

A Guide for **Parents and Caregivers** About  
**Career Education in B.C.**



Setting your  
child up for  
career-life  
success



**StrongerBC**  
for everyone

**career**  
education  
society of BC



## Acknowledgement

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# Why Career Education is important

Career Education is about preparing children to succeed in life on whatever career path they choose. It helps them to be resilient when change happens and to understand the steps involved to move forward positively.

Doing career-life planning from a young age and following it through to the end of secondary school sets students up for a more intentional and successful future. It produces educated citizens who are self-aware, confident and skilled in various areas of their lives.

## What are our ultimate goals?

- ✓ To provide exposure to Career Education concepts
- ✓ To guide personal exploration and skills assessments
- ✓ To provide opportunities for hands-on experience and further study
- ✓ To help prepare students for future studies, meaningful work and a successful career path

We rely on our communities, including parents and caregivers, educators and employers, to help us achieve these goals.

# Understanding Career Education in B.C. and where YOU fit in

A career is so much more than a job. It's an individual's unique journey through life. It impacts not only how they work and earn an income, but also how they bring their skills and interests to life day-to-day, who they interact with and the opportunities they pursue in an ever-changing world.

Successful Career Education involves people like

YOU



## K-GR 3

- Goal-setting
- Self-exploration
- Roles and responsibilities
- Exposure to jobs in the community
- Exploration of skills and interests
- Importance of learning
- Teamwork and work habits



### Parents and Caregivers

The most important career influencers for kids in K-12.

- Genuine conversations about interests and passions
- Encouragement to explore and try new things
- Participation in school and community programs and events
- Post-secondary planning and support

## GR 4-5

- Personal and public identities
- Respect for differences
- Innovative and entrepreneurial thinking
- Leadership and project management
- Safe behaviours
- Role of technology
- Volunteering



### Educators

Interpret the curriculum, bring it to life and offer guidance.

- Exploration and awareness of career options
- Skill building and personal development
- Individual career pathway planning
- Activities, events and connections within the community

## GR 6-7

- Preferences and abilities
- Community contributions
- Respect and inclusivity
- Attitudes and influences
- Value of new experiences
- Short and long-term goals



### Employers

Community partners providing real-world exposure to industries and workplaces.

- Guest speaking in schools
- Work experience placements
- Youth mentorship
- Career fair participation

## GR 8-9

- Self-assessment
- Purpose and passions
- Learning goals
- Curriculum choices
- Networks and mentors
- Career research
- Family expectations
- Community responsibility
- Workplace safety
- Decision-making

## GR 10-12

- Research, challenges, opportunities and risks
- School/work/life balance
- Career-life journey mapping
- Mentorship
- Networking
- Work experience and experiential learning

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Career Development is one of the three aspects of the *Educated Citizen* mandate for B.C.'s education system.

- ✓ Intellectual Development
- ✓ Human and Social Development
- ✓ Career Development



Much like people, careers are constantly changing. That's why our approach to Career Education in B.C. is not a one-size-fits-all model. It's customized to match each student's and every community's unique needs.

## K-12 Career Education goals

In B.C., Career Education is integrated at every level of elementary and secondary education. This is important because career and life skills will guide students for their entire working lives.<sup>1</sup>



**Build adaptability, resilience and flexibility**



**Understand the importance of ongoing career-life development**



**Learn and grow skills and competencies**



**Develop self-knowledge to inform career-life choices**



**Explore and interact with a variety of people and perspectives**

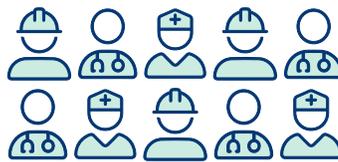


**Investigate a range of roles and opportunities**

[ SOURCE: [B.C. CURRICULUM](#) ]

# 76%

In the next 10 years, 76% of job openings will require some form of post-secondary education or training.<sup>2</sup>



# 1.1 million

In the next decade, B.C. will have over 1.1 million new job openings in health care, technology, education, social services and skilled trades.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> BC Curriculum

<sup>2</sup> WorkBC—British Columbia Labour Market Outlook

<sup>3</sup> WorkBC—British Columbia Labour Market Outlook



**StrongerBC**



## SECTION 1:

# Your role in the Career Education journey

Parents and caregivers can have a profound influence on a child's career journey. They play an essential role in inspiring children, preparing them for success and helping them navigate an ever-changing labour market.

