

EDUCATION AND CAREER

The experience of success creates a strong sense of self-confidence, and that more than anything else is what young people need to get by in the world today.

"I'm dropping out of school and I want to be a Rock Star!"

Many parents/caregivers have faced moments of despair about their teenager's education and career. This is understandable, as the questions of education and career are big ones, especially given the way the world is changing. Adolescence is a time when teenagers only beginning to think about their long-term futures. They're trying to work out who they are at the most basic of levels and now, they must make decisions about learning and career that could potentially influence their whole lives.

Meet with the School:

Parents and teachers can often be at odds with each other because of incorrect perceptions. Get to know your children's teachers and go in with an open mind. Important discussions could include; your teenager's academic ability in particular, his or her strengths and academic ability in particular, his or her strengths and weaknesses, the teacher's impression of your teenager's belief in her or himself, information about your teenager's peer group and social skills and information about the amount of effort your child is making at school. When there's a problem, talk about it with relevant teachers.

Helping your Teenager Choose Courses:

Teenagers are faced with all kinds of choices about what to learn, and they're expected to make these what to learn, and they're expected to make these decisions at much younger ages than in the past. It's important that your teenager is well supported to make an informed decision about her/his choice of subjects in high school, associated options in tertiary education or training pathways and to learn about the 'world of work' and related occupations she/he will be eligible for. Useful tips include; find out what they are interested in and what they are good at, help them to be realistic about their abilities, help them to think about where their choices might lead them and visit a career counsellor for additional support.

Value Your Children For Their Unique Abilities:

We all have our own unique skills and abilities. The best way to encourage teenagers to learn is to find out what they are passionate about and help them pursue that passion. Setting unrealistic goals for your children can result in repeated failure. Teenagers need to know they can achieve the things they set their hearts and minds to. They also need to know you are proud of them for anything they can learn and sometimes, even for the fact that they tried to learn something.

It's Never Too Late!:

The choices teenagers make are important, but not forever binding. Let your teenager know this, whilst encouraging them to think carefully and choose wisely.

Vocation:

Choosing a job or career path can be an extremely exciting time for young people. However, your teenager may soon discover that choosing a career can be fraught with many obstacles. Some tips include:

- Don't try to make them live your dreams
- Encourage them to talk to lots of people, especially those in jobs they are interested in
- Help them to access resources such as the Library, Internet and Career Counsellor
- Support your teenager to apply for jobs and how to deal positively with rejection
- Remember that it's never too late-what really matters is that your children are happy, satisfied with their decisions and, that you have a strong relationship with them

