



CAREER PATHWAYS

Catalog of Toolkits



SYNTHESIS OF THE CATALOG OF TOOLKITS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	ii
GETTING STARTED WITH CAREER PATHWAYS	ii
CHOOSING A TOOLKIT BASED ON YOUR INITIATIVE'S TARGET POPULATION	2
Adult Workers	2
Adults Needing Basic Education	2
Disconnected Youth	3
English Language Learners.....	3
Students Seeking Postsecondary Credentials	3
WHICH TOOLKIT IS RIGHT FOR YOU?.....	4

INTRODUCTION

The goal of the [Career Pathways: Catalog of Toolkits](#) is to provide a comprehensive list of existing resources that you can use when designing career pathways initiatives in your community. In addition, the Catalog helps you choose which toolkits will be most applicable to your initiative, by allowing you to filter toolkits based on target population, intended audience, and the career pathways element you are addressing. This Synthesis builds on the Catalog of Toolkits by providing guidance on how to find resources tailored to the target population of your career pathways initiative.

To use this Synthesis, you can first review the list of general resources on career pathways. These materials are good for anyone who needs an introduction to career pathways.

Next, you can review examples of toolkits included in the Catalog that apply to five different target populations: adult workers, adults in need of basic education, disconnected youth, English language learners, and students seeking postsecondary credentials. Your target population will vary based on who has the strongest need for employment opportunities in your community and whom you and your partners are best positioned to serve.

Finally, the *Which Toolkit is Right for You?* table at the end of the Synthesis crosswalks the toolkits in the Catalog for each target population by the type of organization looking to build an initiative. So for example, if you work for a higher education provider and want to build a new career pathways initiative for English language learners, you can easily see that there are two toolkits in the Catalog that should be most applicable to your situation. Learning how to serve the unique needs of your target population within the core strengths of your agency and your partners will help you design a more successful career pathways initiative.

Getting Started with Career Pathways

If you are new to the concept of Career Pathways, the number of available resources and toolkits may seem overwhelming. Below are three comprehensive toolkits that provide an encompassing introduction to the career pathways approach.

Career Pathways Toolkit: Six Key Elements for Success

The Career Pathways Toolkit: Six Key Elements for Success was developed as part of the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration's Career Pathways Initiative to help guide state and local leaders in building and sustaining career pathway systems. The toolkit is broken up into three sections which detail the Six Key Elements Framework, highlight promising practices from around the nation, and provide tools designed to support visioning and strategic planning. These six key elements are:

1. Build cross-agency partnerships and clarify roles;
2. Identify sector or industry and engage employers;
3. Design education and training programs;
4. Identify funding needs and sources;
5. Align policies and programs; and
6. Measure system change and performance.

ABE Career Connections: A Manual for Integrating Adult Basic Education into Career Pathways

ABE Career Connections provides guidance for adult basic education (ABE) providers who seek to align their services and programming with local Career Pathways efforts in order to create better educational and professional outcomes for their students. It reminds readers that many low-skill working adults need to focus on improving basic skills like English language, writing, and mathematics before they can enter a vocational education setting to acquire a postsecondary credential or degree. The manual also identifies transitional points within the education pipeline that are often problematic for ABE students, where Career Pathways practitioners may need to provide extra support. This manual provides an overview of Career Pathways and describes key components needed to align basic skills training and partnership efforts with local Career Pathways. This manual is organized into sections, including:

- Recruitment of participants;
- Development of basic skills courses;
- Establishment of partnerships; and
- Collection and analysis of data.

Each section includes examples from the sites funded by the U.S. Department of Education under the ABE Career Connections (ABECC) initiative, the challenges they encountered, as well as the resources that were provided to ABECC sites. The appendices contain materials developed by each ABECC site including pathways maps with required hours and passing test scores, guidelines for recruitment, partnership agreements, instructional modules, skills rubrics, and more.