If you're like many parents and caregivers, however, you may feel that there are a lot of things you don't know about the world of work your child will step into after secondary school. The good news is there are many resources to help you. This resource has been designed to support you as you prepare your child for a successful future.

The work parents and caregivers do to shape a child's future begins at an early age. It includes expanding your child's horizons with purposeful Career Education during their elementary years and continues into their secondary school years as they learn about the labour market, engage with career pathways, and become productive, educated citizens.

Parents and caregivers can be powerful allies as their children explore their surroundings and are exposed to new ideas and opportunities, as well as barriers and stereotypes. They can help children understand themselves and the possibilities available to them, how to challenge stereotypes and overcome limitations, and how their interests and passions are at the heart of their career-life journey.

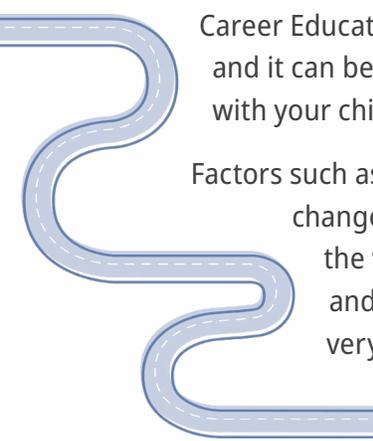
Parents and caregivers can help children to explore a wide range of possibilities. As children grow into teenagers, their understanding of careers and the world of work grows, and is often shaped by who and what are part of their lives. Family members, friends, teachers and employers all play an important role in exploring these possibilities. **But your role, as a parent or caregiver, is the foundation for it all.**

Parents and caregivers can be their child's:

- ✓ Guide
- ✓ Helper
- ✓ Inspiration
- ✓ Confidant
- ✓ Safe space

When it comes to navigating the ability to understand themselves, their interests, strengths and the opportunities that lay ahead of them, your child needs (and wants) your guidance at every step of the way. As young as age 7, they begin to make assumptions about jobs to which they'd be suited, and those assumptions may not reflect the broad range of opportunities available to them.

## A long and winding path



Career Education is a long and winding path, and it can be challenging to walk this path with your children.

Factors such as globalization and technological change have significantly altered the world of work. Your career and work experiences are likely very different from what your children will experience as part of their own Career Education process.

**The average person will change jobs or occupations many times throughout their lifetime as they build on their skills, competencies and experience.**

Sometimes, even just trying to talk to your child about careers can seem overwhelming because:

- **The world continues to change.** Work, career opportunities, industries and labour markets have transformed significantly since you entered the workforce.
- **Career Education is not universal.** Many people, particularly immigrants and newcomers to Canada, didn't receive Career Education in school, or had a different experience than what's offered here today.
- **Education and training options have expanded.** There are now many options for post-secondary education and training that people don't know about.
- **Stereotypes abound.** There are many common stereotypes about careers and the world of work that are irrelevant and inappropriate. It's our responsibility to combat these stereotypes and reveal the opportunities available to your child.
- **There's so much information.** There's a lot to learn!

If any of these scenarios feel familiar, you're not alone! This guide will help to demystify these Career Education scenarios as you navigate the process with your child.

Parents and caregivers often find that their experience of education, career planning and work is vastly different from what their child is experiencing today. Your guidance, influence and encouragement are essential to your child's success when engaging with the world of work.

## Guidance and resources to share with your elementary and secondary learners

If you've struggled to understand where YOU fit into your child's career and personal development process, this resource is for you.

It will help you to understand the opportunities available to your child through B.C.'s Career Education landscape and your role in guiding them toward career and education decisions that make the most sense for their future.

