

Youth with disabilities find it hard to get a job or to be seen as a potential worker

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Plain Language Executive Summary

People with disabilities face many barriers. This includes barriers to getting a job. This is true in Canada and many countries around the world. Many people have worked hard to change this and make things fair.

Some progress has been made but young people with disabilities are still not getting enough attention when it comes to jobs.

Youth with disabilities are also left out of research. There is not much information about their work history and experiences. But there was a survey done in 2022. It had some information on this topic.

It showed that almost 9 out of 10 youth with disabilities had the potential to work. This was among youth with disabilities who were not in school or already working at a job.

Here are some of the other barriers they face.

- **Stigma and discrimination:** They are not treated fairly. Other people think they can't work.

- **Education barriers:** They may have difficulty at school that makes it hard to focus. School may not prepare them for future work.
- **Family challenges:** They may have issues at home that make it harder to focus on a future career.
- **Financial barriers:** They may not have enough money to support their job search.
- **Social barriers:** They may have a smaller social group. They may not know many people who can help them find work.
- **Employment barriers:** They may not get the chance to try out jobs or learn skills early on.

This report looks at these barriers. It looks at the effect they have had on young people with disabilities today and in the past.

Things are getting better but there is still more work to do

More people are paying attention to this issue today. Society is noticing. There is interest from politicians. There is more research being done. There is more information to show what works and what does not.

For example, research shows that having work experience early in life helps. It shows that being mentored helps. These ideas and actions are called ‘strategies.’ They can improve the job outcomes for youth with disabilities.

Strategies can also help advocates. Parents, caregivers, employment experts and youth can all use these strategies.

This report also has many strategies. These include actions and programs like the following.

- Early work experience
- Mentoring programs
- Career exploration
- Skills training
- On-the-job supports

- Resources for transition periods like going from school to a job

These strategies will help youth with disabilities. They will help them to be successful in finding and keeping a job.