

CAREER COACHING YOUR TEENS

A Guide for Parents



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Career Practitioners/Teachers

This guide was prepared to help parents support their teens as they explore career options. It provides suggestions on career planning, how to talk to teens about career choices and how to find an ally who can help prepare teens for entry into the workforce.

You may wish to use this guide as a background document for parent-teacher meetings or drawing on the suggestions to develop activities and/or referring parents and their teens to the resource list for additional information.

Career Coaching Your Teens: A guide for parents has been adapted (with permission) from *A Career Development Resource for Parents: Helping parents explore the role of coach and ally* produced by the Canada Career Information Partnership (CCIP). *Career Coaching Your Teens* has been adapted for Albertans and includes Alberta specific resources. The original CCIP version can be downloaded from the Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF) website at www.ccdf.ca.

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Information in this publication was accurate, to the best of our knowledge, at the time of printing. However, legislation, labour market information, websites and programs are subject to change, and we encourage you to confirm with additional sources of information when making career, education, employment and business decisions.

The Province of Alberta is working in partnership with the Government of Canada to provide employment support programs and services.

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All photos in this booklet are for illustrative purposes only. They are not actual photos of any individuals mentioned.

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Introduction

As your teens go through high school, they will begin to think about their future and about different occupations.



They may have questions about

- ① how to find their career passion
- ① how to choose a career path that's right for them
- ① what's going on in the labour market
- ① which post-secondary schools to attend and what grades they'll need to be accepted
- ① what would happen if they changed their minds after they made a choice

As a parent, you play an important role in supporting your teens with encouragement and information as they begin their career and life journeys.

This guide was developed to help you support your teens as they begin to explore their career options and make decisions about their future. It provides practical ideas and resources you can use in your role as a parent, a coach and an ally.

QUICK FACT

Parents are the greatest influence on teens who are choosing a career path. The teens interviewed for this publication listed their parents as the people they were most likely to talk to about careers.



Your Role as a Career Coach

Coaching is about being an ally, helping your teens realize their ideas and goals and make decisions.

A coach is a guide, a helper, a supporter, an encourager and a partner. An ally is someone who helps or co-operates with another.

Becoming a career coach and ally means...

- helping your teens find their passions and explore their interests
- building on positive career-related experiences in your life and theirs
- helping your teens set challenging but achievable career goals
- recognizing and rewarding your teens for their efforts and successes
- supporting your teens in their career-related choices and through their mistakes
- connecting your teens with the people and resources they need to help them make informed career decisions
- encouraging your teens to “try on” careers by volunteering or through work experience or job-shadowing opportunities at school or in the community
- exploring career and educational options with your teens
- encouraging your teens to try new things
- being informed about the career-related opportunities from which your teens can choose

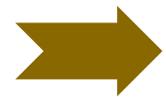
The following section details four factors that will help you be a good career coach for your teens:

STAY UP TO
DATE

TALK TO
YOUR TEENS

BE
A GOOD
ROLE
MODEL

FIND HELP



Stay up to date

The world of work has changed dramatically in the past few decades.

Sometimes it's hard to see the changes especially if you've been part of the workforce or in your chosen occupation for a long time. You may need to do a bit of research to identify new workplace trends, find out about emerging occupations and discover which industries are expected to have the greatest demand for workers. You'll need this information to help your teens make informed career decisions.

Keeping up-to-date can be as simple as reading the newspaper or searching online.



For more information, see the Resources section starting on p. 24.

Your teens may be facing some of the same things you did when you were young, but there may also be differences. Today's teens have grown up using technology. They're adaptable, and they value change.

The choices available to today's teens have increased dramatically, but the amount of information they have to sort through can be overwhelming. To help your teens prepare, it's important to understand what they're going through.



The teens interviewed for this publication shared a number of concerns:

- They aren't sure how they want to live their lives.
- They fear that they may not achieve their dreams.
- They worry that making the wrong choice now will affect them for a long time.
- They don't feel they can talk to their parents about what's going on in their lives.
- They're afraid they won't have time to find themselves and discover their passions.
- There is so much to decide and so much going on in their lives.
- They haven't been exposed to enough occupations to know which appeal to them.

The workplace of today

Most of Canada's youth today are likely to experience

- an average of **15** employment transitions in their working lifetime
- a variety of occupations in up to **five** different sectors of the economy
- a **variety** of concurrent work roles (multi-tasking)
- planned and unplanned **gaps** of no work

Source: *Guiding Youth: Finding a Career Path and Connecting to Work workshop*

Talk to your teens

Many of the teens interviewed for this publication said they want to discuss their careers and career concerns with their parents.

