Parents
Talking Career Choices

Career – The sum total of paid and unpaid work, learning and life roles you undertake throughout your life.

Occupation – A group of similar jobs found in different industries or organisations.

Work – A set of activities with an intended set of outcomes. Can include parenting or volunteering as well as paid employment.

Job – A position in which you perform tasks for payment.
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You Can Help

Introduction
This leaflet is for parents, guardians, or those who have a responsibility or an interest in looking after teenagers. It will provide you with information about career pathways, and give you suggestions on how you can help your teenager to make career decisions.

You can help
As a parent, guardian or teacher you have a key role to play in helping young people make career decisions. Career development is a life long process, beginning in childhood. Many adults state that they decided on their current occupations when they were children. Research shows that parental involvement is one of the biggest factors influencing the development of a child’s sense of the world of work. While the information provided by career professionals is very important, the conversations you have with your teenager about their career decisions are also very valuable.

Get the ball rolling
Think about your own work and life experiences and the paths you took to get where you are. You might be surprised to discover that your teenager is interested in finding out about how you made decisions about your career. Have you always worked in one occupation? Have you tried lots of different kinds of jobs? How did you know you made the right career decision?

Talk to your teenager about the kinds of occupations they are interested in, and then talk to your friends about their line of work. You may know someone who has the occupation that your teenager is interested in. How did your friends get into those occupations? What are the positive and negative things about those occupations?

Think about the work experience your teenager has had, and how they felt about it. Learning what you don’t want to do can be as important as learning what you do want to do. So even if they didn’t enjoy the work experience, it is good to talk about why.

Look at what activities your teenager is involved in outside of school, such as casual jobs, providing child care, sport, volunteer work or a creative hobby. Perhaps they have a special skill or talent that could lead to an occupation?

Talk to your teenager’s Career Adviser at school, and encourage your teenager to talk to them too.

Keep an eye out for any Career Expos at your teenager’s school, or in your local area. Career Expos are a great opportunity to find out about the education and training providers in your area, and potential employers.
One Parent’s Story

When I was young, I was expected to follow in my father’s footsteps. There was very little choice for me. So I left school at 15 and became a mechanic like him. Then I was offered an opportunity to be part of a training program to help other mechanics. I learned a lot about how people learn, and how to motivate them to be the best they can be. After 20 years of being a mechanic and training others, I bought a business. I became a baker, and again, was responsible for training staff. Now, I really enjoy talking to young people in my local area and I am involved in projects at the local school. Because I own a business, I know how important it is that students prepare themselves for life in the real world – they need to be work ready. When I talk to my own kids, I tell them they can do anything they want in their career. I tell them to take advantage of all the different opportunities that are offered at schools these days – things like the Adopt-a-School Program, school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, vocational training and different pathways. You never know what the future holds for you, and I firmly believe that the only time you need to worry is when you stop learning.

Learning Pathways

Pathways through school and beyond

There are many different pathways that can lead to rewarding careers. Remember, a choice made today is not a choice made forever. People are no longer locked into one occupation or education level. It is possible to move from work to study, TAFE to University, or from an Australian Apprenticeship into a long-term professional career.

During school most young people choose between one or more of the following post Year 10 or post Year 12 pathways:

- Studying through a TAFE, private Registered Training Organisation, community training provider, or University
- Undertaking an Australian Apprenticeship
- Taking a gap year where they might participate in community or volunteer work and/or travel
- Starting a business
- Finding employment

Research shows that people are much more likely to get a job if they have Year 12 or an equivalent vocational qualification. However, some young people feel that staying on at school is not for them. If this applies to your teenager, they might want to consider combining their school studies with some practical, paid training.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) in schools allows students to combine vocational studies with their other subjects as they continue to work towards completing Year 12. In this way, students can keep their options open to pursue further full-time or part-time vocational training or to move into tertiary studies.

