Career Development for Students: Elementary, Middle, High School

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“Life Career Development”

- Can be defined as: aiding students in their professional self-development over the course of their education

- Career development is vital for students
  - Encourages students to look to future, stay in school, attend college
  - Gives them long and short term goals to achieve
  - Broadens knowledge of world, possible jobs
  - Shows students their strengths, skills, interests
  - Helps them realize what is required of them when interested in certain careers and make realistic plans
Career Awareness

• School counselors begin counseling career awareness in the elementary levels
• Critics argue it is too early for children to decide on a career, it forces them to choose a career then
• Supporters argue that early involvement encourages college aspirations, especially for impoverished children
• Many children do not have parental support, therefore counselors can play an even larger role in helping the student develop
Career Awareness

- There are many techniques used by elementary counselors to begin career planning
  - Informational videos
  - Career tests: personality, learning style, etc.
  - Interest lists and careers that can pair with them
  - “Career day”: having local business owners, workers come to school and discuss their own career
  - Filling out part-time job applications, basic resume (for upper elementary grades)
Career Awareness

- The technique we are focusing on for elementary intervention uses a tree genogram.
- It is a simple, visual technique, which is best for this age group.
- Provides a method of assessing and discussing family members’ careers in an respectful manner.
  - Some parents may not have a job, or a desirable job and exposing this can make a child feel unworthy.
  - Leaves room for flexibility (nuclear families are not as common anymore).
  - Can lead to further assistance with child.
Career Awareness: Genogram

- The tree genogram used for career awareness highlights the importance family members, especially parents, can have on their children’s future careers.
- This technique also encourages parent involvement: sending the tree home with child and having them discuss occupations of family members.
- Can make a parent realize how influential they are on their child’s future.
The Career Family Tree

- Everyone draw a tree on a piece of paper
- At bottom of tree, put your own interests
- Each branch will have a different family member’s occupation
  - Father, mother, maternal grandpa, maternal grandma, paternal grandpa, paternal grandma
- Additional information can be added if the student knows it i.e. educational background, specific skills
The Career Family Tree

- Process questions for counselor to ask student after the activity:
  - What does your mom do for a living?
  - What does your dad do for a living?
  - What does your grandma or grandpa do for a living?
  - What do they do at their jobs?
  - Can men and women do their jobs? Why?
  - What do you like about their jobs?
Career Exploration

- As career awareness lays the foundation for career development, career exploration opens up a person’s “individual interests, abilities, career values, and needs by exploring jobs and how they fit into the world of work.”
- This normally occurs during the middle school years of schooling
  - Normally should start between ages 10-14
Career Exploration

- Career exploration provides students with more specific and detailed information (and experiences) that is used by them (and others like counselors) when beginning to set tentative career goals
  - This also helps deciding future school curriculum
Career Exploration

When Counseling…

◦ One must also understand that the students are experiencing cognitive, physical, and social-emotional changes while shaping their own identity

◦ Remember that this technique is preventative, not crisis-oriented

◦ Have on-going career development activities for students to explore & why they are relevant
Career Exploration

- When Counseling continued…
  - Work cooperatively with teachers to, “provide opportunity, inservice, & support for integrated career instruction.” (in the classroom & out)
  - Start making students aware of how critical college will be for a lot of these jobs
  - Have open communication with teachers, administrators, parents, & the community to have multiple career exploration events
Career Exploration

- One of the best tools to use during career exploration is a four or six-year plan and a toolkit (folder) of all past information
  - Developing this helps a school counselor help guide them throughout middle school and high school
  - Can be used as a “bridge” between exploration and preparation
Career Exploration

• Hands on exploration (job shadowing) is one of the best ways to explore a career, but one can narrow down their options using multiple tools…
  ◦ Myers Briggs Type Indicator, Campbell’s Interest & Skill Survey, etc.
  ◦ Websites
    • http://www.driveofyourlife.org/
    • http://breitlinks.com/careers/career_activities.htm
    • http://uwhelp.wisconsin.edu/careers/exploration.aspx
  ◦ Job Fairs
Career Planning/Preparation

- Begins in childhood and continues throughout the life span.

- It integrates the individual’s abilities, interest, aptitudes, personal values, vocational opportunities as well as constraints, and other life roles for career development to become an integral aspect of life satisfactions.
Career Planning/Preparation: Goal

- To prepared individuals to successfully navigate the current dynamic world of work

- Reflect an awareness of complexity implied in effectively balancing career, family, and social roles.
Career Planning/Preparation

- Encourage students to look at all careers. Either with a college degree or right out of high school.

- To facilitate the understanding of frequent job or career changes and allow students to maintain good self esteem and belief in their self efficacy in the face of down sizing and other economic adjustments.
Career Planning/Preparation

- Focus on awareness of the interrelatedness of diverse life roles. Which in result enable students to plan more effectively on making career decisions

- Create ways to improve communication skills and interaction for employer’s expectations or future college success.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Sheet</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaks another language</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plays a musical instrument</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is good at sports</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is interested in science</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes to tinker with anything mechanical</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoys working with animals</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is interested in aviation</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes performing in public</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seems to be able to teach others</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has artistic ability</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoys helping others</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is interested in math</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reads and writes well</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes constructing or building things</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes or would like to travel</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes to debate issues</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes to sing</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoys working with money</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes working with computers</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types well</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is good at growing plants</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is a good salesperson</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes talking to people</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gets along well with others</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes to organize things</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wants to go to college/trade school</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wants to join the military service</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would like to be on TV or radio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Likes history</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prefers the out-of-doors</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enjoys working alone</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes talking on the telephone</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoys personal grooming and clothing</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is concerned about the environment</td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
“The challenge for school counselors at every academic level is to discover or develop specific activities that can be implemented to achieve the goal of successful life career development for each student (McIntosh, P.I., 200, pg. 624).”
References