

Career Coaching for Parents



***Helping
Your Teen
Discover
and
Research
Potential
Career
Pathways***

Notes about this Guide

This guide was developed by Louise Berns Robinson for use in the Parent Education workshops sponsored by Northern Virginia Community College's (NOVA) Tech Prep Program. Mrs. Robinson is a Career Coach and Parent Educator employed by NOVA under a Tech Prep grant. Please review the resources and footnotes pages for the resources she consulted during the writing of this guide. Some of the activities have been used in student development (SDV) courses at NOVA and have been modified with use over the years. In the process, the original print reference may have been lost and so it could not be cited. In these cases, the particular SDV course that used it is cited instead. Please feel free to contact Mrs. Robinson if you are aware of the original print reference so that we can properly acknowledge it in future printings of this guide.

All the original activities in this guide—except #6—may be reprinted and used in non-profit, educational settings for the purpose of helping individuals with their career exploration goals. If you wish to use portions of this guide in a profit-making endeavor, you must obtain permission to use the information from Louise Robinson at lrobinson@nvcc.edu or Ruthe Brown, the Tech Prep Director, at rdbrown@nvcc.edu. Permission to reprint and use activity #6 for any purpose must be obtained directly from the States Career Cluster Initiative. That organization may be contacted at www.careerclusters.org.

For the purpose of consistency, we made the choice to use the pronouns “he” and “him” when referring to your teen. We acknowledge that this guide will be used by both men and women but found it awkward to list both pronouns every time they came up. We also chose not to switch the pronouns from “he” to “she” under each section of the guide because we thought that this changing back and forth also sounded awkward. The audience for this guide is parents and other significant care providers of teens. We trust that you will be able to adapt the gender references to the needs of your teen.

You will also note that while the instructional pages in the guide are addressed to the parents, the activity pages speak directly to the teen. You will see “you” instead of “your teen” because it is the teens who will be completing the activities, not the parents.

This guide was originally developed by the Northern Virginia Community College's (NOVA) Tech Prep Program and published in January 2008. The department and staff members associated with this guide are no longer associated with NOVA. Attempts were made to gain appropriate permissions in October 2017.

Career Readiness staff members from the Kent Intermediate School District updated the guide in November 2017.

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Introduction

Do you ever wonder how involved you should be in your teen's decisions? Since the day he was born, you have been his main caretaker, teacher, and cheerleader. While you may have read books or articles along the way and asked advice from trusted friends and family, you've had to learn most of it on the job. Being a parent usually seems like a series of trial-and-error experiments until you find out what works. When your child was younger, you usually stepped in when he needed help; but now, as he begins to mature and wants more independence, you may find yourself holding back to see how your teen will do on his own. And yet a part of you still wants to help them make good choices.

If this sounds familiar, then you are in good company. Psychologist Eric Erickson, recognized parents' need to help nurture the next generation. At the same time, our teenagers are struggling to pull away, form their own identity and become independent. A collision between the needs of parents and children seem unavoidable, doesn't it? Yet research shows that teenagers still see their parents as the most influential figures in their lives, and they rely upon them for guidance as they explore their future educational and career goals.²

No one can take the place of a trusted parent when it comes to making decisions about the future. Guidance counselors, coaches, and teachers are excellent resources, but they can never know your child as well as you.

So you now have the new role of career coach. Parent surveys have revealed that they are uncertain about what resources they can access to support their children through the career exploration process without pushing too hard.³

The purpose of *Career Coaching for Parents: Helping Your Teen Discover and Research Potential Career Pathways* is to provide you with a starting point for working with your teen. This is not meant to be an exhaustive collection of career resources. Instead, it will provide a framework for the career exploration process.

Each section will begin with a brief explanation of the key ideas and then will provide activities that you and your teen can do together. The section will wrap up with the "Next Steps" you can take to continue the exploration process with resources that can be found on the web or in your community.

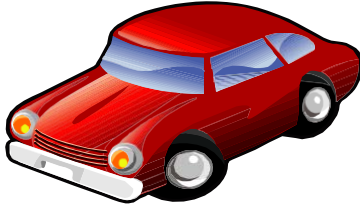
“...Research shows that teenagers still see their parents as the most influential figures in their lives, and they rely upon them for guidance as they explore their future educational and career goals.”



Parents as Career Coaches— Defining the Role & Identifying Communication Strategies

Your Role

The coach is the passenger on the cross-country road trip, not the driver!



What DOES the passenger (parent) do?

- *Consults the map and reviews directions.* This guide lays out the career process for parents so they can successfully guide their teen through the career exploration process.
- *Listens to the driver's needs.* Being a sounding board for teens who are anxious or frustrated about their career research is one of the most important jobs of a parent.
- *Keeps the driver awake so he doesn't fall asleep at the wheel!* It is easy for teens to get side-tracked by other school projects and extra-curricular activities. Parents can help them stay focused on the exploration process.
- *Tunes the radio.* Parents can be on the look out for resources that their teen can access for further career research.

What DOESN'T the passenger (parent) do?

- Grab the steering wheel and make the course corrections himself.
- Make the driver go somewhere he doesn't want to go.
- Change the color, make or year of the car.
- Order the driver to shift gears.⁴
- The road trip is a great analogy to consider when you are working with your teen because career exploration is a journey.

Of course, it is often "easier said than done." The temptation to "grab the steering wheel" is strong because

parents want teens to benefit from their own hard-earned knowledge. But sometimes learning on their own will stay with a teen longer than words of well-meaning advice. As Samuel Taylor Coleridge once said, "*Advice is like snow; the softer it falls, the deeper it sinks in.*"

Communication Strategies

Proven skills can help parents be more successful in mentoring their teens. These include:

- active listening,
- offering observations, and
- summarizing/prioritizing.

Try these out as you complete the activities in this guide.

Active Listening

If you think about it, parents usually listen to their teens while they're doing something else—watching TV, washing dishes, or getting ready to go somewhere. We seldom give them our full, face-to-face attention.

- **Sit down at the kitchen table directly across from your teen** to indicate that your teen has your full attention;
- **Nod your head or make sounds of encouragement**, such as "uh huh," "I see," or "oh?" instead of firing lots of questions to encourage a teen to keep talking and to let him know you are following his train of thought;
- **Paraphrase occasionally – repeat what he said in your own words** – to make sure that you are clear about his meaning.

Offering Observations

Content: As your teen talks and you listen, certain topics may come up repeatedly which may not be obvious to your teen. Simply reflecting back an observation or interpretation allows him to pause and consider why that topic recurs. To someone who talks a lot about balancing homework and sports for example, you can say something like, "It seems like playing sports has taught you a lot about how to manage your time."

- **Emotions:** While some emotions may be obvious to your teen (i.e. I'm frustrated with this school project"), others may need to be "named" because your son or daughter is unaware of them.

For example, "I see your fists are clenched when you talk about this subject and I am wondering if it makes you angry or frustrated." Don't worry about being wrong. As you speak, your teen will definitely correct you if you have stated things incorrectly.

Summarizing and prioritizing

Hold an imaginary mirror to your teen's face to let him see how he has portrayed himself. After listening carefully and occasionally confirming that you understand what he means through paraphrasing and offering observations, **your summary identifies a big picture view of the main content areas and emotions that they have emphasized. You end your summary by asking your teen whether it is accurate.**

An example of a summary might be, "You have mentioned that you really enjoy photography and computer graphics because it allows you to be creative. You also mentioned that your favorite extra-curricular activities include hiking and kayaking and helping improve the environment. You like to work alone or with just one other person and really dislike group projects. Does that sound about right?"

- **Prioritizing simply means asking your teen to decide which activities and work conditions are the most important to him** so he can focus on the most important aspects of his career exploration first. Many of the activities in this guide will ask your teen to rank their most important options. You simply need to summarize what they identify as most important. ⁵

Problem-solving

Communicating with your teen and working together on career development activities may lead to some bumps in the road. Along with other communication strategies, it is important to include a problem-solving strategy which gets your teen involved and interested. The five steps include:

Step 1. **Talk about** your teen's feelings and needs.

Step 2. **Talk about** your feelings and needs.

Step 3. **Brainstorm together** to find a solution you can both live with.

Step 4. **Write down all ideas** without evaluating them. Writing down the ideas conveys to your son or daughter that you are giving their input serious consideration.

Step 5. **Decide** which suggestions you like, which you don't like, and which you plan to follow through on. ⁶

The process of brainstorming ideas for working together, writing them all down without passing judgment, and then going through them together to craft an agreement allows your teen the opportunity to be part of the problem solving process, rather than having a plan laid out for them.

Consider **developing a contract** with your teen. Identify what activities you will complete together, the number of minutes per week you will meet, and the dates that the agreement begins and ends. **Activity #1** provides a sample contract that you may use. Feel free to use this format or make up your own "career planning contract" with your teen.

Although some teens may not need or want this type of agreement, others may appreciate the structure that this gives to your work together. Spelling everything out in writing can be helpful to both of you because your roles, responsibilities, and rights will be clearly listed, making the process run more smoothly.

You will notice that the sample contract mentions possible incentives for completion of career development activities by a specified deadline. Sometimes parents find that small rewards help keep students engaged in the process. You may feel that the ultimate reward for your teen will be peace of mind and a sense of direction as he approaches high school graduation. This may be true and your teen may not need any further motivation. Some parents, though, find that more immediate rewards are helpful. If you are one of these parents, feel free to be creative

with the rewards that you choose. Consider taking your teen to an event related to his career interest, paying for a community college class, buying him supplies to help him pursue his career interest or sending him to a special summer camp in his field of interest. There are many rewards that will serve both as incentives and as positive next steps in the career exploration process.

Encouraging Independence

To encourage your teen to be involved in this process and show some independence, consider the following suggestions.⁷

- Encourage your child to make choices rather than trying to make them for him.
- Show respect for the difficulty of this process. Trying to decide what career path to follow can be intimidating and overwhelming. It might help to think back to a time of your life when you struggled over a decision that seemed daunting. By keeping that memory in mind, you can sympathize more easily with your teen's struggle.
- Don't rush to answer all your teen's questions. It's okay to refer him to outside resources or let him wrestle with his thoughts a bit so that the answers truly become his own.
- Don't rain on his parade. If your teen chooses to research a career path that seems unrealistic or impractical to you, try not to judge.

Instead of immediately trying to dissuade him from it, encourage him to go through the self-assessment and career research steps honestly. He may uncover information on the occupation that changes his mind. If you still see a conflict based on his self-described interests and values and the nature of the career field, you can always ask him to explain how he would deal with the conflict.

For example, your teen indicates that job stability is important to him but wants to become a professional musician. You might ask, "Based on your career research, musicians can't always count on having steady work. This was one of your values. How would you deal with this aspect of the job?"

Finally, be prepared to change your own mind on certain impressions you have about careers! The world is changing rapidly and your teen may have insights into a career field that you have not yet acquired.

You may even want to do some research of your own to find out more about a field your teen is interested in but that you don't know much about.

Next Steps

#1 Read *How to Talk so Kids will Listen and Listen so Kids will Talk* (Faber, Adele and Mazlish, Elaine. Perennial Currents, 1999), **on parent-child communication strategies:**

The workbook format is full of activities so you can practice the communication, problem-solving, and motivational strategies they recommend.

Their follow-up book, ***How to Talk so Your Teen will Listen and Listen so Your Teen will Talk*** (Faber, Adele and Mazlish, Elaine. Collins, 2005), gives specific strategies for working with teenagers.

#2 Watch the following movies for inspiration about your role as a parent to inspire and support your child's development process:

Searching for Bobby Fischer

A father discovers his son's amazing gift for playing chess. He hires a tutor to develop his son's talent and enters him into competitions to challenge him. The son feels stressed by his father's expectations because he is so anxious to please him. The father learns that he must allow his child to find his own way of expressing his gift and he develops a more balanced way of encouraging him.

Little Man Tate

A single mom realizes that her son Fred is a child prodigy and that she cannot provide him with enough intellectual stimulation. She agrees to enroll him to a special school for the gifted but is also concerned that he won't have the chance to be a "normal little boy." She and the director of the school clash but ultimately find a way to support Fred's need to be a child while developing his talents.

Activity #1: Career Planning Contract

_____ (student's name) and _____
(parent's name) agree to set aside _____ minutes every week / month (circle 1) to complete career development activities. We will begin our work sessions together on _____ (start date) and finish by _____ (end date). If our work together is completed on time, the following incentive will be earned: _____
_____.

We will focus on the activities checked below (from our Career Coaching Workbook):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> "The Story of My Life" Time Line | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet Research Scavenger Hunt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Values Budget | <input type="checkbox"/> Informational Interview Practice with Relative/Friend |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work Place Values Matching Worksheet and Dinner Table Discussions Exercise | <input type="checkbox"/> Crafting an "Elevator Introduction" Speech |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Holland Island Vacation Worksheet | <input type="checkbox"/> Job Shadowing/Volunteering Reflection Log |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> What's My Decision-Making Style? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career Clusters Assessment | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal-Mapping Exercise |

When we are apart, _____ (student's name) will be responsible for: _____
_____.