You'll learn:

- ✓ How to talk to your child about their interests, skills and potential career options
- ✓ How to help your child explore their interests and relevant opportunities
- ✓ How to get involved with Career Education initiatives at your child's school
- ✓ How to work with your child's career advisors and teachers
- ✓ How to find opportunities in your day-to-day life with your child to explore jobs and careers

By engaging with your child, working alongside their career educators and school team, and by using opportunities to get them excited about the many possibilities available to them, you can ensure they're set up for a fulfilling and successful career-life journey, whatever that may look like for them.

Let's take the first steps of your child's exciting career-life journey together.



### DEFINING JOBS, OCCUPATIONS AND CAREERS

Career Education is the lifelong process of learning, working and transitioning between jobs. It encompasses "jobs," "occupations" and a "career," all of which refer to different components of the journey:

- A job is a specific position you hold within an organization or as someone self-employed.
- An occupation is a type of work that includes tasks, education and training, typical wages, work settings and other factors. It often comes with opportunities for additional training, progress, advancement or promotion.
- A career encompasses a lifelong journey that includes a job (or several) and an occupation (or several).



## **Considering your child's post-secondary options**

**Some of the most important conversations you'll have with your child will be about further education or training beyond secondary school.**

These conversations can take place any at point in your child's K-12 journey, but will typically occur more often when they're in Grades 10-12. When that time comes, the career educators at your child's school are encouraged to help students explore the full range of options available for post-secondary learning, including those that best align with each student's goals, passions and strengths.

After they complete secondary school, some students may wish to pursue on-the-job skilled trades training; some will want to take a year off to travel and explore; and others may wish to transition to post-secondary study at a university or college. All of these learning opportunities can become valuable parts of an individual's career-life journey. Your child will be best supported when you take the time to listen to their dreams and aspirations, provide them with information about different options for post-secondary learning, and help them navigate the path they choose to pursue.

## SECTION 2:

# Get to know B.C.'s Career Education landscape

The majority of us spend a third of our lives at work. We often spend more time with our co-workers and colleagues than we do with our family and friends.

Our work life not only provides us with an income, it contributes significantly to how happy and satisfied we feel with our lives as a whole.

These are just a few of the many reasons why the B.C. Ministry of Education and Child Care supports Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K–12) students in preparing for a lifetime of meaningful work and career exploration. Today's students must be prepared to transition to post-secondary learning at some point in their career journey as nearly 76 percent of job openings in B.C. between 2024 and 2034 will require some form of post-secondary education or training.

We're providing students with the skills and education they'll need to make choices and decisions that allow them to become educated citizens, and be successful in their careers and lives.

## Our philosophy on Career Education

With a focus on career-life development starting in Kindergarten, the K–12 Career Education curriculum is designed to guide students through an ongoing process of self-discovery, growth in competence and experiential learning about careers and personal development in various contexts.

Career Education helps students understand who they are and how they fit into the world around them, and empowers them to choose and plan their career-life journeys with the guidance, resources and opportunities they need to pursue their interests.

## A brief look at B.C.'s K–12 Career Education curriculum

Career Education in B.C. starts in Kindergarten and extends all the way through Grade 12. Our Career Education curriculum is the result of many decades of work integrating personal and career exploration into every level of education.

The Career Education curriculum is organized into three areas of focus:

1. Personal development
2. Community connections
3. Life and career planning

It's structured to integrate holistically into multiple areas of learning, providing students with opportunities to explore their identity, interests and career aspirations.

Our objective is to prepare students with the skills, knowledge and resilience they'll need to navigate careers and work throughout their lifetimes. The curriculum provides an entry point to a lifelong career journey, and parents and caregivers are invited to come along with their children, every step of the way.

## K-12 Career Education goals

Students are expected to:

- ✓ Recognize the need to be adaptable, resilient and flexible in order to meet the changing opportunities and challenges of today's world.
- ✓ Understand how ongoing purposeful career-life development contributes to the success and well-being of individuals, communities and society.
- ✓ Build personal career-life development capacity to effectively learn and cultivate new interests, knowledge, skills and competencies throughout their lives.
- ✓ Develop awareness of their personal strengths, competencies, values and passions, and use this self-knowledge to inform career-life choices.
- ✓ Communicate and interact collaboratively with others, valuing diversity of people, perspectives, worldviews, ideas and opportunities.
- ✓ Explore a range of experiences, roles and opportunities in personal, educational and workplace contexts to advance their personal career-life journeys.

