

CAREER AWARENESS FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

Why is it important?

Elementary school is the perfect time to initiate career awareness with your child. It is important for your child to become aware of how education is connected to a successful future. While they are in elementary school, you can help your child:

- ▲ Discover the variety of jobs in a global world
- ▲ Connect learning in school to real-world situations
- ▲ Imagine themselves in a career
- ▲ Develop work readiness skills such as making decisions, solving problems, being a leader, and working in groups

Many times, children choose careers based on what they see on television or what their parents do for a living. If you help your child learn about a broad range of careers, they will have more information when it comes time to choose a career.

By talking with your child about the link between education and careers, you will help your child understand that school is important and that school success can open doors to his or her ideal career.

There is not one "right" career for your child but many careers that can fit his or her interests and skills

What does Career Development do?

"Who am I? What am I interested in? What am I good at? What is important to me?" The answers to these questions are pieces to the puzzle that will help answer the question: "What do I want to be when I grow up?" Children need to first examine who they are so they can determine how they will someday fit into the world of work.

A career specialist is assigned to each district to work directly with the teachers and students to infuse career education into everyday lessons and curriculum standards. By doing so, connections are made between classroom learning and the real world.

At the elementary level, career education is all about awareness of self and of the world around them. This awareness comes by incorporating a broad range of experiences throughout the school year such as:

- ▲ Guest Speakers
- ▲ Assemblies
- ▲ Career Fairs
- ▲ Dress-up Days
- ▲ Vehicle Days
- ▲ Field Trips
- ▲ Class Lessons
- ▲ Resources

With the use of career assessments, students are encouraged to examine their interests in a fun, non-judgmental manner. Students investigate their likes and dislikes and learn how their interests relate to the career world. This encourages an understanding of self and enables them to move on to Middle School Exploration, the next phase of career development.

How can you help your child?

Elementary school is the time when children begin learning about responsibility, cooperation, and problem-solving. Here are some ways you as a parent can help your child learn these valuable skills for school and work:

- ▲ Share positive personal experiences to encourage a positive attitude about school and work
- ▲ Discuss your child's likes and dislikes. Use these to plan extracurricular and summer activities
- ▲ Teach your child to accept other children's ideas and differences
- ▲ Help your child to learn valuable work skills, such as being on time, completing assignments, having supplies and taking pride in what they do
- ▲ Involve your child in real-world examples of decision-making by letting them help with paying bills, buying groceries, planning family activities and setting schedules
- ▲ Provide nonjudgmental listening and honest feedback. Your willingness to listen and be a sounding board will keep you a part of their decision-making process

Being an involved parent and encouraging your child to think about careers from an early age will help your child be successful in life.