_____ (parent's name), will be responsible for: _____
_____.

We will re-evaluate our progress half way through our contract period on _____ (mid-term date) to assess whether this contract needs to be modified.

_____ Student Signature/Date

_____ Parent/Mentor Signature/Date

Understanding the World of Work and Preparing Your Teen

Parents often focus on the college selection and application process to get their children ready for the world of work. The chart at the bottom of this page reveals, however, that 82 out of 100 9th grade students don't complete a college degree! While there are many theories to explain why there is such a low rate of completion, these statistics clearly suggest that we *must* prepare our students by teaching them the career development process so that they are more focused as they move forward in life.

First, let's take a look at the world of work that lies ahead for our teens...

- The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that today's learner will have 10-14 jobs by the age of 38.
- According to the U.S. Department of Labor, 1 out of 4 workers today have worked for their present company for less than one year.
- More than half are working at their current job for less than 5 years.
- We are currently preparing students for jobs that don't yet exist using technologies that haven't been invented in order to solve problems we don't even know are problems yet.
- By their 21st birthday, digital kids will have sent/received 250,000 emails/IMs, spent 10,000 hours on the phone, and watched 20,000 hours of TV (with 500,000 commercials).

- It's estimated that 1.5 exabytes (1,500,000,000,000,000,000) of unique new information will be generated worldwide this year. That's estimated to be more than in the previous 5,000 years.
- The amount of new technical information doubles every 2 years. That means for a student starting a four-year technical or college degree, half of what they learn in their first year of study will be outdated by their third year of study.⁸

What does this all mean?

- Your teenager will need to be able to keep up with the newest technologies in order to communicate and function with others in the workplace.
- Given the mind-boggling amount of information that is being generated, he will need to develop the analytical skills to sift through all the information that exists to figure out what is valuable and what is not. For a list of other high demand skills that he will need, see Appendix A.
- He also will face a world of work that is constantly evolving. In order to keep up with the changes, he will have to constantly evaluate what his career goals are and what new areas of knowledge and skills he needs to acquire. How does he do this?
He works through the activities associated with the Career Development Cycle.

Portrait of a Failing System⁹

For every 100 9th graders:



68 graduate from high school on time;



Of those, 40 enroll directly in college;



Of those, 27 are still enrolled the following year;



Of those, 18 earn an associate degree within 3 years or a B.A. within 6 years.



**82 do not meet their educational goals
and are likely underemployed!**

The Career Development Cycle ¹⁰

To help your teen cope with the changing world of work, he needs to learn **HOW** to develop, implement and evaluate career goals on a continual basis. Career Counselors often refer to this as **the career development cycle** because it is circular and on-going. Below you will see a visual of the four stages that your teen needs to pass through on his career development journey. The explanations and activities of this book will help him move through this process.

Self-Assessment

Who Am I?

Take a look inward and identify your interests, personality traits values, and skills through a variety of activities. Use resources to generate a list of possible careers.

Action

How Do I Get What I Want?

Develop a set of goals to put your plan into action and then follow your plan to achieve short-term, mid-range and long-term goals.

If your goals aren't met, start the cycle again with self-assessment.



Career Exploration/ Occupational Research

What's Out There?

Learn about different career options through internet research, networking and informational interviewing, job shadowing and volunteer work.

Decision-Making

What Do I Want?

Bring together your knowledge of self (from self-assessment) and your knowledge of the occupation to decide on a career pathway to pursue.

Self-Assessment —An Overview

Self-assessment is the first step in the career development cycle. It requires looking **inward**, and figuring out what is important to you, what makes you happy, and what you do well (and not so well). Once you have done this, you can turn outward and look at the job market hiring trends, the knowledge and skills need to pursue a career, and strategies to get started in that field.

Reviewing Past Experiences

Before your teen explores future career moves, it is helpful to examine his past experiences for the clues about his preferences. Taking a look backward may highlight patterns in the activities he enjoys and the skills he already has acquired. Examining the past can also shed light on the obstacles he has overcome and the lessons learned from those challenges as well as the role that your family career history plays in your teen's own career decisions.

Activity #2—“The Story of My Life”— is a 3-part exercise that a teen can do together with a parent to help him gain a big picture view of his life as well as the different “chapters.” This story-telling approach will help your teen discover what themes repeat themselves in his life experiences and what skills he has developed as a result of these experiences. **Part 1** involves creating a timeline which includes highs and lows in their life. **Part 2** looks specifically at success stories and **Part 3** looks at obstacles.

The Role Values Play

“Values” is another term for **priorities**. It is important to determine what personal life achievements and workplace conditions really matter most to your teen as he explores different careers. Why? Every time your teen makes a decision about what school subjects to take, extra-curricular activities to pursue, or part-time jobs to hold, he is putting his top priorities or values into action.

If he gets involved in an activity that doesn't match with his the personal and workplace values he has identified previously, then your teen may have a values conflict. He needs to examine whether his values have changed. Throughout our lives, we all have new experiences that cause us to redefine our personal and workplace values.

Activities 3 and 4 are meant to capture where your teen is at the moment.

Activity #3—The Personal Values Budget Exercise— provides a list of some common personal

values that people often pursue over the course of a lifetime. Your teen will try to assess his top 5 or 6.

Activity #4 is divided into two parts:

- **Part 1** is a **Workplace Values Matching Exercise**, which really makes sure your teen can identify the meaning of each workplace value listed.
- **Part 2** includes topics for **Dinner Table Conversations** about workplace values conflicts. This part of the exercise allows you and your teen to talk about how value conflicts are resolved by examining four different fictional case studies.

Methods of Matching Career Interests to Current Labor Market Occupations

Psychologist John Holland believed that a match between individual traits and workplace factors leads to career satisfaction. His career development theory is widely accepted and is the basis for many career resources. The following activity will help you become acquainted with the trait and factor approach he developed.

Activity #5—The Holland Island Vacation Planner helps teens and their parents determine which of the six interest categories fit with the teens preferences and the ONET website will help them generate a list of occupations that match the teen's preferences.

A new classification system developed by the U.S. Department of Vocational and Adult Education identifies 16 different career clusters into which they have placed all existing jobs. These career clusters break down further into 81 specific career pathways that better define the type of work you might prefer within the career area. Within each pathway, specific jobs are listed that require similar knowledge and skills. Individual cluster charts allow you to see all that is possible. Each pathway not only describes the knowledge and skills needed to be successful but also the occupations under that pathway and the educational steps to follow to pursue that pathway.

Activity #6—The Career Clusters Assessment — helps parents and teens identify the top three career clusters that the teen might want to consider. Further research on the Virginia View and Career Cluster websites will help your teen generate some ideas of which career pathways under those clusters he then wants to look at more closely.

Activity #2: Creating “The Story of My Life” Timeline— Instructions ¹¹

On the next page, you will find a line that stretched from your birth to today—a timeline—that you will use to map out the main chapters of your life and to recall memories from each of these chapters. This exercise is designed to help you think about the experiences you have already had in life and the skills that you have acquired as you have moved through these experiences. Just remember, parents, allow your teen to write what is significant *to him*, not what you think is significant. If your teen asks, though, you may help by supplying the dates something happened or basic factual information they request. To get started, just follow the steps below:

Step 1: Between these two dates, mark off with a line and a phrase any significant events in your life and the dates they occurred. Don't worry if you cannot get the marks distributed accurately across the timeline. This is not a lesson in accurate drawing but an activity to provoke your thoughts. These lines divide your life story into chapters to consider separately.

Step 2: Starting at the left hand side of your timeline, think about what your life was like between your birth and the first event that is marked off. What impressions do you have of this chapter of your life? Allow your mind to let one memory from this time period rise to the surface. As you think about it, write down a 3-4 word phrase to describe that memory on your timeline. For example, “I became an exchange student to Spain,” or “I broke my leg in a soccer game.”

There are two kinds of memories that you may come across—**sparkling memories and defining memories**. Sparkling memories are high points in your life, a happy event, or a specific success that you achieved. Defining memories often are a time of disappointment, challenge, or transition that often help set a new direction of your life. Both types of memories are important to consider because we learn a lot about ourselves during peak experiences and low points.

Jot down a memory for each “chapter” or time period on your time line. We will explore these more later.

Step 3: Now that you have considered each chapter individually, take a look at your timeline as a whole. Do you see any patterns that repeat themselves in your life? Are there any interests that have grown over time? Any challenges that continue to surface? For example, you might have started horse back riding in elementary school and then throughout high school and college developed that interest. Or perhaps you have repeatedly battled allergies or other respiratory difficulties. Or perhaps there is a sudden shift or change in direction? On the bottom of the page, write a phrase or sentence to summarize each theme that you find and then circle each one so it will be easy to locate. As you go through the career exploration process, you will revisit these themes to see how they fit with your future life and career planning.

Step 4: Go on to pages 14 and 15 to look at your memories in-depth. Page 14 will ask you to examine your defining moments and page 15 will look at your sparkling moments. From this examination, you will be able to identify skills that you have already cultivated in your life. For example, you may see that a lot of your activities involve working cooperatively as part of a team. Or you may realize that artistic expression is a skill that you have developed through your experiences. A “starter” list of skills is provided on page 16 to help jog your thought process. You may have others. **You only need to break down 2-3 memories on each worksheet, not all of them.**

“Story of My Life” Timeline

13



Activity#2—Part Two: Examining Life Story Challenges or “Defining Memories”

Defining Memory #1: _____

List 3 adjectives that capture your feelings about this memory: _____

What did you learn about yourself, your family, or life in general as you gained perspective on this experience?

What skills did you cultivate as a result of having this experience? (see list on page 16 for ideas)

Defining Memory #2: _____

List 3 adjectives that capture your feelings about this memory: _____

What did you learn about yourself, your family, or life in general as you gained perspective on this experience?

What skills did you cultivate as a result of having this experience? (see list on page 16 for ideas)

Defining Memory #3: _____

List 3 adjectives that capture your feelings about this memory: _____

What did you learn about yourself, your family, or life in general as you gained perspective on this experience?

What skills did you cultivate as a result of having this experience? (see list on page 16 for ideas)

Activity #2, Part Three: Examining Life Story Successes or “Sparkling Memory”

Sparkling Memory #1 _____

What part of this memory makes it a “high point” or “success” for you? _____

What was your role and what motivated you to be involved? _____

What skills did you develop as a result of having this experience? (see p. 16 for list of possible skills)

Sparkling Memory #2 _____

What part of this memory makes it a “high point” or “success” for you? _____

What was your role and what motivated you to be involved? _____

What skills did you develop as a result of having this experience? (see p. 16 for list of possible skills)

Sparkling Memory #3 _____

What part of this memory makes it a “high point” or “success” for you? _____

What was your role and what motivated you to be involved? _____

What skills did you develop as a result of having this experience? (see p. 16 for list of possible skills)

Starter List of Skills ¹²

Circle skills that came up most often in the memories exercises; then put asterisk next to top 5.

Self-Management Skills	Practical	Advising/coaching
Academic	Realistic	Teaching/explaining
Accurate	Reflective	Public speaking/presenting
Active	Resourceful	Public relations
Adaptable	Self-reliant	Policy-making
Adventurous	Sociable	Networking with people
Aggressive	Spontaneous	Marketing
Analytical	Stress-tolerant	Fundraising/sales
Calm	Tenacious	Negotiating
Careful	Trustworthy	Resolving conflict
Cheerful	Functional Skills	Decision-making
Competitive	Budget planning	Researching
Conceptual	Auditing/monitoring spending	Writing
Cooperative	Financial investing	Editing/proofreading
Creative	Purchasing	Serving/helping others
Detail-oriented	Inspecting/quality control	Listening/observing
Determined	Developing/designing	Motivating
Discreet	Assembling	Cooking/preparing food
Efficient	Operating equipment	Artistic expression
Empathetic	Mechanical repair	Musical ability
Energetic	Building/construction	Mathematical computation
Enthusiastic	Troubleshooting (find what is wrong)	Laboratory skills/scientific experiments
Far-sighted	Problem-solving (fix what is wrong)	Computer programming
Friendly	Strategizing/forecasting	Organizing & maintaining data
Goal-oriented	Prioritizing tasks/multi-tasking	Computer systems design/maintenance
Helpful	Coordinating activities	First aid & safety
Honest	Clerical/recordkeeping/data-entry	Athletic ability
Independent	Leading	Travel
Industrious	Interviewing	Transporting/driving
Logical	Team-building	Other _____
Optimistic		
Organized		

Activity #3: Personal Values Budget ¹³

What really matters to you? As you think about your life ten years down the road, what personal values do you want to be integrated into your day-to-day living?

Instructions: You have been given \$10,000 to spend on any of the 20 values listed below. Pick a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 6 values that you would put your money on to secure them for your future. This exercise requires you to make choices about what is really important to you.

