

# Life after high school

Start thinking about your next steps for  
supported employment and continued  
learning

Facilitated by Holland Bloorview & ConnectABILITY.ca

**Thursday September 30, 2021**  
**7:00-8:15PM**

# Agenda

1. Purpose / best hopes / who is this workshop geared towards
2. Parent lived experiences
3. Employment support programs and services overview and lived experiences
4. Continued education options overview and lived experiences
5. ConnectAbility.ca overview and live demonstration
6. Action time/ next steps
7. Question & Answers

# Purpose

- 1) Share information on the types of employment programs and continued learning options available (high level overview)
- 2) Prepare to be an informed consumer of employment services and/or continued learning options by sharing ideas to:
  - Ask questions to find the right service/program for you
  - Partner with service providers for success
- 3) Overview of ConnectAbility's transitions based resources

# Who is this workshop geared for?

- Youth whose post high-school plans are outside of the traditional college and university system
- May be taking the following course streams in high school:
  - Locally developed
  - Essential
  - Workplace

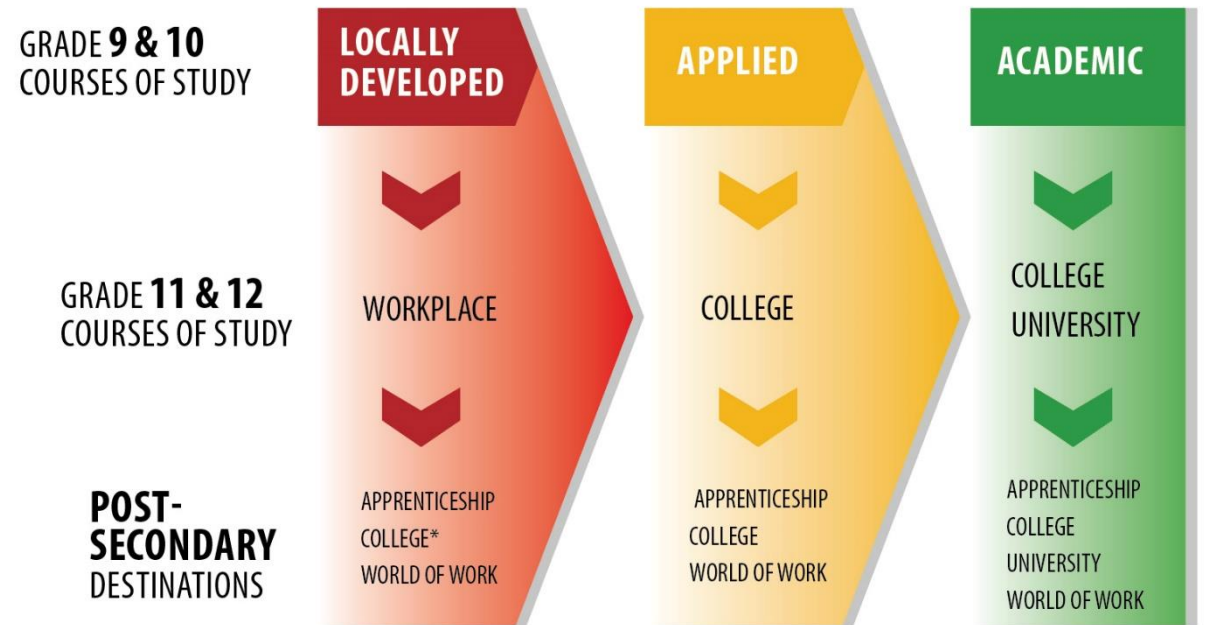


Image: TVDSB.ca

## Workshop Best Hopes

- Learn more about continued learning options available after high school
- Have a better understanding of employment program options and support for after high school
- Explore my options for the future
- Learn about programs that are available to me
- Learn about resources that can help with transition planning

# Introducing our lived experience parent



# Different types of employment programs



# Employment services offer a range of supports

Job Search/ Resume  
Skills Building  
Workshops

Most common  
support service

Workplace Life Skills  
Training (e.g. customer  
service, cash register training)

Job Coaching  
(on-site support for  
learning job)

Job Development  
(personalized matching  
to roles)

Education and/or  
Incentives for  
Employers

Job Maintenance Support  
(e.g. check-ins with  
employee & employer)

Availability depends on the  
type of service provider

# General categories of employment programs/ services



Individual Support for Job Search  
(Flexible, 1:1 meetings)



