

EDUCATION AND CAREER PLANNING FOR TEEN PARENTS

SKILL ASSESSMENT

The following questions will help you identify the skills in which you excel and target those which you need to develop. By yourself or with your team, try to answer each of the questions as honestly as possible. After completing this independent living skill assessment, review it with your team and identify those skills you would like to strengthen.

	<i>I do not know about this</i>	<i>I need to know more about this</i>	<i>I know about this</i>
1. Know why educational and career planning is important for teen parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Am aware that pregnancy and parenthood are no reason to drop out of school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Know that many high schools and GED programs offer support services to pregnant and parenting teens.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Know how to obtain daycare for my child while I am attending school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Know that a good education will increase the likelihood of obtaining a better job with more pay.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Know about higher education options.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Am aware of financial aid options, such as scholarship, loans and grants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Know about various careers and occupations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Am aware of vocational training courses and options.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Have established a long-term career and education plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

You have now completed the assessment section and identified those education and career planning skills for teen parents that you would like to strengthen in order to make better decisions on your own. The following guide can help you in planning how you can learn about and practice skills. Choose a few skills that you want to develop, and with your team, write down your plan of action. Remember, once you accomplish these goals you can go back to your assessment tool and select new goals to build on your skills.

EXAMPLE

GOAL:

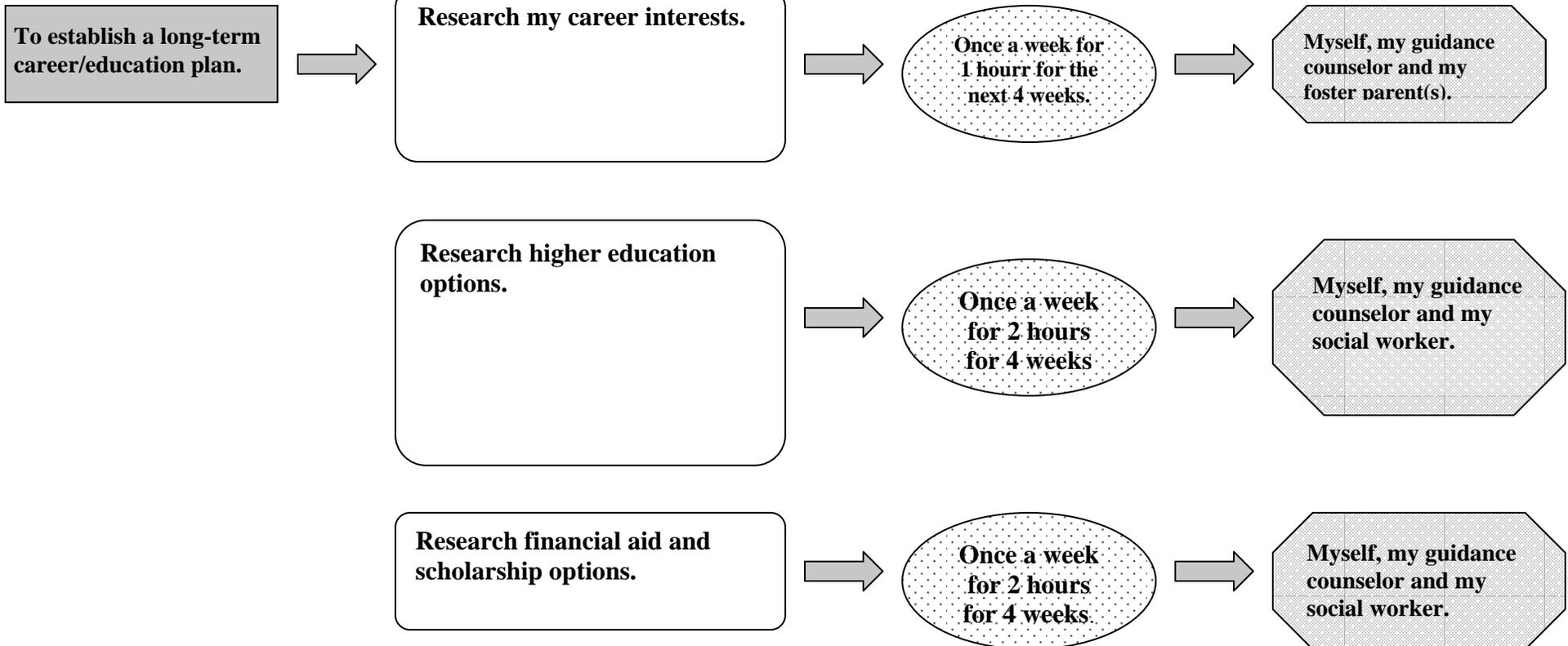
IMPROVE PRE-NATAL CARE SKILLS

State Skill 1:

Plan:

When:

Who:



GOAL: WORK ON EDUCATION & CAREER PLANNING SKILLS FOR TEEN PARENTS

State Skill 1:
To be developed
and/or improved.

Plan:
How do you plan to learn,
develop and improve this skill?

When:
When, where, and how often will you
work on this skill and by when will you
have mastered this?

Who:
Who will assist you?



State Skill 2:
To be developed
and/or improved.

Plan:
How do you plan to learn,
develop and improve this skill?

When:
When, where, and how often will you
work on this skill and by when will you
have mastered this?

Who:
Who will assist you?



EDUCATIONAL/CAREER PLANNING FOR TEEN PARENTS

Educational and career planning is an important part of everyone's life since it will certainly affect each person's future. The level of education we have and the kind of work we do often determines the level of job satisfaction we experience as well as how much money we earn. Also, our jobs can influence our sense of self-worth and self-esteem.

In addition, educational and career planning is of particular importance for younger parents because they not only have to support themselves, but also their children. Also, when parents like their jobs, they are more likely to be inspired to keep them. In consequence, they will be able to maintain their source of income and provide a stable and secure environment for their children.

Discussion:

What do you think? Do you believe that educational and career planning is important for parents? Why or why not?

Unfortunately, even if education is an important value in their lives, some of your parents may think that school or vocational training is not an option for them for a variety of reasons.

Consider the following:

Allison, 18, has a 16-month-old daughter and lives in a program for pregnant and parenting teens. She is attending a GED program but has not made a lot of progress lately; actually, she is thinking about dropping out. When her staff talk to her about this, Allison gets frustrated and states that she really wants to go to college but won't be able to pay for it. Therefore, she feels like giving up and not even trying to get the GED.

What do you think? Do you agree or disagree? What advice would you give Allison?

College is a definite possibility for young parents interested in higher education. There are many different financial aid options available, such as grants, loans and scholarships. (For more information on financial aid, see Module 3.) In addition, there are a number of private and public colleges that offer year round housing for pregnant and parenting youth and other support services, such as on-ground childcare and parenting groups.

ACTIVITIES

- ✓ *Visit your local public library and inquire about colleges offering support services to young parents.*
- ✓ *Talk to someone who was parenting while continuing his/her education about the experiences and rewards of attending college or vocational training.*
- ✓ *Visit a college of your choice and take a tour of the campus.*
- ✓ *Research financial aid and scholarship options.*

While college may not be the right plan or desirable for everyone, there are many other career-training opportunities available that many young parents may not have thought about.

Consider the following:

Tyrone is 17 and has a two-year-old son, Nicholas. Tyrone never liked school and was also diagnosed with several learning disabilities. He feels really bad about himself because he can't read all that well. He is hopeless about his future and thinks that he will never be able to become a professional member of the work force. However, Tyrone enjoys animals and is very talented and patient in dealing with them.

What do you think? What kind of advice would you give Tyrone?

There are many short-term certification programs available to youth interested in learning specific skills. These courses range in duration from six weeks to twelve months. While some courses can be quite expensive, such as beauty school, others, such as home health aid and nurses aid are offered free of charge. (For those courses with fees, however, financial aid is available in most cases). Prerequisites will, of course, vary. Some courses require a GED or a high school diploma; others do not. Some vocations may surprise you. Tyrone, for example, could choose to become a dog groomer. If he did, his interest in working with animals would be met and he would not have to fulfill any prerequisite requirements.

Remember, it is always the best option to obtain a high school diploma or a GED.