	Amount Budgeted
1. A satisfying and fulfilling marriage or love relationship	_____
2. Happy family relationships	_____
3. A month's vacation with nothing to do but enjoy yourself	_____
4. Lifetime financial security	_____
5. A lovely home in a beautiful setting	_____
6. A world without discrimination	_____
7. International fame and popularity	_____
8. Success in your chosen profession	_____
9. An extensive formal education	_____
10. A peaceful world	_____
11. A satisfying spiritual/religious life	_____
12. A long and healthy life	_____
13. Constant mental growth	_____
14. Freedom to do what you want	_____
15. A chance to direct the destinies of a nation	_____

Activity #4: Workplace Values Matching Exercise

STEP 1: Match the names of 20 workplace values with 20 definitions or descriptions of different workplace values. Place the letter of the description in the line next to the value that it matches. **Answer key on next page.**

STEP 2: After you have completed the matching exercise, put an asterisk (*) next to the **top 5 values** that you believe are the most important for you in your future career choice.

1. Prestige	_____	A. The work you do may improve society.
2. Variety	_____	B. You work without close supervision and make your own decisions on the job.
3. Economic Security	_____	C. Your job involves brainstorming and testing out new ideas/innovations.
4. Social Conscience	_____	D. You enjoy the company of your co-workers and you work well together on team projects.
5. Leadership	_____	E. Changes in the economy don't threaten your job; there will always be jobs in your field.
6. Independence	_____	F. Your boss places a value on your suggestions and you receive credit for doing good work on the job.
7. Flexibility	_____	G. Your job allows you to plan and direct activities and oversee the work of other employees.
8. Recognition	_____	H. Your work environment is a safe, clean, comfortable and attractive place to work.
9. High Income	_____	I. Once you leave work, you are able to forget about the stresses of the job.
10. Creativity	_____	J. You provide direct care to others to help them on a one-on-one basis.
11. Learning	_____	K. You can set up your own work schedule.
12. Good Work Relationships	_____	L. You are exposed to new things every day on the job or have the opportunity to take classes outside of work.
13. Leisure	_____	M. Your work involves many different activities, different people, and/or different places.
14. Aesthetics	_____	N. You do not have to commute far for your job. There is no chance you would have to relocate to another state or country for your job.
15. Challenge	_____	O. You have the opportunity to test your knowledge and abilities to the fullest.
16. Geographical Location	_____	P. You get lots of vacation time and are able to spend time with friends/family on a regular basis.
17. Peace of Mind	_____	Q. Your job has high status in the community and you are respected for your work.
18. Advancement	_____	R. You have a good chance to earn a lot of money through your salary or through bonuses.
19. Helping Others	_____	S. Your employer promotes from within.
20. Mastery	_____	T. You have become an expert in your field and derive personal satisfaction from the high level of competency you have attained.

Activity #4—Part Two: Dinner Table Discussions

About Workplace Values Conflicts

Instructions: Below are some scenarios of fictional individuals who face some type of values conflict with their career choice. Using part one of this activity on workplace values:

- 1) Identify what values are at odds with each other in each person's story.
- 2) Suggest what you think they might do to solve the values conflict.
- 3) Discuss whether anyone in your family has faced a similar values conflict.
- 4) Talk about what your family member or friend did to resolve the value's conflict.

Jot notes below regarding your conversation. **There are no right or wrong answers.**

Scenario #1: Nancy is 38 years old and has worked for a prestigious law firm since she was 25 years old. Over 13 years, she often worked 70-80 hours per week on big cases that got her recognition by her peers and the partners of the law firm. Two years ago, Nancy got married and after a year, discovered she was pregnant. She recently had her baby and is now wondering whether she wants to return to work at that firm. She has become very attached to her little baby boy and wants to be able to watch him grow up; but she has worked so hard on her career. She is reluctant to completely give it up. She is about to come to the end of her maternity leave and has to make a decision about what she wants to do.

Scenario #2: At 25, John has been a police officer for 5 years after receiving his associate's degree in criminal justice. His work involves tracking gang activity in Northern Virginia and trying to intervene in criminal activity that he learns about. He knows that he is helping make his community a safer place and improving society is what makes the job worth while to him. Recently, though, he was injured while on duty and has been warned about threats from different sources that he is a target for gang retaliation. He has started to feel very stressed out and has had disturbing dreams and health problems. He's trying to decide whether he should apply for a desk job which would be less dangerous.

Answer Key for Page 19: 1-Q, 2-M, 3-E, 4-A, 5-G, 6-B, 7-K, 8-F, 9-R, 10-C, 11-L, 12-D, 13-P, 14-H, 15-O, 16-N, 17-I, 18-S, 19-J, 20-T.

Dinner Table Discussions...page 2

Workplace Values Conflicts

Scenario #3: George works as a manager for a top IT firm and has been with the company for more than 20 years after being at a few other IT companies for 10 years before that. He has been promoted over the years and now, at age 52, makes a high salary that has allowed him to live comfortably. Unfortunately, his job has become progressively more managerial and he doesn't get to try out new technology or develop innovative strategies to help out customers. He misses the creativity and brainstorming his job used to involve. His after-work hobbies involve acting and videography and he wonders whether he could make a decent wage in one of these career fields. He thinks about changing careers now, but wonders if he should wait another 13 years until retirement to try out a second career.

Scenario #4: Maggie is 22 years old and just graduated from college. After graduating, she returned home to live with her mom and dad and returned to the office job she has held each summer vacation. She really likes her boss and co-workers, and since they have been together for 3 years, they work well together. Recently, a job as the office manager opened up and Maggie's boss suggested she apply for it now that she is done with school. Maggie is tempted but also realizes that the job is not in a field related to her college major. Maggie studied special education and decided she wants to work with children who need intensive, individualized attention. She feels she could really help them and make a difference in their lives. There are many job openings but Maggie hasn't applied yet because she really like her current situation as well.

Activity #5: Holland Island Vacation Planner ¹⁴

STEP 1—Directions: You have the opportunity to take a week-long vacation on a tropical island and have come to the Holland Travel Agency to see what they have to offer. Listen to/read about the descriptions of the people who live on each island and highlight or underline the phrases that best describe you. Then, pick your top three islands that you would like to visit.

Hint: You should select the islands where you have the most in common with the residents. Rank your choices 1st, 2nd, and 3rd.

Island R: R islanders would describe themselves as dependable, practical, and self-reliant. They enjoy working with plants, animals, tools, machines, and equipment, including computers and computer networks. They are interested in mechanical, construction, and repair activities, nature and the outdoors, providing public safety, and adventurous or athletic activities. They are interested in action rather than thought and prefer concrete problems to ambiguous, abstract ones. Some R islanders prefer to work alone instead of in groups. In their free time, R islanders enjoy building things, operating recreational vehicles, sky-diving, rock climbing or other adventurous activities such as hiking, fishing, or camping.

Island I: I islanders would describe themselves as curious, intellectual, and independent thinkers and observers. They enjoy gathering information, uncovering new facts or theories and analyzing and interpreting data, especially in the math and science disciplines. Some I islanders dislike taking a leadership role. They are interested in abstract questions and problems to solve and many are focused on academic environments and pursuits such as attending lectures, reading and studying. In their free time, some I islanders like chess or other games of strategy, analyzing stock portfolios, using or discussing computers, scuba-diving, astronomy or other exploratory activities.

Island A: A islanders would describe themselves as creative, expressive, original, and intuitive. They enjoy a variety of visual arts, performing arts, culinary arts, and writing. They like observing and participating in these activities and prefer environments that are unstructured, non-conforming, and leave room for self-expression. Leisure activities that many A islanders enjoy include: photography, drawing or painting, attending concerts, dancing, cooking and entertaining, going to theater or museums and writing poetry, stories, or plays.

Island S: S islanders would describe themselves as cooperative, caring, understanding, and friendly. They enjoy working with others and are especially motivated to be helpful to others. Their approach to problem solving is through teaching, counseling, encouraging/mentoring others, and facilitating discussions. Some S islanders dislike working with machines and computers. Leisure activities include organizing social events, doing volunteer or community service work, talking with friends, entertaining, attending conferences or conventions, and participating in family activities.

Holland Island Vacation Activity—page two

Island E: E islanders would describe themselves as ambitious, energetic, self-confident, competitive, and persuasive. They enjoy managing people or projects and leading them toward organizational goals and economic success. They tend to seek positions of leadership, power and status. They are interested in government/law, politics, fund-raising, owning their own business and sales and marketing. Leisure activities include entertaining/socializing, reading business magazines, chairing volunteer committees, watching or participating in sports, and joining clubs and organizations.

Island C: C islanders would describe themselves as orderly, efficient, and conscientious. They are interested in activities that require organization, data systems, detail and accuracy. They work well in large organizations and like to use information to solve problems efficiently. They like structured, predictable environments. In their leisure time, they enjoy collecting things, playing board or video games, exercising, developing websites, managing family finances or doing home improvement projects, and volunteering with civic organizations.

Your Top Three Island Vacation Choices

1st: _____

2nd: _____

3rd: _____

What do these letter abbreviations stand for?

R=Realistic

I= Investigative

A= Artistic

S= Social

E= Enterprising

C= Conventional

Each of the descriptions given in the exercise is a collection of traits that an individual might use to define himself if he identifies with a particular Holland interest code. In reality, no one has just one set of characteristics or traits. That's why we encourage you to list your **top three letter codes**.

Holland's Descriptions of Occupational Traits ¹⁵

Like individuals, occupations also have a Holland code. Usually an occupation is coded with two or three letters because the work of that occupation doesn't fit just one set of traits.

R= Realistic occupations frequently involve work activities that include practical, hands-on problems and solutions. They often deal with plants, animals, and real-world materials like wood, tools, and machinery. Many of the occupations require working outside, and do not involve a lot of paperwork or working closely with others.

I= Investigative occupations frequently involve working with ideas, and require an extensive amount of thinking. These occupations can involve searching for facts and figuring out problems mentally.

A= Artistic occupations frequently involve working with forms, designs and patterns. They often require self-expression and the work can be done without following a clear set of rules.

S= Social occupations frequently involve working with, communicating with, and teaching people. These occupations often involve helping or providing service to others.

E= Enterprising occupations frequently involve starting up and carrying out projects. These occupations can involve leading people and making many decisions. Sometimes they require risk taking and often deal with business.

C= Conventional occupations frequently involve following set procedures and routines. These occupations can include working with data and details more than with ideas.

Career Clusters/Holland Codes Cross-Reference Table

(Sorted by Holland Codes)

Holland Code	Holland Codes Personality Type (1)	Holland Codes Personality Type (2)	GOE Code Number*	GOE Interest Areas
RI	Realistic	Investigative	1	Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources
R	Realistic		2	Architecture & Construction
R	Realistic		13	Manufacturing
R	Realistic		16	Transportation, Distribution & Logistics
I	Investigative		11	Information Technology
I	Investigative		15	Science, Technology, Engineering & Math
A	Artistic		3	Arts & Communication
SI	Social	Investigative	5	Education & Training
SI	Social	Investigative	8	Health Science
S	Social		10	Human Services
ER	Enterprising	Realistic	9	Hospitality, Tourism & Recreation
E	Enterprising		12	Law, Public Safety & Security
E	Enterprising		14	Marketing Sales & Service
CE	Conventional	Enterprising	4	Business, Management & Administration
CE	Conventional	Enterprising	6	Finance & Insurance
CR	Conventional	Realistic	7	Government & Public Administration

*GOE stands for refers to career clusters in the Guide for Occupational Exploration

Part 2—Finding Occupations that Match Your Holland Code

It is possible to get a list of occupations that correspond to the Holland code that you identified in this exercise. The U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration sponsored the development of the **O*NET website**, an online database that provides comprehensive information about occupations. It provides several different methods for searching the database, including searches by Holland code.

Step 1: Go to <http://online.onetcenter.org/>

Step 2: Click on “Find Occupations.” Then under “ONET descriptors,” click on “Interests.”

Step 3: You will find the six Holland Themes defined and bolded in blue lettering. Click on the Holland Interest theme you ranked as #1 during the Holland Island Vacation Planner.

Step 4: You will be given a choice of filling in the entire three letter code or simply doing a search by one or two of the Holland categories. If you enter all three Holland interest codes, your list of occupations will be shorter. You may want to play around with different search parameters by putting in just part of your Holland interest code.

Step 5: Once you have your list of occupations, you may define it further by changing the number under “Job Zone.” A zone refers to the amount of education or on-the job training you need to enter this field. A low number (1-2) indicates that you need little preparation; a high number (5-6) tells you that you need a great deal of preparation.

Step 6: Print out your final list so that you have it for future reference. The database doesn't allow you to save your searches for future access.

Holland believed that career satisfaction comes when there is a match between an individual's traits and a similar set of traits assigned to a particular occupation.

