

THERE'S A LOT  
THAT YOU CAN DO  
TO GET A JOB!

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# KYLE JOHNSON, RIVER FALLS WALMART CUSTOMER ASSOCIATE



- Had chores as a kid
- Lot of community experiences
- Several paid/unpaid work experiences before this job
- Good transition teacher
- Bridge program 2 summers

# SOFIA WALZ-CHOJNACKI, WAUWATOSA MEDICAL COLLEGE & WALGREENS



- Learned bus system in middle school
- Parents talked about work early on
- volunteer and work in high school
- Yippee training
- Practice interviews
- Community meeting led to 1 job; networks led to the 2<sup>nd</sup> job

# PAM DEVUYST, KENOSHA DAY CARE TEACHER



- 6 yrs in sheltered work
- On-line college in child care; Assoc. degree in child care; pursuing Bachelor's Degree (DVR paid tuition)
- Got Child Care Teacher certification
- Volunteered at Society's Assets; co-worker told her about child care job
- Got benefits assessment (it was helpful)

# LESSONS LEARNED

- Paid & unpaid work experience makes a big difference
- Using your and your family's networks may lead to a better job than any other strategy
- DVR funding can be essential (for job development, job coaching at the outset, tuition, and more)
- Job training often comes from co-workers and supervisors
- Benefits analysis takes away fear and gets you the facts
- Most job modifications are minimal and inexpensive
- Creative transportation may be necessary
- Childhood chores and future expectation of a real job
- Inclusive education and community experiences help
- Post-secondary education is an option for everyone

1. If you want to work but you don't know what kind of job you'd like or you'd be good at...

Think about what you generally enjoy doing – maybe there are jobs where you could do that. Think about where you want to work: indoors? outdoors? office? store? restaurant?

Try being a volunteer, or working somewhere with no pay for a while to try it out. Those opportunities are often not hard to find.

2. If you're still in school and you've never had a paid job...

Ask your transition teacher or another teacher to help you find a job, or at least some unpaid work experience.

You and your parents can contact DVR. DVR starts paying for job development and other services at age 14.

3. If you have a job but you don't like it or you're not getting enough hours...

You could ask your boss for more hours and some new tasks to learn.

If you start looking for a job don't quit your first job until you have a new job offer.

Use the resources of the Job Center.

You can apply for DVR services to help you find a new job.



4. If you've never talked to DVR or received DVR services, or you've heard bad things about DVR..

You should still contact your local DVR office and ask for a meeting. You can have a family member or friend go with you. Ask DVR what kind of services they provide and how they could help you get a job. Even people who find jobs on their own often get DVR funding to help pay for job coaches or other things they need.

5. If you're worried that you might lose your SSI check or Medicaid coverage if you get a job...

You need a benefits analysis, and it's FREE. (DVR, WIPA, Family Care and IRIS pay for them) Ask your DVR counselor, IRIS consultant, Family Care case manager, teacher or your parents to help you get one. The benefits counselor will explain to you how you can get a job and still keep your benefits.

If you want to learn more about benefits counseling, here are the links on the Internet:

[www.wibsa.org/membership/membership-directory](http://www.wibsa.org/membership/membership-directory)

[\*\*www.eri-wi.org/programs/WIPAprviders\*\*](http://www.eri-wi.org/programs/WIPAprviders)

6. If you don't think you can get a job because you don't have affordable, accessible transportation to get to a job...

You probably don't know all the ways that other people with disabilities are getting to work: paid family members, home care workers, co-workers, volunteer drivers, and many other ways. Talk to your IRIS consultant or your Family Care case manager about the possibilities. And think about the location of the job in your job search.

7. If you don't have a supported employment agency in your county that helps people get real jobs in the community...

Don't give up on your dream of getting a good job, and don't wait for a new agency to get started – that may never happen. A lot of people with disabilities have gotten jobs through the people they and their family and friends know. Or through the connections they made in volunteer or unpaid work experiences. You can too. Get on with it.

“Whatever you like to do, go for it. Try to find a job where you can do the thing you like to do and see how you like working there”

**Taylor Poppe**  
age 20  
Teacher's Aide  
Kenosha, WI



“ Don’t give up - -  
there are always  
jobs out there,  
but you have to  
go after them.  
They won’t just  
fall in your lap.”

**Pam DeVuyst**

Day Care Teacher,  
Kenosha , WI



"I love working at Walgreen's. That's where I met my two best friends. I learned how to take the bus when I was 12. Now I use it to get to work. It's a big part of my independence."

**Sofia Walz-Chojnacki,**  
Shelf stocker at  
Walgreen's & Clerical  
worker at Medical  
College of WI,  
Wauwatosa, WI





“My biggest mistake in my job search was not getting any work experience while I was in school. When I graduated I didn’t have any paid or unpaid work on my resume. That hurt me in job interviews.”

## **Andy Thain**

Founder & CEO,  
At Home Care  
Thorp, WI

