



Entrepreneurship for Youth with Disabilities



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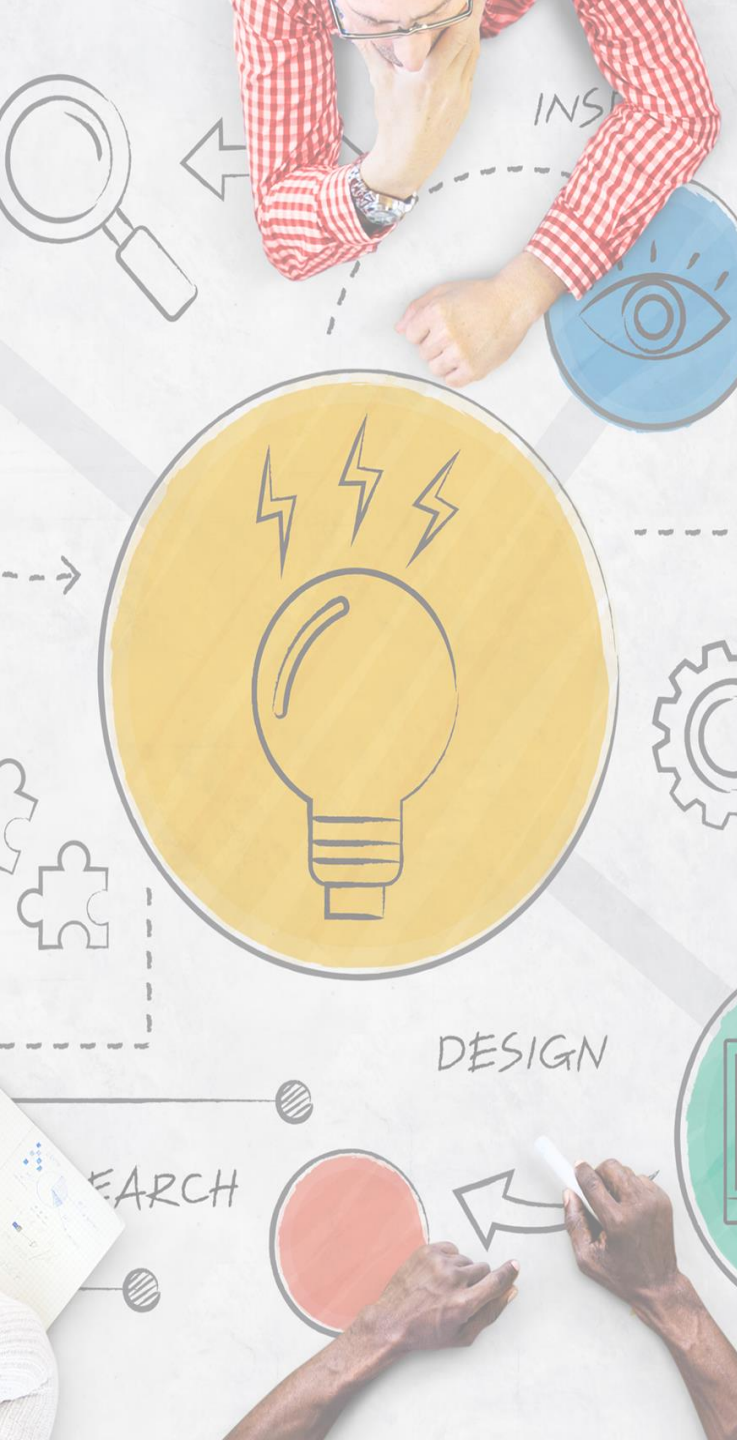
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EYD Project Goals

- ❖ We want students who have IEPs and 504 plans to have the opportunity to explore and learn about how to start their own business in high school.
- ❖ In addition, we would like exploring entrepreneurship as an inclusive option for all high school students and young adults with disabilities.
- ❖ Provide teachers with a high-quality entrepreneurship curriculum.
- ❖ Provide families with a resource guide to support a loved one with a disability in entrepreneurship.
- ❖ Support students with start-up funds to be able to launch their business as part of the learning experience.
- ❖ Make entrepreneurship an accessible employment pathway with Vocational Rehabilitation. Although it is an available choice, it is rarely used.





