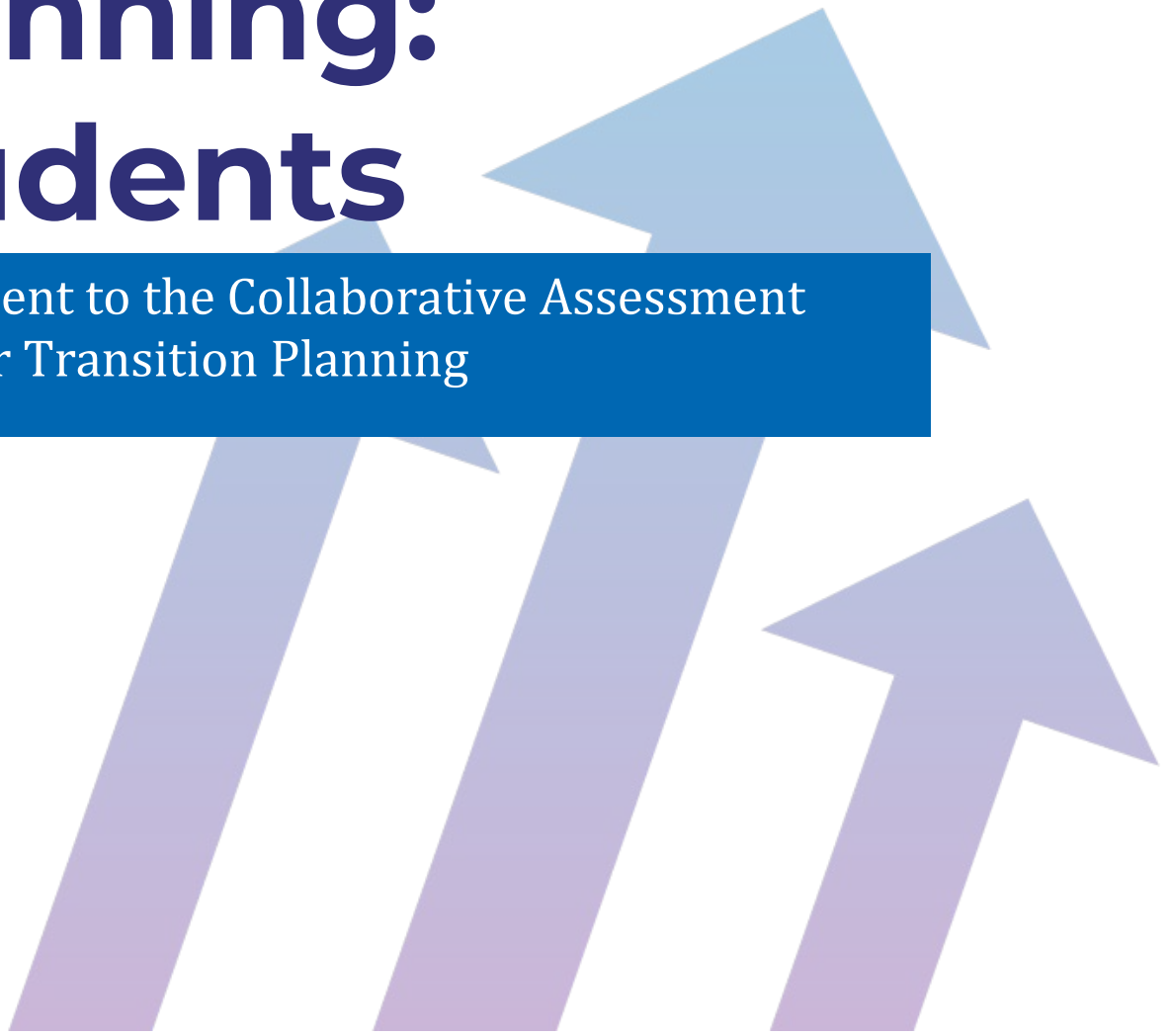


# Collaborative Assessment for Transition Planning: Students

Supplement to the Collaborative Assessment  
Guide for Transition Planning





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## Section 1: What is transition assessment?