The Career Pathways How-To Guide

The Career Pathways How-To Guide was one of the first attempts to collect and analyze lessons learned from the States and regions that were early adopters of the Career Pathways model. It distills the experiences of California, Kentucky, Ohio, Oregon, and Washington into a set of common defining characteristics of Career Pathways initiatives and steps for building Career Pathways in new localities. This guide presents lessons learned from the Workforce Strategy Center's efforts to support the development of Career Pathways and presents step-by-step instructions on how to build such pathways. This manual is organized into three main sections, including:

- The work of building regional Career Pathways partnerships, broken down into the five stages of Gap Analysis, Career Pathways Planning, Implementation, Continuous Improvement, and Expansion;
- The roles that State leaders and agencies can play in helping to cultivate pathways partnerships statewide; and
- Lessons learned from the experience of states and localities in developing Career Pathways.

Each section discusses the specific steps involved at that stage and includes examples from pathways partnerships across the United States.

Choosing a Toolkit Based on Your Initiative's Target Population

Once you have a broad understanding of the career pathways model, you and your partners will be ready to define the target population for your initiative. This may be based on a variety of factors, including who needs stronger employment opportunities in your region and who is funding your work. Below we have outlined five populations that are commonly served by career pathways initiatives and suggest a few toolkits that you might look at to get a better understanding of how to serve them. These lists are not comprehensive. For a full listing of toolkits in the Catalog that apply to each target population review the "Which Toolkit is Right for You?" table at the end of this document.

Adult Workers

For the purposes of this Catalog, adult workers are thought of as incumbent, frontline workers who face changing labor market conditions ([Jobs to Careers Toolkit](#)). They generally have a high school diploma but no advanced training. Career pathways initiatives can connect them to training and supportive services that help them upgrade their skills and find sustainable employment. If you don't know precisely what population you would like to serve, this is the broadest category which offers many ideas.

Some toolkits you may want to review when considering a career pathways initiative for adult workers include:

- [Adult Career Pathways Training and Support Center](#)
- [Shared Vision, Strong Systems: The Alliance for Quality Career Pathways Framework Version 1.0](#)

Adults Needing Basic Education

Adults needing basic education may include those "who have applied for training programs but have been rejected because they cannot pass the entrance test and current students in adult education classes, community college developmental education courses, and non-credit job-training programs" ([Bridges to Careers for Low-Skilled Adults](#)). Their primary barrier is a lack of skills that will allow them to advance in education and training on their way to achieving a family-sustaining career. Career pathways for this population often use the 'bridge' model, which "combines basic skills instruction with occupational content and college and career readiness skills to prepare students for postsecondary education and work" ([Adult College Completion Tool Kit](#)).

Some toolkits you may want to review when considering a career pathways initiative for adults needing basic education include:

- [Accelerating Opportunity Virtual Academy: Resource Library](#)
- [The Breaking Through Practice Guide](#)

Disconnected Youth

Disconnected youth are older youth who may have “experienced difficulties in their personal lives or communities and may not have completed high school” (A [Green Career Pathways Framework](#)), so they need assistance in finding their place in the job market. Career pathways initiatives can provide disconnected youth with education and employment opportunities and support to help them get back on track.

Some toolkits you may want to review when considering a career pathways initiative for disconnected youth include:

- [A Green Career Pathways Framework: Postsecondary and Employment Success for Low-Income, Disconnected Youth](#)

English Language Learners

English language learners may be immigrants or refugees who are seeking employment in the United States. The *Instituto del Progreso Latino* explains that “the immigrant’s process of learning a second language includes several stages, each affecting the student’s social and community engagement. . . . As ESL learners improve their English, these fears of engaging decrease” ([How to Build Bridge Programs that Fit into a Career Pathway](#)). Career pathways, especially those that use bridge programs, can be a way to introduce English language learners to new skills and communities, as well as a new language.

Some toolkits you may want to review when considering a career pathways initiative for English language learners include:

- [Adult Education for Work: Transforming Adult Education to Build a Skilled Workforce](#)
- [Creating A Successful Bridge Program: A “How To” Guide](#)
- [How to Build Bridge Programs that Fit into a Career Pathway: A Step-By-Step Guide Based on the Carreras en Salud Program in Chicago](#)

Students Seeking Postsecondary Credentials

Students seeking postsecondary credentials can be thought of as high school students on track to transition to college or those already enrolled in college. As adult learners, they will want to see the relevance of what they are learning to their lives and their careers, and will be conscious of the amount of time a training program will take to complete ([Building Blocks for Building Skills](#)). A well-designed career pathways model can integrate their learning into work and frame their postsecondary education into in-demand careers.