It's important to talk to your teens to show that you're interested—and there to help. Here are some suggestions to get the conversation started:

- Bring discussions about career choices and interests to the kitchen table.
- Use time spent in the car to ask your teens about their interests and activities.
- Get involved in an activity that you do with your teens. For example, consider volunteering together.
- Make a list of occupations of interest. Each month, select an occupation to explore and discuss with your teens.
- Clip out career-related articles. Put them on the fridge for everyone to see and discuss.
- Explore music, books, websites, movies, TV shows, sports and other things your teens are interested in. Use these as starting points for career-related discussions.

Be a good role model

There are many ways you can help your teens to plan a career.

Sometimes your role may be to simply listen or offer encouragement. Sometimes you'll need to get more involved.

One way to support your teens is to offer your own experience and model good career planning. Here are some tips:

- Talk with your teens about positive work experiences you've had. This sends the message that work can be meaningful and enjoyable.
- Let your teens see that life is a combination of hard work and enjoyment. Balance is important.
- Show your teens how to embrace change and try new things. Show them that it's fine to take risks and that lifelong learning and skill development are important.
- Show your teens that it's okay to make mistakes—in work and in life. Share how your own mistakes have helped you learn and grow.



You're an important role model for your teens, and your actions, words and demeanour speak volumes about your values and opinions.

Find help

Navigating the process of connecting with your teens and understanding career planning is a challenge. You'll quickly realize it's important to find coaches and allies for yourself, as well as being a coach and ally to your teens.

Allies come in many different forms. Some will be with you for a long time. Others will help with a specific situation. However long they are involved, it's important to know who you can turn to for support.

You can find allies among the people who play a major role in your teens' life—coaches, teachers, guidance counsellors, friends, family, elders, religious or community leaders, or even other parents. You can also find helpful people at the nearest Alberta Supports Centre. (See p.24 for details.)

Finding allies

Think about which of your allies could help you

- understand your teens' interests, strengths and beliefs and how to explore them
- find out about available careers and opportunities
- learn about relevant education and training opportunities
- come up with ideas on how to pay for your teens' education
- support your teens through the issues or challenges they're facing. For more information go to alis.alberta.ca



What is Career Planning?

Career planning is a dynamic process.

Teens don't need to worry about making one big career decision that they'll have to live with the rest of their life. They just need to find an occupation that fits their skills, interests, values and beliefs right now. As they journey through life they'll continue to evaluate and adjust their career plans in response to external factors such as changes in the workplace, and internal factors like a shift in their interests or a change in their life circumstances.

All the while, they'll be creating the life they want to live.

Career planning is a lifelong journey, and the cycle repeats over and over again. Every journey has its unexpected turns, pit stops and even a few speeding tickets!

As your teens make occupational choices, things may happen to change their plans. Help your teens prepare for the good and the bad along their journey and discuss the importance of having a backup plan.

As a parent, your role is to coach your teens through each of these steps. We'll give you some tips in the next section.

What are the steps?

Career planning is a continuous cycle that includes four steps

1. get to know yourself
2. explore possibilities
3. make a choice
4. take action



THE CAREER PLANNING CYCLE: A ROAD MAP FOR TEENS

Career planning is a cycle you'll repeat many times throughout your life.
Each time, you'll learn and put your experience to work for you.

GET TO KNOW YOURSELF

Find out your interests, values, personality, skills,
assets and resources.



EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES

Research, try things out, narrow down your choices
and find the best fit.



MAKE A CHOICE

Develop a plan and set career goals that will take you
where you want to go.



TAKE ACTION

Put your plan into action—learn along the way
and achieve your goals.



Planning a career is a bit like planning a trip. After all, life is a journey and if you take it step by step, it will be enjoyable and memorable.

In developing a career plan, here are the steps you'll need to take over and over again. Each time, you'll have more life lessons and experience you can put to work for you.

1

GET TO KNOW YOURSELF

Find out your interests, values, beliefs, personality, skills, assets and resources. Who are you? What's important to you? What are you good at? What do you like to do, and how do you like to learn? What do you really want in your life?

2

EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES

Research a number of occupations and try things out before you narrow down your choices. Armed with the information you've gathered about yourself, make a list of options that are the best fit for you.

3

MAKE A CHOICE

Develop a plan and set career goals that will take you where you want to go. This is a critical step in the career planning process. You'll need to create your own personal vision of a meaningful and satisfying future, identify goals to create your desired future and think about what you'll need to do to move forward. Keep in mind that you don't have to choose a specific occupation: just focus on a general career direction.

4

TAKE ACTION

Put your plan into action. Identify the requirements for working in your chosen career. You'll learn along the way as you work toward your goals.

STEP 1

Get to know yourself



How you can help

In this step, your teens gather information about themselves. The purpose is to “tune in” and identify their interests, values, beliefs, personality, skills, strengths, learning styles and preferred lifestyle. This is an important exercise: people who choose occupations that match their interests, values and skills tend to enjoy their work. They also tend to achieve their career and personal goals.

