



# BEST LIFE: Building Awareness



E1MN is Minnesota’s state agency partnership to advance Employment First outcomes for youth and adults with disabilities.

These lessons can help students build their knowledge and awareness about what a best life means for them, and about tools they can use to plan for and achieve their best life.

### LESSON PLANS FOR TEACHERS

LESSON 1: Best life concepts .....page 2

LESSON 2: Best life tools ..... page 4

LESSON 3: My Vault’s Best life activities .....page 6

**LENGTH**  
20–30 minutes for each lesson

**TARGET PARTICIPANTS**  
Youth in transition (14–24 years of age)

# Lesson 1: Best life concepts



**LENGTH:** 20-25 minutes

**OBJECTIVE:** Students can describe the core concepts that foster a best life.

## INTRO

**Talking point:** We're going to spend some time talking about how you can build a vision for your best life. Let's start by thinking about what makes a best life.

## DISCUSSION

### What helps create a best life?

**Materials:** [Charting the LifeCourse Transition to Adulthood](#) (PDF)

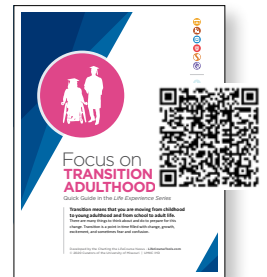
**Instructions:** Ask each student to share one thing that will create a best life—"Let's go around the room and everyone share one thing that they think will create a best life. Your example can be based on something you know you want for your best life or something you've seen your parents, family, or other friends get that helped them have a best life."

**Talking points:**

- Those are great examples! While everyone will have a different vision for what makes a best life, most examples will fall into one of six areas, or "domains": Daily life and employment, community living, healthy living, safety and security, social and spirituality, and advocacy and engagement.
- These six domains are described in a booklet developed by an organization called Charting the LifeCourse. Let's take a look at this booklet and some things they list in each domain.

**Instructions:** Give students the handout and review the six life domains with them.

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*Charting the LifeCourse® Transition to Adulthood*

# Lesson 1: Best life concepts (cont.)



## ACTIVITY

### A best life story

**Materials:** Video: [José-Daniel's story](#)

- Talking points:**
- Now that you know about the six domains that lead to a best life, let's watch a 6-minute video about José-Daniel, who is a person that began working on building his best life when he was in high school.
    - As you watch the video, look for things that were part of his vision for a best life.
    - After the video I'll ask you to share the examples you heard. (*Play video.*)



Video: José-Daniel's story

## DISCUSSION

### A best life story

- Talking point:**
- José-Daniel has been busy creating his best life. In that video he shared quite a few examples of his vision.

**Instructions:** Ask the students to raise their hand and share an example of something José-Daniel shared that was important for his best life.

- Answers:**
- **Daily life and employment:** Improving his job skills and having a job in the railroad industry. Paying bills on time. Getting a degree in engineering.
  - **Community living:** Having a place to live on his own near railroad tracks. Getting around the Twin Cities on his own.
  - **Healthy living:** Nothing in this segment.
  - **Safety and security:** Living in a safe neighborhood.
  - **Social and spirituality:** Having a family if he decides to one day.
  - **Advocacy and engagement:** Getting services from Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) (a program that helps with employment) and Focus Beyond (his school program). Becoming his own guardian at 18. Advocating for accommodations. Having a wide circle of support.

# Lesson 2: Best life tools



**LENGTH:** 20-25 minutes

**OBJECTIVE:** Students can name at least two tools that will help build a best life.

## INTRO

**Talking point:** Now let's look at some tools you can use to start creating your vision for a best life.

## DISCUSSION **Get to know Charting the LifeCourse® tools**

- Materials:**
- [My one-page profile](#) (PDF)
  - [Life trajectory](#) (PDF)
  - [Integrated supports star](#) (PDF)

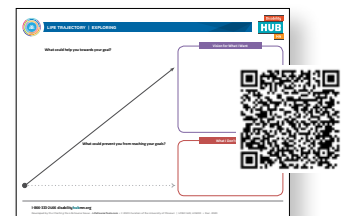
**Instructions:** Print and give each student a copy of the three Charting the LifeCourse tools listed above.

- Talking points:**
- Charting the LifeCourse tools help you learn more about yourself, set goals, and create a vision for your best life.
  - You can use these tools to organize your thoughts and speak up for what you want.
  - The first tool is the **one-page profile**, which you can use to describe yourself—what people like about you, what's important to you and how to best support you.
  - The next is the **life trajectory**. Use this worksheet to envision your best life and identify the steps or experiences needed to get there, including what you don't want your life to look like.
  - The third is the **integrated supports star**. As you saw in José-Daniel's video, he used several resources to reach his goals. You can use this worksheet to write about the tools, resources, and people in your life, and how they help you live an inclusive life in the community.

