

What Kind of Businesses Do People with Intellectual Disabilities Own



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-QHpTN0P9g&t=10s>

Here is our True or False Quiz for Starting Your Own Business

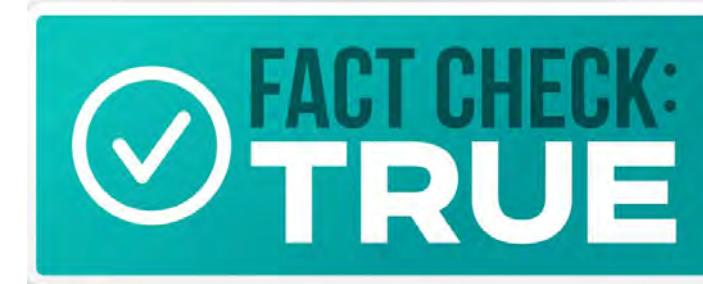
It won't take long to start my business.

This is *false*. Starting a business can take time. Depending on how big your business is, planning can take months or even a year. A smaller business might take a few months, but a bigger one could take a year or more. After opening, it might take another year or longer to start making a profit.

Building a business is a long process and requires patience.

I'll be good at running a business because I'm good at making my product or providing my service.

Maybe. Running a business means doing more than just making your product or providing your service. You'll also need to handle things like ordering materials, tracking sales, managing money, paying bills, advertising, talking to customers, answering emails, and keeping your workspace clean.



More True or False Questions About Starting Your Own Business

I'll work for myself and be my own boss.

Maybe. Being your own boss gives you independence, but it also means taking care of everything. You're responsible for all parts of the business, not just the tasks you enjoy. You'll also need to meet the needs of your customers and vendors.

I can work whenever I want and as much or as little as I want.

This is *false*. While self-employment offers some flexibility, it often requires long hours—sometimes more than a full-time job. You'll need consistent business hours for your customers and to make money. Taking time off can also be tough unless you have someone to help run your business.



More True or False Questions About Starting Your Own Business

Self-employment is a good fit because I don't want to work with other people.

This is *false*. Business owners need to work with others to succeed. You'll need to communicate with customers, suppliers, advertisers, accountants, and other people to keep your business running smoothly.

It's easy to find money to start a business.

This is *false*. Most start-up funds come from your own savings or a business loan. To get a loan, you'll need good credit, a solid business plan, and some of your own money to invest. Even if Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) helps with start-up costs, you may still need extra money from a loan, a grant, or your savings.

Self-employment is too hard for me to succeed.

This is *false*. Self-employment is possible if you're willing to put in the time and effort. It can take months or years to learn the skills you need to plan, open, and grow your business. Starting with realistic goals can help you succeed.

