

Preparing Your TEEN for a Successful Career

10 Tips for Parents

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| 1 | Encourage your teen to investigate a variety of careers. Talk about work and your own job at the dinner table. Talk with friends and relatives about work when your children are present – but not complaints and gossip! |
| 2 | Stress to your teen that school is their work. Attendance is important. You don't take a day off from work just because you feel like it. The same goes for school. |
| 3 | Explore with your teen, without being judgmental, her or his personal talents, strengths, likes and dislikes. Ask: What do you like to do? What skills do you have? Do you like being around people? Do you prefer working outdoors or indoors? Do you like to take things apart? Do you prefer school courses with a lot of 'doing' or with a lot of reading? The more teens know about themselves, the easier it'll be for them to recognize the careers that suit them best. |
| 4 | <p>Help your teen experience first hand as many different work situations as possible. Through school, your employer, friends and relatives, get your teen to take advantage of both formal and informal work exposure programs. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Job shadowing – going through a day or two of work watching someone do his or her job ➤ Mentoring – being paired with a working adult for discussion of job and career likes and dislikes and to identify particular skills and knowledge an employee needs on the job ➤ Internships – a chance to work in a job with an employer for a few weeks or longer to learn more about a career field |
| 5 | <p>Provide as many opportunities as you can for your son or daughter to learn technology. This knowledge is essential for success in the workplace. Encourage your teenager to sign up for a computer literacy course in school, at the “Y”, or through a youth group.</p> <p>If you don't have a computer at home, your child may be able to use one at your local library. Find out what technology courses your school offers and talk them over with your teen. Taking such a course will give your student a much better understanding of today's technological world and a chance to take a hands-on look at the tools, techniques and skills involved in a range of careers.</p> |
| 6 | <p>Go with your teen to career fairs in your area. Find out what career information is available through your school. Many schools maintain extensive career reference libraries, including computerized resources.</p> <p>Finding a career has a big payoff –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If your teen is doing well, a career focus can make selecting a college and choosing a major easier. ➤ If your teen is struggling in school, a career focus can add purpose to his or her studies and give grades a lift. |

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| 7 | Talk to your teen about a career as a goal of education. It's okay that teens usually don't know what they want to do for the rest of their lives. What's not okay is avoiding thinking about future career goals altogether. Preparing for a career is part of what education is about. Don't let your son or daughter get short-changed. |
| 8 | Guide your teenager toward acquiring skills. Every employment opportunity requires people to use both head and hand skills. Encourage your teen to take courses that give him or her the opportunity to apply skills. |
| 9 | Give your teen responsibility, the more the better. Begin with jobs around the house or for a neighbor or an older relative. Young people need to learn that we all have to carry our own weight – that we're all important and that people rely on us to get things done. |
| 10 | Suggest that your teen consider career opportunities that were once considered only for females. There are often excellent job opportunities for persons entering non-traditional career fields. It may take extra commitment to cross gender lines, but there are rewards. |
| Bonus Tip | Keep a sense of humor. No matter how hard we try to point our sons and daughters in the right direction, we can't live their lives for them. So keep your approach light. Be persistent in presenting opportunities; be relaxed in expecting outcomes. Avoid being judgmental. |

Does Your Teenager Know What She or He Wants To Do For A Living?

Probably Not –

at least not for sure. And that's not surprising. There are lots of choices – many of which your son or daughter may not even know about – and how you decide and then achieve your goal can be very mystifying.

As a parent, you can play a big role in helping your teenager move toward a successful career. Believe it or not, you're one of the most powerful influences in his or her life, according to surveys of teenagers. And what you say and the opportunities you provide to your teenager to learn more about careers can be very important.

So what do you do?

Join with educators at your son's or daughter's school to see that he or she gets the best exposure possible to the work world. You can do more than you think!

One of the most important goals for education is preparation for a career. Students need to understand why they need to learn what they are learning and how it relates to the rest of their lives, especially to a future career. And they need exposure to many careers so they can make the best possible choice for them. Parents and educators are partners in assuring a smooth school-to-career transition for students.

What Does It Take to Succeed in a Career Today?

The requirements are changing as work becomes more dependent upon technology and as employers compete in a global economy. Each career has its unique qualifications, but in general, all employees need:

- Academic knowledge
- Technical proficiency
- Productive work habits
- The ability to think logically
- Communication skills
- The ability to work in teams
- Problem-solving skills

School-to-Careers Transition

Your teenager's school is part of a nationwide movement to make education more effective in preparing students for careers. This new approach to education incorporates career exploration, school and work based learning and an emphasis on higher education to help students begin in high school to make the choice that will eventually lead them to productive careers. This new system of education calls for a strong working partnership of schools, area employers and parents.

School-to-Careers Systems

A school-to-careers system is designed to help all students move smoothly from high school into further education and meaningful employment. It helps students explore multiple options and begin to make decisions about the career path that might be best.

Schools and employers work together to make the learning experience realistic and effective.

Here's what to expect:

School-Based Learning

- Career exploration and counseling
- A career-major focus
- A high school program of study with high standards which prepares students for post-secondary education
- Options students can choose to earn a skills certificate, showing future employers what the students know and can do
- A much closer interrelationship between academic and vocational subjects
- Formal arrangements that allow students to obtain advance college credit while still in high school

Work-Based Learning

- Work experience (paid or unpaid)
- Reinforcement of school-based learning through the work experience
- Workplace mentoring
- Instruction in general workplace skills
- Learning about all aspects of an industry