Bridging to Vocational Services and Supports

- Collaborating with VR to update self-employment policies to make it easier for consumers to apply for support to start a business (ongoing process)
- Providing training materials to VR and interested consumers in self-employment
- VR funding of business plans

EYD Entrepreneurial Progression

Students register for year-long Entrepreneurship Course

Drawing from personal identity, prior skills, community need, and natural supports—students develop and prototype their business idea

Students create a business plan and video/audio pitch including mission, marketing, branding, finances, budget, and operations

Students submit their business plan and pitch to UIC team to receive \$500 in supplies/equipment to start their business and ongoing support

Ongoing teacher and student support from UIC Team

EYD Implementation Timeline

YEAR 1

Interviews were conducted with 20 entrepreneurs with disabilities, 6 service providers, and 5 school administrators

YEAR 2

1 high school
7 students with disabilities

YEAR 3

2 high schools
One 18-21 transition program
20 students with disabilities

YEAR 4

3 high schools
One 18-21 transition program
23 students with disabilities
14 students received funding
8/14 students started business/made first steps

YEAR 5

4 high schools
One 18-21 year old program
35 students with disabilities
Currently awaiting business plans and pitches

Year 1 Main Findings Facilitators

Access to other entrepreneurs

Social support (family & friends)

Motivation:

- Being your own boss
- Desire to help others
- Earn money

Access to funding

Year 1 Main Findings Facilitators Continued

Personal qualities:

- Persistence
- Creativity
- Charisma
- Hope

Flexibility and openness to adapt the business

Opportunities for marketing:

- Trade shows
- Word-of-mouth
- Social media
- Websites

Mentoring from an adult

Year 1 Main Findings

Barriers

Personal qualities

- Lack of confidence/ low self-efficacy
- Health limitations

Social support

- Lack of support/ discouragement

Contextual factors

- Lack of money
- Lack of infrastructure
- Inadequate support from VR/school
- Discrimination and lack of accessibility

EYD Curriculum and Guides



With student and teacher feedback, the curriculum has gone through multiple iterations to address:

- **Building in accessibility features**
 - **Audio**
 - **Vocabulary**
 - **Focusing complex content on end goal: business plan and video pitch**
 - **Formatting**
 - **Planning graphic organizer to prepare for business plan write-up**
- **Matching business idea to available funding**
- **Hands-on and collaborative activities**
- **Extension activities for pre, during, and post-unit teaching**
- **Accelerated course for lack of time, experienced entrepreneurs, or exploration purposes**
- **More information for families who want to support a young person in their family with self-employment**