Structured Pre-Employment & Work  
Placement  
(Classroom or workshop format, Set  
schedule)



Day Programs with Vocational, Life-Skills  
or Learning Focus  
(Typically include social and recreational  
components)

Broad categories depicted here:

- Refer to reference page for specific programs and services
- Some service providers might provide a combination (particularly if fee-for-service)

# What to expect of adult employment services

- Goals of service and amount/type of service varies
  - E.g. being placed in a job vs. developing employment skills or training
- Employment counsellors and job developers may have a large client caseload
- Service providers will often share details on job opportunities and will require follow-up from an individual/ family (e.g. updating resume or job application)

**We recommend you contact several organizations and ask questions to find the best fit.**

# Choosing an employment service provider based on your goals

- Having an idea of your personal goals can help you to ask the right questions and choose a service or program that's a good fit.
- Is your primary goal for an employment service to:
  - Provide daily structure and engagement?
  - Connect with employers?
  - Complete individual job search and job applications?
  - Participate in skill building opportunities to prepare for employment?
  - Receive support on the job (job coaching)?
  - Receive support with finding a volunteer role (as opposed to paid work)?



# Employment related lived experiences

- Start early- explore different types of volunteering, co-ops, and jobs/roles
- Get ideas from others (E.g. School, service provider, other families)
- Each agency/program has different employer connections, supports etc.
  - Request visits or virtual meetings
  - Generate a list of questions to ask
  - Understand/consider program setting, staffing, types of supports etc to determine fit
- Be realistic

# Continued learning program types



Alternative High School and Adult Learning Programs



Post-Secondary Inclusive Education



Day Programs with Vocational, Life-Skills or Learning Focus

(Typically include social and recreational components)

Broad categories depicted here:

- Refer to reference page for specific programs and services
- Some examples provided on subsequent slides

# Examples comparing different continued learning options

The screenshot shows the TDSB website with a navigation bar at the top containing links like 'Find Your School', 'New to Canada', 'Policies', 'Media', 'About Us', 'Staff', 'Employment', 'Leadership', and 'Contact Us'. Below the navigation bar is a search bar and a 'Translate' button. The main content area is titled 'Essential Skills Upgrading' and features a sidebar on the left with a list of services including 'Adult Learners', 'Adult Credit Programs', 'Learn4Life', 'Employment Services', 'Learn English', 'Enhanced Language Training', 'ESL Programs', 'Essential Skills Upgrading', 'Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada', 'Teach ESL', 'Skills Development', 'Settlement Services', 'Teach ESL', 'Additional Qualifications', 'International Learners', and 'Continuing Education'. The main content area includes a 'Notice' box stating that the Essential Skills Program will reopen on August 23rd, 2021, and a section titled 'Free English reading, writing, math and computer classes in Toronto for adults'. It also provides contact information for regional offices and a 'Find Community Services on Facebook' button.

## TDSB Essential Skills Upgrading:

- Focus on improving reading, writing and/or computer skills to prepare for further learning and/or employment

The screenshot shows the Monsignor Fraser College website with a navigation bar at the top containing links like 'Find A School', 'Sitemap', 'Questions/Comments', 'Settings', 'Translate', and 'Login'. Below the navigation bar is a search bar. The main content area is titled 'Transition To Work (T2W) Program' and features a sidebar on the left with a list of links including 'Transition To Work (T2W) Program', 'What's New', 'Green Vision for Monsignor Fraser College', 'Programs Offered', 'Student Application Form', 'School Calendar', 'Secondary School Admission', and 'About Us'. The main content area includes a section titled 'Transition To Work Program' with a paragraph describing the program and a list of activities: 'employment training programs', 'volunteerism', 'employment', and 'college vocational programs'.

## TCDSB Transition to Work at Monsignor Fraser College:

- Focus on getting hands on supported work experience to prepare for future volunteering or employment

# Community Integration Through Co-Operative Education (CICE)

- College program for individuals with a developmental disability, intellectual disability or other learning challenges.
- Typical components include:
  - Core courses on workplace and life skills
  - Elective courses based on student interest
  - Work placement (co-op)
  - Access to a learning facilitator for classroom support and tutoring
- Focus is often on having a general college experience rather than on employment as an outcome.