To determine what kind of education and career opportunities may be right for you, complete the educational and vocational assessment sections in Module 3 (Education and Employment).

ACTIVITY

Visit your local office of employment and training and inquire about career options that reflect your long-term interests. (Note: some unemployment offices have specific names such as "Career Link.")

✓ *Talk to a career or guidance counselor about vocational and educational opportunities.*

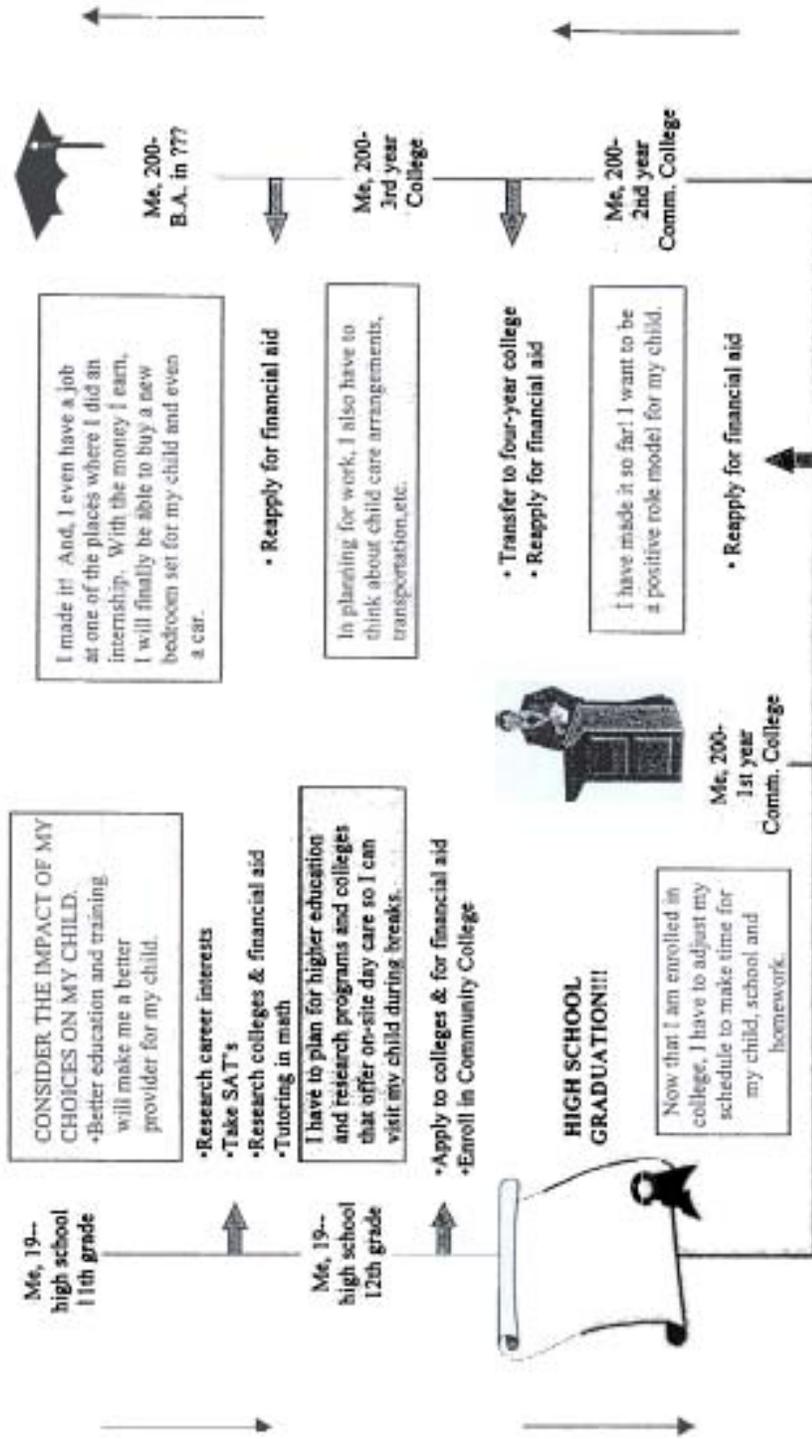
✓ *Talk to friends and people you know about their jobs and career choices.*

