

Career Coaching Your Kids

In *Career Coaching Your Kids* by David H. Montross, Theresa E. Kane and Robert J. Ginn, Jr. the authors suggest four important roles parents play in the career development of their children:

Parent as Clarifier:

- Watch for natural interests and support their development.
- Provide an environment rich in opportunities to express interests and preferences.
- Encourage your child to complete an interest inventory.
- Review with your child the data from his or her self-assessment (skills, interests, values, personality), and keep the focus on the child as the key player in the process.

Parent as Connector:

- Help your child gather data about the real world of work.
- Foster your child's analytical process—it is more productive for your child to invest time learning that a particular career is not a good match than for you to tell your child you think that career is a bad choice.
- Discuss the data your child finds and what was learned from it.
- Help your child connect the data gathered during self-assessment with various options.
- Connect your child to appropriate resources (reading, people, experience) to assist with career exploration.
- Connect your child to your network of friends and acquaintances for career exploration purposes.

Parent as Challenger:

- Talk with your children about career aspirations. Express interest in their plans; communicate the importance of setting goals.
- Provide resources such as ideas on how to get more information and contacts for informational interviews.
- Don't let them get discouraged if they are not excited about a field that they explore. Explain that knowing what one does not want to do is an important step to determining what you do want to do.
- Build self-confidence: Brainstorm informational interview questions, let them practice asking questions, give feedback and suggestions.
- Discuss informational interview results with them. Decipher jargon that they hear from others; motivate them to move on if they've had a bad experience. Help them interpret what they are hearing and determine next steps.
- Help them monitor progress toward goals, process what they are learning, provide feedback and suggestions about how to keep or get back on track.
- Together create and review action plans, checklists, and milestones.

Parent as Motivator:

- Help your child to overcome nonchalance that may be simply disguising a fear of failure.
- Help your child understand the combination of freedom and responsibility that rules most of our lives.
- Provide support in a family setting.
- Remember that one of the core motivations for participation in career decision making is that making decisions is what life is about.
- Help to increase the number of variables being considered.
- Keep the decision making process going even when your child says, "You decide for me!"
- Help your child understand that endurance is the critical element of success in job hunting.
- In times of unemployment, help your child focus on the growth potential in that situation.

ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO SEEK SUPPORT FROM CAREER SERVICES. WE CAN HELP!