

Finding Peace and Purpose at Work

Christopher Gilvar's Experience with Youth Transitional Services

Chris was referred to Easterseals NH's Youth Transitional Services (YTS) in 2018 while a sophomore at Exeter High School. There, he spent his school days separated from his peers due to behavioral difficulties. The school team was at an impasse, with Chris' future at the school uncertain.

Once Chris began YTS programming, though, he quickly flourished. He participated in a variety of activities, but work is where he found fulfillment.

Developing Job Skills and Strategies

To begin gaining valuable employment skills, Chris started attending a work-based learning experience at *I Never Give Up* in Portsmouth, where he helped recycle Comcast wires. He began to learn coping strategies for dealing with the noises and voices that he encountered at work and in the community, and showed increased toleration of the everyday noises he inevitably encountered during his time in YTS.

Learning to Expect the Unexpected

After a few months with a consistent YTS schedule, Chris applied for a paid seasonal position at Water Country and was hired. Initially, his team was concerned about the noisy environment that Chris would encounter at Water Country. Chris recognized this as a challenge for himself. He and YTS staff brainstormed different strategies he could use if he was having difficulty at work. Chris was so successful at Water Country that he was invited to return the following season.

The Benefits of Hiring People with Disabilities

80% lower turnover rate

24% rise in revenues

Expanded talent pool

Reduced absenteeism

Diversity is opportunity

[Read more in our Inclusive Hiring Guide.](#)



Working Toward Independence

Having a job was fulfilling to Chris, and he loved earning his own money, as he saw all of his peers doing. After his season with Water Country, Chris applied for a position as a part-time prep cook at Tinos Kitchen and Bar in Hampton, NH. He did so well there that after a few months he began working independently of YTS staff for a portion of his shifts. This independence was a huge step forward for Chris, who often struggled with the lack of autonomy he felt he had at school and in his life.

Part of the Team, Part of the Community

Giving Chris moments of freedom and independence had an incredibly beneficial effect on his overall attitude. He has worked at Tino's now for more than a year where he is a valued part of the team. Recently, he pursued and secured a second job as a janitor for Bona Fide Fitness in Greenland. Once again, Chris quickly became an important member of the team, and had another community location where he felt accepted and included.

Today, Chris is a high school graduate, moving forward into adulthood. He is an active, constructive member of his local community. Chris can manage his behavior successfully in the community, having learned to expect the unexpected with help from his Youth Transitional Services team.