Complete the following to record your findings:

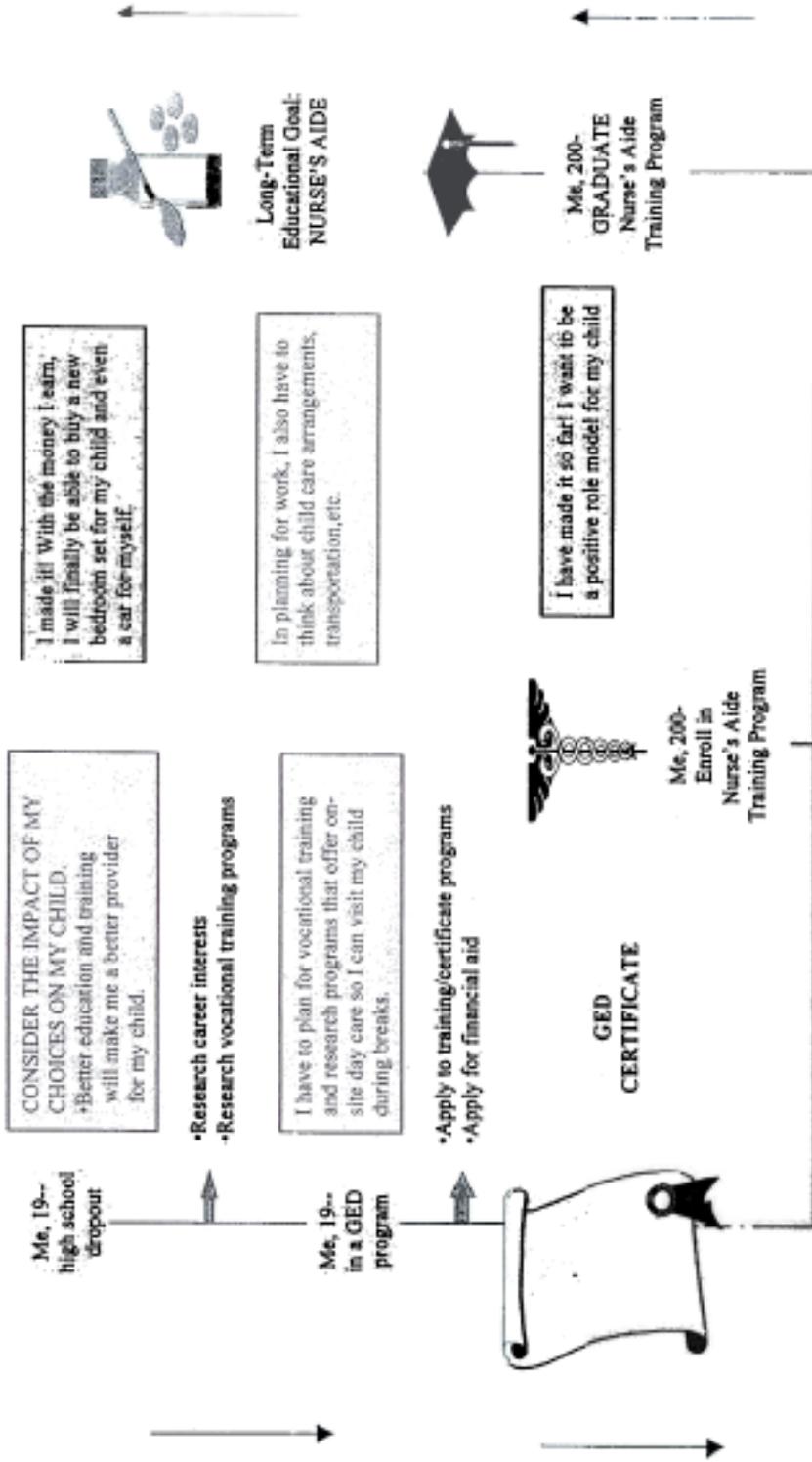
<i>My interests are:</i>	<i>Possible career opportunities:</i>	<i>Educational requirements:</i>	<i>Suitable for parents? (Hours, income, day care, etc.)</i>

By using the format below, evaluate your options and develop your career and educational plan, including time frames.