Teens may have a hard time pinpointing their strengths and interests. They may not see how the things they enjoy doing can launch them on a fulfilling career path.

One way for teens to gather information about themselves is through formal tests or self-assessment inventories: your teens may have completed such a test or inventory at school.

Or, they can go to alis.alberta.ca/CAREERinsite and complete self-assessment quizzes and exercises.

You can help your teens get to know themselves and find their passion by brainstorming to build on something they already love to do. Developing a career map can also be helpful. (See p. 15 for details.)

Brainstorming examples

Ask probing questions to find out what attracts your teens to their favourite pursuits, and to get them thinking about related occupations that might interest them.

If your daughter wants to be a professional basketball player, you could have a conversation that goes like this:

What would you like about playing basketball as an occupation?

What other careers have basketball players gone on to after basketball?
Do any of these interest you?

If your son wants to be a musician, your conversation might go like this:

What are the benefits of making a living as a musician?

When a musician makes an album and goes on tour, what are some of the other occupations involved?
Do any of these interest you?



Be curious! Ask questions that will help your teens identify their likes and dislikes and what is important to them. Ask positive, focused questions that will help them examine their preferences, talents and abilities and begin to see patterns and possibilities. Here are some examples:

What's your favourite subject at school? Why?

What did you like about working on _____?
What was challenging?

What do you see when you picture your life a few years from now?

Have you ever watched someone work and thought, "That's my dream job"?

Is there something you've always wanted to do but were afraid to try?

Be observant and generous with your praise. We often don't know where our skills lie until someone else sees the value in what we do.

Pay attention. How your teens spend their time is often a clue to what they are good at. Is your son or daughter studious? Athletic? Involved in student politics? In a band? Talk about how such interests might fit into their career plans.

Share what you enjoy about your own job. Talk about how your values, interests, skills and personality link to your work.

Tip: Some teens may have more success reflecting on their experiences by writing in a journal rather than having a discussion.

STEP 2

Explore possibilities

Armed with the information they have gathered about themselves, your teens' next step is to generate a list of options that matches their profiles. This involves researching various occupations and industry sectors, trying things out, narrowing down their choices and figuring out which ones are the best fits.

Tip: Thinking about a career sector rather than a specific occupation will help your teens generate a bigger list of options that match their interests. A sector is a group of similar occupations that require similar skill sets, values and interests. For example, teacher, tutor and teacher's aide are occupations in the education sector.



How and why do people choose a career?

Everyone is different, but here are some common reasons people choose a career:

1. Passion

A lifelong passion can turn into a career.

2. Inspiration

People choose careers because someone or something inspired them along their career path.

3. Experience

Travelling, working or starting a family can lead people to certain career paths.

Use your connections. When your teens are researching an occupation, it's helpful to interview someone working in the field. Offer to use your network of friends, family, co-workers and neighbours to find someone (or someone who knows someone) working in that occupation.



See p. 16 for interview question ideas.

Offer support. Encourage your teens to be open to new ideas and to think about non-traditional occupations, emerging fields, self-employment or apprenticeship.

Help your teens research the labour market and specific occupations. Check out alis.alberta.ca for current labour market information, employment trends, occupational profiles, and wage and salary information.



For more links, see the Resources section starting on p. 24.

STEP 3

Make a choice

This is a critical step in the career planning process. Armed with self-knowledge and research, your teens' next step is to create their own personal vision of a meaningful, satisfying future. They'll identify goals and think about what they'll need to do to move forward.

Your teens don't have to choose a specific occupation at this stage. The task is to focus on a general career direction.

Review the information your teens have gathered on various occupations. Discuss how each occupation fits with what your teens know about themselves and what they want their life to look like. For example, ask your teens how well each of their occupational choices rates when they consider the following factors:

what's important to them

what skills they'll use

what their lifestyle will be

what they'll gain

what their interests are

what their income will be

what they'll give up

what their needs are

Share your own career experience with your teens. Explain how your job has parts that match and parts that don't match your preferences.

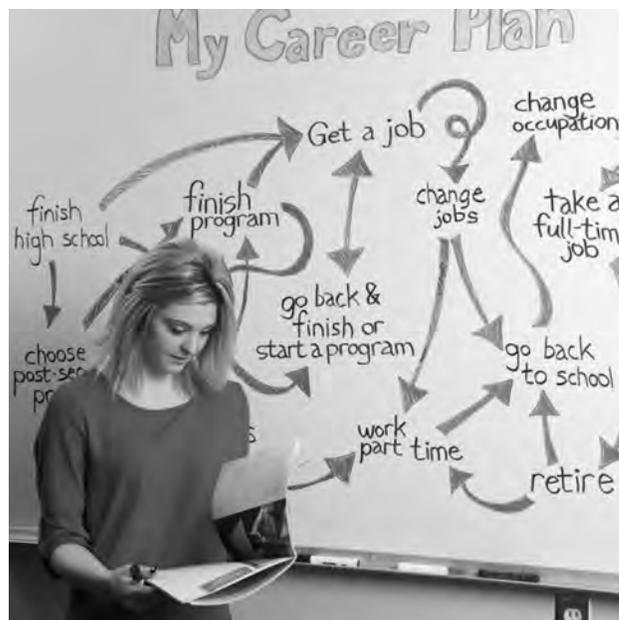
Encourage your teens to look at the options again and decide which factors are most important when it comes to a fit for them. Developing a list of pros and cons can help to narrow down the choices.

