There are many sites on the Internet for education, financial aid and career planning. Try the following free government and nonprofit sites first:

http://bls.gov/k12/index.htm is the Bureau of Labor Statistics site for students. Click on interests and see related occupations.

www.collegeillinois.com College Illinois! is the Illinois Student Assistance Commission’s site for financial aid with a user-friendly guide to scholarships, grants, work-study and more.

www.finaid.org offers financial aid information with links to test preparation and to internship opportunities for students who want to earn as they learn.

www.isbe.net The Illinois State Board of Education has information on learning standards, career and technical education (CTE) and more.

www.iccb.state.il.us The Illinois Community College Board administers Career and Technical Education (CTE) and adult education initiatives. The site links to the 48 community colleges in the state.

www.ibhe.state.il.us The Illinois Board of Higher Education has information on four-year and graduate institutions, public and private. See their Consumer Information section for accreditation, whether college is the right choice, and how to avoid diploma mills or other scams.

www.illinoworknet.com Illinois workNet is the online career one-stop service for job listings, local hiring events, retraining information, social service providers and disability resources. Check the Key Sectors area for growth industries and their career pathways.

IDES is an equal opportunity employer and complies with all state and federal nondiscrimination laws in the administration of its programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Contact the office manager of the IDES office nearest you or the IDES Equal Opportunity Officer at (312) 793-9290 or TTY: (800) 340-1107.

www.ides.illinois.gov

Need more information? Please visit us at the website address above or send email to des.icrn@illinois.gov

Printed by the Authority of the State of Illinois
### Three Easy Steps to a Career Plan

**Step One: Explore Interests**
- Talk to your children about their interests, skills, or passions.
- What have you noticed about them from an early age?
- Encourage looking into any and all careers that seem like fun because they can narrow them down later.

Go to [www.ides.illinois.gov/careerinfo](http://www.ides.illinois.gov/careerinfo) where you’ll find:
- CIS Quick Click for all
- CIS Junior for middle and junior high students
- CIS, the Career Information System, for high school and college students
- ReNEW for adults.

**Step Two: Find Careers That Match**
- When students know their interests they can see which careers match.
- CIS covers how much each occupation pays, how to prepare, working conditions, and much more.

**Step Three: Develop a Plan of Action**
- Students need facts about the education and training required for their chosen occupations.
- Their school guidance counselors can help them develop plans and take the right courses to reach their goals.
- If they are going beyond high school, counselors can provide information on schools, colleges, financial aid and military training.
- Their progress can be tracked in My CIS Portfolio, the Course Planner, and the Career Planner in CIS.

---

### Important Targets for Parents and Students

**Middle School / Junior High:**
- Begin exploring interests. Look at which activities students enjoy most and help them think about potential careers.
- Start learning about Internet career planning resources such as CIS Junior and the Career Information System (CIS) at [www.ides.illinois.gov/careerinfo](http://www.ides.illinois.gov/careerinfo) and then click on CIS, CIS Junior, CIS Quick Click or ReNEW. These are available to all Illinois citizens at no charge. For teen work experience, see the annual update of “Summer JobCentral” under Tools & Resources.

**Freshman Year:**
- Take career assessments to identify interests, skills, work values and personality preferences. There are assessment tools in CIS; results can be stored in My CIS Portfolio.
- Use the Course Planner and the Career Planner in CIS to keep track of requirements and related courses that support career directions.

**Sophomore Year:**
- Join organizations and volunteer in fields related to intended career goals.
- If offered at school take the PLAN test (a pre-ACT test) and/or the PSAT (a pre-SAT test) for the college bound.

**Junior Year:**
- Consider all opportunities including apprenticeship programs for skilled trades, military service, entrepreneurship and employment as well as college.
- Schedule the SAT and/or ACT for the fall of the junior year.
- Talk to guidance counselors for more information on schools and careers. They can be helpful in making sure all time lines are met.

**Senior Year:**
- Explore school-sponsored job shadowing or other ways to observe people on the job. Sign up for internships or other work experience programs.
- Generate a resume using My CIS Portfolio’s “My Education and Work History.”
- Learn about writing a college entrance essay in CIS’ Illinois Schools or National Schools in the FAQs.
- Check Financial Aid in CIS (see Paying for School on the blue bar) if college bound, and apply for financial aid by January of the senior year.
- Use the Job Search section of CIS to fine tune cover letters, resumes and interviewing skills. JOBcentral (within Occupations) and the Employer Locator section can help target where to apply for jobs.

---

### Jobs That Require Higher Education Are Growing Faster Than Those That Require Less Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education and Training Required</th>
<th>Jobs That Require Higher Education</th>
<th>Jobs That Do Not Require Higher Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Required</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postsecondary Vocational Training</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate’s Degree</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Degrees</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Jobs</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average Projected Growth Rate for All Jobs**

---

**Projected Rate of Increase in Number of Jobs**

- Work Experience in a Related Occupation: 8%
- Moderate-term on the job training: 8%
- Short-term on the job training: 8%