

# UNLOCKING STUDENT POTENTIAL

Providing Meaningful Pre-ETS Experiences  
for Students with Significant Disabilities



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# AGENDA

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**01** Missouri Pre-ETS Delivery Model, Data, and Staff

**02** Horizons Team Data and Guiding Principles

**03** Work-Ready Behavior Framework, Teaching Techniques, and Resources

**04** Job Olympics

**05** Wrap-up



**UNLOCKING  
STUDENT  
POTENTIAL**

# Missouri Pre-ETS Model



- 2015 - Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation contracted with the University of Missouri's College of Education and Human Development to manage the state-wide project.
- 2026 - MU Specialist assigned to every school in the state including charter, private, and juvenile justice facilities (almost 700).
- MU is the primary provider of Pre-ETS in Missouri high schools.

# MISSOURI PRE-ETS DATA



**2015-2016 school year:**

- **2,462 students served**

**2024-2025 school year:**

- **10,851 students served**

**2015-2016 school year:**

- **24,245 services provided**

**2024-2025 school year:**

- **107,184 services provided**

# OUR STAFF

GET TO KNOW US BETTER

- We are certified teachers
- 67 Pre-ETS Specialist positions within the program
  - 2 Specialists assigned to students who are deaf/hard of hearing
  - 1.5 quality assurance professionals
  - 11 Specialists serving juvenile justice facilities (Phoenix Team)
  - 12 Specialists serving Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled and life skills classrooms in public schools (Horizons Team)



The **Horizons Team** is dedicated to supporting high school students ages 14–21 in developing meaningful job skills that prepare them for life beyond the classroom.

We specialize in working with students who have **extensive support needs (ESN)**, including those with significant cognitive, physical, and behavioral challenges.



# HORIZONS TEAM DATA

2024-2025  
School Year

**115**

**Buildings Served**

**913**

**Students Served**

**18,556**

**Services Provided**

# HORIZONS TEAM DATA

Current school  
year through  
March 26, 2026

**128**

**Buildings Served**

**1022**

**Students Served**

**14,751**

**Services Provided**

# WE BELIEVE

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- All students can learn.
- Our students learn differently.
- Not every skill we teach will be learned immediately.
- At times, our own expectations need to grow alongside our students.



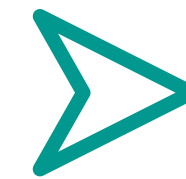
# POSTSECONDARY SUCCESS IS AN ADULT WHO....

- 01 Expresses workplace interests, support needs, and observations
- 02 Performs job tasks with limited prompting or supervision
- 03 Engages in positive, healthy interactions with peers and co-workers
- 04 Demonstrates awareness of and attends to personal physical needs as they arise

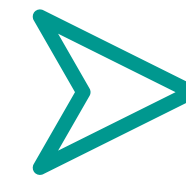


# OUR PHILOSOPHY

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**Every student is worthy of meaningful opportunities to learn and to work.**



**A student's strengths and potential may unfold slowly as they grow and gain opportunities.**



**Work and social skills develop gradually through consistent practice and real-world experiences.**



# OUR ROLE

- A student's potential is rarely fixed; it grows in response to the environment around them. Since we shape that environment for much of their day, we hold a powerful responsibility to set high expectations and provide opportunities that allow them to thrive.
- By building a student's independence, we strengthen their ability to recognize risk, seek support, and stay safe.