Acknowledge your teens' fears, and remind them that career decisions aren't carved in stone: they can always be changed later.

Express confidence in your teens' ability to make a decision that's right for them.

Offer your support to help your teens plan the next steps.

Tip: Some teens have a hard time making a decision. If this is the case for your teens, encourage them to make short-term decisions that keep as many options open as possible.



Sharing your experience is a great place to start

Teens respect honesty. They want to know that what they're feeling isn't so different from what you felt at their age.

Think back to the way you saw your future when you were a teenager. How much of what you experienced do you think your teens are going through?

What did you want to be at your child's age? What did you become?

What were your interests and passions? How are these reflected in your current job?

Who helped you find your career path? How did you get where you are now?

What stories could you share about your own experience?

What lessons did you learn from your experiences?

How did the adults in your life help you along your path?

What changes would you make if you could?

What are the things you wouldn't change?

What did you learn from your experience with your own parents?

STEP 4

Take action

Once your teens have a goal, they'll need a plan to achieve it. Finding out what's needed to work in their chosen field is a good place to start.



Help your teens identify the education and training they'll need for their chosen careers. Break out the requirements into specific, manageable tasks. For each task set goals and timelines for completion.

Here are some questions to think about:

- ① Which post-secondary institutions offer the programs your teens need?
- ① Which post-secondary institution is the best choice? Does it offer information sessions or open houses? If so, what are the dates?
- ① What are the prerequisites for acceptance into the program? What are the admissions quotas?
- ① Are there any special requirements? (For example, do applicants need tools or equipment? experience? a career investigation?)
- ① What is the application deadline?
- ① Is funding available? Are your teens eligible for any scholarships? Do they need to apply for student aid? What are the application deadlines for scholarships or student loans?

Choose a learning path

More and more occupations require considerable post-secondary training. However, university is only one of many educational options that opens doors to meaningful career opportunities. Learning is essential, but the way we choose to learn is flexible.

After high school, most teens choose one of the following paths to further learning:

- post-secondary education or training at college, university-college, university, technical institutes or private training institutions
- apprenticeship
- finding work and learning on the job
- volunteering
- taking a year off to work, travel or just to figure out their next steps

Each path has its own benefits.

Identify the areas in which your teens will need support and decide what you can do to help. For example, talk to your teens about what you can contribute to finance their education. Go with them to information sessions and open houses.

Be supportive when your teens encounter obstacles. Because teens lack life experience, problems that may seem small to you may seem insurmountable to them.

Encourage your teens to persevere when they face adversity. Help them find alternative ways to reach their goals.

Tip: Sometimes it's easier to start at the goal and work backwards to the present. For example, perhaps your teen's chosen field requires specific post-secondary training. Start by determining what needs to be done to get this training.

Tools for Successful Career Development and a Successful Career

Career maps

Developing a career map can help your teens make good choices and select the best options for reaching their goals.

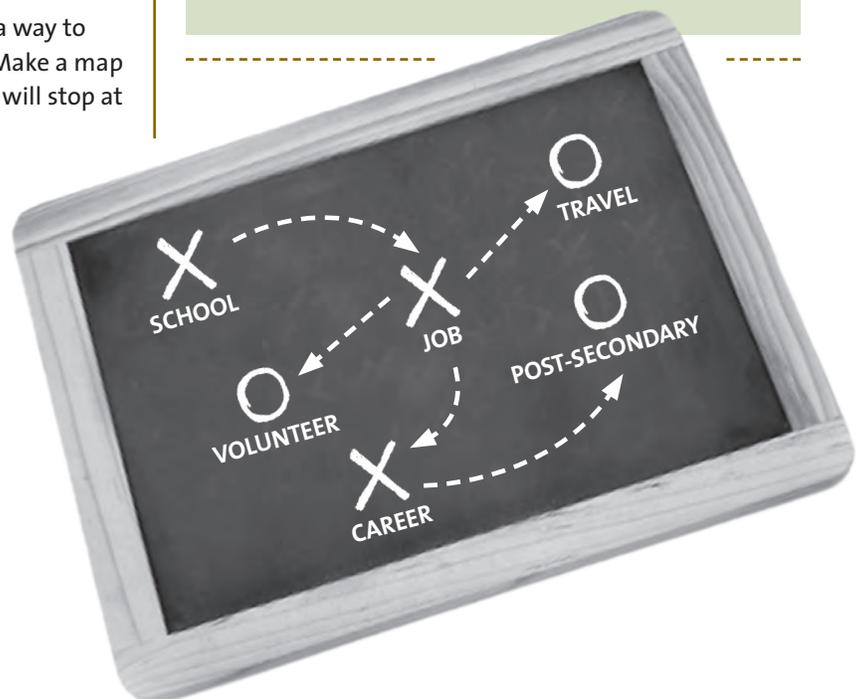
Ask your teens to think about where they want to be when they are 30 years old. Encourage them to dream without limits—to create a vision of what they could be in an ideal world rather than thinking about barriers.

