

Sunflower Bakery Teen Exposure Program (STEP) 2024-25

Sunflower Bakery will offer our teen baking classes and work exposure for students in high school ages 16 through graduation, with a variety of learning disabilities, ADHD, or low-support autism. These classes are a wonderful, real-time opportunity to experience baking in a professional kitchen, learn basic baking skills, safe food handling, kitchen safety, and have a taste of job expectations. All classes will be held at our location in Rockville at 5951 Halpine Road.

Topics covered include following recipes, measuring and weighing ingredients, using equipment and tools, piping, mixing, scooping, rolling, cleaning and more. Students will be introduced to “soft skills” desired by employers in the food industry, such as following directions, sharing equipment/tools, appropriate communication, time management, focus and being a team member. In our production bakery alongside professional chefs, teens are exposed to a real work environment and encouraged to self-advocate.

Sunflower’s STEP is approved under the Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) program of the Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) to provide our teen bakery exposure classes. If your son or daughter has signed up with DORS for the Pre-ETS program, then you should inform your counselor that you plan to apply for one of our classes, so DORS can begin the approval process. If you live in Maryland and have not yet signed up for Pre-ETS, please contact the nearest office of the Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services, DORS, for assistance. If a teen is not living in Maryland, or known to DORS, families may pay the fee privately.

Students will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis for each session. All students must be at least 16 years old by the beginning of the session for which they are registered. In order to ensure safety from COVID-19, all students must be either fully vaccinated at least 2 weeks before the starting date for the session attending or have an approved medical or religious exemption.

There will be 8 sessions offered between July 2024 and December 2024. The curriculum will be the same for all sessions. All SUMMER sessions will meet 4 days/week, Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:00-6:30pm and Fridays from 1-3:30pm. (We will skip Wednesdays.) Other sessions will meet for 2 consecutive weeks on Monday and Tuesday afternoons from 4:00-6:30pm, for a total of 4 classes. **A teen may register for one session each fiscal year.**

Following sessions meet 4-6:30pm M, T, Th and 1-3:30pm Fridays:

- ___Session 1 July 8, 9,11,12
- ___Session 2 July 15, 16,18,19
- ___Session 3 July 22,23,25,26
- ___Session 4 July 29, 30, Aug.1, 2

Following sessions meet 4pm-6:30pm each day:

- ___Session 5 September 9-10, 16-17
- ___Session 6 October 28-29, Nov. 4-5
- ___Session 7 November 11-12, 18-19
- ___Session 8 December 2-3, 9-10

Safety is of utmost concern in a kitchen with industrial equipment and sharp tools. Potential risk factors include uncontrolled seizures, difficulties with balance, control of anger or frustration, sensitivity to sensory irritants, and/or inability to remain standing throughout the 2½-hour class. If a student requires 1:1 assistance, their personal support person may attend the class. Generally, teens are expected to participate as one of 5 students with a professional Chef Instructor and two assistants.

To apply, please complete the following Application and return as indicated on the Application Form either by email to sara@sunflowerbakery.org; by postal service, or in person to 5951 Halpine Rd., Rockville, MD 20851, Attention: Sara Portman Milner, LCSW-C. When your application is received, we will contact you for a required overview session. Please contact Sara Portman Milner at sara@sunflowerbakery.org if you would like more information or have any questions or concerns.