

Career Options

Guide to Career
Planning with
Your Teenager

nscareeroptions.ca



© Crown copyright Province of Nova Scotia, 2011

The material in this handbook may be photocopied for educational or career counselling purposes.

Labour market and employment requirements are subject to change, and it is recommended that the reader verify the information before making any career decisions.

Please visit www.nscareeroptions.ca for the most current and detailed information. To order additional copies of this publication please contact careeroptions@gov.ns.ca.

Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education

An initiative of JobsHere

WHAT TYPE OF JOB
WOULD MAKE MY
CHILD HAPPY?

SHOULD MY CHILD GO TO
UNIVERSITY, COMMUNITY
COLLEGE, A PRIVATE COLLEGE
OR SHOULD HE/SHE WORK
FIRST?

WHAT COURSES
DO THEY NEED
TO TAKE?

HOW MUCH
WILL IT COST?

WHERE CAN MY
CHILD GET
TRAINING?



**PARENTS
ARE #1**

Career Planning With Your Child

These are all questions you and your child will be asking over the next few years.

The answers to these questions are important, so they require lots of thought and research. Talking with your child about careers should not be left to the last moment. You, as a parent, can help your child. Since these are big decisions, it is important to start talking with your child now about their future plans.

This guide will assist you in:

- Helping your child make good career and training decisions.
- Identifying some resources you can use in working with your child.
- Understanding the career development process and how you can help.

Inside this guide you will find information on:

- Why parents are important in their child's career development PAGE 4
- Your network & resources: family & friends PAGE 5
- You do not have to be an expert to help your child PAGE 6
- The career development process PAGE 8
- Guiding principles for parents PAGE 14
- High five messages PAGE 16
- Web resources PAGE 18

Visit nscareeroptions.ca/careerplanning for further information on the steps to developing a career path.

Parents are Important in Their Child's Career Development

Parents often believe that their child is influenced more by friends or people outside the family. However, several studies have shown that children rank their parents as the most important people when it comes to helping them with career decisions. This is not surprising as you have always been there to help them. No one knows your son or daughter better than you do. The fact that you are physically present provides more chances to talk about careers and their future.





Your Network of Resources: Family & Friends

Aunts, uncles, grandparents, foster parents and your friends can also play an important role in helping with your child's career journey. In addition to providing support and encouragement, they can provide opportunities for children to ask questions and find out more about the jobs they do. They might also be able to arrange to have the child interview people in other types of jobs that might be of interest to your child. With the help of this network of supporters, a child might be provided opportunities to learn more about jobs. They might also be able to help your child secure a volunteer/work placement or even summer/part-time employment. This will provide your child with actual work experience. These chances to talk to others and experience jobs can be of great help in making good career decisions.

Your Network



You Do Not Have to be an Expert to Help Your Child

Parents sometimes feel that they do not have the knowledge to help their child. Many feel that only experts can help them with career decisions. At some point, your child may use the services of the school guidance counselor or even a career practitioner. With all of the resources available, you can also be of great help to your daughter or son. These resources are easy to find, as most are on the Internet. There are also some training programs available such as Parents as Career Coaches. The key for parents is a desire to help and the ability to remain open minded. These attitudes, along with a basic understanding of the career development journey, will make it easier for you to help your child.

Knowledge & Skills Parent's Already Have	Resources Available to You & Your Child
<p>You:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• know your child better than anyone else• care about your child• want your child to be happy and successful• have experiences in both life and work that can help your child• have friends and family that could also help your child learn about careers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• career websites (see list of career resources at the end of this guide)• books on careers• Parents as Career Coaches course• school job fairs• school guidance counselors



parentsascareercoaches.ca

The Career Development Process

The goal of the career development process is to help your child find success and happiness in both their career and life. This is identical to the goal many parents share.

There are a number of steps in this process:

IDENTIFY INTERESTS
"WHAT DOES MY CHILD LIKE?"

FIND OUT ABOUT CAREERS
"WHAT JOBS MIGHT MAKE MY CHILD HAPPY?"



IDENTIFY SKILLS "WHAT IS MY CHILD GOOD AT AND WHAT SKILLS & COURSES ARE NEEDED?"