### DID YOU KNOW?

More than 1.1 million job openings are expected in B.C. between 2024 and 2034. Visit the [B.C. Labour Market Outlook 2024 Edition](#) to learn about the **skills and occupations that will be in demand.**



### KINDERGARTEN–GRADE 5 Developing foundations in career-life development

Students explore their expanding sense of self, positive community engagement and reflect on learning and goal-setting.



### GRADES 6–9 Exploring possibilities in career-life development

Students determine their strengths and preferences as they explore career-life concepts such as identity, leadership, personal planning and transferable skills.



### GRADES 10–12 Pursuing preferred futures in career-life development

Through the Career-Life Education (CLE) and Career-Life Connections (CLC) courses, students explore post-graduation possibilities in diverse educational, work and personal life contexts. They build the career-life management skills needed to effectively pursue who and how they want to be in the world.

Please visit the [BC Career Education Curriculum website](#) for more details.



## Additional opportunities for career exploration

Schools and school districts across the province offer a wide variety of programs and initiatives to guide students in exploring and preparing for specific careers or more immediate work opportunities.

While schools and school districts curate distinct Career Education opportunities, most offer variations on the following:

### PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

- Career resources and career counselling
- Career cafés, information fairs and events

### COURSES

- Work Experience 12A and 12B
- Youth Work in Trades 11A, 11B, 12A and 12B
- Youth Explore the Trades
- Dual credit courses
- Workforce Training Certificate 12

Today's students must be prepared to transition to post-secondary learning at some point in their career journey as nearly 76 percent of job openings in B.C. between 2024 and 2034 will require some form of post-secondary education or training.



### ENHANCING FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

Career Education builds upon foundational skills in literacy and numeracy, and focuses on developing skills for further success, such as problem solving, empathy and communication.



## What is the “Educated Citizen”?

Career Development is one of the three aspects of the Educated Citizen mandate for B.C.’s education system. The other two are Intellectual Development and Human and Social Development.

The Educated Citizen is:

- ✓ Thoughtful, able to learn and think critically and can communicate information from a broad knowledge base
- ✓ Creative, flexible, self-motivated and has a positive self image
- ✓ Capable of making independent decisions
- ✓ Skilled, and can contribute to society generally, including via the world of work
- ✓ Productive, gains satisfaction through achievement and strives for physical well-being
- ✓ Cooperative, principled and respectful of others regardless of differences
- ✓ Aware of their rights, and prepared to exercise the responsibilities of an individual within the family, the community, Canada and the world

## SECTION 3:

# Helping B.C. students prepare for a bright future

Technology and numerous other factors are changing the workforce and shaping careers as we have known them around the world. When today's students, your children, enter the world of work, they'll be faced with new and emerging needs and demands.

New tools, changing demographics and an evolving labour market mean this generation will require a career plan and approach that are vastly different to the ones parents and caregivers experienced.

More than ever, today's students need opportunities to explore emerging career paths and develop the skills required to adapt and succeed in a rapidly changing world. To address this need, the Government of B.C. has launched the K-12 Career Connections initiative as part of the **StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan**.

It will increase supports for career exploration and foundational skill development for students in Grades K-8, and expand career sampler programs, work experience placements, apprenticeships and access to micro-credentials for secondary students.

Launched in 2023, the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan is based on labour market data that has identified high priority industries and in-demand occupations where meaningful careers will exist well into the future, such as:

- Digital marketing
- Engineering
- Health care and social assistance
- Skilled trades
- Professional, scientific and technical services (including B.C.'s tech sector)
- Education (including Early Childhood Education, Education Assistants and K-12 educators)

By enhancing Career Education activities in B.C. schools, the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan focuses and supports current Career Education efforts.