What kinds of things will be important in their life? Will they have a house? Where will they live? Will they be married and have any children? What will their work life look like? What will they do for fun and what will make them happy? Will they work in an office, from home, or have their own company?

Next, work with your teens to come up with a way to get where they want to be when they're 30. Make a map of the path and mark the various places they will stop at along the way. Include school, jobs, travel, volunteer work and other things they want to do or achieve.

Make a map of your own career path and how you got to where you are right now. Try to remember the things that happened to you along the way. Compare your map with your teens' and have a discussion. Are there some useful experiences you could share? What were some of the things that caused you to change your plans? When things didn't go as planned, what did you do to figure out a "Plan B?"

Life is a journey. As people's interests change, they may pursue different work or learning opportunities. Each step they take is a building block for their overall career.



Workplace information

Occupational information

Numerous print and electronic resources offer information to help you and your teens pre-screen occupations to see if they're suitable. Pre-screening may stimulate your teens' interest in a particular occupation or help them eliminate it from their list of possibilities.

Alis.alberta.ca/occinfo provides detailed occupational information for more than 550 occupations available in Alberta. Occupational profiles typically address the following questions:

- ❓ What is a particular occupation like?
- ❓ How do people get into the occupation and what do they typically earn?
- ❓ Is the occupation in a growing field?

Alis: The world of work at a click



Go to **alis.alberta.ca/occinfo**. You can search occupations based on keywords, or use filters such as related high school subjects, required education levels, expected income levels and other options. Occupational profiles include hiring trend information and current related job postings in Alberta.

Some of the occupational profiles include videos showing examples of real people in real jobs, to give a sense of what it is like to work in that specific occupation.

One of the best ways for teens to determine if a particular occupation is a good fit for them is to talk to people who are working in that field. These people can describe what their day-to-day work involves, and what the daily highs and lows might be. They can talk about where the occupation has been and where the trends are heading. They might even invite your teens to do some job shadowing.

You can help by using your networks to introduce your teens to people in occupations they are interested in. As your teens' coach, you can help them practice their interview skills and improve their confidence level.

Here's a list of questions* your teens can use for an interview

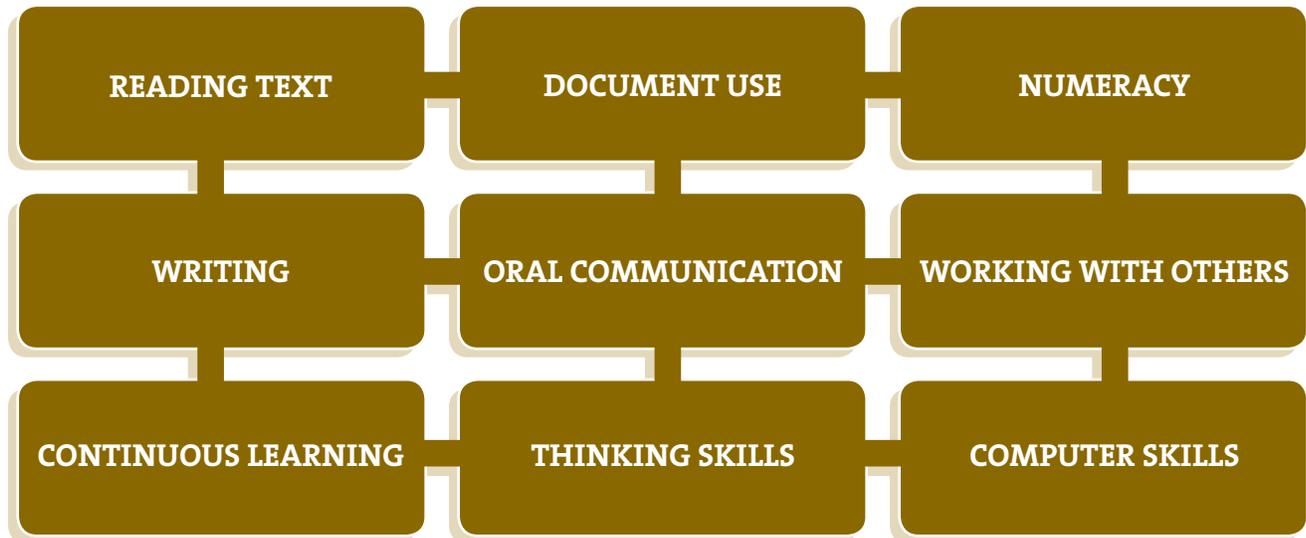
Offer to have your teens interview you before trying out their questions on someone new.

