More Career Awareness Activities for you and your Child.

There are many activities that you can do at home to help increase your child's awareness of careers. Help your child think about chores and how skills he or she has learned in school are needed to complete those chores. You can use such activities as:

- Paying bills;
- Buying groceries;
- Sending birthday cards and letters;
- Getting appliances repaired;
- Shopping for clothing; and
- Organizing family activities.

Ask your child to create a timeline for his or her school day. For example:

- 6:30 - Get out of bed
- 6:35 - Eat breakfast
- 6:45 - Get dressed, comb hair, brush teeth
- 7:10 - Make it to school
- 7:40 - Get organized for first class
- 8:00 - Science class
- 9:00 - Math class
- 10:00 - English class
- 11:00 - Gym class
- 12:00 - Eat lunch
- 1:00 - Spanish class
- 2:00 - Theatre Arts class
- 3:00 - Do homework

Then ask your child to think about how his or her workday may be similar or different.

Teachable Moments -

Put names of different careers in a bowl. Each month, have your child draw the name of a career out of the bowl. During the month, have your child collect as much information as he or she can about that career. Reward your child at the end of the month for collecting the information and discuss the career with him or her.

Ask your child the following questions:

- Would you like to work alone or in a group?
- Would you rather work inside or outside?
- Would you prefer working during the day or during the night?
- Would you mind wearing a uniform?
- Would you like to make things or to sell things?
- Would you rather travel or stay close to home?
- Would you like to work with your hands?
- Would you prefer to give directions or to follow directions?
- Would you rather use communication skills or math skills?

Have your child "interview" you about what you used to think about school and careers growing up. Here are some sample questions for your child to ask:

- What were your favorite school subjects?
- What did you like to do with your free time?
- What career did you think about when you were young?
- Did you follow the career path you dreamed about when you were young? Why or why not?
- What obstacles were in the way of your career path?
- What did your parents want you to do?
- Who helped you make your career decision?
- What did you learn in school that helped you the most?
- What is your favorite thing about the work you do now?
- What do you like least about the work you do now?
- What skills did you learn in elementary school that you use in your work now?
- What skills did you learn in elementary school that you use in your home life?

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

ACRN

America's Career Resource Network

Career Awareness *in* Elementary *School*

Help your child discover the world of work from an early age. . .

No Child LEFT BEHIND

This brochure was created using a grant from the Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education.

Why is it Important to get an Early Start?

Elementary school is not too early to start teaching your child about career awareness. It is important for your child to become aware of how his or her schooling is connected to a successful future. While in elementary school, you can help your child:

- Discover the variety of jobs available to him or her;
- Connect what he or she is learning in school to real-world situations;
- Imagine himself or herself in an occupation; and
- Develop work-readiness skills such as working and playing with others, making decisions, solving problems and being a leader.

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, he or she will have more information when it comes time to choose a career.

To help your child understand how his or her schoolwork will be used in a future career, you can explain the skills workers use in their jobs.

For example:

- A veterinarian uses math skills to calculate the amount of medicine a cat will need;
- A reporter needs writing skills to compose newspaper articles; and
- A marine biologist relies on his or her knowledge of science to study aquatic life.

By talking with your child about the link between school 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.

How do I Start Talking to my Child about Careers?

One way to start talking to your elementary-aged child about careers is to talk about the things that interest your child. Then, point out how these items of interest relate to activities that adults do.

For example:

- *If your child likes art,* discuss how adults use art to design houses, clothing, magazine ads, movie sets and even toys. Explain that art is also used to draw cartoons, arrange flowers and take photos for magazines and books.
- *If your child likes to be outdoors,* discuss how he or she can have a career that involves working outside, such as landscape architecture, forestry, archeology, construction work, marine biology and commercial fishing.
- *If your child is very social,* discuss how people who like to talk and work with people may choose to work as a teacher, a lawyer, a customer service representative, a receptionist, a hotel manager or a convention planner.
- *If your child likes to help people,* talk about different ways he or she can do that in a career, such as working as a nurse, doctor, athletic trainer, family counselor or child care worker.
- *If your child loves math,* you may want to talk with him or her about the possibility of becoming an accountant, a computer programmer, an engineer or a statistician. You should also remind your child that almost all careers use basic math, so it is a very important skill to have.
- *If your child likes to keep others safe,* talk to your child about a career as a police officer, a forensic scientist, a detective, an investigator, a parole officer, a security guard or a bailiff.

Other Career Skills for your Elementary-Aged Child

Elementary school is the time when your child should start 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 for work.

You can help your child in many ways. For example:

- Help your child develop a positive attitude and feel good about his or her life.
- Talk about what your child likes and dislikes, and explain that every person has different likes and dislikes.
- Teach your child to accept other children's ideas, even if they are different from your child's.
- Have your child think about how his or her behavior might affect the feelings of other children.
- Resolve conflicts in a positive manner.
- Talk to your child about how he or she is feeling, and teach your child to deal with his or her emotions in a healthy manner.
- Have your family work as a team to complete a home project.
- When your child makes a mistake, work to correct the mistake and to prevent the same mistake from happening again.
- Take your child to school on time, and teach your child the importance of punctuality.
- Involve your child in real-world examples of decision-making. Talk to your child about how his or her decisions impact other people.
- Explain why work is important - not only for a source of income but also as a way to contribute to society.