### At a Glance

Student should be directly involved in all phases of an assessment process and should have an understanding of why they are being assessed and how to interpret and utilize the assessment information. This section is designed for student and we suggest printing off this section and providing it directly to them so they have a basic understanding of the purpose of the assessment process as well as how their involvement in the transition assessment process can assist them in making informed choices about their future. We want to thank the Pennsylvania Youth Leadership Network (PYLN), as the majority of this section has been developed from information contained in the PYLN Secondary Transition Toolkit.

### What is Assessment? Why Should You Care?

Assessment is all about learning about what you can do in life. It's a process that you go through to try to map out your future. Assessment is a very important part of your transition plan because it helps you:

- ✓ get concrete ideas about what you want to do
- ✓ plan your next steps are
- ✓ learn about yourself
- ✓ challenges you to think about yourself
- ✓ understand your interests
- ✓ know your strengths
- ✓ learn about your needs and accommodations that might help
- ✓ plan for your future goals.

## Section 2: What do the assessments look like?

There are two ways of doing assessment - formal and informal. Formal assessments are tests that are scored and help you understand where you stand compared to others. Informal assessments can be done by a variety of people like your teacher, counselor, family member, your boss or yourself. Information can be collected through a survey, someone watching you, or having you experience work in different settings (school, volunteer, paid work). You can learn a lot about yourself by trying a lot of different things in different places.

## **What Assessment Accommodations Can You Get?**

Accommodations are changes to a classroom or work site that enables you to learn, work and show off your skills. Sometimes you need to ask for accommodations on assessments when you feel it will help you do your best. Accommodations can be things like asking for extra time on a test, using a calculator, having a reader or a note taker or having an accessible work area. There are usually rules about how to get accommodations and you need to find out what they are.

## **What Can You Expect from a Formal Assessment?**

Formal assessments are where you take a test; it's not just to get you out of class for the day. Sometimes when you are scheduled to take a formal assessment, you will be taking more than one test at a time. Whenever you participate in an assessment, it is important to understand why you're doing it and what it can do for you. Before you take it, ask the following questions:

### ***Before You Take the Formal Assessment, Ask the Following Questions:***

- 1) What is this for?
- 2) How can it help me?
- 3) What is the test like?
- 4) How long will the test take?
- 5) Am I allowed accommodations?
- 6) How will I learn about the results of the test?

When you are scheduled for the assessment, make sure you have had a good night's sleep and a good meal. Make sure you know how long you'll be there, how you're going to get there, and what accommodations you are going to be given. During the test, it is important for you to ask questions if you do not understand something.

Within a few weeks after the formal assessment you should meet with someone you trust to review the results of the assessment. This information is to help you understand your strengths and needs and to come up with ideas to be used in your IEP and post-school goals.

## **What about Informal Assessment?**

Informal assessments are an important part of transition assessment. These may include information your teachers or counselors collect over time on your performance in classes, during activities in and out-of-school, and at work. This information may be gathered through interviews, checklists, questionnaires, observations, and copies of work you complete for

classes or employers. You, your family, employers, teachers, and counselors can contribute to the informal assessment data that are collected. Some informal assessment worksheets are included at the end of this section of the guide.

### **What Are the Different Types of Transition Assessments?**

Transition assessment looks at your whole life. Career assessment helps you plan for your career throughout your lifetime. Vocational assessment and evaluation help you understand yourself as a worker. Career assessments and vocational assessment and evaluation are two types of assessments that fall under the category of “transition assessment.” [Sample Assessment Tools](#) are available with the same set of resources as this Student Supplement.

### **What’s the Point?**

Transition assessment looks at every part of your life by seeing you as a student, a worker, a friend, a family member, and a person who lives in a neighborhood. It helps you look at what supports you may need to reach your goals in life. It helps you identify your strengths, needs, what you like the most, and your interests.

## **Section 3: Sample Tools**

Here are some questions to help you think about different parts of your life. These transition assessment questions can help you plan for your future:

### **Worksheet: Transition Assessment**

- 1) How would you describe your home and family life?
  - a) What do you do for yourself?
  - b) How do you help your family (chores, laundry, dogs, etc.)?
  - c) How much does your family help you?
  - d) Are there things you could do on your own to be more independent?

