

Program Overview



YES!

YOUR ECONOMIC SUCCESS

“JA helps with the relevancy of a student's education.”

*— Former PA Secretary of Education,
Carolyn Dumaresq*



The educational phenomenon known as “the Middle School Slump” is a time when peer pressure and the transition out of elementary school prompt many students who were formerly good performers academically to begin losing interest in school. According to a study from the consulting firm the Bridgespan Group, this is a time when Junior Achievement’s programs are particularly effective at engaging students, helping to illustrate to them the benefits of staying in school and the relevance to their futures. The Bridgespan Group study noted that the involvement of volunteers from the community in the classroom as part of the JA experience was particularly beneficial to students.

The **YES!** (Your Economic Success) program provides an opportunity for students to begin discovering the choices that lie ahead. By combining career exploration and financial responsibility, Junior Achievement connects the importance of education to students’ future economic success.

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Importance of Career and Financial Education

Students need a chance to discover career opportunities

As students transition into young adulthood, it is critical for them to see and understand the opportunities that will be available to them; further, to understand that the choices they make and the education they receive are connected to their future economic success. JA presents these concepts in hands-on, experiential programs. This, reinforced with positive affirmation from business volunteers leading the programs, helps solidify the lessons in the minds of students and inspires them to succeed.

Career choice is more about understanding opportunities than it is making the actual decision. The concept of career clusters and the importance of finding things you enjoy doing are challenges that middle grade students need to begin contemplating. Career Clusters provide students with a context for studying traditional academics and learning the skills specific to a career category.



Overview of **YES!**

YES! (Your Economic Success) is a morning program held at the middle school level. It consists of a series of activities intended to help students gain an appreciation for the importance that career and financial decisions will play in their lives as young adults.

The program is coordinated by Junior Achievement and involves volunteers who work with the students during the morning. Each volunteer is able to share their background with the students as the program proceeds.

What grade level is the **YES!** program designed for?

This program is intended to include all 6th, 7th and 8th grade students in a building. The synergy of making the program where every student participates creates a level of energy in the building that adds to the overall impact. The program is not available for a single grade.

Which students should participate in the **Yes!** program?

YES! is designed to give every student an opportunity to realize the importance that career and financial decisions will play in their lives as young adults. As a result, we require that the program be provided to all students at grade level.

What is the charge to schools for the **Yes!** program?

Junior Achievement provides this program to schools for **free**. There is some work required by the school to run the event such as preparing student schedules, providing breakfast for volunteers, and planning for the utilization of the auditorium for the opening.

When during the day does the program run?

Volunteers typically arrive at the school around 7:45 AM. Students gather in the Auditorium for an opening and then go to classrooms for four thirty minute activities. The event concludes around 11:00AM.

Flow of A YES! Day

- ▲ At the start of the day, all students will go to the auditorium for the opening.
- ▲ The 6th grade, 7th grade and 8th grade programs consist of four activities. Each activity is designed to be approximately 30 minutes.
- ▲ The students rotate through the four activities during the morning.
- ▲ The volunteer will remain in a classroom and do the same activity four times to four different groups of students. We recommend that teachers rotate with their students through all four activities.

YES! – 6th grade

The 6th grade program provides valuable information about entrepreneurship, careers, and the skills needed to fit into the work place. Each student will work through four, thirty minute activities.

The Trades

Students will identify the level of education and/or training required for skilled trade jobs and the importance of them in our community through an interactive game. Students will also discuss salary and job growth for trade jobs. STEM jobs play an important part of jobs that fall under the “trades” umbrella.

Business Plan

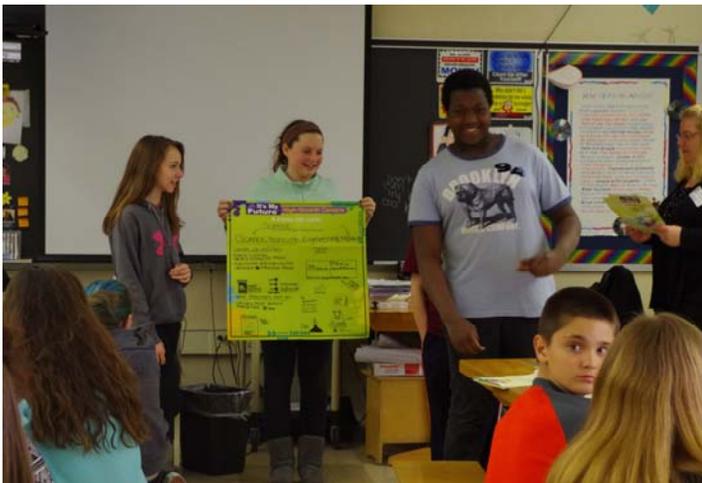
Students will explore business planning by developing a business to solve a community problem. A full business plan will be completed by each team of students.

Entrepreneur

Students will discover different entrepreneurial character traits through a discussion and activity surrounding Milton Hershey’s career.

Teamwork

Students will work together to build structures and uncover hidden optical illusions through teamwork and communication. These skills have been identified as critical to all careers but especially to STEM careers.



Activities are interactive and give students an opportunity to work together and be engaged.



Volunteers work with students on fun activities that help them discuss possibilities for their career and financial journeys.

YES! – 7th grade

The 7th grade program provides practical information about preparing for the working world while still in middle school. Each student will work through four, thirty minute activities.

