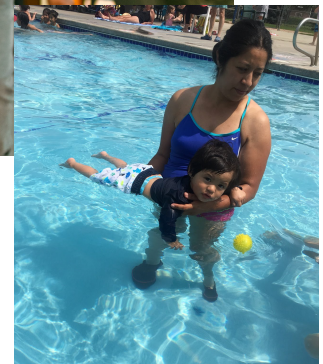


# Family Choice Journal

## Choosing Activities and Schools That are Right for You



Prepared by



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**Your values, needs and desires are the priority when choosing a school or an out-of-school activity for your kids.**

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## Instructions: The Family Choice Journal

The purpose of the Family Choice Journal is to support families and young people in sharing their priorities, hopes and needs when they choose a school or out-of-school activity.

**Note:** The below instructions offer one way to interact with the Family Choice Journal. If you come across an activity that is not helpful to you, skip it! This is for you.

## Learning Happens Everywhere!

Family discussions and learner self-reflection is valuable and important as you make choices about the learning environments and programs you engage in--both in and outside of school!

## Step 1 : Getting Started

Make a list of schools or activities that you know of and that interest you. Maybe you learned about them through a friend, a group you are part of on social media, or it is near your home. **RESCHOOL's DISCOVER Learning Resource** might be a helpful site to learn about activities in your area.

Look at the school or program's website, and set up a time to take a tour, especially if you are looking for a school.



DISCOVER Learning Resource

*Next...*

**Before you tour a school or sign up for the activity...**

## Step 2: Reflect

Learner fills out the **Learner Reflection** and **Experience Reflection**. Invite an adult who knows you well to talk with you about these questions if it is helpful.

## Step 3: Prioritize

Fill out the **Priorities Reflection**.  
Make notes on each card.  
Use the **Priorities Organizer** to make notes about what you need to have, what would be nice to have, and what you do not need.

### Step 4: Review

Reference the **Next Steps Page** and the notes you made in the Family Choice Journal.

### Step 5: Choose

**Choose** a school(s) or activities to visit. If you are choosing a school and have questions about the choice process, contact the school district or one of the schools you would like to attend.



## Step 1 : Getting Started

List of schools or activites/programs you know about and interest you

## Step 2 : Reflect

### Learner Reflection

**You are always learning about yourself and the world around you.**

Learning happens at home, outdoors, in the classroom, in your neighborhood... you are learning wherever you go.

You learn from teachers, parents, extended family members, coaches, your friends, books, videos...there are infinite sources we learn from.

With that in mind, think about the different places and ways you have learned so far and share what you know about how you like to learn.

*I hope to learn about ...*

*Types of places I like to learn in ...*

*I believe I learn best when ...*

*Ways I don't like to learn ...*

*I hope the next school I attend has ...*

*I hope the next activity I do has ...*

## Step 2 : Reflect

# Experience Reflection

**Before you start school or an activity ...**

**What do you hope you or your child will get out of school or an activity?**

Examples: Learn something new; feel belonging and part of a community; gain confidence; prepare academically; meet new friends; meet adults that can help me with my goals and further explore my interests; feel joy; feel curiosity.

**Describe what makes a school or activity high quality to you and your family.**

*After attending for one month ...*

**What did you/ your child experience?**

# Step 3 : Prioritize

## Priorities Reflection

**Instructions: What are your families' priorities when deciding what learning environments are best for you/your kids?**

Write into each section what you need/desire for that priority. There are examples on each card. *These might not be your answers. The examples are meant to support you in defining your priorities.*

If a priority isn't listed, write it in one of the blank boxes provided. If a priority isn't important to your family, cross it out.

Use the **Priorities Organizer** to help organize your thoughts about what you need to have, what would be nice to have and what you do not need.

### Transportation

Examples:

- Can get there with public transportation
- Can bike/walk there

### Identity/Background

Examples:

- Other learners share my child's identity
- Leadership shares my child's identity
- My child's identity is affirmed in the program
- Program allows foster youth to participate without requiring them to identify as foster youth or talk about their trauma

### Location

Examples:

- x miles from home
- Virtual
- x miles from grandma's home
- x miles from school

### Ages and Grades Served

Example:

6-10 year olds so all my kids can attend

## Step 3 : Prioritize

# Priorities Reflection

### Calendar and Hours

Examples:

- Open 7am-5:30pm
- Open Tuesday-Thursday June-August

### Opportunity for continued involvement and growth

Examples:

- Summer interns at the zoo can come back next year
- More senior volunteers supervise volunteer teams

### # of adults per # of learners

Examples:

- 1 adult for every 20 kids

### Safety

Examples:

- I'm comfortable with safety plans in place
- Front lobby is staffed and guests must sign in



## Step 3: Prioritize

# Priorities Reflection

### Interests, Passions, Talents

Examples:

- Loves to build things
- Great cook
- Interested in planets

### Cost/Scholarships

Examples:

- Free
- Less than \$100 per month
- Discounts available to purchase equipment
- Full and partial scholarships available

### Equipment/Supplies

Examples:

- Equipment/supplies included
- Can rent instruments
- Program provides information about where to get supplies
- Uniforms Included

### Needs

Examples:

- Americans with Disabilities Act compliant facility
- Dietary accommodations
- Trauma-informed staff and curriculum
- Language support
- Programs designed for body safety
- Integration of IEP/504 plan
- PT/speech language

# Step 3 : Prioritize

## Priorities Reflection

**Academic preparedness**

- Examples
- Kids that attend improve academically
- Program is known for being rigorous
- Program has emphasis on college preparedness

**Other**

**Other**

**Other**

# Step 3 : Prioritize

## Priorities Organizer

**Need to Have**

**Nice to Have**

**Do not Need**

## Step 4 : Review

### What Next?

1. You have used the Family Choice Journal. What are the questions you want to ask the schools or programs you visit?

2. Think about the schools and activities you have learned about. Which schools or activities seem like the best fit based on what you wrote in your Family Choice Journal?

3. Visit the websites for schools or activities that seem the best fit. Contact them to schedule a tour. Bring your Family Choice Journal with you so you can reference your notes. Being there and meeting the staff will give you the best idea about how well the school or program matches your priorities.

# Family Choice Journal Survey

The Family Choice Journal was designed to help families prioritize their values, needs and desires when they are choosing a school or an out-of-school activity for their kids to participate in.

We want to see how we did! Please use the resource and fill out this 10-minute survey. Your feedback will inform changes we make to the resource.



The Family Choice Journal was designed by RESCHOOL, a Colorado education nonprofit that focuses on making sure the learning that happens in and outside of school is equitable and accessible to all young people.

