Office of Youth Programs

HSIP

HIGH SCHOOL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

2026 - 2027

HOST SITE HANDBOOK

DOES DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

OFFICE OF YOUTH PROGRAMS
SCHOOL YEAR INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Dear 2026 - 2027 High School Internship Program Supervisor:

The District of Columbia Department of Employment Services is excited to collaborate and provide meaningful and constructive work experiences for students ages 14 to 21, grades 9-12. You are uniquely positioned to provide training and guidance to youth. Your partnership enables them to develop positive work habits and other critical skillsets necessary to secure sustainable future employment.

Through your dedication and commitment, youth identify possible career paths, are exposed to post-secondary education, financial literacy, entrepreneurship, employment, and grow to become our future leaders.

This handbook includes all the critical information needed to be a successful host. We are excited to work with you and look forward to collectively ensuring our interns have valuable experiences.

Sincerely,

Dr. Unique Morris-Hughes
Director, DC Department of Employment Services

CONTENTS

SECTION I: PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES 1
Program Dates 1
HSIP Team 1
Responsibilities of Host Site Team 1
The First Day of HSIP 2026 - 2027 2
Time, Attendance, and Payroll 2
Overview Of Time and Attendance Process 3
Participant Timesheet Submission 3
Debit Cards and Direct Deposit 4
Payroll Problem Resolution 5
Program Policies And Procedures 6
Absenteeism 6
Transfers 6
Termination 6
Accidents 7
Grievances 7
Inclement Weather 8
Child Labor Laws 8
Learning Objectives 9

SECTION II: STRUCTURING A QUALITY HIGH SCHOOL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM 9
Overview 9
Learning Objective 1: Preparation 10
Why Is Preparation Important? 10
Learning Objective 2: Presentation 11
Why Is Personal Presentation Important? 11
Learning Objective 3: Effective Communication 12
Why Is Effective Communication Important? 12
Why Is Developing Communication Skills In Youth Important? 12
Learning Objective 4: Setting Yourself Apart 13
Why Is Setting Yourself Apart Important? 13
Learning Objective 5: Interviewing 14
Why Knowing How To Interview Well Is Important 14
Learning Objective 6: Goal Setting 15
Why Is Setting Goals Important? 15

SECTION I: PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Program Dates

The High School Internship Program (HSIP) is administered by the District of Columbia Department of Employment Services (DOES) and will start on Thursday, October 1, 2026, and end on Friday, May 28, 2027.

This year's program will be administered in two (2) semesters, fall and spring. During the application period, youth may select which semester best suits their needs. Applicants should consider extra-curricular activities, course loads, and graduation requirements when selecting their preferred semester.

Note: Interns can only participate in one semester, per calendar year.

Below are the important dates for each semester:

Fall Term: October 1, 2026 – January 29, 2027
Spring Term: February 1, 2027 – May 28, 2027

HSIP Team

The HSIP team is here to assist you and consists of the following key staff members:

- **HSIP Liaison** serves as the primary contact for the host coordinator.
- **HSIP Case Manager** monitors the environment of assigned internships, advocates for interns, and offers support to supervisors.

For daily communications, supervisors and payroll coordinators should contact their host coordinator, who will work directly with the HSIP Liaison to resolve issues.

Responsibilities of Host Site Team

Each host site must identify a team to ensure a positive experience for employers and youth. The team will consist of:

- **Host Coordinator** is the point of contact within the organization of a host site.
- **Payroll Coordinators** are people identified to process payroll for each work site.
- **Internship Supervisors** are people who work directly with interns.

The First Day of HSIP 2026 - 2027

The first day that interns report to work will set the tone for the school year. The following should be done on the first day:

- Verify your intern is on the roster provided by DOES.
- Ask for identification or a copy of the internship assignment letter sent to the intern.
- Instruct the interns to sign in and out on the time or roster sheet.
- Conduct an orientation with interns assigned to your site.