1. What are the specific daily responsibilities of your job?
2. What is your routine on a typical day?
3. What specific education, training or employment experience is required or valuable for this occupation?
4. If you could go back in time, would you choose this same occupation again? Why or why not?
5. What other jobs or volunteer positions did you have before you reached your present position?
6. What opportunities for advancement or lateral movement exist in this occupation?
7. What qualities, skills and abilities do you have that help you be successful in your occupation?
8. How is a new person generally hired for this type of work or position?
9. Every occupation has its downside. What are some of the duties or working conditions that you dislike about this occupation?
10. What is the salary range for this occupation?
11. Can you recommend anyone else who could help me research this occupation?

* Adapted from Elk Island Public Schools' Occupation Research Interview Questions Sheet.

Essential skills

Professionals and employers define essential skills as the skills needed for work, learning and life. There are nine essential skills:

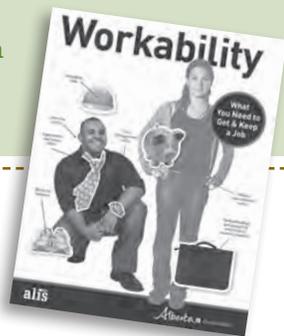


These skills provide the foundation for learning other skills needed for success in the workplace. Learning new skills makes it possible for people to evolve with their jobs and adapt to change.

We continue to learn and develop our skills throughout our lives. As a parent, you can look for your teens' talents, help them recognize the skills they have and talk about the ones they want to develop.

 To find out more about essential skills and other skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to find and keep a job, check out the publication *Workability: What You Need to Get and Keep a Job*.

See p. 25 for information on how to get a copy.



Goals

When looking toward the future, it's important to have a plan. Setting goals can help your teens plan for success.

QUICK FACT

If you write down a goal, you are 50% more likely to achieve it.

Here's how you can help:

- Think about and set goals together with your teens. Talk about how accomplishing short-term goals is a stepping stone for achieving long-term goals.

For example, if the long-term goal is getting an A in Physics, this might break down into short-term goals like attending all classes, completing all assignments on time and studying four hours for each quiz.

- Choose a goal to work on together. What tasks can your teens do? What tasks require help from you? Discuss what to work on first and how you made that decision.

For example, did you choose the first task because it was most important? because it was time sensitive? because it was a prerequisite for the next tasks on your list? Use a calendar to mark out timelines and track progress.



Check out the Resources section (p. 24) for more goal-setting tools and tips.

Set goals with your teens

- how many occupations they will research over a period of time
- how many people they will talk to in occupations that interest them
- how many volunteer experiences they will have, and what they want to gain from each of them
- how they will find out what education and training they need to reach their goals
- what kind of grades they will need to get
- how they will develop the skills they need
- how they will develop their career portfolio and keep it up-to-date
- how they will balance school, recreation, work and family commitments



Career portfolio

Most students will work on a career portfolio as part of their school requirements.

A career portfolio is a place to store and organize information about their

- interests and personality, including formal and informal assessments of their interests and strengths
- skills, including details about workshops, certificates earned and specific skills mastered
- accomplishments and awards, including achievements in school, work or community activities
- work and volunteer history, including a resumé that lists all work and volunteer positions and responsibilities
- career goals and the steps toward achieving them
- letters of reference from people who can speak to their skills and achievements
- research on occupations of interest, including summaries
- details about schools, colleges, universities, training institutions and programs of interest, including brochures or application forms
- favourite resources, such as lists of useful websites and other information sources

As a parent, you can help by gathering artifacts of your teens' accomplishments along the way. Keep a special box or file folder for report cards, writing samples, awards and certificates: when the time comes for your teens to compile a portfolio, access to these items will be easy.

Tip: Encourage your teens to talk about items they have chosen to include in their portfolios. This will build their confidence in their presentation skills and help them identify their strengths and passions.

Finances

It's never too early to start planning for the cost of a post-secondary education.

For information to help you and your teens plan and fund post-secondary studies, go to alis.alberta.ca/post-secondary.



QUICK FACTS

There are many ways to pay for your teens' education and training. Some involve saving money as your children grow; others include loans, scholarships and bursaries.

For more information on paying for post-secondary education, go to alis.alberta.ca/funding.

The High Five

The following High Five messages were developed by career planning experts. They're a solid foundation for successful career and life planning.

Apply the High Five messages as you explore career and life paths with your teens. You may want to talk to your teens about times in your own life when the High Five Messages were important to you.

- 1. Change is constant.** Both in work and in life, change is a constant force. But change can also create opportunities. Being flexible, versatile and adaptable can harness the power of change to build career success.
- 2. Keep Learning.** Learning is a lifelong process that is intertwined with skills development and work. Together, these activities form a continuous cycle of career-building experiences.
- 3. Focus on the journey.** Life is a journey of experiences; destinations are just stopping points along the way. Career building requires attention to not just goals, but also everything that occurs on the journey toward these goals.

As your teens continue their career journeys, they may revise their original goals, or achieve them and set new goals.

- 4. Follow your heart.** People do their best when they're doing what they love or have a passion for. Pursuing your dreams provides motivation and direction and helps to clarify what's really important.

When people are building their careers, it's important that they pay attention to what their hearts are telling them.

- 5. Be an ally.** We are all surrounded by people who can assist us in making career decisions and travelling the road of life. Family, friends, neighbours, co-workers and teachers are all potential allies and mentors.

It's important for people to build networks of allies and to be part of the networks of others.



Summing Up

As a parent, you play a key role in helping your teens succeed. In fact, you are your teens' head coach.

This section sums up the things you can do to help your teens make good career choices.

 Check out the Resources section starting on p. 23 for information and resources that can help get you started in your role as a career coach.



Good luck to you and your teens!

Think about the High Five messages (see p. 20) and help your teens use them on their career journey.

Think about your own career journey. Analyze the career and life paths you chose and think about what you learned from your experiences. Share these experiences with your teens when the moment is right.

Show curiosity. Explore your teens' passions, interests, skills and experiences. Take time to learn what's going on with your teens, and find some common ground.

Model what you know and want. Your teens are watching and listening: take the time to model what you say. Ask for your teens' input. Invite them to talk to you and ask them for feedback.

Get involved. Be active in your teens' lives and build experiences you can share and talk about. Once you and your teens get talking, the opportunity for you to help will happen naturally.

Keep career and life planning top of mind. This makes it easy to find learning moments with your teens.

Tap into your networks. Introduce your teens to people and opportunities that are in line with their interests.

Create school and community connections. Attend advisory meetings and keep in touch with your teens' teachers. Visit an Alberta Supports Centre. (See p. 23 for locations.)

Be informed. Take some time to tour colleges, universities or other training facilities.

Take the time to enjoy the journey you are taking with your teens. There will be many moments when you can play a key role in helping your teens achieve their dreams.

Key Terms*

A **career** is the sum total of a person's life experience. It includes activities such as work, learning, volunteering, parenting and recreational activities. The roles and responsibilities people experience at one stage of life influence their roles and responsibilities at other stages.

Career development is the lifelong process of managing learning, work and transitions in order to achieve goals and cultivate a meaningful, satisfying future.

A **job** is a clearly defined working relationship between a specific individual and an employer to complete a defined series of tasks. "Grade 10 Social Studies teacher with Lacombe Composite High School" is a job.

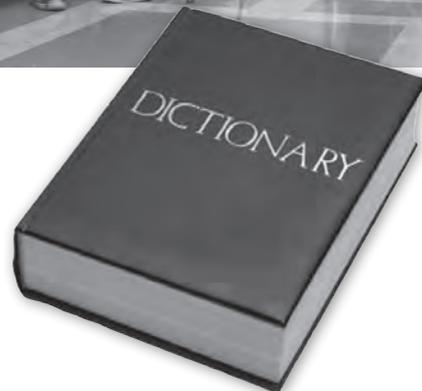
An **occupation** is a group of jobs with similar characteristics found in different industries or organizations. Teaching is an example of an occupation. While there are several ways to work as a teacher, the occupation remains the same.

A **sector** is a group of similar occupations that share common skill sets, values and interests. Education is regarded as a sector. It includes educational assistants, teachers and tutors.

Work is a set of activities with an intended set of outcomes. It is not necessarily tied to traditional employment, but may include entrepreneurship, consulting, volunteerism, self-employment or other non-traditional working relationships.

* Adapted from the *Common Career Language Matrix*, Career Development Association of Alberta as cited in *Guiding Youth: Finding a Career Path and Connecting to Work* workshop.

The terms **work**, **job**, **occupation** and **career** have different meanings even though people often use them interchangeably.



Resources

There are a number of great resources—people, publications and websites—that can help you in your role as career coach. Use these to build your knowledge, or as a starting point for developing your skills as your teens’ coach and ally.

Government of Alberta

The Government of Alberta has a province-wide network of websites, call centres and service centres with a variety of programs, services and publications to assist you and your teens.

alis.alberta.ca

Alis is Alberta’s online source for career, learning and employment information.

You’ll discover information to help:

- **Plan Your Career** – Find out how you can turn what you love into a career. Explore your skills, interests, passions, and discover what you value in a job.
- **Explore Education and Training** – Learn how to plan and fund your education, transfer credits and explore education programs.
- **Look for Work** – Get help with resumés or cover letters, learn how to network and prepare for interviews, and check out job search resources and labour market information.
- **Succeed at Work** – Discover what it takes to stand out at work, handle challenges and be safe in your workplace.
- **Inspire and Motivate** – Discover valuable resources to help your clients, students, children or the people in your community as they plan and achieve their career goals
- Find **Tools and Resources** for specific audiences including newcomers and Indigenous People, or order career, learning and employment publications.

Alberta Supports Centres

Alberta Supports Centres across the province provide information on occupations, career options, finding work, education programs and funding. To locate an office near you, go to alis.alberta.ca/asc.

Resources by Topic

Alberta’s labour market

For information on Alberta’s labour market or industry profiles go to alis.alberta.ca/occinfo.

Apprenticeship

For information about apprenticeship and industry training in Alberta, visit the Apprenticeship and Industry Training website at tradesecrets.alberta.ca.

Career portfolio

To learn about what goes into a career portfolio and how it is used to demonstrate skills to employers, go to alis.alberta.ca/look-for-work/portfolios.

Education planning

For information on choosing a post-secondary or other training program, order or download these publications online at alis.alberta.ca/publications

- *Education and Training Planner*
- *This Is Your Life: A Career and Education Planning Guide*
- *Time to Choose ... A Post-Secondary Education Program*

For information on post-secondary programs, go to alis.alberta.ca/occinfo. You'll find details on post-secondary schools and programs in Alberta and on distance learning options available in Western Canada.

Learning Clicks (learningclicks.ca) provides free presentations to help motivate and engage students in grades 6 through 12 and to help them understand and plan for post-secondary studies.

Presentations are also available to give you the tools and resources you need to help your children with their post-secondary plans and preparation. Book a presentation at learningclicks.ca/request.

Essential skills

For information about the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to find and maintain employment, order or download *Workability: What You Need to Get and Keep a Job* online at alis.alberta.ca/publications.

To learn more about essential skills and how they are used, go to the Employment and Social Development Canada section at canada.ca.

Identifying interests, values and skills

For resources to help your teens with the first step in career planning, order or view these publications at alis.alberta.ca/publications

- *Assessing You: The First Step in Career Planning*
- *Career Planner: Choosing an Occupation*
- *Workability: What You Need to Get & Keep a Job*

Your teens can use a free online career planning tool at alis.alberta.ca/CAREERinsite. CAREERinsite can help your teen explore and compare occupational options based on their interests, values and skills and also access self-assessment quizzes and exercises.



Paying for post-secondary education and training

For information to help you and your teens develop a financial plan, as well explore funding options, go to alis.alberta.ca/pay-for-your-education.

To determine any expected parental contribution should your teen apply for a student loan go to the online parental contribution calculator at canada.ca.

For information to help you and your teens explore their career goals, post-secondary schooling options and to research strategies on how to pay for their studies, check out the publication *This is Your Life: A Career and Education Planning Guide* at alis.alberta.ca/publications.

For scholarship opportunities, visit studentaid.alberta.ca/scholarships, scholarshipscanada.com and studentawards.com.

For more information on budgeting and money management, order or download *Money 101: Budgeting Basics for Further Education or Stretch Your Dollars: Budgeting Basics* at alis.alberta.ca/publications.

Researching occupations

For job descriptions, educational requirements, salary information, employment and advancement opportunities, for more than 550 Alberta occupational profiles, check out the occupational profiles at alis.alberta.ca/occinfo.

You can search occupations based on keywords, or use filters such as related high school subjects, required education levels, expected income levels and other options. Occupational profiles include hiring trend information and current related job postings in Alberta.

Order or download these publications at alis.alberta.ca/publications:

- *Career Planner: Choosing an Occupation*
- *Women in Non-traditional Occupations: Stories to Inspire*

Visit alis.alberta.ca/videos to view your choice of over 200 six-minute video clips showing real people in real positions in a wide assortment of occupations.

How to get a copy of the publications listed here



Order or download at alis.alberta.ca/publications.

Visit an Alberta Supports Centre. Go to alis.alberta.ca/asc to find the centre nearest you.

Got feedback?

We'd like to hear from you.

Email us at info@alis.alberta.ca, or go to alis.alberta.ca/feedback and tell us what you think of our resources.



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for
Work

Succeed

at
Work

Inspire

and
Motivate

Alberta
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Did you know that parents are the greatest influence on their teens' career choices?

This guide will help you support your teens as they explore career options and make decisions about the future. It provides practical ideas and resources you can use in your role as a parent, a coach and an ally.