EYD CURRICULAR PACKAGE



01. Teacher's Guide

02. Curriculum
Extension Guide

03. 13 Units

04. Plan Ahead Graphic
Organizer

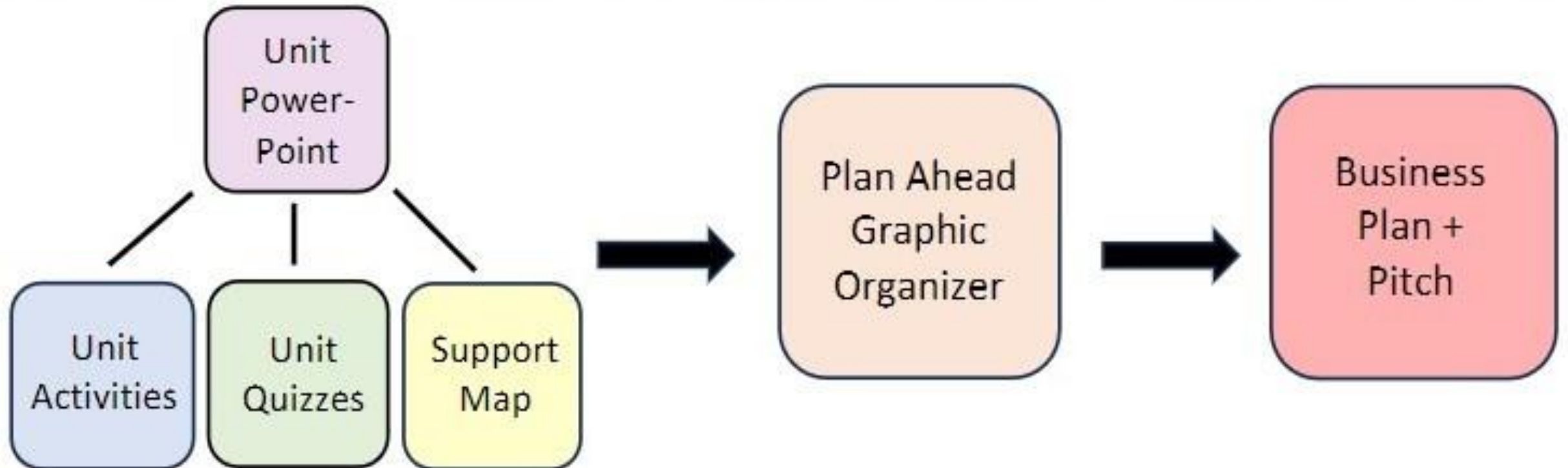
05. Support Map

06. Business Plan

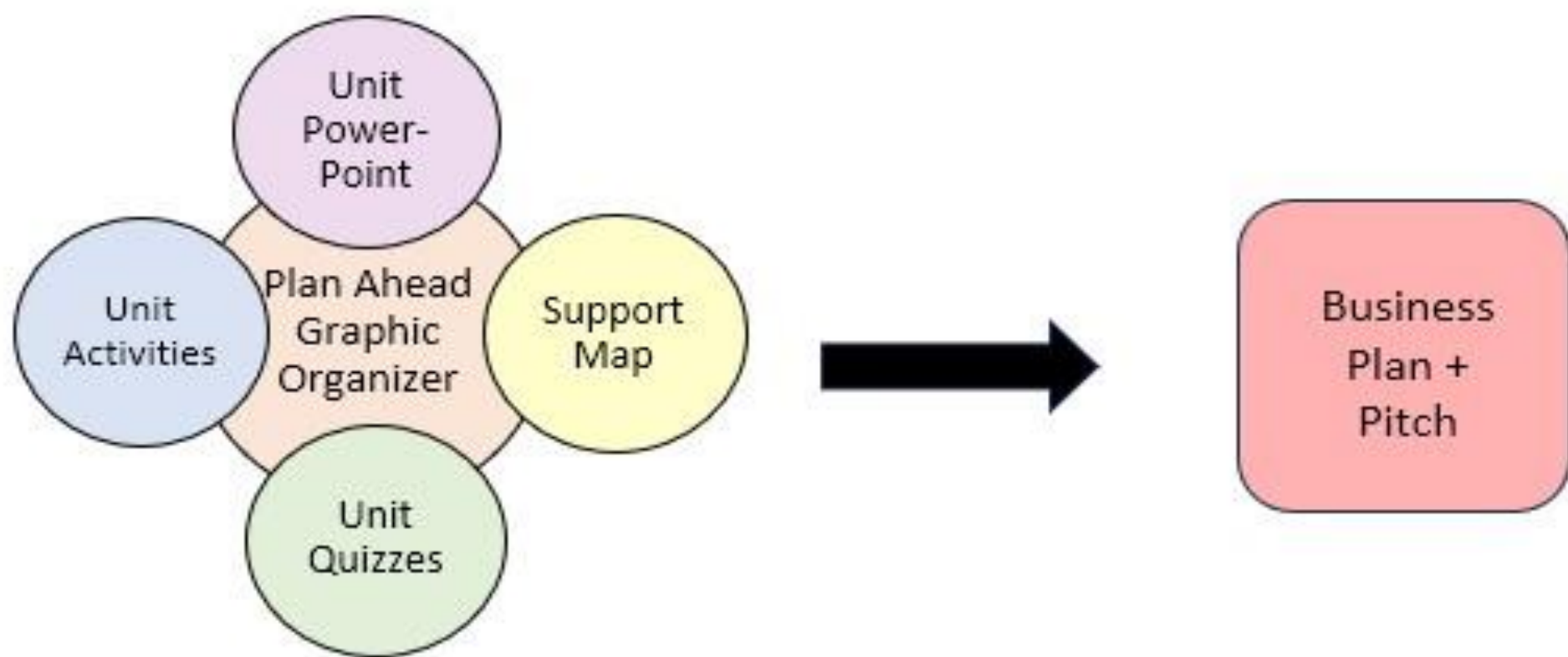
07. Pitch Deck

EYD Teacher's Manual

Direct Instruction Model: This model involves teaching from the presentation slides themselves in a teacher-led format. The presentations and lesson activities are then supplemented and enriched by the activities from the Plan Ahead Graphic Organizer. This model may be the best fit for students who have low support needs, learning in traditional group settings (ex. A high school class).



Coaching Model: This model involves working through the Plan Ahead Graphic Organizer with students individually or in small groups. The graphic organizer serves as a base students can use to explore their business interests in an interactive manner, with space for scaffolding from support persons. PowerPoints and activities then serve as supplementary material to provide background information on business planning activities. This model may be a better fit for students with higher support needs, or difficulties with executive functioning.





UNIT ACTIVITIES



Each Entrepreneurship Unit has different activities throughout the slide show.
Here is a quick guide for each kind of activity you will see:

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Check For Understanding activities are comprehension questions that refer to videos or presented content. These questions are listed on the accompanying worksheet in the google drive unit folder.