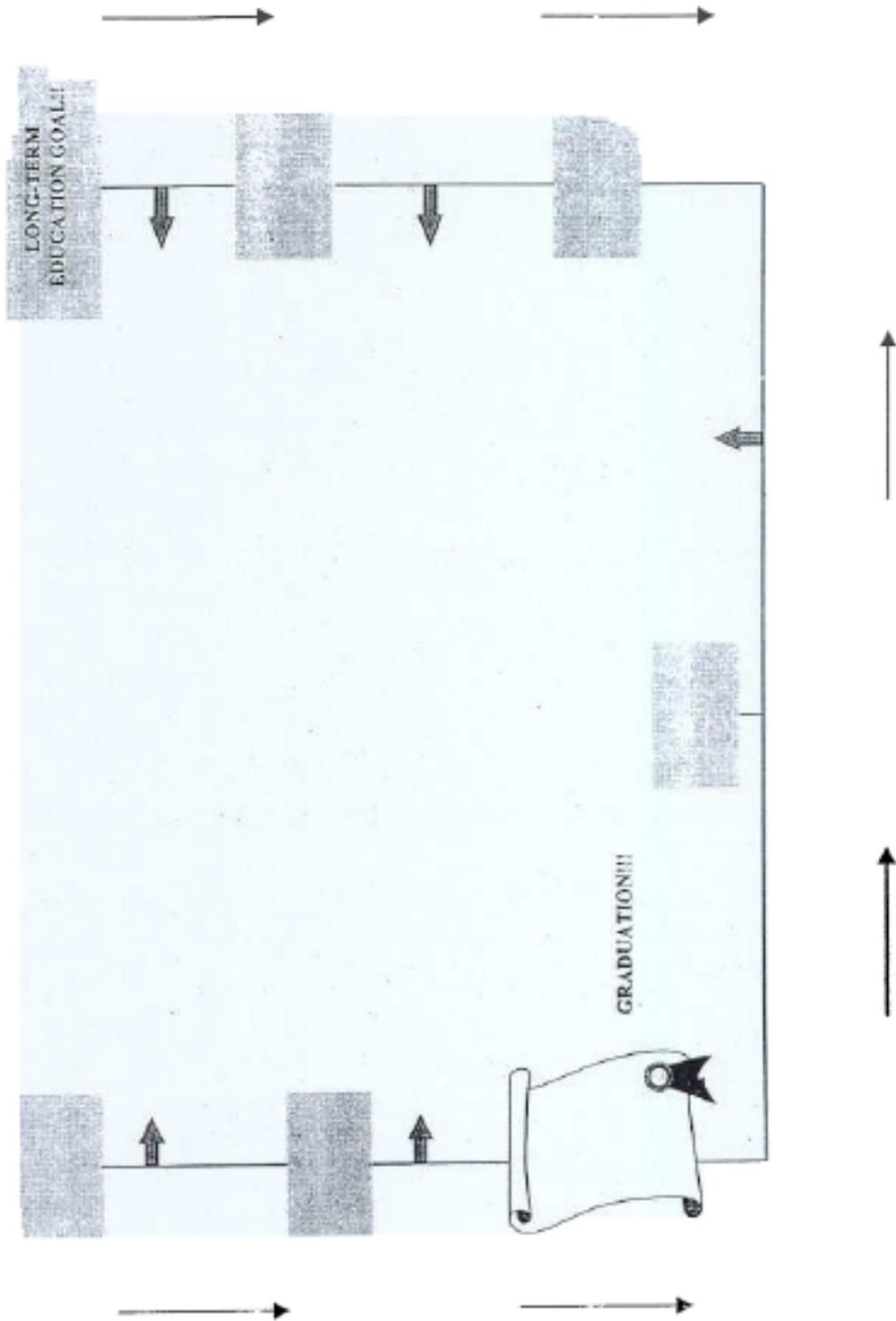
CAREER EDUCATION PLAN EXAMPLE 1:



CAREER EDUCATION PLAN EXAMPLE 2:



YOUR CAREER EDUCATION PLAN:



YOUR CAREER EMPLOYMENT PLAN