Internship Orientation should include the following:

- Regulations, policies, and procedures of the internship as they apply to the participant.
- At least two points of contact the intern can notify when late or absent.
- Safety procedures and steps in case of accidents.
- Appropriate attire for the workplace.
- Clear explanation of participant duties and responsibilities, including the criteria by which work performance will be evaluated
- Process for signing in and out daily and signing the timesheet at the end of each week.
- Schedule of hours that the participant is required to work.

WHAT TO DO IF INTERNS ARRIVE AT YOUR SITE AND ARE NOT ON YOUR ROSTER?

If youth arrive at your site and are not on your roster, please have them contact our HSIP Support Center by calling 202-698-3492 or emailing youthjobs@dc.gov. Notify and follow up with your HSIP Liaison.

Note: Allowing a youth who is not on your roster and not approved by DOES to continue interning at your site will result in your organization being responsible for paying the youth, directly.

Time, Attendance, and Payroll

All HSIP participants will be compensated for time worked up to the maximum allowable hours. Interns are not permitted to makeup work hours and will not receive pay for observed holidays. Interns will see a reduction in hours for those weeks.

AGES	PAY RATE/HOUR	MAXIMUM HOURS
14-21 years	$10.00	8hrs (6hrs for the week where a holiday is shown below)

See holiday schedule below

Holiday	Date
Indigenous Peoples' Day	Monday, October 12, 2026
Veterans Day	Wednesday, November 11, 2026
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, November 26, 2026
Christmas Day	Friday, December 25, 2026
New Year's Day	Friday, January 1, 2027
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Monday, January 18, 2027
President's Day	Monday, February 15, 2027
DC Emancipation Day	Friday, April 16, 2027

OVERVIEW OF TIME AND ATTENDANCE PROCESS

Reporting of Participant Time
In-person participants will record their time daily on a paper timesheet or roster that hosts can print from the HSIP website summerjobs.dc.gov.

All supervisors and payroll coordinators will receive an email with a link to the online payroll Time Management System (TMS) and log-in instructions to enter the weekly time information for youth.

PRE-POPULATED TIMESHEETS CAN BE FOUND IN YOUR HOST PORTAL UNDER THE ROSTER TAB. IF AN INTERN DOES NOT APPEAR ON YOUR PRE-POPULATED TIMESHEET, THEN THEY ARE NOT ASSIGNED TO YOUR SITE. PLEASE CONTACT YOUR HSIP LIAISON IF YOU HAVE INTERNS WORKING WITH YOU THAT DO NOT APPEAR ON YOUR ROSTER.

- **Daily Time:** All interns must sign-in and sign-out daily, and sign their timesheets each week.
- **Weekly Time:** Timesheets are due on Fridays before 2:30 pm and should be forwarded to your HSIP Liaison. Please forecast the participant hours for Fridays to meet the stated deadline, if necessary.
- **Time Reminders:** DOES will send timekeepers and primary points of contact (POC) an email every Friday listing youth whose time has not been entered. Log-in information, including passwords, will be emailed directly to designated timekeepers. Payroll information will be available at summerjobs.dc.gov.

PARTICIPANT TIMESHEET SUBMISSION

DOES requires all internship timekeepers to scan and email all participant timesheets. The scanned timesheets allow HSIP to better track hours worked and resolve payroll disputes.

The collection of timesheets is for auditing purposes only.

DOES WILL NOT ENTER TIME FOR PARTICIPANTS

The DOES Office of Youth Programs will **NOT approve payroll resolutions without timesheets confirming time owed. ALL timesheets must have both the supervisor and participant signatures to be processed.*

ALL timesheets must be scanned and emailed weekly. Timesheets should be sent to your HSIP Liaison via email: Youthjobs@dc.gov

- **Subject:** WORKSITE NAME – Timesheets WEEK ENDING xx-xx-2026

DEBIT CARDS AND DIRECT DEPOSIT

Interns will be paid through their preferred payment method of direct deposit or US Bank Focus Visa Debit Card. The US Bank Focus Visa Debit Card will be mailed directly to the youth. If your intern has issues with their debit cards, they must call US Bank directly at 1-877-474-0010. They should not use system prompts but hold for a live operator. Interns will receive an earnings statement in their intern portal for each pay period.