Australian School-based Apprenticeships give young people the option of starting an Australian Apprenticeship while they are still at school. They are available in all states and territories at the Certificate III level. They can earn a wage as they work and study and this can give them a head start in their chosen career.
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Learning Pathways cont’d

Further education and training
Around 30% of students go straight from school to university. To make the right choice, students need to find out about the university, the range of courses and where they may be offered, and any course requirements. For more information go to www.goingtouni.gov.au

Vocational education and training is great for people who like study that is practical, hands on and directly job-related. Courses are offered through TAFEs, Australian Technical Colleges (Years 11 & 12), private Registered Training Organisations and community training providers. Students can get nationally recognised qualifications in areas as varied as aviation, aged care, cardio technology, children’s services, car mechanic, earth science, plumbing and nursing. For more information go to www.training.com.au

There are costs associated with further education and training, such as course fees, text books and equipment, which should be considered when thinking about this pathway. If your teenager is considering moving away from home to study, they will also need to think about how they will pay for their living costs. A range of financial support is available to young people who are studying, doing an Australian Apprenticeship, starting a business, or looking for work. For more information go to www.centrelink.gov.au

Australian Apprenticeships
An Australian Apprenticeship offers practical work experience and formal training at the same time. Australian Apprenticeships are now offered in more than 500 occupations. They can provide new skills, a great start in an interesting career and a pay packet for the time spent on the job. For more information go to www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au

Taking a gap year
While many school leavers want to go straight on to further education and training, many take a break in their first year out of school, to travel, pursue a hobby, earn money, volunteer, or gain skills and life experience before moving on to formal study. This is known as a gap year.

Taking a break from studying to do something different can really help a young person if they are not sure about what career they want to pursue. There are many ways a year out can increase skills and experience, enhance understanding of a chosen field of study, and add to future employability. For more information go to www.year12whatnext.gov.au

Many young people choose to do volunteer work during their gap year as it is an excellent way of experiencing new challenges and learning about the world of work. Volunteers can provide an unpaid but valuable service to the Australian community, and can also work overseas. A variety of organisations rely on volunteers and it can be a great way to build new skills and add to work experience. For more information go to www.volunteeringaustralia.org

Starting a business
Starting a business is another option to consider. Formal qualifications or business experience aren’t always necessary (though they can be helpful) to start and run a business. There are a number of programs aimed at helping people build their enterprise skills and develop innovative ideas, as well as providing sources of training and education that assist in following innovative career pathways. For more information go to www.business.gov.au
About Employment

The skills teenagers need
Employers are interested in what they describe as employability skills when they decide who to employ and who to promote within their organisations. Employability skills are the skills that allow people to do their jobs well in all circumstances—they are not the technical skills required by an occupation. Employability skills and personal attributes are important no matter where people work or what work they do.

Employability skills
Communication
Teamwork
Problem solving
Initiative and enterprise
Planning and organisation
Self-management
Learning
Technology

Employment growth
Over the past few decades the Australian labour market has changed considerably. Ageing of the population, increased participation of women in the workforce, changes in industry structure, technological advances and a need for greater flexibility have all contributed to change. For more information go to www.skillsinfo.gov.au

Job growth
The chart below shows where the most employment growth is expected from now to 2012–13.

Find out more about occupations and job prospects

www.workplace.gov.au Information on employment, government assistance, training and working conditions.
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Finding Out More Together

Career Advice Australia
Career Advice Australia is an Australian Government initiative that strives to help all young Australians make a smooth transition through school and on to further study, training or work.

