



What Parents Can Do to Help

(for high school parents)

Career Development Center

California State University, Los Angeles

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1. **ENCOURAGE** your teen to investigate jobs and careers. Talk about work and your job at the dinner table. Talk with friends and relatives about jobs when your children are present.
2. **STRESS** to your teen that for now, *school* is their work. Attendance is vital.
3. **EXPLORE** with your teen, without being judgmental, his or her personal talents, strengths, likes and dislikes. (You probably already know most of them).
4. **HELP** expose your teen, first hand, to as many different jobs, businesses, and professions as possible. Through school, community, your employer, friends and relatives, get your teen to take advantage of both formal and informal work exposure programs. These include:
 - job shadowing – going through a day of work watching someone do his/her job
 - informational interviewing/mentoring – being paired with a working adult for a one-on-one discussion of jobs and careers
 - internships – paid and unpaid
 - youth apprenticeship/cooperative education – working at a job under the school's supervision while still being a student
5. **PROVIDE** as many opportunities as you can for your teen to learn technology. New, evolving technologies and the global economy have drastically changed the job market, thus it is imperative that your student be considered computer literate. Make sure that your teen has taken computer classes in high school and that he or she has access to a computer at home, if at all possible.
6. **FIND OUT** what career information is available through the high school and the local library. Many maintain extensive career reference libraries including computerized resources.
7. **GUIDE** your son or daughter toward acquiring important skills. Employers are especially interested in hiring those who have written, verbal, analytical, teamwork and computer skills, and these are skills that can be learned and developed. Having a second language is important as well.
8. **TALK** to your teen about work and career as a goal for his or her education. Today, lifelong learning is a reality – not just for its own sake, but as a demand of the workplace.

It's okay that college freshmen usually don't know what they want to do for the rest of their lives. What's *not* okay is using that uncertainty to avoid thinking about a future career path altogether.

9. **MAKE** your son or daughter responsible for their education. College is not high school, and no one will hold their hand, so they should be encouraged to find out answers on their own.

10. **REMEMBER** that it is your teen's life, not yours. Although you may wish for your child to study for a particular career, he or she really needs to find their own path and if they do so, they are most likely to be happy and feel fulfilled.