# Choosing a continued learning options based on your goals

- Having an idea of your personal goals can help you to ask the right questions and choose a continued learning option that's a good fit.
- You can think about whether your goals relate to:
  - Developing specific skills such as literacy, numeracy, culinary skills, landscaping, etc.
  - Continuing a daily structure and routine similar to high-school
  - Having a general post-secondary experience
- Cost of programs is important to consider:
  - Private education, post-secondary programs and day programs can be quite expensive
  - School board programs are typically free of cost



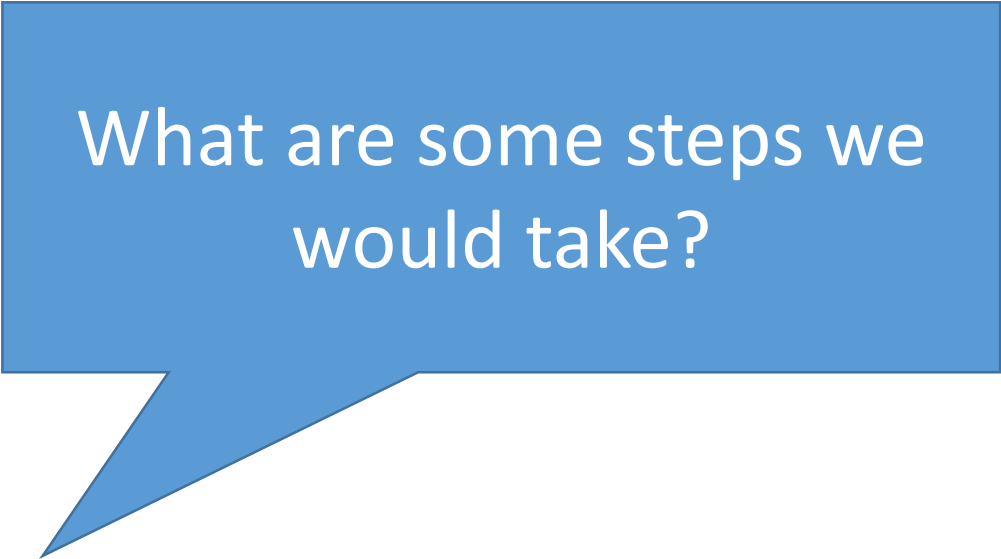
# School related lived experiences

- Started future planning early: hopes and plans for continuation of education following high school
- Involved school in next steps planning, and beneficial to involve other people/staff who know the young person well
- Connected with other families
- Important to consider:
  - Have initial phone discussions with potential programs
    - Ask questions, get a 'feel'
  - Complete campus or program visits (as able) or attend program 'open houses'
    - If possible- request an individual campus tour /meeting
- Benefits of social learning experiences are as important as educational experience (e.g. living in residence)

# Activity: Exploring if a program or service is the right next step for you

We run across a flyer for an employment readiness and life skills program for adults with disabilities that looks interesting.

**If you choose, type in the chat:**

A blue speech bubble with a white border and a tail pointing towards the bottom left.

What are some steps we would take?

A blue speech bubble with a white border and a tail pointing towards the bottom right.

What are some questions we would ask?

# Activity: Exploring if a program or service is the right next step for you

We run across a flyer for an employment readiness and life skills program for adults with disabilities that looks interesting.

What are some steps we would take?

- Read the organization's website
- Ask for a meeting or attend an information session
- Brainstorm questions to ask
- Ask for references
- Talk to others in your network

What are some questions we would ask?

- In-person or virtual services currently?
- Describe your program/ service?
- Waitlist for your program?
- How do you include families in your services?
- What are your outcomes or success rates?
- Provide an example of someone you have supported recently?

# Putting the pieces together



- As a family, it helps to think about your goals and vision for life after high school.
  - Person-directed planning can support with this.
  - Everyone's path will be different.
  - Employment supports and/or continued learning options are tools that can help you on your path.
- Think creatively! This might include combining resources:
  - For example, hiring a support worker to enable participation
  - Using Passport funding or other funding available to you
- Learn more about programs and services and be prepared to be an active partner in the process.