If you have a child aged 13 to 19, Career Advice Australia providers may be able to help you assist your child in their career development. To get in touch with your local Career Advice Australia provider, see the parents section of our website for contact details, case studies and more information. Visit www.careeradviceaustralia.gov.au

Bullseye Charts
The Australian Government produces a series of 30 career information charts called the Bullseye Charts. Each chart looks at a school subject, and the many occupations that subject can lead to. You could start by looking at the Bullseye Charts with your teenager so they can identify what occupations are linked to the school subjects they like. You can view or download the Bullseye Charts at www.deewr.gov.au/bullseye

myfuture.edu.au
myfuture.edu.au is Australia’s online career information and exploration service. myfuture provides information and tools to help people investigate career pathways. It also has a parent information section which can assist you in supporting your teenager to identify career options and set career action planning. myfuture includes comprehensive information about occupations, courses and state-by-state labour market information which may assist your teenager in deciding what occupations to focus on. For more, visit the website at www.myfuture.edu.au

Job Guide
Your teenager may find it helpful to look up the occupations they identified as options from the Bullseye Charts in the Job Guide. The Job Guide offers an in-depth look at more than 500 entry-level occupations and the education and training pathways leading to them. Job Guide is provided in hard copy to every Year 10 student, and is available online at www.jobguide.deewr.gov.au

Year 12 - What Next?
Year 12 - What Next? is a booklet and website designed to inform Year 12 students about the pathway options available to them. Explore the website at www.year12whatnext.gov.au

Remember…
• There is a wide range of FREE career information available in electronic and hard copy formats at www.deewr.gov.au/careerdevelopment
• You could drop in and visit a Career Information Centre (CIC) with your teenager. CICs have a range of career information products as well as professional support in using them. To find out about the nearest CIC to you go to www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/services/career_centres.htm
• Check out the Australian Career Development Studies training available at www.career.edu.au. These are free, self-paced resources for anyone interested in their own career development or helping others, such as children, with making career choices.
Keywords In Careers

Accredited Training  Training that is nationally recognised, and is provided by Registered Training Organisations, including TAFE.

Assumed Knowledge  The minimum level of achievement considered necessary for successful first year tertiary study.

Cadetship  An employment arrangement in which an employer agrees to subsidise the formal training of an employee to enable a qualification to be obtained.

Competency-based training  Training based on the ability to perform tasks rather than the length of time spent in training.

Higher Education Loan Program  Also known as HELP. This program allows eligible students to take out loans from the Australian Government for their course fees for university study, and repay them when they earn above a set income threshold.

Structured Work Placement  Also known as Structured Workplace Learning. Students learn practical skills through structured experience and practice in the workplace. The outcome of this on-the-job training contributes to the senior secondary school certificate and an industry-recognised qualification.

Tertiary Education  Post-secondary courses offered by universities, private providers and TAFE institutes.

Training Packages  Packages developed by industry and endorsed by government to ensure that vocational education and training meets industry standards.

Additional Websites

www.abc.net.au/acedayjobs  Online videos about people who enjoy their work.
www.careeradviceaustralia.gov.au  Find out about the services available in your area and other useful career advice links.
www.career.edu.au  An Australian Government initiative designed for parents and career practitioners to access career development learning opportunities.

www.goingtouni.gov.au  Provides information for prospective and continuing Australian higher education students on the schemes available to help pay university fees and contributions, available scholarships and more.
www.grouptraining.com.au  Information about Group Training Organisations that take on Australian Apprentices, loaning them to ‘host’ employers.
www.ntis.gov.au  The National Training and Information Service provides information about courses, qualifications, competencies, training packages and Registered Training Organisations.
www.skillsinfo.gov.au  Provides industry skills information, including employment data and links to information on employment, careers, skill needs, and training.
www.year12whatnext.gov.au  A guide for Year 12 students planning their post school education and training.

The Job Guide can provide you with specific website information on the occupations you are interested in. Check out the Job Guide book, or go to www.jobguide.deewr.gov.au
Career Advice Australia is an Australian Government initiative that strives to help all young Australians make a smooth transition through school and on to further study, training or work.

Our dedicated providers work closely with schools, career advisers, community groups, businesses and industry to help young people, aged 13 to 19 get access to the skills, hands-on training and support to make informed decisions about their future.

Career Advice Australia can also help you assist your child in their career development.

To get in touch with your local Career Advice Australia provider, visit our website www.careeradviceaustralia.gov.au and see the parents’ section for contact details.