2) What do you do to stay healthy?

a) Do you exercise or play sports?

b) What are your eating habits like?

c) Do you manage your own medications, if you take any?

d) Do you know how to set up your own doctors' appointments?

3) What do you do for fun?

a) What sports do you play?

b) What clubs are you in school?

c) What music do you like?

d) What do you do in your spare time?

e) What hobbies do you have?

f) Do you do any volunteer work with any organization that interests you?



g) Do you help out in your neighborhood (neighborhood clean-up, helping with elderly, etc.)?

4) What are your relationships like?

a) Do you have what you would call “close friends”?

b) How do you get along with your family?

c) Do you have a girlfriend or boyfriend?

d) Are you able to talk to people about your problems?

e) Are you able to communicate your feelings well?

f) Do you get along well with adults?

5) How do you plan for your future?

a) What do you do in school to plan for your future?

b) What are your goals in life?

c) Do you know how to budget your money?

d) Do you use your time wisely?

6) Who runs your life?

a) Are you making your own decisions?

b) Are you doing what you really want to do in life?

c) Do you talk about your future with your family?

d) How do you deal with disagreements about your future with other people?

7) How are you preparing for your future career? Do you want to go on to school after high school?

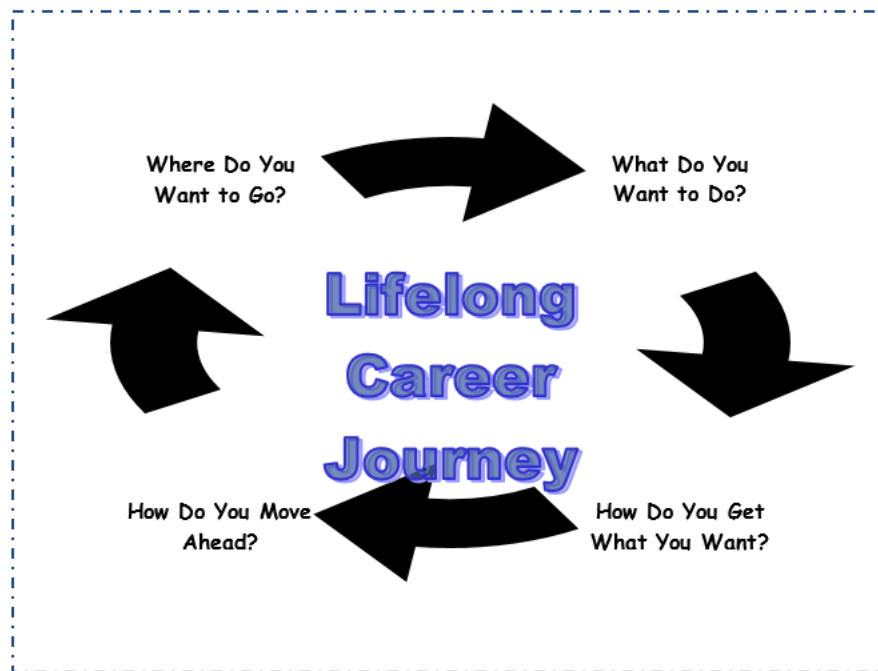
a) Career assessment, vocational assessment, and evaluation can help you plan for your future (see information below).

### **Vocational Assessment and Evaluation**

Vocational assessment and evaluation look at you as a worker. The best way to learn about you as a worker is to do work in different places. During these experiences, it's important for you and those who are helping you (boss, teacher, job coach, counselor, or family member) to collect information on how you do in different settings. This can help you gain good experience that can help you make a good career choice. The different places you can experience work include: in school, in your town working for a company, volunteering, internships and summer work.

## Lifelong Career Journey

Career assessment is another part of transition assessment and it deals with plans for your career throughout your lifetime. We all go through four stages of planning for our careers throughout our lives, which include awareness, exploration, preparation and adjustment.



### Worksheet: Lifelong Career Journey

Here are some questions to help you along your lifelong career journey.

