

Summer Jobs and Beyond: A Guide for Teens with Hearing Loss

And the Adults Who Work with Them

Claire H. Blatchford, M.A., **Author**

Melissa Griswold, M.E.D., and Donna Meehan, M.L.S., **Editors**

Claire Troiano, M.E.D., **Director**

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47 Round Hill Road

Northampton, MA 01060-2199

v/TTY (413) 582-1121

mainstream@clarkeschools.org

clarkeschools.org

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PEOPLE FIRST

Dear Teens,

A quick note about this book and how to use it:

The guy who is your guide through this book is not a real, live person. You can't email him or call him on your cell phone. I made him up. Yet he *is* real, because many of his experiences, as described here, are experiences teens have told me or I've heard about. I created him and also his friend Emily as a voice for *all* of them.

Near the end of the book you'll find several pages of quotes. These *are* real voices of real people with hearing loss. They aren't teens now but they were, not very long ago. They wanted to share their summer and job experiences with you—to give you ideas for what you might do and to help you have the best summer ever.

You will also see that some words are in **BOLD PRINT**. These are words you will need to know whether you're looking for a job now, next year, or five years from now. If, after reading them you're not sure what they mean, or you forget what they mean, you can find them at the end of the book in the **Glossary**.

Though the focus here is on summer jobs, the information given applies to finding a job or internship *any* time during the year. Furthermore, your summer job may well lead you to other jobs during other times of the year.

Please note that we have intentionally left out specific Web Site addresses and instead provide you with the name of organizations or key words to use as search terms. This is because Web Sites change over time, and we do not want to provide you with an unusable address. Using the search terms we suggest will lead where you need to go to find the information.

If you have questions or experiences to share we, in Clarke Mainstream Services, are interested in hearing them and can be reached at the email address below. The more we connect and share, as people with hearing loss, the easier it becomes for all of us to find our way in the world.

Wishing you a wonderful summer—and beyond!

Claire Blatchford
mainstream@clarkeschools.org

Dear Parents, Teachers, Counselors,

Teens with hearing loss may find the amount of information in here overwhelming. I, myself, was astonished when I began to research the topic by how much is available, both online and by way of the grapevine. However, I didn't find much printed material, and little to nothing for teens with hearing loss. I also discovered schools vary in the amount of help they offer; some show students how to write a resume, others don't even bring it up. Often teens are unaware that the job scene is constantly shifting because of population changes and other economic factors.

It could be helpful for you to go through this book, or the chapters relevant to your teen, together. In fact, you may want to go over some parts more than once. As you'll see, notes in boxes with the heading **TO THE ADULT** have been added here and there for you. The greater your teen's familiarity with the subject matter and the terms used in the work world, the better. Surely you want your teen to be as comfortable and confident as possible about stepping into new situations, and every job situation is different.

Though topics like personality type are discussed, the three most important sections for teens in search of work are: **Networking**, **Steps To Follow When Applying for A Job**, and **Selling Yourself**. Whether your teen is applying for a volunteer job, a paid job, or an internship, he or she will need to think about one or more of these things, and may need help with one, another, or all of them. With time and practice your teen will realize they are part of the process of finding work.

While working on this book I talked with teen employers and directors of volunteer services. I heard many stories about teens with normal hearing that were terrific summer employees, so-so employees, and cast-offs who didn't have a clue as to how to conduct themselves or even how to fill out an application form. I've included the points these people made because employers usually don't have the time or the inclination to tell teens outright how they're coming across or how they're doing. Comments as simple as "Throw out the gum!" can be missed. Your teen might also miss a parting, "Sorry, no job now." Hearing people aren't used to stopping everything to look at a person when they speak, and your teen may mistakenly think he or she is being brushed off or ignored.

Last, but by no means least, perhaps the most important thing you can do is to be aware, even from the sidelines, of how things are going. Your support and encouragement are essential. As you may remember, these first steps into the work world can be confusing, exhausting, terrifying and exhilarating.

Claire Blatchford

Thanks go to Dr. David Manning, founder and former director of the Mainstream Center, who suggested the creation of this book, readers Heather Bartini, Hannah Bartini, Mike Bury, Anne Haxo, Pauline Newton, and everyone who shared their time and experiences and, in one way or another, helped shape these pages.

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