



TIP SLIPS

STAGES OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN TEENS

Children move through stages in their career building as they develop. However, as you read the following description of the stages, please remember that just as they didn't all walk or talk at the same age, they won't all mature through these stages at the same rate, either.

The Exploration Stage: Ages 11-14

In this stage, children:

- use interests, abilities and values to make choices;
- don't feel bound by reality when making choices;
- are more knowledgeable about the activities involved in different occupations;
- think more about their career choices, although they change their minds often;
- begin to see themselves as part of the world and question where they fit in; and
- turn inward to examine themselves and learn who they are.

At this stage, you can help your teens most effectively by encouraging them to keep exploring.

The Preparation Stage: Ages 15-18

Early in this stage:

- teens haven't yet been influenced by reality in making their choices;
- they may hesitate to make plans as they begin to feel that their decisions will have a greater effect on their future

Later, around age 17, teens:

- become more logical;
- develop an understanding of current events and how they'll affect the future;
- make many choices about their post high school direction e.g. straight to work, apprenticeship, college, or university;
- feel the impact of reality on their choices;
- continue to explore;
- make tentative occupational choices



Work together by tracking trends and keeping tabs on the future by:

- encouraging them to follow the news on TV, the Internet or in the papers
- encouraging them to read the business and career sections of the newspaper
- talking about events and their impact on the local work dynamic, e.g. the growth of the environmental services industry
- talking about and exploring the industries of the "new economy":
 - computers and semi-conductors
 - health and medical
 - communications and telecommunications

Some Last Words:

Career Decision-Making is not...

- making one Big Decision about which occupation to choose
- choosing an occupation to last a lifetime
- doing a quick test with a print-out of possible occupations
- matching a list of aptitudes and interests with a list of possible occupations
- teaching resume-writing and job-interview skills

Career Planning is...

- helping our teens become aware of the connections between what they learn in school and their own goals or interests
- helping our teens to gain acceptance and self-management skills

NOTE: Please see the Tip Slip "***The High-Five Plus One: Building Your Life***" for more information.

