Students participating in the Job Skills Training Programs will receive experiential training in industrial areas as well as life skills which will allow them to explore future career opportunities. Some of these skills include: self-sufficiency, team work, safety, communication, and interaction with peers and adults.

In addition, students learn real-life work skills including: signing in and out, filling out time/pay sheets, respect for others in a work environment, respect for personal property, and problem-solving in a group environment.

Communication skills are very important and are included in the everyday activities in all of the Job Skills Training Programs. These programs offer each juvenile the opportunity to practice responsible behavior prior to being released to their home community.

There are currently four programs included in the Job Skills Training area. They include: Young Craftsman, Upholstery, Carpentry, and Sewing and Ceramics. These programs all require the student to complete a standard job application. The students are also required to participate in a job interview before program entry. All programs have the potential to pay the students based on their level in the BARJ system in their facility.

Students participating in the Young Craftsmen Program receive hands-on experience in the woodworking field. Some of the skills to be learned include: proper use and care of sophisticated manual and electrical equipment appropriate to woodworking as well as how to work in an actual woodworking shop. More specific skills include: basic woodworking techniques through hands-on experience by building chairs, tables, bird houses, picture frames, clocks, signs and pens in addition to basic furniture repair. Students learn the proper use and care of band and scroll saws, lathes, wood planes, nail guns, hammers, screw drivers, tape measures, sanders, drills, squares, rulers, counter sinks, paint brushes, wood clamps, and a variety of nails, screws, nuts, and bolts.

Students participating in the Upholstery Program will receive hands-on experience in the Upholstery field. Some of the skills to be learned include: the care and use of sophisticated machinery such as industrial sewing machines, compressors, staple guns, button making tools, power and electrical hand tools such as drills and sanders and basic manual tools.

Additional skills taught include: assessing furniture items for necessary repairs and wood reconditioning, proper identification of various types of wood and age and style of furniture item, estimating the projected cost of repair/reupholstering of item, record keeping methods, and fabric removal and cutting procedures.

Proper methods of measuring and estimating fabric and trim yardage, tacking and stapling, button installation methods, sewing cording, zippers, pillows and cushions are also taught.
The Carpentry Program is a setting where the proper use and care of tools is taught. The tools include older hand tools and new, more current tools found in manufacturing and jobsite use today. Students learn the basics and add to that with something new almost every day. Students are taught to work with their hands and their heads.

The program provides a SAFE environment in which to perfect skills and learn the PROPER way to use tools and equipment. Jobsite safety is stressed, as well as shop and tool safety. Program Instructors want to help students learn to safely use tools from hand tools to power tools and computers.

Of course, the most important tool we work with is our mind. Since the limits of what can be accomplished with wood are only the limits of our imagination, it is hard to describe all of the possibilities for this class. Skills training allows students to work on different projects. These can include things from pens, pencils and bowls, rocking chairs, and even full sized house wall packages.

The Sewing program offers specific instruction on topics involved in the sewing industry. Some of these topics include sewing machine operation, care, and maintenance.

Hand stitching as well as machine use is covered. Appropriate terminology used in the industry and other tools and materials in the sewing and textiles industry is also covered. Some of the projects which are made in this area are: pillows, table runners and napkins, pocketbooks, and tote bags. These projects require skills with pattern use and standard stitching techniques from the textile industry.

The Ceramics program exposes students to the terminology and techniques used in the ceramics industry. This can include pottery making, involving molds and slip forming, flat forming, and wheel usage. After the forming process, the program moves to the finishing process including firing and glazing. There is also a chance to do custom paint and other art on ceramic tiles. Some of the projects in this program include: trivets for hot pans, hand built bowls and mugs, flower pots, candle holders, framed ceramic tile art, and anything else which showcases the artistic talents of the students.

Through these non-traditional training programs, instructors are able to use techniques which can be adapted to meet the needs of the students. They can learn patience without realizing it. They can learn anger management techniques without it being a specific topic. They learn problem solving methods in a real world setting and see how these things apply to everyday life.

The short term result of the efforts of these programs is to yield high quality products which are often offered for sale in the DJJ Store of HOPE. The long term effect is that through these programs, the participating juvenile’s overall learning potential and skill performance are improved. This allows the juvenile to demonstrate improvements in their reading, math, and behavior in school and dorm settings as well as in a work environment.

DJJ sees these programs reaching our experiential learners and helping them with skills needed for reintegration and employment upon their release.

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For additional DJJ resources please visit our website:
http://www.state.sc.us/djj/