2026 and 2027 Pay Dates

Pay Period	Pay Date
Pay Period 1 (10/01/2026-10/03/2026)	Friday, October 16, 2026
Pay Period 2 (10/04/2026-10/17/2026)	Friday, October 30, 2026*
Pay Period 3 (10/18/2026-10/31/2026)	Friday, November 13, 2026
Pay Period 4 (11/01/2026-11/14/2026)	Friday, November 27, 2026*
Pay Period 5 (11/15/2026-11/28/2026)	Friday, December 11, 2026*
Pay Period 6 (11/29/2026-12/12/2026)	Friday, December 25, 2026
Pay Period 7 (12/13/2026-12/26/2026)	Friday, January 8, 2027*
Pay Period 8 (12/27/2026-01/9/2026)	Friday, January 22, 2027*
Pay Period 9 (01/10/2027-01/23/2027)	Friday, February 5, 2027*
Pay Period 10 (01/24/2027-02/06/2027)	Friday, February 19, 2027
Pay Period 11 (02/07/2027-02/20/2027)	Friday, March 5, 2027*
Pay Period 12 (02/21/2027-03/06/2027)	Friday, March 19, 2027
Pay Period 13 (03/07/2027-03/20/2027)	Friday, April 2, 2027
Pay Period 14 (03/21/2027-04/03/2027)	Friday, April 16, 2027
Pay Period 15 (04/04/2027-04/17/2027)	Friday, April 30, 2027*
Pay Period 16 (04/18/2027-05/01/2027)	Friday, May 14, 2027
Pay Period 17 (05/02/2027-05/15/2027)	Friday, May 28, 2027
Pay Period 18 (05/16/2027-05/29/2027)	Friday, June 11, 2027

**Pay Periods with an asterisk (*) include a holiday. Interns are not permitted to work on holidays and cannot make up these days.*

Payroll Problem Resolution

In the event a participant is paid incorrectly or does not receive pay on the proper day, the participant will first report the issue to the supervisor. Site-Supervisors will ensure the reported hours match what was paid to the youth. If a participant thinks they have been paid incorrectly, they should follow these steps:

Step 1: Double check to see if there really is an error.

Participants may believe they have a payroll issue, however, their understanding of pay due might be inaccurate. The following common issues can cause confusion:

- **Forgetting about holidays:** Participants will not receive pay for observed holidays. Refer to the 2026 – 2027 Pay Dates table. Youth are only paid up to six (6) hours for weeks that include a holiday.
- **Taxes and Withholdings:** All participants will have taxes withheld even if they file EXEMPT.
- **Absent Days and Time Tracking:** Participants will only be paid for hours worked. Forgetting to sign in and out or not reporting absences can lead to discrepancies in pay.
- **Pay Schedule and Recent Work Periods:** The pay schedule outlines which weeks are included in each pay period. Please refer to the schedule to understand which weeks of work are reflected in each paycheck.

Step 2: If you discover a discrepancy in hours worked or time recorded, you should do the following to initiate a Payroll Resolution:

1. Email an updated timesheet to your liaison to process payment for the correct hours with a detailed description of why the hours were not entered and include the following:

    - Supervisor Name
    - Internship Host Site Name
    - Hours Owed
    - Issue that prevented the time from being entered correctly

Step 3: If the participant does NOT appear on your roster, DO NOT enter a payroll resolution into the TMS system. Please complete the following steps:

1. Inform the participant that they are not at the internship assigned to them by DOES.
2. Assist the participant with logging into their HSIP Intern Portal to view their correct internship assignment.
3. Contact your assigned HSIP Liaison.
4. Provide the participant's name and the internship site to which they have been reporting.