*Special thanks to Dr. Pam Leconte from The George Washington University for giving us permission to adapt the checklist from Sitlington, Neubert, Begun, Lombard, & Leconte. (2nd edition, 2007). Assess for Success: A practitioner's guide for transition assessment. CA: Sage Publications (Permission received from Dr. Leconte to reproduce for educational purposes only)*

#### Where Do You Want to Go?

- ✓ Why do people work? Why do you want to work?
- ✓ What are some jobs you know about?
- ✓ What kind of work do people do on these jobs?
- ✓ What have you dreamed of doing when you finish school?

- ✓ What kind of job do you want?
- ✓ Where do you want to live, and with whom, when you are grown up?
- ✓ What do you enjoy doing when you are not in school?
- ✓ What jobs do your mother, father, and other family members have?
- ✓ What types of things do they do on their jobs?
- ✓ What is college? Why do people go to college? What is vocational training?
- ✓ What is public transportation? How would you get there you want to go if your parents did not drive you?
- ✓ What is voting?

### **How Do You Move Ahead?**

- ✓ Can you continue your training and education after you start to work?
- ✓ Does the employer help pay for extra schooling?
- ✓ How can you get promoted at your company?
- ✓ What benefits does your company offer (insurance, vacation, retirement)?
- ✓ What will you do if you get laid off or lose your job?
- ✓ Do you have options to take classes in areas that you enjoy (hobbies)?
- ✓ Can you transfer your job skills to another company, if needed?

### **Understanding Your Strengths and Talents**

What is a strength? A strength is something you are naturally good at, also called an ability. For those of us with disabilities, our strengths are often overlooked because people might focus on our disability, rather than our abilities. Sometimes we will have different strengths than most people, but these abilities are just as important.

Perhaps some of you are already thinking about strengths that you know you have. But others of you might be wondering, “Do I even have any strengths”? Everyone has strengths and weaknesses, and everyone has something positive to contribute to their community. People can have all different types of strengths. Some people may have physical strengths

(like being good at sports), or mental strengths (like problem-solving or being good at math.) Other people have moral strengths, which makes them good at determining right and wrong. Below is a list that might help you to figure out what your strengths are.

### Worksheet: Self-Assessment Quiz: Knowing Your Strengths

Knowing what your strengths are can help you to discover what kind of job you might be best at. Figuring out what you want to do begins with knowing yourself. The better you understand your own wants and needs, the better you will be able to make decisions about your career goals and dreams. This self-assessment inventory can help.

Check how good you think you are at the following activities. For each strength listed below, you can check if you are “Really Good at This”, “OK at This”, or “Not Very Good at This” to describe how good you think you are at doing these things.

I am:	Really Good At This	OK At This	Not Very Good At This
-------	------------------------	---------------	--------------------------

Sports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

How are you using this ability?

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Working with other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
---------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

How are you using this ability?

---

Working with animals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
----------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

How are you using this ability?

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Working or exploring outdoors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
-------------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

How are you using this ability?

---

Giving others advice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
----------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

How are you using this ability?

---

Math

How are you using this ability?

---

Reading

How are you using this ability?

---

Music

How are you using this ability?

---

Science

How are you using this ability?

---

Art

How are you using this ability?

---

Computers

How are you using this ability?

---

Drama/ Theater

How are you using this ability?

---

Mechanics

How are you using this ability?

---

Making decisions







How are you using this ability?

---

Crafts

How are you using this ability?

---

Memorization

How are you using this ability?

---

Other-

---

How are you using this ability?

---

Other-

---

How are you using this ability?

---

Other-

---

How are you using this ability?

---

### **Understanding Your Weaknesses: Learning About the Supports That Can Help**

Okay, so now that we know what your strengths are, let's ask ourselves another question: what is a weakness? Perhaps there are certain things you aren't as good at. These things would be described as your weaknesses. However, there is something really cool about weaknesses: sometimes they can help you grow in ways you never would have guessed. For example, a person who uses a wheelchair because they have trouble walking may have improved upper body strength from pushing the wheelchair. This changes this person's disability in one area to ability in another area. It is important to see the positive parts of every situation. Go back and look over the worksheets you just completed to help you answer these questions.