The goals of the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan are to enable young people to explore potential occupations, develop the skills needed for occupations in growing sectors and enhance opportunities for all students.

The resources and programming opportunities created under the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan provide various entry points for your child to explore and pursue their interests and potential career goals. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to learn more and find out how to make the most of these opportunities.

Let's find out how your child can benefit!

## The StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan works with B.C.'s Career Education curriculum

The StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan has been designed to work alongside and enhance B.C.'s existing Career Education curriculum and programming. This means that some current programs will offer new resources and additional opportunities. It will also create entirely new programs and resources to provide more students with the chance to build critical skills.

For example, the K–12 Career Connections initiative will increase support for career exploration and foundational skill development for students in Grades K–8. For students in Grades 9–12, it will also expand:

- Career sampler programs
- Work experience placements
- Access to micro-credentials for secondary students

These are just a few components of the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan K–12 Career Connections initiatives. These initiatives are continuously evolving, so please check [Career Programs — Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/career-programs) for the latest details.

Altogether, these components will help more students graduate from secondary school ready to transition to post-secondary study and training, and develop the skills they'll need to join the world of work.



### DID YOU KNOW?

The Province of B.C. has invested \$480 million over three years to support the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan so that more young people can get the training needed for in-demand careers.

B.C. needs to fill more than 1.1 million job openings between 2024 and 2034. The majority of these jobs will need people who have post-secondary education and skills training.

## The StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan also supports people facing barriers

K–12 initiatives within the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan have been designed to prioritize supports for students who may face barriers to accessing career and skill development opportunities, including Indigenous students, students with disabilities or diverse abilities, children and youth in care and students living in rural or remote areas of the province.

To learn about the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan programming available in your area, contact your local school, board of education/independent school authority, or speak to your child's career counsellor or career educator.

You can also access the complete plan: [StrongerBC: Future-Ready-May2023.pdf \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/strongerbc-future-ready-may2023.pdf).

## SECTION 4:

# Get involved in your child's K–12 Career Education journey

You can be your child's most valuable career guide and supporter. Of course, that might seem a little easier in the early years when they're eager to listen and learn. As they grow and start to make their own decisions, they need you in their corner as a trusted advisor.

Take time for these conversations about life, career pathways and the ongoing journey of expanding their knowledge and horizons so your child can consider a wide array of options for their lives.

### The importance of talking to your child about career pathways

From a young age, children are asked the common question: "What do you want to be when you grow up?" It turns out, this question may not be the best way to start the conversation about career possibilities because it comes with the assumption that a career equals their identity as a person. It also assumes they'll have a single, unchanging path.

Today's approach to careers shifts the question to focus on problem solving and making positive contributions. Rather than asking them what they want to be, career educators and career counsellors now encourage children to imagine what gifts they see themselves sharing with the world and what problems they'd like to solve. This can also be

framed as who they'd like to be, and how they'd like to participate in society.

In addition to asking your child how they'd like to contribute to society, here are a few other key messages you can share with your child about careers:

- **Throughout your career journey, you'll likely have many jobs** and you may change occupations several times throughout your life. This is completely normal.
- **Choosing a career path isn't just about how much money you'll potentially earn.** While money is important, it isn't the only consideration for selecting a career. You may also want to think of what kind of life you want to lead, where you want to live, who you'll spend time with and the internal values that motivate you.
- **We spend two-thirds of our lives working** (on average, 80,000 hours). It's important to choose an occupation that helps us feel fulfilled and happy, and that makes a positive contribution to society.
- **It's always a good idea to have a backup plan**, whether it's for a chosen program, school or career path.
- **Remember, you're not deciding your entire future right now.** You're simply choosing a path to explore and you can always change course as you go through life.

- **There are many paths you can choose** to create the kind of life and future you're envisioning for yourself.
- **There are many learning options** after secondary school, for all kinds of learners and interests.

## Career conversations and activities for every age

In the early years of Career Education, career conversations can be attached to any activity at any time.