Supervisors must report payroll issues by calling their HSIP Program Liaison. The online pay resolution website (TMS) can be used to report instances where interns have not received timely pay or believe they were paid less than the total hours worked. Once the supervisor confirms a pay dispute, DOES will resolve the pay issue within 48 to 72 hours.

Program Policies and Procedures

When working with interns in a new environment, problems may arise. Below are some challenges that may occur and general procedures that should be followed to address them:

ABSENTEEISM

The participant is required to give advance notice of anticipated absences from work, regardless of the reason. If this cannot be done in person, the participant must call the supervisor immediately to report the anticipated absence.

The supervisor must notify their Host Coordinator about absenteeism when:

- Participant is absent more than three consecutive days without communicating with the supervisor about the absence.
- You, the supervisor, determine whether the participant has been absent too frequently or is establishing a pattern of absenteeism. An intern may be terminated for missing three consecutive workdays without notifying the supervisor.

Participants will not be paid for absences. If you would like to schedule an intern for makeup hours, you must obtain approval from your Host Coordinator before scheduling.

TRANSFERS

All requests to transfer a participant from the assigned internship must first be communicated to your Host Coordinator. Supervisors must complete a Transfer Request Form stating the reason for the transfer from the worksite. Your HSIP Liaison is available to answer any questions or concerns. Do not dismiss interns or send them to another program or internship until the transfer process is complete.

HSIP staff will transfer participants when the following circumstances apply:

- Safety issue (intern must provide a police report when applicable)
- Health concerns (intern must provide a written doctor's statement supporting their transfer request)
- Internship site closure
- Location (too far from school or home)
- Other approved extenuating circumstance

TERMINATION

Supervisors may request that a participant be terminated from the assigned internship; however, they must ensure that all incidents leading to termination are documented and submitted to HSIP staff and Host Coordinator.

If the site supervisor feels termination is appropriate, they must make an official request to the HSIP Liaison

by completing a Termination Request Form. HSIP staff will then email an official termination notice to the participant.

In the event of a termination for violent or illegal behavior, the intern may be dismissed from the worksite. The Office of Youth Programs conducts the official dismissal.

If a DOES participant believes the termination was wrongful, the participant may contact the HSIP office or (202) 698-3492 to schedule an appointment with a representative.

Participants may face termination from the internship for any of the following reasons, which could lead to legal action:

- **Drugs:** Possession, sale, or use of illegal drugs or alcohol while on the internship.
- **Excessive Absenteeism:** Failure to report to work on three consecutive workdays without prior approval.
- **Disruptive Behavior:** Fighting, physical, or verbal assaults, cyber assault, cyber bullying, or any act that endangers the well-being of coworkers – this could lead to legal action.
- **Theft:** Stealing property from the site, employees, or other participants.
- **Falsifying Documents:** Falsifying time records or those of other intern employees; signing another participant's time record; attempting to use another participant's debit card or personal identification number (PIN).
- **Insubordination**: Refusal to adhere to the program or the internship rules and regulations
- **Harassment:** Verbal, sexual, or physical harassment of a scholar or staff.

ACCIDENTS

If an accident occurs on or near the host site, you must follow the procedures listed below:

1. Call 911 for medical emergencies
2. Notify the participant's parent or guardian
3. Call the HSIP Support Center at 202-698-3492 (report the call as an emergency for escalation)
4. Complete an incident report and forward a copy to the HSIP Program Liaison

DO NOT SEND AN INJURED PARTICIPANT HOME WITHOUT MEDICAL ATTENTION.

GRIEVANCES

HSIP participants are protected by the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977.

HSIP participants are protected from any discrimination on the internship, including sexual harassment, gender identity, and expression discrimination, other forms of harassment, and a hostile work environment.

