

Preparing students  
for employment  
through workplace  
experiences

**PARENT'S GUIDE**





# HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD NAVIGATE THE PATHWAY TO CAREER SUCCESS

As a parent you might have asked yourself this question: ***“What can I do to help my child make decisions for their life after high school and beyond?”***

This guide will help you answer the question by understanding some of the options that are available to your child as they look to explore career possibilities!



**“** This experience let me showcase my creative/artistic side. It helped me learn and expand my skills on the computer. It helped me find what my career pathway would be. **”**

*Student, York Catholic District School Board*

## HOW CAN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES BENEFIT YOUR CHILD?

- Students can identify and explore their strengths, interests, and skill sets - all important information for learning about future career options.
- Organizations are looking for people who know how to communicate well and work on a team - skills that can be developed through experiential learning.
- Their experience may give them an opportunity to work on problem solving in the workplace setting.
- Students who spend time in the workplace may be further engaged and interested in their classroom performance.
- Your child's application for entry to college/university competitive programs or for scholarships becomes more attractive with workplace or volunteer experience. See sample resumes with and without such experiences.
- Students may have the potential to be hired after completing a co-op placement in the workplace.
- Experiential learning opportunities may lead to a smoother transition when entering the workforce.
- Employers now see volunteering as valid workplace experience.
- These experiences help your child stand out by equipping them with examples to use during a job interview and content to include on a resume.
- It's the perfect opportunity for your child to learn about different jobs and industries to make smart career decisions.
- Many employers are looking beyond academic achievements for candidates who have a variety of experiences where they have demonstrated their skill sets.



*Does your child have a dream job in mind?*

## Volunteering works as it contributes to feelings of great confidence in youth, making them feel more employable



Those who have done volunteer work have a **higher chance of getting hired** compared to those who haven't volunteered.<sup>1</sup>

**27%**

“*Experiential learning has created skills that I've never had before as well as helped me prepare myself for the future. This experience has definitely made me think about my future and where I want to go in life.*”

*Student, York Region District School Board*

### WHAT IS EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING?

Experiential learning opportunities are hands-on learning experiences that help students prepare for future employment.

Examples of experiential learning could include a co-op placement, an internship, an apprenticeship, an extracurricular activity, a volunteer experience, an industry professional presenting to a class, a field trip, or a job shadowing experience.

Participating in these experiences allows students to learn more about future careers and learn new skills. All students have the opportunity to participate in experiential learning.





## AS A PARENT OR GUARDIAN, HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING?



### Have career conversations at home

Try out these conversation starters:

- What was the most exciting part of your day?
- What did you find most interesting about \_\_\_\_\_ class?
- What is happening in the world that interests you?
- What world problem would you like to solve?
- What would you like to be known for?

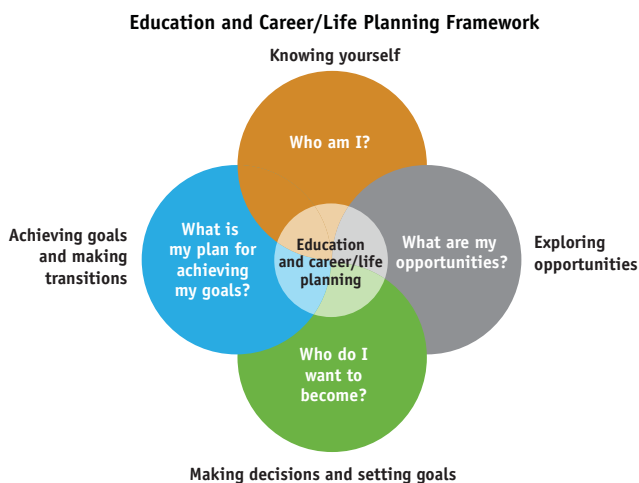
- Talk about your own work experiences. What career path did you take? What skills do you have?
- Encourage your child to take part in extracurricular activities, educational programs and summer camps that connect with their job interests such as a computer camp, robotics team, public speaking contest, environment club or Specialist High Skills Major Program.
- Explore non-traditional careers together by researching jobs and companies on-line, and by asking your friends and family members to share their career experiences.
- Suggest your child volunteers in areas they are hoping to work. Is your child interested in construction and building things? Explore with your child how they can get involved in volunteering with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity.
- Incorporate hands-on activities during family time, such as building with Legos, drawing, baking, making crafts, designing and building something like a skateboard ramp, or playing with old electronics to see how they work.
- Support your child’s career interests by encouraging them to explore career opportunities with their educators.

### AT SCHOOL

- Clubs/teams
- Field trips
- Extracurricular activities
- Take your kid to work day
- Job shadow
- Co-op/internship
- Apprenticeship
- Employer/Community partner presentations
- Specialist High Skills Major
- Skills Competitions
- Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program

### AT HOME

- Make dinner together
- Draw or build with blocks
- Help with home renovation projects
- Create a budget
- Plant a garden
- Build a robot
- Build a tree house
- Visit museums
- Go camping
- Volunteer together
- Network with friends and family



Source: Adapted from Ontario Ministry of Education, Creating Pathways to Success



## WHAT LOCAL STUDENTS ARE SHARING ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES

“ The placement was an amazing experience for me. I was very much involved in the office and learned a lot about the world of political science and law. My employers always trusted me and gave me opportunities where I could expand my knowledge. ”

*Student, York Catholic District School Board*

“ I feel experiential learning has taught me many things about dealing with customers, time management and being in a workplace environment. Overall, after this experience, I feel I am ready for the workplace. ”

*Student, York Region District School Board*

“ Along with having a lot of fun, I developed my teamwork, problem solving and presentation skills. I also learned a lot about mechanical engineering basics, such as how to use a motor properly. The Skills Ontario competitions are a wonderful way for students to learn and have fun at the same time! ”

*Student participating in Ontario Lego Mechanics Competition for York Region*

## ARE YOU READY TO GET STARTED?

Help your child connect with and learn more about the opportunities that are available to them. To learn more about available programs contact your local school board:

### **York Region District School Board**

60 Wellington Street West, Aurora, ON L4G 3H2

Phone: 905-727-3141

Fax: 905-727-3129

[www.yrdsb.ca](http://www.yrdsb.ca)

[www.yrdsb.ca/programs](http://www.yrdsb.ca/programs)

 @YRDSB

### **York Catholic District School Board**

320 Bloomington Road West, Aurora, ON L4G 0M1

Phone: 905-713-1211 or 416-221-5051

Fax: 905-713-1272

[www.ycdsb.ca](http://www.ycdsb.ca)

[www.ycdsb.ca/pathways](http://www.ycdsb.ca/pathways)

 @PathwaysYCDSB

For more information on the local labour market and resources for your child to explore careers, check out:

### **Workforce Planning Board of York Region**

[www.wpboard.ca](http://www.wpboard.ca)



## REFERENCES

1. Nancy Collamer, "Proof that Volunteering Pays Off for Job Hunters," Forbes, June 2013.  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2013/06/24/proof-that-volunteering-pays-off-for-job-hunters/#1fbae551753a>

Disclaimer: Adapted with permission from "A PARENT'S GUIDE TO EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING" by Workforce Development Board Windsor Essex. 2018.

This publication is written as a source of information only. The information contained in this publication should by no means be considered a substitute for the advice of qualified professionals. All efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the information as of the date of publishing. The Workforce Planning Board of York Region expressly disclaim responsibility for any adverse effects arising from the use of the information contained herein.

