

Teens Working

Roads to Success is a new program designed to help middle and high school students prepare for their futures. This newsletter will keep you posted on what we're doing in school, and how families can follow through at home.

For more info, visit www.roadstosuccess.org.

Did you know?

In a government study of teens working from 1994-1997:

- More than half of all 14-year-olds and 60% of 15-year-olds worked, most at freelance jobs like babysitting and yard work.
- 16- and 17-year-olds who worked fewer than 20 hours a week were more likely to go to college than students who didn't work at all. (It's not clear whether work experience effects achievement or whether go-getter students get the jobs.)

Is your son or daughter thinking about a part-time or summer job? Here are some things to consider:

The Good

Working can help young people feel responsible and independent. They can gain skills that will be useful as they move up in the world: problem-solving, punctuality, and pride in a job well done. If students do good work, employers can provide references when they move on to college or full-time jobs. Earning money can also give teens experience with budgeting and prioritizing wants and needs.

The Bad

Balancing work, friendships, school, and family can be stressful. Students who work long hours (more than 15 or 20 hours per week) get poorer grades than those who work fewer hours.



Health and Safety

U.S. law limits the kinds of jobs students can hold and the hours students can work—no more than 3 hours on a school day or 18 hours during a school week for students under 16.

Talk to your teens about ways to deal with unsafe work situations. (See Resources for help.)

Ways to Help

Attitude is everything! Here are some ideas for coaching your teen through tough work assignments:

1. Your effort is valuable.

2. You are learning work skills you can use later in other jobs.

3. Knowing the kinds of work you like (or don't like) will guide your future career choices.

Set limits and expectations about school performance and hours worked. Your teen may not know how to turn down longer hours or juggle all his responsibilities. Watch for slipping grades, fatigue, or stress.

Help your student manage her money so she'll have something to show for her efforts. Reach an agreement on how much to spend and how much to save.

Resources:

www.youthrules.dol.gov
www.osha.gov/SLTC/teenworkers
www.familyeducation.com

Grade by Grade: Getting A Job

Knowing how to get the job of your dreams is nearly as important as having the skills to do the job well.

In grade 9, Roads to Success devotes an entire unit to teen jobs: who's hiring, filling out applications, and rights

and responsibilities at work.

Teens looking for jobs can choose whether to work for a boss (retail stores, restaurants, summer camp) or themselves (babysitting, yard work). We'll be talking about both.

Should teens work? It depends on the teen. "You're only a kid once," some people say. "There's plenty of time for work later on." But for some teens, the joy of a first paycheck and the chance to make their way in the adult world is worth the effort.