HSIP provides a process by which the complaints or grievances of participants will be impartially aired and addressed.
Participants who believe that they have been exposed to discrimination or that they have been unfairly

treated should be advised to follow the procedures outlined below:

1. Discuss the issue with the Internship Supervisor or Host Coordinator
2. Prepare a written statement that describes the alleged incident
3. If the issue is not resolved or if the issue involves the Supervisor, contact the HSIP Support Center at (202) 698-3492
4. HSIP Program Liaison and HSIP Case Manager will work to resolve the grievance

INCLEMENT WEATHER

The Supervisor must monitor weather reports from qualified sources (e.g., newspapers, radio stations, and television news or weather service). When outdoor temperatures are 95 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, the Supervisor must make special allowances for HSIP participants working outdoors. Interns working outdoors must be allotted ten minutes per work hour for a rest period in a shaded area with an adequate supply of water. The participant will be compensated for the time, and it should not be reflected on the timesheet.

If the District of Columbia is experiencing a Code Red day, as determined by the appropriate authorities, outdoor work and activities must be canceled. If interns are dismissed for the day due to inclement weather, compensation will only be given to those who checked in at their internship. If interns do not report to work on a Code Red day and activities are subsequently canceled, they will not be compensated for the day.

CHILD LABOR LAWS

All internship sites must comply with applicable US Department of Labor (DOL) Child Labor Laws. For more information regarding Child Labor Laws, please visit youthrules.dol.gov/index.htm.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

SECTION II: STRUCTURING A QUALITY HIGH SCHOOL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Overview

The curriculum guide provides guidance to staff as they begin to develop or revise their HSIP structure and activities. We aim to ensure all HSIP worksites have strong content and the ability to produce interns that are work ready. The quality of HSIP depends heavily on the ability and professional training of the HSIP worksite staff to:

1. Relate effectively to young people and understand their needs
2. Develop and execute interesting activities for youth
3. Help young people resolve behavioral problems and/or conflict
4. Interact effectively with interns and parents
5. Effectively communicate the mission, goals, and policies of HSIP

This guide is based on the seven learning objectives the Office of Youth Programs strives to see every HSIP participant experience:

- Explore post-secondary education
- Earn money and gain meaningful work-based learning opportunities
- Gain exposure to exciting career industries and create vital career connections
- Learn how to set themselves apart
- Gain financial literacy skills with the ability to understand and make use of personal finance management, budgeting, and investing
- Goal setting
- Learn and develop stackable skills, attitude, and commitment needed to succeed in today's workforce

Interns will be challenged to reach their maximum potential using this guide. The guide is flexible and designed to support individual differences and goals. You can reinforce these goals with approved lesson plans and continuous support from the Office of Youth Programs.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 1: PREPARATION

WHY IS PREPARATION IMPORTANT?

When talking to interns about preparation, ask them: "How do you prepare for your day, life, purpose, or success? Do you prepare or do you go with the flow?" We must teach interns and reinforce the importance of planning for them to achieve their wants, hopes, desires, and dreams.

We must guide interns and emphasize the importance of intentional planning to help them achieve their goals; i.e. wants, hopes, desires, and dreams.

Let's look at examples of preparation:

- **Preparation: The action or process of making ready.**
  Example: *She starts her day with a daily routine that is structured and disciplined.*
- **Formulation: A substance prepared according to a formula.**
  Example: *The internet marketer created a system to help give his business leverage.*
- **Planning: The cognitive process of thinking about what you will do in the event of something happening or a planned event.**
  Example: *Financial planning helped them feel hopeful and at peace instead of hopeless.*
- **Readiness: The state of having been made ready or prepared for use or action.**
  Example: *Now that the business foundation and training are complete, we can start marketing.*
- **Training: An activity leading to skilled behavior.**
  Example: *He will receive training to become a technician.*

If we look at the first words in each example of preparation, we notice a consistent theme: "***activity***," "***formulation,***" "***planning,***" "***readiness,***" and "***training***" are all **ACTION WORDS**.