FIND TRAINING
"WHERE CAN MY CHILD GET THE TRAINING HE/SHE NEEDS?"



This process is actually a journey someone goes through. Many assume it is a straight line; however, this journey is often filled with twists and turns. Sometimes your child may make a wrong turn or travel down a dead-end road. When this happens it may be important to revisit questions like: “what am I interested in?” or “what am I good at?”

Here are four questions or steps to work on with your child:

1. “What Does My Child Like?”

Identify Interests

The first step is for your child to identify what they like. This is important, as it will help them to choose jobs that will make them happy. Sometimes children do not take the time to identify what they like, so as parents, one important way you can assist your child is by helping them identify their interests.

How To Help Identify Interests:

- Talk to your child about activities they are interested in. Then help them describe what it is they like about the activity:
 - “I like working with my hands”...“I like working with computers.”
 - “I like helping other people”...“I like solving problems.”

These “likes” are actually interests. When looking at careers, your child should try to look for careers that would engage them in activities they like. For example, many trade related jobs involve working with their hands. Social and helping jobs involve working with and helping other people.

- There are also a number of online quizzes that can be used to start identifying interests. While these only provide indications, the results can be used to talk more about your child’s interests.

Please see the end of this guide for a list of helpful Web Resources.



2. What Jobs Might Make My Child Happy?

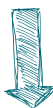
Explore Careers that are of Interest

The second step is finding and exploring careers that match your child's likes or interests. The key here is to start by looking at lots of careers and trying not to reach a final decision too soon. There are several of ways to find out more about careers:

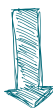
Ways to Find out About Careers

- Visit the Career Options Website or other websites and read about careers that might match some of your child's interests.
- Help your child find someone to talk to who works in jobs that might be of interest to them.
- Your child could volunteer or find part time employment, in areas that are of interest to him/her. While these may not be the exact job they might eventually want, they can observe and gain some information on what those jobs involve.

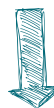
WAYS TO HELP YOUR CHILD FIND OUT MORE ABOUT JOBS THEY MIGHT LIKE



GET
INFORMATION
FROM WEBSITES



FIND PEOPLE FOR
YOUR CHILD TO
TALK TO ABOUT
THEIR JOBS



HELP YOUR CHILD
FIND VOLUNTEER
WORK OR A PART
TIME JOB, IN
AREAS THAT
INTEREST THEM.

3. What is My Child Good At?

Identify Skills & Personal Qualities

The next step is to look at the skills and personal qualities your child has developed.

How To Identify Skills:

- Talk to your child and make a list of school subjects that she/he seems to do well in and that they find interesting.
- Discuss and make a list of all the skills your child has developed from hobbies, sports etc.
- Have your child take online quizzes. Remember, these are indications only of potential skills.
- Your child can also participate in formal testing of aptitudes. This is usually done by a person trained in testing.

How To Identify Personal Qualities:

- Observe and talk to your child about personal qualities you have noted. For example, you may note your child is caring, a hard worker, honest etc.
- Once you have identified skills and qualities, help your child compare their skills and qualities to those expected in occupations they find interesting.

What are Employers Looking For?

Because demands in the workplace change rapidly, the needs of employers change. There are some common skills, called Essential Skills, that are required to varying degrees within most occupations:

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

- Reading Text
- Document Use
- Numeracy
- Writing
- Oral Communication
- Working with Others
- Continuous Learning
- Thinking Skills
- Computer Use

SUGGESTION: TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT THESE SKILLS AND WHICH ONES THEY FEEL ARE STRONG OR WEAK. THEN DISCUSS WAYS TO TRY AND IMPROVE ANY WEAK SKILLS.

Visit nscareeroptions.ca/educationandtraining for information on training programs and post-secondary institutions across Nova Scotia.

4. Where Can My Child Get The Training He/She Needs?

Identify Training Options

The next step is to see what type of training is needed. Choosing the right courses and training is important. Sometimes an employer's demands for specific jobs can differ, so it is always a good idea to do some research like looking at want ads. This will allow you to identify the qualifications and skills most employers are looking for in that field of work. There is also general information on training for careers on websites, such as Career Options. You might also want to get information on course offerings from various universities, community colleges and private training schools. Keep in mind that sometimes there is a need for future training or an apprenticeship after people complete degree or certificate programs.





