
Why should I talk to my kids about careers while they're in school?

- **Many of our attitudes and habits are formed when we're very young.** It's never too early to reinforce the notion that all work has value.
- **Career planning expands horizons.** Students learn about different occupations and types of work they may not have heard of while still having flexibility to change course if desired.
- **Careful planning is more important today than ever before,** because many of today's best-paying jobs didn't exist 30 years ago and require specialized skills and training.
- **What your children study matters.** Earnings vary widely based on the type of college degree or skills credential earned.
- **Some of the future's best-paying jobs involve training in mathematics and science.** High school course selection can be the first step toward entering these fields.
- **Career exploration saves time and money.** By setting career goals early, students arrive at post-secondary education more focused, likely reducing the time required to achieve early career goals.



How can I talk about careers with my children?

- **Be positive.** Look for career-related “teachable moments” in everyday life (TV, running errands, etc.). Encourage all options. Help your child develop a “can-do” attitude.
- **Share information.** Look for information on today's career world and find ways to share that with your child. Talk about economic news and career trends with your children.
- **Watch and learn.** Observe what your children enjoy and don't enjoy in everyday life. Sometimes this can lead to key insights on what jobs they would like.
- **Understand consequences.** Help your child make the connection between career choices and economic consequences, including managing money.

Where can I get more information?

- **The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and local Workforce Solutions offices** have lots of helpful information about job openings, labor market information, and career opportunities. Key Internet Resources:
 - <http://www.texasworkforce.org> (TWC home page),
 - <https://www.workintexas.com> (TWC job matching),
 - <https://www.lmci.state.tx.us> (TWC Labor Market and Career Information),
 - <https://www.texascareercheck.com> (Texas Career Check, information about different career and education options),
 - <https://www.txcrews.org> (Texas CREWS, information on educational and career outcomes).

- **High school guidance counselors and teachers** are important partners in your children's success, especially regarding college and training opportunities.
- **The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board** has many resources on picking and paying for college. Key Internet resources:
 - <http://www.collegeforalltexas.com> (college exploration),
 - <https://www.studentaid.gov> (student aid resources),
 - <https://www.fafsa.ed.gov> (FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid),
 - <https://www.collegeboard.org> and <https://www.act.org> (college admissions examinations).
- **The Texas Education Agency** and TWC jointly run a career information hotline: 800-822-PLAN (7526)
- **The US Department of Labor** has several career exploration resources:
 - <https://www.careeronestop.org> and
 - <https://www.jobcorps.gov>.

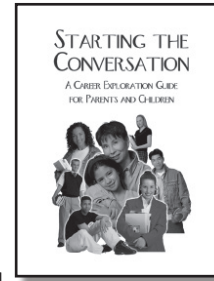


When should I take key actions?

- **Elementary school:** The goal is to increase self-confidence and career awareness. Talk about the many occupations they see in the community and the tasks associated with those jobs. By assigning chores and providing an allowance, children begin to develop personal responsibility and understand the value of money.
- **Middle school:** Develop basic skills for workplace and academic success (good attendance, pride in work, etc.), discuss skills and education requirements of different occupations, formulate a high school graduation plan. Remember, the best way to keep all career options open is a strong math and science background. High schools offer many quality career-related courses worth exploring.
- **High school:** Take career interest inventories and basic skills assessments, research labor market information and trends, start writing a résumé and developing a career portfolio and references, take part-time jobs and/or volunteer opportunities in areas of interest, plan for post-secondary education, take the PSAT (sophomore year), take the SAT/ACT (junior year), attend career fairs and fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) as soon after Jan. 1 of the senior year as possible.



For more information and details on how to start work on career exploration with young people, you can order the full book *Starting the Conversation: A Career Exploration Guide for Parents and Children*. It includes additional resources and topics on how to talk about careers and where to get good information. To order, visit <https://www.lmci.state.tx.us> or call 1-800-822-PLAN (7526).



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<http://www.texasworkforce.org/labormarket>

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.
Relay Texas: 800-735-2989 (TTY) and 711 (Voice).

(6/15/16)

Starting The Conversation: Talk With Your Kids About Their Future TODAY



Today, career success requires more detailed planning than it did in generations past. With that in mind, here are some tips on why and how to introduce your kids to today's world of work.