Be A Success

Students will identify the connection between goal-setting, personal finance, education, and career choices, as well as apply decision making to education and career choices. Students will play a board game to experience a variety of life choices.

Career Paths

Students will complete a career interest survey to explore career possibilities. Student scores will point them to a career cluster in which they will uncover possible career options. STEM careers are play a major role in this conversation.

Am I Qualified?

Students will discuss different levels of education and relate educational levels to different career opportunities through an interactive, team matching game. From jobs that require advanced degrees to jobs that require technical certifications students will have an opportunity to better understand the education requirements for various jobs. STEM jobs play an important role in this activity.

Soft Skills

Students will recognize the difference between soft skills and technical skills and their importance for a future career by playing a hands-on game. Students will assess their own soft skills through a self-evaluation. Soft skills play an important role in all jobs especially in STEM related careers.



In Career Paths, students look at Career Clusters and how their personal interest can align to different types of careers. STEM careers are included in a number of clusters.



Volunteers have an opportunity to work with students on goal setting in “Be A Success”.

YES! – 8th grade

The 8th grade program provides practical information about personal finance and the importance of identifying education and career goals. Each student will work through four, thirty minute activities.

Interviewing Tips

Students will discover interview strategies during a fun and informative game based on Pictionary and Charades. Each tip will be expanded upon during the game. The lesson will wrap up with a do's and don'ts interviewing video.

Keeping Your Balance

Students will understand the basics of making and keeping a budget. They will analyze their budget and focus on gross and net pay, savings, taxes, and expenses.

STEM Skills

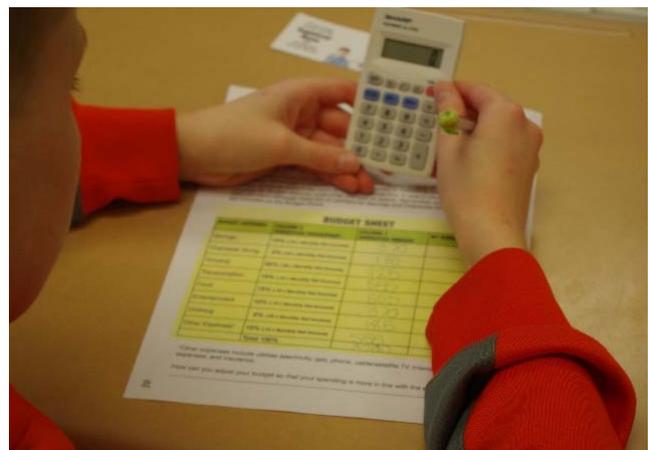
Students will complete STEM activities while demonstrating conflict resolution skills such as constructive criticism, group dynamics, leadership and problem solving. STEM activities include a relay and an engineering block activity.

Resume Building

Students will explore the importance of a resume and how to build their own by looking at their activities, strengths and skills during a fun, interactive game. Emphasizing soft skills is an important part of building a resume that doesn't have a lot of work history. This is especially important in STEM career job opportunities.



The STEM Skills give students an opportunity to work together in a team solving science and engineering challenges.



In “Keeping your Balance” student work on making budgeting decisions. They will work independently on their own budget.

YES! – and CEW Artifacts

To help ensure that all students are on track for meaningful postsecondary engagement and success, the Pennsylvania Department of Education has included a measure of students' career exploration, through the Future Ready PA Index and under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Junior Achievement, in working with local school districts, has developed a series of templates for student evidence (artifacts) from Kindergarten thru 11th grade tied to students participating in JA programs. The YES! program has artifacts for each activity. A total of four per grade level.

Feedback about the YES! program:

"The principles in the JA materials are very important for kids living in a fiercely competitive global economy to apprehend early in life. It will be a privilege to help them start cultivating habits that will prepare them to make their own decisions when the time comes." ~Ken Weber, JA Volunteer

*"I really enjoyed the "games" within each session. I thought each game presented real life scenarios for students to prepare for, and I especially liked how they had a chance to explore various careers/job clusters and work through a monthly budget."
~ Jessica Rauhauser, Teacher, Wilson Middle School*

*"The students liked to see "real" people share information/experiences with them."
~ Lisa Williams, Teacher, Lamberton Middle School*

"These are topics a middle school student typically doesn't have to deal with and may only hear bits and pieces from their parents. YES! gives students a chance to get accurate and important information that is age-appropriate and broken down into manageable chunks. Surely this knowledge helps them get ahead when they face these topics in the 'real world.'" ~Sara Weiser, JA Volunteer

STEM Pre-Apprenticeship program

The YES! program is also a part of JA's STEM pre-apprenticeship program. The PA Department of Labor & Industry has approved JA's program as a certified pre-apprenticeship program. Students who participate in BizTown, YES, and the STEM Summit are eligible to receive the STEM pre-apprenticeship certificate.

Junior Achievement's STEM Pre-Apprenticeship Program is intended to help students from 5th grade thru 12th grade discover the connection between future careers and their academic education. It brings the relevancy to their classroom study in an engaging hands-on experiential way. The programs focus is on helping students identify career interest levels and begin developing the requisite skill sets to enter into apprenticeship programs. These include soft skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem solving along with technical skills like foundational math.

Educator Involvement

Schools are serviced based on available dates. The program is limited and bookings are already taking place for next year.

If your school has an interest in getting involved, please contact Heidi Potter, Senior VP, Programs at JA. You can do this by phone at (717) 843-8028 or by email to hpotter@jascpa.org.



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