Activity #6 ¹⁶

Career Cluster Inventory

Name _____

School _____ Date _____

Directions: Circle the items in each box that best describe you. You may make as many or as few circles in each box as you choose. Add up the number of circles in each box. Look to see which three boxes have the highest numbers. Find the corresponding Career Clusters on the pages immediately following this survey to see which Career Clusters you may want to explore.

BOX 1	Activities that describe what I like to do: 1. Learn how things grow and stay alive. 2. Make the best use of the earth's natural resources. 3. Hunt and/or fish. 4. Protect the environment. 5. Be outdoors in all kinds of weather. 6. Plan, budget, and keep records. 7. Operate machines and keep them in good repair.	Personal qualities that describe me: 1. Self-reliant 2. Nature lover 3. Physically active 4. Planner 5. Creative problem solver	School subjects that I like: 1. Math 2. Life Sciences 3. Earth Sciences 4. Chemistry 5. Agriculture	Total number circled in Box 1 <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
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BOX 2	Activities that describe what I like to do: 1. Read and follow blueprints and/or instructions. 2. Picture in my mind what a finished product looks like. 3. Work with my hands. 4. Perform work that requires precise results. 5. Solve technical problems. 6. Visit and learn from beautiful, historic, or interesting buildings. 7. Follow logical, step-by-step procedures.	Personal qualities that describe me: 1. Curious 2. Good at following directions 3. Pay attention to detail 4. Good at visualizing possibilities 5. Patient and persistent	School subjects that I like: 1. Math 2. Drafting 3. Physical Sciences 4. Construction Trades 5. Electrical Trades/Heat, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration/Technology Education	Total number circled in Box 2 <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
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BOX 3	Activities that describe what I like to do: 1. Use my imagination to communicate new information to others. 2. Perform in front of others. 3. Read and write. 4. Play a musical instrument. 5. Perform creative, artistic activities. 6. Use video and recording technology. 7. Design brochures and posters.	Personal qualities that describe me: 1. Creative and imaginative 2. Good communicator/good vocabulary 3. Curious about new technology 4. Relate well to feelings and thoughts of others 5. Determined/tenacious	School subjects that I like: 1. Art/Graphic design 2. Music 3. Speech and Drama 4. Journalism/Literature 5. Audiovisual Technologies	Total number circled in Box 3 <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
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Source: Adapted from the Guidance Division Survey, Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education (2005)

Note: This survey does not make any claims of statistical reliability and has not been normed. It is intended for use as a guidance tool to generate discussion regarding careers and is valid for that purpose.

Career Cluster Inventory

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BOX 4	<p>Activities that describe what I like to do:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perform routine, organized activities but can be flexible. 2. Work with numbers and detailed information. 3. Be the leader in a group. 4. Make business contact with people. 5. Work with computer programs. 6. Create reports and communicate ideas. 7. Plan my work and follow instructions without close supervision. 	<p>Personal qualities that describe me:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organized 2. Practical and logical 3. Patient 4. Tactful 5. Responsible 	<p>School subjects that I like:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Computer Applications/Business and Information Technology 2. Accounting 3. Math 4. English 5. Economics 	<p>Total number circled in Box 4</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
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BOX 5	<p>Activities that describe what I like to do:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicate with different types of people. 2. Help others with their homework or to learn new things. 3. Go to school. 4. Direct and plan activities for others. 5. Handle several responsibilities at once. 6. Acquire new information. 7. Help people overcome their challenges. 	<p>Personal qualities that describe me:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Friendly 2. Decision maker 3. Helpful 4. Innovative/Inquisitive 5. Good listener 	<p>School subjects that I like:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Language Arts 2. Social Studies 3. Math 4. Science 5. Psychology 	<p>Total number circled in Box 5</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
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BOX 6	<p>Activities that describe what I like to do:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with numbers. 2. Work to meet a deadline. 3. Make predictions based on existing facts. 4. Have a framework of rules by which to operate. 5. Analyze financial information and interpret it to others. 6. Handle money with accuracy and reliability. 7. Take pride in the way I dress and look. 	<p>Personal qualities that describe me:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trustworthy 2. Orderly 3. Self-confident 4. Logical 5. Methodical or efficient 	<p>School subjects that I like:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accounting 2. Math 3. Economics 4. Banking/Financial Services 5. Business Law 	<p>Total number circled in Box 6</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
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BOX 7	<p>Activities that describe what I like to do:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be involved in politics. 2. Negotiate, defend, and debate ideas and topics. 3. Plan activities and work cooperatively with others. 4. Work with details. 5. Perform a variety of duties that may change often. 6. Analyze information and interpret it to others. 7. Travel and see things that are new to me. 	<p>Personal qualities that describe me:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Good communicator 2. Competitive 3. Service-minded 4. Well-organized 5. Problem solver 	<p>School subjects that I like:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government 2. Language Arts 3. History 4. Math 5. Foreign Language 	<p>Total number circled in Box 7</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
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Career Cluster Inventory

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BOX 8	<p>Activities that describe what I like to do:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work under pressure. 2. Help sick people and animals. 3. Make decisions based on logic and information. 4. Participate in health and science classes. 5. Respond quickly and calmly in emergencies. 6. Work as a member of a team. 7. Follow guidelines precisely and meet strict standards of accuracy. 	<p>Personal qualities that describe me:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compassionate and caring 2. Good at following directions 3. Conscientious and careful 4. Patient 5. Good listener 	<p>School subjects that I like:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Biological Sciences 2. Chemistry 3. Math 4. Occupational Health classes 5. Language Arts 	<p>Total number circled in Box 8</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
BOX 9	<p>Activities that describe what I like to do:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigate new places and activities. 2. Work with all ages and types of people. 3. Organize activities in which other people enjoy themselves. 4. Have a flexible schedule. 5. Help people make up their minds. 6. Communicate easily, tactfully, and courteously. 7. Learn about other cultures. 	<p>Personal qualities that describe me:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tactful 2. Self-motivated 3. Works well with others 4. Outgoing 5. Slow to anger 	<p>School subjects that I like:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Language Arts/Speech 2. Foreign Language 3. Social Sciences 4. Marketing 5. Food Services 	<p>Total number circled in Box 9</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
BOX 10	<p>Activities that describe what I like to do:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Care about people, their needs, and their problems. 2. Participate in community services and/or volunteering. 3. Listen to other people's viewpoints. 4. Help people be at their best. 5. Work with people from preschool age to old age. 6. Think of new ways to do things. 7. Make friends with different kinds of people. 	<p>Personal qualities that describe me:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Good communicator/good listener 2. Caring 3. Non-materialistic 4. Intuitive and logical 5. Non-judgmental 	<p>School subjects that I like:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Language Arts 2. Psychology/Sociology 3. Family and Consumer Sciences 4. Finance 5. Foreign Language 	<p>Total number circled in Box 10</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
BOX 11	<p>Activities that describe what I like to do:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with computers. 2. Reason clearly and logically to solve complex problems. 3. Use machines, techniques, and processes. 4. Read technical materials and diagrams and solve technical problems. 5. Adapt to change. 6. Play video games and figure out how they work. 7. Concentrate for long periods without being distracted. 	<p>Personal qualities that describe me:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Logical/analytical thinker 2. See details in the big picture 3. Persistent 4. Good concentration skills 5. Precise and accurate 	<p>School subjects that I like:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Math 2. Science 3. Computer Tech/Applications 4. Communications 5. Graphic Design 	<p>Total number circled in Box 11</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
BOX 12	<p>Activities that describe what I like to do:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work under pressure or in the face of danger. 2. Make decisions based on my own observations. 3. Interact with other people. 4. Be in positions of authority. 5. Respect rules and regulations. 6. Debate and win arguments. 7. Observe and analyze people's behavior. 	<p>Personal qualities that describe me:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adventurous 2. Dependable 3. Community-minded 4. Decisive 5. Optimistic 	<p>School subjects that I like:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Language Arts 2. Psychology/Sociology 3. Government/History 4. Law Enforcement 5. First Aid/First Responder 	<p>Total number circled in Box 12</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>

Career Cluster Inventory

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BOX 13	Activities that describe what I like to do: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with my hands and learn that way. 2. Put things together. 3. Do routine, organized and accurate work. 4. Perform activities that produce tangible results. 5. Apply math to work out solutions. 6. Use hand and power tools and operate equipment/machinery. 7. Visualize objects in three dimensions from flat drawings. 	Personal qualities that describe me: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practical 2. Observant 3. Physically active 4. Step-by-step thinker 5. Coordinated 	School subjects that I like: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Math-Geometry 2. Chemistry 3. Trade and Industry courses 4. Physics 5. Language Arts 	Total number circled in Box 13 <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
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BOX 14	Activities that describe what I like to do: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shop and go to the mall. 2. Be in charge. 3. Make displays and promote ideas. 4. Give presentations and enjoy public speaking. 5. Persuade people to buy products or to participate in activities. 6. Communicate my ideas to other people. 7. Take advantage of opportunities to make extra money. 	Personal qualities that describe me: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enthusiastic 2. Competitive 3. Creative 4. Self-motivated 5. Persuasive 	School subjects that I like: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Language Arts 2. Math 3. Business Education/Marketing 4. Economics 5. Computer Applications 	Total number circled in Box 14 <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
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BOX 15	Activities that describe what I like to do: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interpret formulas. 2. Find the answers to questions. 3. Work in a laboratory. 4. Figure out how things work and investigate new things. 5. Explore new technology. 6. Experiment to find the best way to do something. 7. Pay attention to details and help things be precise. 	Personal qualities that describe me: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Detail-oriented 2. Inquisitive 3. Objective 4. Methodical 5. Mechanically inclined 	School subjects that I like: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Math 2. Science 3. Drafting/Computer-Aided Drafting 4. Electronics/Computer Networking 5. Technical Classes/Technology Education 	Total number circled in Box 15 <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
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BOX 16	Activities that describe what I like to do: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Travel. 2. See well and have quick reflexes. 3. Solve mechanical problems. 4. Design efficient processes. 5. Anticipate needs and prepare to meet them. 6. Drive or ride. 7. Move things from one place to another. 	Personal qualities that describe me: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Realistic 2. Mechanical 3. Coordinated 4. Observant 5. Planner 	School subjects that I like: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Math 2. Trade and Industry courses 3. Physical Sciences 4. Economics 5. Foreign Language 	Total number circled in Box 16 <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
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***Disclaimer:** Your interests may change over time. These survey results are intended to assist you with informal career exploration. Consider more formal assessments and other resources or services to help you plan your career. This survey does not make any claims of statistical reliability.*

Career Clusters

Career Clusters – a way of organizing and tailoring course work and work experience around occupational groups offering students core academics, technical skills and employability skills, as well as activities that match their skills and interests

Pathway – a sub-grouping of occupations within a Career Cluster that have common knowledge and skills

NAME OF CLUSTER	GENERAL DESCRIPTION	PATHWAYS
 <p>#1</p>	<p>The production, processing, marketing, distribution, financing, & development of agricultural commodities & resources including food, fiber, wood products, natural resources, horticulture, & other plant & animal products/ resources.</p>	<p>Food Products & Processing Systems Plant Systems Animal Systems Power, Structural & Technical Systems Natural Resources Systems Environmental Service Systems Agribusiness Systems</p>
 <p>#2</p>	<p>Careers in designing, planning, managing, building & maintaining the built environment.</p>	<p>Design/Pre-Construction Construction Maintenance/Operations</p>
 <p>#3</p>	<p>Designing, producing, exhibiting, performing, writing, & publishing multimedia content including visual & performing arts & design, journalism, & entertainment services.</p>	<p>Audio & Video Technology & Film Printing Technology Visual Arts Performing Arts Journalism & Broadcasting Telecommunications</p>
 <p>#4</p>	<p>Business Management & Administration careers encompass planning, organizing, directing & evaluating business functions essential to efficient & productive business operations. Business Management & Administration career opportunities are available in every sector of the economy.</p>	<p>Management Business Financial Management & Accounting Human Resources Business Analysis Marketing Administrative & Information Support</p>
 <p>#5</p>	<p>Planning, managing & providing education & training services, & related learning support services.</p>	<p>Administration & Administrative Support Professional Support Services Teaching/Training</p>
 <p>#6</p>	<p>Planning, services for financial & investment planning, banking, insurance, & business financial management.</p>	<p>Financial & Investment Planning Business Financial Management Banking & Related Services Insurance Services</p>