- ✓ When you're travelling through your community, you can ask your child questions about the people who work in the buildings you see as you're travelling.
- ✓ If you're reading a book or watching a show together, talk about the jobs the characters are doing.
- ✓ Whether you're sitting down for a planned chat, catching up while en route to activities or helping out with homework or a project, look for opportunities to talk about your child's interests and career awareness.
- ✓ Consider looking up information online together or taking them to the library to fill in any details you don't have yourself. The **Resources and next steps** section of this guide offers some excellent starting points.
- ✓ Share information with your child about your job and what you enjoy about it.

### DID YOU KNOW?



The National Occupations Classification (NOC) lists more than 500 occupations. You can explore them at [WorkBC](#).

**A productive approach to career coaching is to have open conversations about occupational choices and career journeys. Let your child explore their interests, and help them research occupations that match.**

It's also important to note that while career exploration in school is about building awareness, trying new things, being brave and asking good questions, once students reach Grade 10 and start getting closer to graduation, it's critical to start actively planning their next steps with them.

Together, you can ensure that required course credits and timelines are met so that your child qualifies for their chosen career and educational programs.



### IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- Find out what your child is interested in both socially and career-wise.
- Expose your child to new experiences and people in different jobs.
- Build awareness about a broad range of careers and work.
- Talk regularly about careers, occupations and interests.
- Offer to be a guest speaker in your child's class and share your career story.
- Review your child's report card for areas that indicate their strengths and interests.

## Sample conversation starters

**While reading a book:** Ask your child to name the main character's interests and what kinds of careers they could pursue with those interests. Point to illustrations in the book and ask your child to name the careers that relate to those illustrations (e.g. a tree = tree planter, landscaper, forester; a car = engineer, welder, race car driver, etc.). Conversation prompt:

 "Are any of these jobs interesting to you? If so, why?"

**On the go:** As you travel through your community, point out various buildings and ask your child if they know what kinds of occupations might be located in each one. (e.g. a hospital = doctors, nurses, etc.; a bank = tellers, financial planners, etc.). Conversation prompt:

 "Would you like to go visit one of those buildings?"



### IN GRADES 7–9

- Find out what your child is interested in now, as this may have changed since leaving elementary school.
- Continue to encourage broad awareness-building about different career options by attending field trips and open houses that expose your child to options and ideas for their future.
- If conversations are difficult at this age, find relevant, appropriate posts on social media that you can share with them. Invite your child's feedback.
- Use school activities such as sports or field trips as a way to initiate conversations about their interests and skills.

- Stay up to date on Career Education activities at school so you can have follow-up conversations at home. The school's newsletter and website are often useful resources.
- Offer to be a guest speaker or suggest other potential guest speakers for your child's class.
- Introduce your child to friends and colleagues who are willing to talk about their career paths.

## Sample conversation starters

**While watching a show:** If you have a TV show that you enjoy watching together, make a point of commenting on the characters' interests, passions or career pursuits and ask your child about their interests too. This can be a great way to learn about their evolving likes and dislikes and how it might impact their choices. Conversation prompt:

 "Are you interested in learning more about this job? If yes, go to [WorkBC](#) and see occupational profiles that relate to your interests."

**Using social media:** Find a social media clip or meme that relates to a career or industry your child is interested in, and share it with them. Conversation prompt:

 "What are your thoughts on this video? Do you have any questions about the career they were talking about?"



### IN GRADES 10–12

- Encourage your child to explore a diverse range of career programs and resources, and to meet with their career educator or career counsellor/advisor.

- Ask them about their CLE and CLC classes, and encourage their active participation.
- Encourage them to create a **vision board** to visualize their interests and goals. They can do this by cutting and pasting together images that represent their vision for the future.
- Help them research post-secondary opportunities that match their interests, skills and grades. Consider all options, including transfer programs, apprenticeships and dual credit courses.
- Attend events and info sessions, or encourage your child to do so. Follow up with them to get their feedback and learnings.
- Make use of resources such as **WorkBC** and **EducationPlannerBC** to explore labour market trends and labour gaps, as well as programs that match their interests.
- Research scholarships, community grants and loans at **StudentAidBC**.
- Explore apprenticeship programs.
- Support the volunteer work your child is both involved and interested in.

