

FAMILY DYNAMICS AND EXPECTATIONS

It is important to help an **emerging adult** build autonomy in finding a source of income that fits their wants, needs, and strengths. They likely have **internalized expectations** set by **family** and **society** about making money. For example, a parent may tell their **emerging adult** to focus on going to college because the parent did not have the opportunity when they were younger. Your role as a professional is to help separate out an **emerging adult's goals** versus the **expectations that have been put upon them**. Potential topics that arise include:



Following in a parent's/caregiver's footsteps

- An **emerging adult** may feel like they **need to continue a family legacy**, such as taking over a family-run business, joining a specific branch of the military, or going to the college their family has gone to for generations.
- They may also have parents/caregivers who **have never worked**, due to life circumstances like a **disability** or one parent that **stays at home to take care of their family** while their significant other works.



Going to college

- Some **emerging adults** want to pursue higher education, but feel like they cannot due to **affordability, geographic location, or test scores**.
- There are also some **emerging adults** that **do not** want to go to **college**, but feel like they need to based upon societal expectations to continue education. As a provider, it is important to provide an **emerging adult** with **examples of various pathways to earning income**.



Disability benefits and employment

- For **emerging adults** who qualify for disability benefits, they may have been told by parents/caregivers or medical professionals that they **cannot work** and also **receive social security disability benefits (SSDI)**. It is important to familiarize yourself with state and federal disability requirements before discussing **employment** with an **emerging adult** with a disability as this will likely be a source of concern.
 - For specific questions related to **SSDI** and income, head to the Social Security Administration's (SSA) "[Working While Disabled: How We Can Help](#)" guide¹² or contact your local SSA office.
 - For specific questions related to **Medicaid** and working, learn more about the "[Ticket to Work](#)" program.¹³
 - For specific questions related to **emerging adults** with a **disability working in Missouri**, learn more from the World Institute on Disability's [Disability Benefits 101](#).¹⁴

NORMALIZE JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

Searching for a source of income can take many forms - wanting a part-time job while in school, applying for state or federal benefits, selling handmade goods online or other entrepreneurial ventures, continuing education, or joining a branch of the military. Regardless of the reason, it is a **stressful time** for an **emerging adult**. Your role as a professional is primed to help tap into a top priority for them - **building independence**. Focus on these **four conversation topics** to help an **emerging adult** explore their **individualized reason** for seeking income, **interests** and **culture** they want in a **workplace**, **professional methods** to income-searching, and **resilience-based** skills they will need.

Find their reason for income

Explore their **short-term desires for a job**.

- "Tell me about your current living situation. Do you live alone or with parent(s)/caregiver(s), roommate(s), a significant other?"
- "Are you hoping to make money to pay for rent, to save, or for another reason?"
- "What is most important to get out of having a job (e.g. earning money, gaining experience, or independence)?"

Explore interests

Emerging adults today are more likely than previous generations to choose only paid opportunities that **fulfill them**. Explore what would fulfill them as a way to make money.

- "Do you know of job types or areas that interest you?"
- "What are jobs you would settle for as a bridge to the job you really want?"
- If they are not sure, help them take a **skill or interest assessment test**.¹⁵
- They may state interest in something, but a lack of experience. Explore realistic ways they can gain this experience such as **internships** or **apprenticeships**.

NORMALIZE JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

Build skills

Emerging adults' communication skills were greatly impacted by the **COVID-19 pandemic**.

- For many, nearly all of high school or college was experienced at home, in front of a computer, by themselves. They may need to practice interview skills. Simply holding a **mock interview** can help an **emerging adult** explore their **strengths** and **challenge** areas.
- It is also important an **emerging adult** has **clear expectations** in the **job application process**. They are unlikely to receive an interview for every job application, which can be a hard reality to face if they are not prepared.

Give extra support

The **emerging adult** may need additional support - **dress clothes, proper workplace hygiene, resume writing, or advocacy** for disability-related job accommodations - beyond your scope of knowledge or resources. For the state of Missouri, see the **Resources** page.

- Connect them to organizations like a **local career center, employment agency, library, or a vocational rehabilitation program**.
- Read up on best practice models of supported **employment** for people with serious mental illnesses, such as: Individual Placement and Support (IPS),¹⁶ OnTrackNY's¹⁷ adaptation of IPS for **emerging adults** experiencing FEP, and NAVIGATE Supported Employment and Education (SEE) model.¹⁸