Guiding Principles for Parents:

Keep career options open:

Rather than pinpoint a specific career, your child should be urged to consider several different types of careers. This will allow them to:

- Consider lots of possible careers, before they settle on one.
- Have alternative choices, in case their first career choice is either not available or they change their minds.

Be involved in course selection:

At this time your child probably has not defined a career goal. Therefore, it will be important for them to select courses that will allow them to meet entrance requirements for a variety of post secondary training programs.

- Both you and your child should investigate general entrance requirements for a variety of college and university programs. This will ensure that they have the courses required once they make a training decision.
- Meet with the school Guidance Counselor. They may be able to provide additional information or discuss specific training options.

Visit nscareeroptions.ca for information on Nova Scotia's labour market and a list of Career Resource Centres.

Note: Some children, due to specific learning challenges, may not be able to cope with the demands of some courses. This may have an impact on their career and training options if they cannot meet entrance requirements. Some post secondary programs have supports in place for students who have learning challenges. Therefore, you should discuss this with student support staff at the community college or university.

This is your child's journey:

While your role in helping your child is extremely important, it is also critical for you to remember that this is not your journey. The final career choice will be one your child must live and cope with.

Help your child to cope with change:

The world of work is constantly changing. People who can cope with change are the most successful. Helping your child cope with change will assist them in the future.

Allow your child to learn from mistakes:

Your child needs to make decisions. With this comes the potential to make mistakes. When your child makes errors, it is important to help them learn from the mistake, not to judge them.

Identify and celebrate all learning:

Because the demands in the labour market will change, life-long learning is important. Some of this learning will take place in school settings. However, lots of knowledge and skills will be acquired through life experiences including hobbies, on the job, sports, travel etc. Helping your child learn to identify all learning will help them in the future. Specifically, it will assist them in gaining a better sense of all their skills.

Keep Happiness as the Goal:

Stress the importance of looking for work that will make your child happy.



High five Messages for Parents

As parents, there are some critical messages to promote throughout the career decision making process:

Change is Constant

Occupations come, go, and change. People change too. It is no longer realistic to expect that a young person will choose an occupation, train for it, and do that sort of work for the rest of their lives. Young people must still plan for their futures, but they can no longer afford to plan with a rigid mindset (“I’ve made a decision, now that’s settled”).

Real career resilience lies in being adaptable in the face of change. Youth need to learn to expect there will be change. They need to become conscious of the changes that are going on all around them. They need to be able to recognize and seize opportunities that come their way— many purely by chance.

Follow Your Heart

While change is constant, the heart is relatively stable. Heart refers to the qualities, interests, values, and personality traits that can lead to life/work happiness and balance. Academic qualifications and technical skills are required to drive your child down the road to success, but heart will be essential to selecting the right road to begin with.

Focus on the Journey

Often there is a temptation to define a final career goal; however, parents need to encourage their child to concentrate on the career development process. Through this process or journey, they will identify what their passions are and the skills/training they will require to select a career. Parents can help their child move through this process.

Stay Learning

Learning takes place both in formal settings and through life experiences. Both are equally important. As a parent you can assist your child by encouraging them to learn new skills, gain new knowledge, or learn something new about themselves. Your feedback is critical. It is important to give them credit: for jobs well done, efforts made, responsibilities upheld, difficulties overcome, and lessons learned. Children who feel they are competent enough to handle their immediate world are more likely to seek out new experiences that promote even more learning. Equally important is helping your children make sense of their learning experiences and to reinforce the connections between what they have learned and how that learning applies to different career directions. Along the way your children will learn more about themselves, and they will become more confident to think about the big picture of their future.

Access Your Allies

Everyone needs help to build and sustain a career at some point along the way. Parents can assist their child in learning more about jobs through connecting them with their network of friends and contacts.