Some toolkits you may want to review when considering a career pathways initiative for students seeking postsecondary credentials include:

- [Building Blocks for Building Skills: An Inventory of Adult Learning Models and Innovations](#)
- [Resources for Developing and Implementing Programs of Study](#)



Interested in filtering toolkits by Industry, Publisher, etc.? Visit the complete Career Pathways: Catalog of Toolkits online at <https://cptoolkitcatalog.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/>

Which Toolkit is Right for You?

This table can help you identify toolkits in the Catalog that might be most valuable to your new initiative. Identify your agency type in the left column, and the target population you want to serve along the top. Toolkit titles in the list below are hyperlinks to their Catalog entries.

And you want to boost the employability of ...

If you work as a ...		Adult workers	Adults needing basic education	Students seeking postsecondary credentials	Disconnected youth	English language learners
	Adult basic education provider	3, 14, 22, 36	1, 18, 24, 29, 44, 47	4, 9, 14, 18, 36, 44		1, 18, 29
	Business/industry leader	17, 30	29, 47			29
	Economic developer	17				
	Higher education provider	2, 7, 12, 13, 17, 21, 34, 35	18	4, 18, 19, 35		18
	Human services provider	13, 14, 16	18	14, 18		18
	Regional funding collaboratives or other intermediary	16, 20, 46, 48		39		
	Secondary education provider			27, 38, 39		
	State or local policymaker	2, 13, 14, 16, 32, 48		4, 14, 18, 42	36	
	Workforce development practitioner	13, 14, 16, 17, 21, 22, 25, 30, 32, 34, 35, 37, 40	18, 29	14, 18, 35, 39		18
Youth development practitioner				26		

1. ABE Career Connections: A Manual for Integrating Adult Basic Education Into Career Pathways
2. Accelerating Opportunity Virtual Academy: Resource Library
3. Adult Career Pathways Training and Support Center
4. Adult College Completion Tool Kit (list continues on next page)
5. The Breaking Through Practice Guide
6. Career Pathways Advisory Committee Toolkit
7. The Career Pathways How-To Guide
8. Career Pathways Toolkit
9. Community Collaboratives Toolbox
10. Competency Model Clearinghouse
11. Creating A Successful Bridge Program: A “How To” Guide
12. DesignForScale: State Policy Self-Assessment Tool
13. Designing a Performance Measurement System for Career Pathways
14. Employability Skills Framework
15. Expanding Business Engagement (EBE)—Technical Assistance Initiative
16. Florida Adult Education Career Pathways Toolkit
17. A Green Career Pathways Framework: Postsecondary and Employment Success for Low-Income, Disconnected Youth
18. A Guide for Implementing Programs of Study in Wisconsin
19. How to Build Bridge Programs that Fit into a Career Pathway: A Step-By-Step Guide Based on the Carreras en Salud Program in Chicago
20. Jobs to Careers Milestone Tool: Planning a Work-Based Learning Project
21. Making Green Work: Best Practices in Green-Collar Job Training
22. Measuring Business Impact: A Workforce Development Practitioner’s Guide
23. Pathways to Careers: A Guide to Building Partnerships for Workforce Education and Training
24. Policy to Performance Toolkit: Transitioning Adults to Opportunity
25. The Promise of Career Pathways Systems Change
26. Promising Pathways to Careers Toolkit: A How-To Guide to Creating Quality Work-Based Learning Opportunities for Young People
27. Resources for Developing and Implementing Programs of Study
28. Shared Vision, Strong Systems: The Alliance for Quality Career Pathways Framework Version 1.0
29. Student Success Center Toolkit
30. Texas Counseling to Careers Toolkit
31. Toolkit for Workforce Funder Collaboratives
32. Tools for Building Employer-Educator Partnerships
33. Workforce Partnership Guidance Tool



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