

## PARENTS ----- Helping your teen consider career choices

One of the most important decisions your teenager has to make is the choice of a career path. In considering that choice, your teenager will really need your help, even though some may be reluctant to admit it.

By the time they reach secondary education, most students have already shown their particular interest toward certain subjects. The subjects they enjoy most are usually the ones they do well. And that's because those subjects suit their abilities.

To help them make successful career decisions, parents should start first by helping to identify those interests from early secondary school. Help them discover the range of occupations they might be suited for and avoid coercing them into a career decision nurtured by your own parental ambition. "I want my daughter to be a lawyer" when she is more suited to fashion design. Law may be an admirable dream, but is an expectation that could exert suffocating pressure on your teen's self-confidence and desired lifestyle.

Remember, you cannot live your child's life. Try instead to see your teenager not as your child, but as teachers and friends see him/her.

Just as you wouldn't buy the first house you see. A good way to start choosing a career is to shop around. Start your career-shopping with emerging fields of new work along with current skills shortages.

As population increases there will continue to be a growing demand in the fields of health, education, food and nutrition, transport, housing, trades, engineering, hospitality, social services, finance, defense and law.

But also look at emerging industries in the world's new economy with promising growth potential.

**COMPUTERS AND SEMICONDUCTORS** Computer Equipment, Semiconductors, Electronic Components, Software, Information Services.

**HEALTH AND MEDICAL** Medical Care, Surgical and medical Instruments, Surgical appliances, X-ray and electromedical apparatus, Biological products, Medicine and drugs

**COMMUNICATION** Telecommunication services, Telephone equipment, Radio and microwave communications, Entertainment, Aircraft equipment, Guided missiles and space vehicles

**INSTRUMENTATION** Process control instruments, Industrial controls, Engineering and scientific instruments, Instruments to measure electricity, measuring and controlling devices.

### Parents' checklist for Career Guidance

Try these seven ideas to help guide your teen to think beyond today, and about future work opportunities:

1. Brainstorm career opportunities that combine your teen's interests with emerging opportunities
2. Conduct research on your own and network with other parents. Suggest that your teen interview people you know who work in jobs that interest them and job shadow in the holidays.
3. Introduce your teen to people who could be role models in emerging work. Encourage your teen to ask questions about the type of work performed, training requirements and future work potential.
4. Read newspapers, magazines, online and books on career planning and/or economic trends. Clip out or photocopy information on trends on work that might interest your teen. Suggest keeping a scrapbook of occupations that are of interest to them.
5. Watch the news on TV with you teen, and brainstorm ideas and work opportunities based on events and changes in the world
6. Visit together the NZ Careers website [www.careers.govt.nz](http://www.careers.govt.nz) for information on specific careers, courses available and prerequisites.
7. If you don't have Internet at home try local libraries or schools or community centres for access to the Internet

When working with your teen, consider that within an industry, there is a need for just about any occupation. For instance, if your teen loves the entertainment business but wants to be an electronics engineer, is there a match for him/her? Not only is entertainment a growing business, but electronics is a large part of that industry. Similar matches between interest and careers can be found in many fields.

Once your teen has research various options, they will need to set goals and time frames to work towards: and more importantly, plan how they are going to achieve them. People with goals succeed because they know where they are going. And, as parents, it is our job to provide them with the map.

*Adapted from: Arnold Bonnet, PhD, Editor.*

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### Thinking about Career Choices?

NZ Careers is your free online career counselling and advice resource.

[www.careers.govt.nz](http://www.careers.govt.nz)

Go to the address above to access careers information. Check out the various applications

Work with your son/daughter to look at the possibilities.

**N.B VERY HIGH NUMBERS OF N.Z STUDENTS CHANGE THEIR MINDS  
RE THEIR CAREER DIRECTIONS A FEW YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL, ALTHOUGH ALL LEARNING  
IS TRANSFERABLE AND NOT WASTED THIS CAN BE VERY EXPENSIVE**