



EXPLORING CAREERS WITH YOUR STUDENT

CLUSTERS OF STUDY

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SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATHEMATICS

TRANSPORTATION, DISTRIBUTION AND LOGISTICS

The future holds limitless career paths for your child. Guiding your child's choices is the difficult part. The advantage of Personal Pathways to Success is that it lets students start exploring their future today — both in the classroom and in real job environments. But students can't start down the path alone. They need your help in defining their interests and aspirations — your help is key to their success.

HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD IDENTIFY HIS OR HER INTERESTS?

You can help your child identify interests by talking about what they like to do. Some questions to consider:

- What is your favorite school subject? Do you have any special skills or talents? What are your extracurricular activities? Hobbies?
- What have you done that you're most proud of?
- How do you enjoy spending your free time?
- What do you like to do with your friends?
- What kinds of jobs do you find interesting?

Talk about the good and bad points of jobs (working weekends, lots of travel, minimal freedom, etc.). Share your own experiences of education and employment. Take advantage of time together running errands or watching TV to talk about what's involved in certain career paths.

REFINING INTERESTS FOR MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Help students think critically about the careers you've spoken about and any information you have shared.

- Together, make a list of careers the student is interested in. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each?
- What are the requirements for these careers? What's the availability of these careers in your area?

IDEAS FOR MORE CAREER INSIGHTS

- **An informational interview:** Encourage your child to call people who work in the fields in which he or she is interested with questions like: What do you do in a typical day? How did you decide on this career? What kind of training did you need for this career? What do you like most about your work? What do you like least about your work?
- **Career fairs:** Attend career fairs with your child and talk about the various careers represented, the range of work styles as well as the education and training needed.
- **Career interest inventories:** Your child has had an opportunity to take a career interest inventory or assessment in middle and high school. Indicators about your child's career interests on these inventories may be helpful in discussing career choices.



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- Job shadowing: Your child can “shadow” people at work as they go about their daily activities. You can discuss these options with your child’s guidance counselor, or visit www.jobshadow.org for more information.
- Internships and work-based learning: Your child can explore career interests while gaining academic credit. Some internships and work-based learning programs are paid. If you’d like more information about these opportunities in your area, please see your child’s guidance counselor.
- Volunteer work: Your child can volunteer for an organization in his or her career interest area.

Remember that career choice is a personal decision. Be aware that your child may change his or her career interest as he or she is exposed to more choices.

Continue to encourage your child to explore. The more informed he or she is, the better his or her career choices will be.

WHAT NOW?

As you and your child explore careers together through conversation and/or tools on this website, keep this information to guide discussion with your child’s guidance counselor. Your child will complete an Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) anytime during his or her 8th grade year and will have an opportunity to choose a career cluster. In the 10th grade, your child will select a major within the chosen career cluster. This is an evolving process, working to refine the likes and strengths of your student for future success.