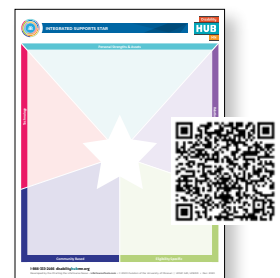
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*My one-page profile*



*Life trajectory*



*Integrated supports star*

# Lesson 2: Best life tools (cont.)



## ACTIVITY

### Practice using the Life trajectory tool

#### Materials:

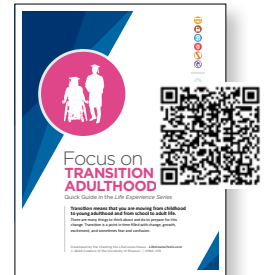
- ‘Life trajectory’ tool from earlier discussion in this lesson (page 4)
- ‘Charting the LifeCourse Transition to Adulthood’ guide from Lesson 1 (page 2)

#### Instructions:

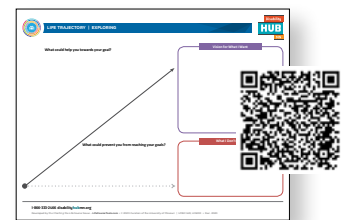
Help students think about what they want for their life and identify some of the steps or experiences they need to get there.

#### Talking points:

- Now that you know what these tools are, let’s practice using one, so you can see how easy they are to use.
- To start, take out the handout I gave you earlier, **Charting the LifeCourse Transition to Adulthood**. Pick one of the categories that you want to set a goal for and put an X by it. Maybe it’s Daily Life & Employment or Community Living, or it could be one of the others.
- Great! Now that everyone has chosen their domain, let’s put the **Life trajectory** tool to use—pull that out so it’s in front of you. In the top right corner, write 1 or 2 things that you want in your life for that domain.
- Great! Below that write 1 or 2 things you do NOT want in your life for that domain.
- Nice work! Now, write down 1 or 2 things that could help you make that vision for what you want come true.
- Good job! For the final step, write down 1–2 things that could stop you from reaching your goal.



*Charting the LifeCourse Transition to Adulthood*



*Life trajectory*

## DISCUSSION

### Your vision for your best life

#### Instructions:

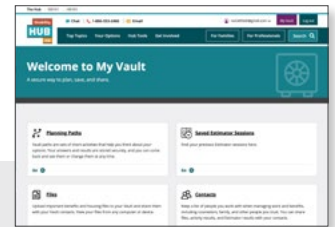
Using their completed Life trajectory, ask 1–2 students to share their vision for what they want, what they don’t want, what will help them reach their goal, and what will prevent them from reaching their goal.

# Lesson 3: My Vault's Best Life activities



**LENGTH:** 25-30 minutes

- OBJECTIVES:**
- Students have a My Vault account.
  - Students can do planning activities in My Vault (with or without support).



*My Vault online tool*

## PREPARATION:

### *Before doing this activity:*

1. **Familiarize yourself with My Vault and how to use it to support students.** Review information on the Disability Hub MN website—you'll find an overview about [My Vault](#) and information about [using My Vault to support people](#).
2. **Create your own My Vault account.** If you don't already have one, create your own professional My Vault account. With a professional account, you'll have access to additional sharing and collaboration features. Learn more about [how to create a professional My Vault account](#).
3. **Introduce families to My Vault.** You can use this flyer: [My Vault: An introduction for families](#) (PDF) to let families know you'll be helping their student create their own My Vault account and do planning activities.
4. **Determine if students will have access to a computer, tablet, or smartphone during the lesson** to create their own My Vault account and complete the activities.
  - **If students WILL have access to a device with an internet connection**, ask students if they have a personal email address, not their school email, to use for creating a My Vault account. If they do not have a personal email account, ask families for their support in getting a personal email for the student.
  - **If students will NOT have access to a device with an internet connection**, make copies of the following activities for students to complete in class while you demonstrate the activities through your My Vault account:
    - [Profile: Best Life](#) (PDF)
    - [My Resources and Supports: About Me \(Integrated supports star tool\)](#) (PDF)
    - [My Life Goals \(Life domain vision tool\)](#) (PDF)
    - [My Vision: Best Life \(Life trajectory tool\)](#) (PDF)
    - [My Budget: Best life](#) (PDF)

## INTRO

- Talking points:**
- Let's take a look at a tool you can use to complete the planning activities online.
  - This tool is called My Vault. My Vault is a personal, online account you can use to explore options around work, understand benefits, store and share files, and plan for your future. My Vault is free, private, and secure. The account is yours to use for all the planning in your life, no matter if you're in or out of school or what agency or organization you're working with.
  - My Vault is a tool of Disability Hub MN. Disability Hub MN is a resource network that helps people find information, explore their options and plan for their future. The Hub is a resource you can use now and after you graduate from high school. You can use their website to find information and planning tools, and they also have experts who can answer questions and help you figure things out. You can reach out to a Hub expert by phone at 1-866-333-2466, and by chat or email on their website, [disabilityhubmn.org](http://disabilityhubmn.org).
  - **Optional:** Show students the [Welcome to My Vault](#) video (3 min, 52 seconds)

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# Lesson 3: My Vault's Best Life activities (cont.)