THINK ABOUT IT

Think About It questions can be completed independently, with a partner, small group, or whole class. These are questions that can be answered out loud, in your mind, or written down.

PLAN AHEAD

Plan Ahead questions are completed on the planning graphic organizer in your google drive folder. This is a planning guide before you complete your official business plan.

SUPPORT MAP

Support Map activities are completed on the Support Map slide in your google drive folder. This is a PowerPoint slide that can be resaved and edited to identify supportive people to help you start your business.

EYD Family Entrepreneurship Guide

While the 13-Unit curriculum focuses on exploration, this Family Guide extends critical information for entrepreneurs to take the next steps in business ownership.



Description: Provides information and resources for families on topics that play a large role in owning a business.



Purpose: To increase accessibility and awareness of important variables for families whose loved one is looking to pursue entrepreneurship as a career pathway.



Development Process:

1. Collaborate with stakeholders to determine Family Guide topics
2. Gather information from most recent and reliable sources
3. Ensure accuracy of information and presentation format from expert reviewers



EYD

Businesses & Current Ideas



Businesses Funded

- ✓ Babysitting Company
- ✓ Photography
- ✓ Custom Hoodies
- ✓ Hand-woven scarves
- ✓ Hand-made Tech
Decks
- ✓ Candles
- ✓ Bakery
- ✓ DJ
- ✓ Shoe Repair
- ✓ Coffee Cart
- ✓ Graphic Design

Current Ideas

- ✓ Car Detailing
- ✓ Lawn Mowing &
Snow Removal
- ✓ Jewelry
- ✓ Clothing Design
- ✓ Voice Actor
- ✓ Tattoo Design
- ✓ Personal Trainor
- ✓ Personal Chef
- ✓ Fabric Flowers
- ✓ Thrifting

EYD Business Event at UIC



EYD brought four Chicagoland High Schools and one 18-21 Transition Program to UIC for a collaborative business brainstorming and feedback session.

- 30 students with disabilities at different points in the EYD course
- 5 Diverse Learners Teachers and 4 Paraprofessionals

Students **shared** their business ideas, **listened** to their peers, and **provided constructive feedback** about marketing, branding, pricing, and operations.

Perspectives about EYD from Students

On the class as a whole:

"It [class] gives you more insight in how the world of business works. Personally, I think this should be a class in high school...It's basically forcing you to think outside of the box – to think in ways that you may not think in your typical math, science or English class."

On the part of class that is most helpful for the future:

"Budgeting is a major part of starting a business and budgeting is awesome. I can put those budgeting skills that I learned from this class into my daily life routine and it's done in a safe environment where you can experiment, and you won't have to be punished with the consequences of overspending or not spending too much."

On learning about networking and natural supports:

"I don't have much networking, but my mother does. She's been working at two different schools. She's worked at an insurance company. Now she works at a grocery store down in Town X. So she's got a lot of people around her that she can contact. But I would like to get up to that point where my mom is and actually do my own networking and have my own assortment of people."

On the Plan Ahead Graphic Organizer:

"I liked how we mapped everything out for our project for starting our business, like getting all the information we needed for planning and putting it right in [the business plan]."

Perspectives about EYD from Teachers

On the class as a whole:

“The class content I liked. And my case, I was able to roll it into preexisting curricula -- senior seminar. So it fit really well into the traditional models that were already using with kids with IEPs. So I liked it a lot. I like the idea of this alternative pathway that is not often discussed with kids in special education. They hear the idea of starting a small business maybe in some math class at some point or maybe they do something granular, but this is a bigger project where they actually get to see, ‘oh, this is something I can actually do.’”

“It gave students an opportunity to see themselves as something other than students... I think back to my own experience, and you go through the motions of school, and that’s what you’re supposed to do but you never really think about yourself in any other capacities than just a student and a child. This really gave them life skills in terms of planning for future and the curriculum really walked them through step by step.”

On social entrepreneurship:

“Getting them to think about their own strengths and weaknesses and how they could incorporate those into, essentially making their communities better, was something really cool to see.”

On the Plan Ahead Graphic Organizer:

“So with the graphic organizer, having each component that they fill out, and then knowing that each component just went simultaneously with the business plan was an awesome idea. It aligned with the business plan really well.”



Thank you!



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**EYD Curricular Package
& Family Entrepreneurship Guide**

***Click Curriculum on UIC project
webpage to take you to the Google
Drive**

<https://eyd.ahs.uic.edu/>