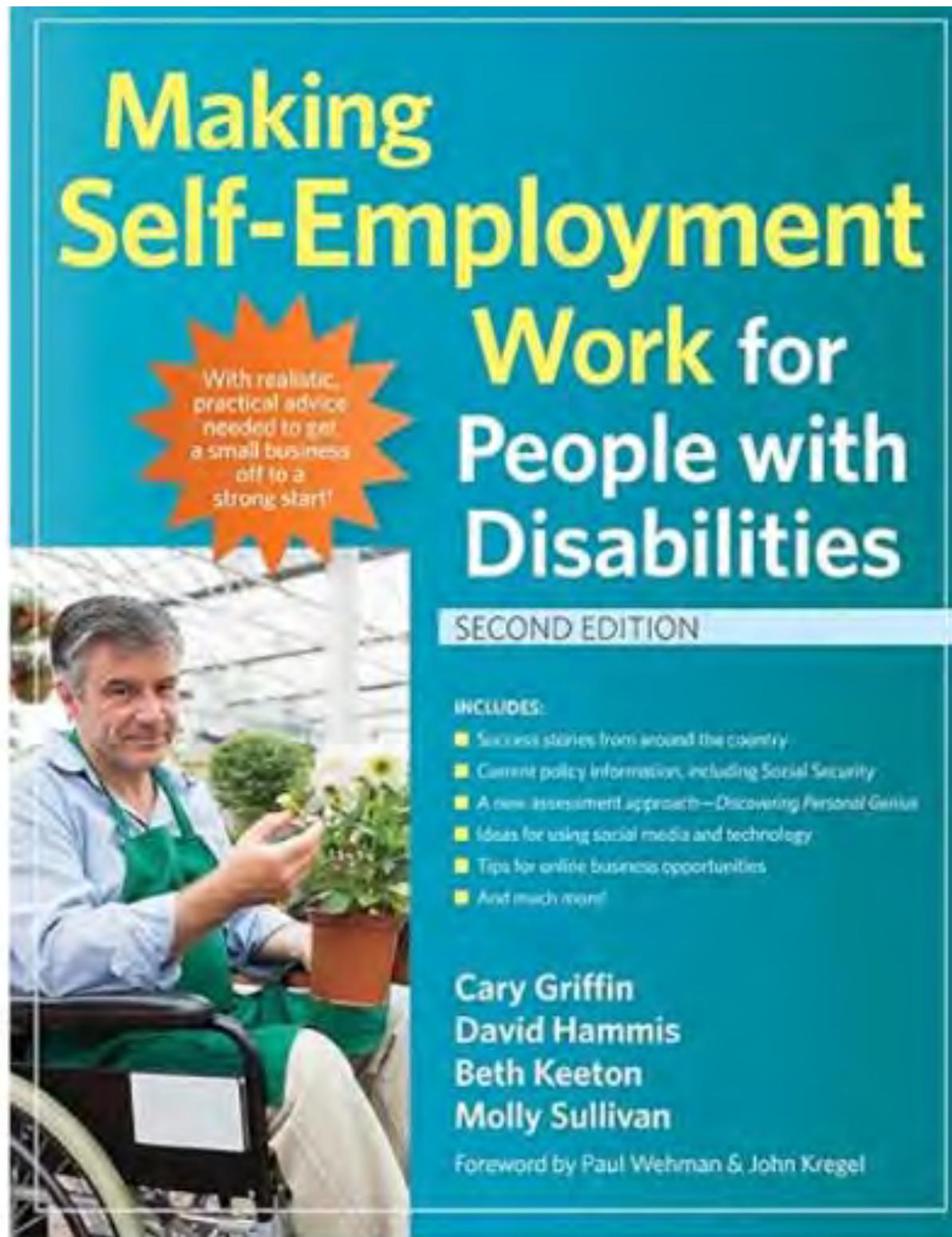


Ellice Patterson and Abilities Dance Boston

Ellice Patterson started **Abilities Dance Boston**, a professional dance company welcoming people with disabilities.

- Ellice grew up in Mississippi and began dancing at 4 years old.
- She faced challenges joining traditional dance companies that didn't support dancers with disabilities,
- That is why she started her own dance company where everyone, no matter their ability, could be a professional dancer.





Support People With Disabilities to build a business plan based on their goals and interests and maintain their benefits while navigating financial and social security systems.

https://www.amazon.com/Making-Self-Employment-Work-People-Disabilities/dp/1598574035/ref=sr_1_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1393620395&sr=1-2&keywords=making+self+employment+work+for+people+with+disabilities#

Collette Divitto

Collette's Story

- Collette Divitto is a young woman with Down Syndrome that owns a successful cookie company called

Collettey's Cookies –

I had the pleasure of meeting Collette when she presented at the Youth Leadership forum. She really inspired me!

Let's look at her story.

<https://colletteys.com/>



Here Are Two News Stories About Colettety's Cookies

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nmm_0-fwi_mg

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ejPrsIW0gl8>



Carol Grabbe Self-Advocate Coordinator IFS/SD Division CT Developmental Services



John Cronin

- John Cronin is a young man with Down Syndrome.
- He wanted to start his own business with the help of his father.
- In 2016 John created Johns crazy socks. His socks are sold around the world. The company donates 5% of their profit to the special Olympics.
- Let's learn more about John and his company.



John's Crazy Socks

Now let's watch a video and learn more about John.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ytnqO74aCuo>



Beanz & Co. in Avon

BeanZ & Co. is an inclusive coffee cafe with the mission to employ and improve the lives of people with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities. Their mission is to spread awareness of and reduce the 80% unemployment rate of individuals with IDD in Connecticut and to promote inclusive workplaces everywhere.





Mia Peterson - Aiming High

Mia is remembered for running her business, Aiming High

- She gave talks at conferences. Mia shared her story of growing up with a disability, focusing on her strengths, getting support where needed, and becoming a successful businesswoman and advocate.
- Her dad helped with business cards, travel plans, and money,
- Her mom helped her adjust her speeches for different audiences.

Mia passed away in 2021.

Eric wrote a business plan with Vocational Rehab & a family friend

Eric lives in Portland, Maine, and says he is "helpful, kind, and friendly to everyone." He runs his own business called Eric's Pizza Express. He sells pizza, sandwiches, and drinks from Anthony's Italian Kitchen, a popular local restaurant. Eric does it all—he sets up and takes down his cart, serves customers, and handles the cash register.





Buttons 'n Bears, Oh My! started in 2008.

They sell custom buttons, magnets, and stuffed animals

- Anna and Jackson, with help from their job coaches, work with people and groups to create the designs for any event.
- Anna and Jackson stay busy running their shop in Davis, selling at local events, and making buttons and magnets for each event.



Friends since middle school





Emilea lives in a small town in Iowa. She first worked in a sheltered workshop, but she and her family wanted her to have a job out in the community.



Em's Coffee Co. opened its doors in December 2009. The coffee shop is open Monday through Saturday, and Emilea works there 40 hours a week. Each weekday, she arrives early to start making coffee, update the chalkboard menu, and open the shop for customers by 6:30 a.m.

Emilea takes on many roles at her coffee shop. She manages the staff, runs the cash register, and talks to customers both in person and on the phone. She has support from a job coach. Her mom helps with bookkeeping, and three other employees work at the shop, serving customers and keeping everything clean. Two of those employees also have disabilities.



Before we go into breakout rooms Let's hear from Rick Hodgdon (CA), Katie Moore (TN), Robert Levy and (CA) Numbers (MN) who signed up to comment today.

#1 Are there any success stories from your state about people with disabilities starting and running their own business?

#2 What can self-advocacy groups do to get the word out about self-employment?