

What are some activities that can help nurture my child's interests?

If your child has an interest in animals, he or she might like to:

- ◆ Join a 4-H club.
- ◆ Volunteer at a local veterinary clinic or zoo.
- ◆ Walk or care for a neighbor's dog.

If your child has an interest in art, he or she might like to:

- ◆ Design a personal web site.
- ◆ Make birthday or holiday cards for relatives and friends.
- ◆ Create graphics for the school newsletter.

If your child likes to help people, he or she might like to:

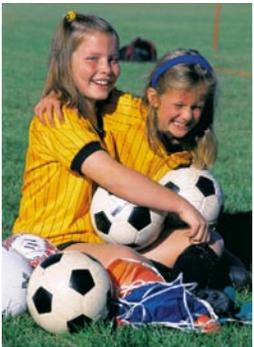
- ◆ Be a summer camp counselor.
- ◆ Assist at a day care center.
- ◆ Teach a younger child to read.
- ◆ Volunteer at a hospital.

If your child likes to build or repair things, he or she might like to:

- ◆ Build a radio or computer from a kit.
- ◆ Take apart an old appliance and put it back together.
- ◆ Design and build a bird house.

If your child likes sports, he or she might like to:

- ◆ Play on a sports team.
- ◆ Assist a coach.
- ◆ Umpire or referee community games.



I've helped my child identify interests....what's next?

Talk with your child about how interests relate to occupations. If your child has an interest in outdoor work, help him or her explore occupations, from gardening to oceanography. If your child wants to help people, explore occupations from teaching to medicine.

If your child has a list of occupations based on his or her interest assessments, help your child explore those, as well as similar occupations. For example, if computer programming is an occupation listed on your child's interest assessment, help your child also explore information about web development, video game development, network technology and computer support occupations.

For more information:

RI RED: Research and Economic Database has career information that you and your child can access from home. Visit the web site at www.dlt.ri.gov/rired.

America's Career InfoNet is available on the Internet at: www.acinet.org/acinet.

The US Dept. of Labor publishes the **Occupational Outlook Handbook**, available at your local library, or online at: www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm.

Your **local library** has career information books and publications, as well as Internet access to explore online career information.

This brochure was originally prepared by America's Career Resource Network (ACRN)

www.acrnetwork.org



Rhode Island Department of
Labor and Training

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4/07 MDF

Your child's hobby today may lead to a career tomorrow...

Helping your child

Identify Interests



How parents can help their children plan rewarding careers

Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training
Labor Market Information Unit

1511 Pontiac Avenue
Cranston, RI 02920

(401) 462-8740 phone | (401) 462-8766 fax

(401) 462-8006 tdd

www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi

How do I help my child plan a career?

People make career plans for a variety of reasons.

- ◆ Some people focus on what they have grown up around and choose the same career as their parents.
- ◆ Some make career decisions based on salary.
- ◆ Others “fall into” a career because they start working for a company and decide to stay there.

Think about your own career planning. Did you plan your career based on what you like to do? If not, do you wish you had? Research shows that your child will be more satisfied with his or her career decision if that decision is based on your child’s interests and the activities that he or she enjoys most.

How to help your child identify interests.

Discuss with your child what he or she likes to do most. Here are some questions that will help you and your child think about interests:

- ◆ What is your favorite school subject?
- ◆ What extracurricular activities do you enjoy the most?
- ◆ What are your hobbies?
- ◆ What do you like to do with friends?
 - ◆ What special skills do you think you possess?
 - ◆ What have you done that you are most proud of?
 - ◆ What do you like to do with your free time?
 - ◆ What interests you the most?



How can my child use Formal Interest Assessments?

Many middle and high schools offer interest assessments for students. There are also some free interest assessments available on the Internet. You should encourage your child to take a number of interest assessments and to share the results of those assessments with you. Your child can try a free Internet assessment at: www.cdm.uwaterloo.ca/step1_5.asp

Here are some important facts about interest assessments that you and your child should keep in mind:

- ◆ Interest assessments are only meant to be a starting point for career exploration. *They are not meant to force your child to pick a career.*
- ◆ When your child takes interest assessments, let him or her know that there are no right or wrong answers.
- ◆ Because the assessments do not actually test, but rather ask questions that are left to interpretation by your child, it is important for your child to take many different interest assessments and compare the results to see if each assessment has similar results.
- ◆ Your child’s interests may change as he or she moves through school and tries new things.

Interest assessments should be taken each year to assist career exploration as your child matures.

Where can I find interest assessments for my child?

The guidance counselor at your child’s school has access to many different interest assessments and knows how to help your child go through the process and understand the results.

What if my child doesn’t seem to have any interest?

There are many ways to help your child explore the world to find what interests him or her. Here are some examples:

- ◆ Pay attention to the activities your child likes, the books he or she chooses to read, the television shows he or she watches, the web sites he or she visits, and the way your child spends his or her free time. Discuss what your child likes or dislikes about each activity.
- ◆ Take your child to museums, art galleries, zoos, musical and theatrical performances and community and sporting events.
- ◆ Let your child try various after-school or extracurricular activities, such as art classes, computer classes or a sports team.



- ◆ Encourage your child to start a collection, and decide what will be in that collection.

As you and your child discover his or her interests, provide more opportunities for your child to learn about and develop those interests.

- ◆ Take your child to the library to explore and borrow books of his or her particular interests.
- ◆ Provide magazines and books that can help your child learn more about his or her interests.
- ◆ Allow your child to join a club that relates to his or her interests.
- ◆ Help your child find community service activities related to his or her interests that will allow hands-on exploration.