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## News from MOICC, June 1999

Maine Occupational Information Coordinating Committee

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# MAINE

## DEPARTMENT OF

# LABOR

Employment Services

## News from MOICC

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June 1999

### Why Career Development?

### LIBRARY USE ONLY

As teachers, guidance counselors, or providers of job placement and retraining services, it is important to understand the context for the work we do. In a book entitled, *Career Choice and Development*, Duane Brown, professor of counseling psychology at the University of North Carolina, and past president of the National Career Development Association, states that "Career development is, for most people, a **lifelong** process of getting ready to choose, choosing, and typically, **continuing** to make choices from among the many occupations available in our society." Brown elaborates, "Each person undertaking the process is influenced by a great number of factors, including family, personal values and aptitudes, and social context."

With this in mind, let's look at some typical key career decisions. For most students, the early school years mark a period of discovery, exploration, and understanding. In other words, they are at the acquisition stage in their personal career development journey. After reaching middle or junior high school, they begin to make tentative decisions about occupational possibilities.

In high school, the process of choosing courses, which level of course to take, and even which



career cluster/academic program to pursue is a clear and crucial decision point. At this stage, counselors assist students to understand the consequences of their decisions in terms of post high school pathways. Students' educational histories, academic strengths and weaknesses, and other significant influences as pointed out by Brown need to be sorted out so that they might make informed and rational post high school career-related decisions.

To enter the workforce, either after high school or after acquiring advanced education or training, individuals then choose an entry-level occupation consistent with a host of desires and needs. Until

relatively recently, these first workforce decisions could be expected to provide individuals with a clear and long-term work plan. Since the 1980s, however, the process of "choosing and continuing to choose" has increasingly characterized the career pathways of American workers. We not only change employers more often than in the past, we now change entire career pathways. Long-term employment and stability is now defined within the context of lifelong flexibility and willingness to continue the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

To help in this process, Federal workforce legislation such as

Continued on page 2

### Inside This Issue

MOICC Conference Update	2
CHOICES Enhancements for fall 1999	2
Training Opportunities for 1999-2000	2
Career Tips for Teens	3
Real Game Update	4

Denis Fortier, Editor



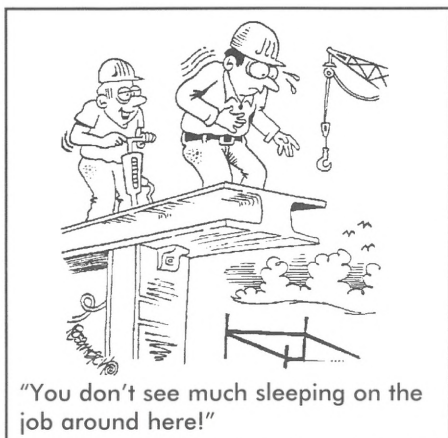
Continued from page 1

the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 is changing and improving the ways American workers obtain employment services. Downsizings, plant closures, corporate mergers, etc., are all factors in this realignment. Employment counselors must have a clear understanding of the career development context for their work as defined by Brown.

## MOICC Conference Update

We have received several calls inquiring about the annual MOICC Career Development Conference. We decided last year, after our 20<sup>th</sup> Conference, to take a year off to assess where we should go with our annual conferences. We will be looking at time frames, locations, themes and needs assessments, between now and September to decide whether or not to resume this annual conference.

For all of you who have called this year looking for our conference announcement, thanks for your interest. Clearly, we plan to continue our long-standing commitment to providing career development resources to our diverse audiences. Let us know what you think.



## CHOICES Enhancements for Fall 1999

Some exciting enhancements will accompany the fall 1999 release of **CHOICES 2000**. The basic platform of the software, i.e., the files and search procedures in the current version of **CHOICES** will continue. Of course, the latest employment outlook and college information for 1999 will be included. **CHOICES** will offer remote access through a feature called **eChoices/CHOICES Connect**. Users will have Internet access to all the **CHOICES** features plus dynamic cyber extras. These extras will include:

- ❑ **Ask-An-Expert**—Users can ask their burning questions about career and hear from the experts. An archive of career development Q/A's is always at their fingertips.
- ❑ **Career Bytes**—users can explore daily articles on such topics as "hot" careers, tips for finding a job, entrepreneurship, and apprenticeship.
- ❑ **User Discussions**—Your connection to the **CHOICES** community. You can discuss and collaborate with colleagues from around the world.