Helpful Web Resources for Parents

The following are some excellent sources of information, which will assist both you and your child, in terms of career decision making, occupational information, financial information and much more:

NOVA SCOTIA CAREER OPTIONS (www.nscareeroptions.ca)

Career Options supports people in deciding on an education and career path, finding meaningful employment, or seeking information on labour market dynamics across the province. Search for information on wages, training paths, job prospects, and employers for over 300 occupational groups by using the Quick Career Search function on the home page or visiting the Search Job Profiles section of the site.

BRIGHT CAREER FUTURES (www.brightcareerutures.com)

Bright Career Options profiles growing Nova Scotia industries such as aerospace, financial services, skilled trades, technologies, and healthcare.

PARENTS AS CAREER COACHES (www.parentsascareercoaches.ca)

Visit and sign up for a Parents as Career Coaches workshop. Find tools and resources for career planning.

YOUTH CANADA – GOVERNMENT OF CANADA (www.youth.gc.ca)

A youth oriented website that provides information on topics including the job search, post-secondary education, money management, and career development.

SKILLS CANADA~NOVA SCOTIA (<http://skillsns.ednet.ns.ca>)

Skills Canada~Nova Scotia is a not-for-profit organization that promotes careers in skilled trades and technologies to Nova Scotia youth.

THE STUDENT COMMISSION (www.tgmag.ca)

Producer of The Sixth Messenger and other youth information. A charitable organization dedicated to creating and promoting opportunities for young people to learn and grow in a positive and safe environment.

NOVA SCOTIA YOUTH SECRETARIAT (<http://youth.ednet.ns.ca>)

Provides information on youth programs, services, and events and facilitates dialogue between youth and government.

OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES (www.ednet.ns.ca/O2)

Options and Opportunities (O2) offers students a more hands-on learning experience. It is designed to help them make successful transitions from high school to work, a career path, or a post-secondary program.

NOVA SCOTIA APPRENTICESHIP (www.nsapprenticeship.ca)

Apprenticeship is a form of post-secondary education for those who want to be certified to work in a skilled trade.

NOVA SCOTIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE (www.nsc.ca)

Nova Scotia's community college offers training opportunities to meet the varied needs of Nova Scotia's students, communities, businesses, and industries.

NOVA SCOTIA UNIVERSITIES (www.ednet.ns.ca/contact/universities.shtml)

Provides a list and links to the pages of Nova Scotia's universities.

PRIVATE CAREER COLLEGES (<http://pcc.ednet.ns.ca/>)

Provides contact information for the many private career colleges that operate in Nova Scotia.

NOVA SCOTIA STUDENT ASSISTANCE (<http://studentloans.ednet.ns.ca/>)

Student Assistance provides an opportunity for all qualified students in Nova Scotia to pursue post-secondary education.

JOB BANK (www.jobbank.gc.ca OR www.jobsetc.gc.ca)

The Training and Careers section will guide you in identifying career options that best suite your interests, strengths, and skills. Provides information on the latest trends, employment prospects, and salary ranges of skilled trades and occupations.

WORKING IN CANADA (www.workingincanada.gc.ca)

Provides job seekers, workers, and those who are new to the Canadian labour market with the information required to make informed decisions about where to live and work. The site can assist individuals who are searching for work or looking to make career decisions.

NEXT STEPS (www.nextsteps.org)

A full-featured employment, career development, and job finding resource for youth.

HRSDC NATIONAL OCCUPATION CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM (NOC) (www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC)

NOC is the authoritative resource on occupational information in Canada. It is used daily by thousands of people to understand the jobs found throughout Canada's labour market.

NOVA KNOWLEDGE (www.novaknowledge.ns.ca)

A member-based organization dedicated to the development of a flourishing, sustainable knowledge economy in Nova Scotia.

CEED – CENTRE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT INC. (www.ceed.ca)

CEED is an organization devoted to helping people discover and use entrepreneurship as a vehicle to become self-reliant.

INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS AND SECTOR COUNCILS FOR NOVA SCOTIA (www.nscareeroptions.ca/labourmarketinformation)

Due to the diversity of Nova Scotia's economy, virtually all industries are represented in the province. Here you will find links to industry associations and sector councils, and links to industry information provided by Industry Canada, Service Canada, and more.