What skills might you need to improve?

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What accommodations and supports could you use to improve on your weaknesses?

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### **Knowing Your Interests: Helping You Plan for Your Future**

The first step to thinking about our future is what we like or what we are interested in. This information can help you explore jobs and careers, as well as training after you complete high school.

#### **Worksheet: Knowing Your Interests**

Check the areas that most interest you. After you're finished circle your top ten.

- Providing a practical service for people
- Self-expression in music, art, literature, or nature
- Organizing and record keeping
- Meeting people and supervising others
- Helping others in need, either mentally, spiritually, or physically
- Solving practical problems
- Working in forestry, farming, or fishing
- Working with machines and tools
- Taking care of animals
- Physical work outdoors

- Protecting the public via law enforcement or fire fighting
- Selling, advertising or promoting

Circle True (T) or False (F) for the following questions

- T    F    I get satisfaction not from personal accomplishment, but from helping others.
- T    F    I'd like to have a job in which I can use my imagination and be inventive.
- T    F    In my life, money will be placed ahead of job security and personal interests.
- T    F    It is my ambition to have a direct impact on other people's lives.
- T    F    I am not a risk-taker and would prefer a career that offers little risk.
- T    F    I enjoy working with people rather than by myself.
- T    F    I would not be happy doing the same thing all the time.

What matters most to you?

For each item check the box that says how important each item is to you.

This is:	Really Important To Me	Somewhat Important To Me	Not Important To Me
Good health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Justice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage/family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faith	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fame	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beauty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Respect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accomplishment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seeing the world	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This is:	Really Important To Me	Somewhat Important To Me	Not Important To Me
Love	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fun	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Power	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individualism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friendship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Charity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Honor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intelligence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wealth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Worksheet: Celebrate Your Strengths

Take the time to celebrate who you are and how far you have come. Each one of us is created special and unique (one of a kind). We all have something important to give to the world, so let your strengths show.

- 1) Review your strengths

- 2) Find a good listener to help you review everything you have done. It's helpful to have other people give you input, since it's sometimes hard to be objective about yourself.
- 3) Discuss work and non-work projects you have been involved in over the last 5 years.
- 4) Regularly review your strengths
- 5) Make a list of your strengths and read it to yourself regularly, adding to it as you go.
- 6) Praise yourself for what you have achieved.
- 7) Review your strengths whenever you are feeling particularly defeated.

## **Section 4: What Does All This Mean to You?**

In the last section you have learned a lot about what assessment is and how it can help you in your transition planning and lifelong career journey. Since assessment is always happening throughout your transition process, how do you keep track of it all? Here's an idea on how you can you do that.

### **Portfolios**

Portfolios are a collection of assessment information about you. They can help you communicate what your dreams, goals, interests and abilities are to people who can help you get to where you want to go. Portfolios can help you grow by learning about yourself, by putting your assessment information all in one place. You are in control of your portfolio and can include anything you feel that is important in telling your story. Some examples of information to put in your portfolio would be: background information, writing your story or journal, job history, samples of your work, video clips of you working, and assessment information. Portfolios can be in a kept in an electronic form or in a binder. Sometimes people use PowerPoint to create their Portfolio. Pick the way that works best for you. Don't forget, you are in the driver's seat!

Build your portfolio through your years in school. To start, use the worksheets you completed from this Toolkit. It will help you plan for your future. It can be shared with your family, teachers, VR counselor and other agencies that can support you. Some information can be used to show your talents and abilities to employers.

### **Summary of Performance**

Another document to help you pull together information you need to plan for your future when you leave high school is called a summary of performance (SOP). Your teacher will work with you to complete this form prior to leaving school.

There are four parts of the SOP:

Part 1 includes general information about you, such as your name, address, and contact information.

Part 2 includes information about your academic levels in reading, math, etc., and accommodations you received in school. Also included is assessment information in the following goal areas and accommodations you use: career/jobs; social skills and behaviors; and your ability to live and do things on your own (budgeting money, laundry, shopping, etc). Ideas are given on what you might want to think about in your future plans.