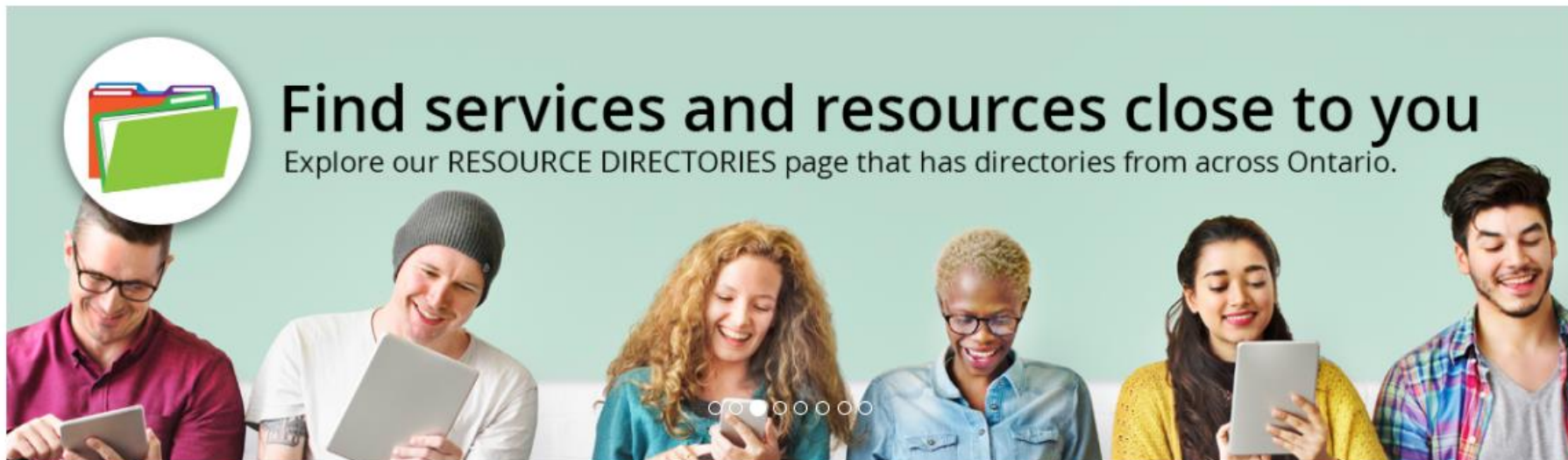
# Introducing ConnectAbility.ca



<https://connectability.ca/en/>

ConnectABILITY.ca

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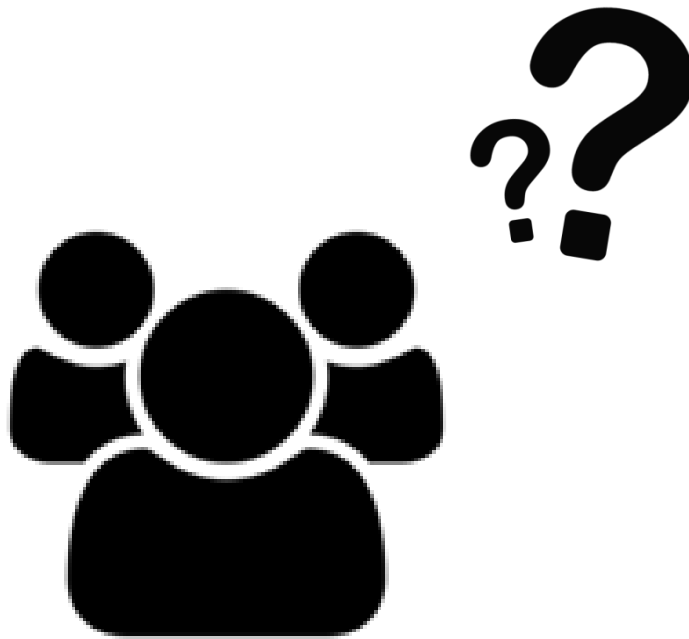


# Feedback Form

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScTOwIEmlOV-RJF\\_wH8bMquPR6XseGAQgkuL3AAZv14n1nqNQ/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScTOwIEmlOV-RJF_wH8bMquPR6XseGAQgkuL3AAZv14n1nqNQ/viewform?usp=sf_link)

# QUESTIONS?

- Put questions you may have in the chat
- Remember that everyone can see and/or hear your questions



# Thank you

## Contact information

- **Jason Meher**
  - ConnectABILITY.ca  
[jmaher@connectability.ca](mailto:jmaher@connectability.ca)
- **Laura Howson-Strong**, OT Reg.(Ont).
  - Occupational Therapist & Lead
  - Holland Bloorview Kids Rehab Hospital-Transitions Strategy, Start Early Stream  
[lhowsonstrong@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:lhowsonstrong@hollandbloorview.ca)
- **Holland Bloorview Youth Employment Participation Programs**
  - Email: [employmentparticipation@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:employmentparticipation@hollandbloorview.ca)
  - Website: <https://hollandbloorview.ca/services/programs-services/youth-employment-participation-programs>