### Sample conversation starters

**In the car:** As you drive your child (and their friends) to activities or friends' houses, take the opportunity to chat with their friends and ask them about their goals, interests and plans for after secondary school. Hearing their friends' responses can make it easier for your child to open up about their own dreams and aspirations. Conversation prompt:

 "What are your thoughts about your next steps after high school?"

**While researching online:** Help your child research potential learning opportunities by visiting post-secondary institutions' websites. Many offer virtual video tours and introductions to their programs. Share these videos and follow up with a conversation to get your child's feedback and answer their questions. Conversation prompt:

 "What are your thoughts on the video tour you watched? Could you picture yourself there?"

**On a campus tour:** Take your child to see what local post-secondary campuses look like. There is nothing more inspiring than seeing it firsthand. It's also a chance to share details about your own learning and career journey. Conversation prompt:

 "How did you like the campus tour? What were your favourite places to explore?"



### ENTERING POST-SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Post-secondary schools have different entrance requirements to suit a wide range of competencies. Be sure to select schools and programs that meet your child's abilities and chosen pathway.

Many post-secondary schools offer opportunities for upgrading, and some schools offer placement exams for students who are working toward meeting specific entrance requirements.

## Exploring career resources

There are many resources available to help you have meaningful conversations with your child. Many of the resources offer simple conversation prompts and career questions you can share to frame your conversations around careers. The [Resources and next steps](#) section of this guide and the [WorkBC Parent Guide](#) are useful starting points.

## More ways to get involved with your child's school programming

There's a whole world of activities happening at your child's school that go well beyond the projects and learning in their classrooms. From extracurricular activities to field trips and themed days, there are many opportunities for both you and your child to explore interests, build skills and prepare for life after secondary school.

Here are some additional ways you can get involved now, to best prepare your child for the future:

- **Attend parent information sessions**, career fairs and post-secondary information events.
- **Speak with your child's teachers and school staff.** They can pass on valuable information about career and work experience opportunities and post-secondary schools.
- **Get to know your school's resources and use them.** Ask your child's teacher or career counsellor where to start.
- **Explore opportunities for your child to build skills** outside of the classroom through volunteering, work experience programs and part-time work.
- **Discover potential scholarships**, grants and awards.
- **Visit university and college campuses.**



## Support your child's success

There are many career and community supports in place for your child to develop their skills and interests.

Here are few things to keep in mind:

- **Talk to your child's teachers and school counsellors** about specific needs or required supports. Their aim is to help your child succeed.
- **If your child has an Individual Education Plan (IEP)**, ensure it's kept up to date.
- **Be sure to ask about and participate in events**, information sessions and other opportunities for designed to increase equity and remove barriers for students.
- **Research accessibility and other requirements** when exploring post-secondary learning opportunities. Many post-secondary institutions have made accessibility a priority.

## Your presence and encouragement are invaluable

No matter what you've experienced in your personal journey through work and Career Education, always keep in mind that you're an important influence on your child, their view of the world and their future plans.

While a lot of career learning and preparation takes place at school and in community-based programs, your child needs you, their parent and caregiver, to actively participate in guiding and championing their success as they grow.

Taking on the role of coach and ally in your child's Career Education process means periodically asking yourself how you can:

- ✓ Help your child to discover and explore their values, skills and interests, all of which may change over time
- ✓ Help them explore potential occupations and learning options
- ✓ Help them set and pursue goals
- ✓ Introduce them to people and resources that match their interests
- ✓ Encourage them to consider various opportunities to gain knowledge and experience
- ✓ Help them research post-secondary learning paths
- ✓ Share your own career experiences
- ✓ Learn about emerging industries and opportunities

Your child needs you, their parent and caregiver, to actively participate in guiding and championing their success as they grow.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Students in many schools and school districts across B.C. can take post-secondary courses while still in secondary school. These are called dual credit courses, which are post-secondary credits that can be funded for eligible students in Grades 11 and 12.

