

The job market is tight, but it isn't impossible! Hundreds of Lake County youth will work this summer. Would you like to be one of them?

Create a plan! Start today!! Who would you like to work for? What kind of work would you like to do? Indoors? Outside? Lots of contact with people? Working with children? Elderly? What special skills do you have? Good at sports? Math? Musical instrument? Crafts? Working with your hands? **Put your plan on paper!** It is the only way to keep track of your progress!

Now, who do you know? Teachers? Pastors? Neighbors? Parents? Networking is important. Tell everyone you know what type of job you are looking for. If you tell your teacher that you are looking for ANY job, they might not be able to help you. But, if you tell that same person that you are looking for pet sitting/dog walking jobs, they are more likely to remember you when they hear of opportunities. Keep a list of everyone that you have spoken to.

Follow up! Getting a job is your job! Just because you told someone once that you are looking for a job, doesn't mean that they will remember. Remind them that you are still looking. Also ask them if they could recommend anyone that could help you with your job search! You are marketing yourself. Remember that McDonalds doesn't market their Shamrock Shake with only 1 commercial! They run their ads on TV and radio, in newspapers and magazines, and have billboards! Perseverance is important!

14 & 15 year olds

This can be a tough age to find employers willing to hire you. Lack of experience, undeveloped work ethic, and labor restrictions are working against this age range. Perseverance, networking and creativity will go a long way! Small local businesses, restaurants, and park districts are examples of places that will hire this age group. Your best bet might be to create your own business. Do you play a musical instrument? Teach kids in your neighborhood. Good at math? Be a tutor. Like to do crafts? Do a craft camp! Are you good at sports? Create a neighborhood "sports camp." Babysitting or pet sitting/dog walking are also great options. Take a wagon full of iced drinks to the area soccer fields and ball parks that don't have concession stands! Use your imagination!

If all else fails, volunteer your time to gain valuable job experience! Area libraries, park districts, churches and summer camps have lots of opportunities where you can learn important job skills! You may not earn money, but you will make it much easier next year when you are looking for a job!

16-18 year olds

This age group is a little older and might have some actual job experience. Some of your experience might be volunteer work or clubs and activities that you are involved with at school. All of that information deserves to be on your resume! And you should have a resume. If you aren't sure how to create one, you can stop by the Job Center for a copy of our booklet "Resumes for a First-wage Job." The booklet is also available on our website: www.lakecountyjobcenter.com Look in the Youth Section, under the "Learn About Youth Services" tab.

Six Flags Great America is a large employer of youth in Lake County. During the spring, they have several hiring events. Check their website: www.sixflagsjobs.com/greatAmerica/jobs. Be sure to arrive dressed to impress! NO JEANS! You only have one time to make a good first impression! Be prepared to answer

questions about customer service experience. Be sure you know WHY you'd be the perfect Great America employee!

Other suggestions: Go to the area malls with a handful of resumes. Know BEFORE you go, which stores you want to apply to. Know some things about your target stores. You want to be knowledgeable. Go into the store alone and dressed for success! Don't go with a group of your friends and enter the store one right after the other. That will overwhelm employers! You don't live near a mall? Go anywhere that there is a concentration of retail establishments.

Many jobs that you will be applying for will be on-line. www.snagajob.com and www.workinretail.com are two sites that specialize in hourly wage jobs. Most large stores have their own web sites. Check them out to find job opportunities.

Of course, the ideas and suggestions for the 14 & 15 year olds would be appropriate for this age group. Gaining experience is the key!

18 years old and up

If you have decided to embark upon your career and forgo additional education for now, the key to your success is creating a **stable job history**. Employers spend money hiring and training new employees. They want to invest their money on people who will stay and be worth the investment. Employees who stay less than 2 years are considered "job-hoppers." Job-hoppers are considered a bad risk/investment. So, even if you are capable of doing another job AND have experience doing it, you won't get hired, because of your lack of a stable job history.

How do you create a stable job history? First of all, you make sure that you are looking for jobs that are suited to your personality. You can go on www.illinoisworknet.com and complete an interest inventory and personality profile. Both of those tools will help you find career clusters that match your interests and abilities. Within each cluster, you will find suggestions of jobs within the cluster. If you like a job, you are more likely to work harder and stay longer. SUCCESS!

Once you know the types of jobs you will enjoy and be good at, you can focus your attention on getting those jobs. www.indeed.com and www.simplyhired.com are two sites that "collect" job openings from a variety of job boards. You can register to have emails sent to you for your job search.

Network, Network, Network! Let people know that you are looking for work! Attend the Job Market job fair at CLC on Thursday, May 19 from 1 to 5 pm. Dress for success! Bring resumes! Know what companies are going to be there and research them before you get there!