Career Clusters

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 <p>#7 Government & Public Administration</p>	<p>Executing governmental functions at the local, state & federal levels.</p>	<p>Governance National Security Foreign Service Planning Revenue & Taxation Regulation Public Management & Administration</p>
 <p>#8 Health Science</p>	<p>Planning, managing, & providing health-related services as well as biotechnology research & development.</p>	<p>Therapeutic Services Diagnostic Services Health Informatics Support Services Biotechnology Research & Development</p>
 <p>#9 Hospitality & Tourism</p>	<p>Hospitality & Tourism encompasses the management, marketing & operations of restaurants & other foodservices, lodging, attractions, recreation events & travel related services.</p>	<p>Restaurants & Food/Beverage Services Lodging Travel & Tourism Recreation, Amusements & Attractions</p>
 <p>#10 Human Services</p>	<p>Preparing individuals for employment in career pathways that relate to families & human needs.</p>	<p>Early Childhood Development & Services Counseling & Mental Health Services Family & Community Services Personal Care Services Consumer Services</p>
 <p>#11 Information Technology</p>	<p>Building Linkages in IT Occupations Framework: For Entry Level, Technical, & Professional Careers Related to the Design, Development, Support & Management of Hardware, Software, Multimedia, & Systems Integration Services.</p>	<p>Network Systems Information Support & Services Interactive Media Programming & Software Development</p>
 <p>#12 Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security</p>	<p>Planning, managing, & providing legal, public safety, protective services, including professional & technical support services.</p>	<p>Correction Services Emergency & Fire Management Services Security & Protective Services Law Enforcement Services Legal Services</p>
 <p>#13 Manufacturing</p>	<p>Planning, managing & performing the processing of materials into intermediate or final products & related professional & technical support activities such as production planning & control, maintenance & manufacturing/process engineering.</p>	<p>Production Manufacturing Production Process Development Maintenance, Installation & Repair Quality Assurance Logistics & Inventory Control Health, Safety & Environmental Assurance</p>

Career Clusters

Page 3

 <p>#14</p>	<p>Planning, managing, & performing marketing activities to reach organizational objectives.</p>	<p>Management & Entrepreneurship Professional Sales & Marketing Buying & Merchandising Marketing Communications & Promotion Marketing Information Management & Research Distribution & Logistics E-Marketing</p>
 <p>#15</p>	<p>Planning, managing, & providing scientific research & professional & technical services (e.g., physical science, social science, engineering) including laboratory & testing services, & research & development services.</p>	<p>Engineering & Technology Science & Math</p>
 <p>#16</p>	<p>Planning, management, & movement of people, materials, & goods by road, pipeline, air, rail & water. Also related professional & technical support services such as transportation infrastructure planning & management, logistics services, mobile equipment & facility maintenance.</p>	<p>Transportation Operations Logistics Planning & Management Services Warehousing & Distribution Center Operations Facility & Mobile Equipment Maintenance Transportation Systems/Infrastructure Planning, Management & Regulation Health, Safety & Environmental Management Sales & Service</p>

My top 3 career clusters are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The Career Clusters Interest Survey was originally part of the States' Career Clusters Initiative, 2007. This resource can now be found at <https://careertech.org/student-interest-survey>

Match Your Top Three Clusters with Occupations

Step 1: Go to <https://careertech.org/career-clusters/>. Select the top rated career cluster from page 32 of this workbook. Please note that the Occupational Outlook Handbook has additional categories and can be found under Occupation Groups at <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/>

Step 2: Sort through the list of occupations that comes up to identify which occupations you plan to research further. Note salary level, education level, and work load for this occupation. You may choose to use this information to help you initially sift through the list, which can be quite long.

Step 3: Do the same process for your second and third choice career clusters.

At this time, you simply need to make note of the occupations that most intrigue you. We will do research in the next section of this guide to learn more about how these occupations match up with your personal background, skill sets and values.

10—15 Occupations from Your Top Three Career Clusters that Interest You

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 9. |
| 2. | 10. |
| 3. | 11. |
| 4. | 12. |
| 5. | 13. |
| 6. | 14. |
| 7. | 15. |
| 8. | |

Self-Assessment Findings: Next Steps & Wrap Up

Wrap up of Assessment Findings:

Key Themes from my Life Story Timeline:

- 1)
- 2)

Top 5 skills I have cultivated through my experiences:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

My Top 2-3 Personal Values:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

My Top 3-5 Work Place Values:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

My Holland Interests Code:

My top 3 Career Clusters:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

My top 3-5 occupations that I plan to research:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Next Steps:

- Many high schools offer a career development software to their students. They usually include personality, interest and values assessments. Please check with your school counselor for more information about the tools already available to you.
- **The Strong Interest Inventory** is available online. Strong based his interest inventory on the work of John Holland. What is unique about this assessment, though, is that your likes and dislikes are compared to the results of qualified professionals in over 120 career fields. The list of occupations that is generated by the report relies on the data from these professionals to further match you to some occupational choices. There is a nominal fee to take this assessment and can be found through a quick google search.
- **Personality** is an influential factor in determining career satisfaction. The **Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)** and **David Keirsey's Temperament Sorter** both categorize individuals by their personality preferences.

*An online option for a personality inventory based on the MBTI is available at: <http://whoami.typefocus.com/>. You may also take Keirsey's Temperament Sorter online at <https://www.keirsey.com/> Both of these online assessments give a free introductory assessment but charge money for a more in-depth assessment.

This is a free student friendly looking at the 16 personality types:

<https://www.16personalities.com/>

*Finally, if you want a great book to read which connects personality type to career choice, check out **Do What You Are** by Paul D. Tieger and Barbara Barron-Tieger.

Career Exploration/Occupational Research—An Overview

The self-assessment activities in this booklet have helped your teen look inward to determine his values, interests, and skills. Using specific websites, he has also generated a list of occupations that interest him and then narrowed down his list to 2-3 occupations to research further. Now it is time to take a deeper look into the work conditions of the careers that interest him. Gathering detailed information about occupations is crucial for two reasons:

1. Your teen needs to make sure the occupations that interest him fit with his personal and professional values. Otherwise, he may face a values conflict later that forces him to change careers.
2. Your teen's research will give him detailed information about the educational path he needs to follow to get established. It is hard to choose a college or trade school major without accurate information.

Online Research

The internet has made career research easier in some respects and harder in others. A large volume of information can be found by Googling specific career paths; unfortunately, it can be hard to sort through the information and determine what is reliable, accurate information and what is not.

Activity #7 provides a short list of some of the most reliable websites for career research and a worksheet for your teen to record his findings. We encourage your teen to photocopy the blank worksheet and research at least two careers so that he can compare and contrast them. This will help him locate the career path that is the closest fit with his skills, values, and interests.

Informational Interviewing & Networking

While online research can provide a lot of detailed information, it cannot always answer every question or give specific information about careers in a specific geographic location. For this reason, it is always important to talk to someone who currently works in this career field. Informational interviewing allows your teen to sit down with a professional who works in the occupation and ask questions not answered in his internet research. Before he can conduct informational interviews, though, he needs to survey his friends, family, and acquaintances to develop a network of people to talk to. Guidelines for both informational interviewing and networking are provided in the pages that follow.

Activity #8 is a practice worksheet that contains questions your teen can use to conduct an interview with a close friend or family member. Once he has gone through the process with a familiar face, he will be ready to try out the interview process with a professional in his chosen career field.

Activity #9, Craft an Elevator Speech, is an exercise which helps your teen write a quick, 30-second introduction about himself, his background, and why he wants to make an appointment to talk to this person in his career field. He can use the worksheet to write his Elevator Speech, and he can modify it as he goes along, and sees what works best. You may want to encourage him to practice it out loud so it becomes second nature to him.

Job Shadowing & Volunteer Experience

After talking to a professional in the career field that interests your teen, the next step is to get some face-to-face experience in that career field. **Job Shadowing** involves visiting an occupational setting for a few hours on an average work day so your teen can see what that position is like on a day-to-day basis. While he won't perform the task, he will get to observe. For some highly skilled positions, observation is the closest your teen will come to personal experience until he has the training to do the job himself. A doctor, for example, cannot allow a visitor to actually perform any medical procedures because that person doesn't have the medical knowledge or skills.

Sometimes it is possible to get hands-on experience through **volunteer work**. During the informational interview process, your teen can ask whether volunteer work is available in the career field of his choice. If it is, he will get a very good picture of what working in that career field is like. While he may not get paid, he will gain experience that can be used on a resume at a later date.

Activity #10, Job Shadowing/Volunteer Work Reflection Log, gives your teen a place to record his impressions and information he gathers during his experience.

In the end, he will take all of his internet findings, interview notes, and reflection log and evaluate whether the occupation(s) he researched are a good fit with the self-assessment findings recorded previously.

Activity #7: Internet Research Resource List

Finding reliable information about careers can be a challenge if you simply try to do a search through Google or another internet search engine. Just as there are books and periodicals that are considered more reputable when looking for information, there are also more reliable websites you can consult. Below is a list of 5 websites to consult when getting started. They attempt to provide objective information without any bias so that you can decide for yourself whether this occupation fits with your needs and preferences.

1. Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH): <https://www.bls.gov/ooH/>

Created and updated annually by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, the information is gathered through a national survey of professionals in occupational categories. This site has some key features you won't find elsewhere. Under each occupation, there is a section on "work conditions" which provides a realistic description of what this job is like day-to-day and what potential hazards or challenges might be. Also, at the end of the occupational description, there is contact information for professional organizations, trade unions or educational institutions that may be able to provide more information.

2. ONET Online: <https://www.onetonline.org/>

This website is funded by the O*NET OnLine is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, [Employment & Training Administration](#), and developed by the National Center for O*NET Development. It also focuses on national data about different occupations, like the OOH. Having said that, one of its features is to allow users to search for salary and job statistics by state. This site provides information in a bullet format with separate categories for knowledge, skills, work activities, workplace values, and Holland interest codes. It identifies which industries, nationally, are considered high growth industries with "in-demand" occupations. If you need to search for occupations according to a military occupational code, a registered apprenticeship code as well the occupational code from the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, this website will allow you to query the database using occupational numeric-alphabetic codes. The website has videos with subtitles for the hearing impaired. **A student friendly version can be found at <https://www.mynextmove.org/>**

3. ASVAB Career Exploration Program <https://www.asvabprogram.com/>

The Department of Defense provides high schools with the Career Exploration Program as a career planning and exploration program. This is free to the schools and students and can provide career path information that students may not be considering. It includes an aptitude and interest assessment with links to occupations.

4. College Navigator

This tool from the National Center for Educational Statistics gives access to information on more than 9,000 colleges, universities, and postsecondary vocational and technical schools in the U.S. Users may search the database by location, type of institution, program and majors offered, availability of housing, and many more options. Users have the option of selecting several school profiles for side-by-side comparisons, and all search results can be sent to a valid e-mail address, printed, or exported as an Excel spreadsheet. The site and all of its information is also available in Spanish

Activity #7 — Internet Research Scavenger Hunt

Directions: Using the descriptions of internet research resources on the preceding page, find the answers to the questions below on the appropriate website. You may wish to use a separate piece of paper for your answers if you uncover a lot of information. Feel free to duplicate this worksheet and use it to research multiple careers.

Name of the occupation for this research : _____

1. What are the main work activities and/or tasks for this occupation? List 4 or 5.
2. What are the daily work conditions that employees in this field face?
3. What type of education or training is needed to enter this field? Is there a specific undergraduate major listed? Is graduate level coursework necessary to advance in this career field? What certification exam or licensure (if any) is necessary to work in this field? What other activities can you perform to improve your skills in this career field?
4. What high school classes would be helpful to take to explore this occupation and develop a strong academic foundation for additional training in this career field?
5. What skills & abilities are needed to perform this occupation? List at least 4-5.
6. What career cluster and pathway does this occupation belong to? What other jobs belong to the same career cluster and pathway that might interest you? List at least 3-4.

Internet Research Scavenger Hunt

Page two

7. Using data from one of the internet resources, what type of earnings can you expect for this occupations?

Entry level: _____

Average: _____

Experienced: _____

8. What is the Projected Employment (Projected % of Change) look like in the next 10-15 years?

Locally _____

Regionally _____

Nationally _____

9. As you view the career video for this occupation (available on Occupational Outlook Handbook), what were the main points that were emphasized about this occupation?

10. What professional associations, trade unions or alternate organizations could you consult to learn more about this career path? Also write down the web address, telephone number and street address so you can contact this organization later.

Networking & Informational Interviewing: Guidelines¹⁷

The Informational Interview Practice Session

Although your teen is interviewing you or another relative or family friend for Activity #8, he should treat the practice session as a true informational interview. While this may feel artificial, he'll be more prepared when it comes time for the real thing. Let's go through the entire interview process from start to finish.

Informational Interviewing —from Start to Finish

- Call or send an email *in advance* to request 20-30 minutes of the this person's time to meet face-to-face. If your teen sends an email, remind him not to use text messaging abbreviations. Don't use any slang in phone calls or email.
- Dress professionally for the meeting. Whatever the standard dress is for that profession, encourage your teen to match it as much as possible when he visits the person's place of employment.
- Be on time to the interview. This actually means getting there about 10 minutes early so that your teen has time to quietly review his question list and go to the bathroom, if needed. Be sure to turn off your cell phone.
- Make sure your teen knows the correct pronunciation of his contact's name and the correct title.
- Meet the person with a verbal greeting and a hand shake. Have your teen practice this in advance so he is comfortable with it.
- Come prepared with a list of questions to ask. (Activity #8 will provide some suggestions.) Unlike a job interview, your teen will set the agenda and ask the questions.
- Jot brief notes during the interview but don't stare down at the page the entire time. If you want to use a tape recorder, ask the person's permission first. Remember that they have the right to say no.
- Be mindful of the time and keep to a 30 minute time frame unless the contact expresses an interest in speaking longer.
- Transcribe any notes within 24 hours. Your teen should do this while his memory is fresh.
- Send a thank you note either via snail mail or email within 48 hours of the interview.

Networking

Networking is the process of making contacts in a career field for professional advancement. Once he has practiced informational interviewing with a family member or family friend, it is time to expand his occupational research to other professionals in his career field of interest. The following steps are meant to guide him through the process of finding people to talk to about careers.

Step 1: Decide who your teen can talk to initially to begin networking. Here's a short list:

- Teachers and guidance counselors already assigned to work with your teen;
- Speakers at your teen's school who present at Career Day, College Night, etc.
- The parents of your teen's friends who work in a career field that interests your teen;
- Your professional colleagues, if you work in a field that interests your teen;
- Acquaintances at religious organizations your family belongs to;
- Acquaintances at community organizations or clubs you or your teen belongs to;
- Other family members and friends of the family;

Step 2: Help your teen prepare an "elevator speech" to use when introducing himself and talking to an acquaintance about his career interests. (See activity #9 for more help with this.) This introductory speech can even be modified and used with email or professional networking websites.

Step 3: Help your teen organize his contacts in a notebook, file folder, or day planner. Information he will want to get includes: name, professional title, company name phone number, email address, mailing address, brief notes about initial conversation and any referrals or recommendations that are given.

Step 4: If your teen makes any additional contacts during the informational interview, encourage him to make his follow-up phone calls within a week while the conversation is still fresh in the contact's mind.

Activity #8: Informational Interview Practice with Relative/Friend

Suggested Questions to Ask:

(Be sure to jot down notes to refresh your memory later.)

1. How did you decide to go into this field?
2. How would you describe a typical work day in the life of a _____(occupation)?
3. Do you work standard business hours or is there overtime or weekend work?
4. What do you like most about this career field?
5. What are the disadvantages of working in this career field? What reasons do people give when they leave this career field?
6. What are the typical education requirements for this career?
7. What skills/certifications are needed for this career?
8. What personal traits does it take to be successful in this career field?
9. What effect does your career have on your lifestyle?
10. How do you see jobs in this career field changing in the future?
11. What is the employment outlook for this field over the next 10 years or so?
12. What is the average starting salary? What are the benefits typically like?
13. What professional journals or professional organizations should I know about in this field?
14. What types of experiences—paid or unpaid—would you recommend if I decide to get started in this career field?
15. Question of your choice
16. Question of your choice
17. Question of your choice
- 18. Who else would you recommend I speak with in order to make an intelligent decision about this field?
(Make this your last question. It makes for nice transition to thanking your contact and
bringing the informational interview to a close)**

Debriefing Questions to ask Yourself:

1. What impressed me the most? What made me uncomfortable?
2. What other questions do I have that I still need to ask?
3. How did this conversation change my mind about the career field I am considering?
4. How does this interview compare or contrast to my previous internet research or interviews?

Activity #9: Crafting an “Elevator” Speech ¹⁸

Imagine... You step onto an elevator and encounter a person who works in the career field of your dreams. You would love the opportunity to talk to this person about what they do and how they got started but you see that they hit the button for the 9th floor. If you are lucky, you have 30 seconds to introduce yourself and ask them if you could talk to them another time.

Are you ready? If you are like most people, you may need to work on your own personal “infomercial” to introduce yourself and persuade this person to give you a business card. Here is a guide to help you get started:

Hello, my name is *(insert your first and last name)* _____ . **I am a student**
at *(insert name of school)* _____ **where I am in** *(insert course of study or*
year in school) _____ .

I am really interested in _____ *(specific area)*.

I am also involved in *(extra-curricular activities)* _____ .

I’ve worked for/with _____ **to get some work**
experience and I’ve developed an interest in *(career field of targeted individual)* _____ .

Since you are a professional in *(name of field)* _____ .

I would really love the chance to talk to you about your own experiences in this field.

Would you be willing to speak with me sometime for 20-30 minutes about the work that you do?

Wait for response.

Scenario #1: *If they respond affirmatively, then proceed with:*

Do you have a business card with your contact information on it?

When would be the best time to call or email you?

Thank you. I will contact you *(time/day you will follow up)* _____ .

Shake their hand. If you have a business card, it would help to hand this to them right after you shake hands. This way they have something with your name on it to jog their memory when you do place your follow-up phone call or send email.

Scenario #2: *If they respond negatively, then back off from your request and simply say,*

Well, thanks for your willingness to listen. Take care.

Remember...This can be adapted to use on the phone or in an email if you decide to make your initial contact through one of those modes of communication instead.

Activity #10: Job Shadowing/Volunteer Reflection Log

Whether you are simply shadowing a professional for the day or are volunteering your time on an on-going basis, it is important to record your impressions of what you observe. Sometimes, there are factors in an occupational setting which will matter to you that were not mentioned in your online research or your informational interviews. In addition, when you visit a work place for the career field that interests you, you may also use the questions from the informational interview section of this booklet when you speak to each new person you meet.

To locate a volunteer position, apprenticeship program, or youth work program, see **Appendix B** for some websites of regional programs.

1. Describe the physical layout of the work setting. As you do, are there any features that strike you as pleasant or unpleasant? If so, what are they? (Tip: Use your 5 senses when considering this question)
2. Do workers in this setting work together on projects or work independently? How do people performing different occupational tasks relate to one another (do they get along or is there conflict)? Does this position have customers that it provides services for? How does this type of interaction appeal to you?
3. Are the daily activities repetitive or is there a great deal of variety? Is the workplace very fast-paced or is work performed at a more relaxed pace? How does this work style fit with your preferences? Is there any activity that makes you uncomfortable?
4. What is the dress code for this work environment? Would I be comfortable following this dress code?
5. How does this job shadowing/volunteer experience influence my overall impression of this career field?

Career Exploration—Wrap Up and Next Steps

Wrap Up of Career Exploration Activities

Note below the key pieces of information that made an impression on you as you did your career research.

Key Findings From Online Research:

Key Findings from Informational Interviewing:

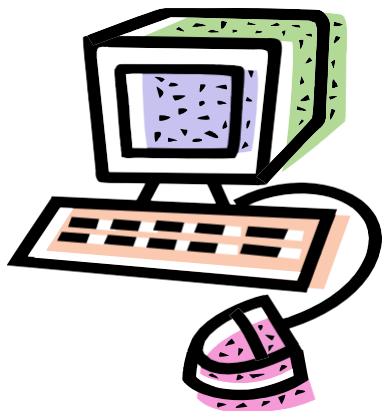
Key Findings from Job Shadowing/Volunteer Work:

Next Steps for Online Research

- Visit the professional organization, trade union, or educational/training organization websites for the two or three career fields that interest you most.
- Check out military career information if you would like to know whether your career field of interest has positions in the armed services. The website is <https://todaysmilitary.com/>. The nice thing about this site is that it gives you general information about military careers and then refers you to the specific branch of the military which needs those occupations. The site tends to be more objective than the specific military branch websites which are more geared toward recruitment.

Next Steps for Experiential Research

- Now that you have tried out an informational interview with a friend or family member, network to locate a professional in your career field of interest. Conduct an informational interview with that professional.
- Once you have found one or two career paths that fit with your preferences, take a high school class in your county's career and technical education program to explore your career interest. See Appendix C for county-by-county contact information.
- Consider a career and technical education class at Kent Career Technical Center (thetechcenter.org). There are over 20 different hands-on programs. Perhaps "dual enrollment" is an option for you. Talk to your counselor. Summer camps are also a great way to try on a skills set or interest. Kent ISD puts together a comprehensive list each spring at careerreadiness.kentisd.org, click students.
- Get a part-time, entry-level job in the field that interests you. This allows you to experience the workplace setting first hand and gives you experience that you can list on your resume. Besides consulting the want ads, many high schools have summer employment fairs. You can also use networking skills to find part-time employment in your field.



Decision-Making—An Overview 19

All of the material in this guide so far has focused on the first half of the career development cycle—self assessment and career exploration research. The second half of the cycle involves decision-making and action planning and is equally important.

Decision-making requires your teen to pull together all the knowledge he has acquired about himself and the occupational areas he has researched to determine which career path he wants to pursue. Your teen will consider how these different occupations fulfill his personal and workplace values and match his interests and skill sets.

Before your teen determines **what** direction he will take, though, it is important to consider **how** he makes decisions. There are many different ways that people make decisions—from flipping a coin to agonizing over several choices.

Some of the most common decision-making practices are described below. As you and your teen read through them, think about whether you have ever used any of these strategies.

Impulsive: You take the first alternative that comes along. This often involves wanting the decision-making process to be easy.

Compliant: You allow others—parents, friends, siblings, other relatives—to decide for you and then go along with their choice. Or you make a choice based on “what is expected of me.”

Intuitive: You follow what feels right in your “gut.”

Agonizing: You look at all the alternatives and keep playing all the “what if” scenarios in your head until you are overwhelmed by the decision to be made.



Cautious: You are afraid to take big risks so you choose the option that appears to be the safest alternative.

Delaying: You keep putting off a decision and as a result of your procrastination, you run out of time and have to make a rush decision.

Fatalistic: You don't make a decision but allow “fate” to decide what will be. The proverbial coin toss.

Paralytic/Denial: You may deny that there is a decision to be made or you may be paralyzed with fear or some other emotion. As a result of your inaction, a decision is made for you.

Planning: You weigh the facts, consider the pros and cons of each option, and then make a rational choice. This usually involves comparing and contrasting two or more options.



There is no right or wrong way of making decisions; although certain **types** of decisions may merit one method over another.

Activity #11, What's your Decision-Making Style? encourages your teen to examine how he makes decisions to see if there is a pattern or preferred style. This activity also asks him to honestly answer whether his style works for him or whether he needs to make some changes.

Until this point, this guide has suggested ways you and your teen could work on a “planning” approach to career decision-making. In the wrap up for this section, though, you will find a decision-making process clearly laid out for your teen to use. A lot of rational thought will go into discovering your teen's values, skills, interests and any obstacles he has overcome so far and then finding out about the occupations. As you and your teen review all the information you have gathered to this point, you can compare and contrast the occupations to find the best fit for your teen.

Activity #11: Decision-Making —What is Your Style? ¹⁹

PART I: Some of the decisions we make do not have a significant impact on our lives; but others can influence us long after the decision is made. Below, list 10 decisions you have made, beginning with the earliest and working your way to the present time. Some examples from your childhood/teenage years might include: joining a particular club or sports team, selecting specific high school classes, applying for the first job you held, buying your first car, computer or other major purchase, deciding on the college you want to attend, deciding to date someone, joining the military etc. Disregard the small space before the number for now.

_____ 1. _____

_____ 2. _____

_____ 3. _____

_____ 4. _____

_____ 5. _____

_____ 6. _____

_____ 7. _____

_____ 8. _____

_____ 9. _____

_____ 10. _____

Decision-Making—What is Your Style?

Page two

PART II: Now that you have written down 10 decisions, look below and choose the phrase that best represents the way you made the decision. Record the letter to the left of the phrase in the blank line above next to your decision. It's okay if you have some variety in the way you made the decisions.

- A. Let someone else decide for me.
- B. Did what I thought was expected of me.
- C. Made the safest decision.
- D. Made the easiest decision.
- E. "The coin toss"--believed that the decision was in the hands of "fate."
- F. Took the first choice that came to my attention (impulsive).
- G. Chose what intuitively felt like the right decision.
- H. Consciously weighed all the alternatives available and chose the best one.
- I. Agonized over the decision and worried over all the "what ifs" and finally chose one out of a need to decide.
- J. Didn't realize I had a decision to make and as a result, the decision was made by default.
- K. Kept putting off decision until the last minute when I just picked one in a rush.
- L. Used another method: _____

PART III. Consider how you have made decisions in the past and answer the following questions.

What did you learn about the way you have made decisions in the past?

What effects have your past choices had on your life? How do the outcomes of these decisions affect you now?

What changes would you like to make to your decision-making process?

Decision-Making Wrap Up:

Proposed Decision-Making Method for Career and Educational Planning

- Step 1: Define the decision to be made.
- Step 2: Identify what values and other factors are most important to you that will affect this decision.
- Step 3: Assess what obstacles might be in your way toward making the decision and identify what information you need to help overcome the obstacles.
- Step 4: Identify various alternatives and compare at least two of them. Then decide which one most closely fits your values, interests, and needs.

Career Alternatives to Compare/Contrast:

- 1.
- 2.

Questions to Consider to Determine Closest Fit:

1. Which career option allows me to have the lifestyle I selected for myself in Activity #3, the Personal Values Budget?
2. Which option more closely honors the workplace values I outlined in Activity #4?
3. Which career option requires skills that most closely mirror the skills I already have or the ones I wish to develop through post-secondary schooling?
4. Which career option is a closer fit with my Holland interest code and/or my MBTI type?
5. What obstacles might I encounter if I pursue each of these career options? Which set of obstacles seems more easily overcome?

Occupation, career cluster or pathway I will move forward with in the action-planning phase of the career development cycle:

Action Planning—An Overview

Once your teen has made a decision about which occupation, career cluster or pathway he wants to pursue, the next step is **Action Planning**. Another name for action planning is **goal setting**. This first step is necessary because unless your teen sets goals, he won't know where to begin or how to proceed. When setting goals, there are several criteria to keep in mind which can be remembered through the acronym **S.M.A.R.T.**

Goals that are SMART are: ²⁰

Specific: State exactly what you want to accomplish in clear, concise language.

Measurable: There is some clear way of measuring your progress.

Action-Oriented: An action verb is used to indicate how the goal will be achieved.

Realistic: Ask the question, "Is this attainable given my resources and the constraints I have (i.e. money, time)?"

Timely: Make sure there is a time table for achieving the goals. Identify a deadline by which you will meet your goals.

Example of a goal that is **NOT** SMART:

I want to lose weight in 2018.

This is a very vague goal that has no action component to it, provides no timetable or means for measuring whether the goal has been achieved. Because this information is not provided, it is not possible to assess whether the goal is realistic or not.

Let's revise the goal so it is SMART:

According to the AMA weight chart, I am 15 pounds overweight. I will lose those 15 pounds over the next 3 months by cutting out sweets, adjusting my portion sizes to meet a 1,500 calorie limit per day and exercising 5 days a week for 45 minutes.

See the difference?

Types of career-related goals

Long-term: This goal is set farther in the future as the first career destination your teen is trying to achieve after he finishes school. For some, this may be just a few years away; for students in middle school, the time-frame may be up to 7 or 8 years away. You will need to help your teen decide what time frame is appropriate to the career path he researches and his current year in school.

Mid-range: Intermediate goals are those that your teen needs to accomplish in order to achieve his long-term career goal. Mid-range goals generally center on high school activities that help your teen develop his career interest or the post-secondary education he pursues to reach his long-term goal. Mid-range goals can take a year or more to complete, depending on the type of activity or the post-secondary training that is required for your teen's chosen occupation.

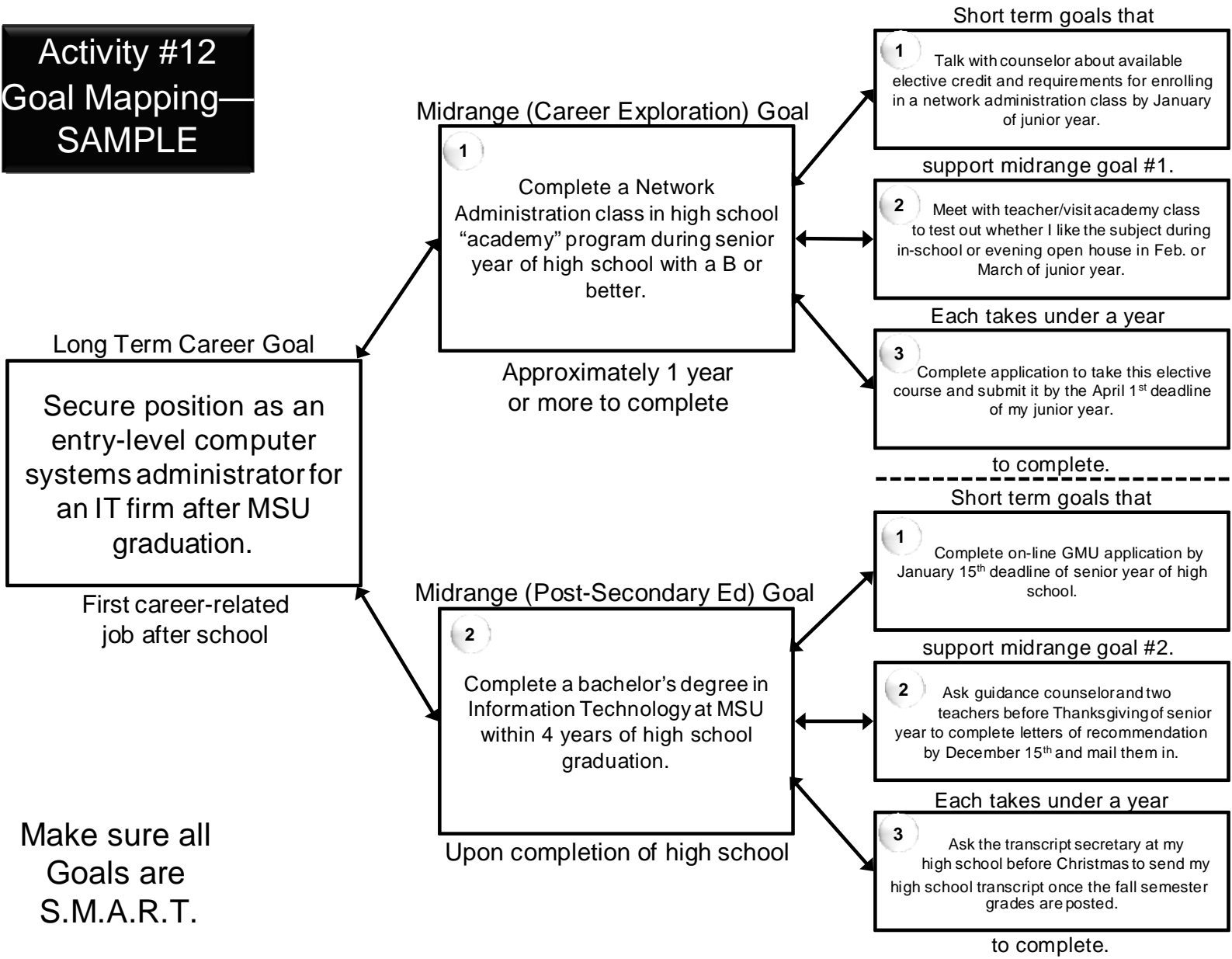
Short-Term: These smaller goals are the steps your teen will take to achieve the mid-range goal. They can take anywhere from 3 months to 1 year to complete. For example, if the goal is to gain admission to a four year college, the application process can take up to 6 months to complete.



Gradually, as your teen starts working on his short-term goals, he will find himself achieving his mid-range and long-term goals as well. **You can help your teen by encouraging him to revisit his goals as needed to see what progress he has made and to assess whether he needs to draw up a new goal map to revise his career direction.** Initially mapping out his goals, though, will help him allocate his time, money, energy, and other resources effectively so that his goals can become a reality.

Activity #12 is a goal-setting map that requires you to determine what your teen's long-term, mid-range, and short-term goals are necessary for the achievement of the career aspiration he decided upon in the Decision-Making Wrap Up section of this booklet.

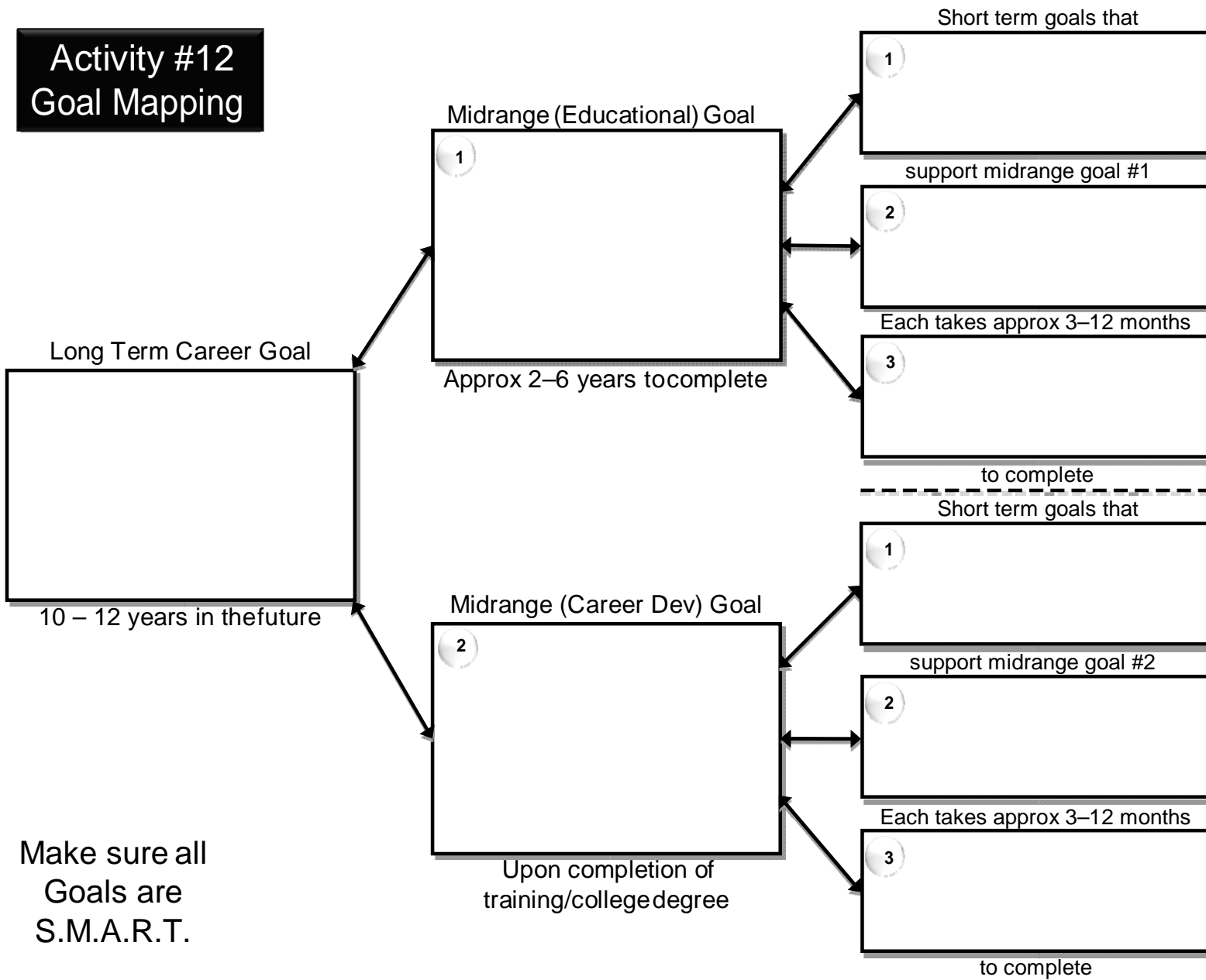
Activity #12
Goal Mapping
SAMPLE



Activity #12: Career Goal Mapping: SAMPLE

Make sure all Goals are S.M.A.R.T.

Activity #12 Goal Mapping



Make sure all
Goals are
S.M.A.R.T.

Career Goal Mapping: Your Turn!

Goal Setting Exercise

Let's get started on those short-term goals! First, make up your "to do" list for achieving each of your first set of short-term goals and indicate a date by which you will accomplish each step. Use a separate sheet of paper to write out everything, if needed.

To Do:

Example: I will : 1) complete my MSU admission application online, 2) request that my high school transcripts be sent, and 3) ask 2 teachers and my guidance counselor to write letters of recommendation and mail them to MSU by December 15.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Are there any obstacles to achieving these short-term goals? How can you resolve those obstacles? Use a separate piece of paper, if needed to write out everything.

Example of Obstacle: My guidance counselor is swamped with requests to complete letters of recommendation and it is hard to even get an appointment to see her.

Example of Possible Solutions: 1) Make an appointment in October, long before the final crunch, so that she can get to my letter earlier. 2) Email her my request within two weeks of when I need the letter sent and be sure to put any information or forms she will need in her mail box.

Obstacle #1: _____

Possible Solution(s): _____

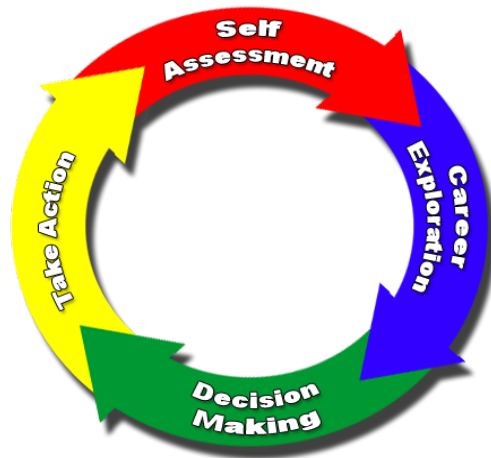
Obstacle #2: _____

Possible Solution(s): _____

Concluding Comments

As you finish up the last of the activities in this book with your teen, you will find that you have moved through all the stages of the career development cycle—from self assessment to career exploration to decision making to action planning and goal setting. Once your teen completes an action, he may find that his commitment to the career field he researched is stronger than ever. If so, great! He can progress full steam ahead on that career path.

Sometimes, though, as an individual takes action toward achieving his career goals, he finds that the goal map he has set up for himself no longer fits what he wants to accomplish. This is perfectly natural and healthy. Sometimes the only real way he'll know whether a career pathway is a good fit is to get his feet wet! The reason the career development cycle is visually represented as a circle is that the process repeats itself continually as an individual moves through his life (see visual below as a reminder). As the world of work changes, an individual may be forced to re-assess where he is. Likewise, changes in an individual's values, interests and skills may motivate him to re-examine his career path as well.



Always remember...career development is a process that we all move through, not a stagnant decision that is made once and never changes. The ultimate purpose of this guide booklet was to walk you and your teen through this process and introduce you to the resources at each stage that will help your teen make informed decisions. Now that he has been through this process once with you, he can repeat it again on his own. Encourage him to hold onto this book so that he can revisit the activities, review what he learned previously and then complete them again to formulate a new direction. Just as some people make annual New Year's resolutions, your teen may want to make a commitment to reviewing his goal map each year.

We hope this guide helped you and your teen have a positive discussion about his career development and we hope that the resources and activities made the process an easy one to understand.

Finally, we hope we've taken the discomfort or fear out of the career exploration process and that you and your teen will enjoy the rest of the journey!

Appendix A. Foundation Knowledge and Skills (Transferable Skills)

These are critical skills that everyone working or pursuing any career must have to be successful. List ways you might continue to develop these skills while you're still in school.

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	ACTIVITIES
Academic Foundations	Achieve state academic standards including language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.	
Communications	Use oral and written communication skills in expressing and interpreting information and ideas including technical terminology and information.	
Problem Solving and Critical Thinking	Define and solve problems, and use problem-solving and improvement methods and tools.	
Information Technology Applications	Use information technology (computers, networks and communications technology) to access, organize, process, transmit, and communicate information.	
Systems	Apply business planning and management within the market environment. Internalize the mission, goals, the organizational systems and functions, and customer and stakeholder requirements for these functions. Know how the performance of these functions and systems as a whole is measured and improved.	
Safety, Health and Environment	Use safety, health, and environmental management systems in companies and internalize their importance to organizational performance and regulatory compliance. Follow company policies and procedures and contribute to continuous improvement in performance and compliance.	
Leadership and Teamwork	Apply leadership and teamwork skills in collaborating with others to accomplish business goals and objectives.	
Ethics and Legal Responsibility	Commit to work ethics, behavior, and legal responsibilities in the workplace.	
Career Development	Plan and manage careers and employment relations.	
Technical Skills	Achieve the technical skills necessary to pursue the full range of careers for all Pathways in the Career Cluster.	

Appendix B: Apprenticeship Programs, Youth Work Programs, and Volunteer Organizations by Region

KENT COUNTY

Grand Rapids Community College Apprentice Programs

<http://www.grcc.edu/constructionelectricalapprenticeprogram/apprenticeshipprogram>

MTech Center

<http://www.grcc.edu/leslieetassellmtec>

Excellent technical training programs.

Heart of West Michigan United Way

<http://connect.hwmuw.org/>

You can do a full search to find opportunities for either children (ages 5-12) or adolescents (13-17). This search page also allows you to search by your interests, type of skills you have to offer, the target group you want to work with, and times you are available.

GRKIDS

<https://grkids.com/volunteer-kids-teens-grand-rapids/>

GRKids has assembled a great list of volunteer opportunities in Kent County to help students get started.

NATIONAL

AmeriCorps

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps>

AmeriCorps is a voluntary civil society program supported by the U.S. federal government, foundations, corporations, and other donors engaging adults in public service work with a goal of "helping others and meeting critical needs in the community. Includes stipend and tuition reimbursement.

Job Corps

<http://jobcorps.dol.gov>

A no-cost education and vocational training program for youth ages 16 to 24 years old. Students live in dormitories on a campus where he or she receives career preparation, career development support, and transition assistance. Virginia has three Job Corps sites in Marion, VA; Coeburn, VA; and Monroe, VA. Students from all over the state may apply to these sites.

Appendix C: Career & Technical Education Contacts for Career Exploration in High School

Career and Technical Education courses should not be considered only for students who are training for “blue collar” jobs rather than going on to college.

There are many good reasons for having all students take at least one career and technical course while in high school. If your teen finds something he is really interested in, he can take follow-up courses to expand his skills and knowledge. In fact, in some courses he may be able to earn dual enrollment credit (both high school and college credit at the same time) which begins building his college transcript.

Look through your school district’s offerings to see what might be of interest to your teen. For instance, he would benefit from a course in information technology since this is now part of our every day existence both at home and in the workplace. Or a course in a career field of interest will allow him to test his skills and interests and either eliminate or focus on that career area. Finally, it’s a great way to expand his knowledge about something that is becoming a hobby, such as photography or web design. There are so many options available it may be hard to choose!



Appendix D: Footnotes

While I have tried to state career planning concepts and data in layperson's terms in this parent guide, there were some concepts and data that influenced what is written, which I paraphrased or simply used as an inspiration for my own writing. In most cases, the work that was consulted served as a starting point and my own work with students led me to modify the concept or activity for inclusion in this guide.

Below are the locations where I obtained information. When accessing published materials, I tried to include specific page numbers, unless I felt the whole document needed to be reviewed to get an understanding of the author's concepts.

1. Corey, G. (1996), pp. 97-106 ; Young et al. (2001) p. 191.
2. Ketterson & Bluestein (1997), pp. 174-176 ; Kracke (1997) pp. 347-348; Middleton & Loughead.
3. Bardick et al. (2005).
4. Virginia Community College System (VCCS) Career Coach Academy Manual from 2006 and 2007.
5. Meier, S. & Davis, S. (1997). VCCS Career Coach Academy Manual from 2006.
6. Faber, A. & Mazlish, E. (2005), pp. 100-108.
7. Faber, A. & Mazlish, E. (2005), pp. 136-169.
8. Warford, L. (2007). Quoted excerpts of this power point presentation.
9. National Center on Education and the Economy (2006).
10. Lane, L. (2005). SDV 107; Ahnsu Consulting GrOup. This is actually a public domain concept but I like the way each of these sources presented it.
11. Brott, P. (2004), pp. 190-194.
12. Masteryworks. (1998); Hecklinger (2003), pp. 31-38.
13. Lane, L. (2005). SDV 100 class. The original classroom activity was done as a values auction; I changed the format to a values budget because the auction didn't make sense for this guide.
14. Borgen, F. & Grutter, J. (2005); Niles, S. & Harris-Bowlsbey, J. (2005), pp. 61-72. Lane, L. (2005), SDV 107.
15. Direct quote from ONET Online under "interests."
16. Career Clusters Website.
17. NVCC Career Center handouts; Yates, M. (2006), pp. 23-50.
18. SDV107 Lane, L. (2005). She referred to this type of speech as an "infomercial" in her lecture but I've heard it referred to as an elevator speech. While this probably falls under the category of public domain, I cite Prof. Lane as my source for this activity.
19. Lane, L. (2005). SDV 107 lecture and activity on decision-making style.
20. Fancher-Ruiz, E. (2005). SDV 100; online at Wikipedia as well as other places; this is a public domain concept but Wikipedia gives a nice overview of all the different ways SMART is interpreted.

Appendix E: Resources

I. Print Resources Consulted

- Ahnsu Consulting Group. (2006). *A Career Development Resource for Parents* (online). From Canadian Career Information Partnership. Available: www.ccip-picc.org/ccip/documents/a_career_development_resource_for_parents_e.pdf
- Bardick, A., Bernes, K., Magnusson, K., & Witko, K. (2005). "Parents Perceptions of Their Role in Children's Career Planning." *Guidance and Counseling*. Vol. 20 (3/4) pp. 152-157.
- Borgen, F. & Grutter, J. (2005). *Where Do I Go Next? Using Your Strong Results to Manage Your Career*. Mountainview, CA: Consulting Psychologist Press, Inc.
- Brott, P. (2004). "Constructivist Assessment in Career Counseling." *Journal of Career Development*, vol.30, (3), pp. 189-200.
- Corey, G. (1996). *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy, fifth edition*. New York: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
- Faber, A. & Mazlish, E. (2004). *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen so Kids Will Talk*. New York: Perennial Currents, an imprint of Harper Collins Publishers.
- Faber, A. & Mazlish, E. (2005). *How to Talk So Teens Will Listen & Listen so Teens Will Talk*. New York: Collins, an imprint of Harper Collins Publishers.
- Hecklinger, F. & Black, B. (2003). *Training for Life*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.
- Ketterson, T. & Blustein, D. (1997). "Attachment Relationships and the Career Exploration Process." *The Career Development Quarterly*. Vol. 46 (2). Pp. 167-178.
- Kracke, Barbel. (1997). "Parental Behaviors and Adolescents' Career Exploration." *Career Development Quarterly*, vol. 45n (4), pp. 341-350.
- Masteryworks. (1998). *Talentsort 2000 Card Sort*. Available for order at: www.masteryworks.com/a/toolShow.cfm?ToolID=28
- Meier, S. & Davis, S. (1997). *Elements of Counseling, 3rd edition*. New York: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
- Middleton, E. & Loughhead, T. (1993). "Parental Influence on Career Development: An Integrative Framework for Adolescent Career Counseling." *Journal of Career Development*, vol. 19 (3), pp. 161-173.
- National Center on Education and the Economy (2006). "Tough Choices or Tough Times." *The Report on the New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce*.
- Niles, S. & Harris-Bowlsbey, J. (2005). *Career Development Interventions in the 21st Century*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Northern Virginia Community College (2007). *2007-08 Catalogue*. (online) www.nvcc.edu.
- Virginia Community College System. (2007). *Career Coaches 2007 Academy Manual*. Richmond, VA: Unpublished training manual for career coach training October 3-5, 2007.
- Virginia Community College System. (2006). *Career Coaches Academy Manual*. Richmond, VA: Unpublished training manual for career coach training January 23-26, 2006.

Warford, L. (2007). *Moving from Student Access to Student Success (Tech Connet)*, "Did you Know" powerpoint presentation. (online) Available: www.league.org/league/projects/ccti/summit/2007/2007CIT-8.ppt.

Yates, M. (2006). *Knock 'em Dead 2006: The Ultimate Job Seeker's Guide*. Avon, Massachusetts: Adams Media.

Young, R.; Valach, L.; Ball, J.; Paselukho, M.; Wong, Y.; DeVries, R. ; McLean, H.; & Turkel H. (2001). "Career Development in Adolescence as a Family Project." *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, vol. 48 (2). Pp. 190-202.

II. Class Lectures & Materials Consulted

Fancher-Ruiz, E. (Professor) (2005) *SDV100: College Success Skills*. Annandale, VA: Northern Virginia Community College.

Lane, L. (Professor) (2005) *SDV107: Career Education*. Annandale, VA: Northern Virginia Community College.

III. Movies & Websites Reviewed/Listed

Movies

Little Man Tate

Searching for Bobby Fischer

Websites

ONET Online: <http://online.onetcenter.org/>

Virginia View: www.vaview.org

Career Clusters website: www.careerclusters.org

Holland Code website: www.hollandcodes.com

Kuder: www.kuder.com

Type Focus: www.typefocus.com/index.html

Advisor Team: www.advisorteam.org

Occupational Outlook Handbook:
www.bls.gov/oco/home

Virginia Electronic Labor Market Access (VELMA):
www.VaWorkConnect.org

Knock 'em Dead Online: www.knockemdead.com

Career Prospects in Virginia:
www.careerprospects.org

Today's Military:
www.Todaysmilitary.com/app/tm/careers

Alexandria Volunteer Bureau:
www.alexandriavolunteers.com

Arlington County Volunteer Office:
www.volunteersolutions.org/acvo/volunteer

Volunteer Fairfax: www.volunteerfairfax.org

Loudoun County Volunteer Services:
www.1-800-volunteer.org

The Voluntary Action Center
www.volunteerprincewilliam.org

Know How Virginia: www.knowhowvirginia.org

DC Cares: www.dc-cares.org

Montgomery County Volunteer Center:
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteer

Prince George's Volunteer Center:
www.princegeorgesvolunteer.org

Volunteer Frederick:
www.volunteerfrederick.org/index.html

Americorp: www.americorp.org

Job Corp: <http://jobcorps.dol.gov>

TC Williams Online Career Center:
www.acps.kqw.va.us/tcw

The Arlington Career Center:
www.careercenter.arlington.k12.va.us/

Fairfax County Office of Career & Tech Ed
www.fcps.edu/DIS/OCTE/index.htm

Monroe Technology Center
www.loudoun.k12.va.us/mtc/site/default.asp

Northern Virginia Community College:
www.nvcc.edu

