



Westchester Institute
for Human Development

<https://www.wihd.org>

Welcome!

Community Support Network Transition Institute 2022

Yes She Can^{INC}™

**WORK SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
FOR YOUNG WOMEN WITH AUTISM AND LEARNING DISABILITIES**

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Who are we?

- Non-profit started in 2013 with the intention of providing vocational training to young women on the autism spectrum
- Located in White Plains, NY
- Housed in an authentic retail business- Girl AGAIn, a resale boutique for second hand American Girl merchandise

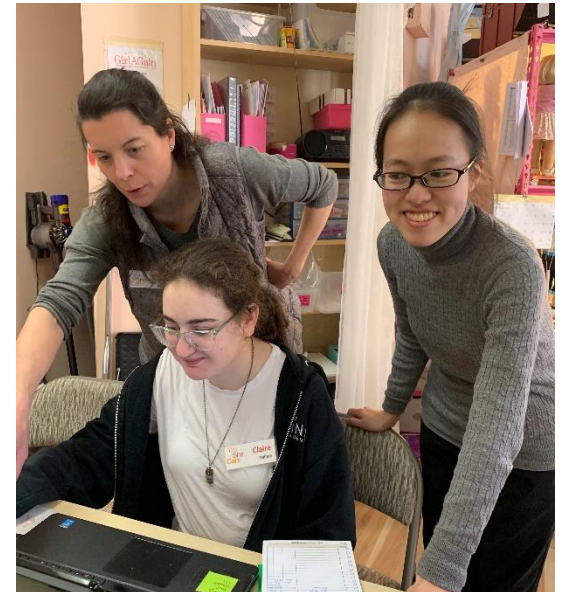


Mission

Yes She Can's mission is to help young women with autism and related social and learning disabilities develop the skills necessary to be successful in employment and to have greater independence.

The program is targeted to those transitioning from school to adult life needing to enhance skills in:

- Vocational readiness
- Self-advocacy
- Independent functioning
- Self-regulation
- Social Functioning



Profile of a typical trainee

- Women with ASD and related social, language and learning disabilities who have a goal of employment
- Women between the ages of 18-28
- High school graduates or those pursuing CDDS certificate
- College students or graduates
- Does not require hand-over-hand instruction, 1:1 supervision, or intensive behavioral supports
- Ability to commit to a set training schedule, including virtual classes



Program Components

In-person training

- Trainees commit to two to three training shifts per week; each training shift lasts 3 hours
- A training “session” lasts 15-16 weeks, or about the length of a trimester
- Trainees work with a coach (1:2) on learning tasks that support the business

Virtual Groups

- Core Skills Class: meets for 1.5 hours every Tuesday (30 minutes of Yoga, 60 minutes of class time) to participate in a discussion on topics related to employment
- Social Hour: meets for one hour every Friday, providing trainees the opportunity to socialize in a more informal way and practice appropriate social interaction

Guiding Principles

- Engage trainees to have direct involvement in retail operations
- On-the-job training in business processes
- Tasks broken down into small steps to encourage mastery
- Modeling, role-playing
- Focus on social/emotional regulation skills
- Teaching strategies to improve executive functioning
- Expectation of achievement
- Professional coaching staff to teach skills



Outcomes



- Authentic competitive work experience
- Acquisition of a variety of job skills needed in competitive employment & specific to individual's interests and strengths
- Increase in workplace social skills and communication skills needed in a job
- Ability to articulate her own support needs on the job
- Increased self-confidence
- Development of an exit strategy for employment

Program Cost

Yes She Can is *not* an OPWDD or ACCES-VR provider, which allows us to deliver a much more robust curriculum and training experience for those who participate. However, this means that there is a cost associated with enrolling in the program.

Families can use their OPWDD Self-Direction budget to pay for Yes She Can, or can choose to private pay.

A typical 15-16 week session will cost approximately \$3,600.

Next Steps

- Enrollment application submitted to Amanda Becker-Torres, Director of Training Programs
- Review of candidate's application and documents
- Candidate interview
- Candidate acceptance
- Create training schedule
- Memo of Understanding signed by trainee and family
- Orientation

Questions?

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