It is important to stress to interns that before they take action to get the desired results, a pre-action must occur. This pre-action is preparation.

For example, shower the night before, have their clothes ironed, and bag/s set by the door in preparation for the next day. These are basic elements of success that are commonly overlooked. To reach their full potential, youth must understand the importance of making preparation a habit.

Ask interns if they ever woke up, showered, skipped breakfast, and rushed to work. They may have felt tired and hungry, which showed in their work performance.

Preparation is critical to success. It helps one achieve the desired results, faster. Preparation is essential for success, enabling individuals to achieve their goals more efficiently.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 2: PRESENTATION

WHY IS PERSONAL PRESENTATION IMPORTANT?

Making a good first impression is important for building relationships. A positive first impression is crucial for creating profitable, sustainable, and long-term working relationships. It is important to inform interns of the proper ways to present themselves in the workplace and reinforce these lessons by showing them the proper steps to becoming successful.

It takes a quick glance for someone to evaluate them when meeting for the first time. In this short time, the other person forms an opinion based on appearance, body language, demeanor, mannerisms, and manner of dress.

With every new encounter, we evaluate the individual, and other impressions are formed. First impressions can be nearly impossible to reverse or undo, making first encounters extremely important. The first impression sets the tone for all subsequent interactions.

Whether in your career or personal life, it is important to know how to make a good first impression. These lessons will help you teach interns the importance of having a good personal presentation.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 3: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

WHY IS EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IMPORTANT?

There are many reasons why effective communication is important, but they all point to one primary reason: communicating effectively allows people to lead more satisfying lives. Communicating with youth is not always the easiest task as the minds of adults and youth are often worlds apart, which is why communication skills development is key.

WHY IS DEVELOPING COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN YOUTH IMPORTANT?

Developing communication skills allows youth to understand and express their feelings and clearly explain their needs. Improving communication skills allows youth to understand themselves and their relationships. For young people, the social aspect of communication is more important than the message being communicated. Some specific examples of communication include:

- Problem-solving
- Conflict resolution and negotiation
- Socializing
- Exchange of information
- Practicing active listening during check-ins, encouraging them to restate what they heard.
- Modeling how to express thoughts clearly and respectfully during discussions or team activities.
- Helping them identify nonverbal communication cues, such as eye contact, posture, and tone.
- Supporting them in setting communication goals, like reducing filler words or speaking with confidence.

Effective communication helps to avoid misunderstandings at work.

If youth can avoid misunderstandings, they will know what others are asking or telling them.

Youth often have difficulty expressing themselves and putting things into words. If they can understand what others are saying, they may not come to the wrong conclusions or take the wrong actions. Hear them out! Many times, what may seem like “attitude” is confusion. Communicating clearly the first time will lead to fewer unnecessary mistakes (missteps).

Effective communication helps youth to express themselves.

When youth express their needs, desires, and opinions, their chances of getting what they want improves. Since youth are sometimes unclear about what they need and their opinions often change, it is important to teach them the benefits of expressing themselves clearly.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 4: SETTING YOURSELF APART

WHY IS SETTING YOURSELF APART IMPORTANT?

What does "***setting yourself apart***" mean? It is the process of developing a "mark" that is created around where you see yourself. Youth often view setting themselves apart as having flashy clothes or funky hairstyles. While this does set them apart, it can be for all the wrong reasons. We want youth to learn that setting yourself apart can be used to express and communicate their skills, personality, and values to gain an advantage in the competitive and limited workforce.

Setting yourself apart is a way to market yourself to the world. Setting oneself apart is important because it helps young people build confidence, open doors, and create opportunities that can shape their future. Your personal brand is what other people think of you. In some ways, it may seem outside of your control, but you ultimately have control over it.

It is important to teach youth that as others interact with them, they will automatically form assumptions that connect with certain labels, often within the first few seconds. You cannot avoid being labeled. It happens automatically because our brains are wired to recognize patterns and form associations. The labels people attach to you become part of their first impression of you.