Planning for these courses typically starts in Grade 10. In addition to providing post-secondary credits, these courses count as elective credit at the Grade 12 level.

## SECTION 5:

# Resources and next steps

There's a wealth of Career Education and labour market resources available to parents and caregivers in B.C.

This section provides a starting point for you to uncover more details about the B.C. Career Education curriculum, career planning, skills gaps and opportunities in the B.C. workforce. All of these resources can support you and your child to make informed decisions.

Note that some of the resources have been created or updated as recently as 2024, while others are a little older. As programs, resources and curricula continue to evolve, it's a good idea to check out the source websites for updates.

## Education resources

### ▶ [BC Career Education Curriculum](#)

This website offers curriculum detail, as well as a deeper philosophical understanding of B.C.'s curriculum from K–12. Here you can review the big ideas, curricular and core competencies and content learning standards for each grade level.

### ▶ [EducationPlannerBC](#)

This site offers tools to help you and your child research, plan and apply to public post-secondary institutions in B.C. It's a great source of information about programs and requirements for B.C.'s post-secondary offerings. Be sure to try the [Find Your Path tool](#), which allows you to explore specific career categories and some of the occupational paths within them.

### ▶ [myBlueprint Education Planner](#)

This comprehensive education and career-life planning program offers tools your child can use to make informed decisions about their future, including exploring career and learning opportunities, tracking their experiences and achievements, learning financial skills and creating a shareable portfolio. Note that this product requires a paid subscription.

### ▶ [StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan](#)

In the spring of 2023, the Province released a plan to address shifting labour market trends and to create new supports for British Columbians, including students who have yet to enter the workforce. This resource provides information about new initiatives such as increased student financial aid, expanded programs, and other training resources for your child as they consider their post-secondary journey.

## Career planning resources for parents

### ▶ [Guiding Principles of Career Development](#)

Created by the Canadian Education & Research Institute for Counselling (CERIC) and backed by abundant research, this overview provides foundational principles to return to often as your child progresses through K–12 and beyond in their career journey.

### ➤ [SkilledTradesBC](#)

As the crown agency that advances British Columbia's trades training system, SkilledTradesBC promotes equitable access to skilled trades, and upholds standards for apprenticeship training, certification and program funding. Try its trade quiz to find the skilled trade that matches your child's interests.

### ➤ [The Early Years — Career Development for Young Children — Parents Guide](#)

Created by the CERIC, this guide is focused on children aged 3 to 8. It illustrates the many ways that Career Education begins early in a child's life so that you can reflect upon the ways they're already exploring pathways and revealing their interests and passions.

### ➤ [WorkBC Parents' Section](#)

A resource to help start conversations between parents and caregivers and their children, this step-by-step guide provides the opportunity to move through topics one by one, or to choose the most relevant topic for you. Don't miss the interactive [career discovery quizzes](#) and the [career exploration videos](#). This is also a wealth of [resources for Indigenous Peoples](#).

## **B.C. labour market resources**

### ➤ [British Columbia Labour Market Outlook 2024 Edition](#)

This rolling 10-year forecast provides a current and in-depth look at 64 traditional industries and where they're heading, as well as two emerging industries: the clean economy and the care economy. It shares projected numbers for education and training, industries and occupations. Be sure to review the outlook for your particular region as well.

## **Helpful steps to get you started**

There's no right or wrong way to jump in and get started on the career exploration journey with your child.

You can dive into some of these resources right away, or start by talking with your child about what they know and what they'd like to know.

If you aren't sure where to begin, here are some helpful starting points:

- Choose one or two resources to review. You could begin by looking at some of the emerging occupations and skills required for the career pathways you might not be familiar with using this [WorkBC Career Profiles](#) tool.
- Have a casual conversation with your child about their career interests and explorations.
- Get familiar with your school's website and read the latest newsletter. These will give you more insight into career-related programs, information on scholarships and awards, and events you can get involved in that could be of use to you and your child.
- At your next parent-teacher meeting, ask your child's teacher about how you can best support their learning.



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