



Published on *mache.org* (<http://www.mache.org>)

[Home](#) > [Resources](#) > Printer-friendly PDF

Career Development Planning During High School

Tags: [careers](#) [high school](#) [HSLDA](#) [interests](#) [job preparation](#) [teaching](#)



Dear Friends,

Are your teens being asked, "What do you want to do after high school?" That question either evokes a feeling of uncertainty in your teen, or he or she is ready with the answer. In any case, you can give your children valuable information and direction by offering a career development elective course during the high school years. As you think about planning this course, we'd like to suggest possible components to include.

Recognize Your Child's Talents and Interests

By the high school years, many parents can identify their children's talents and interests. The next step is to provide opportunities for your teens to hone these abilities by choosing some elective courses of interest through which they can acquire skills in a particular area. Additionally, these courses may introduce them to possible careers such as archeology, computers, business, and journalism, just to name a few. On our high school website we list [sources for such courses](#), many of which were developed and/or taught by homeschooling parents.

If your children don't have any clue as to the direction they wish to go, then researching a number of different careers is a good starting point. Another tool to use is a career interest test. Giving your teens this test during high school can provide them with insight into their natural inclinations and even passions. It can also help them narrow down some careers to investigate. [These tests](#) vary in cost and comprehensiveness, so learn what each one provides before deciding which to use.

Research Careers

A good place to research careers is your public library. Your teen should use the most recent data. Because this data is frequently updated, it's better to use sources from the library rather than purchasing your own. A couple of good starter books are [Exploring Careers: A Young Person's Guide to 1,000 Jobs](#) by Jist Publishing and [Guide to Your Career](#) by Alan Bernstein. Another great source of information is the internet. Your teen can learn about current trends in careers, salaries, job skills, as well as the necessary educational preparation and training. For example, the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics provides [helpful information](#) for both parents (as teachers) and also students.

Another component of research could be to interview people working in the careers your teen is learning about and possibly job shadowing or visiting their places of employment. Information from these interviews can help in choosing types of courses to take while in high school to better prepare for post-secondary training.

Use the high school years to develop necessary skills in areas of interest. If your daughter is interested in music pedagogy, then theory and music history courses will be helpful. For hands-on experience, she may consider teaching a few students on a musical instrument in her own "studio." If your son is fascinated by computers, taking a course in web design, graphic art, or learning a computer language may motivate him in his studies. Knowing that certain careers may require more knowledge in a particular area will provide you with valuable information as you make course selections for the high school program.

Sharpen Job Hunting Skills

As part of the career development course, your teen should create a resume and continue to update it throughout the high school years. This project will help him see the importance of volunteer work, extracurricular activities, and skills. For resources to help in formulating his resume, check out [our high school website](#) as well as the [College Board site](#).

Help your teen to develop good interviewing skills by anticipating possible questions he'll be asked and then writing appropriate answers. You may also want to conduct mock interviews to provide your teen the practice of answering unexpected questions. Your conversations may also include discussions about the appropriate interview attire and etiquette to use for different types of employment.

Completing an employment application for practice will help your teen to understand the type of information he will be required to provide. Another project for your career elective course would be to have your children create personal job files which can include their resumes, contact information for references, letters of recommendation, past employers, special projects they complete, and so forth. Having this information handy will save much time when completing employment applications or locating requested materials. Also take advantage of career fairs advertised in your area. Attending with your teen and observing the process may motivate him to think more seriously about his future.

Sample a Career

Your career development course will be enhanced if the teen can actually explore and experience several careers. Organizations such as 4-H, the YMCA and the YWCA often expose the teen to a variety of careers and hobbies. Work-study programs, internships, community service, and part-time jobs are other ways to see a career up close. Your teen may want to try his hand at being an entrepreneur and launch his own business while still in high school. Through all of these types of activities, encourage your teens to form relationships with people in the different careers. You never know when these networks may be helpful to your child in the future.

For a biblical approach to thinking about possible future vocations, we suggest reading [God at Work: Your Christian Vocation in All of Life](#) by Gene Edward Veith, provost of Patrick Henry College.

Have fun as you explore the myriads of possibilities for your children. We are blessed in our country to have so many choices. Don't become overwhelmed by them but know that the Lord has gifted each of your children, and He promises to lay out their paths (Psalms 37:23; Prov. 16:9) by opening doors of opportunity at just the right time and place.

Next month we will take a look at college selection and how you can use these high school years to prepare your teens for that next step.

Loving the work we do on your behalf,

Becky Cooke & Diane Kummer
HSLDA High School Coordinators



This resource is an article from the *Homeschooling Thru Highschool* newsletter (2/5/2009), and is provided by the Home School Legal Defense Association as a service to the homeschooling community.

To subscribe to the newsletter, please [click here](#).

For more information about the HSLDA, please
[click here.](#)

Author: [Becky Cooke](#)
[Diane Kummer](#)

Source URL (retrieved on 05/23/2013 - 12:52am): <http://www.mache.org/resources/article/11-27-2011/career-development-planning-during-high-school>