When thinking of ways to help young people reflect on what they feel makes them unique, ask the following questions:

1. What are the three things that make you memorable?
2. On what do people always compliment you?
3. What are you passionate about that you never tire of discussing?
4. What have been some of your unique experiences?

Once they have found what makes them unique, work on having them incorporate it into their work. This includes their writing, the way they describe themselves, the way they communicate with others, and, ultimately, through their work.

Setting yourself apart starts with setting goals, writing a mission, vision, and personal statement, and creating a plan on how to make these things happen.

YOUR OUTWARD EXPRESSION = HOW PEOPLE PERCEIVE YOU

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 5: INTERVIEWING

WHY KNOWING HOW TO INTERVIEW WELL IS IMPORTANT

Youth have made it through the first step with a completed application. The next step is the interview. Whether it is their first interview or if they have been through the interview process ten times or more, the importance of a good interview remains the same.

The interview is one of the most important aspects of the job search process. It gives both the job seeker and the employer an opportunity to exchange information to determine whether the individual being interviewed is a good match for the position and for the company.

It is not safe to assume that everyone knows how to interview, even if they have done it before. Many youths become nervous during an interview and may appear to be withdrawn, which may translate into lacking self-confidence or lacking interest and enthusiasm for the position.

A job interview is a systematic, purposeful conversation. The main goal of the job seeker is to show the employer that they have the skills, background, and ability to do the job and that they can fit into the company and its culture. It is also an opportunity to gather information about the job, the company, and future career opportunities to determine whether the job and the company are a good fit.

Knowing how to interview does not always come naturally, especially for a young adult who has never had a job or been required to interview. New job hunters are generally unaware of what interviewers are looking for and unsure how to answer interview questions. Some job seekers do not know how to dress for an interview. Unfortunately, many others do not realize they need interview help until several interviews have passed and there are no offers.

Youth should understand the importance of researching the organization they are interviewing with and demonstrating how their knowledge of the mission aligns with and supports that mission.

From exploring different interview formats to providing valuable strategies and tips, you can teach youth the best ways to prepare for interviews.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 6: GOAL SETTING

WHY IS SETTING GOALS IMPORTANT?

To succeed in any area of life, be it professional or personal, one must start with a goal. The ability to set and achieve goals that give direction is the first step to success. We see this every day. We work with youth who know where they want to go in life or what they aspire to be but have no clear plan or path to follow.

Setting goals is important because it gives youth and their efforts more focus. What do you want to do? Why do you want to do it? What will it mean to you? How will it make you feel? How will you get there? What steps do you need to take to achieve your goal?

Setting goals guides the direction of one's life and allows the things that are happening (or going to happen) around us to be self-directed. Setting goals has a way of helping a person stay focused and often makes it easier to sustain the motivation required to achieve success.

Youth are often unsure of the direction to go, and some may be lost in life. By showing interns how to set goals, their priorities and personal desires are defined. The goal-setting process will require them to consider their lives and what is most important. It can provide meaning when life seems fruitless; it fuels dreams and ideas. When setting goals, one must consider other people and how they might be affected, how the goal will be achieved, and what resources are available to make it happen.

We can show youth how to set meaningful goals by teaching them to break larger ambitions into smaller, realistic steps, helping them identify the specific actions needed to reach those steps, and guiding them in tracking their progress along the way.

By teaching interns how to set goals, they will become more confident. Working toward goals will raise their self-esteem and self-respect. As they begin to move toward accomplishing their goals, we may see them develop personal pride and a sense of accomplishment.

HAVE A GREAT SCHOOL YEAR!

DOES
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF
EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Office of Youth Programs

High School Internship Program

4058 Minnesota Avenue NE, Second Floor Washington, DC 20019
Phone: 202-724-7000 | Fax: 202-673-6993 | does.dc.gov

GOVERNMENT OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR