



PARENTS GUIDE TO CAREER EXPLORATION

For Middle School Students

In middle school, students should begin to explore their interests and abilities and connect them to careers. Parents are an important part of this process.

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Parents Make A Difference!

Parents have the most influence over a teen's career making decisions. Are you prepared?

Research over the past 20 years indicates that parents play a major role in raising career aspirations for their sons and daughters. Without parental approval or support, teens are less likely to pursue diverse career possibilities. It's important for parents to learn about the many opportunities in today's schools to help students prepare for careers and postsecondary education. Parents can provide support to their teen as they begin the career development process.

The Ohio Department of Education Career Connections models identifies the process as:

- **Awareness** - Should begin in the elementary years. Learning about jobs in the community and understanding that one day they will find their way into the workplace are important concepts.
- **Exploration** - In the middle school years students should begin to explore their interests and abilities and connect them to careers. As they mature, their interests may change but this is a good starting place.
- **Planning** - The high school years are where the plans are put into action based on their experiences to this point. The four year of high school are instrumental in the foundation of a career after high school.

There are many ways that parents contribute to their teen's early career development. Parents are often the primary source of their teen's work values and attitudes.

- Career decision-making skills have been linked to early childhood experiences, family attributes and practices regarding careers, and role modeling by parents.
- Parent expectations and support contributes significantly in helping their teen have the maturity to make career decisions.

Many school counselors have reported that if parents participate in the decision-making process for selecting courses, students will choose a more rigorous curriculum. Many parents are not aware of graduation requirements (see Page 14) or what classes will benefit students in terms of career options. Take this opportunity to learn more about your teen's career interests by becoming familiar with career assessments used in schools and the importance of career education plans.

Note: The term 'parent' refers to any caretaker or guardian assisting a child or teen with making career decisions.

What is Career Exploration?

What does your teen want to do when they grow up?

Most likely you'll hear they want to be a doctor, fireman, police officer, lawyer, singer, actor, etc. Or, you'll hear what is "in" and popular on television like forensics investigator, reality TV star or pro athlete. The younger the teen the more unrealistic they are about the choice they make. In most cases, they don't know what these occupations actually do, but there is some aspect that captures their interest.

So what does Career Exploration look like?

- **It provides a reality check.** It helps your teen explore occupations and learn about the job descriptions and requirements.
- **It expands your teen's horizons.** Career exploration exposes them to occupations they did not even know existed.
- **It saves time and money.** When teens choose education and training that matches their abilities, they are less likely to change college majors and more likely to complete their education.

Schools try to meet the needs of the students, but many times school counselors and teachers just don't have the time or resources to provide individualized career guidance. This is where you can step in and advise. You may feel you are uninformed in the process and unable to provide the guidance that your teen needs. This publication will help you better understand what is happening in the labor market and how you might help your teen make more informed choices about their future.

What are Career Clusters & Career Pathways?

Why are these important to know?

Career Clusters are broad groups of occupations and industries with common knowledge and skills. There are many occupations within one cluster that require different levels of training and education. The clusters are subdivided into “career pathways”.

Career Pathways are a series of courses that prepare you for an occupational field. For example, a career in dental assisting can lead to a career as a dental hygienist or dentist.

Career clusters and pathways are NOT organized according to career interests. They are organized around broad industry or economic areas. This means that some jobs are in more than one cluster. For example, the job “accountant” is found in two clusters: 1) Business, Management and Administration and b) Government and Administration.

The 16 Career Clusters and Sample Careers are:

Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (Forester, Biological/Agricultural Technician, Landscape Gardener, Veterinarian, Zoologist or Animal Scientist)

Architecture & Construction (Carpenter, Electrician, Plumber, Construction Manager, Architect)

Arts, Audio/Video Technology & Communication (Actor, Broadcast Technician, Photographer, Public Relations Specialist, Graphic Designer)

Business, Management & Administration (Accountant, Administrative Services Manager, Medical Secretary, Human Resources Manager, Management Analyst)

Education & Training (Fitness Trainer, Teacher, School Counselor, Principal, Special Education Teacher)

Financial Services (Bank Teller, Financial Analyst, Insurance Claim Examiner, Loan Officer, Actuary)

Government & Public Administration (Municipal Clerk, Social Services Manager, Government Service Executive, Legislator, Urban and Regional Planner)

Health Science (Dental Hygienist, Emergency Medical Technician, Nurse, Physician, Pharmacist)

Hospitality & Tourism (Food Services Manager, Travel Agent, Meetings and Convention Planner, Chef, Tour Guide)

Human Services (Social Services Technician, Clergy, Clinical Psychologist, Social Worker, Parole and Probation Officer)

Information Technology (Computer and Information Systems Manager, Computer Equipment Technician, Computer Programmer, Database Administrator, Analyst)

Law, Public Safety & Security (Correctional Officer, Court Reporter, Fire Fighter, Forensic Science Technician, Lawyer)

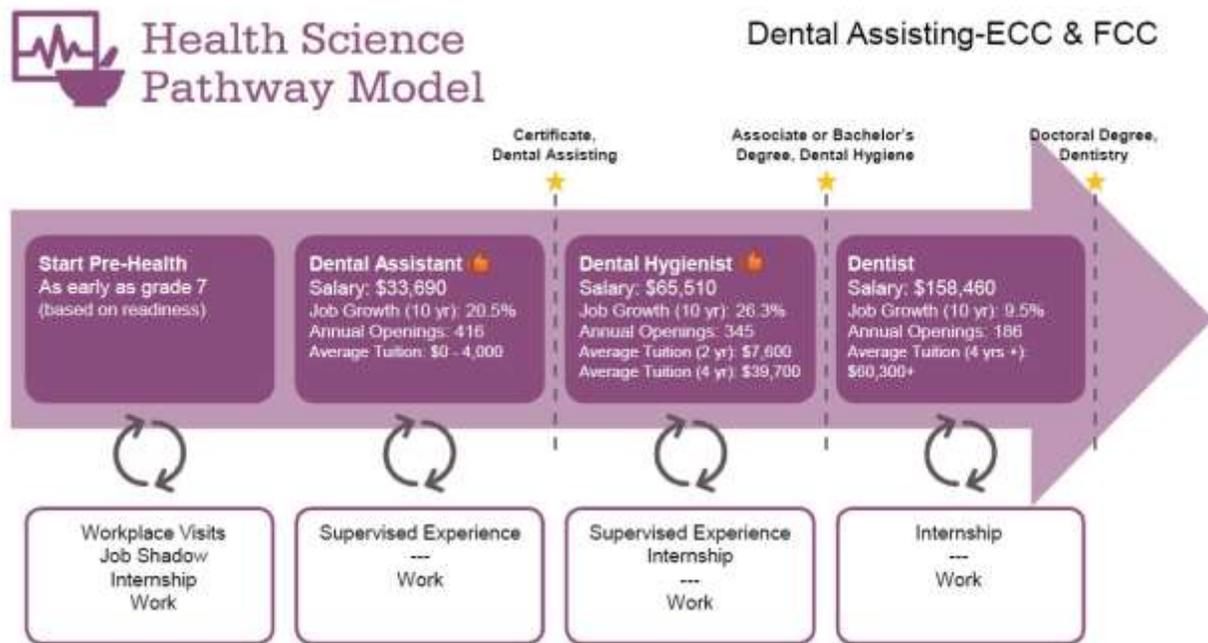
Manufacturing (Civil Engineering Technician, Machinist, Electronic Engineering Technician, Industrial Machinery Mechanic, Welder/Cutter)

Marketing, Sales & Service (Advertising Sales Agent, Interior Designer, Marketing Manager, Real Estate Sales Agent, Wholesale and Retail Buyer)

Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (Aeronautical Engineer, Chemist, Civil Engineer, Geophysicist, Meteorologist)

Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics (Postal Mail Carrier, Air Traffic Controller, Automobile Mechanic, Flight Attendant, Heavy Truck Driver)

Career Pathway Example:



*Stats above are based on Ohio and are available from www.ohiomeansjobs.com

Steps for Career Decision Making

What is the best way to begin career exploration with your teen?

The best way to begin is by talking with them about your own career. Did you choose your career or did it choose you? What steps did you take to get to your career? What do you do in your job?

Teens are always interested when parents begin to share their wisdom with them. However, as a parent you want to help guide your teen as much as possible when making decisions that will impact their careers.

Discussions regarding career exploration can begin as early as elementary school. Career exploration helps to build self-confidence and career awareness. A good activity with children of any age is to observe and discuss occupations you see in everyday life and what might be entailed in the job.

The career decision-making process below includes activities that can begin in middle school and continue through postsecondary education.

Step 1 - Learn More About Your Teen.

Encourage your teen to take interest assessments. A “Career Cluster Inventory” is available on OhioMeansJobs.com. The assessment does not take very long and the results can be saved in a backpack created in OhioMeansJobs K-12. Review the results with your teen. Discuss his/her interests and dreams to help determine goals for the future.

Step 2 - Identify Some Possibilities.

Help your teen explore a wide range of occupations in a variety of clusters that match the results of their assessment. When looking at careers on OhioMeansJobs K-12, be sure to dig deeper by clicking on the occupation and reviewing the work activities, skills, pay, abilities, knowledge, Ohio employment trends, and typical education. Review postsecondary opportunities that could include universities/colleges, community colleges, technical centers, military and apprenticeships.

While we see the relevance of all of this information in a decision-making process, teens really only look at the pay scale. Take that a step farther and guide them to the Ohio employment trends to see what the yearly projected openings are for the occupation. Discuss with them that an occupation with a healthy earning potential is ideal, but there has to be job openings available to receive that kind of pay.

Step 3 - Evaluate Your Teens Options.

You and your teen will also want to consider lifestyle implications and the overall impact on life for each option. For instance, does the job require irregular hours? Can the salary support the lifestyle your teen wants (Step 4)? How much education is required for this occupation? It's important for your teen to understand the relationship between lifestyle, occupational choice, and educational pursuits. Guide your teen in balancing the difference between wants and needs.

Step 4 - Make A Choice.

Encourage your teen to explore a variety of career areas. The economy, demographics, and technology will continue to change the workplace. Some sources are reporting that 65% of children in grade school will end up working in careers that haven't even been created yet. Some jobs will become obsolete while other new jobs emerge. As the workplace continues to change, it will be more important to focus on groups of similar skills and how they can be transferred from one occupation to another. Help your teen to build a budget so he/she understand what expense items will come out of a monthly income.

OhioMeansJobs K-12 includes "Budgeting for Your Career". This would be a good opportunity to work through this activity together. Your teen will need some guidance on various expenses they may not be familiar with like how much electricity, heating or even water costs. How much is a typical food bill for a month? Or clothes, health care, entertainment, personal care, savings or loans, including student loans?

After getting the budgeting results, this would be a good time to also introduce "gross income", "net income" and "taxes". It will be an important lesson for them to understand that income earned is NOT income brought home.

Step 5 - Create An Action Plan.

Planning and organization give direction to your teen's future. Assist your teen in outlining activities and develop a timetable to complete them. OhioMeansJobs K-12 can help you do this with "Create a Career Plan". Your teen will need to have a backpack in OhioMeansJobs K-12 to save the career plan. In the career plan you can select activities and set deadlines.

It is a good idea too for your teen to seek out opportunities for part-time work, job shadowing, volunteering, attending career fairs, and other activities that will help them learn more about the workplace. If you haven't already started a savings plan for college, you may want to investigate financial aid and scholarship options. OhioMeansJobs K-12 has "Scholarship Opportunities" under "Fund It". Financial aid should be considered as early as eighth grade. Why? Many of the scholarships are based on achievement and required courses through the high school years. You don't want your teen to be left out of receiving free money by not doing your homework about scholarships until their senior year of high school.

Military is more than combat. There are a host of various jobs in the military that don't involve combat. Many branches have healthy sign-on bonuses. Education is free and financial assistance for college after the military is also available. To find out more, visit www.careersinthemilitary.com.

Step 6 - Take Action.

Encourage your teen to follow their plan timeline by reviewing short and long-term goals and taking steps to reach them. Encourage your teen to take challenging courses in math, reading, writing, computer skills and science. If your teen is college-bound, remember that colleges don't just look at grades or class position, but also the level or difficulty of the class taken.

NOTE: OhioMeansJobs K-12 will email you when an event in your backpack calendar is due.

Step 7 - Review and Revise.

As your teen progresses and gains more experience, his/her interests may change. Course selection in high school can determine your teen's course of action after graduation. For instance, if your teen wants to go to college and she/he hasn't take the required courses, remedial courses may be necessary. You pay for these courses but the student doesn't get college credit for them. Help your teen to stay on target by taking the necessary courses. Remember that all plans should be flexible in case your teen wants to change some of the goals she/he set earlier.



HOME IS THE FIRST WORKPLACE

- ✓Share responsibilities and make decisions that develop work skills at an early age.
- ✓Resolve problems and work as a team to develop important work skills.
- ✓Let your child plan meals for a week.
- ✓Let your child set-up and organize a family outing.
- ✓Let your child work with another family member on a project.
- ✓Discuss with your child how a problem situation was resolved.
- ✓Be a role model - children learn by example.

What Employers Are Looking For

Does Your Teen Have What Employers Want?

The skills needed to succeed in the workplace have changed significantly in the past several years. Although the basic skill of reading, writing and arithmetic are still very important, as well as technical skills, employers have begun to recognize that another set of skills are crucial to a worker's ability to get a job, keep a job and earn an income. These skills are commonly referred to as "soft skills" or even "21st Century Skills". Here is what they are:

Problem Solving Skills/Decision Making Skills - Can your teen choose a best response among several options, compare advantages and disadvantages or alternate approaches, decide if and what additional information is needed to make a decision, and justify a decision once it is made?

Reading Skills - Can your teen use a variety of written materials to obtain and apply information?

Writing Skills - Does your teen communicate ideas and information through writing?

Speaking/Listening Skills - Does your teen speak clearly and listen carefully?

Mathematic Skills - Can your teen perform basic computations and use math to solve problems?

Learning Skills - Does your teen use effective learning techniques to acquire new knowledge and skills?

Creative Thinking Skills - Can your teen develop or invent novel ideas, use known information in new and innovative ways, make something interesting out of something ordinary?

Team Work/Collaboration/Interpersonal/Social Skills - Can your teen work with others to solve a problem, create something or complete a task? Does your teen share ideas and listen to the ideas of others? Does your teen cooperate with a group decision and do a fair share of the work?

Technical Skills - Can your teen operate a computer; access the internet, apply useful software such as word processing, graphics and spreadsheets? Does your teen enjoy working on mechanical or technical tasks or playing electronic games? Is your teen interested in the way things work?

Responsibility - Does your teen perform assigned tasks without being reminded?

Initiative - Does your teen volunteer for additional responsibilities? Can your teen recognize what needs to be done and do it?

Reliability/Punctuality - Can your teen be counted on to do what has been promised? Will your teen give advance notice if unable to do as promised? Is your teen always on time to school, meetings, and appointments?

In Demand Jobs in Ohio

Consider these labor market facts:

- Ohio economy is expected to add 178,000 job openings annually through 2022 with 30% of the openings coming from the creation of new jobs; the remaining 70% results from the need to replace workers who switch occupations or leave the work force through retirement.
- Education and health care services industries are expected to add the most jobs with a large portion of job growth from health care occupations.
- Goods-producing sectors (construction, mining, quarrying and oil & gas extraction) are projected to grow by 41,500 jobs.
- Service-providing sectors will be led by the health care and social assistance industry which is expected to add 166,000 jobs.

There are many job classifications in Ohio. There are 210 in-demand occupations across the state of Ohio. Below are some of the in-demand jobs, with average wage/hour, education level, and number of openings. Even though some jobs require a college degree, there are many certificate-type programs available at a career technical school or community college that may qualify a person for an entry level position in the same area.

Jobs that require a Certificate or Two-Year Associate's Degree

OCCUPATION TITLE	WAGES AVG/HR	EDUCATION LEVEL	OPENINGS
Registered Nurse	29.10	Associate	4271
Nurse Aid, Orderlie, Attendant (STNA)	11.41	Certificate	2373
LP/Vocational Nurse	19.29	Certificate	1886
General and Operations Managers	43.14	Associate	1526
Computer User Support Specialist	20.99	Certificate	629
Emergency Med Tech	13.32	Certificate	450
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	25.45	Certificate	416
HVAC Technician	20.31	Certificate	412
Dental Hygienists	31.51	Associate	368
Medical Records & Health Info Tech	16.61	Certificate	336
Dental Assistants	16.59	Certificate	322
Physical Therapy Assistants	26.46	Associate	270
Paralegal and Legal Assistant	19.99	Associate	244
Telecommunications Equipment Technicians	24.69	Certificate	154
Health Technologists/Techs	18.69	Certificate	152
Occupational Therapy Assistants	26.55	Associate	145
Surgical Technologists	20.00	Certificate	127
Vet Techs	14.06	Associate	120

Certificate - Requires specialized training at a career technical school or community college.

Jobs that require Four or More Years of College

OCCUPATION TITLE	WAGES AVG/HR	EDUCATION LEVEL	OPENINGS
Accountant/Auditor	29.05	Bachelor	1546
Engineer*	40.41	Bachelor	1356
Computer Systems Analyst	37.29	Bachelor	1018
Marketing Specialists	26.85	Bachelor	810
Lawyers	45.38	Doctoral	571
Construction Manager	37.73	Bachelor	523
Financial Manager	47.10	Bachelor	476
Pharmacists	55.89	Doctoral	420
Human Resource Specialist	25.85	Bachelor	383
Graphic Designers	20.63	Bachelor	356
Computer and Information System Managers	53.67	Bachelor	319
Healthcare Social Worker	23.57	Masters	295
School Counselor	26.41	Masters	279
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Worker	17.34	Bachelor	259
Occupational Therapist	38.12	Masters	177
Family and General Practitioner	76.20	Doctoral	158
Human Resource Manager	45.15	Bachelor	143
Computer Network Architects	45.98	Bachelor	117
Chemists	30.84	Bachelor	93

Associate's Degree - Requires graduation from a 2-year college.

Bachelor's Degree - Requires graduation from a 4-year college or university

Master's Degree - Requires training beyond a bachelor's degree

Doctoral Degree - Requires advanced training beyond a master's degree. Also referred to as a First Professional degree, a program that trains students for specific profession and licensing requirements like dentistry (DDS, DMD), Law (LLB, JD), medicine (MD), and veterinary medicine (DVM).

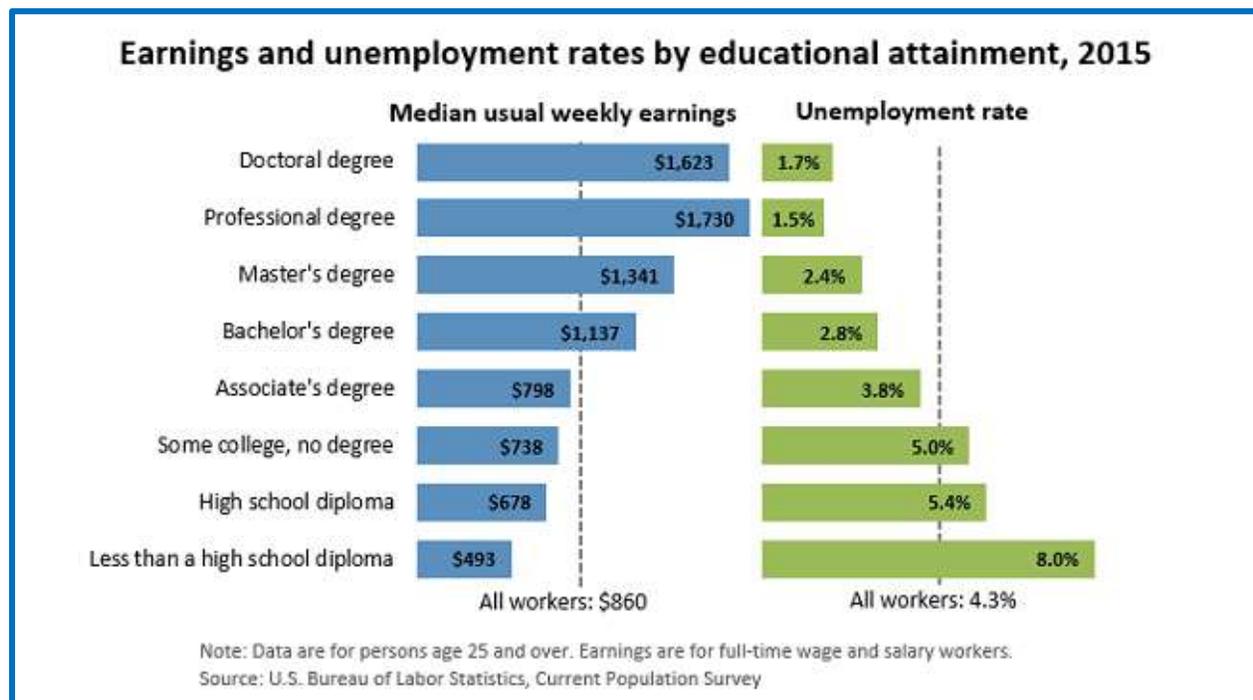
Average Hourly Wages - The wages are statewide averages so they may be lower or higher in certain parts of the state. These are not necessarily the wages paid for an entry level position. Wages vary by experience, responsibility, performance, length of time at a particular company, and geographic area.

Source: OhioMeansJobs.com

Preparing Your Teen for the Changing Workplace

1. Use OhioMeansJobs.com to develop a career and education plan for high school that includes high school courses, graduation, and postsecondary plans.
2. Understand that the more skills and education you obtain, the more job options become available.
3. Broaden the focus of exploration from one occupation to occupations within a career cluster.
4. Focus on developing and identifying skills that can be transferred from one job to another.
5. Develop employability skills that include resume writing, searching for a job, and interviewing.
6. Get as much education and experience related to his or her career interests while still in high school. This can be accomplished through extracurricular activities, volunteering, shadowing, elective classes, internships and part-time jobs.

While there are many things to consider when making career choices such as interests and abilities, the chart below shows that the more education you obtain, the higher the salary. This criterion should be balanced with lifestyle expectations. Help your teen develop a budget using the average wage of an occupation he/she is considering. OhioMeansJobs has a budgeting tool that allows you to work together with your teen on a reasonable budget. The end result will give them an idea of how much would be needed to live within those means and if their occupation of interest pays within that range.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov)

Educational Options to Consider

There is more than just universities and colleges to consider.

Apprenticeship

Students can learn a skilled trade by combining classroom training with paid on-the-job training. Most apprenticeships take two to five years to complete, depending on the trade. Go to OhioMeansJobs.com, “Plan It”, then “Apprenticeships”.

Military

There are five military branches: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard. Serving in the military can provide many educational opportunities. There are over 2,000 job specialties for enlisted personnel and over 1,500 jobs for officers. Some of the opportunities include mechanics, electronics, and business. Many people learn skills and receive training that they can immediately translate into careers in the civilian workforce. Go to careersinthemilitary.com for more information.

Career & Technical Schools

Students can begin to learn some job skills while still in high school. A variety of programs are offered. A few programs are linked to apprenticeship programs. In many programs, students can earn college credit and/or certification in a field of expertise or are prepared for necessary licensure.

Community College

Community colleges have a wide variety of classes and programs. These programs can be completed in two years or less. Some high schools allow you to take dual enrollment classes to get high school and college credit at the same time. After completing these programs a student can go directly to work or continue their education at a university.

University

Most universities offer four-year (Bachelor’s Degree) programs of study and in addition advanced degrees such as a Master’s Degree or Doctoral Degree. Most professional careers require at least a four-year college degree.

On-the-Job Training

Your student can acquire some skills in high school that will allow him/her to go directly to work. Getting a job right after high school is an option, but consider that 85% of all new jobs will require education beyond high school.

Earning an Ohio High School Diploma

Classes of 2018 and beyond

There is no one-size-fits-all way to graduate. Ohio gives you several options to qualify for a high school diploma. Choose the way that works best for you!

To earn a high school diploma in Ohio, you must complete courses and then choose an option on the right to show that you are ready for college or a job. Here's what you need to do to graduate. Talk with your school counselor for more information.

Complete Courses

Take and earn a state minimum of 20 credits in specific subjects.

English language arts	4 credits
Health	½ credit
Mathematics	4 credits
Physical Education	½ credit
Science	3 credits
Social Studies	3 credits
Electives	5 credits

Other Requirements

You also must receive instruction in economics and financial literacy and complete at least two semesters of fine arts. Your district may require more than 20 hours to graduate.

NOTE: You have choices. Check them out at education.ohio.gov, search *graduation requirements Classes of 2018 and beyond*. Then talk to your school counselor.

Show That You Are Ready

Use at least one option to show that you are ready for college or a job.

Ohio State Tests

Earn at least 18 points on 7 end-of-course state tests, including:
Algebra 1 or Integrated Math I
Geometry or Integrated Math II
American Government/History
English 1/English 2
Biology

OR

Industry credential and workforce readiness

Earn a minimum of 12 points by receiving a State Board of Education approved, industry-recognized credential or group of credentials in a single career field and earn a 13 on WorkKeys, a work-readiness test. The state of Ohio will pay one time for you to take the WorkKeys test.

OR

College and Career Readiness Tests

Earn the “remediation-free” scores on either:

ACT

English - 18+

Math - 22+

Reading - 22+

SAT

Writing-430+

Math-520+

Reading-450+

Your district will choose either ACT or SAT for all students in you district to take free during a one-time statewide spring test in grade 11.

Getting an Early Start on College Credit

Advanced Placement (AP): Take an AP course and score successfully on the related AP Exam and you can save on college expenses at most colleges and universities. Talk to your counselor about what AP courses are offered at your school and what score is needed to earn college credit.

Career Technical Education (CTE): Preparation in a program of interest that involves hands-on skills, using industry standard procedures and tools. Includes opportunities to earn college credits and industry certifications. Many programs allow for participation in internship and apprenticeships. This path begins with an application in a student's sophomore year.

College Credit Plus (CCP): Earn high school and college credits at the same time by taking college courses from community colleges or universities. The purpose of this program is to promote rigorous academic pursuits and to provide a wide variety of options to college-ready students. The process begins with an application to the college or university your teen wants to attend. There is no cost for tuition, books or fees to the family for your teen to attend a public college or university. There are limited costs for attending a private college or university. Students must declare their intent to participate by a predetermined date.

Dual Enrollment Credits: Earn high school and college credits at the same time from instructors at your school who are adjuncts (teachers approved to teach at a college level) at a public college or university.

Overview of Financial Aid

There are many ways to support college and any other postsecondary option that your teen may choose. Financial aid is available to everyone. It can help pay for training beyond high school and make the most expensive school affordable. Before you start exploring the options for financial aid, there are a few things you need to know:

- Financial aid money comes from state and federal governments, banks, college/universities, and private donors
- You must apply for financial aid annually; it is not part of the school's admission process. Check fafsa.ed.gov for deadlines to apply.
- Aid is based on a variety of factors including family income, tuition, academic skills, timing of submitting application, etc.
- The **ONLY** website to do the free app is at fafsa.ed.gov. Any other site will charge you to complete an application. Watch out for sites that have a fee.

Financial Aid Myths

College is Too Expensive

While it is true that college costs are rising, it is a good investment for the future as noted on the previous pages. All post-secondary education, not just a college education, is the ticket to good career opportunities. Your teen can make a big contribution toward the cost of college by making good grades while in high school.

We Make Too Much to Qualify for Aid

Aid is intended to make college affordable for students in a variety of financial situations. Financial aid administrators take into account not only income but also other family members in college. Aid is awarded to many families who thought they earned too much money. Many scholarships are available based on academic achievement, talent, merit, volunteering, or other criteria. Check these out early so your teen can spend their high school years preparing for the application process.

I'm not a Straight "A" Student, So I Won't Get Aid

Most scholarships consider grades, but most awards of federal aid are based on financial need.

Private Schools Are Out of Reach for My Student

The key is to pick schools that meet educational, career, and personal needs. Then consider cost. While private schools are more expensive than public schools, the family contribution expected is the same, so a higher school expense also means a better chance of demonstrating financial need. Private schools also offer more grants with high dollar amounts than public schools. Be sure to inquire about this when visiting public and private campuses.

Types of Financial Aid

Grants - Financial aid that does not have to be repaid. The grant amount is based on need, cost of attendance, and enrollment status.

Loans - A low-interest loan that does not accrue interest or require payment until after the student leaves school, for example: Federal Stafford Loan, Federal Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS), Federal Consolidated Loan

Private Aid - Financial assistance from a private business or other organization. Many Fortune 500 companies provide aid to students.

Scholarships - Assistance based on academic performance and/or financial need. The money is not repaid.

Special Aid - Aid for special groups of people, such as veterans, minorities, handicapped, etc.

Work-study - Money earned through part-time employment while attending a post-secondary school. Students work up to 20 hours a week during the academic year.

Timing is Everything!

Early planning and research is critical to finding resources of financial aid. Admission applications vary by school but your teen should be prepared to submit an application as early as October or November of their senior year. Deadlines for the federal aid application are available at fafsa.ed.gov. Be sure to check the website for the deadline and be prepared to get the application in as early as possible in order to be considered for your fair share of aid. Parent/student tax information is required to prepare the federal aid application so be prepared with the proper documents.

Financial Aid Search Tools

www.fafsa.ed.gov

Look here for the Free Applications for the Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) that will start the entire process for applying for financial aid. Note: both parent and student will have to have a FSA ID in order to electronically submit the application. Setting this up is done at this website. You will want to make sure you remember your FSA ID and password. You will need it to update information for future aid. Be sure to keep the information secure.

www.ohiomeansjobs.org

Search for Scholarships and keep them in your teens backpack. You can find the Scholarships under “Fund It” on the main menu.

www.fastweb.com

FREE site for searching colleges, scholarships and more! It does take some time to set-up a profile and login but it is worth the information on this site.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is career development and why is it important?

Career development is a life-long process that begins in early childhood. It involves self-concept and awareness, career awareness and exploration, learning to make decisions, acquiring work skills, and career planning. Career development includes values, interests, personality, aptitudes, and interpersonal skills.

Should I tell my teen what I think would be the best career choice for him/her?

You can help your teen to understand themselves and provide support, but ultimately the choice must be theirs.

I don't have any expertise in career guidance. Shouldn't I just leave that up to the school?

Parents are the primary influence on their teen's interests, beliefs, values, knowledge, and self-concept. Support and encourage areas of interest and talent. Parents can instill a sense of respect for all types of work and workers. Be sure to talk about your own job. Help your teen to experience activities that would expose them to different kinds of work.

How can I support my teen's career development?

1. Parents can influence the way their teen see themselves. If their interests are supported, teens are more likely to develop them further.
2. Help them to explore occupations so that they learn more about things they like and dislike in different work activities.
3. Support interests that are different from your own. Don't discourage your teen from certain career areas even if it is something you would not be interested in or feel comfortable trying.
4. Parents don't need to point out weaknesses. This only makes the teen feel bad about themselves. Allow them to discover their own strengths and weaknesses.

How can I be a good role model for my teen in their career development?

Be proud of the work you do and the contribution you make to the family and community. If possible, allow your teen to visit you at your job. Many workplaces set aside a day for parents to bring their sons and daughters to work.

Where do I start with career planning with my teen?

Self-awareness should be the first step in making career decisions. Interest assessments, work experiences, job shadowing, even observing people at work can help your teens to learn about the things they like and dislike about work. Interest inventories can help them narrow down their interests and relate them to occupations.

How can my teen determine his/her abilities?

Abilities are those physical and mental activities that you seem to do easily. It's not necessarily what you know but your ability to do or learn certain things. Sometimes, additional education will help you enhance your abilities. Ability assessments can help you determine your strong areas and how to match those abilities to occupations.

How can my teen acquire skills that can help prepare them for the workplace?

Skills are activities that can be learned or developed by education and/or training. Career and technical education courses taken in high school can help your teen develop skill and workforce experience. Part-time jobs can also give them work experience. Every job will require them to do certain activities or tasks and each task will require a variety of skills. Their skills will continue to increase over their lifetime.

What are values?

Values are the principals that people use to determine how much something means to them. For example, you value your personal time, so you may not want a job that requires travel or weekend work. If you don't want a stressful or risky job, you may not want to consider being a police officer or firefighter. If prestige is important to you, you may want a job where people will look up to you and respect you.

How can I contribute to my teen's work skills and values?

Let your teen know that the work we do is important and necessary. Teach them the value of reliability, honor, dignity, and effort in the work world and in their own self-respect. Household chores, volunteering and part-time work can help young people develop these traits. These experiences teach responsibility, decision-making skills, and that there are consequences to the choices we make.

Should my teen decide what they want to do by the time they graduate from high school?

It is not uncommon that an 18 year old will be uncertain about what they want in a career. It is better for them to understand themselves as well, so that they can consider a number of occupations that reflect their interests. Statistics show that people between 18 and 36 years of age change jobs approximately 10 times. We usually evaluate our choices, and if they don't fit our needs, we make adjustments. Career choices are not always permanent.

How can I help my teen understand how career choices impact lifestyle?

Labor market information will give salary levels that can be expected, but depending upon the occupation, a person's motivation can help determine their potential for earning money. Early on it's wise for a person to decide what he/she wants to achieve in life and how he/she wants to live.

My daughter wants to be in construction. I feel that work is more suited for men. How should I advise her?

It's an old belief that men are better at some things and women are better at others. This belief has caused many women in the past to hold lower status or lower paying jobs than men with the same amount of education. Times have changed and you will see men and women in all areas of the workforce. It's more important to find a job that will match her interests rather than excluding a choice because of gender.

Wrap Up!

This workbook includes a lot of information and tips on how to help your teen with making career and education decisions for the years ahead. The list below is a summary of things you can do to support your teen's career planning at school and home.

DONE	TASK	DATE
	Discuss your job with your teen. Describe how you made that career decision, what you like or dislike about your job, and what you could have done to improve your career decisions.	
	Review the results of your teen's career assessments that they may have taken at school. Ensure that your teen has explored occupations at school or even at home with OhioMeansJobs K-12 (www.ohiomeansjobs.com)	
	Help your teen set short and long term goals.	
	Have periodic talks with your teen to discuss their career interests. Remember, exposure to different careers and workplaces can develop or change interests.	
	Offer guidance but remember your goal is to help your teen find his/her own way. Resist pushing them toward a career you find interesting. Let him/her make the choice.	
	Be positive. Help your teen build self-confidence and to see themselves with a successful and satisfying future.	
	Help your teen to select courses that will help to prepare them for the occupation they have chosen for postsecondary education.	
	Set high expectations for your teen in their class work and extracurricular activities.	
	Encourage your teen to plan for postsecondary education whether the choice is a career and technical education, community college, university, military or apprenticeship. The majority of jobs in the future will require additional training and education past high school.	
	Start a savings plan as early as possible to help pay the cost of postsecondary education.	
	Explore scholarships and financial aid options. Ask the school counselor to share the information about state scholarships and other local financial aid.	
	Keep the lines of communication open with your teen. Career planning is a not a one-time discussion.	

The following resources were used to develop the information for this guide:

[Parent Primer from the Florida Department of Education](#)

[Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)

[OhioMeansJobs K-12](#)



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