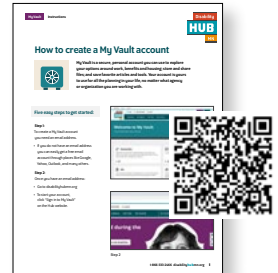


## ACTIVITY

### Create a My Vault account

**Talking point:** I'm going to walk through how to create your own My Vault account.

- Instructions:**
- Ask students if they already have a My Vault account. Any students who already have an account can skip this activity and wait to start the next.
  - If students have a computer or device with an internet connection and a personal email address, ask students to open an internet browser.
  - Project your computer screen. Open an internet browser and go to [disabilityhubmn.org](http://disabilityhubmn.org)
  - Demonstrate how to create a My Vault account using the step-by-step instructions in Disability Hub MN's [My Vault: How to create an account](#) (PDF) guide. If students are using a computer or device and create an account, go slow so they can follow you.



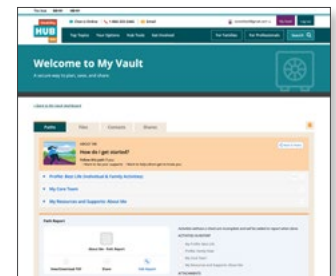
*My Vault: How to create an account guide*

- Talking points:**
- Now that you have a My Vault account, you'll see on the dashboard there are Planning Paths, Files, Saved Estimator Sessions, and Contacts.
  - Let's look at how you can do some 'Best life' activities in the Planning Paths area.

## ACTIVITY

### Overview of 'About Me' path activities

- Instructions:**
- On the My Vault dashboard, click **Planning Paths**. On the next screen, in the Best Life Paths area, click on the box that says **"About Me: How do I get started?"**.
  - If students are following on a computer or device, go slow and check in with students as you go.



*My Vault's "About Me" path*

- Talking points:**
- There are three activities in this Best Life path:
    - The first one is **Profile: Best Life**. This lets you make a one-page profile to let people know what matters to you and how they can help. Your family can also make a profile to let people know what they think matters and how they can help.
    - The next activity is **My Core Team**, where you can make a list of the people you trust most to help you with planning and making important decisions and add their contact information.
    - The last one is **My Resources and Supports: About Me**. With this activity you list the resources and support that you have. The result will be a Charting the LifeCourse integrated supports star.
  - At the bottom of this section there is a **Path Report**, which combines the results from all these activities into one report that you can download or share with people in the Contacts area of My Vault.

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# Lesson 3:

## My Vault's Best Life activities (cont.)



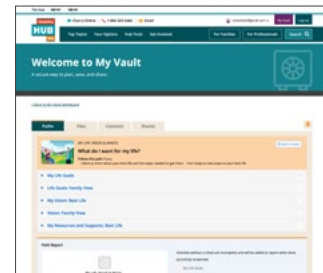
### ACTIVITY

### Overview of 'My Life: Needs and Wants' path activities / Complete a My Vault activity

**Materials:** Completed 'Life trajectory' tool from Lesson 2 (page 5)

**Instructions:** From the 'About me' screen, click the **Paths** tab. On the next screen, in the Best Life Paths area, click on the box that says "**My Life: Needs and Wants: What do I want for my life?**".

- Talking points:**
- If we go back to the Paths tab, you'll see there is another Best Life Path called My Life: Needs and Wants.
  - This path has three activities for you:
    - **My Life Goals**
    - **My Vision of a Best Life**
    - **My Resources and Supports for a Best life**
  - All three of these activities work the same way; you click on the blue activity icon to open the activity, you fill in your answers to the questions, then you can download or share the results from the activity. There are also activities your family can do.
  - Let's take a few minutes to complete the activity, My Vision: Best Life, using the Life trajectory tool we created in our last lesson. (Have students use the Life trajectory worksheet they completed earlier for themselves as you walk them through each question.)



*My Vault's "My Life: Needs and Wants" path*

- Instructions:**
- Click on the View/Download PDF icon so students can see the information entered in the activity shows up on the PDF.
  - Click on the Share icon to show how you can share an activity with someone in their Contacts.





# Lesson 3:

## My Vault's Best Life activities (cont.)



### ACTIVITY

#### Overview of 'Best Life Budget' path activities

- Instructions:**
- From the 'My Life: Needs and Wants' screen, click the **Paths** tab. On the next screen, in the Best Life Paths area, click on the box that says "**Best Life Budget: Does the money add up?**".

- Talking points:**
- If we go back to the Paths area, you'll see there is one more Best Life Path, called the Best Life Budget.
  - This path has two activities:
    - The **Benefits Lookup** will confirm what benefits you get.
    - And you can use the **Best Life Budget** to make a plan for how much money you need.
  - You can see, there are many tools that you can use to learn more about yourself and your idea of a best life. Many of the tools can be done in My Vault or as a printed PDF you can fill out on your own or with your family. Each tool also has a sample you can use if you'd like an example.



*My Vault's "Best Life Budget" path*

### CLOSING

#### Talking points:

- You can begin building your best life now; you don't have to wait.
- Get started by asking your family, your friends, or me to help you start planning.
- Make sure you share the activities you do in your My Vault account with your family and others helping you plan.