**CHOICES Connect** offers a unique opportunity to reach students, their parents, and adults in career transition through **eChoices** with all the convenience of the Internet. **CHOICES 2000** on your site's PC and **eChoices** are interconnected. Users can do work at home and save it, or access work they have started in school or at a CareerCenter and continue at home. The user's identification number is the key to the **CHOICES Connect** integrated system and gives you the best of both worlds – PC and Internet.

In Maine, the annual site license available through the Bureau of Employment Services/MOICC is \$700 annually. Sites choosing to use the **CHOICES Connect** enhancement will pay an additional \$100 for 100 ID's. Additional ID's will be available at \$40 per 100. More details will be available in September, and we will notify all sites then with the details.



### Training Opportunities for 1999-2000

We plan to offer a full slate of training opportunities for next year:

- ❑ **CHOICES**—both school and Career Center staff
- ❑ **The Real Game**—to include expanded product list
- ❑ **Improved Career Decision Making**—Revised to include electronic access and new basic resources such as the O'NET.
- ❑ **LifeWork Portfolio**—aimed at adults in career transition.

Specific training dates, locations, etc. will be finalized and released in the September/October Newsletter.





# Career Tips for Teens

by Jon Sargent, U.S. Department of Labor,  
Bureau of Labor Statistics

**1. Finish High School** *Nearly every job requires basic communication and math skills. Compared to workers at higher education levels, high school dropouts have more difficulty getting and keeping jobs. They also have lower earnings throughout their lives.*

**2. Consider continuing your education** *The more education you get, the higher your earnings are likely to be. On average, high school graduates earn more than high school dropouts. Those who receive post-secondary training earn more than high school dropouts and graduates. Workers who have college degrees or higher usually earn more than those with less education.*

**3. Research career information** *A small investment of your time will help you make an informed career choice that could pay dividends throughout your life. There are hundreds of occupations, so choosing and planning a career is a lot more complex than it may appear. The ideal career for you might be something you've never heard of or thought about. Research information from many sources, including books, computer programs, the Internet, employers, parents.*

**4. Plan your career** *Seek out information about occupations with favorable career prospects, high earnings, and other attributes that are important to you. Having a solid career plan can affect your future prospects more than how much education you have. True, college study increases opportunities for career with above-average earnings, but not in all fields. Good opportunities await workers without college degrees who spend several years learning a sought-after skill or craft.*

**5. Develop basic computer skills** *Take advantage of every opportunity to acquire computer proficiency. Regardless of whether you continue your education beyond high school, chances are that you will need at least minimal computer skills to do your job.*

**6. Value your personal interests and abilities** *You shouldn't be dissuaded from a career that interests you just because it's competitive. If your interests and abilities draw you to a field like acting, journalism, law, piloting, or some other competitive occupation, go for it. Just be prepared for the challenges that may lie ahead.*

**7. Learn how to conduct a good job search and develop a resume** *No matter what you want to do after high school, you will have to market your skills as you search for a job. Learning about resume preparation and job search techniques will help you through the process more easily. Workers average 8 different jobs by age 32, so prepare to change jobs—even careers—until you find the one that's right for you.*

**8. Gain experience early** *Learning by doing is a great way to approach a prospective career. Internships, part-time jobs, and volunteer work are some examples of ways to get hands-on experience while still in school. Not only do these opportunities help you make smarter career decisions, they may help you get hired after graduation; most employers value work-related experience.*

**9. Keep learning** *Take every opportunity to learn new skills. The more you upgrade your skills to the constantly changing world of work, the more likely you—and your career—will adapt along with it.*

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## **Real Game Update**

During the past school year, staff from 59 middle/junior high schools in Maine received implementation training for ***The Real Game***. In conjunction with Henry Lunn and Cathy Van Dyke, plans for the 1999-2000 school year are to offer the ***Real Game*** and one day of training for the remainder of Maine middle/junior high schools.

During this past school year, selected Maine schools participated in pilot testing of the ***Make It Real*** for grades 4-6 and the ***Get Real Game*** for grades 11-12. Evaluations of the pilot testing are currently underway for planned release next fall. When these products are revised, repackaged, and made available to the field, we in Maine

will then announce implementation plans. Generally speaking, each of the various versions will sell for \$200 per product.

The various grade-appropriate versions of ***The Real Game*** are particularly useful for developing Maine Learning Results curricula. Be looking for announcements in the Fall for further information.



Grades 4-6



Grades 7-8



Grades 11-12