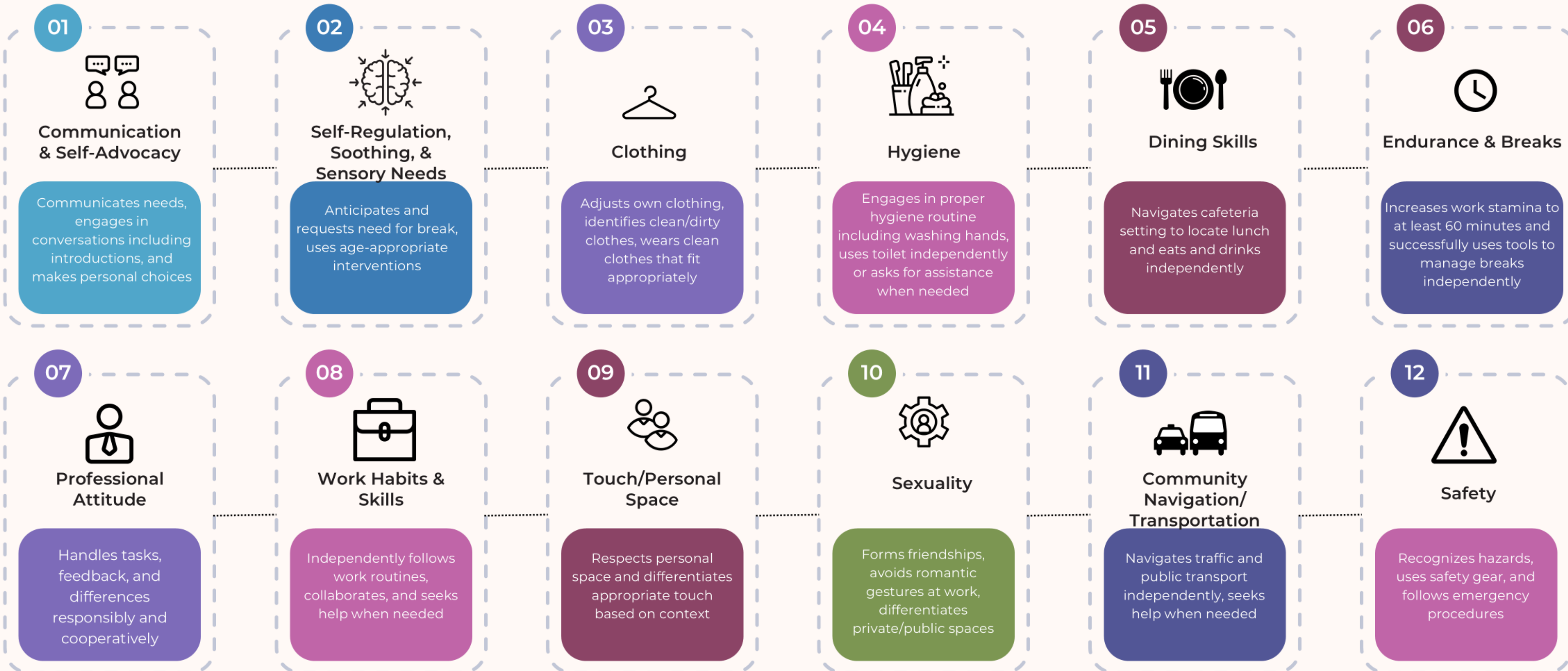
# WORK-READY BEHAVIOR FRAMEWORK



- Practical guide for educators and parents
- 12 key domains that support independence and employability
- Specific skills students can build over time
- Designed to be used collaboratively--teachers, specialists, paraprofessionals, & families
- Encourages early conversations about employment--even before high school

# MU Pre-ETS

## Work Ready Behavior Framework



# Going Digital

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## What's Coming Next:

- Turning the Framework into an easy-to-use electronic checklist
- Progress monitoring across multiple years
- Better data to support instruction and transition planning



## Why This Matters:

- Gives us long-term data to spot patterns, strengths, and areas needing support
- Ensures consistent expectations across all staff and programs
- Tracks progress from ages 14–21 to show growth over time
- Helps us tailor instruction and interventions based on real, measurable trends

# TEACHING TECHNIQUES

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**01**

**Highly Adapted Lessons**

**04**

**Hands-on Experiential Learning**

**02**

**Visual Supports & Modeling**

**05**

**Student-Centered Activities that Promote Independence**

**03**

**Repetition**

**06**

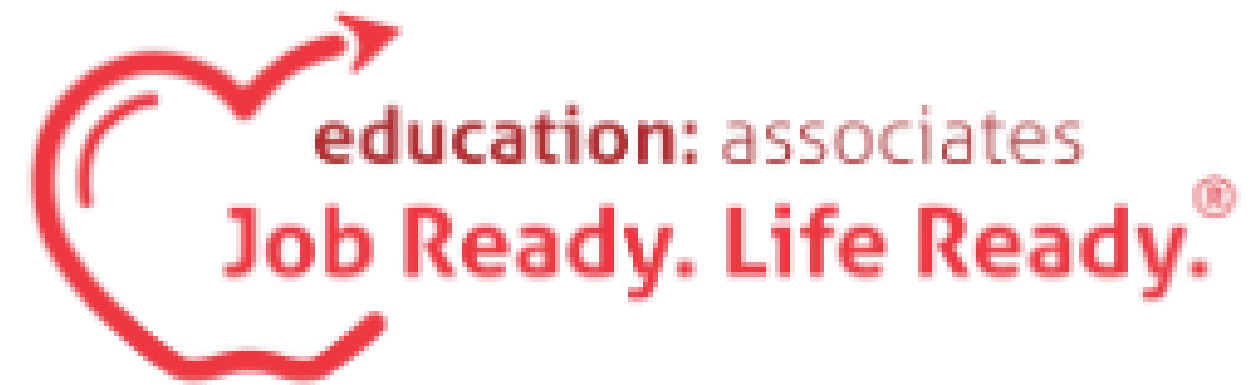
**Real-World Simulations in Collaboration with Community Partners**

# JOB EXPLORATION RESOURCES

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**Custom Career  
Kits**



**Project Discovery Kits**

# PROJECT DISCOVERY

## CURRICULUM BY EDUCATION ASSOCIATES



### WHAT'S IN A KIT?



- Structured, research-based materials
- Hands-on activities and visual supports
- Designed for accessibility and engagement
- Easily adaptable to individual needs
- Peer-reviewed, approved, and validated by leading national organizations, including the US Department of Education

# PROJECT DISCOVERY

## CURRICULUM BY EDUCATION ASSOCIATES



- **Two Levels of Lessons:** Standard and Adapted — we use the Adapted version for accessibility.
- **Video Modeling:** Each activity includes a video demonstration to support understanding and engagement.
- **Vocabulary Support:** Each lesson includes vocabulary cards and boards.
- **Pre/Post Assessments:** Track student progress and understanding.
- **“First Look” Activities:** Introduce key concepts in a structured way.
- **Visual Schedules:** Promote independence and routine.
- **Worksheets & Manipulatives:** Everything needed to deliver each lesson effectively.

# CUSTOM KITS



## Pre-Employment Transition Services University of Missouri



- **Teacher-Driven Design:** Created by educators to reflect real-world job tasks and our students' strengths, resulting in activities that are meaningful, relevant, and accessible.
- **Flexible Levels of Support:** Activities can be easily adapted or scaffolded, allowing us to individualize instruction more precisely than pre-made kits.
- **Realistic, Localized Content:** Tasks and scenarios reflect real workplaces in our communities, making learning more meaningful and relevant.



# CUSTOM KITS

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## What We've Made So Far:

- Fast Food Employee
- Hardware Store Employee
- Movie Theater Employee
- Office Support Services



## What We're Going to Make Next:

- Hospital Employee
- Library Employee
- Warehouse Employee

# CUSTOM KIT-FAST FOOD

## 14 ACTIVITIES/LESSONS



1. Fast Food Exploration

2. Uniforms

3. Build a Burger

4. Where Could You Work?

5. French Fry Station

6. Restocking Materials

7. Rolling Silverware

8. Washing Hands/Wearing Gloves

9. Filling Condiment Orders

10. Money

11. Taking out the Trash

12. Bussing Tables

13. DQ Order Assembly

14. Social Narrative: Working in a Restaurant

# EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

- Job Tours
- Job Shadows
- Volunteering
- On-site Job Coaching
- Guest Speakers
- Job Fairs





# MODIFIED RESOURCES

## Additional Resources

- Boom Learning
- Pictorial Interest Inventories
- Teachers Pay Teachers

# JOB OLYMPICS



- A competitive event where students demonstrate practical job skills in areas such as food service, custodial work, retail, and clerical tasks; events are designed to simulate real workplace expectations and help students practice employability skills.
- Participants receive feedback from local employers and professionals.
- Events are typically planned by a team that includes a local school district; we have several happening all around the state.
- We have a handbook on how to start a Job Olympics event on our website.



**MISSOURI  
JOB OLYMPICS**



**COLLABORATION  
IS KEY**

## **Working Together**

- Families
- Employers
- School Staff
- Vocational Rehabilitation

# SUCCESS STORIES



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A student received a summer work experience report that stated: "She completed all of her assigned job tasks and demonstrated solid job skills. She showed great initiative and consistently took responsibility for her own work. By the end of the week, she was able to work independently, requiring no additional support or assistance from the job coach. Her progress reflects growing confidence and competence in the workplace."



A student arrived at school one day in a suit and tie, ready to take part in his IEP meeting.

He was able to advocate for himself several times in the meeting.



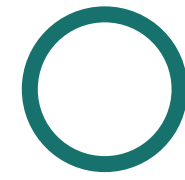
A Specialist delivered lessons from the Animal Care kit and arranged a job shadowing experience at the local animal shelter.

During their visit, students created enrichment activities for the dogs, folded laundry, and assisted with socializing kittens and puppies.

Their performance impressed the shelter staff, who invited them to return as monthly volunteers.



# CONTACT INFORMATION



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## VISIT OUR WEBSITE:



University of Missouri Pre-ETS email:  
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# THANK YOU!

TIME FOR QUESTIONS

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