands-on workplace experiences.

### Career Preparation Activities

Career Preparation activities provide an in-depth discovery of a particular career, linking the skills utilized in the workplace with academic learning. These activities also allow for the development of career and occupationally specific skills.

#### KEY PRINCIPLES

The following key principles support a comprehensive career development system:

- Provide meaningful career development opportunities for all youth
- Design experiences that are youth-centered and developmentally appropriate
- Engage parents, guardians, and caregivers
- Provide real world work experiences for all youth
- Integrate career development across the curriculum
- Build a connected system
- Allow for flexibility & adaptability
- Measure success and solicit feedback