Part 3 focuses on your goals in the following three areas:

- ✓ Postsecondary education and training (college or tech school goals)
- ✓ Employment (career and job goals)
- ✓ Independent living (where you want to live, transportation, money)

This section also gives you suggestions about next steps, agencies that might be able to help you, their contact information and ideas on how they may be able to help.

Part 4, which is optional, gives you a chance to voice your opinion in the following areas:

- ✓ What things that have helped you do well in school (accommodations, supports, services, equipment)?
- ✓ What accommodations and supports worked best for you?
- ✓ What do others need to know about you to help you achieve your goals?

## Case Studies

### Everett's Story

I wish I would have known about how assessments work and what I could have done to improve my experience during the assessment process that took place over my entire education.

In kindergarten, I transferred schools. In order to be enrolled in regular education classes, I had to take an IQ test. I took the test and got a score of 114 and people felt that it could not be true because I had a disability. So I had to take the test again and the results came back virtually the same. I was then enrolled in regular education classrooms, which opened many opportunities for me. I realize that people made assumptions about my intelligence, just because I walked funny.

I started taking career assessments in high school to help me find a career path. However, most of the assessments that I did suggested jobs that I knew were not accessible to people that use wheelchairs. This was very disheartening to me because I felt that these assessments were pointless. This led me to have a negative attitude towards high school and I thought of dropping out. I only was excited about graduating when I realized that college was an option for me.

When in high school, I had to take standardized tests like the PSSA and SAT. I became increasingly frustrated with the limited time I had to complete the tests. I wish that I had known about the accommodations that could have been available to someone like me. I

believe that it would have improved my scores and taken away some of my worries about taking such scary tests.

Now that I am in college, I have made a decision about what my career is going to be. I would like to be a high school teacher in the hopes of exposing student to the abilities of other young people with disabilities and helping them learn to accept differences just by being around me as their teacher.

When exploring a career, I first thought I wanted to be a Dr. Phil type (psychiatrist), because I liked helping my friends with their relationships and social issues. So I went into college as a psychology major and realized that all it did was make me worry about myself and my own mental health. And after all this thinking, I realized that life was passing me by and I wanted to find something that truly lit a fire in my heart.

Sometimes assessment happens through relationships with adult mentors and volunteer experiences. Through my experience with the PA Student Leadership Network, I have been exposed to many education professionals and realized that I am cut out of the same mold as many of them, and share the same passions. Through my volunteer work with PYLN I get a rush from working with student and seeing the impact I can have on their lives. I would love to do this every day, as a teacher, when I finish college.

### **Joe's Story**

When I was in first grade, I was put through a bunch of assessments because of attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder. I didn't really understand what was going on because I was so young, but my parents thought that these tests would be beneficial to me.

I was sent for testing in 11th and 12th grade when I got connected with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. I went to a psychologist and went through a tough, three-hour assessment. I was very agitated because I had just finished school that day and had to go to work after the test. When I told the psychologist that I wanted to be a public official, he said it wouldn't be a good choice because you have to go to college and he didn't think that was an option for me. This made me feel that I wasn't going to amount to anything and I felt that I was going to be someone with a disability, letting life pass me by. When the report came back I met with the psychologist and the jobs that came back were janitor, cook and nursing assistant. I didn't want to do any of these jobs. I felt that I needed to go find my own job and forgot about the assessment. This is an example of how assessment should not go, because it is to help generate options, not limit them.

I have learned a lot about myself through my volunteer experience with the Greenfield Organization. I worked on numerous agency projects such as putting together a newsletter,



doing set-up for fundraising events, and helping to raise money. This experience showed me how to work with people and becoming a leader. Through feedback, I learned that I have a very good personality and am a person who is happy when I am helping people.

Through my volunteer experience with the PA Student Leadership Network, it showed me a lot about being a disability advocate and how to advocate for people who do not have a voice. Now I volunteer much of my time helping advocate for people with disabilities. I learned that someone with a disability is to be in charge of their own life, not just to be told what to do.

The contents of this resource were developed under a grant (H326E200003) from the Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government."

